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An Analytical Study of Political Philosophy of Dr. Israr Ahmad about Caliphate

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Abstract: *Islam is a complete religion that addresses every facet of existence. Islam's political structure is based on the caliphate. During the early years of Islam, the Pious Caliphate ruled for over three decades. Since then, there has been debate and conflict over whether the Caliphate can be revived on its original principles. The author of this essay, Dr. Israr Ahmed, who founded the Tanzeem-e-Islami organization, the Society of Khudam-ul-Quran, and served as the Caliphate's preacher, presents and analyzes his points of view on this topic. He dedicated his entire life to educating Pakistan's population about the actual political system of Islam and how Pakistan is falling behind. His opinions on the state of democracy, the political system, the problem of dual citizenship, and Islamic institutions in the context of the Caliphate in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan are discussed in the article.*

Key Words: System, Caliphate, Governance, Nationality, Legislative, Shariat

Introduction

Dr. Israr Ahmad is regarded as one of the most important Islamic scholars of the 20th century. According to his best understanding, he devoted his entire life to the revival of the caliphate system based on the prophetic model (Khilafah Ala Minhaj Al-Nabuwwah in Arabic), first in Pakistan and then globally. In 1973 and 1991, respectively, he founded Tanzeem-i-Islami (The Islamic Organization) and the Khilafat Movement for that goal. Dr. Israr Ahmad was a part of the Muslim Student Federation before to Pakistan's 1947 independence. However, following independence, he joined Islami Jami'at-e-Talabah, the student wing of Jama'at-e-Islami, as a member and actively participated first as Nazim (administrator) in Lahore and then in 1952 as

Nazim-e-A'la (Chief Administrator) of the Jami'at in Punjab. He did this while studying at King Edward Medical College in Lahore (1950–1954). He became a member of Jama'at-e-Islami after graduating in 1954. He did, however, abruptly resign from the Jama'at for a number of reasons. He was intellectually influenced by Amin Ahsan Islahi, Maulana Maududi, and Muhammad Iqbal. He claimed that the Holy Quran, however, served as his main source of motivation, and he devoted his entire life to preaching its message (Saeed, 2011).

His intellectual education and journey to start a revolutionary movement in Pakistan are described in this background information. Dr. Israr Ahmad expressed some significant concerns

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with Pakistan's political and economic systems. He claims that Pakistan has strayed from its initial goal, which was to construct an ideal Islamic government in the contemporary world. Despite the fact that his opinions have sparked disagreement and debate among a number of religious academics, no academic research has been done on his differing ideologies from Pakistan's current political order. This study intends to convey Dr. Israr Ahmad's opinions on Pakistan's political system, the remedy he proposed to fix systemic problems, and an unbiased evaluation of his ideas (Saeed, 2011).

Research Questions

- 1- What are the views of Dr, Israr Ahmad about the steps and measures which should be taken into consideration for implementation of Caliphate system in Pakistan?
- 2- Will the changes in political and economic system proposed by Dr, Israr Ahmad be feasible and acceptable for communities other than Muslims?

Dr. Israr Ahmad's views on Pakistan's political system

1) Views towards Pakistani democracy

It is crucial to remember that Dr. Israr was not opposed to democracy or electoral systems, but he did strongly condemn the idea of popular sovereignty. He claims that this is the biggest mass-scale rebellion against God. Only the Islamic Republic of Pakistan's constitution grants God the right to rule Pakistan. In addition, the constitution guarantees that no law will be passed that conflicts with the Quran and the Sunnah. He therefore has no objections to the idea of democracy in Pakistan at this level. He did, however, criticize the existing democratic election system because it only allows billionaires to run for office and win, while regular citizens may just cast a ballot. He therefore believed that this system was unfair and built on inequity in its existing state. Yet, he supported elections and believed that they were the only system that allowed people from all regions to express their goals (Ahmad, 2016).

