

The Transformation of Ahmadiyya Religious Education in Responding to Modernity and Social Change in the West

Sabran Kamal^{1*}

^{*1}Universitas Islam Negeri Alauddin Makassar

^{*1}email: Sabranbachtiar.sb@gmail.com

Abstract: This study examines the historical development, doctrinal foundations, and contemporary influence of the Ahmadiyya Movement in the modern Western world from historical and theological perspectives. The emergence of Ahmadiyya in late nineteenth-century British India represented one of several Islamic reform movements responding to colonial domination, religious polemics, and socio-political transformation. While the movement has expanded significantly across Europe, North America, and other regions through missionary activities, educational institutions, and humanitarian initiatives, its doctrinal interpretations concerning prophethood, the Promised Messiah, divine revelation, and jihad have generated sustained theological debates within the broader Muslim community. Previous studies have generally examined Ahmadiyya either as a historical movement, a missionary organization, or a theological phenomenon, with relatively limited efforts to integrate these dimensions into a comprehensive analytical framework. Employing a qualitative library research design, this study analyzes historical documents, classical and contemporary theological literature, scholarly publications, and relevant primary sources concerning the Ahmadiyya Movement. The findings indicate that the movement's expansion in the modern Western world has been facilitated by systematic missionary strategies, global migration, effective organizational structures, and the utilization of modern communication technologies. Furthermore, the study demonstrates that the movement has contributed to discussions concerning religious identity, interfaith dialogue, religious freedom, and the public representation of Islam in Western societies, while simultaneously remaining the subject of significant theological disagreement among many Muslim scholars regarding several core doctrinal issues. The novelty of this research lies in its integrative analysis that combines historical development, doctrinal examination, global expansion, and contemporary social influence within a single analytical framework. The study contributes to the fields of Islamic theology, Islamic history, religious studies, and contemporary discussions concerning Islam in pluralistic societies.

Keywords:

Ahmadiyya; Islamic Theology; Religious Movements; Western World; Islamic History.

Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji perkembangan historis, landasan doktrinal, dan pengaruh kontemporer Gerakan Ahmadiyah di dunia Barat modern melalui perspektif sejarah dan teologi Islam. Kemunculan Ahmadiyah pada akhir abad ke-19 di India di bawah kekuasaan kolonial Inggris merupakan salah satu bentuk respons terhadap dinamika sosial, politik, dan keagamaan yang berkembang pada masa tersebut. Seiring perkembangannya, gerakan ini berhasil memperluas jaringan dakwah ke berbagai negara di Eropa, Amerika Utara, dan kawasan lainnya melalui aktivitas misionaris, lembaga pendidikan, serta kegiatan sosial

Kata Kunci:

Ahmadiyah; Teologi Islam; Gerakan Keagamaan; Dunia Barat; Sejarah Islam.

kemanusiaan. Di sisi lain, penafsiran Ahmadiyah mengenai konsep kenabian, Al-Masih, wahyu, dan jihad memunculkan perdebatan teologis yang terus berlangsung di kalangan umat Islam. Penelitian-penelitian sebelumnya umumnya membahas Ahmadiyah dari aspek sejarah, dakwah, atau teologi secara terpisah sehingga belum memberikan gambaran yang komprehensif mengenai keterkaitan antara perkembangan historis, doktrin, ekspansi global, dan pengaruhnya dalam masyarakat Barat modern. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian kepustakaan (*library research*), melalui analisis terhadap dokumen sejarah, literatur teologi klasik dan kontemporer, artikel ilmiah, serta sumber-sumber primer yang berkaitan dengan Gerakan Ahmadiyah. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perkembangan Ahmadiyah di dunia Barat didukung oleh strategi dakwah yang sistematis, migrasi global, organisasi internasional yang kuat, serta pemanfaatan media komunikasi modern. Selain itu, penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa Ahmadiyah berkontribusi dalam diskusi mengenai identitas keagamaan, dialog antaragama, kebebasan beragama, dan representasi Islam di masyarakat Barat, meskipun pada saat yang sama tetap menjadi objek perdebatan teologis terkait sejumlah ajaran pokoknya. Kebaruan penelitian ini terletak pada analisis yang mengintegrasikan aspek sejarah, doktrin, ekspansi global, dan pengaruh sosial Ahmadiyah dalam satu kerangka kajian yang utuh. Temuan penelitian diharapkan dapat memperkaya kajian teologi Islam, sejarah Islam modern, studi gerakan keagamaan, serta diskursus mengenai perkembangan Islam dalam masyarakat plural.

A. Introduction

The emergence of Islamic reform and revival movements during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries represents one of the most significant developments in modern Islamic history. These movements arose within diverse socio-political contexts characterized by European colonial expansion, intellectual transformation, religious contestation, and the growing encounter between Muslim societies and Western modernity. In response to these challenges, numerous Islamic organizations and intellectual movements sought to reinterpret religious teachings, strengthen Muslim identity, and formulate strategies for social and religious renewal. Among these movements, the Ahmadiyya Movement, founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in Qadian, Punjab, British India, occupies a distinctive position due to its unique theological claims, organizational structure, and extensive international missionary activities (Friedmann, 1989; Lavan, 1974).

