

FOREWORD

Due to various reasons Qadianism is again drawing the attention of the elite and the layman alike in various parts of the world. In India, too, a good deal is being said and written about it these days. But, unfortunately, most of it is based on faulty and one-sided information.

The problem of Qadianism has assumed great importance not only for the neighbouring country of Pakistan but for the entire Muslim *Millat*. The need was, therefore, felt for an objective study of the fundamental beliefs, practices and historical background of the new faith.

The chief merit of the present endeavour lies in the fact that the material used in it has been drawn exclusively from the speeches and writings of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the founder of Qadianism and his trusted lieutenants. It is, as such, a work of scholarship, study and research and free from a trace of distortion, misrepresentation and prejudice.

The author, Maulana Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, is the most well-known and widely respected Muslim divine of India. He is held in high esteem throughout the Islamic World not only for his piety and devoutness but also learning and erudition. He has written about fifty books in Arabic and Urdu on subjects related to Islam and Muslims. A number of his works have also been translated in to English, French, Turkish, Persian and other languages.

The Maulana is the Rector of Nadwatul Ulema, Lucknow and member of the Standing Committee of University of Medina and of the Syrian Academy of Arts and Letters besides being associated in various capacities with religious and literary bodies and institutions all over the world.

Maulana Nadwi has made an intense study of Qadianism. His earlier work *Qadianism: A Critical Study* (1965) has been acclaimed as a most thorough, unbiased and scholarly examination of the subject.

MOHAMMAD ASIF KIDWAI

Qadianism—A Critique

As the people who are acquainted with the genesis, fundamental tenets and practices of Ahmadiyah, popularly known as Qadianism, will agree, this new faith was conceived in the womb of British Imperialism. The Nineteenth Century was unique in the sense that it saw a widespread stirring among the Muslims. In India, during the first quarter of it, Syed Ahmad Shaheed (d. 1831 A.D.) declared Jihad against the alien rulers which found a ready response among the Muslims. Fired with the spirit of heroism and self-sacrifice in the path of Islam, the Indian Muslims rallied in thousands under the banner of revolt raised by the great Syed. Not unduly, the British masters were perturbed by the upsurge. In Sudan, Sheikh Mohammad Ahmad gave the call of Jihad and Mehdism which rattled the Western imperialists. They knew that if the spark was allowed to blaze forth it would become uncontrollable. And, then, they saw the Pan-Islamic movement of Syed Jamaluddin Afghani gaining in popularity. The threat that all this spelt for their colonial structure was too obvious to be ignored. The British exploiters had made a deep study of the character and temperament of the Muslims. They knew that the Muslims were religiously-inclined by nature. It was this characteristic of theirs that could arouse them, as well as lull them to sleep. The only way to hold them in check was, thus, to make use of their religious susceptibilities. The innermost recesses of their hearts could not be reached by any other route. With this end in view, the British Government resolved to raise up some one to a high religious position from among the Muslims themselves so that they might gather around him out of spiritual fervour and, then, he imparted to them such a lesson of loyalty and allegiance that they ceased to be dangerous any more. This was the weapon the British

used and no other strategy could, indeed, be more effective than to alter the religious disposition of the Muslims. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad who was a victim of frustration and mental unrest* and wanted very much to be the founder of a new faith so that he, too, may have devotees and followers and his name, also went down in history like that of the Prophet Mohammad (Peace be on him) was picked up by the British Government to fulfil the mission. No one could be more suited to work among the Muslims towards that objective,

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad launched his endeavour with great alacrity. At first he laid claim to the station of a Renovator¹, then promoted himself and declared that he was Imam Mehdi², after sometime the glad tidings of being the Promised Messiah³ reached him, and finally, he was the Prophet.⁴ The design of the British masters had been put into effect. It had been carried out admirably. The Mirza played his part very well and nothing was left wanting by way of British patronage also. His security and protection was looked after with care and diligence and all sorts of facilities were made available to him. The Qadiani, on his side, was not an ungrateful soul. He never forgot the favours conferred by the Government nor tired of proclaiming that his advancement was solely due to its benevolence. In one of his articles he declares himself to be a "seedling of the British Government"⁵ and

*In Mirza Ghulam Ahmad three characteristics were present at the same time which make it difficult to conclude what was the main factor that determined the direction of his behaviour. These were:

- (i) The ambition to rise to the position of a religious guide and mentor and to become known in the world as a divine Apostle.
- (ii) The melancholia to which a reference is made again and again in his own writings as well as those of his followers.
- (iii) Vague and indefinite political aims and interests and unbounded loyalty to the British Government.

makes a display of his unswerving faithfulness in these words :

