

**THE MAKING OF AN ISLAMIC SOCIETY IN POST-  
INDEPENDENCE INDIA : A STUDY OF THE  
JAMAAT-E-ISLAMI HIND**

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**CERTIFICATE**

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled, "The Making of an Islamic Society in Post-Independence India : A Study of the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind" submitted by Irfan Ahmad in part-fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this or any other university. To the best of our knowledge this is an original work.

We recommend that this dissertation should be placed before the examiners for their consideration for the award of the above-mentioned degree.

  
Prof. R.K. Jain  
(Supervisor)



  
Prof. M.N. Panini  
(Chairperson)

*To  
Ammi-Abbi  
&  
Shannu*

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## GLOSSARY

<i>Ahadith</i>	-	plural of hadith: sayings and traditions of prophet
<i>Ajlaf</i>	-	low caste Muslims, ignoble people
<i>Alim</i>	-	literally, a learned man, generally used for a doctor of Islamic law
<i>Amir</i>	-	a person holding authority, a ruler, head of an organization
<i>Ashraf</i>	-	upper caste Muslims, those of high-born ancestry.
<i>Brelavi</i>	-	belonging to the Indian town Bareilly; belonging to the religious sect which adheres to the doctrine of Ahmad Raza of Bareilly; a conservative sect
<i>Dastoor</i>	-	constitution
<i>Deen</i>	-	way of life
<i>Deobandi</i>	-	belonging to the Muslim religious seminary of Deoband; an orthodox sect which abhors superstitions attributed to the Brelavi sect
<i>Fatwa</i>	-	a ruling by a jurist on the legality or otherwise of an action
<i>Hadith</i>	-	a tradition of the prophet
<i>Hakoomat-e-Ilahi</i>	-	the government of god
<i>Hind</i>	-	Hindustan, India
<i>Ijmah</i>	-	popular consensus
<i>Ijtihad</i>	-	the application of the reason to the Quran and Ahadith and reinterpretation thereof for applying them to particular situation or problems
<i>Imam</i>	-	a religious leader
<i>Ishratrakiat</i>	-	communism
<i>Jahiliyat</i>	-	ignorance, pre-Islamic pagan beliefs and practices
<i>Jamaat</i>	-	organziation, party
<i>Jihad</i>	-	literally, the utmost effort; a war in the cause of Islam
<i>Kafir</i>	-	one who refuses to believe in the unity of God
<i>Khalifa</i>	-	caliph, viceregent; owner of delegated powers to enforce the laws of God
<i>Khilafat</i>	-	caliphate
<i>Kufr</i>	-	infidelity, paganism, blasphemy, loosely interpreted as the act that renders a person outside the pale of Islam

<i>Madrasah</i>	-	seminary
<i>Majaddid</i>	-	a person who restores Islamic doctrines to their pristine purity reviver
<i>Majlis-e-Shoora-</i>		advisory council
<i>Millat</i>	-	community, followers of a faith
<i>Moashra</i>	-	society
<i>Mujahid</i>	-	one who participates in jihad (see above)
<i>Mulukiyat</i>	-	monarchy
<i>Muttaheda</i>		
<i>Quamiat</i>	-	composite nationalism as against religious nationalism, a term associated with traditional <i>ulema</i> who supported the Indian National Congress
<i>Qaumiat</i>	-	nationalism
<i>Qazi</i>	-	a judge; judge of a <i>shariah</i> court
<i>Quran</i>	-	the revealed message of Allah to prophet Muhammad
<i>Reyasat</i>	-	state
<i>Rudaad</i>	-	report, proceedings
<i>Shariah</i>	-	social-religious law of Islam
<i>Shirk</i>	-	polytheism, idolatry, paganism
<i>Tahreek</i>	-	movement
<i>Tasauf</i>	-	mysticism

## PREFACE

The single most important event which considerably changed the tenor of Western academic discourse was the Islamic revolution of 1979 in Iran. The secular prophecy of the modernization theorists that the non-Western societies would proceed soberly along the paths already charted out by the historical experiences in the West was dashed to the ground. Barely two decades before the revolution, D. Lerner in his celebrated book *The Passing of Traditional Society* (1958) had hopefully announced the slow but certain movement of Iran from its traditional past to the modern future. The Iranian experience not only led to the collapse of modernist project inaugurated by the Shah, it also heralded the collapse of dualistic categories in social sciences: cosmopolitan-local; modern-traditional; sacred-secular. One such common wisdom in social sciences then was that the road to progress and modernity meant, *inter alia*, strict separation between state and religion. The event of 1979 belied even that wisdom.

The impact of Islamic revolution was, however, not confined to the frontier of Iran. It went far beyond. The Eighties witnessed the upsurge of religion-based political articulations in South Asia. Zia-ul-Haq in Pakistan embarked upon a ruthless process of Islamization. Similarly, religious turmoil surfaced in Sri Lanka. In India also, religion came to the forefront of political debates.

Many scholars have noted the dramatic and surprising religious upheavals of the late Seventies and the Eighties. As a result, they began to rethink their assumptions and analyses of the interrelationship between religion and state in the non-Western world.

This tract is a sociological exercise to unlock the intimately complex dynamics between religion and politics as represented by the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind in India.

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Irfan Ahmad



## Chapter - I

### Introduction

Sociology of Islam<sup>1</sup> in independent India has mostly devoted itself to the study of social organization of Muslims, their pattern of hierarchy and the socio-cultural institutions that mark their life. In this context Ghaus Ansari's (1960) seminal work *Muslim Caste in Uttar Pradesh* stands out as the first contribution of its kind. The series of four volumes edited by Imtiaz Ahmad, indisputably regarded as a major pioneering work, focuses on the social stratification among Muslims and the dynamics of change in the Muslim society (Ahmad 1973, 1976, 1981 and 1983). Similarly, T.N. Madan-edited volume (1976) *Muslim Communities in south Asia: Culture and society* deals with the belief, modes of exchange and structure of stratification among Muslims vis-a-vis Hindus in Kashmir. Though Gopal Krishna's paper in the volume dwells on the interplay between piety and politics in the Muslim community it is largely historical and provides little account of what happened in the post-independent India. This absence remains even in the revised and enlarged edition of the volume published in 1995. Madan's later work *Religion in India*, edited (1991) also deals with various aspects of faith, rituals and the religious institution among the follower of different religions. The work of A.R. Saiyed (1995) likewise analyses the socio-cultural dimensions of religion in relation to the process of modernization. S. Jain's work (1986), too, broadly falls in the same line. Deepak Mehta's book (1997) discusses the social world of Muslim weavers, an occupational caste in UP; the notion of sacred in their life and its location in the local

social structure. Many other works, mostly micro- studies, also grapple with more or less the same kind of problems<sup>2</sup>.

Of the social movements in Indian Muslims, Tablighi Jamaat, a reformatory faith movement that first began among the Meos in the mid-twenties with Maulana Mohammad Ilyas (1885-1944) as its leader, has received considerable attention from scholars, including sociologists (Faruqi 1971, Marwah 1979, Ahmad 1991, Talib 1997). The political practices of Muslims vis-a-vis their sacred belief have, however, remained a grave casualty of scholars, particularly of sociologists, though the need for it was strongly felt in the past as also now (Bedar 1971:45, Hasan 1996:211). The near-absence of a detailed sociological research on the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, India— an ideological-political movement initiated by Maulana Maududi<sup>3</sup> (1903-1979) in 1941, is a case in point. This gross neglect seems all the more amazing in the face of the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind's active involvement in the political processes of India ever since her independence till today, its well-disciplined organizational spread throughout the country, and the powerful influence that it commands among certain socially significant sections of Muslims. In fact, as an ideological movement its impact has traveled far beyond its place of birth to the West, for instance, Britain where it is increasingly attracting young educated Muslims (Lewis 1994, Geaves 1997).

Though many scholars have written on the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind (henceforth Jamaat) most of their work often tend to bear a journalistic immediacy ( see e.g., Ahmad 1969, Bhat 1970, Islam 1975, Usmani 1975, Engineer 1971,

1985). Some other studies, though rich in detail, hardly offer any analytical explanation and instead appear to be more invective than objective (Shakir 1970, Agwani 1986)<sup>4</sup>. Moreover, whatever little reference is available on the Jamaat, it is mostly found in the works of either historians (Mujeeb 1967, Smith 1979, Hasan 1996) or political scientists ( see, e.g., Brass 1974, Wright Jr. 1979). Sociologists have till now given only a footnote treatment to its ideological-political activities ( Mondal 1988, Madan 1997). An in-depth sociological study of the Jamaat thus seems wanting in almost every respect.

Recognizing the ideological importance of the Jamaat, its well-disciplined spread and its active survival, rather ever-increasing reach, for over a half century since its establishment in 1941, this study seeks to locate its emergence as a distinct ideological movement among various other streams of thought present in the Muslims of the sub-continent towards the end of the first half of twentieth century. To begin with, it asks as to why did Maududi leave Jameeatul Ulema-e-Hind, a group of Muslim theologians, which lent rock-solid support to the composite nationhood of the Indian National Congress and vehemently opposed the Muslim League? What were the factors behind the inauguration of another movement such as the Jamaat when the Muslim League had already emerged as a political force to reckon with? It is interesting to note that the Jamaat was formed just one year after the much-quoted resolution asking for a separate homeland for Muslims was passed by the League at Lahore in 1940. And until Pakistan became a reality, the League was a thorn in the flesh of the Jamaat.

What distinguishes Maududi from rest of the thinkers of his times as also before, is probably the primacy he placed on the *political* aspect of Islam ( Choueri 1990: 134-136). He, therefore, set the goal of Jamaat as establishing the Islamic state ( Engineer 1980:127) — God's governance — which will regulate every aspect of a Muslim's life, — social, cultural, legal, material or otherwise. After the Partition throughout the 1950s and 1960s the Jamaat struggled hard to enforce Islam through the Constitution and various other institutions of the state in Pakistan<sup>5</sup> ( Binder 1963, Bahadur 1977) — a predominantly Muslim country.

But how is its counterpart in India going to accomplish the same where the society is religiously plural? Does it aim at, then, proselytizing the non-Muslims ( Khalidi 1995)? And if the non-Muslims do not convert to Islam, can the Muslims under the banner of the Jamaat form an Islamic State even if they remain a minority? How does it view the non-Muslims now, and under the to-be-achieved Islamic state? What is the *modus operandi* outlined by the Jamaat? Is it a communal party/movement meant for the Muslims alone as the entire literature on the Jamaat portrays (see e.g., Shakir 1970, Bhat 1970, Usmani 1975, Engineer 1985)? I propose to argue that though the Jamaat has most often articulated demands exclusive for Muslims, it is against the honesty of scientific scholarship to say that it ideologically stands for the concerns of Muslim alone. In that case it can never ask for an Islamic Sate in India unlike in Pakistan where majority of

the population is already Muslim. This point — hardly taken into account in the available literature — though may appear like stating the obvious, is nonetheless full of sociological importance in that it not only shows how a universal ideology is modified and recast in a changed and different milieu but also makes a challenging statement in terms of comparison (between India and Pakistan) — the hallmark of sociological inquiry.

Given the religious composition of Indian society the Jamaat can make such demand here only if the whole society or at least its influential sections either convert to Islam or become neutral towards it<sup>6</sup>. It, therefore, seeks to proselytize non-Muslims through ideological-political interventions in the civil society<sup>7</sup> (for the concept of civil society see Hegel 1942, Marx 1970, Keane 1988, Gellner 1991, Kumar 1993, Chandhoke 1995). Its large network of autonomous educational institutions, study circles, ideological camps, well-spread print media and articulation of its position from the democratic fora as also its intervention in political realms, for example, during the Emergency are thus crucial foci in the civil society through which it aims at realizing its goal. Its first and foremost mission, then, is to establish the ideological-religious hegemony of Islam against all other forms of thought or ideology — be it the ‘Jahiliya’ model of Hinduism, liberal democracy of the West, ‘godless’ materialism of communism and above all the syncretically ‘corrupt’ and praxiologically ‘impure’ Islam.

But before it does so, it first of all strives to Islamize and homogenize the entire Muslim society which is otherwise so heterogeneous both in outlook and practice. The Islamization amongst Muslims as visualized and practiced by the Jamaat involves not just the social beliefs or cultural space but eventually the sacralization of State. Do the Muslims at large, however, identify themselves with the Jamaat's goal as it compellingly exhorts them by invoking the Quran and the Hadith? Has it been able to establish its own version of Islam as *the* Islam amongst all sections of Indian Muslims? How does it view Muslims in cultural terms? Does it make any distinction between High Islam and Low Islam a la Gellner (1992) ? More importantly, what model of Islam does it seek to establish culturally? Is its ideology the only stream of thought among the Muslims? If not, what are the points of convergence and divergence between it and the rest?

## II

Having outlined the need of the present study and problematized the issue at stake, a word about the framework employed to comprehend it would be in order. To be categorical, this study is not substantiated by any grand theoretical framework as such for it is rather ambitious at the level of an M.Phil. work. It does not, however, mean that the attempt made here is merely of a descriptive nature. A venture of this kind would, then, betray the classical tradition of sociology which went beyond naked facts and arrived at enduring explanations about society, its maze of institutions and the cultural processes. A sociological study thus calls for at least a minimum level of correlation amongst otherwise discrete social phenomena; certain

causal linkage between them and some conclusion, howsoever tentative, drawn from their analysis. Seen in this context, this study is based on the following main propositions.

To begin with, it does not support the essentialist, monolithic portrayal of any community – religious or otherwise. In the context of the present study, it rejects the otherwise influential works of historians such as Ishtiaq H. Qureshi (1962), Hafeez Malik (1980), Francis Robinson (1983), R.C. Majumdar (1960), A.C. Banerjee (1981) and of sociologists such as T.N. Madan (1976, 1998) and Satish Saberwal (1991, 1996) on account of their misplaced over-emphasis on only one aspect of social reality and the consequent analytical inadequacy arising therefrom. Qureshi and Majumdar, for instance, trace the conflict between Hindus and Muslims back to the latter's arrival in India. According to them, both the communities form separate 'nations' and there is "no sign that the twain shall ever meet" (Majumdar quoted in Alam 1996: f.n.15). Madan and Saberwal also broadly argue along the same line, though their argument is subtle and articulated in markedly different terms.

Such an approach is heavily value-loaded in that it perceives every facet of social reality in terms of religious distinction. This mode of analyzing religion in its own right could be anything but sociological. The craft of sociology, so brilliantly enunciated by Marx, Weber and Durkheim, instead lies in explaining religion and related phenomena not in their own terms but in the wider socio-cultural milieu in which they unfold; the specific context in which they gain or lose salience. In other words, the task of sociologists

is not evaluation but explanation with their gaze cast on the broader milieu in which social phenomena emerge, endure, eclipse and then reemerge.

The proponents of the essentialist, monolithic view are guilty of another wrong – far more grave than the first one – subscribing to a static, frozen view of society with boundary rigidly drawn between groups and communities. Cultures, it is assumed, are separated by barbed walls from one another with no permeability between or across them. In a recent article Madan (1998) pronounces this viewpoint without mincing any word. No wonder, then, that barring Saberwal, all the scholars mentioned above view the intermingling between cultures either as a *detour* or as some sort of compromise and compulsion. As argued in the following pages, such a view is simply untenable as it not only violates the empirical facts but also overlooks, often consciously, the multiple dynamics of complex socio-cultural processes of fusion and confluence in the everyday life where universal ideology of religion is the least influential factor.

Indeed the religion-based explanation can be valid, if at all, only in two rare cases, Partition and Ayodhya movement when vast majority of Hindus and a large number of Muslims participated beyond their supper-local concerns as ‘Hindus’ and ‘Muslims’. Excepting these two occasions, their identity has not been of a religious community but one that of either a caste, peasant, labourer, artisan or an ethnic group (Pandey 1998).



This does not imply that there exists no boundary along cultural or religious lines. Such a view is prone to lapse into a kind of total open-endedness which is no less flawed. Writing about the politics of culture, Talal Asad (1990) argues that there indeed exists a boundary between cultures. But unlike the primordialist contentions, it is not fixed once and for all, rather it is context-specific and historically shaped. Moreover, it is always related to power and domination (Asad 1990).<sup>8</sup>

There is another approach, equally dominant, which sees the emergence of conflicts between religious communities as the inevitable outcome of British mechanization (Chandra 1984, Pandey 1994). A casual link is thus sought to be established between the formation of exclusive, opposing communities/castes and the onset of colonial rule with its attendant modern institutions, mainly administrative. For the proponents of this view, then, it logically follows that the pre-colonial India did not witness any such conflicts and that relationship between groups and communities was largely harmonious (Thapar and Mukhia 1969). While the role of colonial state and its administrative apparatus in creating and sharpening such cleavages can be denied only at the colossal cost of historical facts, it would be incorrect to put the blame squarely at the colonial door either. There are two reasons for it. First, it is a construct historically located in the backdrop of anti-colonial struggle which sought to recast the present in an ideal, golden past. It thus appears to be more an ideological invention than a fact born out by scientific enquiry. One only needs to consider the important contributions made by C.A. Bayly (1985) and Sanjay Subrahmanyam (1996) in this

regard. Based on the sound arguments and rich data they have successfully questioned the widespread notion of a communally harmonious pre-colonial India. Had it been really so, Mujaddid Alf-Thani (1562-1624), the orthodox religious figure, would not have so vehemently opposed the tolerant, syncretic approach of Akbar towards religious matters (Allana 1988, see also Hardy 1963) Neither would have Bullhe Shah (1680-1758), the Punjabi Sufi, expressed his deep anguish over the tension between Hindu and Muslims:

The Muslims fear the flame,  
and the Hindus the tomb,  
Both die in this fear,  
Such is the hatred between them.

(quoted in Subrahmanyam 1996: 44)

A word of caution be added here. The above argument should not unjustifiably stretched to support the monolithic, essentialist view of either Qureshi or Majumdar. This is rather to underline the gross inadequacy of another polar view reflected in the writings of some scholars who find all the faults for the present crisis with colonial rule and instead regard the pre-colonial India as the ideal – great and pristine.

Secondly, this ‘conspiracy-constructionist’ approach does not consider people as self-conscious social actors but always being manipulated by the foreign rule. People are thus reduced to passive objects of mechanization with no agency of their own (see Das 1990). For the argument’s sake even if we admit that it was solely the British who first constructed religious category eventually leading to animosity among the members of two

communities, it still remains unanswered as to why people accepted it. More importantly, how did such constructed categories get internalized in the consciousness of social actors?

### III

Set against this backdrop, I look at the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind and almost all movements of this kind, be it Tablighi Jamaat, Arya Samaj or Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, as essentially *new* in that their advent on political firmament is synchronic with the ascendance of colonial rule in India (Esposito 1983, Ahmad 1991, Gold 1991). This is not to argue that such tendencies were absolutely absent before and that the pre-colonial past was all glorious as some scholars argue (see e.g., Nandy 1985). I instead contend that they did exist in the past as well but in terms of magnitude, salience and organized articulation they are essentially *new*, hitherto unwitnessed in the past. To put it differently, as a movement the Jamaat appeared on the stage as a powerful manifestation of the multi-faceted dislocation unleashed by the colonial intervention, politics being the main arena of collective claims and counter claims.

