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## AHL AL-QURAN MOVEMENT IN COLONIAL PUNJAB: EXCLUSION OF HADITH LITERATURE

### ABSTRACT

*This article discusses the origin of Ahl-al-Quran movement within the historical context of socio-religious movements in the British Indian Punjab during the twentieth century. This movement was part of the process of identity formation and a significant contribution in the dynamic and diverse landscape of South Asian Islam. The movement evoked reaction when it was introduced in a small town of Chakrala where Sufis and shrine-based Islam was highly revered. The proponent of Ahl-al-Quran movement, Abdullah Chakralvi vehemently condemned the shrine-based practices and piri-muridi traditions. It specifically became highly controversial when he initiated a critical reassessment and questioning of texts especially Hadith literature. It also questioned the authority of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the authenticity of his words and actions and their relevance vis-à-vis Quran. However, the movement deconstructed the notion of singular Islamic tradition and helped to explore the plurality of religious traditions within South Asian Islam.*

**Keywords:** *Ahl-al-Quran, Hadith, Qurani namaz, scripturalism, sharia, tariqat*

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## Introduction

British colonial rule was linked to a distinctive structure of knowledge, science and capitalism. This framed new forms of identities, assessing things in a new parlance as for example, the classification of ethnic groups, territorially mapped entities and fixed religious communities, undermining the cohesiveness of a society as such. The process of identity formation occurred in various religious groups in a particular colonial milieu. This experience led to the emergence of a greater number of socio-religious movements in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the Punjab<sup>1</sup>. Abdullah Chakralvi's<sup>2</sup> version of reformist Islam, which he termed as *Ahl al Quran*<sup>3</sup> was one extreme example in this context.

This article argues, in a religiously diverse landscape of Punjab, Abdullah Chakralvi's movement meant to construct a distinctive identity beyond territory and caste, based on a return to the fundamental structure of Islamic knowledge, in which traditional *Hadith* discourse was excluded. Divisions within and among religious communities were to be transcended by a renaissance of the absolute and unbending truth, which was to be found in the Quran only.<sup>4</sup> After a brief period of institutionalization, an enhanced missionary activity began, which was facilitated by mission schools, missionary literature and debates on the comparative analysis of religions of India. This was a direct reaction to large scale proselytization to Christianity, and partly also to Hinduism and Sikhism.

The challenge posed by Christianity to composite local religious traditions of the Punjab demanded an effective counter strategy for proselytization. This resulted in the beginning of socio-religious movements, including Arya Samaj by its founder Dayanand Sarasvati, heterodox Sikh movements like Nirankaris and Namdharis, or the orthodox Sikh movement of the Singh Sabha<sup>5</sup>. Van der Linden remarked that missionary activities influenced the making of modern Punjabi identities crucially<sup>6</sup>. All socio-religious movements were fundamentalist, i-e they sought to return to the 'fundamentals' of their religion. During this era the Punjab was dominated by religious polemics (mostly among the Muslims, Christians and Arya Samajis) on the questions of authentic and inauthentic sacred texts. In these religious controversies, Hindus and Muslims were deemed competitive, oppositional groups, pitted irreconcilably against each other<sup>7</sup>. Dayanand criticized the authenticity of *Hadith* and teachings of *Quran* in a bid to diminish its status as a divine text and undermining the veracity and reasoning of any religion that was not based on the Veda only, which in a way resembles the fundamentalism of Ahl-al-Quran<sup>8</sup>.

There was a need felt among Muslim reformers to protect religious ideals and the projection of Islam suited to the challenges of modern times. Abdullah Chakralvi, propagating his *Ahl al Quran* movement, asserted that

Islam is what had been written down in *Quran* only and therefore rejected *Hadith* as the foundation of Islam. The *Quran* was the only divine and therefore non-disputable source of guidance, as there was a consensus among ulema of all Islamic groups over the excellence and comprehensiveness of the *Quran*. He came to prominence at a time when Punjab had become one of the most religiously diverse regions of the country during the beginning of the 20th century.

