

CONTRIBUTION OF PROF. KHURSHID AHMAD
TO THE FIELDS OF ISLAMIC LEARNING
SCHOLARSHIP

PROF. KHURSHID AHMAD



CONTRIBUTION OF PROF. KHURSHID AHMAD
TO THE FIELDS OF ISLAMIC LEARNING, SCHOLARSHIP

Prof. Khurshid Ahmad started his Da'wah and academic activities in 1949, in the prime of his youth. During the last thirty five years he has made significant contributions, both as an Islamic scholar and as an activist in the field of Islamic da'wah, working amongst the Muslims as well as non-Muslims, particularly in Europe, America and Africa. He has authored or edited more than eighty works. He originally writes in English and Urdu, but his works have been translated in many languages of the world, including Arabic, Persian, Japanese, Indonesian, Hindi, French, German, Turkish and Slovak. Major fields of Islamic learning in which he has contributed may be outlined as follows:

1. ISLAMIC ECONOMICS

As an economist his primary interest was, not only in writing on different aspects of economic theory and practice, but in developing an Islamic perspective on economics. He has been amongst the pioneers of Islamic economics, both in creating a new awareness of the need to undertake serious investigations in studying economics from an Islamic viewpoint and in contributing significantly in developing the nascent discipline of Islamic economics. He has also strived hard to develop a programme for Islamizing the Pakistan economy both as an economist and as the Minister for Planning and Development in 1978-79.

It is no exaggeration to say that during the last half a century many a Muslim social scientist have been trying to show how close Islam was to capitalism or socialism. It was in this background the voice for Islamic economics was raised. His masterly critique of socialism appeared in 1967 (Socialism or Islam) and has been published not only in Urdu in several editions but also in Arabic, Bengali and other languages. It was his clarion call at a YAMY International Seminar in 1973 in Riyadh that initiated the process which culminated in the holding of the first professional conference on Islamic Economics in Makkah in 1976, This has been followed by a large number of conferences, seminars, working groups and the publication of a host of books and brochures on Islamic economics, over a dozen of which have appeared under his editorship or sponsorship.

He has written extensively on the major issues of Islamic economics, its teaching at university level, and the reconstruction of economy under Islamic inspiration. He was elected Chairman of the 2nd International Conference on Islamic Economics, Islamabad, 1983, and is the Acting President of the International Association of Islamic Economics.

2. ISLAMIC EDUCATION

Professor Khurshid has made major contributions in the field of Islamic Education. He not only produced some of the original and thought-provoking writings (Principles of Islamic Education, 1961; Towards the Reconstruction of Educational System (1964); Islam and the Reconstruction of Education (1973), but also helped in generating a worldwide awareness about educational reform in the newly liberated Muslim countries. He has participated in national and international conferences on Islamic education and played an important role in developing the new educational policy in Pakistan in 1978-79. He is amongst the founders of

the Islamic University, Islamabad and has been its Trustee from its inception. He is also the Chairman of the International Institute of Islamic Economics, Islamic University, Islamabad and chairman of Islamic Foundation, Leicester, UK.

3. ISLAMIC LAW

With the liberation of a number of Muslim countries from the yoke of Western imperialism a new debate started among the Muslim thinkers. Many a Muslim scholars expressed their skepticism about viability of an Islamic Constitution and of the Implementation of Shari'ah. Syed Mawdudi was the first Muslim scholar to take up the challenge and produce a scientific, precise and practical response to such challenges. Prof. Khurshid Ahmad furthered this cause first by making the ideas of Syed Mawdudi available to the Westernized elite by his timely translation of Mawdudi's writings on Law and Constitution into English. And second, a more original work was produced by him in two bulky volumes of a scholarly journal ("Chiragh-i-Rah") on Islamic Law in 1956-58.

4. ISLAMIC FAMILY SYSTEM

Prof. Khurshid Ahmad's foremost contribution is in the field of Islamic social and family studies. He not only produced scientific research works like the Birth Control and Islam, 1964, but also helped in generation of ideas on Islamic Family (Studies in Family law of Islam, Lahore, 1963; Family in Islam, Leicester, UK 1971).