In fact, some scholars contend that the Jamaat's ideology and programme were/are aimed at regaining the lost political ground in terms of power and privilege, and the self-confidence which Muslims enjoyed for centuries before the arrival of the British (see e.g. Ahmad 1991: 459-62). Along the same line, it has been argued that the Jamaat emerged in response to the unprecedented material dislocation inaugurated by the British rule (Hyder

1974: 1-8). Further, no group or community was as adversely affected by it as the Muslim community. The birth of the Jamaat has also been linked with the crisis of global capitalism and consequent growth of fascism (ibid. I). No wonder, then, analysts have dubbed it as status-quoist and 'reactionary' (Ahmad 1969, Shakir 1970).

It would be, however, too simplistic to reduce the Jamaat and movement of this kind to material factors alone or as a mere epiphenomenon of the all-encompassing economic transformation. Equally simplistic it would be to characterize it as 'reactionary'. No doubt, all these analyses are valid in their own respects. But there is more to it which begs thorough scholarly investigation. I think the Jamaat can be better understood when situated in the backdrop of colonial rule and its complex forms of modernization. There is a grave danger in this exercise, however. Most scholars view the articulation of religion-based identity in *contrast to* the specific set of modern institutions introduced by the British rule. A more useful and enriching way of analyzing it would be to see it not in *contrast to* but in *conjunction with* the modern forms of institutions and values. This point needs to be reiterated as, while acknowledging the significance of tradition-modernity dichotomy approach, so dominant for long in the sociological debate, it takes us beyond such binary polarities and instead focuses on their more intricate, nuanced and complex interrelationships which are not frozen or timeless but rather constantly negotiated and renegotiated, fashioned and refashioned by different set of actors in varying social contexts.

The recognition of above fact, then, calls out to move beyond the smoke-screen approach according to which behind all kinds of religio-political discourses and practices there lies the hidden clash of material interest. This advance can be well made by shifting the focus onto *cultural identity* that is not necessarily the reflection of class antagonism but rather enmeshed in non-material domain as constitutive of efforts by different communities to come to terms with an altogether new socio-political landscape, first introduced by the British and then continued, though not in the same way, by the post-colonial Indian state. Culture in this sense becomes the medium or strategy by which the Jamaat endeavors to preserve the distinctive identity of the community of believers. Shifting of focus on culture thus assumes tremendous significance as it has not received the kind of attention that it deserves. I.L. Horowitz is quite right when he laments the gross inadequacy of existing frameworks to study the interrelationship between religion and politics in the third world as they failed to focus on culture. The introduction of focus on culture, argues Horowitz, offers an important new paradigm, a more balanced and holistic approach to comprehend the interconnection between religion and politics (Horowitz 1984 : 5-6).

But how to define cultural identity? Any effort at definition is doomed to be self-defeating as there exists none which is commonly agreed. A better and more useful way, therefore, is to see the ways in which it has been conceptualized. Broadly, there are two ways of conceiving it. The first is essentialist, narrow and given as it takes cultural identity as an already accomplished reality with an essence-pure and authentic. According to this

view, religion-cultural identity is a natural articulation of deeply-entrenched primordial attachments, enforced and reinforced as they are through tradition and ritual observance. The second way of conceiving it is historical – contextual. It views identity not as something which is accomplished once and for all; but always in the process, never fully-realized. Stuart Hall writes:

Cultural identity, in this second sense, is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being'. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending, place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. *Far from being externally fixed in some essentialized past, they are subject to continuous play of history, culture and power.*

(emphasis mine, quoted in Larrain 1994: 162)

Note the vital interconnection between culture and power in the quotation above. Any discussion on culture will thus remain flawed without the notion of power being seriously taken into account because both impinge upon each other so crucially. For instance, in a multi-cultural setting the privileging of one culture over another can not be comprehended unless we analyze the matrix of power and its multiple dynamics. Similarly, why particular aspects of a culture gain or lose salience at a given point of time and in a specific space is also related to power. And it is power, among other factors, which conditions the wholesale or partial rejection – selection of a particular version of past in the construction and production of cultural identity. To cite an example from the Jamaat itself, Maududi derived power to mobilize Muslims from a pristine, Islamic culture (to him, religion) whose preservation and propagation he regarded as his mission. It would, then, be

in the fitness of arguments to state here that neither culture nor power can be grasped in isolation from each other. An interrelationship between them ought to be the starting point for any meaningful discussion<sup>8</sup>.

As stated before, the historical context serves as a necessary background to study the Jamaat in post- independent India because the blueprint for fashioning state and society thereafter, was prepared, though often amidst sharp contestation, in its overarching shadow. In the chapter that follows an attempt has, therefore, been made to offer an historical-sociological analysis of Indian Muslims.

## NOTES

1. Reuben Levy first used the phrase 'Sociology of Islam' in English in 1931. See J. Uberoi (1994).
2. For an overall neglect of anthropological-sociological study of the India Muslims see Imtiaz Ahmad's (1972) much-quoted article in *Contributions to India Sociology (n.s.)* and the subsequent debate that followed in the journal.
3. A brief biographical account of Maulana Maududi is given in chapter III.
4. Particularly, Shakir's writings appear like a propaganda, at times chiding; Instead of giving an aetiological analysis of the activities of Jamaat and its ideology, most of his writings often reflect his own modernist and secularist leanings. For instance, see M. Shakir (1983, 1989).
5. The Jamaat-e-Islami of Pakistan, unlike Jamaat-e-Islami of India, has been widely studied, both by the foreign scholars as well as by those from the subcontinent. See K.B. Sayeed (1957), L. Binder (1963), C. Adams (1960), K. Bahadur (1977), M. Ahmed (1991) and S.V.R. Nasr (1994).
6. This point, though implicitly runs throughout the multi-lingual literature produced by Jamaat, it became crystal clear to me in an interview with Shafi Monis, Jamaat's National Vice President (1995-1999). He was initially reluctant to share it with me as he always doubted my motive behind the volley of 'disturbing' queries. Not surprisingly, my repeated assurance that I have no intention whatsoever except the research interest never satisfied him.
7. A detailed treatment to the concept of civil society is offered in chapter IV.
8. I am thankful to R.K. Jain for bringing this point to my notice.



## Chapter - II

### Indian Muslims: A Historical-Sociological Analysis

It is an intriguing paradox that sociology which emerged out of the crying concerns to offer historical explanation of social structure and social change that swept the European Society in nineteenth century, later on, when it became institutionalized as a discipline in American universities after the World War II, turned cold towards history (Skocpol 1984: 1-4). During the high noon of functionalism as a dominant theoretical-methodological paradigm in 1950s and 1960s, history almost disappeared from the sociological debates (ibid. see also Singh 1992). The anti-historicism and abstract empiricism of this grand theory found their ultimate expression in T. Parsons' celebrated work *The Social System* (1951) whose influence went far beyond the frontiers of the United States. As a result of this, sociologists were mostly preoccupied with 'here' and 'now'. It was this insensitivity to history which became the target of major broadside launched by C. Wright Mills who considered history as central to any sociological analysis.

All sociology worthy of the name is historical sociology... Historical types in short, are a very important part of what we are studying; they are indispensable to our explanation of it. To eliminate such materials — the record of all that man has done and become — from our studies would be like pretending to study the process of birth but ignoring motherhood.

(Mills 1959: 146-7)

Later on, this monumental neglect was considerably undone when

sociologists began to recast their focus on historical explanations. Many factors contributed to this shift, the most important one being the near-crumbling of walls that previously separated one discipline from another (Skocpol 1984).

Sociology being sensitive to history is, however, not as simple and easy as it appears. A heated controversy surrounds the interrelationship between the two disciplines. On the one end of this controversy, there are scholars like Philip Abrams, who find no basic difference between them. "History and sociology are and always have been the same thing", argues Abrams. While Goldthorpe, on the other, contends that they are two distinct and separate disciplines and any effort to portray them as one be forcefully countered. (Goldthorpe 1991: 212). His argument in favour of maintaining the distinction is based on both theoretical and methodological grounds. According to Goldthorpe, history is an idiographic discipline, whereas sociology is nomothetic. This distinction remains valid in terms of emphasis, if not in principle (Ibid: 212). As for methodology, it concerns the nature of evidence employed by both the disciplines. The primary sources of evidence for historians are what Goldthorpe calls 'relics from the past' - be it bones, tools, weapons, work of arts or most importantly, objectified communications i.e. documents of all kinds. With the solitary exception of oral history, historians always discover evidence from a reservoir of relics. Sociologists, by contrast, can, rather do generate evidence on their own by conducting field work. Moreover, sociologists' main concern lies in

the contemporary society whereas historians always work in the past (ibid.).

Without going further deep into the controversy, it can be safely argued that a balanced approach lies somewhere in between the two extreme polar views mentioned above, an approach that does not equate sociology with history but is at the same time open to be benefited from the rich historical data in sociological explanations. Such an approach is both desirable and necessary for a work such as this.

A word about Indian historiography would not be out of place here. Historiography in modern sense was introduced by the British in India. James Mill was the first British historian to divide Indian history before the rule of East India Company into two periods: 'Hindu India' and 'Mohammedan India' (Grewal 1992: 100). Eliot's and Dowsons' eight-volume *History of India As Told By Its Own Historians* (1867-77) further echoed Mill's viewpoint. According to Eliot, in medieval India rulers were foreign Muslims while the ruled natives were Hindus (ibid). This bizarre tradition set by the British historians later on became the given paradigm most Indian historians followed, R.C. Majumdar and I.H. Quaraishi being two glaring examples of it.

The hazard of 'communal historiography' is there for all to see. Such portrayal of history is not only highly prejudiced but far from revealing historical facts it in fact conceals them. In the vortex of biases and prejudices objectivity disappears. Satish Chandra writes:

The Communal interpretation of history overlooks the role of the people. It concerns itself more with heroes and villains than with the structure of society, the distribution of political and economic power within it, and the cultural patterns between different sections, communities and regions.

Enough has been said to show that without carefully analysing the role of different castes, classes, and religions we can not understand the processes of cultural integration in India. *The terms Hindu and Muslims tend to obscure these divisions. The refusal of many historians, both Hindu and Muslims, to look beneath surface, has led to the misuse of history and the distortion of medieval reality.*

(emphasis mine, 1996: 42)

In what follows, an attempt has been made to read history neither as an annalistic chronicle of king's (mis) adventure and splendour at the royal court nor as a series of bounded periods, but in terms of socio-political structure, the processes and cultural matrix distinctive of a given age whose beginning or end, nonetheless, can not be exactly pinpointed in fixed clanderical idiom (Geertz 1980: 4-6). The focus is placed on colonial period; the pre-colonial era is being touched upon only to the extent that it would facilitate a synoptic but substantial understanding of the nature and direction of social change the Muslim community underwent during the colonial rule. Covering such a vast span of time in a society like India's which is marked by an amazing diversity is, nonetheless, challenging and hence the analysis offered here is bound to remain unsatisfactory to many, particularly to the students of history. I am also aware of the grave shortcomings involved in this exercise as generalizations made here might be faulted on many counts. The following description is, therefore, limited in scope and based on the well-established scholarship on the Indian sub-continent. For the purpose

of this study, four themes — economy, polity, culture and orthodoxy — have been identified around which the discussion about pre-colonial India centres.

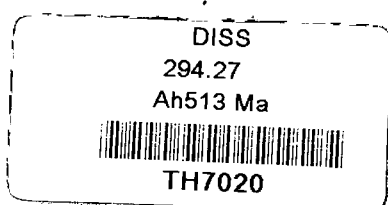


## II

**Economy:** As mentioned above, Eliot and Dowson were quite influential in setting the trend of communal historiography in the sub-continent. According to them the ruling class during medieval India was predominantly Muslim by faith whereas the subject or the ruled natives were Hindu. Following this, it has been argued that Muslims in general were placed at the top of the economic pyramid, with Hindus pushed down the bottom and consequently in perpetual misery. Nothing could be more erroneous than this. It is true that the ruling class (nobles, zamindars and officials at the royal court) by and large and for most part did consist of Muslims, but it represented only a microscopic minority. Economically, the condition of masses of Muslims was no different from that of Hindus at large. As a matter of fact, the fanatic historians like Barani and Badauni deeply lamented that the upper class Hindu were more prosperous than the upper class Muslims. (Habib 1961: XIX). Moreover, those Muslims who occupied the top position were invariably from the immigrant elite groups — Turks, Afghans, Turanis, Iranians, Mughals — not from the local converted Muslim population. In other words, considerations of race and ethnic ties rather than the abstract faith were the bases of formation of ruling class in pre-colonial India.

Mohammad Habib, a noted historian, writes:

TH-7020



No correct comprehension of the political events of the thirteenth century and, in fact, of the middle ages is possible unless a clear distinction is drawn between the Turkish governing-class group and the ordinary Indian-born Musalmans. These Musalmans and the Hindu converts who joined them had no say in the policy of the government of medieval India. (1961: xii)

Peter Hardy (1972), the orientalist historian, will be of immense help to us in unravelling this specific aspect of social life, largely neglected in most works, during pre-colonial India; though one needs to be exceedingly cautious about accepting his interpretations *intoto*. He offers a persuasive account of the economic condition of Muslims.

Of the fifth or so of British India's population who, in the period of the establishment of British supremacy, were Muslim, only a small minority could claim, for themselves or for their ancestors, membership of 'ruling nation'. The vast majority of Muslims supported themselves as the vast majority of non-Muslims supported themselves - by husbandry and by the provision of economic goods and services for others. It would be wrong of course to project backwards to the time of Plassey or even to the time (1803) of Lord Lake's (1744 -1808) occupation of Delhi, such data on the occupational distribution of Muslims as appear in the early British census reports. *However, in the absence of any strong traditions that particular humbly-occupied Muslim groups had fallen from ruling estate, it would not be wrong to assume that, give or take a few score thousand of disbanded soldiery, the occupational split between the Muslims ruling classes and other Muslims was roughly the same in the eighteen-seventies and eighties as it was century earlier, on the eve of the gradual British take-over.*

(emphasis mine, 1972: 6)

A region-wise account will further help comprehend the picture of an all-India level. In the Indo-Gangetic plain, the condition of common Muslims was roughly the same as that of ordinary members of any other

community. They were either agriculturist, labourers, artisans or members of the service occupations such as musicians, bards and perfume-sellers who flowered by virtue of the regal patronage. The Lalkhans, the Malkanas who were Rajput-descended cultivators, together with weavers, cloth printers, brass workers, cotton carders were far more large in number than the small section of high caste Ashrafs, namely Shaikhs, Sayids, Mughals, Pathans, who prided themselves in displaying their foreign lineage. In the region of Bihar, Bengal and Orissa, the scene was not very different. Most Muslims were agriculturists by profession, a vast majority of them belonging to the service castes. Down South in the eastern region, the largest number of Muslims were cultivators, traders, and boatmen. They were originally Tamils. In Malabar, Muslims, popularly known as Moplahs, were fishermen, sailors and coolies along the coast. Inland, majority of them belonged to the class of cultivators. In Gujarat, the pattern of occupation among Muslims was fairly diversified with the arrival of the descendents of Arab traders and sailors. Yet, agriculturists and artisans together outnumbered rest of the population. In the urban centres of Deccan, most Muslims were either petty traders, artisans or labourers (Hardy 1972: 6-8).

Peter Hardy sums up the condition of Muslims in pre-colonial India:

The British encountered then — although they were not fully aware of it until the first census report of the 1870s and 1880s — a Muslims community widely dispersed much the greater part of which was in fact of native Indian descent and which in most rural areas and

in many towns was indistinguishable in occupation from surrounding non-Muslims. (1972: 8)

**Polity:** The periodization of Indian history along religio-communal line has led to a widespread belief that since Muslims were the rulers in middle age, Islam must have been the state religion and accordingly the entire society must have been governed by the Islamic Laws, *sharia*. Even now it continues to be a controversial issue. Theologians, historians and other scholars have debated it *ad nauseum* but with no final resolution. It is, nonetheless, agreed upon by most scholars that after the first four caliphs, the state controlled and run by Muslims ceased to be Islamic in essence. According to Mohammad Habib:

[d] The Prophet left the organisation of political and administrative affairs to the secular good sense of (ijma) of his community. Amir Muawiya changed the caliphate into a mulk or monarchy, though he continued the name. With the rise of Ghaznavid power the first Sultanat in Islamic history was established. "The Sultanat", Mr. Nizami decrees, "had no sanction in the Shariat, it was not a legal institution. Its laws were the result of the legislative activity of the rulers and the governing class". (1961: vii)

It thus follows that the governing principle of state during medieval India was not the *sharia* but the *Zawabit* (non-religious rules) which were heavily influenced by Persian and Turkish experiences. And the goal of the state was not *deendari* (upholding religious ideals) but *Jahandari*, worldly or secular considerations (Chandra 1990: 84). In fact, some rulers clearly violated the injunctions of the *Sharia*. For them power was more crucial than the faith. No wonder, then, that Sultan like Alauddin Khilji (1296-1316) contemplated founding a religion in total



disregard to whims of the *Ulema*. So did Muhammad Tughlaq and Akbar, rightly regarded as the most tolerant ruler in medieval India, actually founded it (Ashraf 1970: 32).

This should not preclude the fact that medieval kings did invoke Islam to derive legitimacy from the clergy. But there never was a stable marriage between religion and politics; rather they were divorced from each other.

In this connection, D.E. Smith's opinion seems to be quite reasonable:

Thus the caliphate, the historical link with classical Islamic polity, did not exist throughout most of the important period of Muslims rule in India the Delhi Sultanate (1211-1504) and the Mughal Empire (1526-1757).  
(1963: 62)

**Culture:** While much has been written about the military conquest and political events in the medieval India, the contours of society and culture have not been extensively explored. This is due to two reasons. First, scholars have concentrated largely on the political aspects and have paid little, if any, attention to the cultural dimensions. Secondly, and this is more decisive than the first one, historians of this period have hardly left any source material behind to make a thorough sense of the socio-cultural life. Yet, some scattered sources provide clues to study the patterns of cultural interaction during this period.

According to Satish Chandra (1997), Muslims society during the period under review was divided on the dual consideration of class and status (see also Mujeeb 1967, Ashraf 1970). There was a clear hierarchy between the *Ashraf*, i.e., upper caste Muslims of foreign descent and the

vast majority of local Muslims, *Ajlaf*, mainly, weavers, service castes, etc., who came to the fold of Islam much later. Social interaction between the two was almost absent. And it was unthinkable to have marital alliance between the member of *Ashraf* and *Ajlaf*. The historian Ziauddin Barani (1285-1357) looked down upon the low-caste Muslims and advised the rulers not to engage them in public life. In his opinion, they should not be taught even alphabet. They were considered brute, savage and *Kam-asl* (Khan 1975:14). Such pejorative against the Indian-born Muslims were used possibly because, unlike the immigrant elites, they carried a deep influence of the local 'Hindu' culture manifest as it was in myriad realms of social life. It was most elaborately evident on such crucial occasions as birth, marriage and death. Many customs related to them were practised by Muslims and Hindus alike (Mujeeb 1967).

As far as the cultural interaction between Hindus and Muslims is concerned, it displayed conflicting tendencies of coldness and intermingling. In the beginning sharp difference existed between the two. Despite this, a gradual but intense process of understanding and adjustment began to develop (Chandra 1997: 229). Festivals became the occasions for both the communities to meet and participate. In particular, mention must be made here of *Basant* in which Muslims joined Hindus with great verve and exuberance (Mujeeb 1967). According to K.M. Ashraf, the festival of *Shabebarat* had definite influence of *Shivratri* as the use of fireworks and illumination of

dwelling and mosques were freely adopted by Muslims.