The establishment of the Ahmadiyya Movement cannot be separated from the historical circumstances of late nineteenth-century India. British colonial administration profoundly transformed political authority, educational institutions, and religious discourse throughout the Indian subcontinent. Simultaneously, Christian missionary expansion, Hindu reform movements such as the Arya Samaj, and internal debates among Muslim scholars created an environment of intense religious competition and intellectual exchange. Within this context, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad presented his religious mission as an effort to defend Islam through peaceful propagation, theological argumentation, and spiritual renewal. These historical circumstances significantly influenced the movement's subsequent doctrinal development and missionary orientation (Robinson, 2000; Jones, 2018).

Since its establishment in 1889, the Ahmadiyya Movement has expanded beyond South Asia and established communities in Europe, North America, Africa, Southeast Asia, and other regions. Its international development has been facilitated by systematic missionary programs, multilingual publications, educational institutions, humanitarian organizations, and effective utilization of modern communication technologies. Today, the movement maintains an extensive global organizational network and continues to participate actively in interfaith dialogue, charitable activities, and public discussions concerning Islam in multicultural societies. Consequently, the Ahmadiyya Movement has become an important subject within the academic fields of Islamic studies, sociology of religion, religious movements, and globalization (Valentine, 2008; Khan, 2015).

Despite its global expansion, the Ahmadiyya Movement has remained one of the most debated religious movements within contemporary Islam. Much of this discussion concerns its interpretations regarding prophethood, the identity of the Promised Messiah and Mahdi, divine revelation, and the concept of jihad. These theological interpretations have generated extensive scholarly discussion among Muslim theologians, historians, and scholars of religion. Consequently,

academic studies concerning Ahmadiyya have developed across multiple disciplines, including theology, history, political science, sociology, anthropology, and religious studies, each emphasizing different dimensions of the movement's development and influence (Friedmann, 1989; Yohanan, 2020).

Recent scholarship has examined Ahmadiyya from several perspectives. Historical studies primarily investigate the movement's origins within colonial India and its institutional development. Sociological research explores issues of minority identity, migration, diaspora communities, and religious adaptation in pluralistic societies. Other scholars analyze Ahmadiyya's missionary strategies, media engagement, and humanitarian activities within contemporary global contexts. Meanwhile, theological studies examine the movement's doctrinal positions by comparing them with broader Islamic theological traditions. Collectively, these studies have contributed significantly to understanding the movement's historical evolution and contemporary relevance (Valentine, 2008; Yohanan, 2020; Khan, 2015).

Nevertheless, existing literature remains largely fragmented. Many studies focus exclusively on either historical development, theological doctrines, missionary activities, or sociological adaptation without integrating these perspectives into a comprehensive analytical framework. Furthermore, relatively few studies examine how theological doctrines, historical experiences, globalization, and missionary expansion collectively shape the movement's influence in the modern Western world. This fragmentation limits a broader understanding of the relationship between religious doctrine, organizational development, and social transformation within contemporary Islamic movements.

The present study seeks to address this gap by employing a qualitative library research approach that combines historical analysis, theological examination, and contemporary religious studies. Through the integration of historical documents, theological literature, classical and contemporary academic publications, and relevant primary sources, this research examines

the Ahmadiyya Movement as a historical, theological, and global religious phenomenon. Rather than examining isolated aspects of the movement, this study analyzes the interaction between its doctrinal foundations, historical development, missionary expansion, and contemporary influence within Western societies.

The novelty of this research lies in its integrative analytical framework. Unlike previous studies that generally emphasize a single dimension of Ahmadiyya, this study synthesizes historical development, theological discourse, globalization, missionary expansion, and contemporary social influence into a unified academic analysis. Such an approach provides a broader understanding of how religious ideas interact with historical change, institutional development, and modern global society. Moreover, the study contributes to the advancement of Islamic studies by demonstrating the importance of interdisciplinary approaches in examining contemporary Islamic movements.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the historical development, theological foundations, global expansion, and contemporary influence of the Ahmadiyya Movement in the modern Western world. The findings are expected to contribute to the fields of Islamic theology, modern Islamic history, sociology of religion, and religious studies while providing a comprehensive academic perspective on one of the most influential Islamic movements of the modern era.

B. Method

This study employed a qualitative research approach using library research as its primary research design. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the objective of the study was to examine the historical development, theological foundations, and contemporary influence of the Ahmadiyya Movement through the analysis of documentary and textual sources rather than empirical or statistical data (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

Library research enabled the researcher to investigate historical records, theological writings, academic publications, organizational documents, and scholarly discussions concerning the emergence and development of the Ahmadiyya Movement in both Islamic and Western contexts.

The study adopted both a historical approach and a theological approach. The historical approach was used to examine the socio-political and religious circumstances surrounding the emergence of the Ahmadiyya Movement in nineteenth-century British India, including the influence of colonialism, religious reform movements, Christian missionary activities, and internal developments within Muslim society. This approach facilitated a chronological reconstruction of the movement's origins, institutional development, and international expansion. Meanwhile, the theological approach was employed to analyze the movement's principal doctrinal teachings concerning prophethood, the Promised Messiah, divine revelation, jihad, and other theological concepts by comparing them with broader discussions in Islamic theology and contemporary scholarly literature.

