

*Lecture no 03*

# **ISLAMIC REVIVALIST MOVEMENTS IN SOUTH ASIA**

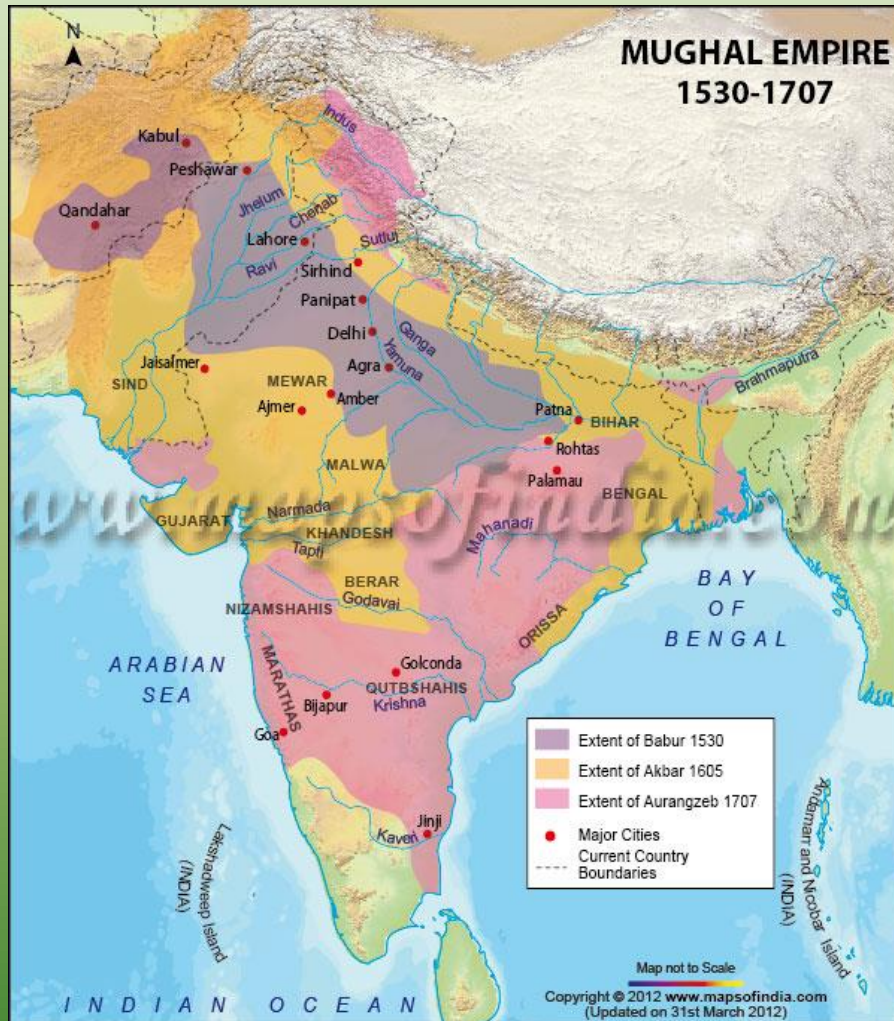
# Islamic Revivalist Movements (17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries)

- Shaikh Ahmed Sarhindi (d. 1624) and his Islamic Revivalist Movement
- Shah Waliullah (d. 1763) and his Islamic Revivalist Movement
- Sayed Ahmed Shaheed (d. 1831) and his “*Jihad Movement*”
- Haji Shareeatullah (d. 1840) and his “*Faraizi Movement*”

# Islamic Revivalist Movements (17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries)

**Shaikh Ahmed Sarhindi (d. 1624) and  
his Islamic Revivalist Movement**

# Background



## Mughal Period in India (1526-1857) A Brief Introduction

- Total duration of Reign: 331 years
  - **Capitals:**  
Agra (1526–1571), Fatehpur Sikri (1571–1585), Lahore (1585–1598), Agra (1598–1648), Shah Jahanabad/Delhi (1648–1857)
  - **Languages:**  
Persian (official and court language) Chagatai Turkic (only initially), Urdu (later period)
  - **Famous Emperors:**  
(1) Babur (1526-1530), Humayun (1530-1540, 1555-56), Akbar (1556-1605), Jahangir (1605-1627), Shahjahan (1628-1658), Aurangzeb (1658-1707)
  - **Last Emperor:** Bahadur Shah Zafar II
  - **Today Part of:**  
Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Tajikistan
- (Source: Wikipedia)

