CHAPTER III

APPEARANCE OF REFORMIST TRENDS

I – Introduction

II - Shaykh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlavi

III - Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi
I. INTRODUCTION

The reformist trends in the Indian Muslim society had made their first appearance almost with the beginning of the Mughal Dynasty. It was during the early period of the Mughal rule that Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi (1564-1624), popularly called Mujaddid Alf-i-thani, started to propagate his reformist ideas not only in the realm of Tasawwuf but also in the field of Muslim social and religious life. He developed the parallel sufistic philosophy of Wahdat al-Shuhud which to a great extent replaced the earlier sufi philosophy of Wahdat al-Wujud. His reformist contribution in presenting and reviving the original teachings of Islam greatly contributed in diluting the effects of Akbar's Din-i-Illahi which was an amalgamation of heterogeneous religious teachings and aimed at consolidating the Mughal rule in the pluralistic Indian society.¹

About the same time Shaykh Abdul Haqq (1551-1642), of Delhi emerged and carried out his reformist ideas in the field of Hadith which had so far been largely subordinated to rational sciences. The teaching of Hadith was not popular in India nor was a complete set of books on hadith available in this country. Shaykh Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlavi was the first scholar who made an attempt to popularize the science of Hadith in India but he had no suitable successor and so interest in Fiqh, Mantiq, and Tafsir continued to overshadow that in Hadith.²

² K A Nu'am, Ḥāfat-i-Ṣāḥib: Shaykh Abdul Haqq Muhaddith Dehlavi, (Delhi, 1964), p 284.
With the accession of Akbar speeded the growth of liberalism in Indian Islam. Akbar's early career was one of deep devotion to Islam but the worldliness and deception of theologians like Shaykh Abdun Nabi and Makhдum al-Mulk Abdullah Sultanpuri, their uncompromising attitude on any controversial point of Shariat, their quarrels in the Ibadat Khana which passed from tongue to blows and abuses disgusted him. The mystic in Akbar was thirsty for the peace of the soul, first at the fountain of Islam. But here he found only insincerity, mutual contradiction and violent outburst of learning without reason thrown up by the self styled pillars of Islam. Nevertheless, he clung to the spirit of Islam shaking off the opaque screen of theology and unfettered by the outward conformity to the injunctions of the Shariat. It is ridiculous to bring charges of apostasy from Islam and irreligiousness against him. But the liberalism in the age of Akbar was an eyesore for the orthodox. They raised their voices against the un-Islamic practices of Akbar. There is no denial that the outward manifestation of the state of affairs, if judged from the orthodox point of view, was complete departure from the observance of the faith. Akbar in his reformist zeal unnecessarily introduced such things that in the Din-i-llahi which were against the orthodox belief. Mulla Abdul Qadir Badauni has enumerated some of the innovations of his time.

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In this period only the juristic view of Islam was alive whereas the spirit of Islam had died. They were busy in hair splitting discussions of the juridical problems of the minutest differences, which sufficed to cause perennial quarrels among them. They were induced to give Fatwa or decision of the sacred law, which often permitted the Haram or the prohibited and prohibited the Halal or the permitted.\(^5\)

The policy of reconciliation, which Akbar persistently followed throughout his long reign, was naturally calculated to hurt and weaken the religious conscience of Muslims. In certain cases it outraged their feelings and they felt that true Islam was bypassed. Mulla Badayuni says that the Emperor's aim was to win over his Hindu subjects.\(^6\)

The founding of the 'Divine' faith-Din-i-Ilahi, completed the first phase of Akbar's dream of setting himself up as a superhuman who must naturally wield absolute authority over his subjects. Now followed a number of royal decrees which left the orthodox gaping as to where it would all end. Some of his innovations and orders appear today to be presumptions and ridiculous.

According to Badauni Akbar surrounded himself with people who were most ready to accept all his teachings without question and those who did not believe in revelation or in any religious code.\(^7\)

Akbar did within the next two decades, three things which had far reaching consequences for Islam and

\(^5\) Burhan Ahmad Faruqi, Mujaddid's Conception of Tawhid, (Lahore, 1943), pp. 15-16.
\(^6\) ibid., p.17: also, K.A. Nizami, op. cit., p.269.
Muslims in the Subcontinent. The first was the launch of Din-i-llahi on the belief that since Islam had completed a thousand years of its life it ought to be replaced by a new religion. The Din-i-llahi incorporated creed, rites and practices from every religion Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism and Christianity except Islam. It proved to be a total failure, however it succeeded in highlighting the religious degeneration and skepticism of the age.\(^8\)

Secondly, Akbar gathered at his court men who criticized flouted and ridiculed Islamic beliefs practices and personalities. Originally he had started seeking for truth in different religions but due to the interest and rivalries of narrow-minded ulama the quest turned into a campaign against Islam.

Third, and the most important, Akbar acted to change the laws and institutions of the country based on Shariah, e.g. He abolished Zakat and Jazia, withdrew the prohibition of drinking and gambling, discontinued the Hijri calendar etc.\(^9\) consequently, Islam losts its dominating position among other religions. It was constricted and castigated.\(^10\)

Vicent Smith says that a “whole gist of the regulations was to further the adoption of Hindu Jain and Parsi practices while discouraging or positively prohibiting essential Muslim rites”. Another historian Wolsely Haig, says that Akbar’s discourse was never of universal
toleration but in practice he accepted the faith in which he was bred. V.D. Mahajan writes in the Muslim rule in India that "as the Hindus had great sanctity for cows, the use of beef was forbidden". Ishwari Prasad points out that "The Emperor's disregard of the religion of the Prophet which was manifest in the rules and regulations issued by him further exasperated the learned in the Law and produced great uneasiness in the minds of the Muslims."

The revival of Hinduism in Northern India made the conditions worse. Sirhindi laments the situation in several letters. In the earlier generation non-muslims freely performed their religions rites in Muslim towns but Muslims could not practice Islam. If they dared they were put to death.

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II. SHAYKH ABDUL HAQ

The disastrous results of Akbar’s persecution of orthodoxy were so obvious that the ulama had to take note of the happenings and seek some remedy. A great scholar of this period was Shaykh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlavi (1551-1642) his ancestors hailed from Bukhara. Agha Muhammad Turk Bukhari was the first to migrate to India in the reign of Sultan Alauddin Khilji 1296-1316 with a large party of Turks consisting of his relations’ disciples and servants and was soon admitted to the rank of the nobles of the Sultan.