Dr. Israr Ahmad believed that democracy wouldn't arrive unless there was economic equity

among the populace. After this economic justice, when the general populace receives a ballot paper, they will be able to choose for themselves who to cast their vote for. He holds some distinctive ideas regarding caliphate and authority in the modern period. He thought that Satan had changed the idea of human sovereignty into one of popular sovereignty as a result of human evolution in order to maintain his evil. On the other hand, Allah Almighty has changed the personal caliphate into a communal one and removed the human caliphate from it. All of this is happening simultaneously. The conflict between the caliphate and sovereignty is still going on. The "Public Caliphate" was how he referred to the current caliphate. He cited the Qur'an and claimed that Surah Al-words, Shura's which read, "This signifies that the "order" of the Muslims shall be chosen by mutual consultation with the Muslims," explained this world view (Ahmad, 2015). He gave this system a thorough analysis. He claimed that a person would become the caliph of God if they applied the Islamic system to their physical being. This represents the caliphate on a personal level. The caliphate system will be at its highest degree, or Public Caliphate, when all such caliphs elect their rulers using ballots. He provided several explanations of how this Public Caliphate has been implemented in Pakistan, which are covered in more detail in the paragraphs that follow (Ahmad, 2015).

2) System of Governance

There are many distinct types of governments in the contemporary era, but the parliamentary and presidential systems predominate in democracies. Pakistan's current political structure is based on parliamentary democracy with an equal vote for all citizens. Dr. Israr Ahmad opposed the parliamentary system because he believed it to be unjust for two reasons. First of all, having a head of state with no authority is ludicrous. The divide of power between the head of state and the head of government would also constantly be a topic of discussion.

He believed that the US presidential system had become quite similar to the Caliphate system. The election of the Caliph in the Caliphate was permanent, whereas it is now for a period of four to five years. He thought that the United States was the world's most developed nation. This should be interpreted as a claim that the

presidential system has advanced society more than the parliamentary system in this way Ahmad, 2016). Another crucial aspect about non-Muslims that he brought up was the prospect that, under the presidential system, a non-Muslim may be appointed to a ministry while being unable to serve in the legislature (Ahmad, 2016).

3) Voting rights

He also questioned Pakistan's political system for giving non-Muslims' votes equal weight in both the legislative assembly and the general election. He claimed that Muslims had challenged the case of Pakistan on the grounds of the theory of the two nations, and that granting non-Muslims the same voting rights would betray this notion and turn the political system secular (Ahmad, 2018).

4) Nationality

According to Dr. Israr Ahmad, it should be recognized as a general concept that non-Muslims have the position of a protected minority in an Islamic state. In an Islamic state, they do not have the same rights as Muslims as citizens. He asserts that it is also a difficult concept to grasp because, in the modern period, "Secularism" and "Nationalism" are the two political pillars that support global politics." (Ahmad, 2018). Politics, the economy, social systems, and family structures have no bearing on religion; it is a personal affair for each citizen. The citizens of a nation are all on an equal footing. He emphasizes that it is important to keep in mind that only conceptually or linguistically are they all considered equal citizens; in a developed nation like the United States, everyone is aware that there is a divide between whites and blacks. Similar to how everyone is aware of the distinction between Shuddar and Brahmin in India, which bills itself as the world's largest secular nation. Both Muslims and non-Muslims experience the same thing. The Indian Constitution theoretically declares that every Indian is an equal citizen, which is a different matter. The idea of being a "equal citizen" is one of the most fascinating concepts, according to him, and no other concept can be compared to it (Ahmad, 2018).

He makes it clear that Pakistan was founded on the rejection of nationalism. The Muslim League and the Congress disagreed on this point

since Muslims had their own nationality, whereas the Congress held that all Indians—Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, and Parsis—belong to one nation. Dr. Israr Ahmad was of the belief that Pakistan was established out of two-nation theory, which means Muslims constitute a separate nation. Because of this, Pakistanis can only be of Muslim nationality, and they are not entitled to the same rights as other citizens. The restrictions placed on non-Muslims were described by Dr. Israr Ahmad.

a) A Caliph cannot be a non-Muslim (Head of State). This is acknowledged in Pakistan's constitution as well. On the basis of the state religion, it is mandated. Yet he makes his case by stating that even though Allah granted the Caliphate to the entire human race, those members of the race who asserted their claim to the throne (or who embraced the rule of a power other than Allah) were denied the Caliphate. As a result, only Muslims now possess the caliphate, and non-Muslims will not rule as caliphs.