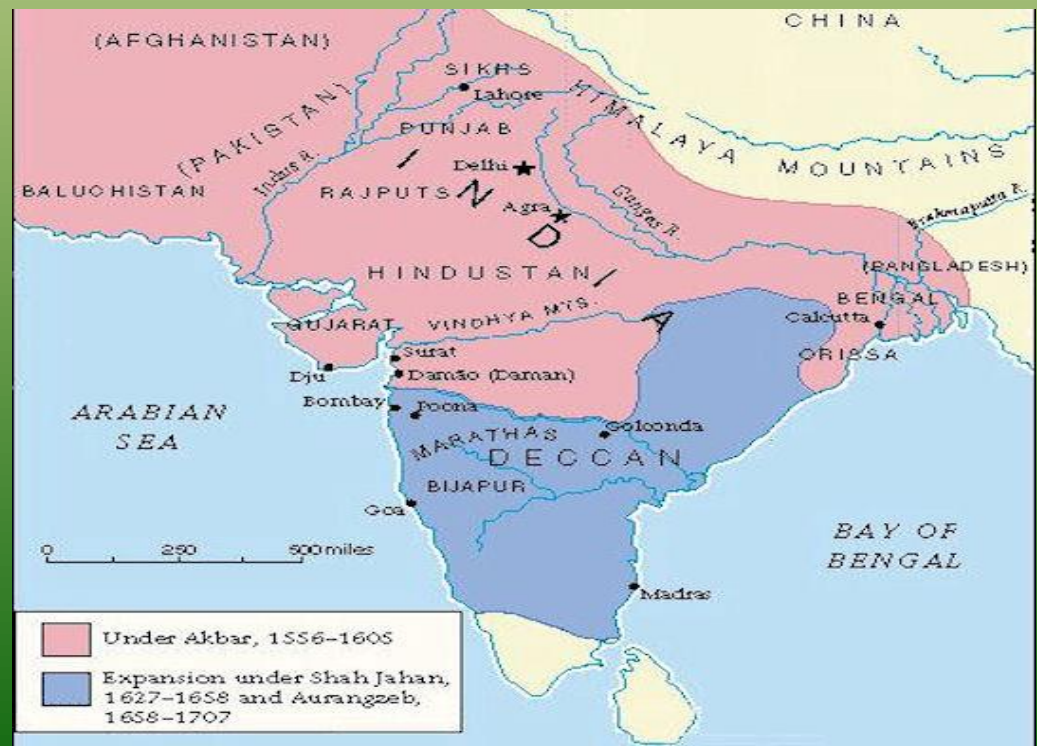


# AKBAR (Reign 1556-1605CE) : HIS RELIGIOUS REFORMS OR INTRODUCTION OF NEW RELIGION



Late 16th century portrait of Akbar  
by Manohar

1. Akbar's political ambitions to extend the empire.
2. Akbar's irritation with narrow-minded Mulla's religion and quest for Reality
3. The Millenial Movement (Alfi Tehreek)
4. Akbar's Deen-e-Illahi; Religious Reforms or Introduction of a new Religion?
5. Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi's Reaction



# FACTORS THAT ENCOURAGED AKBAR TO INTRODUCE RELIGIOUS REFORMS/NEW RELIGION

## 1. Akbar's political ambitions to extend the empire.

- 1556, he defeated Hemu a Hindu leader who seized Delhi.
- 1557, he put down a rebel Muslim army led by Afghans and Uzbeks.
- 1567, he began series of campaigns against rebellious Hindu chiefs.
- By 1580 Akbar had added Gujarat and Bengal
- 1589, Kashmir was captured.
- 1591, Sindh was captured.
- 1595, Kandhar was added and Deccan peninsula in the south was annexed.

(Source: Nigel Kelly, "The History and Culture of Pakistan", Peak Publishing London)

## 2. Akbar's irritation with narrow-minded Mulla's religion and quest for Reality

In terms of attitude towards religion, Akbar's three phases of life:

### *Phase I:*

- A devout, Orthodox Muslim and God-fearing and Religious-minded individual.  
Attachment with Chishti Sufis.