"The greater part of my life has been spent in supporting and defending the British Government. I have written so many books regarding the prohibition of Jihad and loyalty to the British that were they to be gathered together, they would fill fifty *almirahs*. I have distributed these books in all countries ; Arabia, Egypt, Syria, Kabul and Rum."⁶

At another place, the Mirza writes :

"From my early age till now when I am about sixty years old, I have been engaged with my pen and tongue in an important task : to turn the hearts of Muslims towards true love, goodwill and sympathy for the British Government, and to obliterate the idea of Jihad from the hearts of the less wise among them, since these stand in the way of sincerity and frank and honest mutual relations."⁷

Proceeding, in the same book, he says :

"I believe that as my followers increase, the believers in the doctrine of Jihad will become less and less. For accepting me to be the Messiah and the Mehdi itself means the rejection of the doctrine of Jihad."⁸

Likewise, the Mirza, again declares :

"I have written scores of books in Arabic, Persian and Urdu with a view to preach that Jihad against benevolent Government was in no way justified ; rather, wholehearted obedience to it was a religious duty. I got these books published at great expense and, then, had them distributed in Islamic countries. And I know that these books had a great influence even in this country, and the people who owe spiritual allegiance to me are growing into a party whose hearts are filled to the brim with sincere fidelity to the Government whose moral condition is excellent ; I

think they will be a boon to this country and are willing to sacrifice themselves for the Government.¹⁷⁰

The movement of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad furnished excellent spies, faithful friends and self-sacrificing agents to the British Government. Some of his followers did yeoman service to it, both in India and abroad and did not hesitate even to shed their blood for its sake, such as, Abdul Latif Qadiani who was an enthusiastic preacher of the Qadiani faith in Afghanistan and also did his best to refute the concept of Jihad. He was executed by the Afghan Government because it was feared that the kind of preaching he indulged in would drive out from the Afghans the spirit of valour for which they were known all over the world. In the same way, Mulla Abdul Halim Qadiani and Mulla Nur Ali Qadiani were executed in Afghanistan for certain papers were found in their possession which proved that they were the agents and spies of the British and their job was to conspire against the Afghan Government, as is apparent from the statement issued by the Minister of Interior of Afghanistan in 1925, and the official organ of the Qadiani movement, *Al-Fazl*, too, has published this statement in its issue of March 3, 1925 and displayed this event as an act of glowing self-sacrifice.

The Qadiani community, in sum, kept strictly away from all nationalist movements from its inception. It took no part in the struggle for freedom, neither during the lifetime of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad nor after his death. What is more, it took pleasure in the injustices and atrocities perpetrated by the Western Imperialists on the Islamic World. The Qadianis remained completely indifferent to all popular endeavours of the Muslims, and to the problems and movements which sprang from Islamic consciousness. Their sole concern was to engage in religious polemics and make minute distinctions in argument or issues like the death of Messiah, the life of Messiah, the descension of Messiah and the Apostleship of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

The time rolled on and the Qadianis remained engaged in their activities, giving rise to new mischiefs, holding polemics, sowing the seeds of doubt and disbelief and serving the cause of British Imperialism. Their headquarters were at Qadian in the Gurdaspur district of the Punjab. They were carrying out their nefarious business under the protective umbrella of the British but it had never crossed their imagination that they would ever come to possess political power and to lay their hands on a State and enjoy a dominant position in its government and administration. Firstly, they had stayed away from the nationalist movement and the struggle for freedom, and secondly, their numerical strength was very weak and they were submerged by the Muslim majority. But, in 1947, the state of Pakistan suddenly came into being and the Qadianis acquired, without shedding a drop of blood, what they could never have dreamt of, i.e., power and rule. How did it happen? It makes strange reading but it is beyond the scope of our enquiry.

The Ulema and other men of thought and learning in India viewed the Qadiani menace with profound anxiety and did their utmost to counteract it with the weapons of knowledge, tongue and pen. No greater action was, evidently, possible under a political system which was its originator as well as benefactor. Among these crusaders of Islam the four to play the most prominent role were: Maulana Mohammad Hussain Batalvi, Maulana Mohammad Ali Monghyri (founder of Nadwatul Ulema Lucknow), Maulana Sanaulah Amritsari and Maulana Anwar Shah Kashmiri (*Sheikhul Hadees* Darul Uloom, Deoband). Among the organisations, Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam was in the forefront. Its President was Syed Ataulah Shah Bukhari, who also occupied a prominent place among the freedom-fighters of India.

