TRADITION AND MODERNIZATION AMONG MUSLIMS IN NORTHERN INDIA

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D E C L A RAT I O N

Certified that this dissertation entitled "Tradition and Modernization among Muslims in Northern India" submitted by Javed Rahmat Siddiquee, Centre for the Study of Social Systems, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy, is an original work and has not been submitted so far, in part or full, for the award of other degree or diploma of any University. This may be placed before examiners for evaluation for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy.

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IN LOVING MEMORY OF

MY MOTHER, QAMRUN SIDDIQUEE

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C O N T E N T S

CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

CONCEPT OF TRADITION

Traditions are old customs and practices of people that have had existed in society for long time. It is defined in reference to modernization. Tradition and modernisation are relative term because nothing traditional and nothing is modern in absolute sense. Both tradition and modernization are ongoing processes. What is modernity today will become tradition tomorrow and the tradition of today would have been modernity of yesterday. Tradition and modernization are also contextual terms because what is modern in one context may become traditional in another context and vice-versa. Locating tradition and modernity in the value frame, singh states that the distinction between traditional values and modern values, being evolutionary universal, might not be typical to any one

particular cultural tradition whereas traditional cultural value may be particularistic and typical.[1]

Each community in a given society absorbs the tenets of modernization according to its condition and situation. The moulding of tenets of modernization cannot, however, be taken as tradition. Singh further writes, " But it does not mean that in all substantive details all modernized societies or cultures will be alike. On the contrary, the existential adoptations to modernization in every society take a historical and distinctive form."[2]

GREAT TRADITION AND LITTLE TRADITIONS

Looking into the contextualisation of tradition, Redfield used the term little and great traditions in his study of Mexican Communities to analyse social change. He used the term - "autonomous cultural system" for primitive, isolated and tribal culture. According to him, culture of a peasant community is not autonomous as opposed to that of the tribal community.

It is an aspect or dimension of civilization of a society. But the peasant culture and society, according to him, can be treated as sub-society and sub-culture. What is missing in the autonomous or isolated tribal culture, according to him, is the lack of communication or discontinued communication to the local community, of thought originating outside of it and also of interaction between that community and centres of civilization.[3]

Redfield used the term civilization for the compound culture in which he differentiated little tradition(s) from great tradition. He writes, "Let us begin with a recognition, long present in discussion of civilization, of the difference between a great tradition and little tradition. In a civilization there is a great tradition of the reflective few, and there is a little tradition of the largely unreflective many. The great tradition is culturated in schools or temples, the little tradition works itself out and keeps it well going in terms of the unlettered in their

village communities. The tradition of the philosopher, theologian and literary man is a tradition consciously cultrivated and handed down; that of the little tradition is for the most part taken for granted and not submitted to much scrutiny or considered refinement and improvement."[4]

The two traditions (little and great traditions) are, however, interdependent. Great and little traditions have since long affected each other and continue to do so even today. People take some traits from the great tradition and mould them according to their understanding. On the other hand, the great epics have arisen out of elements of traditional tales narrated by many people, and these epics have returned again to the peasants for modification and incorporation into local culture. "Great and little traditions can be thought of as two currents of thoughts and actions distinguishable yet ever flowing in and out of each other."[5]

Contrary to it, Marriott has viewed both great and
little traditions as diachronic and has conceived the
subject not only in terms of social relation but also
in terms of culture custom and institution in course of
modification.[6] He has noticed this in his study of
Kishangarhi, a village in Western U.P. Any religion
consists of little and great traditions in their close
interaction and adjustment. They influence each other.
About Marriott's study of little and great traditions
in Kishangarhi village, Redfield Writes, "He (Marriott)
finds evidences of accretion and of transmutation in
form without apparent replacement and without
rationalization of the accumulated and transformed
elements. Fifteen of nineteen festivals celebrated in
Kishangarhi are sanctioned in universal sanskrit texts.
But some of the local festivals have no place in
sanskrit teaching; those that do are but a small part
of the entire corpus of festivals sanctioned by
sanskrit litrature; villagers confuse or hoose between
various classical meanings for their festivals; and

even the most sanskritic of the local festivals have obviously taken on elements of ritual that arose, not out of the great tradition, but out of the local peasant life".[7]

Redfield further states, "Marriott proposes that the two way interaction between little and great traditions be studied as two complementary processes to which he gives names. For one thing, the little traditions of the folk exercise their influence on the authors of the Hindu great tradition who take up some element of belief or practice and, by incorporating it in their reflective statement of Hindu orthodoxy, universalize that element for all who thereafter come under the influence of their teaching. Marriott cannot quite prove that the following was indeed an instance of universalization but he suggests that the goddess Lakshmi of Hindu orthodoxy is derived from such deities as he saw represented in his village daubed on walls or fashioned in images of dung: the natures and meanings of the high goddess and the local godlings are similar,

and some villagers identify the latter with Lakshmi."[8]

Finally, Redfield observes, "The opposite process, which Marriott calls "parochialization," is that by which some sunskritic element is learned about and then reformed by the villagers to become a part of their local cult. For example, a divine sage of the sanskritic tradition, associated by the Brahman elders with the planet venus, is represented by erection of a stone in the village."[9]

In any case, the relationship between both the processes of universalization and parochialization is interdependent and reciprocal. In the process of universalization elements of little tradition are incorporated into the great tradition. In the same way, in the process of parochialization the elements of great tradition are incorporated into the little tradition of a community. Hence, both are continuous and simultaneously go into a process in which one tradition contributes to the other and side by side maintains its own structural relevance and autonomy.

Little tradition is practised by taking great tradition as its "reference model", whether that tradition is sanctioned in the sources of great tradition or not but the people who practise little tradition always try to link it to any form of the great tradition.

Tradition is often considered as static with its resilience to change. But singer has rejected the view that traditional Indian society was resistant to change. He has found that the adaptive strategies evolved over several centuries prior to the establishment of the British rule in India continue to function even today.[10] Those civilizations which are not indigenous but have entered the local community from abroad, such as the peasant society of Latin American countries, have been termed as, by Redfield, "secondary civilization". This is in contrast to the civilization of India which he has called "primary civilization". Such civilization is indigenous and has developed out of the precivilised people of that very culture converting them into the local cultural

civilization. Where one great tradition has supplanted to the other, the native great tradition has provided situations that anthropologists may regard as instance of ongoing acculturation. But there are also instances of "deculturation" i.e. removal of the great tradition.[11]

Describing the role of cities in the structuration of the great tradition, both Redfield and Singer say that two basically different roles that cities play in processes of cultural change are "orthogenetic" role of carrying forward and systematically elaborating long established local cultures, and the "heterogenetic" role of introducing or creating modes of thought and behavior that go beyond or conflict with established local cultures. The same city may perform both roles to some extent but these roles will be classified as "orthogenetic" or "heterogenetic" only when one of the two roles predominates in a particular period. They have postulated two hypothetical patterns of urbanization. One they call "Primary" and the other

"Secondary" as mentioned above. They have also traced social, cultural and psychological consequences of both types of urbanization.[12] The great tradition can be localised in the city. According to Singer, there are three general methods for localising a great tradition with a united area: through a study of its sacred geography; of its professional representatives and their social organization; and of its cultural performances (including religious rites and ceremonies).[13]

Besides, Kings, renouncers and educational institutions had played important roles in the formation of great tradition in India. Great tradition was enacted in urban areas where it was potronized by kings and the elites provided legitimacy to it. In the ancient times educational centres were one of the most important pillars in religious learning because education was limited to theology, and other limited subjects like philosophy, mathematics, etc which were considered more in terms of religion than of science.

These religious-cum-educational centres were patronized by the king. Education was imparted by Brahmins who were again protected and patronized by the King. Education was limited to Kings, their kins and family members and other elite sections of society. The elite were consisted of Dvija (twice born) or people of the upper castes but were dominated by Brahmins due to their special role as prescribed in the religious texts. Though , the King was superior in political matter, he was considered interior to the Brahmin in the religious affairs. Even "renouncers", who were not considered to be part of this worldly affairs as perceived by people, were always considered higher in the prestige esteem than the King or political power.[14] It is in this context Louis Dumont has found status or religious status superior to power in the Hindu caste system.[15] Thapar writes, "the political role of the sanyasin (renouncer) is not without significance. The authority of the "sanyasin" desiring from the fact of renunciation coupled with the power of

"Tapas" (peanance) and "dhyana" (mediation) was seen as a parallelauthority to that (state) power. Kings were fearful of the wrath of the sanyasin. The "Danda" (punishment) carried by sanyasin was not merely physical state for it symbolised the power of coercion through an intangible source of strength. Far from being life negating the renouncer was the symbol of power and was often treated as counter weight to temporal authority. The power of renouncers had also to do with fact that they were in search of what might be called the non-orthodox understanding of knowledge. The initial absence of deities in their tradition and the break from the sacrificial ritual provided a rationality. But their character had changed in the post first millennium A.D. When the monastic centres as the nuclei of renouncers became economically selfsufficient through grant and endowment. The initiates, or at least those who were not involved in the arduous of managing and administering the property owned by the institution and villages over which it had

authority, spent their time in writing scholarly commentaries and treatises on existing philosophical and theological texts. The empiricism of perceived knowledge gave way to hours of scholarly debate."[16]

To avail of these privileges, and also of fear psychosis that these renouncers should not become protest symbol for those castes which were not considered twice born (shudra and untouchable). A clause was added that only Brahmin could become the renunciator. The Ashram (stage of life) was added with the Varna-Dharma so that caste functions could continue and dissent could be made less apparent. The individual renouncer had not only been accomodated in the Brahminical tradition but his charismatic power was accepted as legitimate source of authority. Knowing the power and hold of these renouncers the king started providing patronage to them. A reciprocal relationship was established between the king and the renouncer. On one side, the king provided privileges to renouncers who were restricted to Brahmin community and on the

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other side these renouncers provided legitimacy to kingly power through their interpretation of religious scripture.[17] This reciprocity has been highlighted by a number of commentators on Dumont's theoretical expositions on the Hindu caste system.[18]

Thus, the great tradition in India has remained primarily the Hindu tradition contributed by numerous sources such as educational institution, power elite (King), renouncer, literatee, etc. Even laity contributed, to some extent, to the formation of the great tradition. In brief, the great tradition in general and in India in particular is the product of a long duration of its formation and is not practised uniformly through the length and breadth of a society or culture. It provides ground for the formation of the little tradition (s) practised by the people of different socio-economic and cultural background.

THE INDIAN TRADITION Vs TRADITIONS IN INDIA

The great tradition in India is in actuality
synonym to the Hindu great tradition as stated above
and the great traditions of tribal community and other
religious communities like that of Islam, Christianity,
Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, etc. have been considered
as little traditions though these are autonomous and
independent. In other words, the Indian great
tradition is actually sanskritized Hindu great
tradition of which the great traditions of other
religions and of tribal community are considered as
parts. These two types of traditions are placed in
superodinate and subordinate kinds of relationship in
which the Hindu tradition lived with by majority of the
people is the oldest one and is considered higher in
esteem.[19] It has edge over other traditions though both
types of traditions reciprocate to each other. More

specfically, the great traditions of Hindus and Muslims

have influenced each other in numerous ways.

It is, however, inappropriate to say that there

is only one great tradition in India and that too of

the Hindus, and others are little traditions. Even the

Hindu great tradition is not one but it has multiple

traditions having their own little and great

traditions. These traditions have both reciprocal and

interdependent relationships between them and their own

great and little traditions. Sometimes, these also

contradict among themselves as each of these traditions

is autonomous and contributes both positively and

negatively to the Indian great tradition. In the same

way, the great tradition also has give and take

relationship with little traditions. Thus, we can say

that each tradition has both "parochialization" and

"universalization" processes simultaneously.[20]

Yet, according to Dube, Indian society or culture

cannot be described fully through the dichotomy of the

little and great traditions. Even the Hindu philosophy

which is considered to be great tradition is not just one school of thought; rather, it has numerous schools of thought. It recognizes and advocates divergent images of society and different schemes of values. As an alternative, Dube offers a six-fold classification of traditions in India each of which is to be studied in rural as well as in urban context to evaluate change. These are: the classical tradition, the emergent national tradition, the regional tradition, the local tradition, the Western tradition and the local sub-cultural traditions of numerous groups.[21] Even then, the problem remains as in which of these six-fold traditions can the Islamic tradition (or for that matter any non-Hindu traditions) be placed which is lived with by the largest religious minority (Muslims) in India.

THE ISLAMIC GREAT TRADITION

Before we look at the Islamic great tradition in India, it is pertinent to see what are the basic tenets of the Islamic great tradition as such. The concepts of little and great traditions in Islam are controversial because with its territorial expansion over long period of time many traditions got developed by adopting a few new aspects and rejecting the many old ones. For instance, the traditional Islam has always condemned the "bidas" - new customs and ways of doing things, and its religious ideologues have often resisted the new customs and social practices whenever these first appeared. Yet, whenever the innovatory thrusts were really strong, new customs and practices managed to impose themselves allowing different self-definitions of Muslims to persist. Side by side, new orientations to life were incorporated.[22] However, five pillars of Islam remained intact. These were:

Iman (faith), Namaz (prayer), Roza (fasting), Zakat (type of voluntary tax on surplus money) and Haj (prilgrimage to Mecca). These were placed in the hierarchical order in which the Iman enjoyed the top and Haj the bottom positions.

