

**REDEFINITION OF IDENTITIES,  
SUBALTERNNS AND POLITICAL ISLAM  
A CASE OF MAJLIS I AHRAR IN PUNJAB**

The thematic, diverse and multidisciplinary nature of South Asian studies in recent times has engineered a cross-fertilisation of ideas and filaments, which play a significant role in understanding communitarian identities. A historic event of the magnitude of the dissolution of the British Raj in 1947 is neither an isolated incident of history, nor does it owe to a few individuals, who exclusively engaged themselves in complex negotiations deciding the destiny of one-fifth of humanity. The independence of South Asian sub-continent is the result of interplay of several complex factors and forces, where ideas and individuals spawned multiple responses and trajectories. This process was neither the self-dictated design of the colonial state, nor did it occur only because two or three major actors were forcefully propounding their divergent forms of nationalism. In other words, despite their pivotal roles, not only did these forces interact among themselves in an earnest manner, they equally pursued a complex interface with the regional, communitarian, ideological, class and gender based forces. These latter forces, often defined as subalterns, were not merely the second-tier political actors, they, in several cases, helped redefine the politics of identities in the most plural part of the world, especially in the decades preceding Partition. Thus, the debate and research on South Asian history in pre-1947 context has to take into account these forces and ideologies, without ignoring the core troika of the colonial state, the Indian National Congress (INC) and the All-India Muslim League (AIML).

Long before independence came to South Asia, numerous population groups, led by their traditional and emerging elite, engaged themselves in the processes of collective redefinition. This is not to suggest that such a development was simply a reaction or an engineered response to colonialism, though the latter surely provided the impetus, yet the processes predated the consolidation of the British rule. For instance, Shah Wali Allah Delhavi (1704-1764) was already concerned about the formidable challenges that the Muslims were confronted with during the decline of the Mughal Empire. Along with his son, Shah Abdul Aziz, and through a reform movement, he opposed the unorthodox religious practices and led the investigation of Islam's contemporary weak spots to provide a major re-evaluation of Muslim thought and practices.<sup>1</sup> His was not a concern that only typified the apprehensions of the Delhi elite, but was an India-wide uncertainty felt strongly by various strata of Muslim societies, especially at a time when regional fissures had begun to threaten the very socio-political fabric of the late Mughal society. He represented a powerful section of the Muslim *ulama* who felt that along with religious redefinition, Muslims urgently needed some political revitalisation; otherwise demographic and regional challenges, and the changed realities, would seriously marginalise them.<sup>2</sup>

Encounters with modernity during the early nineteenth century, and the developments following the traumatic events of 1857, only further underlined the acute challenges and fewer options facing scattered and even rudderless communities such as India's Muslims.<sup>3</sup> It was at this juncture that like Hindus, many Muslims from the traditional urban centres such as Delhi, Lucknow and Lahore began to wrestle with the idea of redefining the collective cultural identity of Muslims.<sup>4</sup> The solutions varied from traditional to modernist; yet the objectives were all based upon a shared realisation that Muslims were stalemated in a sordid state of affairs, and needed rejuvenation towards some collective self-actualisation. Three responses characterised the contemporary elite Muslim positions: firstly, cooperation and even collaboration with the Raj during its "High Noon"<sup>5</sup>; secondly, aversion to Western institutions and

innovations by seeking a total back-to-roots approach; and thirdly, the synthesis of traditions with modernity. The regional, land-based intermediaries held the first position; who sought to benefit from an official patronage, while kowtowing to the colonial hierarchical structures, and was evident across all the Indian provinces. In addition, it included princes, nawabs and rajas, who operated as loyal vassals while being totally dependent on the colonial goodwill and security guarantees. The second category, from among Muslims, included religious scholars-ulama-who either founded newer seminaries, or re-energised the existing ones. Some of them, such as Deoband and Rai Bareilli<sup>6</sup>, even long after 1857, continued to defy the Raj through their Jihad activities from the tribal areas on the Frontier.<sup>7</sup> Among the third form of response from Muslims, we find a serious quest to seek equilibrium between the traditional and the opportunities that a westernised modernity afforded: modern education, new employment opportunities and a scientific attitude towards life. Such a viewpoint was largely pioneered by individual reformers such as Sir Syed Ahmed Khan,<sup>8</sup> Syed Ameer Ali<sup>9</sup> and Syed Abdul Latif;<sup>10</sup> who sought to guide Muslims towards an accommodation with Western institutions instead of rejecting them, which could have left them on the margins of an increasingly plural and highly competitive sub-continent.<sup>11</sup>