The celebrated poet and thinker, Dr. Mohammad Iqbal, also took a leading part in the refutation of the Qadiani creed. In some of his writings he openly declared that Qadianism was a revolt against the Apostleship

of Prophet Mohammad, a conspiracy against Islam, and an independent faith whose followers were a distinct religious community that had nothing to do with the great Muslim *Millat*. The Qadianis were not Muslims by any means. And Iqbal was not a diehard. He was included among the most educated and enlightened men of the World of Islam and was a passionate believer in Islamic unity, the main planks of which were tolerance and broad-mindedness. But since Iqbal knew Mirza Ghulam Ahmad closely and was fully aware of his religious motives and mysteries, he felt compelled to expose the great harm he was doing to Islam. To him goes the credit of demanding, for the first time, the expulsion of the Qadianis from the fold of Islam and their being proclaimed as a separate religious community.

Once the 'Statesman', leading English newspaper of India, had raised the question of Qadianism. Dr. Iqbal at once, issued a rejoinder in which he said that Qadianism was the name of an organised conspiracy to lay the foundations of a new community on an Apostleship that was parallel to the Apostleship of Prophet Mohammad²⁰. Similarly, when a prominent Indian leader asked why the Muslims insisted on the expulsion of Qadianis from Islam while they were a sect among them like so many other sects, Iqbal replied that the Muslims insisted because the Qadiani movement was trying to carve out from the *Ummat* of the Prophet Mohammad an *Ummat* of an Indian Apostle. He, further, said that this movement was even more dangerous for the collective existence of Islam in India than the creed of Spinoza was for Judaism.

The Almighty had opened the bosom of Iqbal for the doctrine of the Termination of Apostleship and he was convinced that the idea of the finality of Prophethood held the key to the collective existence of Islam and the solidarity of Muslims. He was not prepared to tolerate the least repudiation of or deviation from it for it would amount to the destruction of the very fabric of Islam.

During the course of his letter to the Editor of the Statesman (referred to above) Dr. Iqbal remarked :

"The belief that Mohammad (Peace be on him) is the Seal of the Prophets is the sole factor that draws a permanent line of demarcation between Islam and the other faiths which share with the Muslims the creed of Monotheism and also recognise the Apostleship of Mohammad but do not accept the termination of Divine communication and Apostleship, such as, Brahma Samaj in India, and it is on the basis of it that it can be decided about any group as to whether it belongs to the fold of Islam or not. I do not know of any sect in Islam which may have tried to jump across this border line. The Bahai sect of Iran did renounce the concept of the finality of Apostleship but the Bahais also openly declared that they were an independent community and not Muslims according to common usage.

"We, of course, believe that Islam is a revealed faith but its existence as a society or an *Ummat* wholly revolves round the personality of the Prophet Mohammad. Hence, only two paths are open to the Qadianis: either they emulate the example of the Bahais and withdraw themselves from the Muslim *Millat* or give up the curious interpretation of the doctrine of the finality of Prophethood. Otherwise, these political interpretations candidly show that they want to remain attached to the Muslim community merely for the sake of the gains that go with the fact of being a Muslim. Without it, they will have no share in these privileges and advantages."¹¹

The stand taken by Dr. Iqbal was not at all unreasonable. The Qadianis had themselves declared on more than one occasion that the entire Muslim community was non-believer according to their faith. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and his disciples had plainly stated that the Muslims who did not accept the Qadiani religion were

Kafirs behind whom it was not allowed to offer *Namaz* nor was it lawful to give them one's daughter in marriage. Writes Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud, the son of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and the second *Khalifa* (Leader) of the Qadiani community, in *Aina-i-Sadaqat*.

"All those Muslims who have not been integrated in the oath of fidelity to the Promised Messiah, regardless of whether they had heard his name or not, are *Kafirs* and outside the fold of Islam."²

The same *Khalifa*, while giving evidence before a Court of Law, said :

"Since we regard Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to be a Prophet and the Non-Ahmadiyas do not regard him to be a Prophet, and according to the teachings of the Quran to reject any one of the Prophets is apostasy, the non-Ahmadiyas are *Kafirs*."³

Dwelling, on another occasion, upon the differences between the Qadianis and the Muslims, Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud quotes the following from his father :

"We differ with them with regard to the Being of Allah, with regard to the Prophet Mohammad, with regard to the holy Quran, and with regard to *Namaz* (prayer), *Roza* (fasting), *Zakat* (poor-due) and *Haj* (pilgrimage) ; in short, in each and every thing we differ with them."⁴

These were the reasons that plunged the Muslims of Pakistan deep into anxiety. They saw that a sword was hanging over their heads, a British outpost has been established in the heart of their country, the edifice of Islam was being demolished slowly and stealthily and which posed the greatest danger to their existence as a religious community ever since Islam had made its debut in the world.