In other matters, the beliefs and practices of people were moulded according to their local culture and tradition governed by the different time and condition. The "Sunnah" (what the Prophet had said, done and liked) of the Prophet Muhammad became the reference model for Muslims of all over the world. Though the "Sunnah" is not a compulsion on Muslims, it is a kind of advice given to them. Wherever possible, deviation is allowed. In course of time this variation has become the main source of emergence and development of little traditions along with the cultural compromises of the Muslim believers.

The great tradition and little traditions in Islam are, however, autonomous but their relationship is reciprocal and interdependent. It is reciprocal in the

sense that not only great tradition contributes to the little traditions but even the little traditions contribute to the great tradition as it happens in the case of traditions in other communities and religions. For instance, the "Muharram" (expression of grief for the martyre of Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet, and his (Ali's) two their sons. Hassan and Hussain) which is of the Indian origin is celebrated among the Muslims in north India and has, thus, become part of the Islamic great tradition. Similarly, celebration of the Id Milad-un-Nabi (the Prophet Muhammad's birthday) is fastly adjusting in the great tradition of Islam. The little tradition is autonomous and has direct relevance to the local Muslim community. It is autonomous in the sense of its local importance and value – attached with the local culture. People know that this tradition is not in accordance with the great tradition of Islam. Yet, they always practise it in reference to the great Islamic tradition and try to link it with that. Little tradition has been able to maintain its independent

existence and importance. At the same time, it is
derivation of the Islamic great tradition which has
always served as its reference model.

Islam originated and developed in a nomadic socio-
cultural milieu of Arabia and had an egalitarian social
structure. Social structure of the numerous tribal
groups was not highly stratified, and a shift from King
- oriented egalitarianism to religion oriented
egalitarianism was relatively easier. But this form of
structure did not last long.[23] When the Prophet came
to <u>Medina,</u> the nomadic economic base of the society was
exposed to a mercantile and agrarian economy. Islam
then embedded into a social structure which was more
complex in its organization.[24] This was sociologically
important due to three reasons. Firstly, it's
egalitarian and democratic structure of power was soon
transformed into a feudal authoritarian pattern.
Secondly, the former unity between the political and
religious leadership was weakened as often the
political and cultural policies of the imperial

administration   could   not   conform   to   the   limited

religious   perspectives   held   by   the   <u>Ulemas</u>   (religious

elities).   And   finally,   with   the   territorial   expansion

of   Islam   many   structural   and   cultural   characteristics

which   pre-existed   in   the   societies   before   their

conversion   to   Islam   were   added   on   to   its   structure   when

majority   of   members   joined   this   religion.[25]

The   "Shariah"   (Islamic   Law)   has   in   reality   been

never   as   closed   a   body   of   principles   as   this   seems   to

suggest.   This   is   partly   because   of   the   circumstances

in   which   it   emerged   and   crystallized   and   partly   because

of   the   necessity   for   it   to   adopt   the   requirement   of   the

indigenous   environment   of   the   countries   to   which   it

spread   from   its   originant   Arab   heartland.[26]

Islam   has   always   reflected   a   greater   degree   of

pluralism   and   diversity.   It   is   contended   that   in   the

body   of   the   Islamic   Law   which   is   derived   from   the

"Quran"   and   the   "Hadith"   (sayings   of   the   Prophet)   there

are   other   elements   such   as   "Ijtihad"   (reasoning)   and

"Taqlid   or   blind   imitation,   ijma   (consensus)   and   Quiyar

(analogy). In the beginning the ijtihad was considered being more important but the orthodoxy to the Taqlid of the traditional law code which was not much essential to the system as such, emerged later in the early medieval period. The jural postulates through the ijtihad or rational interpretation have allowed the introjection of modernism in Islam. Thus, both the tradition and modernity are contextual and inter-linked in Islam.[27]

Contrary to it, it has generally been held that the Muslims in India are either not modernizing at all or are lagging behind the other religious communities in getting modernized. Ahmad[28] also states that there is something inherently anti-modernization about their religious faith which has been responsible for their failure to respond to the current process of modernization and social change taking place in Indian society. He further writes that both the sociologists and anthropologists have not given much attention in their studies of the on modernisation and social change

Muslim community. One of the consequences of this

neglect is that the lack of modernization and social

change among the Muslims in India has been attributed

entirely to certain stereotypes or cliches prevalent

among them. Even others do not explicitly start their

analysis with any stereotypes but with their analysis

of empirical data ultimately deal the subject in terms

of popular stereotypes.[29] For instance, Ahmad

criticises Singh on the latter's treatment of

modernization and Islamic impact in India. According

to him, Singh begins his analysis by isolating the

essential attributes of modernization and then goes on

just poseing them upon what he (Singh) calls "the World

view of Islam". This he does to see how for that world

view contains elements of modernization and is

compatible to it.[30]

Any way, both tradition and modernization

constitute a single simultaneously ongoing process. At

any given point of time, a society may have modern

values in certain respect and the traditional ones in

other respects as mentioned at the very out set. Also, what is modern today may become traditional in course of time and <u>vice versa</u>. Thus, both tradition and modernization among Muslims in' India should be analysed in terms of historicity of the religio-economic contexts of their community.

GREAT TRADITION AND THE ISLAMIC TRADITION IN INDIA

The Hindu great tradition and Islamic great tradition represent two different varieties of traditional world views.[31] Hinduism emphasises on hierarchical, polytheist and non messianic historical ethos[32] whereas Islamic tradition represents apparently a non-hierarchical, monotheistic and messianic historical ethos. During the imperial extension of Islam in India members of different religious faiths specially from Hinduism embraced it. Hence, many

structural and cultural characteristics of their
society and religion were added to its structure.[33]
The acculturative and endogenous changes got
incorporated in the great tradition of Islam in India
through the following stages. "The first stage was
related to the duration of Islamic rule in India, the
second stage was initiated after the establishment of
the British domination and finally the third stage was
marked at the beginning of the Indian freedom movement
leading to the country's partition and political
independence."[34] This stage has followed the post-
independence period.

Retrospectively, Islam was introduced by merchants
in the Western parts of India much before the political
conquering by the Muslim invaders (rulers) who came
from the heart land of Islam. Mandelbaum Writes,
"Islam and Christianity, however, became more widely
accepted in India, apart from the original settlement,
after rulers of these religions conquered large
territories. Emulation of the temporal rulers and the

persuasive power of their resources had something to do with this acceptance though some became converts for essentially spiritual reason and others were converted because of a desire for social regrouping. The foreign merchants and rulers were too few or too aloof to induct converts into a new way of life as well as into a new mode of worship. They offered a reference category rather than a reference group. Converts lacked any new social base to go with their new scripture and had little alternative but to continue in the pervasive caste system. They became ratified and re-entered the typical struggle for social mobility."[35]

Historically speaking, the Islamic power was established in India during the medieval period. The political and cultural elites of Islam carried forward its cultural tradition in protective and optimistic environment. The tradition flourished in the Persian and Turkish literary works and was patronized by Muslim rulers. It went through many orthogenetic adaptations necessitated by the socio-cultural situation prevalent

in India.[36] Some Muslim rulers adopted liberal, secular and integrative approach towards Hindu tradition, though most of them were orthodox in their attitudes towards Hindus.

During the British rule in India, attitudes of Muslims towards Hindus did not remain the same. Several changes had adversely affected the Muslim community. For instance, the reduction of the military establishment of the Nawab of Bengal threw out of employment a large number of Muslims who served in the Nawab army. Mughal faujdars were replaced by the European Magistrates, Qazis were replaced by judges, Persian language was replaced by English as state language, etc. Consequently, Muslims became educationally and economically weak and politically deprived.[37] After the Sepoy Revolt or Mutiny of 1857, the Britishers deliberately adopted the discriminatory policy towards the Muslim community. For instance, immediately after the revolt the Britishers repressed the Muslims, consfiscated their lands and property on

large scale, and declared Hindus to be their favourites. After 1870 this policy was reversed and an attempt was made to turn the upper and middle class Muslims against the nationalist movement.[38] Muslims generated among them the feeling of relative deprivation in comparison to other religious communities especially the Hindus. This, in turn, generated among them a consciousness for the need of social reforms in the Muslim community.

In the eighteenth century many movements were organised to bring reforms in the great Islamic tradition in India. In due course these got polarized into two major schools. One stood for liberalism and peaceful reforms in Islam and the other school insisted for more orthodoxy and militancy to be introduced in it.[39] The former school was represented by Shah Waliullah, his son Shah Abdul Aziz and Karamat Ali. and the latter school was represented by Sayid Ahmad Barelvi and Shariatullah. Both schools or streams of thought represented "Wahabi school of Islamic

thought".Syed Ahmad Barelvi and Shariatullah advocated that the Muslims in India were deprived due to the British rule which was giving preferential treatment to Hindus. They were also of the view that the British rule was depriving the Muslims from their faith in Islam and from their due share in the existing socioeconomic opportunities. So, they suggested that Muslims should fight against the British rule in order to get their due share.

Further, in the nineteenth century especially after 1857, other two schools of thought emerged. One was "Aligarh School" and other was "Deoband School" of thought. Aligarh school was activated by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. This school became a movement when he started a number of social and educational reforms in the light of modernization. "He was tremendously impressed by modern scientific thought and worked all his life to reconcile it with Islam. In his view, any interpretation of the Quran that conflicted with human

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reason, science or nature was in reality a misinterpretation."[40] In 1877 he founded at Aligarh (U.P.) the Muhammedan Anglo-Oriental College (MAO) as a centre for spreading the Western science and culture. Later, this college grew into the Aligarh Muslim University. The Deoband School was founded by the group of Ulemas. They established a theological college "Darul-uloom" in Deoband, in Saharanpur district in U.P. to teach the Islamic philosophy and theology. They were against any reform in the Islamic tradition and emphasised the maintenance of its status quo.

Being encouraged by the Aligarh school, a sizeable Muslims entered the modern politics. It was the landed gentry whose members linked their political fortune to the British raj. At the same time, they initiated social and intellectual reforms within the community. Both peasantry and artisans were impoverished due to the economic policies of the British regime. These strata of the Muslim society were unorganised and inarticulate. They could only communicate their

frustrations to the "Ulemas" with whom they were in touch, more or less."[41]

In the phase of the national movement a western educated Muslim elite gradually emerged in the tradition of Islam and started working with the religious elite (Ulemas) for realization of modern cultural goal of nationalism and freedom. This phase of the movement was rather complex since it was involved at two levels of relationships. The first type of relationship was between the secular and orthodox Muslim elites within Islamic tradition. Second was between the Hindu elite, Secular and non secular, and the Muslim elites.[42]

The plan for creation of a separate Muslim state developed later but before that its socio-psychological roots were laid in the sub-conscious of a large majority of the Muslim elite and masses for historical and existential reasons. There was feeling of fear and suspicion in the heart of Muslims. "This was further accentuated by communalist movement. Muslims felt

suspicious about the communal over tones in the ideological exhortation not only of Tilak and Lajpat Rai but also of Gandhi who used many cultural and social symbolisms in his ideological postulates smacking pretty will of neo-Hinduism."[43] Further, "it is reasonable to suppose that Gandhi's objective was also double: to attain independence and to save Hinduism."[44]

The post-independence period is marked by the adaptations of democratic tools to solve the basic problems of the Muslim community that have persisted even after partition of the country. Numerous attempts have been made by the various agencies to project a uniform tradition in the name of Indian tradition which in effect is the Hindu great tradition as mentioned earlier. These attempts have denied autonomy of other traditions or have considerely them as sub-tradition of the Indian (Hindu) great tradition.

The role of both little and great traditions in the process of modernization is not very clear.

Sometimes a great tradition is very much favourable to modernization and other times little traditions contribute positively to it. Yet, in some other times both the little and great traditions contribute negatively to modernization. Generally speaking, Muslims in India are largely governed by the importance of the great tradition of Islam due to its preaching and ideals. But in their day to day behaviuor and social interaction, they are also influenced by both the great and little traditions of Hinduism and to some extent of that of Christianity, Skihism, etc. at local level.[45] As a result of this, they often compromise with both great and little tradition of Islam. Some times their identity of being Muslims instill in them a kind of protest against the great tradition of Hinduism. This happens when their identity of being Muslim or followers of Islam or Islamic tradition serves as an identity symbol for a community vis-a-vis that of Hindus. The identity consciousness of both Hindus and Muslims compells them to follow the great

traditions of their own because these traditions provide them assertion to exist as separate identities or communities.