The focal arenas wherein composite influence was most pronouncedly evident were architecture, music, literature, and socio-religious movements. Sufi mysticism played a key role in facilitating the process of understanding and cordiality. The most popular Sufi order (*Silsila*) was the *Chishtia*, founded in India by Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti (1143 Siestan 1236 Ajmer). Its two other revered figures were Nizamuddin Aulia (1238-1325) and Nasiruddin Muhammad Chiragh (d. 1356) whose followers came from all castes and religions. Sufism with its rejection of formalist religiosity and singular emphasis on the unmediated union between individual and the God made great inroads into the hearts of ordinary men and women. The popular appeal of *Bhakti* movement during this period was equally significant. Though some scholars trace its genesis back to the *Vedas*, its mass appeal in the North in fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was in some way or the other linked to Islamic influence. Its main thrust was on the direct union *sans* priestly intermediary inbetween. It negated empty rituals and emphasised simplicity and devotion. Kabir (mid fifteenth century) was indisputably its most influential leader. The second great leader of this movement was Guru Nanak (1469-1539), the founder of Sikh religion (Ikram 1964: 125-28).

The composite spirit of this age was, however, most beautifully reflected in the genius of Amir Khusrau (1253-1325), arguably one of the few towering cultural figures India has produced. His was a multifaceted

personality. Though principally recognised as a poet, he made pioneering contribution to music as well. In him, poetry, music, mysticism, scholarship, historical imagination all creatively blended to enrich the cultural treasure of the land he was born in. He extolled the rich traditions of India and admired the ethos of Delhi. A trusted *Mureed* of Nizamuddin Aulia, Khasruau is credited with writing, poetry in Hindvi, mother of modern Urdu (Rai 1984) which, to use Mohammad Hasan's phrase, is the 'child of composite culture'. He introduced many Perso-Arabic ragas (airs), for instance, *aiman*, *gora* and *Sanam*. *Qawwali* supposedly owes its origin to him. So does *tabla*, though it is not fully established.

To set the matter straight, it was not 'cultural apartheid' as wrongly argued by the Orientalist historian Peter Hardy (1963: 370) but cultural intermingling or what Humayun Kabir called 'fusion of mentalities' which distinctively characterized the pre-colonial India, the glorious phase being the reign of Akbar and Shahjahan and its greatest intellectual embodiment Dara, the prince, all of whom, unlike the exclusivist, fanatic policies of rulers such as Auragzeb, upheld and practised moderation, pluralism and tolerance.

**Orthodoxy:** The discussion in the preceding pages might have given the impression that orthodoxy — the strict, adherence to the belief that society in its all aspects, including politics, be literally organized on the basis of the *Sharia* - as a thought did not hold much sway in pre-colonial India. But it is only partially correct. Dominant, of course, it was not; it

did, however, exercise immense influence at higher levels in terms of royal policy and legitimacy of the rule. It was not uncommon for the Saltanat rulers to get their claim to throne endorsed by the reigning Caliph of the time. In the *Khutba* read out before the congregation gathered for Firday prayer, along with the name of Sultan Caliph's name was also mentioned. Though rulers like Alauddin Khilji (1296-1316) did not care about the *Sharia*, there were others who tried to follow it, often for political designs rather than for religious concerns. Muhammad Tughlaq (1326-1351) called himself '*Sultan-e-Adil*', the title typical of an orthodox ruler in medieval times.

Ziauddin Barani, the fanatic historian, writes in his *Fatawa-i-Jahandari*:

There is no verse of the Quran and no hadith of the holy Prophet permitting the pomp, ceremonies, manners and customs of kings, or all those action of pride and power by which the terror of King is engraved on the hearts of the subjects, both far and near,... Also, from the world and acts of the Pious *Khalifahs*, which are worthy of being adopted by kings of the Muslims faith, no percept has come down to us.

(quoted in Mujeeb 1967: 65)

The collapse of Delhi Saltant however did not lead to the collapse of orthodoxy, it rather persisted as a force, now weak, no strong. The religious figures who zealously espoused the cause of orthodoxy during seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and whose indelible impact stretches forth to the present century are Shaikh Ahmad of Sirhind and Shah Waliullah.

Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi (1564-1624) was a disciple of Khawaja Baqui

Billah (1563-1603), founder of the orthodox *Naqshabandi* order of sufism in India. Shaikh Ahmad's revivalist orientation can be traced back to his pamphlet entitled *Radd-e-Rawafid* which was directed against the *Shia* creed (Mujeeb 1967: 242-243). At his heart lay the cause of Islam which, he thought, had fallen from the pinnacle of glory. He, therefore, sent letters to prominent nobles lamenting the sordid state Muslims had come down to. He vehemently attacked Akbar's syncretic policy and attitude and his tolerance to the followers of other faith. He also regretted the abolition of the *Jizya* by Akbar and held him responsible for the downfall (*sic*) of Muslims and the rise of Hindus during his reign. He expressed his rage so openly:

The non-Muslims in India are without any hesitation demolishing mosques and setting up Temples in their palace... During *Ekadashi*, Hindus fast and strive hard to see that no Muslim cooks or sells food on these days. On the other hand during the sacred month of Ramadhan, they openly prepare and sell food, *but owing to the weakness of Islam, no body can interfere. Alas, the ruler of the country is one of us, but we are so badly off:*

(emphasis mine, quoted in Ikram 1964: 171-172).

It was this helplessness of Muslims, more perceived than real, which Shaikh Ahmad sought to surmount by asserting Islamic catholicity. This made him realize the significance of the state power to enforce the *Sharia* whose undiluted purity he regarded as the panacea to the disgrace allegedly caused to Islam. This solitary emphasis on the *Sharia*, was reflected in his new doctrine of Sufism, *Wahdatush Shahud* (Unity of Phenomena). It be noted here that from the very beginning sufism

considered the *Sharia* as a mere externality and instead placed emphasis on the inner experience. Shaikh Ahmad made the *Sharia* an integral part of spiritual quest. Thus, through the doctrine of Unity of Phenomena he not only catholicized the otherwise tolerant traditions of Sufism but also brought forth the inevitability of the *Shariah* as the sole principle of ordering all domains of human life, including the domain of politics. The zeal with which he revived Islam won him the title of Mujaddid Alf Sani (The Reviver in the Second Millennium).

The man who actually galvanized Muslims into action in the whole of the sub-continent on a scale unprecedented in the entire history of Indian Islam was the encyclopedic personality of Shah Waliullah (1703-1762). S.M. Kram (1964) described him as “the greatest Islamic scholar India ever produced” And it was he who, more than anyone else, infused a deep sense of regeneration of religious consciousness among Indian Muslims. And in his colossus scholarship — ranging from mysticism, theology, jurisprudence, reform to politics — all shades of religious developments in the subsequent centuries trace their lineage, implicitly or explicitly (Geaves 1997: 168).

A scholar of supreme calibre, Shah Waliullah wrote in the period when Mughal empire had begun to crumble and before Indian Muslims faced the challenge of Western ideas. He mercilessly criticised those *ulema* who insisted upon sticking to old forms of thought. He exhorted them to abandon *taqleed* and interpret Islam in the light of emerging challenges. This new spirit, known as the *ijtihad*, should be applied, argued he, to

the *sharia* as well. Regarding the correctness of various schools of Islamic Laws, he held an open approach saying that all the four be combined to reach an integrated decision. As for *Sufism*, he considered the century-old wedge between juristic and mystical thoughts as artificial. He stood for a creative blending between the form and spirit of religion (Nizami 1971: 99-100).

What concerns us most, however, is his recasting of Islam vis-a-vis the syncretic, plural culture of India and its resultant political implications. To restore the pristine glory of Islam, shah Waliullah asked Muslims to jettison the non-Islamic (read Hindu) practices and lead their life in accordance with the basic tenets of Islam. The composite culture (discussed before) and popular religion of masses were consequently viewed as deviations from the pure Islam. So was the imputation of divine power to the *pirs* and the *faqirs* by ordinary Muslims or worship at their tombs. (Hardy 1972: 29). All such practice were corrupt for which he held nobody responsible but the rulers, hence his repeated emphasis on the need for a righteous ruler to strictly enforce the faith as he saw it. Not surprisingly, then, Shah Waliullah wrote to Ahmad Shah Abdali, the Afghan plunderer, to salvage Islam (*ibid.*).

### III

The disintegration of the great Mughal empire was not abrupt. Neither was the British conquest of India achieved in one swift stroke. Both were fairly slow and gradual processes; they passed through various phases of ebbs and flows. While in the case of former, it is generally



believed to have begun following Aurangzeb's death in 1707, in the latter it is commonly agreed to have started after the Battle of Plassy (1757) in which Siraj-ud-Daulah, the *Nawab* of Bengal, was defeated by the British East India Company which, though present since 1600 when the then emperor Jahangir allowed it to conduct trade in India, could establish its total, formal control not before the mid nineteenth century, in 1858 to be exact. The British rule over India for nearly two hundred years thus did not have uniform impact everywhere even though its intention remained the same althrough. Since Bengal was the first zone to undergo the Company rule, this part of discussion, therefore, begins by analysing the colonial impact there.

After the battle of plassey (1757), the officials of the East India Company (henforth Company), let loose a reign of terror in Bengal. Organized loots and plunder followed. The subsequent victory of the Company in the battle of Baxar in 1764 further consolidated its base. Robert Clive, the architect of British rule in India, then, secured the *Diwani* right from the Mughal emperor whereby the Company assumed authority to collect revenue from the three provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Following this, a series of revenue legislative measures were passed, the most important one being the Permanent Settlement Act of 1793. The Act for the first time introduced the concept of private ownership of land (Desai 1976: 41) and created an altogether new class of landlords loyal to the *Raj*. This was done by replacing the old zamindars, predominantly Muslims, with the new one which mainly

consisted of Hindus. The hitherto dominant landed Muslim aristocracy suddenly received death jolts. Once placed at the top of economic pyramid and endowed with prestige and privileges, now it found itself in a gradual but certain decay.

The Permanent Settlement meant in the circumstance of eighteenth - century Bengal, the virtual closing of the door to landlordism to Muslims.

(Hardy 1972: 43)

The next major change, as far as Muslims were concerned, introduced by the Company was Resumption Regulations of 1820 which empowered it to resume *Lakhiraj*, revenue-free land granted by Mughal emperors for educational purposes. Even the Muslims, endowments — and they were large in number — were not spared. This gave a further blow to Muslims, especially their upper strata as it led to the virtual collapse of traditional system of education (Kabir 1969).

Another crucial result of the Company rule was the overnight change of court language. The famous circular of Lord Macaulay of 1833 replaced Persian with English. It meant further closing of doors of administrative services to Muslims. The middle layer received yet another blow to its privileged status when the Company introduced modern criminal law in place of the traditional legal system. As long as the latter was in force it provided jobs to Muslims in the judicial departments. With the introduction of new criminal code even those jobs slipped out of their hand (Malik 1980).

During the first century of the British rule, Muslims aristocracy almost

vanished. One should add, parenthetically, that colonial policy did not affect all classes of Muslims equally (Hardy 1972: 49). Yet, they suffered most. Nothing demonstrated it more eloquently than the book of W.W. Hunter, a British official of Civil Services commissioned to inquire whether or not Muslims were inherently rebellious. In *Indian Musalmans: Are they Bound in Conscience to Rebel Against the Queen?*, published in 1871, Hunter argued that condition of Muslims in Bengal had become pitiable. According to him, they had fallen down from a glorious past to a grim present (Khairi, 1995: 35-8). What was more alarming was the absence of a middle class in Musalmans. For reasons explicated below a full blow middle class failed to emerge; a small section which did, e.g. in the legal profession, was too tiny to be submerged under the comparatively vast size of middle class among Hindus (see Table 2.1).

TABLE 2.1

*Statement Showing the Hindu and Muslim Students who passed the entrance and B.A. Examinations at the University of Calcutta, 1876-86.*

Entrance Examination										
Year	1876	1877	1878	1879	1880	1881	1882	1883	1884	1885-86
Hindu	1,196	980	914	905	1,421	1,170	1,216	1,338	--	1,230
Muslim	66	67	66	59	90	67	92	123		91
B.A. Examination										
Hindu	118	53	81	92	146	99	178	189	114	268
Muslim	7	3	--	4	4	1	6	15	3	8

**Source:** Hasan, M. 1994. *National and Communal Politics in India*. New Delhi: Manohar: 16.

Scholars offer many explanations for this uneven development. According to one explanation Islam was the reason; the British were all set to destroy Muslims and, therefore, they promoted Hindus (see e.g., Malik 1980). Such an explanation is puerile. It is concerned more with surfaces than with the current and churning beneath the line. Here colonialism as an exploitative system finds no mention. Nor is the variation within the community taken into account. Worse, the motive of colonial rule remains unexamined. It hardly needs to be emphasized that for the British it was more the imperatives of rule than the holiness of faith which led to the backwardness of Muslims. The British consciously followed a policy to create a wedge between Hindus and Muslims so as to maintain their rule.

What really prevented the Birth of middle class among Muslims was not the Christian conspiracy but the religious obscurantism, enforced and reinforced by the tradition-bound clergy; for Muslim clergy English education was *haram* (forbidden) in Islam. The overall peculiar circumstances of the time were no less responsible. This seems certainly valid in the realm of modern education which they took to quite late (Ashraf 1975).

The situation in the United Provinces was quite different from Bengal, Hunter's otherwise magisterial account being irrelevant (Hasan 1994: 15). Unlike in Bengal, in the north and Deccan (Hyderabad) for fairly a long time after the break-up of Mughal empire quasi-independent states

survived and prospered (Bayly 1983). Master as they were in the craft of chicanery and expansion of imperial frontier the British gradually began to influence polices of these states. Yet, in sharp contrast to Bengal, they formally fell under British rule quite late, the kingdom of Awadh was annexed in 1856. Apart from the important political centres such as Delhi, Awadh and Hyderabad there were few other Muslim states, Rampur and Tonk.

From the above account it, then, appears that in marked contrast to Bengal, during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries Muslims aristocracy did not eclipse all on a sudden in the north. It remained a distinct class with continued privileged and power. It does not mean that there was no decline in its position, especially when compared with seventeenth century. But in comparison to Bengal, its position was surely sound. One obvious reason was that unlike in Bengal, the British did not effect large-scale change in the administrative set-up. Also, high qualification was not the only criterion for coveted government positions. "Recruitment was not always" remarks Mushirul Hasan, "as Syed Ahmad's career illustrates, on the basis of college degree but on account of family background and tried loyalty to the raj". Even after the Uprising of 1857, the position of Muslim aristocracy did not undergo a fundamental change. Francis Robinson (1974) has furnished convincing arguments and data against the commonplace notion that Muslims were totally ruined after 1857.

Yet, the Uprising of 1857 whose impact was more pervasive in the north than in the south where, according to Anil Seal, 'not even a single dog barked', proved disastrous for Muslims. Until 1857, Delhi remained the symbol of Mughal Power, however, nominal. But the Revolt and its failure extinguished even that symbol and left Muslim gentry grope in darkness. The old king Bahadurshah Zafar was banished to Rangoon. India came under the direct rule of the British Crown.

Though the Uprising was jointly fostered by Hindus and Muslims, it was the latter whom the British attacked ruthlessly for sowing the seeds of sedition (Desai 1976). Hardly had the embers of Uprising died down, the British forces came down heavily on Muslims. Mass killing and destruction followed.

"After 1857", says Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964) in his autobiography, "the heavy hands of the British fell more upon the Moslems than on the Hindus". A young British military officer resolved "to show these rascally Musalmans that with God's help, Englishmen will still be masters of India". And far away from the tumults of war and trappings of military boots in Delhi, Palmerston (1784-1865), the British Prime Minister from Britain asked Canning to destroy each and every building, including the Jama Masjid in Delhi, associated with Muslim traditions and learning, their antiquarian veneration and artistic beauty being no consideration. Consequently, a witchhunt for rebellious Muslims ensued. They were killed wherever the British found them. Their property was looted or destroyed. The British vengeance wreaked upon Muslims

moved even Ghalib, the poet who was otherwise thankful to the Raj for his pension.

The Muslim element should not be magnified, however, as is the wide spread tendency among the communally-biased scholars (see e.g. Malik 1980). This tantamounts to attributing *post factum* motive to actors who themselves might not have been conscious of it. By now it is an established fact that the Uprising of 1857 was the first expression of the nationalist aspirations against the foreign domination (Chandra et al 1989, Ashraf 1975). And in cultural terms, it embodied, the composite ethos of Indian society. S.A.A. Rizvi writes:

“This concerted action (1857 Revolt) cut across all barriers of caste and creed of linguistic and regional prejudices. British officers, despite their active effort, failed to stir up the communal frenzy. The Muslims gave up cow sacrifice in Delhi and other places to demonstrate their goodwill towards Hindus, and the latter exhibited due consideration towards the religious sentiments and prejudices of Muslims. At many places in North-Western Provinces, the entire population rose in a body against the British domination.

(1970: 80)

The latter half of nineteenth century as it grew in the shadow of 1857 marks a major turning point in the history of colonial India on two counts. First, British policy towards India, especially vis-a-vis the communities, underwent a significant shift. In 1861, the Indian Council Act was passed which formed the basis of subsequent constitutional reforms (Brass 1991), Morely-Minto Reforms of 1909 being a watershed in that for the first time the British, following the old Roman motto *Divide et impera* introduced communal separate electorates<sup>1</sup>. And

despite vehement opposition to it by the Indian National Congress, established in 1885, it remained in all the reforms that followed and which All Indian Muslims League, founded in 1906 at Dhaka, exploited to its full use.

Secondly, a religio-cultural awakening emerged during the period under review. The father of this awakening in Bengal was Rajaram Mohan Roy (1776-1833) who attacked the prevalent social ills - the practice of *Sati*, subjugation of women, empty rituals of caste and its attendant inequality which afflicted Hindu society so deeply. He was a great advocate of modern education. With equal zeal he advocated the right of women in property. And in this sense he was undoubtedly a great reformer of his times. But there is another aspect to his set of ideas and practice, e.g. Hindu-Muslim relation which needs critical scrutiny. The nationalist historian, Bipin chandra, hails him as the "first great leader of modern India". Arindam Sen (1994) in a paper written in Hindi, however, questions such dominant notions not only about Rammohan Roy but about the whole Bengal Renaissance. In the Bengal 'awakening' Sen finds a strong Hindu revivalist tinge. Further, it was the revival of great traditions of Hinduism, not of its little traditions. Making a comparison of Muslims (sic) and British rules Rajaram Mohan Roy wrote in 1823:

During Muslims rule, the religious freedom of the native people was trampled upon... Often, the Bengali community was economically exploited and humiliated on religious ground.... The merciful god, then, inspired the British to come to Bengal and liberate its native people.

(translation mine, quoted in Sen 1994: 12)



Similarly, Keshav Chandra Sen harboured an ill will towards Muslims. Delivering a lecture in London in 1870 he said:

Under the Muslim misrule when even the last ray of hope had extinguished... then the kind God sent the British to salvage India.