Shaykh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlavi was born in 1551 in a family noted for its piety and learning. His father, Shaykh Saifuddin, and uncle, were famous among the people for their knowledge of poetry and learning and pleasant manners. Shaykh Abdul Haq who received his early education under the care of his father proved to be a keen and assiduous student. He was able to complete his traditional learning at the early age of seventeen or eighteen and memorized the Holy Quran in a year. After acquiring a good knowledge of Arabic, logic and Kalam, he studied under some ulama of Transoxiana. His family seems to have then shifted to Fatehpur Sikri and came in close contact with Shaykh Abul Faiz Faize and Nizamuddin Ahmad Bakshi. Discussions in the Ibadat Khana on various religious topics with a view to explore the divine truth were too frequent and often embroiling in nature. The ulama had lost all their prestige due to mutual bickerings

13 N. Hanif, Biographical Encyclopaedia of Sufis, South Asia, (New Delhi, 2000), 1st ed. pp. 41-42.
and quarrels. Consequently members of other faith like Hindu priests, Catholic missionaries, Zoroastrians, Jains, along with other authorities and rationalists were also actively associated with these discussions.

In 1579 Akbar through a Mahzar (representation) signed by the principal Ulama Makhdum-ul-Mulk, Mulla Abdullah Sultanpuri, Sadr al-Sudur Shaykh Abdun Nabi, Qazi Khan Badakshi, Qazi Jalaluddin Multani, Sadr-i-Jahan Mufti and Shaykh Mubarak Nagori assumed full power of selecting from amongst the decrees issued by the Mujtahids, the Fatwa best suited to the occasion and the interest of the state. He also assumed the authority to issue new orders for amelioration of mankind provided that these were not contrary to Nass (the text of Quran & Hadith). Shaykh Abdul Haq did not remain for long at the imperial court which was not congenial to him. He therefore left for Delhi whence he set off for Mecca in 1586 on pilgrimage, to acquire further knowledge of theological works particularly Hadith. After studying Sahih Muslim and Sahih Bukhari under the ulama of Mecca for sometime, he came in contact with Shaykh Abdul Wahhab Muttaqi and remained under his influence throughout his stay in Hijaz. He learnt Mishkat under him. In India, it appears, a desire for the study of Hadith was stimulated by the works of Egyptian scholar al-Suyuti (d.1505). Inspired by his contribution Shaykh Ali Muttaqi popularized the study of Hadith with a view to making the words and actions of Prophet Muhammad easily accessible to the Muslims. He

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14 I.H. Qureshi, op. cit., p. 77.
15 N. Hanif, op. cit., p. 41.
aroused among scholars a passion to devote themselves to the task of disseminating knowledge and learning and to bring back to the Sunnah.

Shaykh Abdul Haq matured considerably under such able tutelage. He acquired the broadminded tolerance of his teacher who held that Muslims should not be branded as heretics and unbelievers because of even seemingly serious errors. Shaykh Muttaqi adopted an attitude of neutrality in the matter of Wahdat-al-Wujud. He was neither in favour nor against it. His lecturers emphasized the Sunnah upon which he patterned his own life and along with it he also contributed in Tasawwuf. His influence on Shaykh Abdul Haq was profound. He taught him Hadith and also gave him books on Tasawwuf and even prescribed some sufi practices. Shaykh Abdul Haq felt inclined to accept the Shaafi school of jurisprudence but Shaykh Muttaqi persuaded him to stick to the Hanafi school because the majority of Muslims of the Mughal Empire were, Hanafis.16

Shaykh Abdul Wahhab Muttaqi initiated him into the Chishti. Qadri, Shazili and Madiniya orders and infused in him a passion for the service of the faith and dissemination of knowledge. He took a practical and balanced view of all religious reforms. He made the dissemination of knowledge and scholarship the basis of his programme. He surpassed all his predecessors in his contribution to Hadith.17 Shaykh Abdul Haq after considerable reluctance came back to

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India in 1592 after having spent three years under the fostering care of Shaykh Abdul Wahhab Muttaqi. In Delhi he started teaching the exegesis of the Quran and hadith. He wanted to extricate Islam and the Muslims from the mess created by heterodox Sufis and Bhakti Saints, of which the disastrous aberrations of Akbar were an indication.\textsuperscript{18}

He started a school of advanced learning of Hadith, fiqh, and theological studies. About that time there settled in Delhi Khwaja Baqi Billah (1564-1103), a Naqshbandi Saint who inspired both Shaykh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlavi and Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi. Khwaja Baqi Billah also played an important role in the resistance of Islam. Both Sirhindi and Shaykh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlavi wrote letters to Khwaja Baqi Billah. He was highly impressed by the attainments of Shaykh Abdul Haqk whose letters were a source of great pleasure to the Khwaja.\textsuperscript{19}

Despite his reputation as a Muhaddith Shaykh Abdul Haq was a sufi of great eminence. He had been initiated into it by his father Saifuddin. Shaykh Abdul Haq was trained in the Qadiriya order and had an emotional attachment with the spiritual preceptors as well as the founder of the order (Silsilah) Shaykh Abdul Qadir Jilani. Shaykh Abdul Haq did not loose his ties with the Qadiriya Silsilah but added a new dimension to his spiritual accomplishment through the influence and instruction of Khwaja Baqi Billah. Shaykh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlavi would communicate the teachings of Shaykh Ali Muttaqi to

\textsuperscript{18} I.H. Qureshi, \textit{op. cit.}, p.81

\textsuperscript{19} S.A.A. Rizvi, \textit{op cit.}, p.159. cf. also, K.A. Nizami, \textit{Hayat-i-Sheikh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dehlavi}
Khwaja Baqi Billah with a view to know Khwaja's reaction to them.

