

Imam-*t*-Rabbani Mujaddid-*t*-Alf-*t*-Thani
Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi's Conception of Tawhid

OR

THE MUJADDID'S CONCEPTION OF TAWHID

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KASHMIRI BAZAR - LAHORE (INDIA)

First published
October 1940

Published by Sh Muhammad Ashraf
Kashmiri Bazar, Lahore

Printed at the Ripon Printing Press, Bull Road, Lahore
by Mirza Mohammad Sadiq

PRELIMINARY

THIS dissertation is an attempt to work out the conception of Tawhīd in the thought of that great Islamic mystic, viz., Shaikh Aḥmad Sirhindī, who is generally called the Mujaddid-i-Alf-i-Thānī¹ (the

¹The word Mujaddid can be translated as the Reformer, the Regenerator, or the Renewer. I prefer Renewer.

The idea of Mujaddid has its origin in the ḥadīth:

ان الله يبعث في هذه الامة على رأس كل مائة سنة من
يتجدد لها امر دينها -

“God will, on the eve of every century, raise a person in this nation (Islām) who would renew the religion”: Abū Dāūd (202-275 A.H.). It is maintained that many persons have accordingly been the Mujaddids of their centuries, e.g., ‘Umar b. ‘Abdul ‘Azīz (d. 101 A.H.)—First Century; Imām Shāfi‘ī Muḥammad b. Idrīs (d. 204 A.H.)—Second Century; Ibn Suraij (d. 306 A.H.)—Third Century; Imām Bāqillānī Muḥammad b. Ṭayyab (d. 403 A.H.) or Imām Asfrāyyinī Aḥmad b. Muḥammad (d. 406 A.H.)—Fourth Century; Imām Ghazzālī (d. 505 A.H.)—Fifth Century; Imām Fakhruddīn Rāzī (d. 606

Renewer of Islām on the Head of the second thousand of the Islamic Era). The Shaikh himself had the inspired belief that he was a Mujaddid.¹

A.H.)—Sixth Century; Ibn Daqīq Al'īd Muḥammad b. 'Alī (d. 702 A.H.)—Seventh Century, Imām Bulqīnī Sīrājuddīn (d. 905 A.H.)—Eighth Century; Jalāluddīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 911 A.H.)—Ninth Century, and others of the subsequent centuries. (Cf AM., Vol. IV, p. 181). However, it is noteworthy that only Shaikh Aḥmad has claimed the dignity of the Mujaddid-i-Alf-i-Thani for himself.

Khawāja Kamāluddīn Muḥammad Aḥsān has quoted two hadīthes in روضة القيومية :

(1) يبعث رحل على احد عشر مائة سنة هو نور عظيم اسمه
اسمى بين السلاطين الجابرين يدخل الجنة بشفاعته رجال
الوفا (جامع الدرر)

"A man will arise at the beginning of the 11th century, who will be a great light and whose name will be the same as mine, (he will arise) amidst tyrant kings; thousands of men will enter Paradise through his intercession."

(2) يكون رحلا في امتي يقال له صلة يدخل الجنة
بشفاعته كذا وكذا (جمع الجوامع)

"There will be a man in my nation who will be called a 'conjoiner,' through whose intercession there will enter Paradise so-and-so."

It is believed that these predictions were made about Shaikh Aḥmad (See RQ., Part I, pp. 37-38.)

¹ The Mujaddid keenly realises the need of a great Reformer

It was Mullā 'Abdul Ḥakīm of Sialkot (d. 1067 A.H.), the most illustrious scholar of the day and the Shaikh-al-Islām of India, who was the first to apply to Shaikh Ahmad the epithet of Mujaddid-i-Alf-i-Thānī.¹ Indeed all the divines and mystics of eminence have acknowledged him as such. For example, Shāh Walī-Ullah² and his son Shāh 'Abdul

in a letter to his son Khwāja Muḥammad Ṣādiq (1000-1025 A.H.). See M., Vol. I, Ep. 234. Further he expressly claims for himself the dignity of Mujaddid-i-Alf-i-Thānī. See M., Vol. II, Ep. 4. Again writing to his son, Khwāja Muḥammad Ma'sūm (1009-1079 A.H.) he says:

الحمد لله الذى جعلنى صلةً بين البحرين و مصلحا بين
الفيئتين

"Praise be to Allah who created me a conjoiner between two oceans and a pacifier between two parties. (See M., Vol. II, Ep. 6.). The reference is perhaps to the last Hadīth in the preceding note

¹ KA, Vol. I, p. 614.

² Shāh Walī-Ullah (1114-1176 A.H.). He was the most eminent divine of his age, and a mystic too. He belonged to the Mujaddidī Naqshbandī School. He acquired mystic discipline from his father, Shāh 'Abdur Raḥīm, and is said to be the 'Mujaddid' of his time. He is the founder of a school in Hadīth and Tafsīr. He translated the Qur-ān into Persian and is the author of many famous works on Hadīth, Theology and Mysticism.

'Azīz,¹ among a host of others, always speak of him as Mujaddid-i-Alf-i-Thānī. The latter is also reported to have said that amongst the mystics of Islām, Shaikh 'Abdul Qādir Jilānī (470-560 A.H.) and Shaikh Aḥmad Sirhindī are the two greatest, only he could not decide which was the greater of the two.

- Shaikh Aḥmad is the first and the greatest among the mystics of Islām who expressly and strenuously opposed the Pantheistic conception of Tawḥīd known as Waḥdat-i-Wujūd² or Tawḥīd-i-Wujūdī. This conception had become almost universal amongst Muslim

¹ Shāh 'Abdul 'Azīz (1159-1248 A.H) was the eldest son of Shāh Walī-Ullah. He was the most celebrated scholar of his day and universally respected like his father. He taught Ḥadīth to the famous mystic Shāh Sayyid Aḥmad Barelwī, and also initiated him into the Naqshbandī School. He wrote many works on Kalām and Ḥadīth.

² Waḥdat-i-Wujūd (وحدت وجود) or Tawḥīd-i-Wujūdī (توحید وجودی) is unity of Being. It is the doctrine of very many mystics in Islām. The exact equivalent would be Unityism—that is, existent is one. This soon becomes Identityism—that it is identical with everything else, which in the end passes on to pantheism,—that it is God and God is all. It