The scholars of South Asian Islam have not given much attention to the *Ahl-al-Quran*. Aziz Ahmad and Dietrich Reetz have called them as a 'fundamentalist splinter group of *Ahl-i-Hadith*' while Francis Robinson has described them as puritanical. Barbara Metcalf declared the origin of *Ahl-al-Quran* as a product of bitter internal dispute among the *Ahl-e-Hadith* and did not consider socio-religious reform movements in Punjab as a context for the emergence of this movement<sup>9</sup>. Ali Usman Qasmi, in his exclusive work on *Ahlal-Quran* argues that the *Quran*-centric approach of *Ahl-al-Quran* movement cannot be described as 'scripturalism'. As unlike *Ahl-e-Hadith* and other scripturalists, *Ahl-al-Quran* reinterpreted the *Quran* and understanding of the doctrinal basis of Islam. This shows the plurality of religious traditions in South Asian Islam. In the traditional landscape of Chakrala where saint veneration and cults of Sufis and shrines were historically rooted, vehemently condemned Chakralvi's *Quran*-only approach as heterodox and accretion against Islam. The article argues that this refusal of the prophetic traditions in form of *Hadith* literature was the central reason for broad resistance the movement met.

### Contesting the Authority of Hadith literature

Abdullah Chakralvi (d.1916) began to disseminate his religious ideas with the contestation of intercessionary authority as such. He denounces the tradition of spiritual mentoring inform of the *piri-muridi* traditions *bida* (accretion), contrary to the religious traditions of his own family which had deep spiritual allegiance with the *khanqah Musa Zai* (D I Khan district). His family espoused the practices of strict adherence to the dictates of *sharia*, immersed in spiritual exercises (*tariqat*). He professed and advised to offer regular prayers in mosque. The social pressure to join prayers was very strict. It was a usual practice in the town that anyone found missing in congregational prayer was publicly reprimanded by Chakralvi.

Born in a Awan (Qazi)<sup>10</sup> family of Chakrala, a small town in Mianwali district, he was named Qazi Ghulam Nabi. His family had a spiritual allegiance with *khanqah Ahmedia Saeedia Musa Zai Sharif* (Dera Ismail Khan) and was firmly in keeping with the practices of strict adherence to the dictates of *sharia*, immersed in spiritual exercises (*tariqat*). The most influential religious figure in his family was his cousin Qazi Qamr-ud-Din

(b.1858).<sup>11</sup> He received training in the Sufi path and multiple initiation with Khawaja Usman Damani and later renewed his initiation with Khawaja Siraj-ud-Din, the sajjada nashin of *khanqah Musa Zai Sharif*. He established a khanqah after his name "*khanqah Qamria*" at Chakrala, which kept a close relationship with *khanqah* Sirajia, a prominent Deobandi khanqah in the district.<sup>12</sup>

He also laid the foundation of madrasa adjacent to his *khanqah* in 1882. Chakralwi started teaching in that *madrasa*, served as *khateeb* and led prayers in a mosque for fourteen years at Chakrala<sup>13</sup> after returning from Delhi. He refrained to make a full expression of his *Quran*-only faith at once and gradually refuted *Hadith* in the favor of *Quran* as the most comprehensive source for guidance. It was only under the influence of Khawaja Ahmed-ud-Din Amritsari, that he changed his mind. His religious ideas underwent a gradual change toward a faith in the unity of Allah, a selective adoption of script i-e *Quran*-only, rejection of *Hadith* as a reliable conjecture and aversion to the authority of Islamic *fiqh*.<sup>14</sup> *Ahl al-Hadith* scholar Nazir Hussain, and Maulvi Nur-ud-Din who later became the successor of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad were instrumental in constructing his religious thoughts.<sup>15</sup> There was not only a dogmatic shift in his religious beliefs but he also changed his own name "Ghulam Nabi" (the slave of prophet) to Abdullah (the slave of Allah), he considered his previous name as "Polytheistic" in its connotation.<sup>16</sup>

At the outset Chakralvi was firmly adhered to *Ahl al-Hadith* sect. He therefore upheld the authority of the authentic books of *Hadith* like Bukhari and Muslim along with that of the *Quran*. In his letter addressed to Maulvi Allah Yar Khan of Dera Ismail Khan, Chakralvi talked about the attributes of God in the light of *tafsir* and *Hadith* collections.<sup>17</sup> He was believed to have proclaimed the *Quran* as the only authentic source. However he did not reject *Hadith* in its totality and kept being supportive of traditions from Bukhari. To make a public pronouncement of his ideas, he decided to conduct *munazaras*, the test of his orthodoxy through a learned authority in Islamic matters, The person who contested him was Qazi Qamar-ud-Din. Incessant condemnation of his opinions particularly on *Hadith* compelled Chakralvi to leave Chakrala. Consequently, he moved to Yaru Khel<sup>18</sup> an adjacent small town in Mianwali.<sup>19</sup> One of his followers and supporters was, Ghazi Khan, a businessman from Yaru Khel. He advised him to start proselytizing his ideas in the Friday congregational prayer at Mian Fateh Muhammad mosque. But that advice could not yield any positive result. His unorthodox views did not sit well with the people. When he underscored his point about *Hadith* by saying that Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) forbade to collect *Hadith* and it was an intrigue against Islam by non-Arabs, people were incensed beyond measure. Chakralvi could not make much following. The Punjab census report of 1911 indicated, 271 members of *Ahl al-Quran* were