The efforts for socio-cultural redefinition among Muslims, emanated from cities across North Indian metropolitan centres, such as Bombay and Karachi; it was confined to a small section of middle class, as most Muslims were either urban poor or lived in rural areas. The evolution of Indian party politics since the late nineteenth century was confined to these specific groups, though its pioneering efforts came from the urban intermediaries of the British, Hindu and Parsee backgrounds. The Indian National Congress (INC), since its formation in 1885, had been dominated for an entire generation by this class of professionals and loyal constitutionalists; something that one notices in the initial composition of the AIML, especially at its formation in Dhaka in 1906. Unlike the INC, the AIML had a bigger share of landed gentry, though it's driving force were

individuals from Aligarh's first generation. The urban professionals, like the INC, had a large share of barristers in it.<sup>12</sup> Traumatic events of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century accelerated political activism in India: the Partition of Bengal in 1905, and its annulment six years later; the mobilisation during the First World War; the dissolution of the Ottoman Caliphate; the Amritsar Tragedy of 1919, and the advent of leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi and M. A. Jinnah on the political scene.<sup>13</sup> The British Government responded with new control mechanisms and constitutional reforms. These were meant to foreclose the possibility of street-based agitation in the wake of provincialisation of the Indian politics, before it could assume an all-India dimension.<sup>14</sup> It was in the 1920s, after the fragmentation of the Khilafat Movement,<sup>15</sup> and the weakening of the INC and the AIML, that a number of new regional and religio-political parties emerged on the Indian political map. They mainly concentrated on local issues, but simultaneously sought extra-regional solutions by focusing on macro fronts, for example non-cooperation and civil disobedience movement. These parties included the Khaksar Movement, the Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam (MAI), the Punjab National Unionist Party, the Red Shirts and Krishak Proja Party—just to name a few from among many across British India. The third category of political parties to be formed soon after the First World War were of an ideological nature, with the *Jamiat-i-Ulama-i-Hind* (JUH) and the Communist Party of India (CPI) being the most pre-eminent among them. From amongst the Hindus and Sikhs several new religio-political parties such as *Jana Singh*, *Rashtrya Sewak Swayam Sangh* (RSSS), Hindu Mahasbha and *Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee* (SGPC) symbolised parallel trends of combining religion with politics.<sup>16</sup> These three parallel political constellations, manifested divergent political and ideological strands amongst all the major communities in India, from the second decade of the twentieth century up to the post-1947 period.

The selection of the MAI as a case study here is not merely a record of the political career of a major religio-political party in Muslim India, but also investigates the recurrent and

equally vital themes of identity politics among Indian Muslims, the urban-rural fissures in Punjab, the paradigmatic relationship between Pan-Islamism and sectarian divisions, the role of an intermediate Muslim class in Punjab, and the emergence of political Islam.

### **Politics of Identity among South Asian Muslims**

Long after the fall of the Mughal Empire, and before the consolidation of colonial rule in India, there were periodic outbreaks of local rebellions, which resulted in intermittent defiance until the uprising of 1857; which involved sections of Muslims as well as Hindus. Historians have analysed the 1857 revolt: the 'socio-economic grievances' of the British Army troops of Indian origin; and newer culture and economic challenges were a consequence of the consolidation of colonial rule.<sup>17</sup> The fragmented opposition of local communities to specific injustices, rather than an all-encompassing class-consciousness, was the dominant factor that had often spawned the episodic resistance. The uprising of 1857 gave the British a sharp awareness of the role of religious revivalism underlying the popular protest. As a result, the colonial power allowed a few more civil liberties to the Sikhs, Muslims and the Hindu lower castes, in the later part of the century. The Muslim response to the events of 1857 was fragmented and equally intense; some of them declared it to be a holy struggle. Several proclamations and decrees were issued from urban centres. There was Muslim response from the small rural towns of Awadh and eastern UP, where popular Islamic leaders organised resistance to the British, though they lacked cohesion and a common platform. Among the several reasons for their failure were the theological, political and social splits in the Muslim and Indian communities, and the lack of an organised leadership.