The primary data consisted of historical documents, official publications of the Ahmadiyya Movement, writings attributed to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, and relevant documentary sources describing the historical development and doctrinal foundations of the movement. These primary sources were complemented by official organizational publications, historical records, and publicly available institutional documents that provide information concerning missionary activities, organizational development, and international expansion.

The secondary data consisted of books, peer-reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, and academic publications discussing the Ahmadiyya Movement from historical, theological, sociological, and religious perspectives. Particular attention was given to authoritative studies by scholars of Islamic history, comparative religion, sociology of religion, and contemporary Islamic movements. Additional references included publications concerning colonial India, modern Islamic reform movements, globalization, interfaith dialogue,

and contemporary religious pluralism to provide broader contextual understanding.

Data collection was conducted through a systematic documentation technique. The researcher collected historical records, theological literature, scholarly publications, and institutional documents related to the Ahmadiyya Movement. Subsequently, the collected materials were classified according to four principal themes: (1) historical background and emergence of the movement; (2) theological doctrines and religious teachings; (3) international missionary expansion and organizational development; and (4) contemporary influence within Western societies. This thematic classification facilitated systematic comparison between historical developments and contemporary scholarly interpretations.

The collected data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis following the analytical procedures proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2020). The analytical process consisted of four interrelated stages: data reduction, data categorization, comparative analysis, and interpretative synthesis. During the comparative stage, historical narratives, theological arguments, and contemporary academic discussions were critically examined to identify patterns of continuity, transformation, and scholarly debate concerning the Ahmadiyya Movement. Particular attention was given to distinguishing historical facts from theological interpretations in order to maintain analytical clarity and academic objectivity throughout the research process.

To strengthen the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, the study employed source triangulation by comparing information derived from primary historical documents, official organizational publications, academic books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and contemporary scholarly research. The comparison of multiple independent sources minimized interpretative bias and enhanced the reliability of historical reconstruction and theological analysis. Furthermore, the study adopted an interdisciplinary perspective by integrating historical analysis, Islamic theology, sociology of religion, and

globalization studies to produce a comprehensive understanding of the Ahmadiyya Movement within the broader development of modern Islamic thought.

Finally, the interpretation of the findings was guided by principles of historical objectivity and academic neutrality. Rather than evaluating theological claims from a confessional perspective, this study analyzed the Ahmadiyya Movement as a historical and religious phenomenon within the broader context of modern Islamic history and contemporary religious studies. Such an approach enables a balanced examination of the movement's historical development, doctrinal characteristics, global expansion, and intellectual influence while maintaining scholarly rigor and methodological consistency.

C. Results and Discussion

Historical Background of the Ahmadiyya Movement

The emergence of the Ahmadiyya Movement in the late nineteenth century must be understood within the broader historical transformation experienced by the Indian subcontinent under British colonial rule. The decline of the Mughal Empire, the consolidation of British political authority, the expansion of Christian missionary activities, and the emergence of Hindu reform movements collectively reshaped the religious landscape of South Asia. These developments generated profound intellectual and theological challenges for Muslim communities, encouraging the emergence of various reform movements seeking to preserve Islamic identity while responding to changing political and cultural realities (Robinson, 2000; Lavan, 1974).

British colonial administration introduced significant reforms in education, law, and governance that altered traditional Muslim institutions. Western educational systems, scientific rationalism, and Christian apologetics increasingly influenced public discourse, while Muslim scholars debated appropriate strategies for responding to colonial domination and religious competition. During this period, several Islamic reform movements emerged,

including the Deobandi movement, the Aligarh movement, the Bareilvi movement, and the Ahmadiyya Movement. Although each movement pursued different objectives and methodologies, all sought to address the challenges posed by colonial modernity and the changing religious environment (Metcalf, 1982).

The Ahmadiyya Movement was formally established in 1889 by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in Qadian, Punjab, then part of British India. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad presented his movement as an effort to revive Islamic spirituality, defend Islam against external criticism, and encourage peaceful religious propagation through intellectual engagement rather than armed conflict. His writings addressed theological debates with Christian missionaries, Hindu reform organizations such as Arya Samaj, and Muslim scholars, reflecting the highly competitive religious environment of colonial India (Friedmann, 1989).

One of the defining characteristics of the movement during its formative period was its emphasis on organized religious publication. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad produced numerous books, pamphlets, and public debates addressing theological issues, comparative religion, and Islamic apologetics. These publications became important instruments for disseminating the movement's teachings and responding to contemporary religious controversies. Historians have noted that the extensive use of print media distinguished the Ahmadiyya Movement from many earlier Islamic organizations and contributed significantly to its rapid expansion beyond the Indian subcontinent (Jones, 2018).