identified in the entire province and only six people were registered in the Mianwali district.<sup>20</sup> The wide spread public rage forced him to flee away to Lahore.<sup>21</sup> He could not speak about his views on the rejection of *Hadith* and the religious authority of the Prophet (pbuh) in Mianwali due to the fear of reaction. He made a public pronouncement of his views more explicitly in 1901, from Chiniyan Wali mosque, the most important prayer center for the *Ahl al-Hadith* sect.<sup>22</sup> As he made a public pronouncement of his heretical views from the mosque, he was expelled by Abdul Jabbar Ghaznavi (a member of famous Ghaznavi family of *Ahl-e-Hadith* scholars of Amritsar).

The controversy began, when Chakralvi refused to do standard and prescribed recitation during prayers. As according to him, *Hadith* permitted different recitations for various postures of Namaz. It was in 1903, when he publicly expressed his *Ahl al-Hadith (ghair muqalid)* beliefs in the congregational prayers in Mianwali for the first time. He had got constructed a mosque in Chakrala to give *dars-e-Quran* there by his few followers. When he changed his ideas to what was then to be branded *Ahl-e-Hadith*, he had the traditional arch in the mosque removed, as he considered it a typical feature of a "Jewish mosque", i.e. a synagogue. People condemned his ideas and vociferously demanded that he should not be allowed to lead prayers, subsequently the responsibilities of *imamat* were assigned to his cousin Qazi Qamr-ud-Din.<sup>23</sup>

Similar demands were made by the *pirs* and *sajjada nashins* of the *khanqahs* in the surrounding areas like *Musa Zai* and Syed Lal Shah of Danda Shah Bilawal. The primacy of these reformist organizations was the negation of the very concepts on which dominant system of religious authority and power of rural *sajjada nashins* drew their legitimacy and power.<sup>24</sup> The intense opposition that he faced from *pirs* and *sajjada nashins* was due to the peculiar topography of Chakrala, which was surrounded by Pindi Gheb, Attok and Fateh Jung, with a wide constituency of disciples of *Musa Zai sharif*, and Khwaja Nur Muhammad Mervi.<sup>25</sup> He therefore refrained to make a full expression of his *Quran*-only faith at once and gradually refuted *hadith* in the favor of *Quran* as the most comprehensive source for guidance.<sup>26</sup> Gradually he became alienated from other Muslim groups and established a separate mosque with the financial assistance of his disciple Shaykh Muhammad Chittu (d.1911) in Lahore.

### Contesting the Authority of the Prophet

While professing his *Quran*-only approach, Chakralvi's main concern was to determine and redefine the role of the Prophet (pbuh) and that of his recorded teachings and sayings in *Hadith* literature. He tried to curtail the religious authority of the Prophet and his image, exalted by Allah with unimaginable powers. He redefined the image of the Prophet as essentially

human model for behavior, as a messenger of Allah, devoid of divinely attributes.<sup>27</sup> All such verses which spoke of combined obedience to Allah and Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) were construed by him as 'shirk' on the premise that Islam is upholder of obedience to Allah alone (*tauhid*).<sup>28</sup>

In this regard he identified two types of Quranic verses.

1. Verses 6:11,9:11,9:14,24:3-4, which, he interpreted that Allah instructed the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) to follow only those which had been sent to him through revelation and that is Quran only. In another verse, he interpreted as, if you obey any other book or person, that will be considered as shirk.
2. These are the verses, which he interpreted that God had commanded to offer prayers according to the instructions given in Quran [3:15]. The significance of this message is that <sup>29</sup>the revelation is through *Quran i-e Jali* revelation. In another verse, [4:6] which said that God had sent an exalted "Burhan", a perfect 'nur' to you, which is capable to explain every issue of Islam. He interpreted that *burhan* does not mean *rasul* (prophet) but Quran, as Burhan means clear argument or narration. The word *nur* (light) also signified Quran and not Prophet. Another verse [17:9] which actually addressed believers, that they should obey Allah and His Rasul and donot trespass their commandments. He interpreted the word *rasul* as Quran and it does not mean 'Muhammad' (pbuh) since the verse is addressed to believers and Muhammad (pbuh) is also a believer so it is not sensible that God had addressed Muhammad to follow and obey his own self.