Muslims were in a predicament after 1857, as the new rulers of India had not only dislodged them from power, but had also castigated them as 'potential rebels'. They were excluded from all responsible positions in the official machinery, and faced repressive policy at several places. Muslims were reluctant

to reconcile with the changed situation, and suffered serious marginalisation. They refused to learn English,<sup>18</sup> exhibited a 'pride of race, memories of superiority and a feeling of attachment to religion', and remained alienated from Western culture.<sup>19</sup> They were not ready to accept the new challenges and contemporary demands, whereas the majority community, with its traditional flexibility, continued to make rapid progress. Hindus were experiencing an intellectual renaissance, at a time when Muslims all over India were falling into a state of intellectual and economic morass. Most of the British historians blamed Muslims for "Mutiny", but by 1870, their attitude was becoming less hostile. They seemed to realise that continued hostility towards Muslims would be inimical to imperial interest. The most powerful factor to rehabilitate the Muslims intellectually and socially, was the leadership provided by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898), who left his distinctive mark on Muslims in four different but inter-connected fields: education, religion, social life and politics.<sup>20</sup> He realised that the Muslim plight could not be ameliorated until a change occurred in their attitude, through a modern education system. Through his speeches, pamphlets, translation societies and schools, he generated interest for Western education. He adopted a rational approach to religion, as he argued that reason was the only infallible guide to understanding truth, and one must avoid irrational and unnatural beliefs and practices. His basic motive was to promote understanding and friendship between the British rulers and their Muslim subjects. He advised Muslims against joining the INC, and to regain their own cultural and economic strength, by immersing themselves in education and economy, before venturing into Indian politics.<sup>21</sup>

A balanced review of the Indian reformers of the late nineteenth century, including Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, needs to be done in a way where their adaptation of Western styles of arguments and education could be understood in its historical context. The most successful social reformers of the nineteenth century were able to advocate a rational system of religious education for their communities, although, the influence of Western thought and sciences had been quite limited during the

early decades.<sup>22</sup> Concurrently, a wide range of purist movements had evolved among some Indian Muslims, as an attempt to bring the mosque and school together.<sup>23</sup> The Muslim reformers found support among the common people who had been seeking justice and hope in this period of extreme social dislocation. The teachings of Syed Ahmad of Rai Bareilly found support amongst the Muslim artisans of Allahabad and Patna, the tribesmen of North-West Frontier, and in the rural areas as well. Syed Ahmad advocated *jihad* against alien customs and 'non-Muslim rulers'.<sup>24</sup> Simultaneously, an orthodox reformist movement emerged in East Bengal in the form of the Faraizi Movement; which believed in the centrality of the Quran within an Islamic ethos. The movement attracted rural religious teachers, artisans, petty landlords and peasants, and developed a big following. The rivalries of these movements gradually transformed into a religious debate.

Amongst the Indian Muslims, the seminary at Deoband, Madrasa Darul-Uloom, suggested a back-to-roots, literalist and purist version of Islam. By ignoring the forces of modernity it could steer back to the recreation of a lost Islamic glory. The founders and leaders of Deoband combined faith and politics, and sought Islamic revival in a more activist form, stopping short of an open *jihad* or militarist defiance of the Raj.<sup>25</sup> The generations of the ulama trained at Deoband established numerous seminaries with similar curriculum and emphasis all across India; with the passage of time, it led to the growth of such political parties as the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind, *Jamaat-i-Islami*, *Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Islam* and even the Taliban. Soon after the First World War, the Deobandi ulama formed JUH in 1919; which, amidst a very agitated phase of the Khilafat Movement in British India, espoused Pan-Islamism.<sup>26</sup> Sharing platforms with the INC, these ulama demanded independence for India, while simultaneously subscribing to Pan-Islamic idealism; and thus combined Islam with territorial nationalism. Some of them formed parties such as *Ahl-i-Hadith* and *Tabligh*, meant to energise Muslims to a more rigorous practice of Islam, but avoided direct involvement in politics.<sup>27</sup> The Deobandi Islam, over the decades, gained greater experience in institution

building, publications and training of generations of future clerics; who followed a strict and purist version of Islam, often erroneously called the *wahabi* Islam in South Asia. Their linkages with the movement in Arabian Najd and Hejaz were limited, and instead were motivated by the South Asian dynamics.