The historical development of the movement was also closely connected with organizational consolidation. Following the death of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in 1908, leadership was transferred to the institution of the Khilāfah, which became the central administrative authority responsible for coordinating missionary activities, educational programs, and international expansion. The establishment of this institutional structure enabled the movement to maintain organizational continuity while extending its influence across different regions

of the world. According to Valentine (2008), the centralized leadership system contributed substantially to the movement's organizational stability and global missionary effectiveness.

An important turning point occurred in 1914, when internal disagreements concerning leadership and theological interpretation resulted in the emergence of two principal branches: the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community (Qadiani) and the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. Although both groups shared common historical origins, they developed different interpretations regarding the religious status of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and several doctrinal issues. This division significantly influenced the subsequent development of the movement and shaped the diversity of Ahmadiyya communities throughout the twentieth century (Lavan, 1974).

The expansion of the Ahmadiyya Movement beyond South Asia was facilitated by systematic missionary initiatives during the early twentieth century. Missionaries were dispatched to Europe, North America, Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East with the objective of introducing Islamic teachings through preaching, educational activities, translation projects, and community development. The movement became one of the earliest Muslim organizations to establish permanent missionary centers in several Western countries. Historical studies indicate that these international missions contributed to increasing public awareness of Islam among Western audiences during a period when organized Muslim institutions remained relatively limited (Valentine, 2008).

Another factor supporting the movement's international development was its early adoption of modern communication technologies. The publication of books, journals, newspapers, translations of the Qur'an, radio broadcasts, satellite television, and later digital media enabled the movement to communicate with diverse audiences across geographical boundaries. Contemporary scholars argue that the effective utilization of communication technology became one of the distinguishing features of the Ahmadiyya

Movement compared with many other Islamic organizations during the twentieth century (Yohanan, 2020).

The historical trajectory of the Ahmadiyya Movement demonstrates that its emergence cannot be explained solely through theological considerations. Rather, it developed through the interaction of colonial politics, religious competition, institutional organization, technological innovation, and global migration. These historical circumstances shaped both its internal doctrinal development and its international missionary orientation. Consequently, understanding the movement requires an interdisciplinary perspective integrating history, theology, sociology, and religious studies rather than limiting analysis to doctrinal debates alone.

The findings of this historical analysis indicate that the Ahmadiyya Movement represents one of the most significant examples of modern Islamic religious movements emerging in response to colonial transformation and globalization. Its historical development illustrates how religious organizations adapt institutional structures, communication strategies, and missionary activities to changing social contexts while maintaining continuity with their foundational religious narratives. This historical perspective provides the necessary foundation for examining the movement's doctrinal characteristics and theological interpretations in the following section.

Historical Background of the Ahmadiyya Movement

The emergence of the Ahmadiyya Movement in the late nineteenth century must be understood within the broader historical transformation experienced by the Indian subcontinent under British colonial rule. The decline of the Mughal Empire, the consolidation of British political authority, the expansion of Christian missionary activities, and the emergence of Hindu reform movements collectively reshaped the religious landscape of South Asia. These developments generated profound intellectual and theological challenges for Muslim communities, encouraging the emergence of various reform

movements seeking to preserve Islamic identity while responding to changing political and cultural realities (Robinson, 2000; Lavan, 1974).

British colonial administration introduced significant reforms in education, law, and governance that altered traditional Muslim institutions. Western educational systems, scientific rationalism, and Christian apologetics increasingly influenced public discourse, while Muslim scholars debated appropriate strategies for responding to colonial domination and religious competition. During this period, several Islamic reform movements emerged, including the Deobandi movement, the Aligarh movement, the Bareilvi movement, and the Ahmadiyya Movement. Although each movement pursued different objectives and methodologies, all sought to address the challenges posed by colonial modernity and the changing religious environment (Metcalf, 1982).

The Ahmadiyya Movement was formally established in 1889 by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in Qadian, Punjab, then part of British India. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad presented his movement as an effort to revive Islamic spirituality, defend Islam against external criticism, and encourage peaceful religious propagation through intellectual engagement rather than armed conflict. His writings addressed theological debates with Christian missionaries, Hindu reform organizations such as Arya Samaj, and Muslim scholars, reflecting the highly competitive religious environment of colonial India (Friedmann, 1989).

One of the defining characteristics of the movement during its formative period was its emphasis on organized religious publication. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad produced numerous books, pamphlets, and public debates addressing theological issues, comparative religion, and Islamic apologetics. These publications became important instruments for disseminating the movement's teachings and responding to contemporary religious controversies. Historians have noted that the extensive use of print media distinguished the Ahmadiyya Movement from many earlier Islamic organizations and contributed

significantly to its rapid expansion beyond the Indian subcontinent (Jones, 2018).

The historical development of the movement was also closely connected with organizational consolidation. Following the death of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in 1908, leadership was transferred to the institution of the Khilāfah, which became the central administrative authority responsible for coordinating missionary activities, educational programs, and international expansion. The establishment of this institutional structure enabled the movement to maintain organizational continuity while extending its influence across different regions of the world. According to Valentine (2008), the centralized leadership system contributed substantially to the movement's organizational stability and global missionary effectiveness.