(ibid: 12-3)

Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya was no exception. Nothing demonstrates it more starkly than his portrayal of Bhakti movement and Indian Muslims. For him, Bhakti-Sufi tradition, the shining symbol of our syncretic culture, meant nothing but submission and passivity: because it betrayed his visualization of a virulent Hinduism where from, he thought, flows the vitality to rejuvenate India. In his writings one can discern a subtle but deep condescending attitude towards Muslims. The last phase of his life in which he produced there major novels - *Sitaram*, *Mirnalini* and the famous *Anandmath* - is marked by deep-rooted hatred against them. He squarely blames Muslims for the plight of Hindus. It was they, argued he, who brought Hindus from the apogee of glory to the present decay. As Tanika Sarkar has perceptively observed, in imagining India as a nation Bankim invoked a glorious Hindu memory which was exclusive and agressive at once. For him ideal Hindu society existed much before the coming of Muslims in India. (Sarkar. 1994, see also Michael 1996).<sup>2</sup>

This exclusivist construction of India as a nation with an open Hindu assertion - nay an aversion to Muslims - found its most articulate embodiment in the ideology and politics of the Arya Samaj, established in 1875 by Dayanand Saraswati (1824-83). The primary objective of the

Samaj was to purge Hinduism of its corrupt influences. Dayanand denounced caste system in no uncertain terms. He sought to purify Hinduism through adherence to an undiluted 'vedic faith'. The 'vedic texts', thus, became the source of revitalization of modern Hindu society for Dayanand (Gold 1991: 539-42). Another objective of the Arya Samaj was to check the conversion of Hindus to other religions. Later on, in twentieth century this led to the sharpening of communal divide already set in motion by a maze of other political factors (Jaffrelot 1996)<sup>3</sup>. The controversies over Hindi-Urdu language and cow are another two nodal points of this revivalist-communal politics in the last quarter of nineteenth century. The latter arose in north India under the influence of writings and activism of Dayanand Saraswati. First established in Punjab, the Gaurakhsini Sahbas (Cow-Protection Societies) grew active in the 1880s and later on spread to other parts of the country. Cow being sacred to Hindus and an object of sacrifice for Muslims, it flowered into a major controversy precipitating a chain of communal riots in 1893. As a result, it led to the redrawing of identity boundary between Hindus and Muslims (Pandey 1994).

No less controversial was the Hindi-Urdu issue. In the eighteenth century, Urdu was written and spoken by Hindus and Muslims alike. It was written in Persian as well as Devnagri scripts. A century later, parallel processes of Persianization and Sanskritisation began which resulted into the birth of two separate languages - Hindi and Urdu (Rai 1984, see also Ahmad 1997). The irony was further compounded when

Hindi became synonymous with Hindus and Urdu with Muslim. The colonial state had its own role in creating and accentuating the divide. In 1872, Hindi was made the court language in nine districts of the Central provinces (modern Madhya Pradesh) by replacing Urdu. And in 1900 Sir Anthony McDonnell decreed the use of Devnagri script in court and offices of the United Provinces as obligatory.

The analysis offered above serves as a necessary background to identify various currents of thoughts and responses found among Muslims in the wake of colonial impact, in material as much as ideational arenas. Equally important in this connexion as noted in the preceding pages, is the socio-religious awakening that first crystallized among the elites of Hindu community, particularly the Bhadralks of Bengal.

Keeping the focus of this study in mind, following five dominant ideological-political responses could be identified among the Indian Muslims<sup>4</sup>.

- Islamic Traditionalism
- Islamic Modernism
- Secular Nationalism
- Muslim Communalism
- Islamic Fundamentalism

Before I set out to analyse each of these responses I must add that this typology is purely heuristic, not essentialist. Scholars concerned with different set of problems may not necessarily agree with this classification. This is, however, as will be obvious later, relevant for this

study. Needless to say, this classification does not represent water-tight compartments.

*Islamic Traditionalism:* The most representative and popular example of Islamic traditionalism was *Ulema* and people known as Deobandi. The term Debandi is derived from the place Deoband in U.P. where the centre of Islamic Learning (*madarsa*), Dural Uloom is located. Maulana Mohammad Qasim Nanawtawi, an active participant in the Revolt of 1857, founded it in 1867. On its pattern a large number of theological seminaries were established throughout the subcontinent. The focal concern of Deoband was "to safeguard and preserve the normative and institutional structure of traditions", observes Mumtaz Ahmad (1991) "from the increasingly aggressive onslaught of Western idea and institutions". It was opposed to modern education and stood against any change. In other words it symbolized characteristic opposition to modern values. Maulana Rashid Gangohi, one of the guiding spirits behind the establishment of Darul Uloom and successor of Nanawtawi, considered philosophy as 'develish art' (Faruqui 1963). Politically, it was dead against the League and its two-nation theory. It always supported the Congress. As a mater of fact, the Deoband Ulema carried out polemics against the champions of Pakistan cause. Maulna Hussain Ahmad Madani, a towering religious figure of Deoband, rejected religious nationalism of the League and instead described territory as the defining principle of nationalism (Alvi 1987). The Jameetual Ulma-e-Hind, formed in 1919 in the wake of Non-cooperation movement and Khilafat

agitation, for the most part remained under the leadership of Deoband Ulema and lent rock-solid support to the Congress, its ideology and programme.

Bralvis, so-called after the name of Ahmad Raza Khan of Braily (a town in U.P.), represent another stream of Islamic traditionalism. They profess popular form of Islam; in Gellner's antropological term Low Islam. The religious belief and practices of Bralvis are infused with superstition and syncretism. They have unflinching faith in the miracles and power of saints and *peers*. Worship at the shrines of great souls is an integral article of their faith. They mainly come from the peasantry. It is interesting to note that tough Bralvis and Deobandis are both *Sunnis* they hate each other (Alvi 1987, Sanayal 1994).

*Islamic Modernism:* In India Islamic modernism has become synonymous with Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and his movement. Much before Sir Syed Ahmad, however, a few enlightened Muslims of Calcutta felt the need for modern education. In 1856, the National Mohammedan Association was formed with Nawab Amir Ali (1817-79) as President. Seven years later, Nawab Abdul Latif founded the Mohammaden Literary Society. Both Abdul Latif and Amir Ali struggled hard to surmount the difficulties that prevented Muslims from pursuing modern education. Karamat Ali of Jaunpur (d.1873) emphasised the need for studying European languages and science (Rizvi 1970).

But it was Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-98) who advanced a

comprehensive agenda for the spread of modern education among the Indian Muslims. Being himself from the aristocratic background, his main concern was to prepare the youth of his class for western education so as to bring them on a par with the Hindus who had already embraced it much before the Muslims did. Impressed as he was by the intellectual capacity and material glamour of the West, he wanted his co-religionists, particularly their elite, to adopt modern education unhesitatingly. In this sense, his was the modernist response to the material and intellectual challenges of the colonial rule. Sir Syed's openness to liberal ideas invited the wrath of Mullahs who called him *Dahriya* (this-worldly). The obscurantism of clergy, however, could not deter him from the great task that he had set for himself. To accomplish this he founded the Scientific Society in 1863. In 1876, he established Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College, later known as Aligarh Muslim University.<sup>5</sup>

Education being his principal concern, Sir Syed was not interested in politics as such. He never participated in anti-British struggle. Instead, he remained loyal to the British and opposed Congress. Based on this, scholars, both in India and Pakistan, have portrayed him as the harbinger of Muslims separatism. This is simply misleading. His speeches in the Imperial Legislative Councils, considering the circumstances obtaining then, were remarkably progressive and he spoke for all Indians (Nizami 1980: 132-35). What he stood for was the socio-economic parity between Hindus and Muslims. He nicely expressed this when in a famous speech he compared India with a bride adorned by Hindus and Muslims

who were her two beautiful eyes. The bride would be disfigured if the two eyes remained unequal. Seen in this background, it would be erroneous to say that Sir Syed advocated the cause of Muslim separatism, much less an Islamic state. K.A. Nizami (1980) and Mushirul Hasan (1994, 1998) have demonstrated the fallacy of this popular view (see also Rizvi 1970). Next to Sir Syed, perhaps the most important personality was Syed Amir Ali (d. 1928) who sought to strike a synthesis between Islam and Western thought. According to Mumtaz Ahmad (1991), he represented the apologetic response by Islam to the West as he tried to prove the essential compatibility between Islam and Liberalism.

*Secular Nationalism:* The long dormant passion for national freedom came to the foreground when Indian National Congress was founded in 1885. As a nationalist political platform, its objective was to champion the aspirations of all communities. It viewed issues in a secular, democratic framework. In this sense we can call it a movement of secular nationalism. Right from its inception Muslims actively participated in its political programmes. This is evident from their sheer number. The number of Muslims delegates from U.P. in the annual Congress sessions shot up from 8 per cent in 1886 to high points of 42 per cent in 1889 and 55 per cent in 1890 (Hasan 1994: 39).

Badruddin Tayabji (1844-1906) and Rahmatullah Sayani, two Muslims leaders from Bombay, were indeed among the founders of the Congress. In 1887, the former became the President of the Congress. Tayabji was a

man of broad vision. He asked his co-religionists to rally under the banner of the Congress as it alone would deliver goods to them. Muslims readily responded to his call even though some misguided elements tried to prevent them from joining the national movement. The Lucknow session of Congress held in 1899 with Romesh Chandra as the President bears testimony to it; out of the total 789 delegates the number of Muslim delegates was 300 (Husain 1965).

It would be, then, perfectly correct to say that until 1935 vast majority of Indian Muslims were with the Congress. In 1937-38 provincial election League suffered a humiliating defeat even in the Muslim-majority areas. The architect of this comradeship between Muslim and Congress was Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (1889-1954) who rejected the two-nation theory and instead believed in composite nationalism. An erudite scholar of Islam, Azad, along with the countless fellow Muslims was in the forefront of national movement. For many years he led the Congress in testing times. In his Presidential address at Ramagarh session of Indian National Congress, Maulana Azad proclaimed:

Today if an angel were to descend from the heaven and declare from the top of Qutub Minar that Swaraj can be obtained in 24 hours, provided India relinquishes Hindu-Muslim Unity, I would relinquish Swaraj rather than give up Hindu-Muslim unity. Delay in attainment of Swaraj will be a loss to India, but if our unity is lost, it will be a loss to the entire mankind.

(quoted in Engineer 1998:)

Another powerful leader belonging to this political orientation was Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, popularly known as the 'Frontier Gandhi'. As



already mentioned before, majority of the Ulema were not only with the Congress but vehemently opposed the communal politics of the League.

*Muslim Communalism:* As a dominant political discourse the genesis of Muslim Communalism can be traced back to 1906 when All India Muslim League was formed by Muslim Landed magnates and Nawabs. The Mcreeley - Minto Reforms of 1908 was a watershed in that it for the first time introduced communal representation and separate electorates. Muslim League, however, did not appear in vacuum. Three factors went into its making: the British policy of divide and rule, ever-increasing political insecurity, more perceived than real, of the Muslim landed gentry and non-accommodative capacity of the Congress whose one section of leadership for various reasons was communally biased and aggressively asserted the primacy of Hindu culture in the future shaping of Indian nation. Majority of Indian Muslims, however, never supported League. It was only after 1935 that it took mass dimension. This is quite a controversial theme and much has already been written about it. Suffice it to mention here that 'Islamic State' was never the goal of League. It was not even in the figment of Jinnah's imagination. The Pakistan movement did not aspire for divinely-ordained political and social system. The recent scholarship, relatively free from the nationalist chauvinism, has proved the fallacy of the widely-held notion that Pakistan was created as the 'Kingdom of Allah' and that Jinnah was a religious bigot. In this regard Ayesha Jalal's (1985) work assumes tremendous significance (see also Khairi 1995, Weiner 1997). Hamza

Alvi seems to have captured the crux of this new scholarship:

A claim that Pakistan was created to fulfil the millenarian religious aspirations of Indian Muslims is therefore contradicted by the fact that the principal bearer of Islamic religion in India were alienated from the Pakistan movement. It is only in retrospect, when history is being rewritten, that Jinnah is pictured as a religious bigot. The fact remains that Islam was not at the centre of Muslims nationalism in India but was brought into the political debate in Pakistan after the nation was created.

(1987: 21-22).

*Islamic Fundamentalism*: All the above-discussed ideological political currents had fully crystallized by the dawn of twentieth century, the first two as early as the second half of the nineteenth century. The fundamentalist response as a full-blown ideology appeared quite late. The most definite representative figure of this trend in Indian Islam was Maulana Syed Abul Ala Mawdudi (1903-79), founder of Jammāt-e-Islami (Islamic Party). The Jamaat came into being in 1941 but Mawdudi had begun to visualise it in 1938 itself. When asked about the purpose behind the Jamaat's formation, Mawdudi replied:

The situation between (19) 24 and (19) 37 was full of frustration. The Muslims were in the grip of a crisis. On the one hand Khilafat movement had failed and in the wake of its failure came the spate of Hindu-Muslim riots. On the other hand such disintegration had set in the Muslim community that there was no real leader or personality on whom they could repose the faith.

(quoted in Usmani 1975: 77)

Mawdudi was right in pointing out the gravity of situation. The national movement under the leadership of Indian National Congress had in the mid-thirties entered a critical phase. The goal of much-desired freedom was not so distant. Having been routed in the 1936-37 elections to

Pronvical Assemblies, Muslim League in sheer desperation moved the notorious resolution at its Lahore session in 1940 asking for separate homeland of Muslims. The Pakistan resolution was passed a few days after the historic Presidential speech of Abul Kalam Azad who reiterated his unflinching commitment to the Congress and composite nationalism based on territory, not religion.

The Indian Muslims in the late thirties were broadly divided into two ideological-political camps: secular, plural nationalism of the Congress and communal nationalism of Muslims League. While the Congress and Azad enjoyed the support of majority of Muslims, League was still a party *sans* any mass base. Maududi rejected both these positions, the former because under the Congress-ruled India Muslims would be absorbed by Hindus; the latter because League's nationalism was a pale replica of the West which he uncritically detested. The League leadership, felt he, was not in the hands of righteous *ulema* but the Western -educated individuals in whose scheme Islam as an all-inclusive ideology never figured, even remotely. To be precise, the would-be Pakistan shall not be an Islamic state based on the *Sharia* but a mirror image of Godless, Western, secular democracy (Usmani 1975, Bahadur 1989).<sup>6</sup>

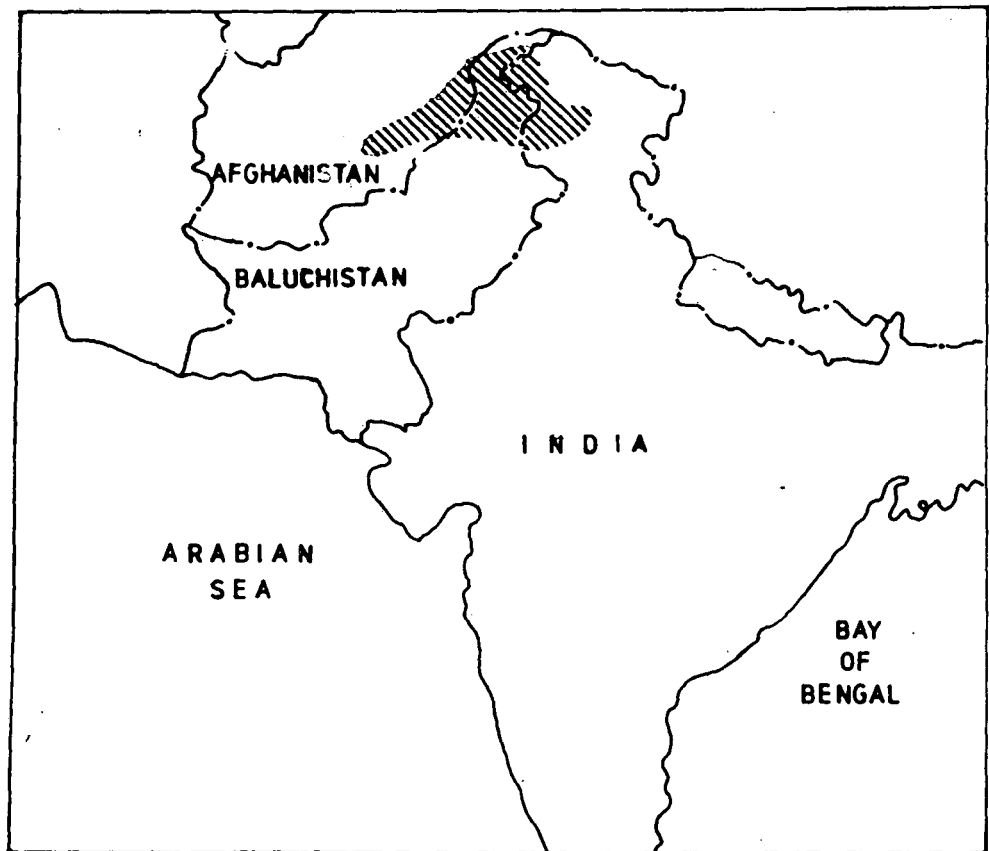
Thus in sharp contrast to both the Congress and League, Maududi set the goal of the Jamaat as the establishment of Islamic state under whose overarching vigilance every domain of human life would be regulated. The Islamic state would be based on the divinely-ordained *sharia*, not

any man-made law as it would amount to betraying Allah's Commandment which he interpreted as the relentless struggle to establish His Kingdom on the earth.

For historical clarity and proper contextualization, it must be noted that though Mawdudi's clarion call for an Islamic state was novel in the twentieth century Indian Islam, its genesis goes far back into history. Mawdudi's thought had a recognizable ancestry in the Islamic militancy of the first decade of nineteenth century.

Following the virtual take over of Delhi by the Company in 1813, Shah Abdul Aziz (1749-1824), son of Shah Waliullah (discussed before), issued a *fatwa* declaring India as *Darul Harab* (abode of war). The *fatwa* meant launching of *jihad* against the British rule. Aziz could not live for long to enforce his *fatwa*, otherwise a religious obligation. Saiyed Ahmad of Rai Braily (1782-1831), his trusted disciple, sought to realize the mission of his mentor. Jihad was planned. This required a territorial base. And the *Mujahedeen* (holy warriors) identified the North-West Frontier Provinces (NWFP) as the best tactical zone for this purpose. Sayed Ahmad asked Muslims to join his holy army. Letters were dispatched to notable Muslims. Hundreds of Muslims responded to his call. They all marched to the NWFP, and trained their soldiers for the *Jihad*. The Sikhs being the reigning power in the region, in 1831 they first declared war on them. But eventually they were defeated by the mighty Sikhs. Among hundreds of *Mujahedeen*, Saiyed Ahmad was also killed in the battle of Balakot. The *Jihad* movement thereafter petered

FIRST ISLAMIC STATE ESTABLISHED THROUGH  
*JIHAD* IN NORTHWEST FRONTIER PROVINCE (1830)



SOURCE: Malik, H. 1980. *Moslem Nationalism in India and Pakistan*. Lahore. PPH.

out (Rizvi 1970, Malik 1980, Geaves 1997).

The failure of movement notwithstanding, it is sociologically significant to underline the fact that for the first time in the history of modern India *Jihad* was initiated for establishing God's Kingdom. Saiyed Ahmad and his followers had carved out an autonomous region where they provided not only military training to the *Mujahedeens* but also forcibly enforced *Sharia*. They had indeed established an ideal Islamic state and a perfect society (see the map). Following the practice of Prophet, they asked the local Pathans to take oath of allegiance (*baiet*) at Saiyed Ahmad's hands and henceforth practise 'true' Islam. Many of them were thrilled by Saiyed Ahmad's charisma but the appeal of 'true' faith proved meaningless to majority of Pathans for whom their 'false' Islam was dearer than the *Jihad*.

Saiyed Ahmad and his followers were thus trying to implant in the present their golden past as during the times of Prophet and righteous caliphs. They were struggling to relive the seventh century Arabia in the India of nineteenth century.