There is constant struggle between the great tradition of Hindus and that of Muslims because the former undermines the existence and importance of the Islamic great tradition in India. It also considers it, along with traditions of other religions, as a little tradition of great tradition in India.[46] On the other side, the Islamic great tradition constantly struggles to make its identity assertive and equal to the great tradition of Hinduism. The Muslims insist for comparison of the Islamic great tradition with that of Hinduism on equal footing. The examples, may be cited as that of the Wahabi movement activated by Shah Waliullah and his son Shah Abdul Aziz as mentioned above, the , Mujahideen movement started by Syed Ahmad Barelvi in the 18th century, the Deoband school of the 19th century, the Tabligh movement founded by Maulvi Ilyas in the tweentith century, etc. All these

movements were primarily the religio-political movements. The Tabligh movement was a missionary movement for revivalism in Islam and was started in the 1920's. It became more popular after independence. Initially, Maulvi Ilyas had started it "with the sole objective of ridding the little tradition of Islam in India of its syncretic cultural ruminants from Hinduism. It was also in a way a reaction to the Hindu revivalistic movements of Arya, Samaj which at about the same time was actively engaged in the Shuddi movement which meant purification of the `convert Muslims for their reconversion to Hinduism."[47]

The Tabligh movement can be seen in the form of religios revivalism as it distantiated Muslims from their cultural ties existing with Hindus. It increased the identity consciousness and political mobilization of the Muslim community. "This was the normal sociological process for this (Muslim) minority group under the types of political and social situations to which it was exposed after the partition."[48] The

Tabligh movement was started to follow the great tradition of Islam because there was apparent threat that the little traditions of Islam were having compromising attitudes towards the great tradition of Hinduism and these would have assimilated Muslims into the fold of Hinduism. "Combined with the orthodox movement in the great tradition of Islam active during the first quarter of the 20th Century, Tabligh movement in its little tradition generated a momentum for cultural retreatism and horizontal mobility. Partition of the country in 1947 only reinforced this tendency. It confirmed the minority consciousness among the remaining population in India. The post-partition communal riots created a traumatic psychological feeling of insecurity among the Muslims."[49] It alienated them further from the Hindu cultural life. During the post-partition days "the Arya Samaj carried systematic campaigns for conversion of some Muslim communities to Hinduism who were culturally nearer the Hindu tradition."[50] Singh further states, "Finally,

with the introduction of a democratic type of political system which dispensed with the system of separate electorate and reserved seats for Muslims, this community naturally felt insecure and had to mobilize itself as a solidaristic group for effective political participation."[51]

The Muslim community in India can, thus, be seen in the context of a minority group struggling to preserve its respective identity and tradition. The Muslims are trying to compete with the Hindus for the reward of economic development and modernization. Yet, their feeling of being insecure and discriminated against the Hindus often get reinforced amidst the recent revivalism of the "Hindutva philosophy" and its cultural expansionist overtone. In the long run this may greatly influence the great tradition of Islam through the continued interaction with its little traditions at the local level least the Islamic great tradition in India retreats the recent aggressive political overtcne of the Hindus' revivalism.

C H A P T E R - II

SOURCES OF THE ISLAMIC GREAT TRADITION

SOURCES OF THE ISLAMIC GREAT TRADITION

The great tradition is consciously cultivated by the elite section of a society which comprises theologians, philosophers and literary men as stated in the previous chapter. The great tradition is considered standard behaviour and it works as a scale for measurement of conformity to the norms of the society. However, the great tradition works as a reference model for little tradition(s) because the latter is always practised by linking it directly or indirectly with the former, whether this linkage is true or imaginary.

The Islamic great tradition is located in the primary source of religion and its organs like Quran, Hadith and Islamic jurisprudence. In the Quran there are 114 suras or chapters which are divided into thousands of ayats or verses. The chapters vary in

their length in terms of number of ayats included in each chapter. The longest chapter contains 286 and the shortest one only three verses. Most of them, however, were revealed piecemeal to the Prophet Muhammad during the two periods of his call; the _Mecca_ Period (610-622 AD) and the _Madina_ period (622-632 AD). Thus, 93 chapters were revealed in the former period and twenty one in the latter one.[1]

According to an account, "the contents of the Quran can be said to comprise the dogma, a body of narratives and moral and juridical injunctions, Central to the dogma is the belief that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is his apostle and the last of the Prophets. But in addition, Muslims are enjoined to believe in the previous Prophets and their scriptures, in the angles, in the day of judgement and in paradise and hell. The narratives give the stories of farmer peoples, tribes, kings, prophets and saints. They are meant to preach a moral by showing how the righteous have been rewarded and the wicked punished".[2] Edward

Sells writes, "The _Quran_ contains the entire code of Islam. That is, it is not a book of religious precepts merely but it governs all that a Muslim does. The Quran contains the whole religion of Muhammad. No Musalman ever disputes its authority or casts any doubt upon its genuineness. Its voice is supreme in all that it concerns, but its exegesis, the whole system of legal jurisprudence and of theological science is largely founded on traditions. The _Quran_ is believed to be a miraculous revelation of divine eloquence as regards both form and substance, arrangement of words, and its revelation of sacred things".[3]

The _Quran_ was not revealed in one piece but it was revealed gradually over a period of twenty three years. It is compilation of those revelations. Whenever the Prophet got revelation, he immediately summoned one of his literate companions and dictated him. To ensure perfect accuracy, he would ask the scribe to read out what he had written down. He also asked his companions to memorise it and repeat in daily prayer. The first

step taken by the Prophet for preservation of the Quran was that he instructed that the Quran should be learnt from the competent person(s). Secondly, it was to be written down after learning it so that one could refresh one's memory in case one forgot. Thirdly, he asked to memorise it completely. But after death of the Prophet, the best of the knowledgeable persons of the Quaran were killed in the Battle of Yammah during the Abu Bakr regime. So, Umar, the second caliph was worried that those who had memorized the Quran would slowly depart from the world either owing to natural death or killed in battles. He announced in the city of Madina that any one in possession of any part of the holy Quran either in written form or who had recited it in the presence of the Prophet at the 'presentation' or who had corrected version of it after comparison with the Prophet version should appear before the Commission, comprising of a number of companions of the Prophet including Umar himself and headed by Zayad-ibn-Thabit. "The Commission was directed to collect the

authorized text of the holy Quran. Its terms of reference stipulated that an ayat (verse) occurring at least twice in the manuscripts submitted to it should be accepted for the record or else it should be rejected. When a person presented his manuscript to the commission, Umar would ask him to declare an oath that the manuscript he was submitting was the same as was corrected in the presence of the Prophet. The manuscript was accepted after such an oath was taken".[4]

During the Usman regime, Islam had been expanded vastly. Due to diversity and composition of Army, pronunciation became a problem and some controversies had been raised regarding it. So, Usman, the caliph III issued a directive to carry out necessary reforms in the script in order to evolve uniform system of pronunciation. He ordered that even though, if any confusion evolved or controversy arose then pronunciation of the people of Mecca should be followed. Till now, the Quran has not been changed and its version compiled by Abu Bakr and pronunciation

corrected by _Usman_ is in vogue.

The Hadith follows the Quran. Both together constitute the main source of the great Islamic tradition. The _Hadith_ means tradition. "It comprises three elements viz. the sayings of the Prophet, his actions and his tacit approval of a statement or action of someone else. The technical term for the third category, is _taqrir_".[5] A command given by the Prophet or an example set by him is called _"sunna"_, a word meaning the rule. The command given by God in the Quran can be divided into _"Fard"_ and _"Wajib"_. Fard is a kind of compulsion which a man has to fulfill at any cost but wajib is a kind of good advice given to him. "The term Sunnah and Hadith were initially different but they are now synonymous : Hadith denotes speech or word and Sunnah means way of doing."[6] Sells Writes, "in the ordinary sense of the word tradition they may be; but in Muslim theology the term Hadith, which we translate traditions, has a special meaning. It is applied only to the sayings of the Prophet, not to

those of some uninspired divine or teacher. The Wahabis reject the traditions handed down by men who lived after the time of the companions, but the Hadith, embodying sayings of the Prophet, they, in common with all Muslim sects, hold to be an inspired revelation of God's will to men".[7] He further writes that Shia also reject the Sunnah but they have their collection of traditions equivalent to Haidth. Though the Hadith is considered to be commentary on the Quran, but in hierarchy it is placed after the Quran, because the Hadith does not have the same impeccable proof of accuracy as has the Quran. That is why, the transmission of the Hadith after the death of the Prophet does not possess that status of absolute certainty which the Quran does.[8]

The Islamic jurisprudence (Shariah or Shariat) consists of a part from the Quran and the Hadith, ijma (consensus), ijtihad (reasoning), mutual agreement and reciprocity. The word ijma means to be collected or assembled. Technically, it means the unanimous consent

of the leading theologians. Practically, it is a collection of the opinion of the companions. The election of Abu Bakr to the caliphate is called _ijma-i-Ummat,_ the unanimous consent of the whole sect. The concept of 'mutual agreement" is also one of the sources of the Islamic jurisprudence.

It was operated during the life of the Prophet and has remained relevant after him. Suppose if we reach an agreement with another state and enter into a treaty with it, the terms and conditions will remain binding for the duration of the treaty. They will become part of law. In other words, treaty obligations or limitations mutually agreed upon become part of law during the validity of the treaty. Yet, another source of law is the principle of reciprocity. But its example was not found during the Prophet's time. The earliest example belongs to the days of Umar. The Quran and Hadith became the two permanent sources of law during the life time of the Prophet. Earlier, the Muslims were advised to first refer to the Quran and Hadith in the

case if they did not find solution to their problems;
then they were to take recourse to ijtihad or personal
reasoning which was commented by the Prophet himself.
The concept of _ijtihad_ has a great value to the
Muslims. According to Hamidullah, the _ijtihad_ was
introduced because if in a condition when Muslims find
the Islamic law as static and inadequate to solve their
problem, they would use the _ijtihad_ or reasoning for
the purpose. On importance of the _ijtihad_ Hamidullah
writes, "if _ijtihad_ had not been permitted, the Islamic
law would have remained confined to the Quran and the
Hadith. It was quite possible that on occasions even
the greatest of scholars and jurists might have failed
to discover the relevant law appropriate to meet a new
situation".[9]

Defining the relationship between absolute Shariah
and its later development in different schools Khan
writes, "From very beginning there were two schools of
thought, one believed that the Shariah should be
implemented in its original form whereas other

emphasised that implementing form of the Shariah may be variable depending upon the situation. Caliph Umar was of the latter view and during his period of "Khilafate" (Caliphate) he adopted different implementing forms of Shariah. In the later period four well known schools of jurists (fiquah) developed depending upon the eco-system where they lived".[10] The four schools were: <u>Abu Hanifa, Shaffi, ibn Malik and ibn Hambal</u>. The Muslims are free today to choose any of these schools of law. But after their choice they have to completely follow the rules of the respective school and pick and choose is not allowed. Thus, the Islamic great tradition is holistic and it maintains continuity by reinterpreting certain pre-Islamic practices and then incorporating them in the Islamic practices.

FORMATION OF THE ISLAMIC GREAT TRADITION

Before the birth of Islam in the 6th century, the Arabia peninsula was formally divided into three major regions. These were: first, the Arabia Felix or the fertile tract along the sea coast comprising of the West and South Western coast; second, the Arabia Petraca or the rocky tract which included the whole north western portion; and the last was the Arabia deserts or the sandy desert consisting of whole interior parts. Now, the modern geographers have divided the Arabia peninsula into seven provinces viz. Hejaz, Yeman, Hadzamowtomanor Kingdom of Muscat, Central Arabia or Kingdom of Nejd, Iraq-i-Ara, i.e. the region extending along the borders of Persia, and Bahrein or the provinces situated along the Persian Gulf.[11]

The Arabs living in the Arabia peninsula are considered to be descendant of <u>Noah</u> (The Prophet). They were divided, in that past, into three categories. In

the first, category were the Arab Baida or the aboriginal Arabs, second category were in the Arab Ariba or those who migrated to Arab, made Arabia as their home and adopted Arabic as their language. The last category included the Arab Mustariba or the earlier settlers.[12] These three categories of people had themselves divided into numerous tribal groups. About the political status of Arabia in the 6th century of the christian era Sarwar writes, "nowhere in the whole peninsula was there any state or authority which could enforce law and order. At the beginning of the sixth century Kindites (descendants of Qahtan through Ya'rab) had attempted to form a Kingdom in Central Arabia, but they soon fell a prey to the general disorder in the country and about the time of the Prophet (Muhammad) birth (571 A.D.), anarchy reigned amongst the nomad tribes of <u>Al-Hijaz</u> and <u>Nejd</u>".[13]

The religion of the tribals was not uniform. All the tribals were professing polytheism dominated by

naturalism and animatism. <u>Kaaba</u>, a place of worship situated in Mecca city believed to be built by <u>Ismael and Abraham</u> as believed by Muslims. Kaaba was the main centre of worship of tribals. It is said that there were three hundred sixty idols in and around Kaaba and that each tribe had its own deity. Idols were in the shape of man called Wadd, woman called <u>Naila, lion yughuthetc</u>. Besides idol worship, tribals also worshiped the stars, the sun and moon.[14]

The status of women in the pre-Islamic period was very low. There was practice of killing female child and daughter was a thing which would bring bad name not only to her father but to the whole tribe. Women were considered to be a thing for pleasure and amusement. Among the Bani Tamim and Quraish tribes, girls were regarded as a nuisance and some fathers prided themselves in killing their daughters. Their was neither clear cut instruction about marriage nor the concept of incest taboo. Women were considered to be wealth. There was a custom that when a person died and

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left a widow or widows, the nearest male relation had to cover her or them with his mantle and they became his wives. Even, son was allowed to keep his step mother as his wife. There were no laws regulating marriage and divorce. Man was allowed to marry and divorce as many women as he wished but women were not given any type of right regarding their marriage and divorce.[15] Further, gambling and drunkeness were common vices. These were considered to be ways of leisure, recreation and a sign of prosperity and status symbol among the people. Money lending on high interests was common among the Arabs. Tribal feuds were common which led to war with anothers on flimsy ground. Plundering and cruelty were common. The practice of witchcraft and soccery was also prevalent.[16]

When Islam emerged in Arabia, the first and foremost concern was its unity among the different tribes which was not possible without reformation. The sociopolitical, economic and religious unity was emphasised because without it the expansion of Islam

was not possible outside Arab and the rest of the world. The concept of uniformity was developed in Islam for the unification of people. Voll writes, "In Muhammad there was the distinctive unification of political and social and religious concerns that characterize the Islamic tradition".[17] Religion was made the most important factor for unification of tribes because the numerous type of diversities and tribal feuds were prevalent to such extent that unity on other basis was difficult. The other reason could be that the Islam brought revolutionary changes in the Arabian society which was not acceptable to the people without religious sanction.