An important turning point occurred in 1914, when internal disagreements concerning leadership and theological interpretation resulted in the emergence of two principal branches: the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community (Qadiani) and the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement. Although both groups shared common historical origins, they developed different interpretations regarding the religious status of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and several doctrinal issues. This division significantly influenced the subsequent development of the movement and shaped the diversity of Ahmadiyya communities throughout the twentieth century (Lavan, 1974).

The expansion of the Ahmadiyya Movement beyond South Asia was facilitated by systematic missionary initiatives during the early twentieth century. Missionaries were dispatched to Europe, North America, Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Middle East with the objective of introducing Islamic teachings through preaching, educational activities, translation projects, and community development. The movement became one of the earliest Muslim organizations to establish permanent missionary centers in several Western countries. Historical studies indicate that these international missions contributed to increasing public awareness of Islam among Western audiences

during a period when organized Muslim institutions remained relatively limited (Valentine, 2008).

Another factor supporting the movement's international development was its early adoption of modern communication technologies. The publication of books, journals, newspapers, translations of the Qur'an, radio broadcasts, satellite television, and later digital media enabled the movement to communicate with diverse audiences across geographical boundaries. Contemporary scholars argue that the effective utilization of communication technology became one of the distinguishing features of the Ahmadiyya Movement compared with many other Islamic organizations during the twentieth century (Yohanan, 2020).

The historical trajectory of the Ahmadiyya Movement demonstrates that its emergence cannot be explained solely through theological considerations. Rather, it developed through the interaction of colonial politics, religious competition, institutional organization, technological innovation, and global migration. These historical circumstances shaped both its internal doctrinal development and its international missionary orientation. Consequently, understanding the movement requires an interdisciplinary perspective integrating history, theology, sociology, and religious studies rather than limiting analysis to doctrinal debates alone.

The findings of this historical analysis indicate that the Ahmadiyya Movement represents one of the most significant examples of modern Islamic religious movements emerging in response to colonial transformation and globalization. Its historical development illustrates how religious organizations adapt institutional structures, communication strategies, and missionary activities to changing social contexts while maintaining continuity with their foundational religious narratives. This historical perspective provides the necessary foundation for examining the movement's doctrinal characteristics and theological interpretations in the following section.

The Expansion of the Ahmadiyya Movement in the Modern Western World

One of the most distinctive characteristics of the Ahmadiyya Movement is its systematic expansion beyond South Asia into Europe, North America, Africa, and other parts of the world. Unlike many Islamic organizations that initially concentrated their activities within Muslim-majority societies, the Ahmadiyya Movement adopted an international missionary orientation from its early years. This global outlook enabled the movement to establish religious institutions, educational centers, humanitarian organizations, and missionary networks in numerous Western countries long before the emergence of large-scale Muslim migration during the second half of the twentieth century (Valentine, 2008).

The international expansion of the movement began during the leadership of the early Khalifahs, who emphasized the importance of *tabligh* (religious propagation) as one of the organization's primary missions. Missionaries were assigned to various regions, including the United Kingdom, Germany, The Netherlands, North America, and several African countries. Historical records indicate that one of the earliest permanent Ahmadiyya missions in Europe was established in London during the early twentieth century. The establishment of mosques, Islamic centers, and educational institutions enabled the movement to introduce Islamic teachings to non-Muslim audiences while simultaneously serving the religious needs of emerging Muslim communities (Lavan, 1974; Friedmann, 1989).

The movement's expansion in the United Kingdom became particularly significant because London gradually developed into one of the principal administrative and missionary centers of Ahmadiyya activities in Europe. Following political changes in South Asia and the migration of Muslim communities to Britain after the Second World War, Ahmadiyya institutions expanded their educational programs, interfaith initiatives, publications, and humanitarian activities. Scholars of religion argue that these institutional developments enabled the movement to participate actively in public

discussions concerning Islam, multiculturalism, religious freedom, and social integration within British society (Valentine, 2008).

A similar pattern can be observed in North America, where Ahmadiyya missionaries established organized communities through educational activities, public lectures, translation projects, and dialogue with religious organizations. During the twentieth century, the movement actively published English-language literature explaining Islamic beliefs and responding to misconceptions concerning Islam. The translation and dissemination of the Qur'an into various European languages became one of the movement's most influential missionary strategies. These publications expanded access to Islamic literature for Western readers and contributed to broader academic and public discussions concerning Islam (Jones, 2018).

The success of the Ahmadiyya Movement in the Western world cannot be separated from its effective utilization of modern communication technology. From the early use of printing presses and newspapers to contemporary digital platforms, satellite television, websites, and social media, the movement consistently adapted technological developments to support religious communication. Contemporary scholars note that this technological adaptation significantly strengthened the movement's capacity to maintain organizational cohesion across geographically dispersed communities while simultaneously reaching broader international audiences (Yohanan, 2020).