They realised that the only solution to the difficulty lay in the ejection of the Qadianis from the Muslim *Millat*

and their being treated as a non-Muslim minority. There was nothing new in this demand. It was the same that had been voiced, first of all, by Dr. Iqbal and raised and propagated by him forcefully in his speeches and writings. He had emphatically said :

“Qadianism is far more removed from Islam than the Sikhs are from the Hindus yet the British Government has declared the Sikhs to be a non-Hindu minority though there obtain numerous social, religious and cultural ties between them. They even intermarry while Qadianism holds it unlawful to have matrimonial relations with the Muslims and to make them their sons-in-law and its founder has declared all sorts of relations with the Muslims to be illegitimate by saying that the Muslims were like decomposed milk whereas the Qadianis were like fresh milk.”

Unfortunately, there are still persons who have not yet realised the true significance of the problem of Qadianism and the menace it represents. They do not see that Qadianism is not the name of a creed or religious sect but a conspiracy against the solidarity of Muslims and a revolt against Islam. It is inimical to the Faith brought by the sacred Prophet and seeks to set up hindrances to it at each step. It wants to replace Islam in the domain of belief, thought and feeling and to divert towards itself the respect and reverence in which it is held in the world. It clearly declares that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is not only superior to the holy Companions, Renovators, saints, divines and theological doctors but even to many prophets. There is no difference, according to it, between the Companions of the holy Prophet and those of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. The status of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is equal to and even higher than that of the Prophet Mohammad. His deputies are of the same rank as *Khulfa-i-Rashideen* (the rightly-guided Caliphs of Islam). Its town, Qadian, enjoys same sanctity as Mecca and Medina, and the pilgrimage to it is in no way

inferior to the Pilgrimage to Mecca.

Take, for instance, *Haqiqat-un-Nabuwat* written by Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Qadiani. About Mirza Ghulam Ahmad he says in it that he has excelled some of the Divine Apostles.¹⁵ In the official mouthpiece of Qadianism, *Al-Fazl* it is stated that "he was greater than many Prophets, may be, than all of them."¹⁶ In its issue of May 28, 1918, it is said, while declaring that the Companions of the holy Prophet and of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad were equal in rank that "it is wrong to distinguish between the two groups and to hold one of them to be superior, in the totality of their attributes, to the other. Both of these groups; in truth, belong to the same party. There is only a difference of time between them. They were the pupils of the First Prophetic Advent; these are the pupils of the second Prophetic Advent."

In the same journal, it is proclaimed that "the Promised Messiah is Mohammad, the very Mohammad."¹⁷ Likewise, Mian Bashiruddin Mahmud, a deputy of the Mirza, writes in *Anwar-i-Khilafat* that "I believe, as a matter of faith, that in the Quranic verse *His name is Ahmad* refers to the Promised Messiah."

Qadianism does not stop at it. It goes further and claims for Mirza Ghulam Ahmad superiority even over Prophet Mohammad. The Mirza himself in *Khutba-i-Ilhamia* says :

"The spirituality of our Prophet (Peace be on him) appeared, with its brief attributes, and that time was not of the apex of its development, but the first step towards the highest point of its perfection. Then that spirituality revealed itself fully in the sixth millenium, i.e., at this time."¹⁸

The Mirza again says :

"For him (the holy Prophet) the moon eclipsed, and for me both the sun and the moon eclipsed. So, will they still deny?"¹⁹

According to Qadianism the grave of the Mirza is similar in glory and sacredness to the resting place of the Prophet Mohammad. For instance, it was published in *Al-Fazl*, on behalf of the Training Department of Qadian, in disapproval of those who went to Qadian and yet did not visit the Mirza's grave that 'in this way, the full reflection of the radiance of the Green Dome of Medina is falling on this White-Dome and one could partake (here) of the blessings which are peculiar to the radiant resting-place of the holy Prophet. How unfortunate is he who in the *Hajj-i-Akbar* (Great Pilgrimage) of Ahmadiyah, should remain deprived of this blessing.'²⁰

The Qadianis, as such, believe that Qadian is one of the three holy places of Islam. In one of his speeches Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud said :

"By venerating Medina we do not affront the House of Kaaba. In the same way, when we venerate Qadian, we do not affront Mecca or Medina. The Exalted God sanctified all these three places and chose them for the manifestation of His Light."²¹

The Qadianis go a step forward and claim that what is mentioned in the Quran about the House of Kaaba and Masjid-i-Aqsa also applies to Qadian. The Mirza asserts that the Quranic verse *And whoever will enter it shall remain in peace* refers to his own mosque in Qadian. In one of his couplets he says :

"The land of Qadian is now a place of veneration. It is like the land of the Sacred Enclosure (of Mecca) by the rush of the people."²²

So also declares *Al-Fazl* in its issue of August 21, 1932 :

"The Quranic verse *Glorified be He who carried His Servant by night from the Inviolable Place of Worship (at Mecca) to the Far-Away Place of Worship (at Jerusalem) the neighbourhood whereof we have blessed* signifies the Promised Messiah's Mosque at Qadian.