In his writings Maududi pays glowing tribute to Shah Waliullah and Sayed Ahmad who, according to him, rendered great services to the cause of Islam. They were rejuvenators. He extols Saiyed Ahmad and his close associated Shah Ismail for their bravery and imagination.

Thus they demonstrated once again the real Islamic spirit before the world. They did not fight for the sake

of wealth or territory, national pride or any other worldly greed; they fought in the Way of Allah. The only objective before them was to deliver the masses of the people from the yoke of un-Godly rule, and establish that system of government which accords with the will of the Creator and real Sovereign.

(Maududi 1992: 90)

With this historical sociological background in mind, the next chapter deals with the ideology, goal and practice of the Jamaat in India.

## NOTES

1. For a detailed analysis of Constitutional reforms and related political developments, see M. Jha (1972). Also see D.D. Basu (1997).
2. Similar awakening emerged in Manarashtra during the ninteenth century, see Richard Tucker (1976).
3. 'Indian renaissance' has generally become synonymous with Bengal and Rajaram Mohan Roy, in particular. A 'counter awakening' from the below, had, however crystallized much before it. For a scathing critique of 'Brahminical renassaince' and the rise of awakening among the lower castes, see G. Aloysius (1997).
4. I have taken this classification from Hamza Alvi (1987) but have modified it to suit the purpose of my study. As against the five major responses outlined here, Alvi identifies eight ideological-political positions.
5. Though the Aligarh movement under the leadership of Syed Ahmad Khan was largely educational, it also took up social issues, e.g. women's education, polygamy etc. The vast Urdu literature generated in its wake carried an intense nostalgia about the glorious Islamic past; in particular, the poetry of Altaf Hussain Hali (1837-1914) and prose (mainly Islamic History) of Shibli (1857-1914), the two powerful figures of Aligarh movement.
6. For a conceptual distinction between communalism and fundamentalism see chapter III.



## **Jamaat-e-Islami Hind :Ideology, Goal and Practice**

To appreciate the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind in its entirety is to draw a terminological-conceptual distinction between the two related yet, uniquely different sociological phenomena, communalism and fundamentalism. The two bear crucial significance for this study, more so because they are often confused with each other. While the former is largely non-existent in Western academic discourse and has almost become synonymous with the sub-continent, the latter is exclusively of Western origin(see Marty and Appleby 1991, AL-Azm 1993, 1994). To compound the problem further, even the academics use the twin terms – communalism and fundamentalism – quite loosely and interchangeably. The ambiguity produced in its wake not only leads to gross conceptual confusion but also smears the possibility of a coherent cognizance of the phenomena, their genesis, growth, ideas, values and adversary both are continually engaged with. To reiterate, this distinction is the *sine qua non* for unravelling the intimate but complex interrelationship between faith and power, particularly in a multi-cultural, multi-religious society like India where their political implications are perhaps far more consequential than anywhere else.

As a first step towards this exercise a comparative analysis of the ideologies of communalism and fundamentalism appears necessary. In comparison to fundamentalism, communalism does not possess a full-blown, total ideology. Though it too employs sacred symbols and religio-cultural capital as does fundamentalism, albeit more elaborately and more sharply, in its struggle for equal redistribution of power and resources, both material and symbolic, it does not offer an alternative *weltanschauung* or parallel socio-political system. In the Indian setting, communalism and its adherents,

whatever their variants, stake claims for equal share or treatment in the given scheme. more precisely political order, about whose codes and principles both Ego and Alter Ego have no major difference as such. The adversary of communalism is, therefore, *particular* (Gupta 1996, see also Ahmad 1997); for instance, in north India it is Hindus for Muslims and Muslims for Hindus.

By contrast, fundamentalism, its theorists and practitioners do not strive for mere equality but superiority; their target is to replace the existing codes and principles with their own grammar which they consider as the 'infallible truth'. Any other interpretation of the 'truth' is either rejected outright or looked at with abject suspicion. Since, unlike communalism, it possesses an elaborate grammar it has blueprints for ordering every aspect and all institutions of human life – from politics, culture, economy, education, marriage to personal behaviour. For fundamentalists, it is 'us' versus 'the rest'. To put it differently, their adversary is not 'particular' but 'general' (ibid.). To give a concrete illustration, Islamic fundamentalism in India does not regard Hinduism alone as its adversary. It includes Christianity, communism, liberalism, atheism, hedonism, certain important aspects of modernity and all those individuals or groups who hold view other than the one prescribed by it<sup>1</sup>.

Some scholars, like Bernard Lewis, Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Gilles Kepel, however, question the usage of this Western term in the non-Western context (Al-Azm 1993, 1994). H.Johar and B.Bahgat(1996) argue against the use of term 'Islamic fundamentalism' on account of its Western origin. They instead call it 'political Islam' (Johar and Bahgat 1996:99). Going by this argument, the use of terms such as 'Hindu fundamentalism', 'Sikh fundamentalism' is unwarranted. While there is some weight in

their argument it can not be sustained too far. Originate, of course, it did in the West but can this in itself be a cogent reason for its wholesale rejection? What alternative sociological term, then, do we have to explain more or less the similar phenomena in the non-western world? The questioners have no definite answer to it. Each of them designates it differently, often depending on their own convenience. I therefore, retain the term, But I must hasten to add that I do not use it the way Martin and Appleby (1991) have so amorphously employed in their otherwise well-documented volume. It is being used strictly in the sense as outlined in the beginning.

Looking back, it can be unproblematically argued that communalism's best bearer in pre-independence India was Muslim League. Jamaat-e-Islami, on the other hand, represented the most comprehensive and arguably most articulate form of fundamentalism. This analytical distinction will become clearer as the chapter proceeds.

In the light of above terminological-conceptual distinction now I proceed to analyse ideology, goal and practice of the Jamaat in post-independent India. Keeping the objective and scope of this chapter in mind, the following discussion is divided into two parts. In the first part I propose to outline the contours of Jamaat's ideology as stated in its vast literature. Special treatment is given to the ideological shift, more apparent than real, the Jamaat underwent after Partition in 1947 when it was divided into two separate organizations viz., Jamaat-e-Islami Hind and Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan. The goal of the Jamaat is also discussed here. In the final part, I propose to reflect on the political practice of the Jamaat in post-independence India.

## II

ideology is one of the basic concepts in political sociology, particularly in the sociology of social movements. It is, nonetheless, quite a slippery term. Ever since 1796 when the French philosopher D.de Tracy first used it till now, it has travelled a long, circuitous route: Marx and Engles, K.Mannheim and Deniel Bell being stops of remarkable significance. The historical career of the concept is thus characterised by varying, often conflicting, meanings and interpretations<sup>2</sup> (see Marx and Engles 1976, Mannheim 1936, Shils 1968, Johnson 1968).

I have, therefore, no intention to attempt a chronologically elaborate treatment of the term, ideology. This is neither feasible nor desirable. Suffice it to say that I am using the term in a *neutral* sense – as ‘systems of thought’ ‘systems of belief’ or ‘symbolic systems’ – which pertain to social action and political practice. Seen in this context, ideology forms an integral component of social movement, be it modern, revivalistic, traditional or a combination of traditional and modern. It shapes actions of participants and leaders in the movement. By now, sociologists have reached a consensus that a movement owes much of its peculiarity and character to its ideology. Unlocking the ideology of a movement, no less of the Jamaat, is vital in that it determines goal of the movement, mobilizes people into action and offers a ‘cognitive map’ to make sense of the world. It identifies adversary and friend. It fashions identity and creates solidarity among its adherents vis-à-vis the ‘other’. Ideology, particularly of a party/movement like the Jamaat, is highly systematized, though not always logically consistent. In this sense, it deals with not only a few aspects of life but with the whole of it. In brief, ideology is a *weltenshauung* in its own right.

What is the world view – *Weltenshaunung* – of the Jamaat? To know it one has to understand the life and thought of its founder, Maulana Maududi. In the entire history of the Jamaat since 1941 till date, he has been the only original thinker. There has been none after him. All the subsequent ideological developments in the Jamaat are, therefore, at best an extension of Maududi's ideas and at worst a hackneyed repetition of what he had already said. The sheer ingenuity and vastness of his thought makes him, in the words of Wilfred Cantwell Smith, “the most systematic thinker of modern Islam”.

Syed Abul Ala Maududi was born in Aurangabad, Deccan in 1903. His father had had both religious and modern English education. In fact, he was a practitioner of law in the British courts. But at the time when Maududi was born his father had relinquished the legal profession considering it un-Islamic. Owing to this new-found religious zeal he did not send his son to modern English school; he instead employed private tutors to teach him the Quran, Hadith, Urdu, Arabic and Persian at home. Maududi thus did not receive his education in *madrassa*. On the contrary, he disliked it thoroughly. He viewed the traditional system of learning in religious seminaries as archaic and dead weight. His mastery over Islam and working knowledge of English were his own individual achievement. In 1914, he passed the *Maulvi* examination in second division, his grasp over mathematics being fairly weak. *Alim*, the next higher degree after *Maulvi*, he left unfinished.

The unpromising beginning apart, he embarked upon a career in Urdu journalism at a very young age. At 15, he joined the staff of *Madina* (Bijnore), an Urdu newspaper. Simultaneously, he began to learn English on his own. Two years later he assumed the

editorial responsibility of *Muslim* (Delhi), an Urdu mouthpiece of Jameetul Ulma-e-Hind. *Al-Jamaat* succeeded *Muslim* in 1924 and he remained its editor until 1928. In the meanwhile, he gradually grew dissatisfied with it as the Jameeatul Ulma-e-Hind, owner of the paper, which started lending vocal support to the Indian National Congress. Between 1928 and 1932 he busied himself in self-education. In 1933 he launched his own journal *Tarjumanul Quran* (Exegesis of the Quran) from Hyderabad. In 1938, he moved to Pathankot, East Punjab.

It was through *Tarjumanul Quran* that he established himself as a serious scholar of Islam. His writings impressed Iqbal, the poet-philosopher, who invited him to come to Lahore and help him codify Islamic jurisprudence. The *Tarjumanul Quran* was as integral to the evolution and dissemination of Maududi's thought as *Indian Opinion* and *Young India* were to Mahatma Gandhi or the Paris-based *Al-Urwatul Usqa* to Jamaluddin Afghani, the foremost theoretician and a relentless crusader of Arab nationalism. It provided Maududi with a platform to articulate his views. It also served as an intellectual weapon with which he attacked his ideological adversaries. Through this monthly journal which he continued to edit until his death in 1979, he sought to realise two aims at once: bulldoze all the 'false' ideas and establish the supremacy of his own. In the pages of the journal he mercilessly criticized the then dominant movements which had captured the imagination of Indian people – the Khilafat movement, the Khaksar movement, the Indian National Congress, Jameeatul Ulma-e-Hind and All India Muslim League. His attack was simultaneously directed against socialism, capitalism and nationalism. The criticism also involved advancing of an alternative ideology :Islam was his straight answer. Which Islam? Islam as he saw in theory, in its so-called golden period and in the Quran and Hadith. Islam as practised by millions of

its followers across the subcontinent, Maududi felt, was worse than *shirk*, the *bete noir* of Allah.

The fountainhead of Maududi's ideology is religion or what he calls *deen*. And by *deen* he means the complexity and entirety of relationship between God (Allah) -- the one Lord and Creator of mankind -- and men, indeed the whole of the world. Behind every reality, from the smallest particle to the largest universe, Allah's will and miracle work. Adam was the first man created by God. He was also his first Prophet. God revealed his religion, Islam, to him to spread it among his descendants. His message was: He is the lord of the universe and He alone should be worshipped and obeyed; they should lead their lives in accordance with the will of God and that if they followed it they would be duly rewarded and if they did not they would be punished both here and in the hereafter, *Akhirat* (Maududi 1986 :37-38)

The good among Adam's descendants followed the path shown by him, others did not. They instead began to worship false gods, the sun, the moon, animals and trees. This gradually paved the way for polytheism and idolatry in open and blatant violation of the religion of God. Over a period of time, His message was either forgotten or set aside. To remind of the original message Allah, therefore, began to raise prophets among every people (ibid. : 38).

With the passage of time and advancement of civilization it, however, became possible to send the same message addressing the moral, spiritual, social, cultural, political, economic and other needs of men, to the entire mankind. According to Maududi, such stage came around two thousand years ago (ibid.:40).He interprets the cardinal

message of all the prophets sent by God as the following:

The ultimate aim of all the prophets' mission in the world has been to establish the kingdom of God on the earth and to enforce the system of life received from him.

(Maududi 1992 :29)

Muhammad (A.D.571-A.D.632) marked the conclusion of the long chain of Prophets sent by God in different epochs and in different places. There would be no Prophet, so goes the belief, after him. No revealed book after the Quran. Muhammed's message is ultimate and final: *Islam is the only true religion, the rest are not only false but perpetually at war with it.* (Maududi 1986 :59, 1991:40)

Having pronounced the conclusion of any further revealed message after the Quran and arrival of any new Prophet after Muhammad, Maududi contends, the entire humanity ought to follow the Holy Book and Muhammad as they herald the culmination and perfection of God's religion, Islam. This is undoubtedly the bounden duty of the followers of Islam which in Maududi's view, means total submission to Allah. The very recitation of the words called *Kalimah*, by which a man becomes Muslim, then, entails that he should obey and worship none but Allah who is Sovereign. The *Kalimah*, in his interpretation of Islam, thus assumes the status of a covenant between Allah and his believers.

What does it mean to say that Allah is the Master of everything? It means that your lives are not your property; they belong to God ...Each and everything belongs to God and has been given to you as a gift...since God is the real owner and you are merely trustee of things owned by Him, you must use these things strictly as He has told you. If you do otherwise, you are abusing your trusteeship; this would amount to cheating God. You have no right to move your hands and feet against his wish, nor to make your eyes see what he dislikes.

(Maududi 1996:74-75)



It is more than obvious that by Islam Maududi does not mean merely worshipping Allah five times a day, he rather means the enforcement of his injunctions and commandments at all times and in every walk of life. There should be absolute synchrony between His will and man's life in its totality. No compartmentalization of human life and society into different water-tight grooves, religious and secular, sacred and profane, spiritual and material. Each and every domain of life must be based on the *Sharia*, the Divine code, for God has quite clearly stipulated His law to guide and determine the human life:

We shall not be doing our duty to his task unless our lives, individual and collective, become a living embodiment of Islam :unless our personal characters are a living proof of its truth, our homes are fragrant with its teaching, our business and factories are illuminated by its rules and laws, our schools and institutions are shaped by its ideas and norms, and our literature and media reflect its principles. *Indeed until our entire national policy and public life make its (Islam's) truth manifest and self-evident.*

(emphasis mine, Maududi 1992a:32)

Maududi was well aware of the fact that Islam as he saw it would not be lived unless all the social and political institutions were brought under a central political authority based on the Divine Law, the *Sharia*:

Finally, I should state one more important thing. This witness of ours would not be complete *unless we establish state based on the principles and teachings of Islam...* Only when the Truth is witnessed in this manner, by both words and actions, will the crucial responsibility laid down upon the Muslim Ummah be fully discharged. Only then will no ground remain for mankind to deny or turn away from the Divine guidance.

(emphasis mine, ibid :32-33)

Note the centrality of Islamic state in Maududi's thought. It is not only central, rather indispensable without which the Truth will remain incomplete. Its most strident ideological expositions are elaborated in Maududi's book entitled *Islami Riyasat* (Islamic State) which, I think, can be regarded as the single most important treatise in

the twentieth century Indian revivalist Islam. Justifying the urgency of Islamic state he argues:

...for Muslims to live as Muslims the only way is to surrender themselves to the will of Allah; to judge their individual and collective affairs in accordance with Allah's Laws and *Sharia*. Islam can never accept that Muslims pose their faith in Allah but decide the affairs of life by un-Godly laws. This is the greatest duality we can ever imagine. Islam is there to eradicate this duality, not to accept it. This is the moving force behind the demand for the Islamic state.

(translation mine, Maududi 1991:49)

The precedent of state based on the *Sharia* was, however, not new in the history of Islam. In his reinterpretation of Islam, by an idiosyncratic combination of *ijtihad* and literalist exegesis, it did exist during the times of prophet Muhammad and the rightly-guided four Caliphs who succeeded him. Muhammad, at Madina, had established the first ever Islamic state (Maududi 1992:30) wherein, in sharp contrast to today's state, there did not exist any division or separation between temporal and spiritual authorities; rather they embraced each other. The four caliphs who succeeded Muhammad followed in his footsteps (Maududi 1992,1994). They all worked as God's vice regents, *Khalifa*, on the earth. It was during the period following the rightly-guided four caliphs that *Khilafat* disappeared and degenerated into *Mulukiyat*, monarchy, (Maududi 1994).

It needs to be underlined that this 'golden' period (A.D.632-A.D.661) formed the nodal point of reference for Maududi in his reinterpretation of Islam cast as it was in the political vocabulary. And it was this illuminating signpost in the chequered history of Islam towards which he beckoned the present-day Muslims and instilled a strong sacred feeling in them to strive for the noble goal as it were their utmost religious obligation.

It thus follows that Sovereignty of Allah as against that of man and visualization of Islam as a holistic system as against its confinement to private, invisible terrain are the founding stones of Maududi's Utopian Islamic castle. But the *raison d'être* of his recast Islamic ideology lies in the passionate mobilization of piety and faith to actualize the political aims. Maududi's ideological vision, as explicated above, found praxiological embodiment when he established the party, Jamaat-e-Islami, on August 26 1941 at Lahore. And the goal of the Jamaat as he defined it was – *Hukumat-e-Ilahiya*, Allah's rule.

As far as the mechanism and means to achieve the cherished goal were concerned, he placed great emphasis on the mental-attitudinal transformation with the Jamaat as the vanguard. Dispelling 'false' notions of Islam among Muslims and removing hostility to Islam among the non-Muslims were his central concerns. Education, therefore, occupied key position in Maududi's thought. It is through education, said he, that outlook would be moulded anew. In this sense, his approach can be described as gradualist and piecemeal (Nasr 1994).

This, however, was only one aspect. Islam in its totality could be followed and enforced only when the state had been captured. For Maududi the question whether state first or society appeared irrelevant. He was for both. And since Islam can not be enforced in society without a state, he put singular emphasis on the latter (cf. Nasr 1994). Responding to this question he said:

Will it be legitimate for a nation which believes in the supremacy of Allah and his Prophet...to give moral sermons to each other but accept the un-Godly rule? If we accept it, we may not be individually apostate but as a collectivity and nation surely we would be.

(translation mine, Maududi 1991:724)

Acceptance of un-Godly rule being tantamount to apostasy in Islam, argued Maududi, its true followers must make all the possible efforts 'o wipe out its every trace and establish *hukumat-e-Ilahiya*. Use of force was not ruled out (cf. Ahmad 1991, Nasr 1994). In fact, in *Al-jihad Fil Islam*, first published as early as 1927, he unapologetically justified the use of coercive means in pursuit of Islamic goal as defined by him (Maududi 1993, see also, Bhat 1970, Bahadur 1977)<sup>3</sup>.