Global migration has also played a crucial role in shaping the movement's contemporary development. During the second half of the twentieth century, migration from South Asia to Europe and North America contributed to the establishment of permanent Ahmadiyya communities in major metropolitan areas. These diaspora communities function not only as religious congregations but also as cultural, educational, and social institutions that preserve religious identity while facilitating integration into multicultural societies. Studies on religious transnationalism suggest that organizations such as the Ahmadiyya Movement successfully maintain connections between local communities and

central leadership through regular communication, international conferences, educational programs, and coordinated humanitarian initiatives (Levitt, 2007).

Beyond missionary activities, the Ahmadiyya Movement has become widely recognized for its emphasis on humanitarian service and interfaith dialogue. International campaigns promoting peace, blood donation, disaster relief, educational assistance, and health programs have contributed to the movement's positive public image in many Western societies. Public initiatives emphasizing themes such as "*Love for All, Hatred for None*" have become closely associated with the movement's efforts to promote peaceful coexistence and constructive engagement with diverse religious communities. Researchers argue that these humanitarian activities represent an important dimension of the movement's public identity and contribute to its visibility within contemporary discussions concerning religion and civil society (Valentine, 2008; Khan, 2015).

From the perspective of the sociology of religion, the Ahmadiyya Movement represents an example of a transnational religious movement that successfully combines centralized organizational leadership with local community adaptation. Unlike purely local religious organizations, transnational movements operate through interconnected global networks that facilitate the circulation of religious authority, educational resources, financial support, and organizational policies across national boundaries. This organizational model has enabled the movement to preserve institutional continuity while adapting its activities to diverse legal, cultural, and political environments in different countries (Levitt, 2007).

The movement's expansion also illustrates the broader relationship between globalization and contemporary Islam. Globalization has accelerated the movement of people, ideas, technologies, and religious organizations across national borders, creating new opportunities as well as new challenges for Muslim communities. Within this context, the Ahmadiyya Movement has demonstrated a notable capacity to utilize global communication networks,

multilingual publications, digital media, and international organizational structures to sustain its religious mission. Contemporary scholars argue that such developments exemplify the transformation of Islamic movements from locally organized communities into globally interconnected religious institutions (Roy, 2004).

Nevertheless, the international development of the Ahmadiyya Movement has also been accompanied by significant challenges. In several countries, legal restrictions, social discrimination, and theological disagreements have influenced the movement's public activities and institutional development. Academic literature indicates that these challenges vary considerably according to national legal frameworks, historical experiences, and patterns of religious pluralism. Consequently, the experience of Ahmadiyya communities differs substantially across regions, illustrating the complex interaction between religion, politics, law, and society within contemporary globalization (Human Rights Watch, 2023).

Overall, the findings indicate that the expansion of the Ahmadiyya Movement in the modern Western world cannot be explained solely through theological factors. Rather, its international growth reflects the interaction of organized missionary activity, institutional leadership, migration, globalization, communication technology, humanitarian engagement, and adaptation to multicultural societies. This multidimensional process demonstrates how contemporary religious movements negotiate religious identity while participating in increasingly interconnected global environments. The following section examines the broader theological and social implications of these developments for contemporary Islamic thought and interreligious relations.

Contemporary Theological and Social Implications of the Ahmadiyya Movement

The historical and theological analysis presented in this study demonstrates that the Ahmadiyya Movement occupies a distinctive position

within contemporary Islamic studies because it intersects multiple academic disciplines, including Islamic theology, religious history, sociology of religion, political science, globalization studies, and interfaith relations. Consequently, the movement should not be understood solely through doctrinal discussions but also as a religious organization whose historical development, institutional strategies, and global expansion have significantly influenced scholarly discourse concerning Islam in the modern world.

One of the principal implications of this research concerns the relationship between religious interpretation and theological diversity within Islam. Throughout Islamic history, differences of interpretation have emerged regarding legal reasoning (*ijtihād*), theology (*'aqidah*), jurisprudence (*fiqh*), and spirituality (*taṣawwuf*). The Ahmadiyya Movement represents one example of how religious communities formulate distinctive theological interpretations while simultaneously interacting with broader Islamic intellectual traditions. From an academic perspective, examining these developments contributes to a deeper understanding of the dynamics of religious interpretation, institutional authority, and doctrinal formation in modern Islamic history (Esack, 2005; Nasr, 2015).

The study also demonstrates that theological debates surrounding the Ahmadiyya Movement extend beyond questions of doctrine into broader discussions concerning religious authority. Contemporary scholarship has shown that questions regarding who possesses the authority to interpret sacred texts, define religious orthodoxy, and represent Islamic identity remain central issues in modern Muslim societies. These discussions are influenced not only by theological arguments but also by historical experience, institutional development, educational traditions, and political contexts. Consequently, the Ahmadiyya case illustrates the complex interaction between theology, institutional legitimacy, and community identity within contemporary Islam (Roy, 2004; Saeed, 2006).

Another significant implication concerns the role of the movement in discussions of religious pluralism and interfaith dialogue. In many Western countries, the Ahmadiyya Movement has participated actively in public initiatives promoting dialogue among religious communities, humanitarian cooperation, and peaceful coexistence. These activities have contributed to public discussions concerning Islam as a religion capable of engaging constructively within multicultural societies. From the perspective of religious studies, such initiatives demonstrate how faith-based organizations contribute to social cohesion while maintaining their own religious identity. This finding supports broader academic arguments that interfaith engagement constitutes an increasingly important dimension of contemporary religious life in pluralistic societies (Casanova, 1994; Berger, 2014).