He denied the Ahle- Sunnat's concept of the Prophet. All the differences between *Ahl-e-Sunnat wal Jamat* (Barelwi) and Deobandi Ulema on the issues of Prophet's knowledge of the unseen, his intercessionary role (the *shifaat*), the doctrine of being and seeing (*hazir wa nazir*) emanate from the basic difference over the personality of the prophet Muhammad.<sup>30</sup> Barelwis had long tradition decrying Deobandis, as they considered them the blasphemers of the Prophet (pbuh) and this led to conflict between the two denominations. Chakralvi did not discuss and contradict with the central elements of Ahle Sunnat's prophetology however he tried to diminish the religious authority of the Prophet. He redefined the image of the Prophet as essentially human model for behavior, as a messenger of Allah, devoid of divinely attributes. He was averse to the idea of increased role of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in the matters of faith. All such verses which spoke of combined obedience to Allah and Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) were construed by him as 'shirk' on the premise that Islam is upholder of singular obedience to Allah alone. For *Ahl al-Quran* the Prophet's authority was apocryphal and the historicity of his recorded words had no solid basis.

## Chakralvi's Quran-only Views

Chakralvi asserted that the Quran as the only valid, the divine source of guidance, denying the importance of the entire corpus of *Hadith* literature and Islamic Jurisprudential text. He noted that Islam is what had been written down in *Quran* and rejected *Hadith* as the foundational text of Islam. He chose *Quran* as the only divine source of guidance, as there was a consensus among Ulema of all Islamic groups over the veracity and comprehensiveness of the *Quran*. His religious beliefs were considered heterodox and deviant in its starkest form therefore they could not establish a foothold in the region and confronted intense opposition.<sup>31</sup> He based the supremacy of Quran as the sole source of religious guidance on the premise that the authenticity of *Hadith* literature was questionable in terms of historical accuracy and veracity of its contents. In order to curtail the authenticity of *Hadith* and establish the Quran as the sole source, he falsely interpreted the verses which brought differentiated understanding of the prophet's role and authority.

The most trenchant opposition came from *Ahl-e-Hadith* scholar who challenged his ideas was, Muhammad Husayn Batalwi-the editor of *Ahl-e-Hadith* journal *Ishaat-us-Sunnat*.<sup>32</sup> The most important issue under debate in their polemics was concerned with the religious status of those edicts which had been ordained in *Hadith* alone without a trace of evidence to be found in any of the Quranic verses. In that case the authority of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) had to be accepted, and some of the issues were explained by him in the form of his divinely inspired words and actions (*wahi ghyr matlu*). Chakralvi maintained that Quran was the repository of all details, hence *Hadith* or *Wahi ghair matlu* were not required.<sup>33</sup> Prominent ulema of all religious sects including Nazir Husayn Dehlawi condemned Abdullah Chalralwi. A journal titled *Ishaat-ul-Quran* started its publication in 1903 to disseminate his teachings about Quran and Hadith.<sup>34</sup> It was published under the auspiceis of Anjuman Ahl al Zikr wal Quran, as he and his followers called themselves as Ahl al-Quran.<sup>35</sup>

## Qurani Namaz

Chakralvi's distinctive *Quran*-only school of thought embroiled him in a complex situation when Ulema insisted that if *Quran* contained the teachings about the entire religion of Islam then he must prove through *Quranic* verses, the number of daily prayers, obligatory for Muslims, the number of *rakat* and what will be recited in between the *rakat*. For this purpose Maulvi Abdullah wrote a voluminous book "*Burhan-ul Furqan*" in 1905, in which he took down all aspects of daily prayers and '*rakat*' (divisions within prayers), recommended salutations and body postures to be maintained during the offering of prayers.<sup>36</sup> The book turned out as the most controversial treatise.

Ulema considered the introduction of *Quranic namaz*, as the deviation from the established form of Muslim *namaz*. To explain his *Qurani namaz*, he heavily relied on Arabic Lexicography which enabled him to de-contextualize verses, modifying the meanings of a particular word in a verse to make the text favorable to the continuity of his argument.<sup>37</sup>