5. ISLAMIC THOUGHT AND DAWAH

Prof. Khurshid has written extensively on introducing basic Islamic teachings to the modern educated classes and the non-Muslim world. His books Islamic Nazriya-e-Hayat (Islamic Way of Life, Karachi University, 1962-63) in Urdu and Islam: Its Meaning and Message (1976-1984) in English are amongst the most popular and most powerful introductory books on Islam. He has authored or edited over a dozen books on basic Islamic concepts, books which are used extensively all over the world. A number of his books are used as essential reading in many universities of Europe, America and the Muslim World.

6. ISLAMIC RENAISSANCE AND REAWAKENING AMONG THE YOUTH

One major contribution of Prof. Khurshid has been his role in the Islamic re-awakening of youth in Pakistan and other parts of the world. As editor of the first Islamic viewpaper of Muslim students (Students Voice, 1951-56) and as the President of the Islami Jamiat-e-Talaba Pakistan in 1953-55 he made an impact on the mind and lives of the Pakistani youth. Through his writings, visits and lectures he developed a very close link with youth in Bangladesh, Malaysia, Indonesia, UK and Europe. His writings were translated in the native languages and through personal contact he helped in organizing Islamic work in those countries. During the last ten years he has lectured at more than one hundred universities and centres of learning and research in the world.

7. ISLAMIC INSTITUTION BUILDING

Being an economist and policy planner, Prof. Khurshid has been actively involved and responsible for building Independent Islamic Institutes at an international level. In 1963 he founded Islamic Research Academy in Karachi, Pakistan and acted as its Secretary General till 1968. This research institute has produced over 100 research works till now. In 1973 he founded the Islamic Foundation, Leicester, England and was appointed its Director General (1973) and later Chairman of the Board of Trustees (1978). The Foundation has produced around one hundred and twenty publications and educational aids and has also conducted Islamic tarbiyah programmes for youth and new Muslim converts. He also "extended" substantial assistance in the establishment and development of Muslim Educational Trust in London.

In 1978 he founded another Independent Islamic research centre, namely Institute of Policy Studies. The Institute is directed towards scientific analysis of policy issues of the Muslim world, particularly in economics, education, world affairs and energy resources. It has published over 30 studies in above fields.

Prof. Khurshid has been equally instituted in development of a worldwide awareness about building Islamic Institutions in various Muslim communities e.g. Muslim communities in England, Germany, Holland, France, Denmark, USA, Canada, Kenya, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Nigeria, Senegal Gabon, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Indonesia, etc., have often invited him to get professional help and guidance in developing the Independent economic and structural base.

8. INTER-FAITH DIALOGUES

Prof. Khurshid has also contributed a lot to a better understanding of Islamic Message among the non-Islamic peoples. He has been a strong spokesman for Islam in several international dialogues and has taken a non-apologetic approach in presenting Islamic message. He was Co-chairman of the Chembassy Dialogue in which Islamic Da'wah was projected in its real colour. This put the Christians on the defensive. He has participated in over a dozen international dialogues and was invited as visiting Professor by the universities, of Holland and the Vatican to speak on Christian-Muslim relations.

9. IMPLEMENTATION OF ISLAMIC SHARIAH

Prof. Khurshid has written extensively developing Islamic programme for societal reconstruction. As Federal Minister for Planning, Development & Statistics, he tried to implement these ideas and developed policies that led to the introduction of Zakat and Ushr system, Interest-free banking and Islamic educational reforms in Pakistan. He also helped in development of better economic collaboration between the Muslim countries.

10. POLITICAL AND SOCIAL REFORM

Prof. Khurshid has also been associated with an ideological movement for social and political reform. The Jamaat-e-Islami is one of the foremost Islamic Movements in the whole of the Muslim World. He has been associated with it as a member of its majlis-e-shoora, and

Executive Council and is one of its naib amir (Vice-President). He has edited a number of magazines and journals (Students Voice, The New Era Weekly, The Chiragh-e-Rah Monthly, The Voice of Islam, monthly, the Iqbal Review quarterly, He was honoured by the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur in 1982 for his contributions to Islamic scholarship by the award of Hon. Doctor of Education.

PROF. KHURSHID AHMAD