However, unity among the people became meaningless without equality. The equality of race clan, tribe, language, etc. was very much emphasised for safeguarding the justice for the people. The concept of rule of law was added in the form of Shariah which is heavily adopted from the Quran and Hadith but its flexibility is there in the form of ijtihad (reasoning)

as stated earlier. With the emergence of Islam some pre-Islamic traditions continued to exist or were reformed and adopted to the Islamic system. Others were strongly rejected.

Basically, Islam was a tribal reform movement. It provided uniform norms for its followers in the form of its great tradition. As stated earlier, the Islamic great tradition adopted many little traditions of the Arabian society and elevated them upto the great tradition of Islam. Knowing the importance of little traditions prevalent in the Arabian society, Islam did not reject all of them but many were adopted, some tolerated for the time being, and very few were rejected at its early stage. Those little traditions which were adopted inthe Islamic great tradition got their legitimacy from the Quran and Hadith. Little traditions also strengthened the Islamic great tradition. Hence, a reciprocal relationship was established between the little and great traditions of Islam.

Continuity of tradition in Islam and adoption of the pre-Islamic traditions are the same because the Quran not only said about belief in the Prophet Muhammad but in all those Prophets who came before him. So, continuity of the pre-Islamic traditions and adoption of the local or little traditions are synonymous. About the continuity in Islam, Gaiedton writes, "what emerges most obvious from traditional account of the founding of the Kaaba in Mecca and the coming of Muhammad is the sense of continuity which binds all sacred history together and which characterizes every manifestations of Islam. It could not be otherwise, the religion of unity and unification must necessarily be the religion of continuity, which allows no break with the past and refuses to allow time to disperse the interrelated element of perennial truth".[18]

Islam has strongly rejected the idol worship and .directed for monotheism. Even though continuity was

maintained through nonotheism. At the heart of the revelation was the declaration that there is no God other than the Allah (God). There are several mentions of displeasure and punishment for idol worshiper in the Quran. Hosain writes, "The Arabs originally believed in one God but at the time when Prophet was born their religion had degenerated in polytheism, star worship and fethism".[19] About adoption of the pre-Islamic traditions into the Islamic fold, Voll says, "All aspects of the life of the community were subject to the message of the revelation. Muhammad showed a tenacious adherence to the revelation of God with new condition. His ability to compromise at the right time was an important unifying factor in the community. His personality and personalized style of rule were reflected in an emphasis on individual obligation. His conservation is exemplified by his willingness to accept existing symbols and customs when they could be reinterpreted in the framework of the new revelation. For example, the special place of the pilgrimage to

Mecca was retained, but it was shown to have a monotheistic, Islamic significance".[20]

FORM OF THE ISLAMIC GREAT TRADITION IN INDIA

Islam preached and propagated the philosophy of unity equality, fraternity or brotherhood and justice among the people as stated earlier. The Quran explicity rejected the gradation of groups and individuals on the basis of birth, race and the ideology of pure and impure. The only criterion of social evaluation recognized in Islam is the religious piety. Islam preached in the holistic term where economy, polity and society cannot be separated from religion. Islam is a way of life and has its own social system and structure.

The Islamic tradition has had witnessed orthogenetic changes from the time of the Prophet

Muhammad. As mentioned above, Islam was born in the nomadic tribal social environment but when the Prophet migrated to Madina which had mercantile and agrarian social environment, certain traditions and customs were added to it. Thus, the social structure of Islam became more complex.[21] After the death of the Prophet or during the caliph periods some drastic changes occurred in it due to its territorial expansion. Singh writes, "The first important change was in the politico - economic nature of Islam; its equalitarian and democratic structure of power was soon transformed into a feudal authoritarian pattern. The establishment of the Ummayad dynasty is the beginning of this process. Secondly, the former unity between the political and religious leadership (between the governors of the new empire and the Ulemas) was weakened as often the political and cultural policies of the imperial administration could not conform to the limited religious perspectives held by the ulemas".[22] Power struggle led to the development of attitude of Ulemas

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for adoption of the great tradition and the political elites were inclined for adoption of the little traditions.[23]

When Islam came to India, two types of groups emerged, the first group was of those who had already embraced Islam before they came to India. The second group consisted of those people who converted to Islam from Hinduism. However, those converted from the low Hindu castes were considered lower than those who converted from the higher castes, "This is further so, since the elites who were the bearers of great tradition of Islam in India and constituted the upper most segments of the Islamic society, did not come from amongst the indigenous converts to this religion".[24] The upper most segments of the immigrant groups of the Islamic society were divided into four categories: Saiyid, Sheikh, Mughal and Pathan. They together constituted "Ashraf" section of the Islamic society. Ghaus Ansari writes that Ashrafs are "considered the descendants of early Islamic nobility and thus they are

regarded as sacred almost like the Brahmins in the Hindu tradition".[25] The non-Ashraf or remaining Muslims were called "Ajlaf". But this type of division and stratification is antithetical to the Quran and Hadith. Generally, speaking, some sociologists and social anthropologists have traced some traits of the Hindu caste system among the Muslims in India. These are hierarchy, heredity, and endogamy which are practised among them like Hindus. But there is consensus among these sociologists and social anthropologists on the point that though Muslims are having caste traits, caste is not supported by their religion or the Islamic great tradition unlike that of the Hindus.[26]

The Islamic great and little traditions were obviously influenced by the Hindu great tradition but this was not the case of asimilation of the former to the latter. Instead, even the Hindu great and little traditions were influenced by the traditions of Islam. The Islamic little traditions had accommodated many

many traits of Hindu little tradition in order to provide more convenience to the converts from Hinduism. Though great traditions of both Islam and Hinduism at present continue, in principle, to maintain their basic tenets, in practice there occurs continous and even consisted interaction between them. This is more distinctly visible through the close interaction between the little traditions of both the religious commities which are derivations from their great traditions as stated earlier. Thus, the Islamic great tradition in India can be considered in the process of undergoing continuous formation or modification giving place for its change and modernization though at the face of it there appears strict adherence of its folowers to the static tenets of the Islamic principles.

C H A P T E R – III

INDIAN TRADITION AND THE ISLAMIC TRADITION

INDIAN TRADITION AND THE ISLAMIC TRADITION

Indian tradition is a synthesis of all major traditions existing in India i.e. Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, Jew, Sikh and Tribal traditions on the basis of their sharing, participating and interacting with one another. Dube puts emphasis on sharing for development of a common culture and tradition. He writes, "Definitions of 'Culture' usually include the words 'shared' or "common" with reference to habits, values, achievements or whatever else may be taken as the criterion of analysis. Sharing or group participation is indeed the very essence of the culture concept. A culture develops when groups of people living in constant interaction come to share certain ways of behaving, thinking and doing things".[1] Indian tradition, if at all there exists one, is

dynamic because as time passes, it will become more and more synthesised and complex. More so, many traditions will come together to interact and develop into one tradition that will be the Indian tradition in real sense of the term.

The Islamic Tradition and Hindu Tradition

The Islamic tradition and the Hindu tradition have a number of contradictory religious and cultural ethos in their great tradition. For instance, the Islamic great tradition is based on the principle of equality, fraternity and monotheism as mentioned in the previous chapters. These principles in Islam are emphasised in its various tradition. Singh compares Hindu tradition with the Islamic tradition and writes, "In contradistinction to the structure of the Hindu great tradition the great tradition of Islam is founded on a

world view which is apparently non-hierarchical, is purely monotheistic and messianic historical in ethos".[2] The Hindu tradition has the characteristics of hierarchy, holism, continuity and transcendence as mentioned in the last chapter. Louis Dumont[3] has characterised and highlighted the only element of purity and impurity in the Hindu tradition whereas Singh considers that both Hinduism and Islam represent two varieties of traditions, the two separate world views. About the Islamic tradition Singh writes, "This emphasis on the historicity of the revealed tradition has rendered the world view of Islam not only more proselytizing or activistic in the sphere of religion but also makes it holistic and socio centric in general cultural orientation. Similarly, in ideal typical form Islam has a more developed orientation towards the holistic principle in its conception of social order than even Hinduism."[4]

Hinduism and Islam originated in different sociocultural milieu. Islam was basically tribal reform

movement or a religion developed in the tribal society as mentioned in the previous chapter whereas Hinduism developed in a well established civilization. Islam is younger as compared to Hinduism, which is considered to be the oldest religion of the world. As stated, the Islam developed in a tribal socio-cultural milieu where social structure was based on the principle of tribal egaltarianism. However, the tribal society was controlled by the tribal chiefs. To escape persecution when the Prophet Muhammad migrated along with his people from Mecca to Madina which had the mercantile centres and agrarian economy, The social structure of Madina got influenced and many changes occurred to transform its nomadic base to agro-mercantile economy.[5]

In any case, when the Prophet returned to Mecca, the Islam started expanding to other territories. After the death of the Prophet Islam expanded deep in Asia, Africa and some parts of Europe also. Changes occurred in the tradition of Islam due to its expansion. The democratic and egalitarian structure of Islam was

transformed to feudal - authoritarian as stated in the last chapter. The dominance of religious elites (Ulems) was weakened and the political elites acquired more power as compared to their counter-parts (Islemas). Many little traditions of the non-Muslim communities were included into the Islamic tradition after the conversion of their followers to Islam.[6] Thus, when Islam came to India via Persia and Central Asia, it had already adopted certain changes to accomodate itself to those parts of land.[7] In other words, it had either adopted certain practices of the local people or the people continued their earlier practices even after they converted to Islam. But it is evident that Islam always adopted the little traditions of the people by simply giving some Islamic interpretations to these traditions. Thus, in the process the little traditions either became part and parcel of the Islamic great tradition or were equal to that.

Like Islam, Hinduism is also not a static religion. Uptill now, many basic reforms have taken place in Hinduism. Hindu tradition has gone changing along the time and space. It adopted certain traditions in particular time and condition and rejected them later on. Since the time of the Indus Valley Civilization numerous types of modifications have been going on in the Hindu tradition. About religion of the people of the Indus Valley Civilization Hussain writes, "As the pictographs inscribed in the seals of Mohanjodaro and Haroppa have not yet been deciphered, we know very little about the mental and spiritual life of the ancient inhabitants of the Indus valley. All that we can say on the strength of the available material is that their religious beliefs and practices are, to some extent, reflected in Hinduism."[8]

Then, during the vedic period Aryans did not have only the vedic tradition and culture but had also adopted certain elements of the Dravidian culture and tradition. So, the vedic Hindu tradition was certainly

influenced and to certain extent, synthesised by the Dravidian culture and tradition. According to Dandekar, "Indo-European concepts the religion of the Aryans involved other ideas which may have developed in the course of their eastward migrations or may have resulted from the assimilation of indigenous religious notions encountered in the Indian subcontinent itself. From a sociological stand point, the religion introduced by the Aryan invaders was limited to persons of Aryan birth, though some non-Aryan beliefs seem to have been accepted in a modified form or at least tolerated by the priest-hood of the conquering Aryans."[9]

Further, during the post-vedic period many traditions appeared in Hinduism. For instance, there appeared the varna system, the imposition of disabilities on the Sudras, the institution of Gotra, etc. The Ashramas or four stages of life which were not well established in the vedic times appeared in the post-vedic era.[10] Numerous types of rituals increased

tremendously. In the words of Kosambi, "The sacred books deal overwhelmingly with <u>Yajna</u> blood sacrifices. Collective sacrifices were made to other vedic gods besides Agni, though always in the presence of the sacred fire. The duration and ·complication of the ceremony began steadily to increase."[11]

The Buddhism and Jainism criticised the caste system and its mentor the Brahmins for their claimed ritual and social superiority. These religions emphasised equality, fraternity and humanism. About the effects of Buddhism and Jainism on the Hindu tradition. Husain states, "The challenge of Buddhism and Jainism to the Vedic-Hindu religion was a stimulating and refreshing inspiration to the minds of the Hindu thinkers who now left the beaten track and ventured on new path of speculation and reasoning."[12] Thus, the Hindu tradition had undergone varieties of changes over thousands of years as stated above.

Formation of the Indian tradition

We have mentioned above that when Islam came to India, it greatly influenced Hinduism was also influenced by it. In the later age, specially during the colonial period the westernization introduced by the Britishers also influenced Islam and led to many social reforms in its customs and tradition(s). So, both the Islamic and Hindu traditions are dynamic. These traditions, along with traditions of other communities, can contribute to the formation and strengthening of the Indian tradition.