After his return from the Hijaz Shaykh Abdul Haq had given by the idea of pursuing a secluded life and started establishing closer contacts with such member of nobility as Murtaza Khan and Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan. He wrote letters to Khan-i-Khanan and Shaykh Farid Bukhari to focus the attention on the vital need of fostering the Shariat and strengthening the cause of Sunnah and stressing the need to lead the life of a practicing believer he urged him to draw inspiration directly from Prophet Muhammad. He also criticized the attitude of those who tried to subordinate the Shariah to philosophy and interpret it accordingly. He advised him not to worry about the ambiguous and obscure portions of the teachings of the Sufis but to skip over the pages containing such discussions and to concentrate only upon what was unambiguous. The highest of all the affairs relates to the guidance, revival and promulgation of the laws of Sunnah. In another letter to Shaykh Farid he stressed that the Muslims should first of all acquire adequate knowledge of the Shariat and Faqih and later on attend to Sufism. He argued that one should be Faqih sufi and not sufi Faqih. When Shaykh Abdul Haq arrived from Hijaz Shaykh Faizi wrote several letters to Shaykh Abdul Haq who preferred not to associate himself with faizi believed that his associations with Faizi might hinder his mission of reviving the Shariat and Sunnat. Shaykh Abdul Haq also explained

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20 K.A. Nizami, op cit.
the theological problems of Sunnis and the supremacy of Shariat. He made solid contributions to all the branches of theological studies particularly Hadith and beliefs. He derived inspiration from Shah Abdul Maali Qadiri who advised him to complete his commentary on Mishkat. The main aim of all his works was to propagate the superiority of Shariah and Sunnah and to bring home to the Muslim the importance to Prophet Muhammad and his mission so that other methods of seeking spiritual satisfaction from the un-Islamic sources and schools of thought could be checked.

He was a prolific writer and was the author of books and treaties on the exegesis of the Quran, Hadith, Fiqh, Tasawwuf, ethics, Philosophy, Logic, history, grammar and biographies. His books were widely read but his contribution in Hadith was so important that he earned the title of Muhaddith. Among his works on Hadith the most important are Ashiat ul lama’at fi-sharh al-Mishkat, Sharh-i-Sufar us Saadat, and Madarij un Nabuwwah. Ashiatul-lam’at is a Persian commentary on Mishkat al Masabih written by Shaykh Waliuddin Abu Abdullah Muhammad b. Abdullah Khatib Tabrize (d.1347) and completed by him. Abdul Haq commenced his commentary at Delhi in 1611 A.D. and completed it in 1616 AD. It comprises of four volumes and contains a valuable introduction explaining some of the technical terms used in the compilation of Hadith. Sharh-i-Sufar us Sadaat is a collection of authentic traditions relating to the life, character, practices and moral teachings of Prophet Muhammad. Another important work

on Hadith Madarij-un-Nabuwwah is a detailed biography of Prophet Muhammad in five parts and a takmilah (conclusion). He also compiled some short treatises on Hadith from the point of view of practical utility. Shaykh Abdul Haq also wrote Takmil ul Iman wa taqwiyat al iquan dar bayan-i-aqaid i-Islam this is a simple exposition of the articles of faith for a pious believer.

The work of Shaykh Abdul Haq on Sufism seeks to explain and popularize Qadiri discipline as also to reconcile Shariat and Tariqat. The most popular one of this category is Miftah-i-Futuh al Ghaib or Sharh-I-Futuh ul Ghaib. Another work by him Maraj al-Bahrain seeks to reconcile different sufi disciplines, fiqh and Tasawwuf, and Shariat and Tariqat. The main task was to create a taste for sufism in the faqih and to inspire the sufis to adhere to the laws of Shariat. It severely criticizes philosophy and discourages the use of rational thinking in matters relating to faith. If the traditional teachings are made subordinate to reason all that remains becomes unintelligible and the interpretations mostly run counter to the faith. Shaykh Abdul Haq adopted a middle course in the matter of Wahdat-al-Wujud. He neither favoured those who condemned Ibn al-Arabi nor approved of those who regarded him as a Qutb. He warned the people against falling a prey to the ambiguities and obscurities of Ibn al-Arabi and advised them to follow the path of peace and harmony. One of the most important works on sufism is
Akhbar-ul- Akhyar fi Asrar il Abrar which contains detailed studies of the biographical accounts of the Indian saints.\(^{22}\)

Shaykh Abdul Haq criticizes those who in the name of Tawhid (Wahdat-al-Wujud) violated the Shariah and were dissolute libertines, these impostors cried *Hama Ust* (All in He). Shaykh Abdul Haq endorsed his father’s interpretation of the phrases *Hama Ust* and *Hama az Ust*, which he considered essentially identical. Only the true sense of Tawhid explains the significance of the many in the one. As long as one remained entangled in the linguistic gymnastics then not only the Fuqaha but also a section of the sufis too condemned Ibn, al-Arabi’s works as conflicting to his beliefs. Muhaddith Dehlavi believed that *Fusus-al-Hikam* was written in a special style as the sufi discipline was not based on the ideas it contained.\(^{23}\) With Shaykh Abdul Haq’s death, an epoch of creative scholarship in theological studies, particularly in Hadith, came to a close. His greatest concern was to restore the Shariat and Sunnat to their pristine purity. His objective was not much different from that of Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi. But the two widely differed in their approaches. Shaykh Abdul Haq used polite and persuasive language. His achievement therefore was positive and tangible. On the other hand Shaykh Mujaddid’s polemics failed to impress his contemporaries. It tends to generate not only hatred, mutual distrust and discord among the various

\(^{22}\) S.A.A. Rizvi, *op cit.* pp.161-172; See I.H. Qureshi, *op cit.*

sections of the Muslims but also inject communal virus into the body politic of the country.  

S.A.A. Rizvi, _op cit._, p.175.
III. Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi

The Muslim community of the Subcontinent in his time was passing through a very critical period. Akbar the Mughal ruler of Delhi had introduced some policies detrimental to Islamic life. His belief was that the religion of the Prophet had run its course and should be replaced by a new religion. In fact he launched an eclectic religion of his own making i.e. Din-i-Illahi. During this period the limits prescribed by Islam for the lawful and unlawful were rejected, the religious injunctions were practically violated and personal whims and desires of the ruling authorities were made the arbiter in all affairs. The pseudo sufis on the other hand were also misguiding and spreading, under the cover of sufism, different beliefs and practices among the masses who already had were involved in various forms of Shirk under due to the impact of the polytheistic culture of India. The ulama, who were the guardians of religion, were instead using their expertise to justify un-islamic practices. Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi made a tremendous effort to fight these evils. With the help of his disciples he made great efforts contribution in reforming the religious and spiritual thinking of the Muslims in India.25

Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi was the first and foremost revivalist and reformer of Muslim India renowned as Mujaddid Alf-Thani. (Revivalist of the second millennium).26 The importance of his contributions were more so because of its range and timing. He devoted his life for the

reformation of both the Muslim society as well as sufism. In the backdrop of the introduction by Akbar of a heretic and eclectic religion known as Din-i-Ilahi, the silence of the ulama and sufis was broken by Shaykh Sirhindi who took up the cudgels in opposing him and in preserving Islam in its pristine purity. Sirhindi defended both the Islamic beliefs and practices through his writings called Maktubat, the collection of his sufistic and reformist ideas written to scholars and prominent figures in different parts of India.

Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi was born in 1564 A.D. at Sirhind. He traced his ancestry from Hazrat Umar Faruq, the second Caliph of Islam, and the family of Hazrat Baba Farid the famous Chishti saint. He received his early education from his father Shaykh Abdul Ahad who himself was a devout saint and an eminent mystic Shaykh Ahmad pursued a course of higher studies at Sialkot.27

He was initiated into sufism by his father in the Chishti Silsilah28 who lived in the company of famous Chishti saint Shaykh Abdul Quddus Gangohi and had received Khilafat from his son Ruknuddin Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi studied Hadith under Maulana Yakub Kashmiri. Qazi Bahlul Badakshani taught him some advanced texts on Tafsir and Hadith. He later went to Agra where he frequented the society of the Chief Minister Abul Fazl and his brother Faizi and took serious offence of Abul Fazl's anti-Islamic attitude.

Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi’s creative life falls into two periods; his pre-sufi phase when he wrote works typical of a scholar of his time refuting Shiism and providing the necessity of Prophethood, and his sufi phase, when he produced a range of works suffused with spiritual insight. But the most important of his reformative work is Maktubat which is the collection of his sufistic and reformist ideas written to his followers and friends in Persian. These letters had been published in three volumes. The first volume consist of 313 letters, the second volume of 99 letters and the third consisted of 114 letters in which 10 more letters were added thus the total of letters in three volumes consisted of 536 letters. These letters had been translated into various languages and had played a very significant role in reforming the religious and sufistic ideas prevalent in his time.

The first volume of the Maktubat contains twenty letters addressed to Khwaja Baqi Billah. But the ecstatic verses, which Shaykh Sirhindi claimed to have written to him, are not found in them. On the contrary, the Shaykh affirms in these letters the complete compatibility of his mystical insight with the Shariah. His approach of uncompromising allegiance to the Shariah is also evident from his statements scattered in the Maktubat. For instance, he maintains in one of his letter that unless one follows the straight path of the Shariah by fully abiding by

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29 Syed Shahabuddin, op. cit., p.197
all its command in all walks of life, he cannot get the real pleasure of the path of Tariqat.

The historical importance of the Maktubat may be judged from the fact that they provide the basic indispensable material for the analysis of his thought.³¹

In this period the sufis had started reforming the religion and society by writing letters to their followers. This practice was started in India by Shaykh Sharf al-Din Yahya Maneri (1262-1380)³². Shaykh Sirhindi also adopted the same technique of writing letters which played a very positive role in reforming the social and sufistic orders of his time. Nearly seventy of these letters were addressed to Mughal officials whom he wanted to win to his views that orthodoxy should be revived, superstitious sufistic practices should be suppressed and that infidels should be humiliated. In 1599 A.D. he was initiated into the Naqshbandi order by Khwaja Baq Billah who was then living in Delhi. Subsequently Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi devoted himself to the propagation of Naqshbandi ideas on Tasawwuf. He became a leading pir of the order and wrote numerous letters and treatises explaining various points in accordance with the sufistic doctrine of the Naqshbandis. In his letters he expressed ideas considered arrogant and controversial in certain circles.³³ Some important personalities and scholars of Akbar's court were Mulla Mubarak Nagawri father of Abul Fadl and Faizi who

³² Sheikh Sharifuldin Yahya Maneri was the distinguished saint of the Firdausiya order. He was an ardent believer in Wahdat al-Wujud. For detail see, N. Hanif, op. cit., p.200.
initiated Akbar into heterodoxy. Fath Ullah Shirazi who headed a committee to examine the rationality of the Shariah and Sharif Amuli whom Akbar deputed later in Bengal to preach his new religion. These people had learned Greek philosophy and acquainted themselves to some extent with Indian thought mostly by their contacts with Hindu pundits at the court. They objected to the belief in Prophethood and revelation and denied the need for a divine Shariah. To counteract this Sirhindi wrote his first book *Ithabat al-Nabuwwah* which presents the familiar arguments on the institution of Prophethood and its necessity. He upholds the possibility of super rational way to knowledge by referring to the phenomenon of dream and mystic-Kashf, and underlines the need of prophetic revelation by showing that human reason is incapable of establishing truths beyond the world of perception and that the mystic Kashf is another alternative which is not infallible. The only reliable source is the prophetic *wahy* so far as the establishment of a particular claim to Prophethood is concerned. Sirhindi based his arguments on the life, message and the work of the Prophet in addition to the miracles that he performed. In the case of Muhammad his argument centres on the Quran, his exemplary life, the perfection of Shariah and its impact on society. The *Ithbat al-Nabuwwah* is a concise and forceful work on the subject. Alongwith Prophethood the honour of the Companions of the Prophet was also under attack.\textsuperscript{34}

Shaykh Ahmad began his work by attacking the Mahdi Movement of Saiyyad Muhammad of Jaunpur by veiled criticism of the new religious beliefs of Akbar and by opposing the view of Abul Fazl and others that belief in the Prophet was not necessary for true belief in God.\(^{35}\)

He had tried to breach the Gulf between religious laws of Shariat and mystical doctrines of sufi \textit{tariqa}. In his opinion ulama who follow the lead of the Prophet are superior to the sufis who follow the saints.\(^{36}\) Again in his opinion observance of a single commandment of Shariah is more profitable than a thousand years of self imposed penance or spiritual concentration. He was of the view that the mystical experience ought to be in accordance with religious laws; otherwise it will be a fallacy. He held that to call Ram and Rahim as identical is a great folly because the creator and creature cannot be one. Before the birth of Rama and Krishna no one called God by this name. In his opinion Prophets in India came and went un-heeded.\(^{37}\) He condemned all such practices that the Muslims had adopted as a result of contacts with Hindus. He held that Islam being a perfect faith was in no need to borrow anything from any other religion.

One may, perhaps, find the reasons for this attitude in the fact that one had seen days when a Muslim was


\(^{36}\) Syed Shahabuddin, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 197.