In order to understand the peculiarity and distinct character of the Jamaat it should be recalled that during late Thirties and early Forties – the historical context in which it came into being – the freedom struggle had reached a critical phase and the Indian political opinion was divided along two broad ideological poles, Indian National Congress and All India Muslim League. Western ideas of secularism, socialism and communism had also great appeal, especially among educated Indians. From Maududi's ideological viewpoint, all these movements and their ideas represented false concerns. None of them had the agenda of an Islamic state, not even the *Ulema*, custodians of Islam. Maududi, therefore, not only rejected them all but subjected them to tearing criticism. The traditional *Ulema* and the Muslim League were his specific targets<sup>4</sup>. He mounted frontal attack on the League for two reasons. First, much like the Congress, it was also based on the ideology of nationalism, Muslim nationalism which was out and out detrimental to *his* Islam. Further, it never talked about ordering the would-be Pakistan on the principles of *sharia*. Simply put, Pakistan was not at all an Islamic demand in his view. Secondly, Muslim League's nationalism, was premised on the concept of territory rather than faith. Territorial Muslim nationalism informed by the Western ideas of democracy, argued he, was as condemnable in the *Sharia* as the

Indian nationalism (Maududi 1987:109-11,1996a:96)

### III

Barely six years after the formation of the Jamaat India was partitioned. And in a *volte face* of first order Maududi chose to be a citizen of the same Pakistan which he had been condemning for long. After Partition, in 1947 the Jamaat was divided into two separate political organisations: Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan and Jamaat-e-Islami Hind. The organizational separation, however, did not lead to any alteration either in its ideology or goal. The goal of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind in India remained the same -- establishment of Allah's sovereignty in all walks of life, including politics. But terminology expressing the goal was changed on account of 'confusion' and 'misunderstanding'. The earlier goal of *Hukumat-e-Ilahiya* – Allah's Kingdom – was replaced with *Iqaamat-e-Deen*, establishment of religion. Maulana Abul Lais Nadwi, the first *amir* of the Jamaat in independent India, remarked:

...there is no question whatsoever of making any fundamental change in the Jamaat's Constitution. However, partial, terminological addition or deletion can be done.

(translation mine, Nadwi 1990:104)

The Jamaat's Constitution which came into force on 13 April 1956, also makes no secret of its goal. Its Article 4 reads:

The objective of the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind is *Iqaamat-e-Deen*, the real motive of which is solely the achievement of Divine pleasure and success in the hereafter.

(Constitution of the Jamaat 1995:5)

The objective is followed by an explanation:

*Iqaamat* of this *Deen* means that, in its entirety and without exercising any discrimination or division, should be sincerely followed and followed single-mindedly. It should be so enforced

and given effect to in all aspects of human life, individual as well as corporate, *that the development of the individual, the reconstruction of society and the formation of State should all conform to this very Deen (Islam).*

(emphasis mine, ibid:6)

Despite the explicit proclamation of reconstructing state and society on the basis of the *sharia* and Islam in its Constitution, the Jamaat publicly makes ambiguous statements regarding its goal: 'pursuit of Divine pleasure', 'furtherance of Islam' etc. (Engineer 1985:259). In the light of evidences quoted directly from Jamaat's own official literature, including its Constitution, it is established beyond any shadow of doubt that its goal in India after Partition remains the same as originally laid down by its founder, Maulana Maududi. The change enacted after 1947 is more in terms of strategy and tactics than ideology and its original goal.

Since its establishment in 1941 until 1947 Maududi was the *amir* of the Jamaat in undivided India. Following Partition of the subcontinent in the summer of 1947, the Jamaat also had to be divided. According to the organizational rule, the decision to this effect solely lay with the President, Maududi who as an individual overshadowed the entire organization. As mentioned above, he himself migrated from Pathankot in East Punjab to the newly-created Pakistan. A correspondence followed between Tufail, General Secretary of Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan and Maulana Abul Lais Nadwi, then a teacher at Madrasatul Islah, Sara-e-Meer, Azamgarh in U.P. and, later to become the first President of the Jamaat in India. On Maududi's edict the former dispatched a letter dated February 15 1948 to the latter directing the Jamaat members who remained in India to dissociate themselves from the Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan and form an independent organization of their own. It was, however, categorically stated that the

goal of the Jamaat in both the countries would remain one and the same (Nadwi 1990: 6-8)

The total number of the Jamaat members in undivided India was 999. After Partition, only 240 remained in India (Agwani 1986). In obedience to Maududi's edict the Jamaat members in India met in a conference at Allahabad in April 1948. The three-day conference held under the gloomy shadow of Partition announced the formation of an independent party bearing the name of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind. It also unanimously chose Maulane Abul Lais Nadwi as its first *amir*, the supreme position in the Jamaat's organizational structure. It was also decided in the conference that its headquarter would be based in Maleehabad, Lucknow. Munshi Hedayat Ali, one of its members, volunteered to donate his land and building to the Jamaat. Along with the headquarter one research institute and one library were also established (Nadwi 1990).

Before I set out to analyze the Jamaat's activities in the post-Partition India it would be worthwhile to dissect the comprehensive blueprint Maududi offered to the Indian Jamaat on the eve of Partition. The future action plan of what he called the 'Islamic movement' in India was elaborated in the historic address he delivered at Madras in the annual regional conference of the Jamaat in April 1947.

Mauduli predicted, of course, quite wrongly, that India for obvious reasons would become a Hindu State as a result of which the distinct religious identity of Muslims would be destroyed (Maududi 1996b: 10-11). In such a grave atmosphere he advised Muslims in general and the Jamaat members in particular to eschew the trodden path of Muslim nationalism like the Mulsim League as this would spell disaster for them; the

majority community' would make their lives well-nigh impossible (ibid: 13). The only way left for Indian Muslims, then, was to uphold the flag of Islam: their efforts being directed towards the ideological mission and message of Islam. They should transform themselves morally, praxiologically and collectively so as to become the 'best' community whose motto was not parochial but universal brotherhood and whose religion was not meant for them alone but for the entire mankind. This task as he visualized it was twofold: radical moral and ideological transformation of Muslims and a ceaseless campaign among Hindus to either bring them to the fold of Islam or neutralize them. In the accomplishment of the twin tasks, hoped he, lay the success of Islamic movement whose ultimate goal he had already set as the establishment of Allah's kingdom.

According to Maududi, Hinduism was not an organized, coherent religion. Its very foundation was fragile and its ideals myopic. It was ridden with irreconcilable contradictions : further, religio-political consciousness in Hindus was based on the negative feeling against the British and Muslim nationalism. With the departure of the British and creation of Pakistan, Hindus would be left with no enemy to create hysteria against. Communism being one-sided in favour of matter as against spirit would also fail. Islam could majestically fill up this great vacuum provided it was presented in its true form as, he believed, it was the best system against all the traditional religions as well as the modern European ideologies (ibid :20-24). In pursuit of this long-term goal he recommended four steps to the Jamaat members in India.

First, elimination of nationalist, and by nationalist he meant religious, conflict which had gripped both Hindus and Muslims in the past. Muslims must not raise any demand



for representation in Assemblies or fight for share in the government service. "They should rather develop" advised Maududi, "indifference towards the new government and political system" (ibid: 32). Hindus should be assured that here was no other party in the field to contest against them. This he regarded as necessary to remove the hostility non-Muslims (read Hindus) had developed against Islam, and to carry on the missionary activities (ibid.:31-33). Secondly, Muslims should radically transform themselves in such a manner that non-Muslims begin to consider their religion and culture inferior to that of Islam. Thirdly, all the intellectual capacity of Muslims be exploited in the ceaseless propagation of Islam. Fourthly, and this followed from the above three, Muslims should readily learn Indian languages to spread the message of Islam far and wide. Their obsession with Urdu would hinder the processes of interaction with the non-Muslim people, the main target of Jamaat's mission in India (ibid.: 36-38, see also Rudaad... 1997, vol. 5)

The programs and activities of the Jamaat in post-independent India testifies to the guideline given by Maududi.

The first twelve years of the Jamaat from 1948 to 1960 is marked by withdrawal from the mainstream socio-political processes and consolidation in term of party building and the required ideological-political training, *tarbeeat*. It appealed to Muslims, particularly its members, to relinquish all the key positions they held under the un-Godly system, for example, membership in the legislative bodies or posts in the judiciary (Jamaat's Constitution 1995:9-10). Maulana Sadruddin Islahi, one of the founding members and a leading thinker of the Jamaat in India, compares the basic principles of modern political system with those of Islamic system. Both these

systems, contends he, are not only different but in hostile opposition to each other. He identifies three core premises of the former – sovereignty of man, democracy and secularism. As against it he counterposes the ideological premises of the latter – sovereignty of Allah, vice regency of man and the *Sharia*. *His straight conclusion is that both can never cohabit. Hence the mission of Islamic movement led by the Jamaat to replace the former with the latter.*

In such condition (the post-independent political system in India) Islamic movement in no respect can either accept the existing system or cooperate with it. Its goal of *Iqaamat-e-Deen* enjoins upon its adherents not only to consider the existing system unlawful but to make its declaration open and loud... and try to replace it .

This is why, it (the Jamaat) considers it illegitimate to participate in elections which sustain the existing order.

(translation mine, Islahi 1994 :105)

Under the new political system based on democracy and secularism that India formally adopted after independence, the Jamaat feared that even Muslims, leave alone Hindus, elected to Assemblies and Parliament would be legislating laws not in accordance with the *sharia* but on the basis of Western democracy, which it described as *haram*, forbidden in Islam.<sup>5</sup> It was owing to this unflinching belief that in 1950 when Z.H.Lari convened a Muslim Conference at Lucknow appealing to all Muslim organizations, the Jamaat included, to come to a joint platform in order to preserve the identity of Muslims and further their common interests, the Jamaat flatly refused to lend its support. The refusal was based on the ground that all the Muslim organizations invited to the Conference did not accept Islam as their fulcrum. Maulana Abul Lais Nadwi, *amir* of the Jamaat, demanded that problems relating to Muslim community must be solved within an 'Islamic' not 'Muslim' framework (Shakir 1970 :31)

The policy of withdrawal by the Jamaat was reiterated in the Jaunpur Muslim Convention held soon after the Partition. On the ideological ground, already stated above, it did not participate in the Convention but sent its observer. Presenting the Jamaat's position the observer remarked that while Muslim leaders conducted their other affairs in the light of the Quran and Hadith, albeit partially, in political affairs they followed un-Islamic European model. He further said that any future programme for Indian Muslims must flow from the *sharia*, their only legitimate manifesto. Much to the lament of the Jamaat, however, its proposal was dismissed by the Convention. (Yusuf 1989: 89-90)

Organizational consolidation and ideological training went hand in hand with the policy of withdrawal. In the decade following Partition it embarked upon the difficult task of party building and ideological training. New units of the Jamaat were established and those already existing were further strengthened. Strategic location of the headquarters was one of its primary concerns so as to carry out its activities successfully. Maleehabad did not prove suitable to this objective. Consequently, in 1949 it was decided in the *Majlis-e-Shoora* (henceforth *shoora*), the highest executive body in the organizational structure of the Jamaat, that the headquarters be shifted to Rampur, a predominantly Muslim town in Western U.P. The research institute and library were also shifted (Nadwi 1990 :106). Finally the headquarters was shifted to Delhi which is for obvious reasons politically more prominent than either Maleehabad or Rampur.

In order to propagate its ideology the need for a newspaper was strongly felt. *AL-Insaaf* served this purpose best. Realizing the political importance of Delhi the *Shoora*

in 1953 decided that it should be shifted there. But the authorities in Delhi did not grant declaration to *AL-Insaaf*. A new newspaper *Dawat* was, therefore, launched on 13 September 1953 with Asghar Ali as editor (ibid : 111). Other vehicles and channels to spread its ideology and programme were also put to use. Ideological camps and training centres were organized to transform its members and disseminate its ideas. Its leaders and workers also launched various mass contact campaigns.

All the programmes described above were aimed at ending the nationalist (religious) conflict, so deep and so fresh in Hindus and Muslims alike after Partition, and creating a favourable atmosphere for the Jamaat's ideology to flower. The main constituency of its activities was Muslims. But as per Maududi's recommendatory blueprint, it had to work with equal zeal and dedication among the non-Muslims as well. In the annual session of the Jamaat held on 27 November 1952 in Hyderabad, a considerable number of Hindus also participated on its invitation. Addressing the joint gathering of Muslims and Hindus, Abul Lais Nadwi, *amir* of the Jamaat, urged the Congress leaders in free India to shun the immoral path of Western democracy and 'irreligious' secularism and instead build a new India on a sound spiritual-ideological ground. Behind Nadwi's urge lay the self-righteous superiority of Islam as a self-sufficient system (Nadwi 1960). The most formidable challenge in this regard was what the Jamaat called 'hostility' and 'misunderstanding' among the Hindus. It sought to dispel the misconception of Hindus that the Jamaat wanted to multiply Muslim population and thereby establish their domination over them (Hindus). It familiarized Hindus with the universal brotherhood of Islam. It also assured them that its message, unlike that of RSS or Hindu Mahasabha, was not meant for Muslims alone but for the entire mankind. With the specific goal of establishing the superiority of Islam against all religions, Hinduism in

particular, and influencing non-Muslims, it started a journal in Hindi, *Ujala*. It also invited, among many others, prominent leaders such as Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Jawaharlal Nehru, Gobind Ballabh Pant, Dr. Sitaramayya, Shri Rajagopalachari, Sardar Baldev Singh, and Sir Maharaj Singh to Islam (Yusuf 1989:98). It had also approached Mahatma Gandhi. As a matter of fact, Gandhi had participated in one of its zonal conferences held in Patna in 1947<sup>6</sup> (Rudaad... 1997, vol. V).

By the beginning of Sixties India had undergone significant change – social, political and economic. In the political arena democratic processes had established their firm root though by no account had they achieved the *telos*. The processes of democratization unleashed under the new political order after India gained independence had deeply influenced different castes and communities resulting into their integration in the mainstream politics. Muslims were no exception (Krishna 1967). The early Sixties also witnessed the rise of communal riots in Calcutta, Jamshedpur, Rourkela and Jabalpur (Quraishi 1971:1229). Both these developments caused great worry to the Jamaat. The former because in spite of its appeal to withdraw from the un-Godly political system Muslims were actively participating in it; the latter because it threatened the very existence of Muslim community. Moreover, in a volatile communal atmosphere it was not possible for it to carry out its activities. Alarmed by the gravity of situation the Jamaat realised the need for immediate political intervention for if it failed to take initiative it would stand discredited among Muslims as their only ‘true’ party. Adopting the tactics of united front, in August 1964 it, in collaboration with others, floated All India Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat (All India Muslim Consultative Committee), a loose confederation of various Muslim political parties and religio-educational organisations. Since my concern here is not to trace the

genseis, growth or decline of the Majlis, suffice it to say that the Jamaat played a key role both in the formation of the Majlis and in its determination of political agenda. The main goal of the Majlis was to lobby for the Muslim interests within the democratic-constitutional framework. A nine-point People's Manifesto was released by it. The Manifesto included, *inter alia*, revision of school text books to eliminate exposition of Hindu custom and beliefs, promotion of Urdu as the second official language in U.P. and other states, preserving the Muslim character of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) and safeguarding the Personal Laws of different religious communities. As a policy it did not participate directly in the elections; instead it supported candidates who accepted its Manifesto. Electorally, it did not meet with great success. It, however, accentuated the process of politicization among Muslims. For various reasons the Majlis declined as an active force in the Seventies (Quraishi 1971, Anderson 1981, Bahadur 1989).

It is no coincidence that the four demands which formed the desideratum of Majlis Manifesto also prominently figured in the Jamaat's agenda. A quick perusal of the proceedings and resolutions of its *shoora* will prove it. In the *shoora* held in April 1963 the Jamaat strongly condemned the move of Union Law Minister to set up a committee to reform the Muslim Personal laws (MPL). It also opposed the Monogamy Bill tabled in the Maharashtra Assembly, 'unfortunately' by a Muslim member. Its resolution read.

The *Majlis-e-Shoora* thinks that the move to change Muslim Personal Laws is extremely dangerous. Declaring polygamy as unlawful which is otherwise permitted by the Quran is an open interference in religion (Islam).

(translation mine, Rudaad... 1985:215)

The same year on 28 July its President, Nadwi addressed the Bihar State Muslim Convention and described the government's move to reform the MPL as an open threat to the religious identity of Indian Muslims. He further demanded that the very article of the Indian Constitution pertaining to the desirability of Uniform Civil Code be done away with (Nadwi 1985:32). It was precisely this crying concern to preserve the *sharia* which made the Jamaat establish its own Shariat Panchayats in every nook and corner of the country where Muslims formed a sizable population (see Table 3.4). Needless to say, these Panchayats run parallel to the existing judicial courts.

The primacy the Jamaat placed on such issues as Urdu, AMU and education can be well grasped by its strongly-worded resolutions passed in its *shoora* during the Sixties. The last one – education – needs some elaboration. The Jamaat felt that the government run education system, especially at primary and secondary levels, had been consciously promoting Hindu culture and belief through texts books. This, according to it, would surely go against those students who believed in Islam. For the Jamaat it was, therefor, not only the question of negative impact of the so-called secular education system. It was much more than this: the very continuity of 'Muslim mind' which it sought to transform into a purely Islamic mould, was at stake. The large network of educational institutions, both primary and secondary, established by it goes to prove this point (see Table 3.4).

During this period it made another effort to extend its influence over its rival groups. It took initiative to form an All India Muslim Newspaper Editors' Conference. Interestingly, Usman Farqalet of daily *AL-Jamiat*, an ideological adversary of the Jamaat, was elected as its President, while Yusuf Siddiqui of *Radiance*, organ of the

Jamaat, was elected as Secretary. This coming together of the hitherto diehard opponents was no doubt to form a united front of Muslims with the Jamaat in the forefront.

Having organizationally consolidated itself by the first half of the Seventies it sought to further enlarge its base. To make inroads among the youth and students it founded Students Islamic Movement (SIM) in 1977. The main objective behind its establishment was to introduce Islam on all-India level to the youth (Engineer 1985 :260-61). Later on, on the controversial issues of its autonomy and the methodology to bring Islamic revolution the SIM parted ways with the Jamaat. This was a great shock to the latter. It, then, floated another organisation of students with the same objective, Students Islamic Organization (SIO). The SIO works well under the tutelage of the Jamaat. In 1984 its membership stood at 3,286 with 12 units in different colleges and universities (Nadwi 1984 :43). It enjoys considerable support in AMU, Jamial Millia Islamia and Jawaharlal Nehru University, the bastion of radical left politics. Its girls' wing, Girls Islamic Organization (GIO) has of late become fairly active though it is not as strong as the SIO (Ansari 1996 :11-13).

The discussion so far has revolved around the Jamaat's activities among Muslims. Now I turn to analyze its activities vis-à-vis non-Muslims (Hindus) whom Maududi had identified as equally important for the success of Islamic movement in India.

As it is clear from the aforesaid analysis, the Jamaat strove hard to emerge as the sole political spokesman of Indian Muslims, though with hardly any success. Side by side it also sought to create public opinion in favor of a society based on religious rather than



secular principles. Its organ in Marathi, *Marg Deep* wrote in its issue of December 26, 1964:

If we want to have sound communal harmony in India, there should be separate and strong organizations of Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists and others...Every religious community should have a separate political organization and every issue should be decided by the leaders of the respective communities by holding talks.

(quoted in Ahmad 1969 :16)

Behind the editorial suggestion of *Marg Deep* was without any shadow of doubt Maududi's rosy prediction that once there emerged a consensus to fashion India on the basis of religion as against secularism, Islam was bound to win as it, unlike Hinduism, alone was endowed with an organized, systematic and holistic philosophy. Addressing a convention just three months before the Partition at Darul Islam (Pathankot) the Maulana advised Hindus to study their religious texts and establish the future state on their bases after freedom from the British. But in case they (Hindus) did not find any systematic guidance from their own religious books, Maududi invited them to study Islam and embrace it as it was the only true religion of God (Haq 1972). Following in the footsteps of its founder, the Jamaat in India found no better friend than the RSS<sup>7</sup>, torch bearer of Hindu Rashtra (Bhat 1970:37).