Chakralvi extenuated the relevance and necessity of *Hadith* literature to seek guidance in the matters of faith on the premise that Quran aptly provided solutions and responses to all theological issues and disputations in Islam with the excellence and comprehensiveness of its text. To support his argument, he identified two categories of verses which repeatedly reinforced [6:11] [3:8] [1:3] [9:11] that a detailed explanation of everything is incorporated in Quran. He further explained that verses [7:8] [15:16] [7:17] specifically addressed Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and instructed him that Quran was the only most authentic, comprehensive source, sent to him through revelation and he followed what was inspired to him without any change, modification or addition in the divine contents on his own accord.<sup>38</sup> The second type of verses are those which only instructed about offering namaz according to the instructions laid down in Quran. He cited verses [3:15] [7:21] which emphasized that the details of namaz, its rituals, practices are taught in Quran to the believers.<sup>39</sup> He disagreed with the belief that God had only given commandment about the offering of namaz, whereas the practices of namaz are told by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in *Hadith*. He argued that Allah either conveyed all rituals of namaz through revelation in Quran (*wahi jali*) or had practically demonstrated the rituals. The second option, he ushered out calling it frivolous and ridiculous.<sup>40</sup>

The questions and objections were raised by non-Muslims such as Sawami dyanand that it is a matter of surprise that Quran tells about the method of *wazu* (ablution) but the details about namaz are void. For this purpose Chakralvi wrote a voluminous book in which he narrated all aspects of daily prayers and '*rak'at*' (divisions within prayers), recommended salutations and body postures to be maintained during the offering of prayers. To explain his *Qurani namaz*, he heavily relied on "*Lisan-ul Arab*" and "*Muntahi ul Arab*" in Arabic Lexicography, enabled him to de-contextualize verses and modifying the meanings of a particular word in a verse to make the text favourable to the continuity of his argument.

To determine the timings of five daily prayers was a matter of primary concern which he specified in the Quranic verse [5:16], [17:101] the word "*Dalukul Shams*", i-e declining of the sun from the meridian. According to him it signified the prayer timings for three prayers, two during the day and one before sunset. The word "*ghasaq-ul-Lail*" means dark of night, he interpreted it as the Isha prayer (night prayer), for Fajar prayers (morning) the word *Quran-ul- Fajr* is mentioned.<sup>41</sup> To contextualize the meanings of the verses, he explained words with the help of Arabic *Lughat*, he in this regard



interpreted verse 10:12, the meaning of '*Nihar*' as 'light', the beginning of day from rising of sun to setting of sun and the night begins from setting of sun to the rising of sun in the next day.<sup>42</sup>

To prove that *Qayyam* was the first act of Qurani namaz, he mentioned verses [5:12] and [15:23], the word '*Qanūt*' means *Qayyam*. He cited verses [2:5],[2:12],[3:13] which explain, the worshipper was to stand upright, facing the direction of the Kaba.<sup>43</sup> Bowing down on knees (*ruku*) was the next phase of Qurani namaz. Maulvi Abdullah cited number of verses [5:], [17:17], [12:6], [17:11] which mentioned '*ruku*' to be observed during *namaz*. In verse two and four it is clear that *ruku* comes after *Qayyam* and before *sajda*.<sup>44</sup> Chakralvi, to support his claim, he maintained that the word "*salat*" meant *rakat* and cited some more verses [23:15],[4:3],[19:15] which mentioned *ruku*, *qayyam* and *sajda* together.<sup>45</sup> The verses [17:11], [17:17] indicated, *sajda* was the fourth aspect of prayers and in between *ruku* and *sajda* was '*Qoma*' which was crucial for *ruku*, without this *ruku* was incomplete. After the second prostration, in a half-standing appearance called *qa'da* in accordance with the verse [23:15], [11:4].<sup>46</sup> In response to a question regarding number of *rak'at* to be offered in the five daily prayers, he referred to Quranic verses, in which angels with two, three and four wings were mentioned. He interpreted 'angels' as 'prayers' and 'wings' as '*rak'at*'.<sup>47</sup> One major difference in *Qurani* and conventional namaz was the fact that he deemed call to prayers (*azan*) not necessary and imam would not stand ahead of other worshippers but between them in the congregational prayers.<sup>48</sup>

### Reaction Towards Chakralvi's Theological Ideas

Abdullah Chakralvi's book *Burhan-ul Furqan* published in 1905 as the most controversial treatise, invoked a hostile reaction among ulema. They found his aberrant arguments based on the explanation of Quranic verses as frivolous, the modification and new understanding of Quranic *namaz*, drifted from the established form of Muslim namaz was criticized on the basis that in order to make a desired inference, he did not take resort to authentic sources like *Hadith* and *Faqh*. He claimed, he was on Prophetic mission and he had to bear with all tribulations on this path. He maintained that those who criticized his Qurani namaz were following the opponents of Prophet Shu'ayb who refused to offer the prayer suggested by the Prophet, against the established ways of their ancestors. He referred to the verses [21:30], [3:22], [20:29], which he interpreted as an evidence to prove his claim. According to him, Quran instructed in these verses, that when Prophets and believers taught their people Qurani namaz, their opponents would torture their Prophets and they had to bear all difficulties with patience.<sup>49</sup>