\(^{37}\) Aziz Ahmad, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 185-186.
incapable of enforcing Islamic rules and regulations even during the reign of a Muslim ruler.  

His real fear was the growing syncretistic trends in Muslim society during his period. As described by Tara Chand, “The Muslim sufis and saints, especially whose who followed the teachings of Ibn al-Arabi became interested in the principles of Vedanta and the practices of Yogas, and were influenced by them. The Hindu Bhakti Schools spread all over India, similarly Tasawwuf spread widely. Even Muslims of the upper class considered it necessary to join one of the sufi orders and adopt a pir who guided the disciples.

Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi being a fanatic Sunni wanted almost an intolerant treatment for the Shia whom he hated bitterly but many of whom held high posts in the administration. He considered the company of an innovator worse than the company of a Kafir. The worst of the innovators according to him are those who bear malice against the Companions of the Prophet. God has called them Kafir in the Quran. His hatred of the Shias emanated from the sense of frustration and jealousy at their political ascendancy. He had started his career by writing a separate treatise entitled. Raddi-Rawafiz to refute the beliefs of Shias. He also wrote letters on this subject. Sirhindi explains in the beginning of the epistle that his decision to write a refutation was prompted by the

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38 Sheikh Mohammad Ikram. Modern Muslim India and the Birth of Pakistan (1858-1951). (Delhi, 1950), p.7
40 S.A.A. Rizvi, op. cit., p.250.
Prophetic tradition demanding that the learned refute heretical ideas whenever they appear. He decided to fulfill this duty when he observed that some of the Shias who frequented these regions boasted and were proud of these fundamental principles and spread these fallacies in the courts of the princes and kings.

Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi described the Shia-takfir of the Companions of the Prophet and then launched his bitter attack upon the doctrines of the Shias. Their adoration of Ali is similar in excesses to the Christian attitude towards Jesus. The Shia books are unreliable and must be considered to be as corrupted as the Tawrat and the Injil.41

Sirhindi tries to show that the Shia practice of condemning and vilifying the Companions of the Prophet is mistaken, degrading and disastrous. Sirhindi’s Raddi Rawafiz was well received and an indication of its popularity is that almost a century later a scholar of Walliullah’s calibre chose to write a commentary on it and popularize the ideas therein.42

In letter No. 33 addressed to Mullah Haji Muhammad Lahori he talks about the wretchedness of the ulama-i-su and says, “these scholars are captivated by the charm of the world and had reduced their knowledge as means to get maximum mundane benefits”.43

41 Yohanman Friedmann, op. cit., pp. 51-52
42 Mohammad Yasin, op. cit., p. 142.
According to Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi the main channel of mischief were the ulama-i-su or the worldly-minded scholars who have exclusively taken Fiqh or Jurisprudence as the whole Islamic learning. Sirhindi believed that every slackness and irregularity that had taken place in matters of Shariat and every obstruction which hindered the growth and expansion of Islam was due to the wickedness of the ulama-i-su resulting in their incompetence. On the issue that some ulama quoted the Quran and the Hadith to benefit from an impious intention he opined that they pretended to prove it on the basis of these authoritative texts. The real trouble lay not in the original sources but in their wishful interpretation. The ulama played a learned jugglery with the language of the Quran and Hadith to suit the situation and requirements of their masters.  

It was this group of ulama-i-su (the impious scholars) who in their anxiety to attract and monopolize the favours of Akbar created an atmosphere of bickering, intrigue and rivalry in the court. To consider them custodians of orthodoxy is to give them an importance which they hardly deserved. They were custodians of their own interest and not of Shariat Law.

Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi laments that ulama of the time who are the guardians of religion and whose duty is to save the masses from Shirk and bidah are themselves involved in such practices. Such ulama have become the preachers of bidah and destroyer of the Sunnah.  

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44 M. Yasin. op. cit., p.142.
46 Mohd. Taher. op. cit., p. 203.
interests these ulama would introduce controversial matters in a way so as to help them gain the confidence of the rulers which instead of leading to propagation of religion, would rather become the cause of ruin.\textsuperscript{47} The ulama did not stop at bidah they moved to change the very face of religion. Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi deplored these acts as sheer distortion of religion and condemned their perpetrators. His wrath is particularly directed to the ulama of the court who shared the responsibility with heretics like Mulla Mubarak and Abul Fadl in leading Akbar astray.\textsuperscript{48} Being superficial and incompetent, they could not defend Islam against free thinkers, self-seeking and narrow minded scholars. They discredited religion by fighting between themselves and condemning each other as fasiq and kafir. Sirhindi appealed to the God-fearing ulama of the country to realize their responsibilities and condemn the evils infecting the life of the masses and damaging the image of Islam.\textsuperscript{49}

Towards the end of Akbar's reign a struggle for succession between his sons ensued. Salim secured the support of some influential officials of the court who resented Akbar's religious policies. He promised to defend the Shariah and ascended throne under the name of Jahangir after Akbar's death in 1605 A.D.

Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi wrote to the officials that now it is the duty of the leaders of Islam the Sadr-Jahan and the ulama of Islam that they work for the implementation of

\textsuperscript{47} S.A.A. Rizvi, \textit{op. cit.}, p.251.
\textsuperscript{48} Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi, \textit{op. cit.}, p.195.
\textsuperscript{49} M. Taheer, \textit{op. cit.}, p.204.
the Shariah. The institutions of Islam which have been demolished must be quickly restored. He wrote to Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Jahan since the king listens to your words and gives them weight so it would be really great if you explain to him the beliefs of the 'Ahl-i-Sunnat wal Jamaat', defend the tenets of Islam and condemn infidelity and heresy, and to restore Islamic institutions and to suppress anti-Islamic forces.50

Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi, in his letters, says repeatedly that the world has sunk in heresy and innovation. He was all in favour of Qiyas and Ijtihad provided it was within the framework of the Quran and the Sunnah. He argued that Ijtihad was not departure from the Sunnah but its application to new problems and situation. Only the one who followed the Prophet followed God. He condemned those ulama and mystics who encouraged deviation from Sunnah.51

He turned to the nobles and wrote letters to Nawab Murtaza Khan, Shaykh Farid, Abdur Rahim Khan-i-Khanan, Mirza Aziz Koka Kan-i-Azam and others exhorting them to stop religious vagaries and experiment at the court.52

Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi believes that mystic experience is more valid than logic or philosophy because it is a fact and not an assumption or deduction. Philosophy was suspect as it is a mere speculation and after all the criterion can only be experience.