Soon after the formation of the Darul Uloom at Deoband, a seminary was established in Rai Bareilly, UP. Unlike its counterpart at Deoband, it sought the possibility of Muslim regeneration in the mystical traditions of Islam. Positing Sufi saints, *mashaikhs* and *sajada nashins* as the intermediaries between the Creator and humanity, the mentors and future generations of Barelwi alumni, such as Ahmad Raza Khan, situated their kind of Islamic ethos within a syncretic Indian culture.<sup>28</sup> Most of the South Asian Muslims have been, and are followers of the Sufi traditions, and that is where the Barelwi approach has remained ascendant. This is not to suggest that Sufi Islam is totally apolitical and discourages activism. It revolves around certain Sufi orders, involves periodic rituals, and unlike the Deobandi School, allows devotional music and dance at the shrines, or before a living saint. Numerically, Barelwi Muslims had outnumbered other purist groups, yet they do not enjoy the level of institutional framework and rigour, which characterises their Deobandi counterparts, and thus remains segmented. Whatever ideology or methods these traditionalists adopted, they believed that the Muslims of the sub-continent had lost their political power because of their religious laxity; and Islam needed to be revived as a complete code of life. These Muslim ideological elites were deeply suspicious of Western civilization, and advocated separatism, based on the dictum of 'back-to-roots'; whereas the Tablighi Jamaat, established in 1926, believed in an Islamic revival through a sense of harmony and rigorous community work.<sup>29</sup>

Apart from these revivalists and syncretists, individuals such as Syed Ahmed Khan, Jamal ud Din Al-Afghani, Syed Ameer Ali, Syed Abdul Latif, Muhammad Iqbal, and the future leaders of the Muslim League, flagged the need for social and

religious reforms, and came to be known as modernists or reformists. They urged educational reforms and established modern institutions to rejuvenate the community. During these testing times, many cultural *anjumans* came into being; for instance, the first Muslim organisation in the Punjab to work for the socio-religious uplift of the Muslims during the British period was *Anjuman-i-Islamiya*, which had been established in 1869. It was originally set up to take over and maintain the Badshahi Mosque, which had been converted, during the Sikh rule, into a store for gunpowder; the British restored it to the Muslims. The *Anjuman-i-Islamiya* helped the restoration of several other Muslim monuments in Lahore and its environs. It helped Sir Syed Ahmad Khan in the spread of his education programme in Punjab, but continued to focus at looking after the Badshahi Mosque during the period of British rule. The *Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam*<sup>30</sup> another venerable cultural body, was established in 1884; it advocated modern education among Muslims, and turned out to be the most effective organization of the civil society.<sup>31</sup> Certain well-known personalities financed the ambitious plans of the Anjuman, which worked for the social uplift of the Punjabi Muslims, and provided a respectable platform for cultural activities. Another charity in Punjab, the *Anjuman-i-Khawateen-i-Islam*, was founded in 1908 in Lahore; its work was in education, social reform and the rights of women in the light of Islamic teachings. Although a few Muslim women were engaged in reform activities at that stage, yet they had to face intermittent criticism from some quarters for their activism.<sup>32</sup> Eventually, these reformists used the AIML and other such centrist organizations, to articulate Muslim cultural renaissance in India.

### **Muslim Politics in Punjab: Unionists or Nationalists**

“The Punjab tradition” as it has come to be known, was based on a loyalist landed aristocracy and a powerful bureaucracy. Two decades after the British took over Punjab from the Sikhs in 1849; the seeds of ‘Punjab Tradition’ were sown, which co-opted the rural elites into the new system. It was believed that ‘the core of Punjab tradition undoubtedly lay in its

reliance on the loyalty of the village proprietors'.<sup>33</sup> The Punjab Alienation Act of 1901 was actually a favourable strategy to help the rural agriculturalist groups against the urban moneylenders, who were mostly Hindus. The latter had reacted and actively protested against this Act, which was a personal victory for individuals like S. S. Thorburn,<sup>34</sup> who had undertaken to support the cause of the agriculturists because their landholdings were diminishing. The Punjab Government had used his book as a reference work for legislation, and it proved to be an influential document. The Act helped to restore lands to the Muslim peasants in Punjab, who languished in miserable conditions on account of the mortgages on their lands. The following years saw several British administrators in Punjab promoting rural interests vigorously, which further widened the cleavages between the rural and the urban interests.<sup>35</sup>