The movement's international experience also provides important insights into migration, diaspora, and transnational religious identity. Contemporary globalization has enabled religious communities to maintain institutional connections across national boundaries while simultaneously adapting to diverse legal and cultural environments. The Ahmadiyya Movement illustrates how religious organizations negotiate questions of identity, organizational continuity, and community development within increasingly interconnected global societies. Scholars of transnational religion argue that these developments represent a broader transformation affecting numerous contemporary religious traditions rather than a phenomenon unique to Islam (Levitt, 2007).

From the perspective of human rights and religious freedom, the Ahmadiyya Movement has frequently been discussed within international academic and legal literature because of the diverse legal and social experiences encountered by its communities in different countries. Comparative studies indicate that the status of Ahmadiyya communities varies considerably depending on constitutional arrangements, legal systems, historical experiences, and patterns of state-religion relations. Consequently, the

movement has become an important subject within discussions concerning minority rights, freedom of religion, citizenship, and the governance of religious diversity in modern societies. Examining these issues from an academic perspective contributes to a broader understanding of how religious communities interact with contemporary legal and political institutions (Human Rights Watch, 2023; United Nations Human Rights Council, 2022).

The findings further indicate that globalization has fundamentally transformed the methods through which contemporary religious movements disseminate ideas and organize communities. Unlike nineteenth-century missionary activities that depended primarily upon printed publications and personal travel, religious organizations today increasingly utilize digital media, online education, satellite broadcasting, multilingual publications, and global communication networks. The Ahmadiyya Movement has demonstrated considerable organizational adaptability in utilizing these technological developments to sustain religious education, missionary activities, humanitarian programs, and institutional coordination across multiple continents. Such developments illustrate how globalization reshapes religious communication while simultaneously expanding opportunities for international engagement.

An important contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that the historical development and international influence of the Ahmadiyya Movement cannot be explained adequately through a single disciplinary perspective. Historical analysis explains the colonial and socio-political context of its emergence, theological analysis clarifies the doctrinal foundations that distinguish the movement, while sociological perspectives illuminate its institutional adaptation and global expansion. Integrating these perspectives produces a more comprehensive understanding than approaches focusing exclusively on theological controversy or historical chronology.

The novelty of this research therefore lies in its interdisciplinary analytical framework. Previous studies have frequently concentrated on isolated aspects

of the Ahmadiyya Movement, such as its historical origins, missionary strategies, theological doctrines, or sociological development. In contrast, this study synthesizes historical reconstruction, theological analysis, globalization theory, and the sociology of religion into a unified framework for understanding the movement's development and influence in the modern Western world. This integrative perspective contributes to contemporary Islamic studies by illustrating how religious movements evolve through the interaction of doctrine, institutional organization, historical experience, and global social transformation.

Overall, the findings confirm that the Ahmadiyya Movement represents an important case study for understanding the complexity of contemporary Islamic movements within an increasingly interconnected world. Its historical development, theological characteristics, organizational structure, and international expansion demonstrate how religious communities continuously negotiate questions of belief, identity, institutional continuity, and social engagement under changing historical circumstances. Consequently, the movement provides valuable insight not only for Islamic theology but also for the broader academic fields of religious studies, sociology, globalization, and contemporary history.

D. Conclusion

This study examined the historical development, doctrinal foundations, global expansion, and contemporary influence of the Ahmadiyya Movement in the modern Western world through qualitative library research employing historical and theological approaches. By integrating historical documents, theological literature, and contemporary academic scholarship, the study demonstrates that the Ahmadiyya Movement emerged within the socio-political and religious transformation of nineteenth-century British India as part of a broader pattern of Islamic reform and revival. The interaction between colonialism, religious competition, educational modernization, and

institutional organization significantly shaped both the theological development and international missionary orientation of the movement.

The findings reveal that the doctrinal identity of the Ahmadiyya Movement is closely associated with its interpretations of prophethood, the Promised Messiah, divine revelation, and jihad. These theological interpretations distinguish the movement from many other Islamic organizations and have contributed to sustained scholarly discussions within Islamic theology and religious studies. At the same time, the study indicates that the movement's historical development cannot be understood solely through doctrinal analysis, as organizational leadership, institutional continuity, missionary strategy, and adaptation to changing historical circumstances have also played decisive roles in its expansion and international influence.

Furthermore, the research demonstrates that the international growth of the Ahmadiyya Movement has been facilitated by systematic missionary activities, centralized organizational structures, global migration, multilingual publications, humanitarian initiatives, and effective utilization of modern communication technologies. These factors have enabled the movement to establish institutional networks across Europe, North America, Africa, and other regions while actively participating in public discussions concerning religious identity, interfaith dialogue, multiculturalism, and the public representation of Islam in contemporary Western societies. The findings therefore illustrate how religious movements adapt to globalization while maintaining institutional continuity and transnational religious identity.