Generally speaking, Indian tradition is consciously or unconsciously used synonymous with the Hindu tradition. Some people do differentiate between the two but they try to do it in terms of establishing some kind of relationship of a sub-tradition with the tradition or great tradition. In their understanding, all other traditions are considered to be subtraditions of the Hindu tradition or the Indian tradition. Singh

writes that both Hinduism and Islam represent two variety of traditional world views.[13] Though there was conflict between the two but the cultural syneretism was also there.[14] About the role played by the partition of the country in the continued states of conflict and syncretism between Hinduism and Islam, Singh further writes, "A historical contradiction between the aspirations of Islamic and Hinduistic elites existed on the basis of Islamic elite's unconscious or conscious goal to regain Islam's dominant past in India and Hindu elite's commitment to do away with all vestiges of foreign domination (both Islamic and British) in the context of which the meaning of nationalism was formulated by most of them".[15] For partition of the country, Singh blames the overemphasis on the great tradition, the struggles between the Islamic great tradition and the Hindu great tradition." Singh further says, "To this may be added the nature of sociological relationship between the Hindu and Islamic traditions which was always based on

the principle of equilibrium passed on power. There was cultural syncretism between Islam and Hinduism but never a mutual cultural acceptance."[16]

Mukherjee is of the opinion that there should be a common base for the Indian tradition and this base should not be interpreted in terms of one religion or the other. In his opinion, "India is not merely a geographical mass; it is a social entity, and so there is a prima-facie case for search for a common base in respect of Indian tradition".[17] He says further, "This base has often been interpreted in terms of Hindu religion; with reference to the Pilgrim centres strewn all over the sub-continent and thus providing the new work to bind India as a whole. But when we speak of "Indian tradition", we do not exclude the Muslims, the Christians, the zorastrians, etc. For our purpose, therefore, the unity expressed by the overt practice of one religion is not of direct importance."[18] Emphasising the same argument Roy writes, "Indian culture is predominantly known to the outside world by

the misleading title of Hindu religion."[19]   Throughout

his analysis Roy used the term Indian culture in

preference to Hindu culture or religion. He has done

this "primarily because Hindu religion and Indian

culture are not synonymous term: they do not denote the

same things."[20]

It is, thus, clear that Indian society has

multiple traditions rather than any single tradition.

Malik has warned against the tendency among the

scholars to propagate one single tradition instead of

plural traditions. In his own words, "There are various

perspectives - historical, geographical, mythological -

ritual, etc. that have been brought in to explain the

maintenance of Indian traditions, social systems and

cultural patterns. But, unfortunately, most researches

have not kept in view the multidimensional approaches.

By these attempts scholars have tried to establish a

single cultural identity of a unique nation and people.

It is because of this general orientation the attempts

to understand various problems of Indian civilization

have been incomplete and unsuccessful." [21] About the problem of model which is appropriate to study the Indian culture and changes occurred in it, Unnithan and others have indicated three problems: one, there is lack of written history of Indian tradition; two, the sociologists and social anthroplogists have largely neglected the study of peasant society; and, three, there is a trend of making generalization of the findings of the study of one part of the Indian civilization.[22] Like Mukherjee, they too are of the view that the concept of Indian tradition should not be confined to only to one tradition but the scholars should take into account all those traditions which are in practice in India. They are also of the view that when we talk about the Hindu tradition, we only take into account the Hindu great tradition which is derived from the Sanskritic text and is practised by the upper castes. But such tradition in reality is not the tradition(s) of Backward caste Hindus including Dalits.[23]

Anthroplogists have talked about the culture. Buy they have confined themselves mainly to the tribal culture. They have classified the Indian culture into three major sub-structures or cultures: elite, folk and tribal.[24] This classification is ideal type. This is so because among the elite section are included the upper castes, the twice born Hindu males with their sanskritised great tradition. Their ladies are not included in this as they are considered to be bearer of the folk or little tradition(s).[25] The folk culture or sub-structure of culture is dominated by the folk tradition found in the oral tradition. However, folk and elite traditions are supplementary to each other. They interact continuously within a circular relationship in which the folk tradition derives its legitimacy from the elite tradition whereas the elite tradition gets reinforcement from the folk tradition. The folk tradition is creative and it is erroneous to say that the folk tradition is merely local and parochial. One may find fundamental unity of ideas,

values and institutions which are part of the great

tradition and the various cultural forms of the folk or

the people.[26]

The tribal culture is self-contained and whole in

itself. It does not have sub-structures of its own or a

sub-structure of any culture. It is true that in all

these years the tribal culture has borrowed from other

cultures but its borrowing is neither continuous

process nor is it essential for its existence. Though

the major trends of territorial isolation the tribal

communities have maintained their distinct cultural

identity, it has been found through the recent

empirical studies that even among the tribals there is

no single tradition but multiple tribal traditions.[27]

Thus, on the basis of such understanding, Dube has

strongly advocated for multiple traditions as mentioned

in the previous chapter. According to him, India is a

Multi-religious, multi-ethnic and highly stratified

society with having complex cultural plurality.[28] So,

the model for the study of India's culture and

tradition should not be either simple or dichotomous. It should also not be of a water-tight compartment like sanskritization and little and great traditions. Sankritisastion in his opinion is very confusing and close to Brahminization and Hinduisastion.[29] Sanskritic model for him is not a single model but it provides various models and is even anti to other models.[30] Secondly, not all groups draw references from the Sanskritic sources.[31] For instance, Muslims, Christians and even certain Hindus communities like Dalits do not draw references from the Sanskritic sources but from their own sources written by their mentors in local languages. Thirdly, "Sanskritisastion hypothesis is uni-directional and has a single focus. It denies the impact of secular elements on the sanskritised tradition model."[32]

Various groups, in reality are motivated not only by one model but by several models. The various cultural processes are also multi-dimensional Hence, orientation of these groups cannot be explained within

the frame of one model or the other. For example, both the dichotomous concepts of little and great traditions are not clear in terms of their properties because some great traditions are not written in the sacred texts.[33] "Also, some traditions mentioned in the texts have been reformed later. Not only that but multiple traditions and even opposed great traditions are found in the sacred texts. Therefore, a clear understanding of the great tradition is not very easy." [34]Rejecting both the approaches of sanskritisation and little and great traditions, Dube has proposed six - fold classification of traditions in Indian society as stated in the previous chapters.[35] However, these traditions, according to him, are both rural and urban, and are appropriate to study the complex Indian cultures. In his opinion, to study the complex Indian cultures the adoption of a more complex framework of traditions will reflect the single great tradition and recognise the historical antecedents and regional variations. It will also combine the secular and ritual

trends present in the country.[36] The retrospectively, six-fold traditions suggested by Dube are: the classical tradition which is derived from the mythology, religious lores and historical past. It is not limited to sacred or sanskritic texts only but is drawn from the other sources also. So, it makes difference between the Hinduisation and Indianisation.[37] The second is the regional tradition which includes cultural traits and cultural complexities spread on certains territory.[38] The third type of tradition is the local tradition. It is much narrower than the regional tradition.[39] Fourth is the Western tradition which in actuality is the adoption of certain western tradition at the ideological or practical level. These western traditions are now well entrenched in the social and cultural life of the people in India.[40] The fifth type of tradition is the emergent national tradition which has emerged due to strong national consciousness in India. Its form, may be of nativistic, revivalistic or reinterpretaional.

The sixth type of tradition is the sub-cultural tradition of particular social groups like ruling families, bureaucracy, etc. These groups are governed partly by their own tradition and partly by that borrowed from others.[41]

In spite of providing a detailed classification of traditions in India, Dube has not recognised the Islamic great tradition as a separate entity. It is hard also to locate the Islamic great and little traditions in his six fold classification. Though he has hinted for inclusion of traditions of non caste Hindus in the category of the classical tradition, his differentiation between Hinduisation and Indianisation does not explicity suggest for inclusion of traditions of the other religious communities like Muslims, Christians, etc. Then, it may obliquely be said that his concept of Indianisation is parochial it is includes the traditions of both the upper and backward caste Hindus or the sanskritic and non-sanskritic traditions. Even if we try to locate the

Islamic great tradition, within the six-fold classification of traditions suggested by Dube, its relationship with other traditions will be of the tradition and sub-tradition in which other traditions will be treated as tradition and the Islamic tradition as sub-tradition. But this will be completely atrocious to the Islamic great tradition like to the traditions of other religious communities in India.

The traditions of Islam and Hinduism are ever flowing stream where many traditions have got incorporated. These traditions are dynamic, and have been changing in accordance with time and condition, though the degree of change has varied from community to community. Nonetheless, both have changed drastically, though the traditions are time specific in which their major tenets are more pronounced and not in all times that follow. In sum, every tradition in India, is inter-related in one way or the other. Each tradition has the give and take relationship with another. However, the problem remains that at the

cultural level the people in India either misconceive of the Hindu tradition as Indian tradition or they place the Hindu great tradition higher in the esteem in comparison to the traditions of other religious communities. A true Indian tradition may emerge only when all traditions prevalent of one tradition in the country should be included in and their relationship with other traditions is not of the super or subordinate type but of the equality type.

CHAPTER - IV

LITTLE AND GREAT TRADITIONS OF ISLAM IN INDIA

LITTLE AND GREAT TRADITIONS OF ISLAM IN INDIA

Modification, additions and substractions of tradition had been important feature of the Islamic tradition. Islam adopted many pre-Islamic traditions of Arabia either by giving Islamic tilt to them or by modifying their certain aspects as stated in chapter 2. Besides, the conversion of local traditions into the Islamic great tradition with the territorial expansion of Islam was a continuous process. In the long run, these little traditions got fully absorbed into the great tradition and whenever and wherever these little traditions existed as independent entity, these carried the major tenets of the Islamic great tradition. Thus, continuity and adoption of multiple traditions have always remained the basic features of the Islamic tradition.

We have mentioned in Chapter 2 that Islam came to India via Persia and Central Asia. So, in the broader sense what has been considered to be Islamic tradition is in actuality the modified Islamic Arabian tradition with addition of a number of little traditions of those areas through which it travelled. About nature of the Islamic tradition in India Ahmad writes, "Unlike Hinduism in India or Islam in Arabia, Islam in India was intrusive in character. It came over an already established civilisation and could establish itself only by slow degrees over the already deeply entrenched indigenous tradition. In the course its journey through Persia and Turkeston, the Islamic faith had acquired certain accretions so that the version of Islam which had been introduced into India was quite different from what it had been in its original heartland. On arrival in India, it had been further diluted through conversion to its fold of large groups of local converts who were bound to bring their preconversion beliefs and practices into the faith.

Thus, it was almost inevitable that the religious tradition of Muslims in India should comprise two distinct elements: one ultimate and formal derived from Islamic text and the other proximate and local validated by customs."[1]

About the relevan   omy and power of little traditions Ahmad sta.... , .,.... the Islamic tradition which came to India tried to replace the indigenous tradition(s) completely but it was not possible because the local traditions were integral part of people's life and its complete rejection might have caused the rejection of Islam itself.[2] Resistance put by the local traditions encouraged the Islam to assimilate the local cultural traditions by putting the Islamic content into them.[3] But it is historically proved that the assimilation was not one way process. Instead, the Islamic tradition got definitely influenced by the numerous local traditions and in course of time its initial tenets obviously got diluted as mentioned in the previous chapters. More precisely, the

assimilation of local cultural traditions to the Islamic tradition, according to Tara Chand, was not one sided. But Islam was also influenced by Hinduism and vice-versa. He further writes, "The Muslims who came into India, made it their home. They lived surrounded by the Hindu people and a state of perennial hostility with them was impossible. Mutual intercourse led to mutual understanding. Many who had changed their faith differed little from those whom they had left. The effort to seek a new life led to the development of new culture which was neither exclusive Hindu nor purely Muslim. It was indeed a Hindu-Muslim culture. Not only did Hindu religion, Hindu art, Hindu literature and Hindu science absorb Muslim elements, but the very spirit of Hindu culture and the very stuff of Hindu mind were also altered, and the Muslims reciprocated in every department of life."[4]

There are several levels in the religious system of Muslims in India and each level enjoys autonomy yet remains integral part of Islam. Generally, speaking,

three levels are clearly recognizable.[5] The first level consists of beliefs and practices which are traditionally described in the Quran or in the teaching of Quran. These Quaranic beliefs and practices command reverence and respect of Indian Muslims and the Muslims in World as well.[6] The second level includes beliefs and values practised by the people confined in a limited territory. These are not derived from the Islamic seripture and are occasionally opposed to the ideas laid in the scripture. But people regard this level equivalent to the first level of Islamic beliefs and practices. The best example of it is the celebration of Muhorram festival in northern India.[7] Finally, "the third level contains a large number of non-philosophical elements such as supernatural theories of disease causation, propitiation of Muslim saints."[8]

Retrospectively, the influence of local or little traditions on the structure of great tradition of Islam in India can be seen at three levels: at the marriage,

family and kinship level; at the level of form of social stratification; and the level of practicing some traits of caste system. Ahmad has criticised the sociologists and anthropologists for their acceptance of general beliefs that Muslims follow the customs and tradition(s) prescribed in the scriptual texts.[9] He states, "There is wide spread impression that Muslims in India adhere strictly to the basic tenets of Islam as embodied in Sharia. This impression had indeed been so widespread that even sociologists and social anthropologists, who are committed to the empirical investigation of social life, have been prone to accept it. Either they have tended to disregard the possibility of a chasm dividing the stated ideals of Islam and social practices altogether or they ignore the deviations from the stated norms wherever they occur and accept the normative position as a sufficiently valid basis for describing the religious beliefs as well as the social institutions and behaviour patterns of the community".[10] Critising the

general beliefs regarding Sharia that it is intact, invariant and uniform in nature, Ahmad has produced different type of impression about the Sharia. According to him, it will be misleading if we assume that the life and society of a Muslim in India is only shaped by the Shariah or Islamic law." On the contrary, Muslims have displayed the variety of institutions, customs, traditions, etc. which are not even prescribed by scriptural text. Even the social life of one particular group in one region is different from another Muslim group in the other region. If social organisations, customs, etc. were shaped by the great tradition of Islam then there should be uniformity among Muslims all over the country.[12] Side by side, there should have also been clear cut distinctions between Muslims and the people other religious communities of that region. But this is not so. There are certain religious customs which make some distinction otherwise both seem to be influenced by each other.