b) No non-Muslim will be allowed to hold a legislative position since the Caliphate's system of law-making is based on the Book and the Sunnah, and it is impossible for someone who disbelieves in either to take part in the legislative process. In accordance with Pakistan's constitution, this is unacceptable.

c) Non-Muslims will not be permitted to join significant official policy-making bodies. He provides evidence for this by outlining the circumstances following the foundation of the caliphate. The spread of this system over the world will then be the primary priority, he said. A non-Muslim is not allowed to participate in the creation and implementation of this policy in such a situation. These three institutions are off limits to non-Muslims from this perspective (Ahmad, 2016).

On the other hand, he discussed non-Muslims' rights in an Islamic state, as he intended in Pakistan. Non-Muslims will be completely free to follow their legal system. They will therefore choose their marriage, divorce, and inheritance laws in accordance with their own religions. Individuals will be free to pass on their religious beliefs to the next generation however they see fit, but proselytizing to Muslims will not be permitted at all. They will be completely free to conduct business and operate an industry. Also, non-Muslims will have full opportunity to obtain

government positions based on their merit, with the exception of policy-making organizations. There is a top level in every department where major policy is decided. While there will be a ban at this higher level, non-Muslims will have same access to employment possibilities as Muslims below that level (Ahmad, 2016).

5) Powers of Legislative Assembly

Dr. Israr Ahmad agreed with Iqbal that the legislative assemblies should make legislation under modern Islamic law (Iqbal, 1989). He said that the fundamental tenet of our religion is that no law should be passed that conflicts with the Sunnah or the Holy Quran. As a result, the reach of the law has expanded greatly. He clarified that according to jurists, anything is legal until it can be shown that something is sacred. If everything is prohibited unless it can be demonstrated to be legitimate, then the circle of legitimacy would have shrunk significantly while the circle of illegitimacy would have increased significantly. Since there is a very broad range of what is legal and what can be considered legal, there is also a very broad range of what is lawful (Ahmad, 2016).

6) Council of Islamic Ideology

Dr. Israr Ahmad was grateful that Islamic laws were included in Part IX of Pakistan's constitution. He referred to it as the height of hypocrisy, though, that while it is stated in the Pakistani constitution that no law shall be established that is incompatible with the Quran and the Sunnah, the country's whole political and economic structure has been changed to be incompatible with Islamic teachings. He criticized the Islamic Republic of Pakistan's Council of Islamic Ideology, which is tasked with making recommendations on how to make laws more in line with Islamic principles (Rafique, 2015). However, the Council may only make recommendations; it is up to the ruling class to decide whether to follow them or not. Because of this, Dr. Israr Ahmad believed that the Council lacked authority and that the constitution was a hypocritical instrument that did not actually ensure the formation of the Islamic system as it had been initially promised. He came to the conclusion that the elected Houses, not God, are sovereign since they have the exclusive right to proclaim a legislation to be against the Qur'an and Sunnah (Ahmad, 2016).

7) Federal Shariat Court of Pakistan

Dr. Israr Ahmad praised the Federal Shariat Court of Pakistan's constitution as well. This court is tasked with determining whether or not any law or legal provision is in conflict with Islamic tenets as set out in the Holy Qur'an and the Holy Prophet's Sunnah (peace be upon him). In the entire Muslim world, there isn't anything comparable to this court. Yet Dr. Israr Ahmad consistently opposed the exclusion of the constitution, Muslim personal law, and any legislation governing a court's or tribunal's process from its purview. He also opposed the 1980s decision to exclude financial problems from its purview for the first ten years. When these ten years' period expired, it ruled against the bank interest as 'un-Islamic' by designating it as *riba*. Pakistan's then-government requested review by the Supreme Court of Pakistan. Despite assertions from several governments in Pakistan, the issue persisted and, in short, it has still not been fixed. This interest-based financial system, according to Dr. Israr Ahmad, is a declaration of war against God and His Prophet (PBUH). He asserts that such an Islam also exists in India, so why would Muslims bother to found another nation in the name of Islam if they weren't going to put its socio politico economic system into place at the federal level (Ahmad, 2016)?