His Quranic *namaz* came under strike when Sanaullah Amritsari vehemently criticized that such a sensitive theological issue cannot be decided on personal judgements. Despite opposition he made a practical demonstration of Quranic *namaz* in Siriyanwala mosque in Lahore.<sup>50</sup> According to a source Khawaja Ahmad-ud-Din Amritsari also shared Chakralvi's ideas and one of his adherent Maulana Arshi Amritsari strongly argued that Quran only instructed about two prayers with two *rak'at* in the entire day, Chakralvi, in response then proved five prayers for Quran.<sup>51</sup> Two more persons who supported his views were Hafiz Muhib-ul-Haq and Allama Aslam J.Rajpuri, came of from an *Ahl-e-Hadith* family.<sup>52</sup> Maulvi Abdullah's own sons Qazi Ibrahim and Qazi Isa, refused to accept his religious beliefs. His son Qazi Ibrahim (d.1919), trained as a *Ahl-e-Hadith* scholar, was disinherited by Maulvi Abdullah for refusing to convert to *Ahl-al-Quran*. Qazi Isa opposed Maulvi Abdullah's religious ideas, considered his father as *gumrah* (on the wrong path), and explicitly called *mankirin-i-Hadith* (those who deviated from *Hadith*) as "kafir". However, he handed over his son Qazi Yahya to his father for fear of getting deprived of his ancestral property. Maulvi Abdullah's grandson Qazi Ismail (d.1944), an *Ahl-e-Hadith* scholar throughout his life remained actively involved in *Ahl-e-Hadith* organizations and madrasas in South Punjab.<sup>53</sup> Maulvi Abdullah could not make much following. The Punjab census report of 1911 indicated, 271 members of *Ahl-al-Quran* were identified in the entire province and only six people were registered in the Mianwali district.<sup>54</sup> His Islam being enshrined in Quran only with an outright exclusion of *Hadith* was not appealing. His rejection of *Hadith* literature and a novel idea of Qurani *namaz* was construed in Chakrala as heretodox and innovation against Islam and completely incomprehensible for rural audience. He encountered strong resistance and opposition in Lahore and in the last days of his life, he decided to move back to his native town Chakrala, where he got settled finally. To avoid confrontation he stopped preaching his Quran-only ideas and started silently teaching Quran in the mosque that he got constructed in the early days of his movement and later died there in 1916.<sup>55</sup> After his death, the organization was guided by Maulvi Hashmat Ali Khan Lahori.

## Conclusion

*Ahl-al-Quran* movement had a very little success in proselytizing efforts yet the movement emerged as an acculturative movement,<sup>56</sup> added new religious ideas in the larger reformist discourse despite the fact that his religious ideas received no acceptance in his hometown, Mianwali, the origin of *Ahl-al-Quran* movement, where a traditional shrine-oriented traditions were deeply embedded. The diversity of religious communities led to polarized socio-religious environment in the Punjab. Subsequently the distances between the

religious groups grew and the religious identities were more sharply defined. *Ahl al-Quran* movement adopted the similar behavior patterns of the surrounding cultures and religions, as all socio-religious movements defined themselves with a fundamentalist approach, likewise *Ahl al-Quran* also took an extreme position by demonstrating the process of going back to the very pristine version of Islam.<sup>57</sup> The most vehement reaction emerged when Chakralvi contested some aspects of Prophetology and tried to diminish the Prophetic authority by declaring all such *Hadith* redundant which stressed upon the authority of Prophet and *Tauheed* simultaneously. In this sense his contestation of prophetology was closer to the Deobandi idea of Prophet as human model.