How norms vary from community to community shows the diversity and differentiation of values among Muslims. Rizvi[13] in his study of Muslim community of Multani Loharas, generally known as Karkhandar in Delhi, has shown that they live jointly but keep their hearths separately though they regard jointness with reverence. Contrarily, the Bakerwals of Kashmir studied by Khatana have the tradition of separating their son after marriage.[14] This shows that how environment has influenced the norms and social institutions of the Gujar Bakarwals and yet their norms and practices are regarded as inherent parts of the Islamic great tradition.[15]

In the matter of kinship also the Muslims like Hindus have large kinship groups but these groups do not play the same and equally important role. In the words of Ahmad , "These differences serve to underscore religious differences but the presence of identical social grouping equally highlights the fact that in terms of the structure of family and kinship

groupings the Muslims in India are not necessary distinguishable from their non-Muslim neighbours. They seem to be a part of a wider cultural complex shared equally by all those who reside in the region as whole."[16] This is true because customs, traditions, family structure, marriage patterns, descent, etc. are very much influenced by the environment.

As mentioned above, the Islamic great tradition is supplemented with local customs and traditions and both little and great traditions of Islam contribute to each other as mentioned in Chapter 2. Customs and practices adopted by the Muslim communities are of regional nature. Muslims are not only governed by the Sharia but by a number of social institutions. The Islamic laws are supplemented by the traditional usages. According to Levy "In marriage, divorce and the distribution of inheritance, the provisions of the Shar' (Sharia) would appear to be very widely neglected. This is primarily because of the impact of the surrounding environment and day to day

interaction of the Muslim communities with their non-Muslim neighbours."[17]

Generally, a few sociologists and social anthropologists have traced some features of the Hindu caste system among the Muslims in India as mentioned in the previous chapter. These features are: hierarchy, heredity and endogmy which are now commonly practised among the Muslims in India. These sociologists and social anthropologists are however of the view that though Muslims practice some features of caste, yet caste is not supported by their religion or by the Islamic great tradition unlike that of the Hindus. So, acceptance of traditions, customs, rituals etc. among the Muslims in India can be seen at two levels: one at the religious level where equality, fraternity, etc. are emphasised to be practised among all people irrespective of their class, clan or race. More precisely, this is at the theoretical or ideological level. Two, at the wordly or material or social level numerous types of differences in acceptance and

practice of traditions, customs, etc. can easily be seen among the Muslims depending upon their location in different regions. For instance, according to Barth,[18] the Swat Muslim community in the North-West Pakistan is divided into unequal groups known as 'quaum'. The term is used for the hierarchically ordered groups. The important Quaums are: persons of Holy descent, landowner and administrator, priests and craftsmen, agriculturists, tenants and labourers, herders, and despised groups. These groups are found in each and every village and they are dependent on one another in matter of skills and services. They together form a community.

"The various quoums of among the Swat Muslims are not strictly homologous nor there is concept of rituals attached with group superiority as in Hinduism. Social stratification among them is expressed in different ways. But as a Muslim, they explicitly repudiate the very social differences which the existence of Quom implies. The sacred activities continually assert the

basic unity and equality of all the Muslims. These quoums cannote more the sense of class than of caste in Hinduism. The different quoms within a single community participate in the non-monetary reciprocal services on the model of the Hindu jajmani system and there exist relative rankings of many occupations in which they are employed."[19]

The presence of caste system among the Indian Muslims is supported by other studies also. For instance, Ahmad[20] has presented a picture of caste system practised among the Muslims in Bihar which is very close to the Hindu caste system. His emphasis is that most of the Muslims were converted from the lower ranks of the Hindu caste system during the medieval period. He writes that the spread of Islam in Bihar and Bengal had been a gradual process. As number of people of foreign descent was not considerably high, it was all the more necessary to win over the support of the local people by converting them. This necessity implied some sort of compromise with local customs and

beliefs. A complete Islamization of the converts was neither possible nor practicable. Describing the rituals practised by the converted Muslims and the relationship of these with the Islamic great tradition, he writes, "it is little wonder, that the worship of the village godlings was some times performed as before, that at places animistic beliefs continued, that Brahmin priests were still employed and Hindu festivals observed. The wonder is not that these hereditary customs and beliefs were adhered to but that some of the teaching of Islam were strictly observed."[21]

Comparing caste systems or caste system practised by both the Hindus and Muslims in Bihar Ahmad further states, "In this way we find that through contacts and conversion the Muslim society borrowed caste elements. But caste system just like Hindus could never evolve in their community. The concept of caste pollution and thereby the institution of untouchability is alien to the traits of Islam."[22] Ahmad, however, mentions about

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a complex system of caste differentiation among the Muslims in Bihar. In his own words, "Broadly, the Muslim society in India is divided into two sections - Ashraf and Ajlat or Atral. The first meaning noble or the high family, includes all Muslims of foreign blood and converts from higher caste, while 'Ajlaf' meaning degraded or unholy, embraces the functional groups and low ranking converts. In Bihar like U.P. and Bengal, Sayyad, Sheikhs, Moghuls and Pathan constitute the upper caste Muslims i.e. the Asrafs, while the Ajlaf are carpenters, painters, artisans, graziers, tanners etc"[23] Further, Ahmad has quoted the census of 1901 to mention a third category of Muslims, called Arzal or lowest of all. It consists of the very lowest castes such as Halalkhor, Lalbegi, Abdal, Bediya, etc. Dumont has taken example of U.P. of the pre-partition days and divided castes among Muslims into two categories: Ashraf and non-Ashraf. Ashraf comprise of Saiyid, Sheikh, Mughal and Pathan and are supposedly descendant of immigrants. The Saiyid and Sheikhs have the Arab

origin whereas the Mughals and Pathan are ethnic name. The Sheikhs and Saiyids were literate persons like Brahmins and came gradually in small number but the Mughals and Pathans came in large number. According to Dumont, a large number of Rajputs also joined Ashraf category. It is generally said that the Ashrafs strictly observe endogamy to preserve the purity of their descent. Yet, Dumont writes, "Among the Ashrafs there is no (absolute) endogamous grouping in the sense which we have given the term.

There is, however, a marked preference for marriage within a very small group known 'biahdari'or biradari (marriage circle). It is well known that a Muslim may marry even his first cousin in the paternal line his father's brother's daughter.) Though Dumont accepts that Muslims do have caste but he makes difference between the Muslim caste and the Hindu caste system. He states, "The Ashrafs are contaminated by caste spirit although they have not completely succumbed to it. Commensality is liberal among the

Ashrafs. Roughly speaking, whilst there are differences of custom among Muslims, prohibition to commensality never appears except between Muslims and Hindus or between Muslims whose status is widely different (Asraf and non Ashraf)". Thus, Islam does not justify any distinction based on caste, class, clan, race, birth, etc. as stated earlier in this chapter. But Hinduism justifies caste system. Yet, there seems to be general consensus among those sociologists and social anthropologists who have studied the Muslims that social stratification among the Muslim communities is certainly comparable to the Hindu caste system. However, the exact parallel cannot be drawn between the two.

Thus, there exists caste or caste system among the Muslims in India. About the form of such caste system among Muslims, Imtiaz Ahmad says, "A consideration of caste among the Muslims would require to be based not on purely structural criteria but rather on the degree to which their social stratification displays

principles and features characteristically associated with caste among the Hindus. A caste has a close relationship with the hereditary accupation which serves as the basis for its economic interdependence. At the level of social hierarchy, links between caste and traditional occupations are more at the bottom as compared to the top ranks." Ahmad accepts that there exists the concept of hierarchy among the Muslims but it cannot be said to be prototype of the Hindu caste system. For him, "There is notion of hierarchy among the Muslims, though it is hard to say how for the criterion of ranking amongst them can be said to conform to Hindu models. Such ranking among the Hindus is based on the criteria of pollution and purity.

Since the caste system with its number of distinctive features practised among the Muslims in India is not supported by the principle or ideology of Islam, it is to be considered little tradition though its territorial jurisdiction covers almost the entire population of Muslims spread in the different regions

in India. Hence, more appropriately, this may be treated at least a great tradition, if not great tradition of Islam. Same is true in the cases of family structure kinship system and marriage pattern among Muslims in India.

Spear has criticised some prevalent notions about the Muslims in India which produce contrary picture from the reality. He has pointed out two important misconceptions about the Muslims in India. First misconception is the notion of Islam in India as a monolithic entity with one faith or creed, one race and one political expression. But infact Islamic faith was brought in different forms by different groups, in India at different times. Its result was the formation of different sects. The second misconception is that it is supposed that the original form of Islam is the only significant thing about the Indian Muslims. But in reality the original Islamic tradition was greatly influenced by the Turkish, Afghan and Persian cultures as mentioned in the previous chapters. Spear

has mentioned about the three types of conversion: individual, group and mass conversion which have led the Muslims even in India to follow both the Islamic tradition and their pre-conversion traditions as mentioned earlier.

In sum, we have discussed in this chapter that when Islam reached India, it had already incorporated many local traditions as its little tradition. In India it also adopted or incorporated many local traditions. These local traditions became its little traditions and provided vitality to the Islamic great tradition. Little traditions are practised in reference to the great tradition and the latter provide legitimacy to the former. Little tradition contribute to the great tradition by strengthening it. Thus, the relationship between the great and little traditions in Islam is as two-way process in which they reciprocate each other and together form a Islamic tradition in India which obviously is different from the Islamic tradition practised elsewhere in the world.

C H A P T E R – V

MODERNIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC TRADITION IN NORTHERN INDIA

Modernization of the Islamic Tradition in Northern India

Modernization is a complex concept as it covers a large number of heterogeneous trends like organization of societies at the national level, mobilization, secularization, participation of people in State activities, rationalization, etc.[1] About the concept of modernization Singh writes, "Modernization is a composite concept. It is also an ideological concept. The models of modernization co-vary with the choice of ideologies. The composite nature of this concept renders it pervasive in the vocabulary of social sciences and evokes its kinship with concepts like 'development', 'growth', 'evolution', and 'progress'.[2] About the ideological aspect of modernization Singh further states, "its ideological mooring, however, suffuse it with value loads that render social scientists and the public equally ambivalent to its notion as modernization becomes a candidate for

rejection or approval, prejudice or pride. Ideology also serves as a canopy under which the similarities and differences of contradistinct models of modernization can be examined and their relevance analysed. The structural and existential issues in the modernization of societies, the changes in their material and technological conditions, modes of production, distribution of wealth and power and relative deprivation of classes and sections of people in a society - all these processes tend to have a fit on a calculus of meaning that is ideological".[3] In the opinion of Singh, ideology is important for modernization. Variations of ideology make variations in the models for modernization. Since ideology in his opinion is subjective, modernization becomes value loaded for the developing countries.[4]

However, Srinivas has preferred the term westernization to modernization. He states, "Implicity in westernization are certain value preferences. A most important value is what may be broadly characterized as

humanitarianism by which is meant an active concern for welfare of all human beings irrespective of caste, economic position, religion, age, and sex-Equalitarianism and secularization are both included in humanitarianism."[5] According to Srinivas, modernization is value - loaded whereas Westernization is neutral. He further writes, "The term "Westernization" unlike "modernization" is ethically neutral. Its use does not carry the implication that it is good or bad, whereas modernization is normally used in the sense that it is good".[6] Though Srinivas has preferred to use the term westernization, he has also pointed towards its limitations. He states, "Westernization" is unsuitable for several reasons: It is too local a label, and the model which is initiated may not be a western country but Russia, Turkey, Japan or India".[7]

Contrary to this, Lerner has preferred the term modernization to Westernization. According to him, "where Europeanization once penetrated only the upper level of middle east society affecting mainly leisure

class fashions, modernization today diffuses among a wider population and touches public institutions as well as private aspirations with its disquieting "positivist spirit". Central to this change is the shift in modes of communicating ideas and attitudes - for spreading among a large public vivid images of its own new way is what modernization distinctly does".[8] Further, according to Lerner, people in the middle-east have preferred the traits of westernization but they do not like it to be named as westernization. This is so as he found the anti-colonial attitude developed among the people who had fought against the colonial western world. He writes, that the complication of middle east modernization is due to its own "ethnocentrison - expressed politically in extreme nationalism, psychologically in passionate xenophobia. The hatred sown by anti-colonialism is harvested in the rejection of every appearance of foreign tutelage. Wanted are modern institutions but not modern ideologies, modern power but not modern purposes, modern wealth but no

modern wisdom, modern commodities but not modern cant".[9]

Tradition and modernity are the processes of linear change. There is misconception that modernity and tradition are dichotomous. Rudolphs say, "The assumption that modernity and tradition are radically contradictory rest on a misdiagnosis of tradition as it so found in traditional societies, and a misapprehension of the relationship between them".[10] They further write, "The cumulative effect of the misdiagnosis of traditional societies and the misunderstanding of modern societies has been to produce gap between tradition and modernity".[11] Instead of conflict between modernity and tradition, they can mutually reinforce and help each other. Also, instead of unidirectional the relationship between the two may be of interactionist nature.[12]

There is no unanimity about the nature and type of modernization. However, the various attributes of modernization can be categorised as structural and cultural changes leading to modernization. In other

words, modernization may lead to change in cultural structure and social structure of a society. The structural changes in a society can be measured through a number of variables like economic, social, and political whereas cultural changes can be identified in terms of changes in tradition, rituals, customs, marriage, etc. More specifically, modernization has both cultural and structural attributes. According to Singh, modernization is cultural universal and has certain universal attributes like rationality, universality, scientific temperament, etc. But each society will adopt these attributes according to her condition(s). So, there will be variance in culture of different societies. [13]

Since the last part of the colonial rule in India several movements were started among the Indian Muslims to introduce change in their social structure. Some of these movements were like those of Mujahideen, Farazi, Deoband School, Tablighi, etc. as stated in earlier chapters. All these movements were against the existing

hierarchy in the Muslim society. Caste, clan, race and even descent had become the symbols of inequality in the Muslims society. Therefore, opposed the social discrimination of one strata or "caste" against the other and emphasised equality amongst all the followers of Islam. They blamed the Hindu tradition for these "evils" intrigued in the Muslim society and emphasised that any influence of the Hindu tradition on the Muslim tradition should be stopped. They also insisted for adoption of the Islamic great tradition and for discarding the little traditions. The Mujahideen movement of the previous century was at the fore front and the Tablighi movement started in the first quarter of this century has still been mobilizing the people against little traditions. Anyway, all these efforts have been made to keep the Islamic traditional structure intact.