It should be stated here that by the late Sixties secular-modern processes had fairly gained ground in Indian politics. This worried the Right forces of both the hues, Muslim and Hindu. To counter the secular menace the Jamaat, and the RSS and its sister organizations came together. Close-door parleys were held between leaders of the two groups. The main objective behind this new friendship was "to counteract the non-religious activities", writes Nafis Ahmad, "of secular and progressive forces". In

Gujrat a delegation of the Jamaat held extensive talks with the Hindu Mahasabha leaders to explore the possibilities of a united platform against the progressive and socialist forces in the country (Ahmad 1969).

This process of mutual interaction between the RSS and the Jamaat, already begun in the Sixties found new frontiers of further cooperation during the Emergency. The Indira Gadhi led government proclaimed emergency in June 1975. Within a week it imposed ban on the Jamaat and arrested its leaders and cadres.<sup>8</sup> The chain of primary schools run by it were also confiscated (Wright Jr. 1979: 87).<sup>9</sup> Along with it, the RSS was also banned and its leaders were jailed. In prison leaders of both the Jamaat and the RSS came together. This led to the 'miracle' of a dialogue in the jail (Jaffrelot 1996 :285). Misgivings about each other gave way to mutual understanding. Hostility between the RSS and the Jamaat, realized their leaders jointly, was due to the mischief of 'secular' forces (Farooqi 1977:15). In early 1977, both sets of leaders were released. The new-found love between the two brought them together to support Janata Party in the post-Emergency election in which it clinched landslide victory and formed the first non-Congress government at the Center.

On the organizational front the Jamaat made rapid progress in the span of thirty-three years since its establishment in 1948. Its membership rose from 240 in 1948 to 2831 in 1981 with 36, 243 sympathisers and 1,240 helpers. The number of local units also increased upto 436 in 1981 (see Table 3.1). Additionally, it established rapport with 285,395 men and 26,253 women of Islamic faith and with 29,691 non-Muslims (Agwani 1986: 62-64). It claims to have the support of 29,162 Muslim boys and 9,058 Muslim girls. These figures though helpful at one level in assessing its growth over the

decades, by no means do they reveal the actual influence it wields on the Indian Muslim. There are two reasons for it. First, its criteria of membership are extremely rigid and highly demanding in terms of moral standard and political commitment. Second, the official figures can not be considered as hundred per cent accurate. Any perceptive observer of the Indian Jamaat will agree with me that its style of functioning is secretive in many respects.

**TABLE 3.1**

**The Area-wise Breakup of the number of members, sympathizer and helpers of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind as in 1981.**

Area	Number of local units	Member	Sympathizers	Helpers
Headquarters	1	16		
Delhi	1	41	92	6
Orissa		2	20	
Andaman Islands	1	6		1
Assam	1	7	500	
West Bengal	24	142	2855	28
Bihar	34	192	6 077	83
Uttar Pradesh	144	894	3 857	127
Punjab	1	10	87	
Rajasthan	8	54	391	28
Gujarat	2	16	250	4
Maharashtra	56	353	3 520	46
Madhya Pradesh	21	125	500	
Andhra Pradesh	39	385	9 250	595
Karnatka	18	105	4 000	297
Tamil Nadu	7	33	400	7
Kerala	78	450	4 444	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>436</b>	<b>2 831</b>	<b>36 243</b>	<b>1 240</b>

Source: M.S. Agwani. 1986. *Islamic Fundamentalism in India*. Chandigarh: 63.

**TABLE 3.2**

**Statistics (as on April 1, 1992)**

Members	3917
Workers(Karkuns)	17474
Sympathisers (Muttafiqs)	175,079
Non-Muslim Associates	4431
Contacts (Muslims)	416,190
Contacts(Non-Muslims)	149,780
Regional Headquarters	14
Local Jammats	535
Workers' Circles	1470
Muttafiq Circles	2218

**Source:** *Jamaat-e-Islam: Hind : An Introduction*. Delhi. MMI. Undated.

**TABLE 3.3**

**Regional Language Publication Houses (1992)**

Delhi- Urdu, Hindi, English	1200 titles
Calcutta- Bengali	110 titles
Madras- Tamil	112 titles
Hyderabad- Telugu	76 titles
Miraj- Marathi	53 titles
Calicut- Malayalam	305 titles
Mangalore- Kannada	118 titles
Ahmedabad- Gujarati	58 titles
Malerkotla- Punjabi	12 titles
Guwahati- Assamese	22 titles
Cuttack- Oriya	13 titles

**Source:** *Jamaat-e-Islami Hind : An Introduction*. Delhi. MMI. Undated.

**TABLE 3.4**

**Micro-Islamized Public Spaces Created by the Jamaat (1992)**

Educational Institutions	
(Pertiary)	1217
(Secondary)	65
Colleges and Centres of Higher Islamic Education	51
Interest Free loan Societies	323
Zakat Collection Centres	393
Shariat Panchayats	62

**Source:** *Jamaat-e-Islami Hind : An Introduction*. Delhi. MMI. Undated.

In ten years between 1981 and 1991 the Jamaat has further enlarged its base. The organizational-political expansion is most starkly evident in the five-time increase in its strength of sympathizers: from 36243 in 1981 to 175, 079 in 1991 (see Table 3.2). But far more important than the numerical rise is its active and vocal persistence which can be grasped by the fact that it is the only political organization of Indian Muslims which has survived the vicissitudes of times and shows the sign of further growth in future as well. No other Muslim organization can probably match the exemplary discipline of its cadres and leaders. Nor the missionary zeal with which they are striving to achieve the Islamic Utopia. By now it has become the most widespread Muslim organization, having its own press in almost all the important Indian languages. Many dailies and a dozen of weeklies are published by it from every nook and corner of the country. In the Sixties Nafis Ahmad (1969) estimated the circulation of *Radiance*, weekly organ of the Jamaat in English, not less than ten thousands.

According to the Jamaat's own data of 1992, around 30 periodicals in 11 important languages, mostly weeklies, including one daily, subscribing to the ideology of the Jamaat, are published from different cities of the country in Urdu, Hindi, English, Assamese, Bengla, Gujrati, Marathi, Telgu, Kannad, Malayalam and Tamil. It has published thousands of books and pamphlets in many Indian languages (see Table 3.3). This by no way exhausts the use of other means of mass communications it employs to spread its ideology<sup>10</sup>.

Besides, it runs hundreds of educational institutes, Islamic Courts, Zakat Collection Centre, Islamic Banks, Societies and Centres of various kinds to propogate and practice its ideology (see Table 3.4). It is these self-contained, autonomous, parallel

institutions in the civil society, their interrelationship with its ideology and the Indian State towards which I turn to discussion in the following chapter.

## NOTES

1. Though Marty and Appleby (1991) have made the distinction between fundamentalism and other related phenomena like traditionalism, revivalism etc., probably the first ever razor-edged analytical distinction between communalism and fundamentalism has been attempted by Dipankar Gupta (1996).
2. For a detailed treatment of the concept of ideology as it has evolved through distinct historical stages, see John B. Thomson (1990).
3. According to Kalim Bahadur, an expert on Pakistan and author of *The Jamaat-e-Islam of Pakistan* (1977), many writings of Maududi have been deliberately deleted in the publications of Jamaat both in India and Pakistan to suit the different political circumstances. My analysis of Maududi's ideology is entirely based on the books published in India. Since my focus is on ideology, I have not dealt with the organizational aspects. Scholars have, however, noted that the Jamaat's organization runs on authoritarian line. See Kalim Bahadur (1977) and (1989).
4. Maududi's quarrel with the traditional *ulema* was on account of latter's support to the Congress. But far more important than this was the conflicting interpretations of Islam by the traditional *ulema* and Maududi. The former were conservative and opposed to any modern ideas. By contrast, the latter emphasized the need of reason and *ijtihad* and was comparatively open to modern ideas. It should be, however, mentioned that Maududi's use of reason was selective; to him reason ought to be at the service of religion, Islam.
5. The non-participation in the elections by the Jamaat has become quite controversial. Some analysts are of the view that it is inherently against participation of Muslims in elections. This view is not only flawed but highly misleading. It is not against participation in the election *per se* but the purpose behind it. After achieving a degree of popular support it plans to participate in the elections and use them as a means to realize its objective of establishing *Deen*. Non-participation in the election is therefore a temporary tactics, not a permanent principle. See Rudaad...(1966).
6. That the Jamaat has also the objective to convert non-Muslims through peaceful and democratic process is an established fact. However, its headquarter in Delhi does not give any official figure about its missionary activities. When I asked one of its senior leaders about this he began to suspect my motive and declined to divulge it.
7. For a historical account of the RSS, its ideology and involvement in Indian politics see Daniel Gold (1991) and C. Jaffrelot (1996).
8. Before the Emergency the Jamaat leaders have been subjected to five rounds of arrest in 1953, 1954, 1965, 1967, and 1971 respectively.
9. Theoder Wright Jr.'s (1979) account of the Jamaat during the Emergency as

also before appears to be sympathetic. Largely concerned with the 'behaviour', he misses the ideological and political aspects of the Jamaat which are no less important than the 'behaviour'.

10. My analysis of the Jamaat's activities covers the period from 1947 to 1980. However, I have given the data of post-1980 period for two reasons. First, official data of the pre-1980 period is not available. Second, they do not affect my analysis in any way: rather they aid my interpretation as they show the steady rise of the Jamaat on almost every front.



## State, Civil Society and Islamization

That the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind regards the separation between faith and state as criminal, that it views the post-independence Indian state not only as non-Islamic but anti-Islam, that it eventually seeks to implant Allah's government on the earth has been fully demonstrated and established in the preceding chapter. The primary question, then, is: how it is going to establish Islamic State in India. To put it in a comparative context, unlike in the predominantly Muslim Pakistan where the Jamaat has directly fought for Islamic state right since 1947 (Adams 1960, Binder 1963, Ahmad 1991, Nasr 1994), how is its counterpart going to do the same in India which is multi-religious, multi-cultural and where Muslims are a minority? This puzzling question, then, begs a sociological exploration of the interrelationship between the nature and objective of the India state, the dynamics in the civil society and the Jamaat's goal to establish Islamic State, *Iqaamat-e-Deen*. As a prelude to this exercise it is necessary to provide a few conceptual clarifications of the three terms – state, civil society and Islamization – which serve as analytical backbone of discussion here. My purpose is not so much to define what exactly these terms are – which has been done by many others – but to situate them in the light of present study. This chapter is accordingly divided into two main parts. In the first part I offer the contextual definitions of the above three concepts. The second part deals with the complex interrelationship between state, civil society and Islamization vis-a-vis the Jamaat, its ideology, goal and practice in India.

## II

A vast array of adjectives are employed to define the modern state – multinational, polyethnic, authoritarian, welfare, bourgeois, socialist, developmentalist, democratic, terrorist, theocratic, secular and so on. These adjectives, however, signify four different things: territorial base, socio-cultural characteristics of the population, ideological leaning of the state and certain crucial functions performed by the state. It needs to be underlined that the above categories do not represent watertight compartment; they are rather permeable. Moreover, my discussion of state is here mainly located in the context of the last two bases of state's definition – ideological leanings of the state and its performance of certain crucial functions which impinge, directly or indirectly, upon the lives of citizens (Oommen 1996).

Whether the post-independence Indian state is secular or not has for long been a subject of intense debate among the social scientists. In recent times, since mid-Eighties, it has recaptured the attention of observers and consequently there has been an upsurge of scholarly writings on this theme<sup>1</sup> (see e.g., Nandy 1985, Madan 1987, Yalman 1991, Hasan 1996, Bilgrami 1997). I do not wish to survey the complexity and intricacy of this vast literature which is still proliferating. Instead, I focus here on the concept of secularism as adopted by the Indian Constitution.

Though the term 'secular' was inserted in the Preamble of the Constitution only in 1976 through 42nd Amendment Act, its overall ethos has been present therein ever since it came into force on 26 January 1950 (Basu 1997). As a

matter of fact, the idea of secularism goes back to the freedom struggle. The national movement under the leadership of the Indian National Congress consistently fought against the religion-based nationalism manifest in the two-nation doctrine, the strong tendency of communalism within its own rank notwithstanding. The future blueprint as envisaged by the mainstream national movement clearly maintained a separation between state and religion. It remained wedded to this idea even after Pakistan declared to fashion itself on the basis of religion (Bhambhri 1997). In the Constituent Assembly on 3 April 1948 Jawaharlal Nehru, an ardent champion of secularism, proclaimed that

the alliance of religion and politics in the shape of communalism is a most dangerous alliance, and it yields the most abnormal kind of illegitimate brood.

(quoted in Smith 1963 : 473)

Despite this open and bold statement of Nehru, a precise and common meaning of secularism hardly emerged during the freedom struggle as also thereafter. Even today, there is no consensus over its definition and it is subjected to different interpretations by different individuals or groups. In order to avoid the prevalent ambiguity and confusion it is perhaps advisable to look at the Constitutional provisions pertaining to it. Elaborating these provisions of the Constitution, D.D. Basu writes:

India, under the Constitution, is a "Secular State", i.e., a State which observes an attitude of *neutrality and impartiality towards all religions*. A secular state is founded on the idea that the State is concerned with the relation between man and man and not with the relation between man and God which is a matter of individual conscience.

...there shall be no State religion in India. The State will neither establish a religion of its own nor confer any special patronage on any religion.

(emphasis in original, 1997:111)

Three points follow from the above. Firstly, state will not support any religion, it will remain neutral towards all. Secondly, the two should not be fused together. Thirdly, and it follows from the above two, religion is a matter of private sphere and it should not impinge upon the public sphere, viz., state's policy towards the citizens.

The distinction between private and public spheres is nonetheless, beset with contradictions. A religion with an elaborate system of life does not consider this distinction either desirable or necessary. Moreover, many aspects of religion affect the public sphere in that they restrict or hamper the individual. Caste system is a case in point. The Muslim Personal Law based on the divine *sharia* is yet another example from the viewpoint of women's right to equality. In such circumstances the state, then, intervenes in the particular religion to emancipate the individual. The Hindu Code Bill passed in the teeth of opposition in the early Fifties and various moves by the state to introduce reforms in the Muslim Personal Law are glaring examples of State's interventionist role. The guiding principles of the state's interventionist role have been the *liberal-modern values*. State in such matters relating to religion is, therefore, not *neutral*; it has a definite role to play, a specific duty to perform: to protect the citizens' interests as defined by it (see Smith 1963, Bilgrami 1997).

India is a secular state in all the aforesaid three respects (Smith 1963, Kothari 1970, Haq 1972). This does not mean that in practice also it has strictly followed the ideals laid down in the Constitution. The real practice of secularism does not depend on the mere constitutional commitments. It is

subject to a host of other factors. But it is commonly agreed that the Nehrurian era witnessed the hallmark of secularism in practice.

Finally, it should be noted that secularism is not an idea accomplished once and for all, not even in the United States, the supreme model of secularism for the rest of the world. It is rather an *ongoing process*, now halted now accentuated by the vagaries of politics.

Like the concept of like secular state, the notion of civil society is equally shrouded in ambiguity as it evades a coherent definition. The existing vast and still-proliferating literature on it is often more obfuscating than revealing. As a concept, it is elusive and slippery. No wonder, then, than it has come in handy for NGO activists, communitarians, post-modernists, fundamentalists, liberals and radical theorists alike (Colas 1997 : 262-63).

The idea of civil society is found in the writings of Aristotle under the title of *Politike Koinonia* (Cohen and Arato 1992). Through the translation of Aristotle's *Politics* by William of Morebeke and Leonardo Bruni it, then, came to modern Western political philosophy. The concept of civil Society thus exclusively belongs to the Western intellectual tradition which itself emerged in a particular historical context. It emerged after the eclipse of Medieval era when the European society was passing through an unprecedented phase of dramatic change between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. To be specific, its onset in synchronic with the unfolding of modernity in Europe.

The early theorists of modernity – Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) and John Locke (1632-1704) C posited civil society against the “state of nature”, something they took as given and against which civil society was sought to be fashioned. Civil society became coterminous with the state which signified a distinct form of government, usually as a conceptual reverse of the state of nature, actual or imagined (Coady 1986). To Adam Ferguson, it denoted a particular type of society, ‘polished’, less barbarous; a society characterized by cultivation of mind through arts and letters. A society marked by commercial gusto and urban spiritidness (Shils 1991: 5)

During the eighteenth century there was a remarkable shift in the meaning of civil society when it increasingly became identified with economy. This shift occurred in the wake of new science of political economy (Colas 1997: 263). And it is the theorists of classical political economy (CPE) who advanced a distinctly much elaborate view of civil society. The theorists of CPE based their formulations, *inter alia*, on two premises: material conception of history and economic rationality of man. Consequently, they brought economic organization to the centrstage of human life and its analysis. In obvious opposition to Aristotle, for them, man ceases to be political. Economic society rather than *Koinonia politike* became the natural habitat for man. Seen in this perspective, individualism, property and institution of free market formed three cardinal components of civil society (Chandhoke 1995)

Conversely, the late liberal thinkers – J.S. Mill and de Tocqueville – were not so sure of the freedom of civil society. According to Tocqueville, state derives

power from society but it could possibly turn despotic and cripple the freedom of the latter. In *Democracy in America* he, therefore, warned against the danger of democracy. What concerned him most was not the disorder unleashed by the clash of antagonistic interests but the new type of state despotism. This made him devise various means to contain state power and make it accountable. He found three ways; the most important of all being the crucial checks and balance exercised by the numerous social associations. Divided into three arenas - state, economy and civil society – democracy in his view could flourish only when the civil society through its autonomous associations – cultural, social, religious and commercial could bridle the excesses of the state. In fact, he visualized civil society as a bulwark against the state despotism and as an agency by which individual freedom and autonomy could be safeguarded.

It was, however, Hegel (1770 Stuttgart –1831 Berlin) who offered the most comprehensive view of civil society. In *Philosophy of Right*, first published in 1817, he locates civil society within a dialectical evolutionary development of stages where it unfolds as a distinct level between the ‘particularity’ of family and ‘universality’ of the state. Civil society thus denotes a mediating level between the two (Hegel 1942). But despite its mediating role the two are not fully harmonized. Civil Society, observes Hegel, is rife with conflict. It is so deeply engulfed in strife that it is unable to generate a true consensus on its own. He, therefore, makes a case for the control and regulation of civil society by the state. The privileging of state by Hegel is not surprising because state for him is the very Idea actualized, Universality attained and Freedom

embodied (ibid: para 260).

Writing a few decades after Hegel, K.Marx (1818-83) makes a historical reversal of Hegel's core ideas. "Civil society", writes Marx in *The German Ideology*, "as such only develops with the bourgeoisie; the social organization evolving directly out of production and intercourse..." A detailed exposition of civil society is found in Marx's *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (1843). While for Hegel civil society was subordinate to the state, for Marx it was just the opposite. In brief, civil society for Marx is coterminous with the bourgeois economy where the main object of exploitation is the working class which in Hegel's philosophy appears as 'violent mob' (Marx 1970, Marx and Engels 1976, see also Chandhoke 1995)

The immediate background behind the resurgence of academic interest in civil society, nonetheless, can be traced to two important developments in the Euro-American history – emergence of new social movements (NSMs) in 1960s in America and West Europe, and collapse of socialist states in the erstwhile communist block of Central and East Europe. My usage of civil society is related to the latter; it appeared in the Central and East Europe as public sphere separate and autonomous from the state (Keane 1988 :23). In other words, civil society is a distinct property of liberal democracy. According to E.Shils, there are two integral components of civil society. Firstly, it is a part of society comprising a complex of autonomous institutions – economic, religious, intellectual and political – distinguishable from the family, the clan, the locality and the state. Secondly, "it is a part of society possessing a



particular complex of relationships between itself and the state and a distinctive set of institutions which safeguard the separation of state and civil society and maintain effective ties between them” (Shils 1991:4).

