

The Ahmadi Muslims: A Curious Sect

by Hugh Fitzgerald



With an Ahmadi Muslim apologist, Qasim Rashid, running for the Virginia State Senate and [charging his opponent](#) with “Islamophobia,” it’s worthwhile to give this sect a closer look.

The Ahmadi Muslims are a curious sect. They make up only 1% of the world’s Muslims – if indeed we accept that they are Muslims at all. Because their founder, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, claimed in 1889 to be both a prophet who came after Muhammad, and the Mahdi, many orthodox Muslims do not accept Ahmadis as Muslims. Indeed, in Pakistan, where the most Ahmadis – four million – live, they are forbidden, by the Second Amendment to the Constitution, to identify themselves as Muslims. They have been subject to large-scale attacks in Pakistan, during the

anti-Ahmadi riots in Lahore in 1953, and again in 1974, when dozens of Ahmadi mosques were demolished or set on fire around the country. The last large-scale anti-Ahmadiyya violence ending in many deaths was in 2010, when, during Friday prayers, 94 Ahmadis were killed and more than 120 were injured in nearly simultaneous attacks against two mosques in Lahore. In 2018, a historic Ahmadi mosque, as old as the movement itself, was torn down in Sialkot. And there have consistently been smaller attacks, on one or several Ahmadis at a time, killed for being heretics or Infidels.

Pakistan is not the only Muslim country to treat the Ahmadis as non-Muslims. Saudi Arabia forbids Ahmadis from living in the country. But among the foreign workers, some Ahmadis manage to slip in, and the Saudi government routinely conducts nationwide raids to locate and deport them. Nor does Saudi Arabia allow Ahmadis to make the Hajj to Mecca. Pakistan raises an additional barrier to Ahmadis performing the Hajj. It requires that all Muslims applying for a passport must denigrate the founder of the community, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, and declare that all Ahmadis are non-Muslims. This requirement, naturally, discourages some Ahmadis from applying for a passport.

Ahmadis have been persecuted, attacked, and banned in many other Muslim countries. In 1924, affiliation with the Ahmadiyya became a capital offense in Afghanistan. Since then, no Ahmadiyya Muslims have been reported in Afghanistan. In Algeria, the position of the Ahmadis has worsened in the last few years. In March 2016, Algerian authorities refused an attempt by Ahmadis to register as an association under Algerian law. In June 2016, a planned Ahmadi mosque was raided and shut down in Larbraa. Since March 2016, more than 280 Ahmadis have been arrested and have faced prosecution. Algerian officials have publicly called Ahmadis heretics and a threat to Algeria. In June 2016, the Minister of Religious Affairs and Endowments, Mohamed Aissa, described the Ahmadi

presence in Algeria as part of a “prepared sectarian invasion.” In February 2017, he stated that Ahmadis are “not Muslim.” In April 2017, Ahmed Ouyahia, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika’s chief of cabinet, called on Algerians to “preserve the country from the Shia and Ahmadiyya sects.” In Bangladesh, in late 2003, several large, violent marches ended in the occupation of an Ahmadi mosque. In 2004, all Ahmadiyya publications were banned from the country. In India, Ahmadiyyas are recognized by the government as Muslims, but they are not permitted by Muslims of other sects to sit on the All India Muslim Personal Law Board. In Indonesia, Ahmadi have been attacked and killed by mobs, and warned by the government not to try to spread their faith. In Malaysia, Ahmadis are forbidden from saying Friday Prayers at the central mosque, which also bears a large sign declaring that “Qadianis [Ahmadis] are not Muslims.”

In the U.K., Ahmadi shops have been vandalized, and Muslims instructed not to vote for Ahmadi candidates. Anti-Ahmadi hate leaflets have been distributed all over London. The Ummah Channel has broadcast interactive television programs on which religious leaders and callers alike said that Ahmadis should be killed. And Ahmadis, such as Asad Shah, have been killed by mainstream Muslims.

All of this shows that the Ahmadis are discriminated against, persecuted, and even killed, in many parts of the Islamic world. Yet the Ahmadis enthusiastically proselytize for Islam in the United States. They never discuss, in their meetings with non-Muslims, what Ahmadis endure at the hands of mainstream Muslims. Many of the Ask-A-Muslim-Anything events are put on by Ahmadis, who also conduct many of the Open-Mosque meetings. The Ahmadi sect is genuinely more peaceful in what it preaches about Jihad than are mainstream Muslims. Ahmadis stress their desire to spread Islam by non-violent means, and their outreach efforts to non-Muslims are sincere. But some of their spokesmen, such as the State Senate

candidate Qasim Rashid and Harris Zafar, consistently defend Sunni Muslims, the very people who deny that Ahmadis are true Muslims.

[Robert Spencer took on Qasim Rashid](#) two days ago: “Qasim Rashid has for years been a professional liar, a one-man cottage industry of deception and hypocrisy. He has whitewashed [Muhammad’s support for torture](#) and [the reality of jihad violence](#) and Sharia oppression; dissembled about [the Qur’an’s sanction of deception of unbelievers](#)