The economic growth in Punjab remained uneven and retarded the processes of industrialisation and political development. The creation of a 'hydraulic society' through canalisation, not only increased fertility of the sparsely populated areas but also increased their interaction with the outside world.<sup>36</sup> The canal colonies remained dependent on the irrigation system introduced in the nineteenth century, and strengthened a tribal/feudal patriarchal arrangement under the existing administration. The major share of these colonies was allotted to the agriculturist groups, who did not have any desire to oppose the colonial rulers. This landed class remained loyal to the British, and later, to the Unionists; at a time when their counterparts in the rest of India were opting for other parties who were more anti-colonial in their politics. The poor and lower classes in rural and urban areas were not beneficiaries of the canal colonies; they later proved to be the crowds available for political activism, and even for communal strife.<sup>37</sup> The rural elites having obtained their status and position from the canal colonies, had an economic basis for their continued loyalty to the British, and thus proved a bulwark against any political challenge. Several other land grants came their way as reward for helping the administration on political matters, or for fending off crime. In addition, land allotments happened to compensate

for individual sacrifices and natural calamities.<sup>38</sup> A wide range of land in the canal colonies was reserved for military purposes, and the vast tracts meant for animal breeding were made available to retired soldiers. Land distribution lessened the risk of agrarian tension among the Punjabis, although spatial dislocations might have led to opposition to the British, or even some occasional alliances with the nationalist movement.<sup>39</sup>

An astute politician like Fazl-i-Husain had sensed the situation within the context of the Punjab tradition, and instead of defying the British, decided to become its supporter.<sup>40</sup> First, he formed a Rural Party within the Punjab Legislative Council, which evolved into the Punjab National Unionist Party in 1924. He mentioned the objectives of this new Party in his speech, highlighting the “business of the reformed government to assist, encourage and help the backward classes in preference to enlightened classes”.<sup>41</sup> Here, the ‘backward classes’ was a reference to the rural and agricultural poor. He continued his efforts to help the agriculturist groups, as the Minister for Education and Local Self-Government in Punjab.<sup>42</sup> He proved to be the most influential statesman of his times in the province, as he involved all the significant Punjabi leaders of different communities in his Party, which remained a formidable force for the next two decades. Sir Muhammad Shafi competed with Fazl-i-Husain over the political leadership of the province, and differences between them often came out in the open. Leading a progressive group of Punjabi Muslims, Fazl-i-Husain tried to maintain an edge over Mian Muhammad Shafi, though both kept a respectable distance from each other.<sup>43</sup> After the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy, the British Government appointed the Hunter Commission to inquire into the incident, and Mian Fazl-i-Husain represented Lahore in its hearings. A few other concerned Punjabis helped in the preparation of a case to be put before the Commission, and formed a committee to collect facts from all the districts.<sup>44</sup>

The twentieth century brought a new phase in the politics of the province, in the wake of the partition of Bengal and its annulment: the agitational politics of Hindus; the

formation of Muslim League, demanding constitutional safeguards for Muslim interests, opened a new chapter in Indian communal relations. Meanwhile, Punjab took a lead in nationalist activities, with radical factions preparing to defy British authority. Political leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai and Har Dayal, condemned the political policies of the colonial rulers, and even chose to work in exile.<sup>45</sup> A few youthful activists gathered around Lajpat Rai's charismatic personality, and owing to support from the Punjabi nationalists living abroad, Rai and Dayal opted for a new style of struggle<sup>46</sup> through the Ghadr movement based on the Pacific Coast.<sup>47</sup> Despite its distance and persecution by the British and North American governments, the Ghadr interlude left a far-reaching impact upon the masses and political activists in Punjab. It was a short-lived movement, but manifested impressive international networks, and established a new tradition of radicalism amongst the Punjabi diaspora.