Contrary to this, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was of the opinion that the structure of the Islamic tradition should be interpreted in the light of modernization and

westernization. Islam is not against modern western education. In his opinion, any interpretation of Quran, which is contradictory to Islam, is misinterpretation. Rawlinson writes, "the work which brought storm of opposition was his "Tafsir",(commentary on the Quran). Syed Ahmad wished to show that there was no opposition between the teaching of Islam and modern science, and his views on the subject were frankly rationalistic. He maintained that the Quran was not verbally inspired, but must be interpreted in the light of reason".[14] To remove prejudice against western education from the mind of Indian Muslims, he established the scientific society in 1862 at Ghazipur (U.P.) for translating English books into Urdu.

The impact of British rule in India was one of the greatest causes which encouraged the Indian Muslims to go for modernization. Fall of the Mughal empire before the establishment of the Pax Britannica and the gradual loss of control of Muslims in administration perpetuated a sense of deprivation among them. Their

backwardness in the fields of administration, army and education was due to structural changes introduced by Britishers. The Britishers established administration which was based, more or less, on the western pattern under which the Muslims had very little or almost nil representation. This relative deprivation imbibed by the Muslims was of two types. One, the Britishers were the sole cause of the Muslims' deprivation. Therefore, they were to be driven out of India and the old Mughal set up was to be revived. Two, since it was not possible to drive the Britishers out, Muslims were to educate themselves in the western way. Only then they could get their due share in the existing administration.

Contrary to the general impression, there was always a feeling among the Muslims in India for acquiring western knowledge of science and technology. But the economic political and religious factors proved to be constraints in their path of modernization. Yet, the first reformation movement was started by Shah

Waliullah to meet the need of social reform among the Indian Muslims as mentioned in the earlier chapter.[15] He emphasised the need for reinterpreting the Islamic tradition in order to meet the requirements of the changing situations. He called for reasoning and propagating the <u>ijtihad</u>, criticised <u>Ulemas'</u> for sticking to <u>Taqlid</u> (blind imitation). He also advocated that the 'sharia' should be adopted according to the specific requirements of the particular region and should go according to the social, religious and legal practices of that region or society. He was against the binding of people to a single school of the Islamic jurisprudence and, thus he advocated for freedom of choosing the desired traits from the different schools of the 'Sharia'. He disapproved the conflict between the Islamic jurisprudence and the mysticism and emphasised necessity of both. He also emphasised the necessity of economic prosperity among the Muslims and said that the monopolisaton of wealth would lead to revolution. He was against the monarchical form of

government and advocated for oligarchic rather than the democratic form of government. [16]

The followers of Shah Waliullah are popularly called 'Wahabi' - a term taken from Arabia where a movement was led in the 19th century by Abdal-Wahab of Hejaz against carrying out the non Quranic activities. But the Wahabi movement of Arabia and the Wahabi movement of the previous century in India cannot be considered synonymous.[17] The Wahabi movement in India had influenced several movements of the later period. About the influence of this movement Nizami writes, "in fact, many of the religious movements in the years that followed, though differing in their concept and approach, drew inspiration from him (Shah Waliullah). If, on one side, the orthodox school of Deoband which stood for religious traditionalism sought to emphasize its ideological link with him, on the other side, Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, who stood for a complete reorientation of religious thought in the light of western rationalistic tendencies, often turned to him

for the support of his religious attitude".[18]

Shah Waliullah was in favour of change in structure in and not of Islam. On one side, he asked to adopt the Quranic practices and, on the other side, he emphasised the need for interpreting the Islamic jurisprudence in accordance with time, region and culture as stated earlier. About the followers of Shah Waliullah, Nizami further writes that, "Shah Waliullah was admired but was never understood by his contemporaries. His ideas were applied to new situations in fragments piece meal and mutilated and according to subjective preferences. A healthy balance which was the essence of his thought was ignored and the sections of Muslim society acted upon his direction in one sphere but utterly ignored his lead in other."[19]

After his death in 1963, his son Shah Abdul Aziz succeeded him in the same year. He was not having similar rigid attitudes towards the Ulemas of his time. Yet, his approach towards modernization was dichotomous. In the political sphere he was strongly

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opposed to the Britishers and he used the religious

sanction to launch struggle against the British rule in

India. But in the social sphere he was liberal. In the

words of Nizami, "His religious approach was so broad

and comprehensive that he had studied the religious

texts of Hinduism, Christianity and Judaism with great

care and could quote from them with great felicity. He

told a disciple that the word "parameshwar' and "Allah"

had identical connotation and he (disciple) could utter

any of them".[20] He adopted realistic attitude towards

social problem. For instance, he was of the opinion

that family planning was not anti-religion.[21] He was

in favour of learning the western arts and sciences.

Even he praised the Britishers for their achievement in

the fields of science and Arts. In the field of

politics, he used religion as a weapon against the

Britishers and he declared "Jehad" (religious war)

against them. The British - occupied land was declared

"Darul-Harb War zones".[22] Thus, both Shah Waliullah

and Shah Abdul Aziz had comparatively liberal views in

the fields of education and social practices but very rigid views in the matter of politics. They used their rigid views against the British rule in India. The Wahabi movement started by them was initially as a religious reform movement. But at the subsequent stages, it developed, with sufficient social, economic and contents.[23]

The other two movements - the Mujahideen and the Farazi movement - were organised in the nineteenth century by Syed Ahmad Barelvi in northern India and Shariatullah in Bengal respectively. The proponents of both the movements were influenced by shah Waliullah and the Wahabi movement of Arabia. They had also adopted orthodoxy towards the Britishers. Though, the content of their movements was political, form was religious. About the nature of these movements and their roles in bringing about reform in the Islamic great tradition Singh states, "In the nineteenth century India, these various pulls in the reformation movement of the Great Islamic tradition began to

polai into two major schools, one which stood for libei m and peaceful reform , and the other which was ror more orthodoxy and militantism. The former trend was activated by Shah Abdul Aziz and his disciple Sheikh Karamat Ali, both of whom were for peaceful religious reforms. The more militant approach was offered by Sayyid Ahmad Barelvi and Shariatullah who were for jihad and condemnation of the British regime as a religious war zone."[24]

Both approaches were, in a way, combined by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan who was born in Delhi in 1817. He had witnessed the mutiny of 1857 and post-mutiny persecutions of Indians in general and the Muslims in particular. By this time Muslims had developed strong rigid attitude towards the Britishers which was result of propagation of the Ulemas involved in the Mujahideen movement. Also, several structural changes introduced by the Britishers were not liked by the Muslims because these changes deprived them from their representation in the various social, economic and military positions.

Singh has analysed the attitudes of Muslims in these conditions and stated, "it is not surprising that Islam during this period lost more and more of its earlier syncretic and liberal tendencies and in its place orthodoxy and revivalism became its major preoccupations".[25]

Sir Syed was blamed by the orthodox Ulemas on the ground that he was drifting Muslims away from the teaching of Islam. He was vigorously criticised by the orthodox Ulemas on the ground of his book Tafsir-i-Quran (Commentary on Quran) in which he had emphasised that Quran should be interpreted in the light of reason because there is no conflict between teaching of Islam and modern sciences as stated earlier in this chapter.[26] He had warned the Muslims that had they not taken to the western education, they would remain not only backward but sink to the bottom of the backwardness.[27] Assessing the ground reality of the Indian Muslims, he tried to correlate the modern education and Islam so that Muslims should not be

influenced by the orthodox teaching of the Ulemas. He wrote, "if choice were to lie between giving up Islam itself or saving ourselves from apostasy, I should have unhesitatingly chosen the latter even it had meant utter destruction for myself and my people. That, however, is not the choice. Adoption of the new system of education does not mean the renunciation of Islam".[28]

Moreover, he not only preached the Muslims but also established a Scientific Society for propagation of the scientific temperament among the Muslims as mentioned earlier in this chapter. He propagated the method of reasoning, dialogue, experiment and testing of hypothesis. He emphasised that in day-to-day life beliefs and views should not be held dogmatically but tentatively. In the words of Khusro, "Sir Syed was really seeking to legitimise the basic tenets of the post-renaissance scientific attitude. He had clearly discerned the need to shift from rigid and dogmatic beliefs to empirical and rational beliefs from blind

faith to reasoning".[29] Sir Syed was deeply impressed by the English language. He knew that both the English language and the knowledge imparted through English medium would not only be beneficial to the Muslims for getting employment in the British India but it would also enable them to make their contact with the western science and philosophy. He established the Mohemmadan Anglo Oriental College (MAC) in Aligarh in 1877 with English as the medium of instruction. He adopted a system in which English medium was given upper hand not all off sudden but in a gradual manner. At the college level, medium of instruction was English. Besides English, Persian and Urdu were also taught as second languages. At the school level, Urdu was the medium of instruction and English was taught as second language. At the elementary level, it was the Madrassa (religious School) where Arabic was taught. [30] In a way, he had introduced the two if not three language formula in the college, which later on became Aligarh Muslim University.

In brief, Sir Syed opened door of the western modern education for the Muslims. He was very much concerned about their educational backwardness. In his opinion, in a nation equality cannot be possible if all groups are not equals in terms of education. He castigated Muslims for following the Islamic tradition without bothering about its sources. He claimed that all sources of the Islamic tradition(s) are Quran and Hadith. But his firm view was that teachings of Quran and modern sciences are not contradictory because the Quranic teachings are to be interpreted in the light of science. Thus, he wanted Muslims to adopt the tradition in accordance with the modern thinking. It is in this sense, emergence of the Aligarh movement in the field of modern Muslim education was the most outstanding event in the history of Islam in India.

The Islamic tradition had never remained static. Rather, it is a living tradition because many changes were incorporated in it in the past and this process is still on. Its passage through Iran, Central Asia, etc.

had brought many additions in it before it came to India as stated in the earlier chapters. Also, numerous Hindu tradition have been incorporated in it in certain ways since the early times. There is, however, a strong correlation between political condition of the Muslims in India and their attitude towards retaining the Islamic tradition. For instance, their political instability has always made them panic and has been reflected in development of their rigid, intact and "status quo" attitudes towards their tradition. As stated earlier Muslims had developed hostile attitudes towards the Britishers during the colonial period. This had also deepened insecurity and relative deprivation among them. Yet, their attitude towards the Islamic tradition got greatly influenced during this period.

The Muslim consciousness of relative deprivation had manifested in two forms in the previous century. First form was represented by the Aligarh Movement which was to compete with other religious community in the field of modernization. The second form was

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represented by the Ulemas of the Deoband School established in 1867 in Saharanpur Distt. of U.P. immediately after the 1857 mutiny. About the role of the Ulemas Hasan writes, "over the years, the Ulemas resisted the secularising tendencies in continuing to wear the medieval attire. Their turbans and flowing gowns made them stand out as symbols of conservatism in a society that was becoming less Islamic and more secular. The emphasis on Taqlid, opposition to the exercise of individual judgment (ijtihad), and the stubborn defense of established traditions explains, in large part, the absence of any significant education and social reform movement among Muslims."[31] But situation did not remain the same in the present century. The political development provided opportunity to the ulemas for their dominance amongst the Muslim leaders. Yet, a some what reciprocal relationship was established between the traditionalists and modernists". On the political events which caused the unity between the traditionalists and modernists Hasan

states, "The annulment of the partition of Bengal, the Turko-Italian War, the furor over the Kanpur mosque affairs, and the rejection of Muslim University scheme added thrust to the converging courses in politics of modern and the traditionally educated."[32]

At the same time, during the second decade of the twentieth century a religious movement called "Tablighi movement" was started by Maulana Ilyas (1885-1944) of Kandhala (Saharanpur Distt. of U.P.). "Tablighi, in Arabic, literally means to instruct or to educate the people about their religion".[33] This movement can be seen in the context of reaction against the Shuddhi (purification) and Sangthan (organisation) movements organised by the Arya Samaj to reconvert all those Hindus who were converted to Islam. In the words of Marwah, "The Shuddhi movement was basically aimed at such Muslim communities which were considered to have been Hindus in recent past - the aim being to persuade these communities to return to the fold of Hinduism. This movement caused considerable anxiety among the

Muslims, and they started consolidating their position by propagating religious orthodoxy."[34] The Tabligh movement can also be seen as a solidaristic movement of Muslims which had emerged due to their minority identity consciousness. Faruqi states, "The movement has also helped, though indirectly, in promoting a feeling of communal solidarity among the Indian Muslims".[35] The partition of India too has enhanced the minority consciousness among the Muslims. Singh has correlated their identity consciousness and the political situation after the partition. According to him, "Islamization, in the form of religious revivalism, distantiated Muslims from the cultural ties existing with Hinduism, and the increased identity consciousness and political mobilization of the community was the normal sociological process for this minority group under the type of political and social situation to which it was exposed after partition".[36]

Amongst all the socio-religious movements started by the Muslims in India one common element is that

these have advocated for the "ijtihad or reasoning to be adopted in the Islamic tradition. They have also emphasised adoption of the great tradition of Islam because it is identity assertive. Muslims consider today their Islamic great tradition as equivalent to the Hindu great tradition. Therefore, their such feeling, in theory, encourages them to discard a number of little traditions already incorporated in Islam which, as stated earlier, have acquired by now their own importance and autonomy in the Islamic structure. Hence, it may not be possible to discard all of them. In fact the Islamic great tradition in India may find very hard to stand without its little traditions.