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### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Smith, Wilfred Cantwell. (1943). *Modern Islam in India: A Social Analysis*. Lahore: Minerva Book Shop, 186 also Deol, Harnik. (2000). *Religion and Nationalism in India: The case of the Punjab*. London: Routledge, 21; Chaterjee, Partha. (1993). *Nationalist thought and the colonial world: A Derivative Discourse*. London: Zed Books, 6.
- <sup>2</sup> Zabeeh, Zafar. (2011). *Faiz Qamr-ul-Aulya*. Chakrala, 122.
- <sup>3</sup> Abdullah Chakralvi proclaimed the Quran as the only Divine source of guidance for Muslim beliefs and practices. He rejected the entire corpus of hadith literature and embraced the idea of Quranic comprehensiveness. See Qasmi, Ali Usman. (2011). *Questioning the authority of the past: The Ahl al-Quran movement in the Punjab*. Karachi: Oxford University Press, 125.
- <sup>4</sup> Jones, Kenneth W. (1994). *Socio-religious reform movements in British India*. New Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 120; Deol, Harnik. (2000). *Religion and nationalism in India: The case of the Punjab*. London: Routledge, 54.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid, also see Veer, Peter Vander. (1994). *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Gyanandra Pandey. (1990) *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press. Also see Gould, William. (2004). *Hindu nationalism and the language of politics in late colonial India*. London: Cambridge University Press, 274.
- <sup>6</sup> Linden, Bob Van der. (2008) *Moral Languages from Colonial Punjab: The Singh Sabha, Arya Samaj and Ahmadiyahs*. Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 17.

- <sup>7</sup> Gilmartin, D & L, Bruce B. (2000). *Beyond Turk and Hindu: Rethinking Religious Identities in Islamicate South Asia*. Florida:University Press Florida, 34.
- <sup>8</sup> Dayanand, Swami Parkash, Satyarath trans.Vandematharam Ramachandara Rao. (1988). *Spot-Light on Truth: Swami Dayanand's Satyaratha Parkash* in English with comments. Hyderabad :78.
- <sup>9</sup> Aziz, Ahmad. (1967). *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan:1857-1964*. London:Oxford University Press,120-1. Robinson, Francis. (2007). *Islam, South Asia and the West*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press,65-6; also see Robinson. (2000) *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press; Metcalf, Barbara. (1982). *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 289; Jones, *Socio-religious reform movements in British India*,95. Reetz, Dietrich. (2006) *Islam in the Public Sphere: Religious groups in India, 1900-1947*.Delhi: Oxford University press.
- <sup>10</sup> The family was given the title of "Qazi".The educated persons appointed as judges in the Muslim Court in Delhi were called as Qazi, hence the educted and influential falimies were known as Qazi.
- <sup>11</sup> Qazi Qamr-ud-Din, received his early education from madrassa of Anga sharif Khushab, then went to Saharanpur to get education I Hadith and Tafseer from Maulana Ahmed Ali Muhadith Dehlvi Saharanpuri & Maulana Ahmed Hassan Kanpuri.
- <sup>12</sup> Zabeeh, *Faiz Qamar-u-Auliya*, 122.
- <sup>13</sup> Chakrala is a small town in Mianwali district, located 10 miles away from Mianwali-Talagang road.
- <sup>14</sup> Qasmi, *Questioning the Authority of the Past*, 133.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid., 127-131.
- <sup>16</sup> Zabeeh, *Faiz Qamar-ul-Aliya*, 96.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid, 127.
- <sup>18</sup> A reasonable number of Ahl-e-Hadith from Qureshi family were settled in, Yaru Khel, were Maulvi Abdullah's adherents.
- <sup>19</sup> Syed Naseer Shah, Abdullah Chakralvi, An unpublished Article, 24.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid, 145.
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid, 25.
- <sup>22</sup> Chinian Wali mosque was built by one of Aurangzeb's nobles, Nawaz Sarfraz Khan. Abdullah even faced opposition in Lahore and was expelled by Abdul Jabbar Ghaznavi (a member of famous Ghaznavi family of Ahl-e-Hadith scholars of Amritsar) when Maulvi Abdullah refused to do standard and prescribed recitation during prayers. As according to him, Hadith Permitted different recitations for various