When the First World War broke out in 1914, Punjab contributed 100,000 soldiers for the defence of the British Empire against the Central Powers. While on the one hand, Punjab provided heavy loans, recruits and strong moral support to the British rulers, simultaneously; many Punjabis participated in the Khilafat and Non-cooperation movements. Many Punjabi Muslims had a strong sense of Pan-Islamism, as they traced their roots to Central and West Asia. Khilafat, for a while, was a populist movement in the Punjab, and the masses joined it in big numbers. The peasantry identified with the Muslim cause, but it remained a stronger force in urban centres like Lahore, Gujranwala and Amritsar. The influential Punjabi landlords were absent from the Khilafat and Non-cooperation movements. During this period, individuals such as Malik Barkat Ali, Maulana Mazhar Ali Azhar, Afzal Haq, Zafar Ali Khan, Allama Iqbal, Saif-ud-Din Kichlew, Gazanfar Ali Khan and Malik Lal Khan played a vital role in activating the middle and lower classes in urban Punjab, on a trans-regional cause, which was emotionally important to the Muslims. Muslim leaders like the Ali Brothers, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Saif-ud-Din Kichlew, Chaudhry Khaliq-uz-Zaman and Maulana Zafar Ali Khan led various rallies and processions, under the auspices of the

Khilafat movement. They spoke on behalf of their co-religionists in the Near East, and protested against the ignoble treatment meted out to a defeated Ottoman Turkey, which was assumed to be the spiritual centre for global Islam. In the Punjab itself, the movement gained considerable momentum, particularly among the lower classes, which joined such rallies in big numbers. The less developed areas of Punjab, such as Attock and Mianwali, also proved to be the centre of protests,<sup>48</sup> as the people showed considerable solidarity with Turkish Muslims. Meanwhile, Mahatma Gandhi had joined the movement with his *Satyagraha* programme, and the Non-cooperation Movement was initiated under his leadership. It proved to be a unique period of Hindu-Muslim unity against foreign rule. Processions were taken out in various urban centres, and were usually circumscribed by the British administration. On such occasions, encounters would turn volatile, costing many human lives. Saif-ud-Din Kichlew and Satyapal were important leaders of the movement in Punjab, at a time when martial law had been promulgated in the province.<sup>49</sup>

Punjabi politics revolved around rural and urban groups, and relations between them were to shape the future events. The Unionist Party managed to keep a balance between both the groups,<sup>50</sup> and charismatic personalities such as Fazl-i-Husain, Chhotu Ram and Sikandar Hayat Khan helped to maintain this balance. After the Act of 1909, a limited proportion of population was given the newly conferred franchise, which again provided an electoral opportunity to the aristocracy. The property-holding condition prevented the masses from taking part in politics and other constitutional processes. With the implementation of the Reforms of 1919, political power was again concentrated in the hands of provincial politicians. Contemporary politics in the Punjab revolved around personalities rather than issues or parties, which suited the Raj. Punjabi Muslim landlords, like their urban counterparts, were divided into smaller factions, displaying their *biradri*-based tribal affiliations and animosities.<sup>51</sup> The latter group included some younger enthusiasts, who were the loyal followers of Mian Fazl-i-Husain. Fazl-i-Husain was himself away from the province during the 1930-35 period. Despite his membership of

the Viceroy's Executive Council (VEC) in Delhi, he kept himself in constant touch with the politics of his native Punjab. His most trusted colleague was Sikandar Hayat Khan,<sup>52</sup> who took over as the President of the reorganised Unionist Party after Fazl-i-Husain's death in 1936. Since Fazl-i-Husain's interest in the politics of Punjab was long-term, beyond the next elections for the Punjab Legislative Assembly under the India Act of 1935, he did not take any significant interest in the Shahidganj dispute. He wanted to keep the all-India parties like the INC and the AIML out of Punjab, through a communal solidarity among the Unionists. With this as his objective, he cashed in on the pro-rural policies of the British. Hence Fazl-i-Husain's political aims and interests diverged from those of Jinnah's, who wanted to establish a Muslim Parliamentary Board in the Punjab, as a prologue to the forthcoming vital elections. His opposition to Jinnah enraged Punjabi Muslim Leaguers like Malik Barkat Ali and Allama Iqbal, who construed it as an anti-Muslim policy. Despite Jinnah's best efforts to engage Fazl-i-Husain, the latter refused to support an all-India political solution of the Muslim problem right up to his death. As a result of the elections of 1937, his successor, Sikandar Hayat, became the first Chief Minister of Punjab. The reason for his success was the united effort by different communal representatives, under the banner of the Unionist Party. Individuals like Sikandar Hayat tried to pursue a non-confrontational path in their relationship with the mainstream political parties, such as the INC and the AIML, during the 1930s and 1940s. Landed aristocracy of Punjab continued to flourish with the patronage and support from their colonial rulers.