50 Abdul Haq Ansari, op. cit., pp. 206-207.
52 Ibid., p.47.
In his criticism of the philosophers Sirhindi maintains, like al-Ghazali, that human intellect is incapable of understanding properly the nature of God without prophetic assistance. Greek philosophers did not become aware of the existence of the creator despite their intelligence and attributed the existence of things to Dahr (time). It was only when the prophetic call gradually became stronger that the later philosophers rejected the view of their ancient philosophers and affirmed the existence of the Creator. They would not have been able to become aware of his existence without Prophetic help. Some philosophers deny Prophethood and even those who accept it reject the content of essential parts of the Quran such as bodily resurrection and the events connected with it. Their denial of God's knowledge lead them to the rejection of divine laws. As a result they are ignorant people and must be regarded as infidels.

The harsh judgment passed by Sirhindi on the philosophers leads to an equally indignant rejection of their natural sciences. Their geometry, astronomy, logic and mathematics are useless so far as hereafter is concerned and therefore fall within the category of inconsequential things they must not be dealt with except in cases where they are indispensable to the strengthening of the science of Shariah.

Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi asserts that the best sciences of the philosophers namely ethics and medicine have been stolen from the books of the Prophets. Unlike Ghazali, Sirhindi does not discuss separately the merits of each
science he lumps together all the philosophers and all their sciences and rejects them in toto.

Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi's attitude towards theologians was sympathetic although they also are superficial ulama and cannot reach divine awareness. Both, the sufis and theologians, strive to attain knowledge of God but each group understands it in its own way. Sufis maintain that the way to attain the objective is the suppression of the evil bidding soul (Nafs-e-Ammarah) and the purification of the innerself. He understands knowledge as expanded ecstatic perception.\textsuperscript{53}

Sirhindi was of the opinion that the rational argument of the theologians, though intended to strengthen the faith, are likely to have the opposite effect. This weakening is caused by the fact that human reason is not capable of providing rational proof for certain articles of faith as the vision of God in the hereafter or the doctrine of God creating the acts of men by creating in men the power to perform each act. Both these tenets are correct but the rational arguments adduced by the theologians to support them are deficient and deficiency creates doubt. Regarding the tenets Sirhindi believes in Maturidi School, which, in his view, kept aloof from philosophical subtle, lies that he opposes in al-Ashari. Sirhindi maintains that articles of faith must not be subjected to the test of reason, which is ill-equipped to demonstrate their validity.

Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi deals with the theological issues mostly in letters to government officials or to sufis

\textsuperscript{53} Yohanan Friedmam, \textit{op cit.}, p.55.
who are beginning their training and these letters are comprehensive statements outlining the proper beliefs that ought to be held and the proper practices that ought to be followed.\(^5^4\)

He condemned the study of philosophy and beliefs of the Mutazila and their followers and criticizes the commentary entitled *Tabsir-ur Rahman* for it explained the verses of Quran rationally.\(^5^5\)

One of the most important periods of his life was between 1618 and 1622. He spent more than a year in the prison of Gwalior and three years with Emperor Jahangir and his army. His increasing popularity aroused the jealousy of his rivals who poisoned the ears of the Emperor and reported him to be dangerous both to the Emperor and the state. The Emperor had faith only in ascetics and Hermits. He could not tolerate the widely popular sufi in his land. Perhaps Asaf Jah and some others nobles had a hand in this intrigue against the Mujaddid. The matter was worsened still by his refusal to bow before the Emperor. The Shaykh would not agree to it because Sajda is exclusively due to God and to no one else; consequently, he was imprisoned at Gwalior.\(^5^6\)

He fearlessly faced the displeasure of an absolute monarch and chose imprisonment rather than to renounce his own beliefs and principles. He stood firm as a rock against the tide of Mughal heresy introduced by Akbar. He


\(^5^5\) S.A.A. Rizvi, *op. cit.*, p. 225

is called Mujaddid because he started the movement of purifying Islam and restored its traditional orthodoxy. This courageous stand against un-Islamic practices resulted in a religious renaissance in India. He trained a group of disciples and asked them to make people realize the importance of the Sunnah and to counteract the forces of heresy and to observe and make others observe the tenets of Islam.  

The influence of Indian culture had its impact on the Muslim society. Another factor of the religious degeneration of the Muslims was the impact of ignorant and misguided sufis many of whom sacrificed animals at the tombs of sufi saints. Most of the sufis held musical sessions or Sama, indulged in spiritual dances or 'raqs' and celebrated the birth of the Prophet (mawlud). They cared more for dhikr (divine remembrance) and fikr (contemplation) than farz and Sunnah and indulged in spiritual exercises and neglected prayers in assembly. The novices had developed strange ideas about their masters, as they believed that they had the power to deprive them of their spiritual attainment if they became angry and could secure God's pardon for their misdeeds if they were pleased.  

He started a vast correspondence with men of eminence in different countries. These epistles were widely circulated. They expounded religious truths and laid great emphasis on Ittiba-i-Sunnat. He also enlisted the great nobles of court as his disciples and used them bring about

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57 Muhammad Farman, *op. cit.*, p. 875.
58 S. A. A. Rizvi, *op. cit.*, p. 252; also Yohanan Friedmann, *op. cit.*, p. 70.
a change in the life of those circles and also to influence the Emperor towards a change of heart. When Akbar died and Jahangir succeeded, the Shaykh started a campaign among people to take a vow not obey any orders contradictory to Islam.59

Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi's reforms can be easily divided into three categories (1) call to the Muslims to follow the Sunnah and discard heresy of bidah (2) purification of Islamic mysticism from the practices and thoughts which had crept into it through non-muslim influences (3) emphasis on Islamic laws. Heresy implies an innovation60 and the ulama gave a new name to the innovation introduced into Islam namely Bidat-i-hasana i.e. though that it was an innovation but not sinful. Under this every distorted version of the Quran and Shariat or any purposeful interpretation was regarded agreeable and admissible. The Mujaddid waged a regular war against this evil. His Maktubat are full of references to it. He advised the ulama to interpret the Quran and Hadith as it has been interpreted and understood by the religious heads of the past and in the light of the precedents set by their actions.61 He quotes many sayings of the Holy Prophet according to which heresy misled people and uprooted the traditional practices. When heresy creeps into religion it deprives the believers of traditional practices and in course of time Sunnah would disappear and heresy would prosper. Thus, heresy is a cutting axe to religion while Sunnah is