- postures of Namaz. See Qasmi, *Questioning the authority of the past*, 127.
- <sup>23</sup> Qazi Qamr-ud-Din (b.1858) received training in the Sufi path and multiple initiation with Khawaja Siraj-ud-Din, sajada nashin of Musa Zai in four major silsilas (Naqshbandia, Qadria, Chishtia, Suhurwardia). See Sanyal, Usha. (1996). *Devotional Islam and Politics in British India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press. also see Gilmartin, David. (1989). *Empire and Islam Punjab and the making of Pakistan*. London: I.B.Tauris & Co, 59 ; Ansari, Sarah F.D. (1992). *Sufi Saints and State power 1843-1947*. Lahore: Vanguard, 33.
- <sup>24</sup> Sanyal. (1996). *Devotional Islam and Politics in British India* . Delhi: Oxford University Press. also see Gilmartin, David. (1989). *Empire and Islam Punjab and the making of Pakistan*. London: I.B.Tauris & Co, 59 ; Ansari, Sarah F.D. (1992). *Sufi Saints and State power 1843-1947*. Lahore: Vanguard, 33.
- <sup>25</sup> Zabeeh, *Faiz Qamar-ul-Aliya*, 98. Aso see Syed Naseer Shah, Abdullah Chakralvi, An unpublished Article, 25.
- <sup>26</sup> Reetz, *Islam in the public sphere*, 27.
- <sup>27</sup> Chakralvi, Abdullah. (1906). *Tarjamat-ul-Quran ba-tasreef-ul Ayatul Quran*. Lahore: *Balagh-ul-Quran*. For the detailed study of Prophetology see, Sanayal, *Devotional Islam and Politics*; D. Ingram, Brannon. (2018). *Revival from below: The Deoband Movement and Global Islam*. California: University of California Press.
- <sup>28</sup> Abdullah Chakralwi referred to surah Nisa which said, ‘one who obeyed Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), he indeed obeyed Allah. He denied this interpretation and maintained that Muhammad (pbuh) is only a messenger of Allah, it is the message which had to be followed and obeyed and not the messenger, a human. He undermined the status of hadith literature due to his apprehensions and reservations with the historicity and the authenticity of the system of preservation so his Quran –only approach developed out of historiographical and theological reasons.
- <sup>29</sup> Qasmi, *Questioning the authority of the Past*, 4.
- <sup>30</sup> Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) was the most exalted being of all creation to whom Allah had gifted exceptional powers. Ahl-e-Sunnat Prophetology was engraved in this dual character, in which Prophet is so close to God, without respect (ta’azeem) for Prophet there is no faith( Iman), without faith there is no efficacy in prayer and yet is distinct from Allah and subject to Him. Muhammad’s (pbuh) knowledge was for Ahmed Reza, a perfect illustration of this pivotal fact. See Sanyal. *Devotional Islam and Politics in British India*, 259. Also see Eisenlohr, Patrick. ‘Na’t: Media

contexts and Transnational dimensions of a devotional practice' in D.Metcalf, Barbara, *Islam in south Asia in Practice*. (2009). NewJersy: Princeton University Press,102.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid,. 128.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid,.

<sup>33</sup> *Ishaat-ul-Quran*. (October,1903): 1-2.

<sup>34</sup> *Ishaat-ul-Quran* 5, 13 (May1908) :1-4.

<sup>35</sup> Qasmi, *Questioning the authority of the Past*, .131.

<sup>36</sup> Chakralvi, Abdullah. (1905). *Burhanul-Furqan Ala Salat-il Quran*. Lahore: Anjuman Ahlal Quran, 226.

<sup>37</sup> To determine the timings of five daily prayers was a matter of primary concern which he specified in the Quranic verse [5:16],[17:101] the word "Dalukul Shams", i-e declining of the sun from the meridian. According to him it signified the prayer timings for three prayers, two during the day and one before sunset. To contextualize the meanings of the verses, he explained words with the help of Arabic Lughat, he in this regard interpreted verse 10:12, the meaning of 'Nihar' as 'light', the beginning of day from rising of sun to setting of sun and the night begins from setting of sun to the rising of sun in the next day. See Chakralvi, *Burhanul- Furqan*, 9-10

<sup>38</sup> Ibid,.

<sup>39</sup> See *Tulu-i-Islam* (June 1975). Lahore: 41.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid,.

<sup>41</sup> Chakralvi, *Burhanul- Furqan*,93.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, 113-114

<sup>43</sup> Qasmi, *Questioning the authority of the past*, 141.

<sup>44</sup> Chakralvi, *Burhanul- Furqan*, 226.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 237-238. Also see *Balagh-ul-Quran*1,6. (June 1924). Gujranwala: 10;1,9.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, 245.

<sup>47</sup> Syed Naseer Shah, unpublished article on Abdullah Chakralvi, 5.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, 8.

<sup>49</sup> Chakralvi, *Burhan-ul-Furqan*, 174.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, 144.

<sup>51</sup> Syed Naseer Shah, unpublished article on Abdullah Chakralvi, 33

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, 39.

<sup>53</sup> Qasmi, *Questioning the Authority*, 144.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid, 145.

<sup>55</sup> Syed Naseer Shah, unpublished article on Abdullah Chakralvi. 42.

<sup>56</sup> 'Acculturative movement', originated within the colonial milieu and was led by individuals who were products of cultural interaction See Jones, *Socio-religious reform movements in British India*

<sup>57</sup> Ibid,.