Allama Muhammad Iqbal, a philosopher-poet and the architect of Muslim separatism, had begun taking interest in politics in the 1920s, while inspiring Indian Muslims with his poetry to a new and dynamic self-consciousness. His ideas and philosophy were founded on the resurgence of Islam that would become boundless and timeless in its ultimate realisation. He initially joined Mian Fazl-i-Husain's progressive group, along with Malik Barkat Ali and Taj-ud-Din, but subsequently became a devoted Leaguer and a follower of Jinnah. After the Sikandar-

Jinnah Pact of 1937,<sup>53</sup> he became a vocal critic of the Unionist politics in Punjab and suspected the latter of wanting to highjack the AIML, in order to consolidate his own party. Malik Barkat Ali, the only Leaguer in the Punjab Legislative Assembly in 1937, started his own newspaper, *The New Times*, so as to project the policies of the AIML. Ashiq Husain Batalvi and the Punjab Muslim Student Federation, united in their opposition to the Unionists, supported Malik Barkat Ali. Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, who had joined the Unionists after the election of 1937, rejoined the AIML for the cause of Pakistan, at a time when several Unionists were deserting their party.<sup>54</sup> Within less than three years of the Sikandar-Jinnah Pact, Jinnah had succeeded in defining a new political identity for the Muslims, and the demand for an independent Muslim state emerged. Many of the Unionists joined the AIML during the mid-1940s, along with the *sajada nashin* families, as well as the rural and urban groups.<sup>55</sup>

After the fall of Delhi in 1858, the centre of Muslim intellectual and cultural activities had shifted to Lahore. Writers like Altaf Husain Hali, Muhammad Husain Azad, Abdul Haleem Sharar and others helped energise and revitalise Urdu literature. Urdu acquired the best of Punjabi novelists, poets, fiction writers; a tradition of resistance literature was established during its renaissance in Lahore, in the closing decades of the nineteenth century.<sup>56</sup> It became the hub of literary activities because of the anjumans and many other literary societies, which based their educational and cultural activities on Urdu print material. Urdu also became the main medium of the print media, at least for Muslim Punjabis, who were able to develop linkages across the provincial boundaries. During the 1920s, some English and Urdu newspapers began influencing the Punjabi public opinions on contemporary issues, such as the Balkan Wars and the future of the Ottoman Khilafat. These papers included, *Comrade*, and *Hamdard*, which, in fact, belonged to the Ali Brothers; while Maulana Abul Kalam Azad owned *Al-Hilal*. The leading contemporary English daily, *The Civil and Military Gazette*, followed a middle-of-the-road policy, and was subsequently joined by *The Punjab Tribune*, with strong pro-INC political affiliation. Though *Zamindar* of Lahore emerged

as a leading Muslim paper during the Khilafat era; was owned by the poet and orator, Zafar Ali Khan, but suffered from periodic closures and confiscation of deposit money due to official censorship.

The Urdu press also included *Haq*, which had editions in Gurmukhi, Urdu and English, and a circulation of 70,000 in 1918. Earlier, the *Paisa Akhbar* had also earned a major following amongst the Muslims, whereas, *Ihsan*, *Inqilab* and *Eastern Times* were some of the prominent newspaper supporting particular Muslim viewpoints, and which appeared at different times. The *Ihsan* supported the policies of Mian Fazl-i-Husain and his successor, Sikandar Hayat Khan. As mentioned earlier, Malik Barkat Ali, a veteran politician and Leaguer, brought out the *Eastern Times*, which was looked after by his son, Malik Maratib Ali. By the late 1940s, *Dawn* had achieved the status of being the official mouthpiece of the AIML besides *Nawa-i-Waqt*, which also supported the demand for Pakistan.<sup>57</sup> Some sections of the Punjabi elite were familiar with the papers published in other South Asian urban centres during the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, despite a strict censorship. However, the rural Punjab remained unaffected by the print media, because of its high rate of illiteracy and widely prevalent feudal system.<sup>58</sup>