And when the truth is that Qadian is equal, in fact, a little higher, in grade to Mecca, the journey to it will, naturally, be equal to Haj, or even superior, to it. Hence, Mian Mahmud said in a Friday sermon that ; for this reason God has prescribed a *Zilli* (Shadow) Haj so that those whom He wants to make use of in the progress of Islam, and so that the poor, i.e., the Muslims of India should be able to participate in it."

Another Qadiani leader makes bold to observe :

"Just as the former Islam without Ahmadiyah, that is, the Islam that remains without Hazrat Mirza Saheb, is a dry Islam, so is the Mecca Haj a dry Haj without this Haj because in these days the objectives of Haj are not fulfilled there."²³

One can easily imagine from the foregoing how eager Qadianism is to become an independent world religion with its own Prophet, its own Companions, its own Caliphs, its own sacred places, its own history, its own personalities and its own literature. It seeks to break off the ties with the eternal heritage of Islam, with its history and august personalities, its earliest sources and fountainheads and its sacred places and spiritual centres, and to provide an alternative for each one of them for its followers. But how can there possibly be a substitute for them. Consequently, one turns away from devotion, love and obedience towards the Prophet of Islam, feels no joy in remembering him, loses interest in the study of his biographical record and cares nothing for following in his footsteps and occupies oneself with singing the praises of the Mirza and eulogising his holiness and nobility. He rejects the glorious history of Islam, the history of faith, chivalry and human dignity, and allows himself to be bewitched by a history which is solely one of wretchedness and misery, of dancing to the tune of unjust rulers and tyrannical governments, of flattery and cajolery and of spying and hypocrisy. Whoever discards

the illustrious personalities of Islam which are rightfully the pride of the world and everlasting symbols of human excellence and attaches himself to these mean-hearted and lowly men who speak nothing but the language of servitude and know of little else than treachery, throws over board living and imperishable Islamic knowledge and awareness and becomes fond of a worthless literature which is remarkable only for wretchedness of style, abusiveness, vulgarity, tall claims, white lies, ridiculous interpretations and unfulfilled prophecies. Such a man severs his bond of devotion with the town where the Divine Revelations came and the Angels descend and which is the seminary of mankind and the refuge of humanity and from whose horizon was heralded the day-break of the modern world, and makes that town the centre of his spiritual allegiance which is the nest of spies and the stronghold of the fifth column of the *Millat* and where everything that should not be done is carried out. This is the Qadiani community which changes every virtue into a vice.

The Qadiani faith is the pernicious matter which spreads disgracefulness and cowardice and sycophancy and toadyism and the adulation of Western Imperialists in the Islamic world. It produces the lackeys of international gangsters and oppressors who have sown corruption in the lands of Islam and subjugated the Muslims.

The misdeeds of Qadianism are too numerous to be reckoned. It promotes confusion in the *Millat* by destroying the unity of the *Kalima*. It shakes its faith in the springheads of Islam, its original sources and immortal heroes, and paves the way for hypocrites and imposters and false claimants to Apostleship. It encourages defeatism, frustration and disillusionment.

Qadianism diverts the attention of the Muslims from international problems and the establishment of a just social order, for which the *Millat* was raised up by God,

to a few bogus questions and strives to make them the charioteers of British Imperialism

By placing the crown of Apostleship on the head of a worthless man like Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, Qadianism has brought the whole of mankind into as much disgrace as the sacred Prophet had made it honourable. Qadianism has abused and insulted man. Its existence is a crime against humanity.

Qadianism is not the problem of a particular country or Government. It is not anyone's domestic or internal affair. It concerns the entire World of Islam. It is a question of the creed of Islam, of the honour of the sacred Prophet and of the dignity of mankind. If this creed goes under, this honour is tarnished and this dignity is sullied there remains not a particle of goodness in the world.

These are a few facts, and God knows, there is no other aim or motive behind their presentation than religious pride and anguish of the heart and forebodings for the future. But I have no apology to offer to those who want to live away from the world of reality or in whose eyes there is no worth and importance of belief and faith.

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