In any case, Dr. Israr Ahmad argues that it is impossible to challenge these crucial issues at this court's door. This explains why all these advancements have essentially been for naught because the Holy Qur'an contains the most in-depth information regarding family laws. He said that even the British at the time did not interfere with these regulations, and that Muslims in India likewise had protection for their family laws. But, one of our nation's top martial law enforcers, Muhammad Ayub Khan, imposed rules made by a hadith-denier that were in effect during his eleven-year term and are still in effect today (Ahmad, 2016).

Also, in Dr. Israr Ahmed's opinion, it was a mistake to form this Court as a totally distinct court, when it should have remained a part of the nation's judicial system. The second error was keeping this court below other high courts. Judges were only appointed for a period of three years, and the government had the authority to remove them. As a result, this court was unable to make rulings without the influence of the executive

branch. Dr. Israr Ahmad offers the following suggestions to build a Caliphate system in Pakistan:

Solutions by Dr Israr Ahmad to established Caliphate System in Pakistan

The ideas expressed by Dr. Israr Ahmad above are largely self-explanatory, and his critique of Pakistan's political system on various levels refers to changing the way things are done now as a remedy. He did, however, go into greater detail about several solutions. To help you comprehend these solutions, a quick summary is provided. First of all, he was a fervent supporter of Pakistan's presidential system since, in his eyes, it was more closely akin to the Caliphate system. He urged a cap on election costs, a restriction on absentee land lordship, and the abolition of the feudal system, much like India did after gaining independence, to address issues at the legislative and electoral levels. Not to mention his dislike for people of mixed nationalities and his beliefs that non-Muslims should be excluded from all decision-making roles and given the status of a protected minority in order to rid the resulting Muslim state of the influence of unbelievers. In terms of the Council of Islamic Ideology's status, he wanted its members to be transparently chosen for a set term and for its recommendations to be binding rather than merely recommendations. Additionally, he suggested giving judges of the Federal Shariat Court the same standing as judges of higher courts from the time of their hiring until their dismissal or retirement. In addition, he wished to include without limitation all governmental concerns, issues pertaining to people's lives, and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan constitution within the purview of the Federal Shariat Court.

His own path of action was the most important of these options. Dr. Israr Ahmad thought that a group of between 0.2 and 0.3 million fundamentalist Muslims would be able to force the current administration to make these changes. He never advocated for an armed uprising against the government, but he did say that the best way to achieve that goal would be to organize nonviolent sit-ins and function as a pressure group. He spent his entire life putting that particular group of people in place so they could support him in his goal.

Analysis of Dr. Israr Ahmad's political thoughts in relation to the political system of Pakistan

It is evident from Dr. Israr Ahmad's aforementioned ideas that he desired to create in Pakistan a model Islamic state that would serve as a role model for the rest of the Muslim world in this time period. He admitted that the Pakistani government had taken a number of concrete measures to Islamize the nation, including establishing the Federal Shariat Court and the Council of Islamic Ideology and avowing God's supremacy over all other beings. Yet in his opinion, there is a lot of actual work to be done.

It is important to note that his views on democracy are remarkably similar to those of other opponents of democracy. Given the makeup of Pakistan's legislature and their stated assets on the website of the Election Commission of Pakistan, his assertion that democracy only aids millionaires in winning elections is remarkably accurate. But, it is oversimplified for him to argue that economic fairness is the only way to guarantee authentic democracy. The recent rise of populism implies that the general public's economic situation has little bearing on how they cast their votes, not only in Pakistan but also globally. In actuality, those who supported populist politicians in large numbers are not drawn from the disadvantaged sections of society. Hence, economic justice alone will not be sufficient to address Pakistan's democratic problems. Instead, critical thinking and education are more important factors. Thus, Dr. Israr Ahmad's recommendation to fix Pakistan's democratic deficit is not particularly thorough.