One of the principal contributions of this study lies in its interdisciplinary analytical framework. Unlike many previous studies that primarily examined the Ahmadiyya Movement from either historical, theological, or sociological perspectives independently, this research integrates historical reconstruction, theological analysis, globalization studies, and the sociology of religion into a comprehensive framework. This integrated approach provides a broader

understanding of the interaction between religious doctrine, institutional development, historical transformation, and global social change. Accordingly, the study contributes to the advancement of Islamic studies, religious history, and contemporary scholarship concerning transnational Islamic movements.

The **novelty** of this research resides in its comprehensive examination of the Ahmadiyya Movement as a multidimensional religious phenomenon. Rather than limiting the analysis to theological debates, this study demonstrates that the movement should also be understood through its historical evolution, organizational structure, missionary strategies, global institutional networks, and contemporary social engagement. This perspective expands existing scholarship by illustrating the complex relationship between theology, history, globalization, and religious identity within the development of modern Islamic movements.

The findings also have broader implications for the study of Islam in pluralistic societies. They demonstrate the importance of adopting interdisciplinary approaches when examining contemporary religious movements, particularly those operating across diverse cultural, political, and legal environments. The Ahmadiyya Movement provides an important case for understanding how religious communities negotiate questions of belief, authority, institutional legitimacy, social participation, and public engagement within an increasingly interconnected global context. Consequently, the study contributes not only to Islamic theology but also to wider discussions in comparative religion, sociology of religion, globalization, and contemporary history.

Nevertheless, this research is limited to qualitative library research based on historical documents, theological literature, and scholarly publications. Future research is recommended to incorporate empirical methods such as interviews, ethnographic fieldwork, comparative case studies, and analyses of contemporary Ahmadiyya communities in different national contexts. Such approaches would provide deeper insights into the lived experiences,

organizational dynamics, and social interactions of Ahmadiyya communities within diverse cultural and political settings. Further interdisciplinary research is also encouraged to explore the relationship between religious movements, globalization, digital communication, migration, and the transformation of religious identity in the twenty-first century.

E. Bibliography

- Aydin, C. (2021). Islam, globalization, and transnational religious movements in the twenty-first century. *Contemporary Islam*, 15(2), 165–182.
- Bano, M. (2022). Religious authority and Islamic movements in contemporary Muslim societies. *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 33(1), 25–47.
- Berger, P. L. (2014). *The many altars of modernity: Toward a paradigm for religion in a pluralist age*. Berlin, Germany: Walter de Gruyter.
- Casanova, J. (1994). *Public religions in the modern world*. Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.
- Cesari, J. (2021). *What is political Islam?* Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2023). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (6th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Esack, F. (2005). *The Qur'an: A user's guide*. Oxford, England: Oneworld Publications.
- Friedmann, Y. (1989). *Prophecy continuous: Aspects of Ahmadi religious thought and its medieval background*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Human Rights Watch. (2023). *World Report 2023*. New York, NY: Human Rights Watch.
- Jones, J. (2018). *Islam in the West: Religious identity and contemporary movements*. London, England: Routledge.
- Khan, A. (2015). Globalization and transnational Islamic movements: The case of Ahmadiyya. *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 35(2), 214–229.
- Lavan, S. (1974). *The Ahmadiyah movement: A history and perspective*. Delhi, India: Manohar Book Service.
- Levitt, P. (2007). *God needs no passport: Immigrants and the changing American religious landscape*. New York, NY: The New Press.

- Mandaville, P. (2020). *Islam and politics* (3rd ed.). London, England: Routledge.
- Metcalf, B. D. (1982). *Islamic revival in British India: Deoband, 1860–1900*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2020). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Nasr, S. H. (2015). *The Study Quran: A new translation and commentary*. New York, NY: HarperOne.
- Peek, L. (2021). Muslim identities in Western societies: Contemporary perspectives. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 47, 417–435.
- Robinson, F. (2000). *Islam and Muslim history in South Asia*. New Delhi, India: Oxford University Press.
- Roy, O. (2004). *Globalized Islam: The search for a new Ummah*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Roy, O. (2021). Religion, migration, and globalization: New perspectives on Muslim transnationalism. *Religion, State & Society*, 49(4), 287–301.
- Saeed, A. (2006). *Interpreting the Qur'an: Towards a contemporary approach*. London, England: Routledge.
- Scott, J. (2020). Global religious movements and institutional adaptation. *Social Compass*, 67(3), 369–386.
- Turner, B. S. (2022). Religion and globalization in the twenty-first century. *Current Sociology*, 70(5), 659–676.
- United Nations Human Rights Council. (2022). *Freedom of religion or belief: Annual report of the Special Rapporteur*. Geneva, Switzerland: United Nations.
- Valentine, S. (2008). *Islam and the Ahmadiyya Jama'at: History, belief, practice*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Voll, J. O. (2021). Islamic revival and global religious transformation. *The Muslim World*, 111(4), 521–540.
- Yohanan, F. (2020). Religious identity and globalization: Reassessing the Ahmadiyya movement in contemporary Islamic studies. *Journal of Islamic Studies*, 31(3), 345–366.