After independence a large number of Muslims have not shed their hesitation away in adoption of the modern values. There is a general feeling among the political and religious elites among Muslims that any change will adversely affect their tradition which ultimately may lead to assimilation of the Islamic

tradition into the Hindu great tradition. Singh's
opinion is that the powerful political elite and middle
class can override the resistance to traditionalism.
He has cited the example of Pakistan, Arab and
Turkey.[37] But Moin Shakir has criticised the role
played by the Muslim political elites. About their
role he says, "In the context of the imperatives and
compulsions of the contemporary political
situation in India, the task of the political elite of
the various minorities is undoubtedly deficient. It
demands not only the recognition of special problems of
minorities but also a constructive participation in the
national life of people".[38] According to him, their
failure to fulfill the task was due to the fact that,
firstly, "it (their minority consciousness) still
carries burden of the past on its shoulders."
Secondly, it has not responded to the realities arose
out of the political partition of the country.[39]

Liberalism and the feeling of relative deprivation
are correlated in the context of the Indian Muslims.

As stated in earlier chapter, the liberal attitude generated among the Muslims at the time of Akbar had started shrinking and reached its lowest point after the Sepoy Revolt in 1857. Many revivalistic movements had started in the 18th and 19th centuries against the practices of the little traditions. Even in the present time, there is feeling among the Indian Muslims of their being minority in the existing political set up which has encouraged them to assert and act as a unified pressure group. In the opinion of Shakir, the partition has created a psychological problem for the Indian Muslims which has compelled them to adopt a rigid attitude towards modernization. He writes, "All the privileges of the pre-1947 days were snatched away. The reservation in the services was abolished, Adult franchise and common electorate replaced separate and limited electorate."[40] About the positive effect of the partition he further states, "But at the same time the partition of country provided an impetus to the process of social change or modernization. The Muslim

women started abandoning _purdah_. Their education received more attention. The percentage of their literacy rapidly grew. They did not feel shy of accepting jobs in the governmental and non-governmental sectors. Politically, the community prepared itself to bring legacy of two nation theory to an end. Secularism is accepted as the national objective. As the community settled down, the upward mobility and economic prosperity in the various social classes of the Indian Muslims became noticeable." [41]

Partition of the country has affected the Muslims in economic field also. A noticeable number of Muslim elite, middle class and landlords had migrated to Pakistan at the time of Partition of India Ahmad critises those scholars who include the Muslim Jagirdars in this list.[42] However, after independence a gradual emergence of the middle class among the Indian Muslims can be seen due to the effect of modernization. Peasantry constitutes the largest section of Muslims contrary to the existing view that

the majority of Muslims lived in urban areas.[43]

According to Ahmad,[44] Muslims are also benefited from the economic development and modernization. But this benefits are not uniform. He has mentioned three types of effects of modernization and economic development on the Muslims. These are: some Muslims have been benefited and others have remained unaffected. Still in other cases their socio-economic position has declined.

The economic position of any community and its educational standard are correlated. Such correlation works in the sense that more education leads to more economic participation and development which ultimately leads to modernization. We have mentioned earlier that Muslims have remained backward in the field of modern education as compared to Hindus since the previous century. We have also mentioned that Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was the person to realise the importance of modern Western education which, according to him, was not only to provide job opportunities to the Indian Muslims

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but also to open their mind to compete with others and develop their own society to the level of the Western society. He also realised the sensitivity of the matter. Hence, he did not exclude the study of theology and oriental knowledge from his broader educational plan though he provided it lower status as compared to the Western education. He said, "There are two things, gentlemen, for upholding the position of Mohammedans - one of this world and one of the next. For salvation in the next, there is no anxiety if we believe that "There is no god but Allah and Mohammed is the Prophet of God (Allah). But we have to give attention to the troubles of this sad world; and although we have but few days to spend in it, yet its affairs should be set straight."[45] He further said, "believe that without high education it is impossible now to acquire honour."[46]

Modernization of education, polity and economy are interlinked and form a vicious circle in the positive sense of the term. Education can be sought as backbone

in the process of modernization among Muslims. Since
Muslim are consciousness of being minority community,
the imposition of any Western model will not be
suitable or acceptable to them. In the Islamic social
structure religion, politics and economy are interwoven
and cannot be separated even in a democratic state.
This was realised by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan also who
formulated a model in which religious tradition could
be and should be interpreted in terms of modern
thinking as stated earlier. Any contradiction between
science and Islam is, in reality, a matter of
Interpretation of the both and that can be easily
resolved by putting them in the right perspective(s).

CHAPTER - VI

CONCLUSION

C O N C L U S I O N

Tradition and modernization are the ongoing processes. A society may observe modern values in one aspect and traditional values in another. What is modern may, however, become traditional in course of time, i.e. tradition of today would have been modernity of yesterday and vice-versa. Tradition and modernization are the contexual terms because what is modern in one context may become tradition in the other context. Modernization is said to have universal and uniform values. But it does not mean that every community will be modern in the same fashion and degree. Instead, the process of modernization will vary from community to community and from period to period.

We have mentioned in chapter 1 that Redfield has considered the isolated tribal culture as autonomous in comparison to the peasant culture on the basis of its communication with other culture. He has used the term civilization for the compound culture in which he has differentiated between little and great traditions. The

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great tradition, according to him, is consciously created by the elites as compared to the little tradition which are unconsciously created and practiced by the masses. Both little and great traditions are interdependent and influence each other. Little traditions are practiced in reference to the great tradition and draw their legitimacy from it. In the same way, little traditions strengthen the great tradition and provide vitality to it.

As mentioned in chapter 1, Marriott has found that religion is not consisted of great tradition only but little traditions are also its part and parcel. Several traditions practiced by villagers are also to be considered great tradition of Hinduism. But many others do not find place in the sanskritic texts. Marriott has given the concepts of parochialisation and universalisation. When people draw traits from the great tradition and follow them in accordance with that, it is called parochialisation. Contrary to that, when majority of the people start practicing

little traditions, it is the process of universalisation. Both the processes of universalisation and parochialisation are interdependent and reciprocal. Both are continuous and are inherent part of the great tradition.

A tradition is dynamic and not static as mentioned in chapter 1. Singer has rejected the view that Indian society vis-a-vis tradition was resistant to change. In his opinion, Indian society had been changing since several centuries prior to the establishment of the British power. The Hindu great tradition was formed by the elites and patronized by the Kings. The elites have provided legitimacy to it. Contrary to it, sources of the Islamic great tradition can be located in Quran, Hadith and the Islamic jurisprudence. The Quran is said to be the divine revelation of Allah (God). The Hadith means tradition which includes three elements of saying of the Prophet Mohammad, his actions, and his tacit approval of a statement or action of someone else. The Islamic jurisprudence (Sharia) consists of

(apart from the Quran and the Hadith) _ijma_ (consensus),
ijtihad (reasoning) and _Taqlid_ (blind imitation).
Later on, four schools were developed in the Shariat
for its better implementation in a given social
condition of a particular region. These schools were
Hanafi, _Shaafi_, _Maliki_ and _Hambali_. Muslims were given
freedom to choose any of these schools as mentioned in
chapter2.

Before the emergence of Islam, the Arabian society
was divided either on the basis of clan or tribe.
Numerous clans and tribes were following several
traditions and practices. Islam adopted many practices
of the Arabian society: some were tolerated for time
being while others were strongly rejected. Hence, it
maintained continuity with the past. The pre-Islamic
practices, that were added to its great tradition, were
given the Islamic interpretation. Nonetheles, these
existed as little traditions in Islam. In the context
of the Islamic tradition, both little and great
traditions has ever reciprocated each other. For

instance, in marriage Muslims practice two patterns: religious pattern - <u>Nikah</u> as prescribed in Quran, Haidth etc. and the other pattern called "<u>shaadi</u>" is sanctioned by the local customs. Both patterns are equally revered and approved. So, the Islamic great traditions(s) and its little traditions are given equal importance. They are supplementary to each other. The little traditions in Islam are always practiced in reference to its great tradition as stated earlier. The Islamic great tradition provides legitimacy to its little traditions. The little traditions, in turn, strengthen the Islamic great tradition as stated earlier.

Before Islam came to India, it had already incorporated many traditions in its great tradition. After coming to India it got further diluted and many local traditions (little traditions) joined the Islamic tradition. Thus, the present Islamic tradition in India is the product of formation and reformation of many traditions. Its journey through many civilizations and

cultures has enriched it. In the same way, the contemporary Hinduism and its traditions are not product of a particular time and condition. Instead, these are the product of a journey of thousand years.

Both the traditions of Hinduism and Islam are dynamic as stated in this chapter. Their traditions change according to time and condition. Both originated in different social conditions at different point in time. Islam is much younger to Hinduism. Though Islamic tradition got moulded to get adjusted in the Indian condition, its great tradition emphasises on equality and fraternity or brotherhood. yet, through its interaction with Hinduism the Islamic society in India has very much imbibed the characteristics of the Hindu caste system. Contrary to it, it has also influenced Hinduism in many ways as discussed in earlier chapters. However, those people who were converted to Islam, retained some aspects of their earlier practices and these, in turn, have existed as little traditions in Islam though these have obviously

been given Islamic interpretation. However, these little traditions are practiced in Islam in reference to its great tradition as mentioned in the earlier chapters.

The Islamic society in India is greatly influenced by the Hindu caste system as stated in chapter 4. However, what makes the caste among Muslims different from that in the Hindu society is that the Hindu religion prescribes the caste system whereas it is proscribed in Islam. It is true that some traits of caste are prevalent among the Muslims but these cannot be treated equivalent to those of the case of Hindu.

Yet, all Indian traditions in general and the Hindu and Islamic traditions in particular have always been interacting among themselves. This has, in turn, provided scope for emergence of the Indian tradition. Indian tradition, in true sense, is a synthesis of all major traditions like Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, Sikh, Jain and Tribals, though all of these have their autonomous existence. None is to be considered a sub-tradition of other. Not only this but each tradition

has gone through the process of reformation by both adding and eliminating certain traits. However, the dilemma in the contemporary Indian society is that when we talk about Indian tradition, we consciously or unconsciously take into consideration only the Hindu great tradition. Even if other traditions are taken into consideration, these are accepted as sub-traditions. There appears to be continuous struggle between the Hindu great tradition and the great tradition of other communities. Hence, Indian tradition in its real sense may emerge only when all traditions are interwoven in a single string on the basis of their equal importance and not on the basis of their being treated as sub-tradition of any one tradition. Otherwise, India has to have multiple traditions and not only one tradition.

The Islamic traditions (both great and little traditions) are living traditions. These are dynamic and not static as changes among the Muslims and in their traditions are inevitable. Yet, majority of the

Muslims in India have adopted the reductionist tendency by which they always look, for their identity, at the traditional tenets of Islam. They try to keep their identity intact with tradition. They do this keeping in view their opposition to the Hindu great tradition. They justify their resistance to change in the Islamic great tradition on the basis that their tradition is better, complete, universal and ever flowing process and requires no change.

Their resistance to change, feeling of insecurity, relative deprivation, identity consciousness, etc. are correlated. During the Mughal period Muslims in general had adopted the liberal attitude towards cultural synthesis. But this liberal attitude started shrinking when the Muslims started going away from administration. Instead of adopting pragmatic attitude towards ground realities, they adopted isolationist attitude. The Britishers had introduced some structural changes which were modern. But the Muslims struggled to revive the traditional structure of their culture and

customs instead of adopting modern education. Many movements were started, in the 19th century, in the name of religion but in reality their contents endorsed the social, economic and political grievances of the Muslims.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was the only man who realised the true cause of frustration among the Muslims in India. His firm believe in western education, and scientific and contextual interpretation of Quran was a revolutionary thought. Sir Syed knew that in order to silence the ulemas, who strongly condemned him and declared him as anti-religious, both theology and modern education were to go side by side. He did this also to take the Muslim masses into confidence and not to antagonise them. But he hierarchised the educational system in which theology was placed at the bottom whereas modern education was put at the top.

This is a well known fact that after independence Muslims have remained backward educationally, economically and politically as compared to Hindus.

Many privileges have been taken away which they were enjoying before independence or partition of the country. In the present democratic set up in India where number counts in the electoral politics, the series of communal riots, government's indifferent attitude towards their upliftment and their feeling of relative deprivation have generated tremendous amount of insecurity among the Indian Muslims which ultimately has developed minority consciousness among them. As a result, any direct legislation or government's interference in their Personal Law or religio-cultural tradition(s) generates tremendous amount of resistance from them. Therefore, government should provide required infrastructures like modern educational institutions, employment opportunity, etc. for their modernisation. There is need to evolve a consensus among them to accept change in their Personal Law and cultural tradition(s) to match with the modern time and condition.

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