A careful reading of the second point raises many questions: Is civil society absolutely autonomous of and separate from state? Is it always anti-state? It should be noted that autonomy and separation of civil society *vis-a-vis* state do not reside in a vacuum. The existence of civil society itself is dependent on the state. Under a totalitarian state there is no civil society. As noted before, it is a distinct property of liberal democracy. To put it differently, civil society and state are mutually interdependent : only a democratic state can fashion a civil society, only a democratic civil society can shape a democratic state (Walzer 1991 : 302).

Civil society has another meaning. It denotes the recognized public sphere where political affirmation and contestation takes place. Neera Chadhoke's observation accords well with what I am suggesting:

Civil Society is simply the sphere where groups organized on class and other social bases – gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, environment – engage in political and ideological struggles. It is the sphere of organized politics, organized not only in the sense that these practices are carried out by institutions such as political groups and social movements, but organized in the sense that public opinion about issues undergoes a process of crystallization.

(1995 : 168)

From the above two formulations about civil society follow : first, it is a part of society consisting of autonomous institutions distinguishable both from the

family and the state; second, it symbolizes the public sphere where contending forces struggle to establish their respective ideological-political dominations. I am using the concept of civil society as outlined in this paragraph.

In comparison to both state and civil society, Islamization is a simpler notion. Y. Singh identifies three types of movements under the rubric of Islamization:

...an upward cultural and social (which during the Muslim rule also implied economic) mobility in the status of groups through conversion to Islam; Secondly, movements towards orthodoxy in cultural and religious matters among the converts to Islam; thirdly, adoption of some Islamic cultural values and styles of life by non-Muslims either for reasons of expediency and profit or due to the historical forces of cultural contact.

(1977 : 73)

Islamization is being used here in the second sense : as movement towards orthodoxy and orthopraxy. To grasp the matter fully, some qualifications are required here. Islam, as noted by many scholars, is not monolithic –culturally or otherwise. According to Ernest Gellner (1992), it is internally divided into High Islam and Low Islam (see also Singh 1977). While the former is textual, codified, literal, organized and puritan, the latter is folk, diffused, unorganized and practised by Muslims majority of whom are either historically converts or heavily influenced by local non-Islamic culture. In case of India Low Islam is intimately linked to the shared, composite practices of Indian culture, mainly Hindu. It is the outcome of syncretic influences of Hinduism and Islam. The best suitable example of High Islam is the *sharia*. The process of Islamization thus signifies the collective efforts by Muslims to achieve conformity to the *sharia* and other legal codes of Islam (ibid : 77). Seen in this context, it is

revivalistic in that it exhorts believers to jettison their non-Islamic beliefs and practices and return to the pureideal, classical phase of Islam. To put it straight, it signifies the victory of an orthodox, orthoprax, High Islam over heterodox, hetroprax, Low Islam including those institutions and values of modernity which militate against its basic core.

Finally, as a process Islamization is not only cultural but political as well and it does not mean merely abandoning of non-Islamic beliefs and practices but also the institutionalized resistance to alter or replace something which is already Islamic in content, e.g., the Muslim Personal Laws in the Indian context.

### III

To recapitulate how the Jamaat views Indian State, it needs to be mentioned that it finds nothing friendly in it. The ultimate goal of the Jamaat and the objective of Indian state as expressed in the Constitution represent two irreconcilable poles: while the former regards sovereign none but Allah and hence the undelayed establishment of His kingdom on the earth, the latter considers people as sovereign with little – nay no – regard to divine wrath or blessing. If it finds anything ‘good’ about the Indian state it is its ‘secular’ and ‘democratic’ character. Secularism and democracy for it, however, not what we generally construe; they mean altogether different things to it. It defines secularism not as separation between state and religion or as privatisation of faith but as the constitutional guarantee to profess and propogate one’s religion. Likewise, it defines democracy not as the process of collective participation in the decision of public policy by the citizens or as empowerment

of the unprivileged groups but as the freedom to prorogate its ideology. Read the following resolution of the Jamaat passed in its *shoora* in August 1970:

India is a secular state in the sense that its constitution is neutral as amongst different religions and their followers, that is, it recognizes no discrimination amongst various citizens on grounds of religion.

In the present circumstances the Jamaat-e-Islamic Hind wants that in contrast to other totalitarian and fascist modes of government the above mentioned secular democratic mode of the government of India should endure.

(quoted in Siadiqi 1971: 86-87)

The last paragraph lifts the veil of the Jamaat's strategic acceptance of rather than its principled commitment to the 'secular democratic mode of the government of India'. Consider also the phrase such as 'In the present circumstances', 'in contrast to other totalitarian and fascist modes of government' in the resolution. What it means, then, by these concepts is simply the constitutional grantee to profess and prorogate one's faith, and the existence of public space separate from and outside of the pale of the state. It in this public sphere in the civil society, characteristic of liberal democracy, which it seek to establish its religio-ideological hegemony over as the first but decisive step towards Islamizing the whole society, the final step being the recasting of the existing state into Islamic mould. It is also the sphere independent of state's interference where it has established its own model of Islamic society, the micro-Islamized public spaces.

How it plans to attain its objective is clearly laid down in the constitution of the Jamaat<sup>2</sup>. The article 5 reads.

For the achievement of its objectives the Jamaat shall adopt constructive and peaceful methods; that is, it shall reform the mental outlook, character, and conduct through prorogation (of

Islam), instruction and dissemination of Islamic ideas, *and thus shall train public opinion in order to bring about the desired righteous revolution in the social life of the country.*

(emphasis mine, Jamaat's Constitution 1995:7)

Right from the beginning the Jamaat has been struggling hard to establish its ideological-political hegemony in the civil society so as to "train the public opinion" in the desired direction of its goals of *Iqaamat-e-Deen*. Its adoption of means such as the large, ever expanding network of Press, individual and group contacts by its leaders and cadres, forging of united front with the rival groups within the Muslims as well as with the Hindus, involvement in politics, seminars, organizing special weeks, public addresses, students' front etc. all go to signify the urgency and exemplary dedication with which it is trying to hegemonise the civil society. I have discussed them at length in the preceding chapter. I shall, therefore, not dwell on this here and instead focus on another aspect of civil society where it has created a quasi-Islamic society separate from the mainstream society and almost independent of the State. Though these institution of the civil society are meant only for the phase of transition from today's un-Godly social order to tomorrow's to-be-achieved God's kingdom, they are extremely important for the preservation of Islamic identity of Indian Muslims as well as for the future Islamic revolution. From among the many concrete cases I shall discuss here only two which are representative of its total ideology and programme.

The two issues which have concerned the Jamaat most are: Islamic education and Muslim Personal Law. Both these issues are quintessentially related to the role of post-independence Indian state. In the previous chapter it has been

shown how it fought against the corruption of young Muslim minds in the government-run schools through the 'Hindu' text books. It should recalled that revision of text books 'to eliminate exposition of Hindu customs and beliefs' was one of the prime demands of the All India Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawrat in the Sixties. It also figured prominently in its own agenda. The objective of the Jamaat is, however, not only to check the spread of the so-called Hindu education for even if the government-run schools stop imparting it, its purpose will remain unfulfilled. What it really want is to Islamize the whole society through education. Amidst a hostile state on the one hand and an arcane system of traditional religious seminaries<sup>3</sup> on the other, the only way out left for it was to establish its own chain of primary and secondary schools where it could train the young minds according to its own ideology. The large networks of schools and colleges run by the Jamaat (see Table 3.4, chapter III) thus serve two-fold purpose: they safeguard the Muslim minds from the onslaught of an un-Godly state and also prepare them for the future Islamic revolution<sup>4</sup>.

But for more crucial than education is the Muslim Personal Law. This is probably the only aspect remaining of the *sharia*. Knowing fully well the intention of the Indian state to reform it and eventually introduce a common civil code for all citizens in its place, it has developed its own parallel legal Islamic institutions to solve the problems relating to marriage and divorce. Till now it has established 62 Shariat Panchayat for this purpose.

These micro-Islamic public space in the civil society serve as identity marker

for the Jamaat. They represent well-demarcated boundary drawn to distinguish Muslims from the non-Muslims. They also serve as model Islamic society beckoning 'the other' to come to its fold and win Allah's blessing or else face His wrath in the life hereafter, *aakhirat*. Moreover, they symbolize the magnitude of Islamized public spheres in civil society. And once the entire civil society has been Islamized through ceaseless propagation of its ideology the state will automatically become Islamic. Allah has promised to help and reward the God-fearing people in their holy mission to realize the divine goal, *Iqaamat-e-Deen*. The duty to attend the sacred call and the urge to win the divine reward synoptically explain the onset of the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind and its passion to establish the Kingdom of God amidst a threatening and invading landscape marked by modernity and non-Islamic culture.

#### IV

In concluding the discussion of this chapter, a point about the theoretical impasse of the Islamic movement in general and the Jamaat in particular may be made: can the Islamic movement fashion a new society of its vision?

Both the theory behind it and the empirical outcome thereof make an intriguing statement about the eventual success of the Islamic quest. Oliver Roy in his insightful book *The Failure of Political Islam* points out the vicious circle in which its theoreticians, leaders and the supporters are unconsciously caught. Consider the comparative case of India and Pakistan. Despite a religious state in Pakistan, a truly Islamic society has failed to emerge. In India, argues the Jamaat, an Islamic state can come about only if the society has been thoroughly

Islamized. In other words, Islamic society is to be founded on the virtuous conduct of its members in strict obedience to the *sharia* but complete virtuousness can be achieved if the society is Islamic in advance. No Islamic state without righteous Muslims, no righteous Muslims without an Islamic state.



## NOTES

1. In the ongoing debates on secularism, there is one powerful stream of scholarship which rejects it as 'impotent blueprint' for the foreseeable future. Its focus is cast more on the desirability than on the viability of secularism in the non-Western world. See T.N. Madan (1987).
2. According to the Jamaat, an Islamic movement usually passes through three stages before it achieves the ultimate goal – propagation (*Dawat*), migration (*Hijrat*) and the *Jihad*. In the first stage *Dawat*, Allah's revealed message, is given to people. In the second, Muslims migrate to a secure place if the power that be begins to persecute them for their missionary work. The final stage involves the *Jihad*, holy war against the enemies. See A.A. Islahi (1987).

In modern times and, especially, in a democratic country like India it is, however, not necessary for an Islamic movement to pass through all the three stages. It might succeed in the first stage itself viz., the stage of propagation. Needless to say, the Islamic movement led by the Jamaat in India is in the first stage. For details see S. Islahi (1994).

3. The main ideological difference between the Jamaat and the traditional *ulema* represented primarily by Darul-Uloom lies in the realm of modernity. The former is conservative as it does not allow any new ideas to creep into Islam whereas the latter is relatively open to the demands of changing times. But probably the most important point of difference is on the question of political involvement. The Darul-Uloom and the *Ulema* associated with it do not consider it necessary to establish the God's Kingdom, perhaps tactically. The Jamaat, on the other hand, regards it as the utmost obligation of the Muslims.
4. A sociological study of the education system established and run by the Jamaat will further help scholars comprehend its ideology and activities.

## Conclusion

We have traversed a fairly long route so far. The journey began by outlining the need for a research work on the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, one of the most important ideological-political organizations of Indian Muslims. A perusal of literature reveals that sociologists have been mostly concerned with the analyses of pattern of hierarchy, ritual observance, social and cultural institutions and the dynamics of change among Indian Muslims. The political ideas and practices of Muslims in independent India have remained largely unexplored. The absence of a sociological study on the Jamaat is a case in point.

What makes the Jamaat distinct and extremely important is that it is probably the only movement/party which hopes to recast the existing society and polity along the orthodox Islamic principles. It needs to be underlined that this hope in itself is not novel; it has a historical lineage going back to the pre-colonial India. In fact, it would not be incorrect to say that throughout the history an ideologically orthodox section of Muslims has always made the demand to establish the divine rule of Allah, though the circumstances for the demand were by no means uniform. The historical-sociological background offered here aims at locating this ideological ancestry.

The demand for an Islamic state, however, gained salience during the colonial era. No other period in Indian history perhaps witnessed the volume and the quality of change as did the British period. The material-ideational transformation during the colonial period elicited many responses from Indian

Muslims: the Jamaat was one of them. We have seen in great detail these responses in the backdrop of national movement. Maulan Maududi, founder of the Jamaat, was critical of Indian National Congress, Muslim League and other Muslim political organizations alike because, as he saw it, none of them had an Islamic agenda. In order to actualize this very agenda, he established Jamaat-e-Islamic (Islami party) in 1941.

We have discussed the ideology of the Jamaat and its goal. Maududi being its founder and the only original ideologue, we have analyzed the evolution of his ideas through a biographical sketch so as to appreciate its politics. The focus is, however, on its political practices since 1948 when it was divided into two separate organizations in the wake of Partition. The analysis of the Jamaat's practice in post-independence India is based on its vast literature. In the analysis we have covered its activities in almost every realm with the exclusive focus on politics. The post-independence history of the Jamaat is the history of ceaseless struggle to emerge as the sole spokesman of Muslims and enlarge its frontier of influence. Simultaneously, it has made serious efforts to introduce Islam to non-Muslims and also forge joint ideological-political fronts with them.

Finally, we have discussed the ideological premises and goal of the Indian State after independence and the Jamaat. A comparative case of the Jamaat in Pakistan and India has been presented. It is interesting to note that though the ideology and goal of the Jamaat in both the countries are one and the same, the means to achieve the objective are markedly different. While in Pakistan

it wants to establish Islamic state first, in India it first seeks to Islamize the society which will automatically lead to the establishment of Islamic state. As an integral part to this ultimate goal it has created micro-Islamized spaces in the civil society. These spaces serve dual purpose: they work as safeguards against the onslaught of existing un-Godly rule and also represent the model future Islamic society. In concluding the discussion a theoretical impasse about the Islamic movement in general and the Jamaat in particular has been highlighted. Which of the two should be achieved first – Islamic state or Islamic society?

In order to enrich our discussion, it would not be out of place to have a brief overview of the sociological theories related to it.

Until recently, three theories have dominated most academic discourses about the dynamics between faith and power – modernization theory, world-system theory and critical theory. Of all the three, modernization theory has ruled the intellectual world as the uncrowned theoretical paradigm. In fact, for most scholars it has served as *the* point of beginning.

The modernization theory is premised on a dichotomous distinction between “traditional” and “modern”. According to it, the onset and spread of modernity characterized by magnitude of industrialization, adoption of advanced technology, scale of economic development, level of literacy, demographic change and the governing capacity of the modern nation-states ushers in the process of secularization. As a result of it, influence of religion

as an organizing principle begins to diminish in everyday life. Religious beliefs, practices and institutions gradually lose social importance. In other words, religion is banished to the invisible, private terrain. Implicit in this argument is the assumption that traditional or less modern societies have been continuously moving towards the more modern societies. The movement from the traditional to modern causes a near earthquake in the sacred cosmology which manifests itself in the reversal of modernization process. The religious turmoil, particularly the ones openly political in nature, are thus negative consequence of the twin processes of modernization and secularization.

The second theory – world-system theory – is essentially a variant of Marxism and had dominated the academic debates as an equally powerful paradigm. Its cognitive canvas is much broader as it locates the rise of religious phenomena in the larger context of social, political and economic relations which link developing countries to the advanced capitalist states. Its main focus is on the global capitalism and its increasing expansion. As capitalism expands through trade and commerce it upsets the existing equilibrium and destabilizes the religious beliefs and institutions. These exogenous jolts of ever-enlarging capitalist relations in turn lead to an abrupt disruption and unexpected social dislocation which find strong articulations in a religious vocabulary.

If the world-system theory focuses mainly on the traditional and the less advanced societies Frankfurt School of critical theory – the third perspective – primarily explains the realities of the late capitalist societies. According to

Jurgen Hebermas, the foremost theoretician of this framework, *technical reason* of the ruthless bureaucratization and the growing ills of capitalist market have grossly eroded *communicative action*. The dramatic upsurge of religious phenomena, contend the critical theorists, is an open revolt against the heartless monetization and mechanization of our collective life. They symbolize the quest for meaning in the lifeworld colonized by instrumental reason.

Though these theories of religion and politics reflect varying intellectual concerns and assumptions, there is one common premise which unifies them. And as such they belong to one broader theoretical approach. They all regard religion as a residual category. Religious upsurge is reduced to an epiphenomenon of the larger socio-political processes introduced in the wake of modernity. Religion always reacts to the forces external to it. It is not a determining factor in itself. In other words, religious turmoils and events are nothing but the throwback effect of the forces of change. Such an understanding, then, refuses to lend any credit to the agency and consciousness of social actors. Moreover, it does not seriously take into account the shaping capacity of culture. At best, it considers culture as a subsidiary factor in the making and unmaking of political events.

In sharp contrast to the above theories there is another dominant approach which explains the interface between faith and state solely in terms of religious idioms. According to this perspective, religious beliefs, practices and institutions constitute *the* defining categories of any scholarly analysis;

they do not react to the external forces; rather they shape and determine them. S.P.Huntington is the most notable exponent of this view in recent times. In the subcontinent. I.H.Qureshi and R.C.Majumdar, among many others, can be indisputably regarded as the early ancestors of this approach.

This study has demonstrated the fallacy of both these major approaches. While the former highlights the process of modernization, social rupture and invasion of lifeworld by the technical reason to the total exclusion of religious institutions and passion of faith, the latter exclusively focuses on the sacred beliefs and practices to the neglect of the wider socio-political context in which religious events unfold. A balanced approach calls for a creative synthesis of both so as to arrive at an integrated, holistic understanding of the interplay between religion and politics. This precisely has been the aim of this study.

Set against the above backcloth this study has examined the interrelationship between religion and politics – a theme largely untouched by sociologists – as visualized and articulated by the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, arguably one of the most important and growing ideological-political organizations of Indian Muslims. First of all, it has sought to situate the birth of the Jamaat in the historical-sociological context. Much to the discomfort of intellectual prophets who consider religious turmoil as a pathological manifestation of modernization, this study has clearly shown that the clamor for Islamic state equally existed during the pre-modern era. And much to the dismay of the Qureshis and the Majumdars this study has demonstrated that the religious

conflicts are not inherent or in-built in the beliefs and practices of social actors, rather they crystallize and accentuate in a definite social context.

This study has also highlighted the decisive role faith and culture play in shaping political events. The issues of Urdu and Muslim Personal Law, which prominently figure in Jamaat's agenda, can not be reduced to dry economic formulations. In modern India they have become the markers of Muslim identity. Similarly, the sacred passion to realize Allah's will can not be reduced to the natural interplay of economic forces.

It has been one of the findings of this study that the Jamaat, like other voices in different religious communities, represents an acute social tension between the certitude of religious beliefs and the unsettling uncertainty that so distinctly characterize the modern social world. How to cope with it is a challenge we all face.



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