61 Muhammad Yasin. op. cit., p.143.
the guiding star and so to strengthen Islam heresy must be uprooted.

According to Shaykh Sirhindi those who subscribed to Wahdat al Wujud began to care little for the Shariah as they believed that the goal of the Shariah was to attain knowledge and if any one realized the truths of Wahdat al-Wujud he will not have to perform the duties of the Shariah. Sirhindi referred to these ideas and practices in his letters and denounced them as Shirk, Kufr and bidah. He urged upon sufi teachers and mashaikh to discard these evil practices and reform their lives. Sirhindi did not distinguish between good and bad innovations and denounced every innovation as bidah as he believed that every bidah changes the recommended course of doing things and replaces the Sunnah.62

He was a prolific writer as a part of his revivalist movement he produced several useful works. The following are worth mentioning

1. *Ithbat al-Nubuwwah* (Arabic)
2. *Radd-i-Rawafid* (Persian)
4. *Sharh-i-Rubaiyat* (Persian)
5. *Maarif-i-Ladunniyah* (Persian)
6. *Mabda Wa Ma’ad* (Persian)
8. *Maktubat*63 (Persian)

62 Mohammad Taher. op. cit., p.203.
Tasawwuf had taken complete possession of the hearts of the Muslim community contrary to the Monotheistic, personal, transcendent God of Islam. Pantheistic conception of deity had taken root. Hence most of the liberal sufis declared that Tariqat is something different from Shariat. Tariqat was the substance and Shariat only its shadow. Consequently non-conformity with the Shariat or the path adopted by the Prophet to attain the direct experience of God did not disqualify the ulama from spiritual communion. Therefore according to the Mujtahid the sufis under the cloak of Tasawwuf had misled people from the path of Shariat. Shaykh was the first and the greatest among the mystics of Islam who expressly and strenuously opposed the pantheistic conception of Tawhid known as Wahdat al-Wujud.\(^\text{64}\)

For the first time in the history of sufism a mystic of his calibre discussed the mystic experience and clearly distinguished between the Prophetic way and the saintly way to God and judged the latter in the light of the former. Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi reviewed the whole history of sufism and explained the ideas and practices that were within the bounds of the Shariah and what must be condemned as an aberration.\(^\text{65}\) As a sufi he believed that the mystics were also liable to err in their kashf the same way as the Mujtahids. All those aphorisms of the monists, Pantheists and other sufis who uttered expressions contrary to the beliefs of the pious Sunnis, and irreconcilable with the Shariah, should not be interpreted in

their literal sense but be glossed over by means of some allegorical explanations as having emanated from a state of Sukr (ecstasy). He was more critical of such utterances particularly of the aphorism of Ibn al-Arabi.66

The doctrine of monism (pantheism) had a great hold upon the minds of the people. It was accepted both by the mystics and the philosophers. Some of the great mystics had declared the experience of monism as the Summum bonum of their attainments.67 The Mujaddid explained his convictions and experience in philosophic terms68.

Before Ibn al-Arabi sufis such as Bayazid Bistami and Mansur al-Hallaj had expressed their ideas of unity and union in a state of ecstasy, but it was Ibn al-Arabi who seems to have been the first to interpret his own mystic experience of Tawhid or unity in such a way as to be intelligible to others and strenuously maintained that Wahdat al-Wujud is the very essence of Islam.69 The concept of Tawhid as advanced by the Mujaddid himself is that we cannot know God through Kashf-o-Shuhud or intuition and mystic experience. Hence we should revert to revelation and to Ulama-i-Zahir or the scholars of Shariah because their concept is derived directly from revelation. Mujaddid discusses dhat-o-sifat or the being and the attributes of God on the principles of theologians and here

69 Burhan Ahmad Faruqi, *op cit.*, pp. 80-81.
he follows not only the Asharite School but also the Maturidites.\textsuperscript{70}

There are three stages of Sirhindi’s experience. The first stage is where he sees the world as one with God. The second where in he sees the world as a shadow of God different from God yet in some sense one with Him. And the third wherein he sees God completely different from the world and absolute.\textsuperscript{71}

It is at this stage he clearly realizes that mystic experience has no objective validity with regard to \textit{dhat-o-sifat} or the being and attributes of God. Whatever is known through mystic intuition is merely a subjective experience without any objective validity whatsoever. Consequently, \textit{Iman-bil-ghaib} or faith in the unseen is unavoidable. If it is possible for us to get to know anything besides this about God that is through revelation. Therefore we ought to follow the theologians as they derive their conception of the being and attributes of God exclusively from revelation. But the nature of his \textit{Ihata} or comprehension \textit{Maiyyat} or co-presence, \textit{qurb} or nearness is beyond our understandings.

The Mujaddid believes that Divine attributes show that they are of two kinds: negative or positive. The negative attributes again are of two kinds, firstly, those, which are meant to deny all imperfections in God’s being, secondly, those which indicate his beyondness. Again, positive attribute are also of two kinds, firstly, relative attributes which are relative true of him e.g. \textit{Qidam} or self

\textsuperscript{70} \textit{Ibid.}, pp. 117-118.
subsistence. *Azaliyyat* or Eternity, *Wujub* or Necessity and *Uluhiyyat* or Divinity. We affirm these attributes of him only because the attributes opposite to them are signs of imperfection and in comparison with these attributes denote perfections. Secondly, essential attributes which adequately describe His nature and are absolutely true of Him. They form part of his essence e.g. *Hayat* or life, *ilm* or knowledge *Qudrat* or power, *Irada* or will, *Sam'* or hearing, *basr* or seeing, *Kalam* or speech and *Takwin* or creation. Mujaddid maintains that His *sifat* or attributes are other than and in addition to His *dhat* or Being and that the world is the *Zill* or effect of His attributes. Hence the Mujaddid follows the Maturidite School. However, he corroborates the conception on the basis of his mystic experience as well and maintains that according to it too the attributes are not identical with the Being and that the Being of God is perfect by, and in itself and does not stand in need of attributes for His perfection. God is mawjud (has existence) but He exists by His own being by His own self and not by Virtue of the quality of Wujud or existence, which has been added to this Being.72

His attributes, existence, life, knowledge, power etc. are the *Ta'yyanat* or determinations or the descents of His Being. Indeed the Mujaddid would avoid the use of the term of *tanazzul* or *ta'yyun* because it tends to signify identity. According to him the *Sifat* or attributes are the *az'lal* or effects of the *dhat* or being and the world is the *Zill* or effect of the *Sifat* or attributes.