### *Phase II:*

- 1575, Ibadatkhana was built in Fethpur Sikri, Akbar's quest for understanding religion starts. Religious clerics were called for presenting their views on Islam. The specific nature of Mulla's irritated Akbar from Islam and he invited the clerics of other religions.
- He started to follow different religious rituals.

### *Phase III:*

- Introduction of Deen-e-Illahi

# *Akbar's Religious Innovations or Deen-e-Illahi*

## **3. The Millenial Movement (Alfi Tehreek)**

- Hadith of Prophet (PBUH) that after every thousand years there shall appear a person who shall purify Islamic teachings and segregate Islam from non-Islamic faiths, rituals and values.
- First thousand years of Hijra calendar were about to end during the reign of Akbar and this Hadith was now on the tongue of every religious scholar. Everybody was looking for a Reviver of Islam (Mujadid).
- Number of people including Mahmud of Pasakhwan (d. 1492 CE) and Syed Muhammad of Jaunpur (d 1504 CE) claimed to be promised Mujadid, and even later claimed to be Mahdi.
- Akbar introduced "Deen-e-Illahi".

(Source: M.R.Kazmi, "Pakistan Studies", Oxford University Press)

## **Features of Akbar's Deen-e-Illahi**

1. The unpleasing way to include in Arab's Deen/Tareeqa. The followers were given a token containing Ism-e-A'zam and the king's symbolic motto Allah-O-Akbar. (Remember king was also called as Akbar).
2. When the followers of Deen-e-Illahi used to meet with themselves, one would say "Allah-O-Akbar" and the other responded "Jalli Jalalahu". (Remember the King's name was also Jalaudhin). Thus confusion raised whether King used to consider himself as God?
3. Slaughtering of Cow was banned officially.
4. Dogs and pigs declared as sacred animals.
5. Ghush-e-Janabat was prohibited.
6. More than one wife was banned. A lot of others foolish decisions were taken by Akbar.

(Source: Zawar Hussain Shah, "Seerat-e-Mujadid Alif Thani", Zawariya Academy Karachi)



# Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi's Reaction to Deen-e-Illahi

## Who was Sheikh Ahmed of Sirhind?

- *Title:*  
“Mujadid Alif Thani” (reviver of the second millennium)
- *Born:* 1564
- *Family Background:*  
Religious, Scholarly and Mystic family of Sirhind. Son of Sheikh Abdul Ahad, a Chishti Sufi Saint. Descendent of Hazrat Umar Faruq, hence was called as Faruqi.
- *Mystic attachment with Order:*  
Naqshbandi disciple of Khwaja Baqibillah.
- *Well-known as:*  
Prominent Religious Scholar, Author, a great Sufi Saint of Naqshbandiya Order. And founder of Naqshbandiya Mujadidiya Branch of the same Order. He wrote a number of books and booklets on Islam.

## Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi's Contribution



- I. To influence the Courtiers of Akbar & Jahangir to adopt right path of Islam
- II. Pure Islamic Teachings were propagated in the breadth and length of Subcontinent
- III. Purification of Islam by segregating non-Islamic beliefs and rituals from it
- IV. Pioneer of the idea of separate Muslim identity



# Suggested Readings

1. Mulla Abdul Qadir Badayuni, ***"Muntakhib-ul-Tawareekh"***, English/Urdu Translations
2. S. M. Ikram, ***"History of Muslim Civilization in India & Pakistan"***, Institute of Islamic Culture
3. S. M. Ikram, ***"Rod-e-Kausar"***, Idara Saqafat-e-Islamia
4. Annemarie Schimmel, ***"Islam in the Indian Subcontinent"***, Sang-e-Meel Publications
5. Nigel Kelly, ***"The History and Culture of Pakistan"***, Peacock Publications London
6. I. H. Qureshi, ***"Bar-e-Sageer Ki Millat-e-Islamiya"***
7. Dr. Mubarak Ali, ***"Akbar Ka Hindustan"***, Fiction Book House
8. Zawar Hussain Shah, ***"Seerat-e-Mujadid Alif Thani"***, Zawariya Academy Karachi
9. M.R.Kazmi, ***"Pakistan Studies: A Textbook"***, Oxford University Press