Yet, he does have a point when he supports the presidential system, which is focused on personalities and shares some characteristics with the historically religious caliphate. Yet, there are a number of reasons why recommending such a system for Pakistan may not be the best idea. First of all, it is a personality-based system, and Pakistan already struggles with the problems of dynastic and personalized politics. Implementing such a system would simply make these problems worse and empower some people and families with authoritarian tendencies. Second, Punjab, the largest province, is where the majority of people reside. The president would therefore

always be from Punjab if a presidential system were to be implemented. Smaller provinces would have complaints as a result of this. Installing a presidential system would therefore not be a wise decision in Pakistan (Ahmad, 2016).

Dr. Israr Ahmad agreed that a parliamentary system might be changed to one based on the Caliphate. He did, however, criticize the system due to the distinct heads of state and government and the fact that the British had imposed it in their colonies. These modifications were made to the system, though, in order to make the head of state less contentious by keeping him out of the day-to-day operations of the government. There is nothing un-Islamic about that system, so rejecting it solely because the British installed it is not very compelling. The status of non-Muslims who are of mixed nationalities and their argued historical and religious implications are hotly contested topics. It is a historical fact that Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the man who founded Pakistan, opposed dividing Bengal and Punjab. He called this action scandalous (Ahmad, 2007). The founder of Pakistan was also opposed to the idea of population exchange between Pakistan and India based on religion (Ahmad, 2008). In fact, no leader of unbroken British India would consider exchanging populations solely on religion. How then could such a sizable non-Muslim minority be denied Pakistani nationality if Punjab and Bengal are kept as provinces and are included in Pakistan as initially proposed? With the majority of non-Muslims migrating to India, it is relatively simple to reject mixed nationality, but that was not the initial plan during the war to establish Pakistan. In addition, Jinnah explicitly stated that everyone is equal and that the state of Pakistan has nothing to do with the religion of its residents (Ahmad, 2007). Thus, it is historically incorrect to deny non-Muslims their nationality.

Religiously, Jews from Madina decided to jointly defend the city during the Meesaq e Madina era, the first state of Islam in the city. Several Islamic thinkers articulated this alternative status of non-Muslims, which was based on equality and contract. The earliest Muslim kingdom, Madina, included Jews as well, although they were not considered a protected minority. And at that time, they were not dispensing any Jaziya (Ahmad, 2014). The connection was established by a contract. Hence, many religious scholars have suggested that there

may be a different kind of relationship with non-Muslims in an Islamic state, one that is founded on contract and in which the parties to the contract have equal standing. This is the situation in Pakistan, where non-Muslims share contractual obligations with Muslims and are accorded the same legal protections. Yet, there is a lot of disagreement concerning both points of view, and this is also not founded on consensus.

Dr. Israr Ahmad has very accurately highlighted the chains that have been placed on the Federal Shariat Court and Council of Islamic Ideology. But is breaking these chains without any preparation a good course of action? Consider family law as an illustration. Will the entire Pakistani population accept Islamic family law if it were to be introduced over night? Is society ready to implement these laws? The interest-based banking system is another illustration. It is simple to claim that something is forbidden in Islam, but has any religious group developed a replacement? Has the state the power to design and implement a fresh system in the midst of the current economic catastrophe if the current banking system is abolished? Before making the final move into these sectors, these are important practical questions that must be answered. Dr. Israr Ahmad is absolutely correct to point out that no government in Pakistan has yet made a single significant move in this direction.

Conclusion

Dr. Israr Ahmad is a religious scholar and his thoughts are based on purity and sincerity. But he seems rather ambitious regarding implementation of political and financial changes which are proposed by him for the establishment of Caliphate system in Pakistan. For implementation of certain innovations and reforms in the country a consensus, patience and consistency is required. But Dr. Israr Ahmad neglected the participation, equal status and rights of citizenship of other communities and minorities residing in the country. For the change in political system and for implementation of Caliphate system no reliable and feasible mechanism is proposed by him. If the election is the only way to choose or elect the Caliph, then what will be the difference between elected head of state/Government and Caliph? So his proposed political philosophy has a flaw in this regard.

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