72 Abdul Haq Ansari, Sufism and Sharia: A Study of Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi's Efforts to Reforms Sufism, (Leicester, 1986); for details see Burhan Ahmad Faruqi, op. cit., pp. 123-126.
The *Sifat-i-Takwin* or the quality of creation of the world, the world in its *Zill* i.e. its effects and not its *tajalli* that is its mode. Thus the existence, the life, the knowledge, etc of the finite beings is the result of the mixture of *adam* or non-existence and *Wujud* or existence etc.\(^7^3\)

Shaykh Ahmad Sirhindi insists that there is absolutely no relation between the world and its unique Creator except that the world has been created by Him and is a sign that indicates His hidden attributes. The Mujaddid holds that the essence of man is the soul and soul is the creation of God. However the soul does not belong to *alam-i-khalq* or the universe of process to which material things belongs it belongs to *alam-i-amr* or the universe of instantaneous creation. It is incomparable and inexplicable. But the soul has been interwined with the *alam-i-khalq* where it has been given a body. This has aroused in it certain new tendencies e.g. to sin and to disobey God. This state of things has given rise to the need of purifying the soul and encouraging and strengthening its original inclination. The tendency to disobey God is the fountainhead of all evils and vices. But inspite of sin and disobedience the soul preserves the capacity of overcoming vice. For purification, there begins to arise in it a state of repentance. This is called *nafs-i-lawwama* having progressed further it attains to another stage where it achieves perfect harmony with the divine Will to act. Terminologically this stage of spiritual development is

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called *nafs-i-mutma'innna*. This is the zenith of human perfection and the highest end for man. Indeed it is the very purpose of the creation of man. The attainment of *nafs-i-mutmainna* or beautiful self is called the stage of *abadiyyat* of servitude. "*Abadiyyat* is attained when man becomes absolutely free from bondage to everything other than Allah. It means that love of God is not the end in itself it is only a means it is a means to dissociate oneself from *ma siwa Allah* or things other than Allah and to achieve *abadiyyat* or servitude. There is also another relation between man and God, *marifat* and cognition. But the true *marifat* or cognition only means that man should realize that he is incapable of knowing God.\(^74\)

Pantheism was the real bane of Islam. The Mujaddid knew its fallacies and he denounced it vehemently. He based his stand on the training he had received from his father and his Shaykh Khwaja Baqi Billah. The state of Pantheism was revealed to him shortly after he had adopted the Naqshbandi way of approach to reality. He experienced all the secrets of *Tajalli-i-'Zati'* or vision of being. Then the light of God and His Attributes dawned upon him and this according to Ibn-al-Arabi is the ultimate end of sufism. For years he kept thinking that he had reached the state in which he had realized the ultimate truth but all of a sudden this state vanished. Then he came to realize that union with God is only experimental and not existential. God is not and cannot be one with anything. God is God and the world is world. Whatever the

\(^{74}\) Burhan Ahmad Faruqi, *op. cit.*, pp. 134-138; also Abdul Haq Ansari, *op. cit.*. p.87.
theologians said in this respect was true. As the Mujaddid loved pantheism in the early stage of his life yet with the new revelations the veils were lifted and reality appeared to him in its true form. This world is merely a mark of the existence of its Creator and it merely reflects the various attributes of the Lord.

To the followers of Ibn-al-Arabi pantheism is the final stage of sufistic perfection which in reality is nothing but one of the states experienced by every devotee. Mujaddid's first experience was the result of his "intoxication" because of his love for God and in his intense longing he had been so submerged in emotion that he had come to feel that he was not separate from Him. The Mujaddid says I had accepted pantheism as it was revealed to me not because I was directed to it. Now, I denounce it because of the right revelation of my own which cannot be denied. 75

He was against the philosophy of Wahdat-al-Wujud which he had rejected and in its place he gave a new philosophy of Wahdat-al-Shuhud. He was of the opinion that it is wrong to say that everything is God because this doctrine negates all creation and it is also in conflict with reason and religion. So it is wrong to call all in God or Hama Ust. In its place it is more correct to say that all is from God that in Hama-az Ust. In his opinion it is wrong for a sufi to cry, out 'Anal Haq' i.e. I am the truth. In his opinion the mystical relation with Allah was that of love and not that of union with Allah. 76

Shaykh ʿĀhmād Ẓīrhdī’s first observation of this doctrine of *tawhīd-wujūdī* is that it is not the tawhīd of the Prophets. The Prophets do not teach that the Being is one. They only teach that God is one; they did not say that nothing exists besides God. They only say that there is no God besides Allah. Contrary to Ibn al-Arabi’s *Tawhīd Wujūdī* they teach that the world exists, that it is other than God and different from Him, that God shares nothing with the world. The Prophet’s religion is based according to Ẓīrhdī on the premise of duality rather than the identity of God and the World. It separates the creation from the Creator. The Mujaddīd also observed that Ibn al-Arabi’s theory of Wahdat-al-Wujūd conflicts many fundamental principles of Islam. It provides for instance a justification for idolatry since the philosophy identifies the world with God, so the worship of any object is the worship of God. 77

The Mujaddīd was a great religious enthusiast. The movement that he started in religion is still continued by his followers in various parts of the Muslim world. His heritage is indispensable for a modern reconstruction of religious thought in Islam. He was a sufi but he did not think of sufism as the sole aim of life. For him it was merely a means to an end, the end being complete and unconditional adherence and fidelity to the Quran and the Sunnah. The Mujaddīd believes that Tasawwuf is essentially a *Tariqa* to purify oneself to attain strong conviction in the truths of the Prophet’s revelations, to

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obey the command of the Shariah most honestly and to make obedience absolutely selfless for nothing but for the pleasure of God. It is a way to be the most honest and sincere servant of God. It is neither a pursuit of mystery nor an exercise in deification.

The mission of Mujaddid Alf thani, the religio-political reform movement of the official Islam to establish an ideal Muslim state according to the orthodox notions, was taken up and continued by Shah Waliullah Muhaddith Dehlavi another Mujaddid of Islam in India in the following century.