### **Transregional Islam and Sectarianism**

In the absence of a unified or single religion and due to multi-religious and cultural manifestations, mystics and intellectuals yearned for tolerance and a sense of commonality in the daily life of Punjab. They despised the rigidity of religious scholars of all communities, which remained a staunch reality and desired more syncretic harmony.<sup>59</sup> On the one side, several Punjabi Muslims, particularly those in rural areas, were not comfortable with the Deobandis, whom they perceived as wahabis, while, simultaneously, they had accepted the parallel Barelwi tradition from the UP, which they found similar to their own perception of a Sufi Islam. Similar dissensions could be found within the Hindu and Sikh communities, where scriptural and mystic traditions remained in conflict. The introduction of

the Christian missionaries in the late nineteenth century and the plethora of printed religious literature further delineated religion-based identification. Whereas the Arya Samaj and other Hindu organisations communalised the Hindu community, Tabligh,<sup>60</sup> contributed to a sense of separate Muslim identity among the Muslims. Passionate religious debates increased the political awareness among the people, and added to cultural distinctiveness among the major communities of the province.<sup>61</sup> It caused sectarianism within the Muslim communities as testified by the case of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (d. 1908) He engaged in *muzakras* with the missionaries as a Muslim maulvi; and eventually established his own Ahmadiyya sect in the late-nineteenth century.<sup>62</sup> Muslims, and particularly their clergymen, denounced him for challenging the finality of Prophet Muhammad, and for claiming to be the promised Messiah.<sup>63</sup> The Raj had a laissez-fair policy towards religion unless it threatened the status quo, and focused on the consolidation of rural-based loyalist political elite. Intermediaries took up the religious and communal issues and, as a result, religious parties became the pressure groups in the province. To a large extent, the religious parties were confined to urban areas and their support was limited to a 'thin layer of middle class' in the province.<sup>64</sup>

Islam has been historically a political force, which unlike all other religions, created its own polity under Prophet Muhammad. Since then, the Muslim monarchs and caliphs usually portrayed themselves as the defenders of Islam, without marginalising their non-Muslim citizens. All Muslim rulers inherited the legacy of combining religion with politics, which was reflected with variable effect in the policies of dynasts and sultans in Muslim India, Africa, Spain, Central Asia and the Middle East. Some Muslims in British India began to view themselves as a separate nation, and not just a minority. People like Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, Allama Iqbal and M. A. Jinnah viewed South Asian Muslims as a nation, seeking its sovereignty. Iqbal redefined the concept of *millat*, based upon a well-connected and interdependent community of sovereign nations. Jinnah translated it into a political demand in the Lahore

Resolution of 1940. The political parties, like the JUH and Jamaat-i-Islami, following the Deobandi school of thought, also represented the idea of intermixing religion and politics. The MAI also belonged to the same ideological group, and spearheaded its own vision of political Islam, which resembled that of the JUH.

### **Genre of Intellectual History and the MAI**

The emergence of Pakistan as the largest Muslim territorial state heralded a new chapter in the history of South Asia, providing an opportunity to initiate a scholarly debate on the complex interaction of Islam, nationalism and the state. Islam as an ideology of resistance to colonialism, though a recent concept, was being simultaneously applied in Africa and Central Asia. It was during the 1960s that phrases such as progressive Islam, Islamic socialism and Islamic radicalism began to be used to describe the political content of various movements. In the case of Muslim South Asia, political Islam and intellectual history have been intertwined for a long time. The historiographical debate on the creation of two autonomous states, however, could be summarised into three main categories: the Indian nationalists considered the Raj as definitive spoiler of a legendary united India; the Pakistani nationalists, on the other hand, sought the roots of a separate Muslim nationhood from the early advent of Islam into the sub-continent; and the Cambridge School of South Asian history would define it as party politics, where the colonial state played its role of an honest broker, to disseminate power among the feuding territorial, religious and ideological communities.

Modern Indian Muslim experience is a challenging scholarly area, with great room for further academic research. There are quite a few significant studies, though mainly done outside the region.<sup>65</sup> Francis Robinson and Ayesha Jalal produced significant studies in 1974 and 1985 respectively, at a time when Mushirul Hasan offered his critical views.<sup>66</sup> Robinson's work has analysed the gradual separatist tendency among the UP Muslims during the phase of Hindu revivalism,

the Urdu-Hindi controversy, conflict over jobs and competition over the membership of representative bodies at the local and district levels. He has studied the impact of constitutional measures over Muslim political articulation, accentuated by their concern for the fate of the Khilafat; and evaluated the ideological differences among the UP elites as Deobandi, Barelwis, Shias and Sunnis which was a hindrance to their emergence as a unitary group. The differences between the modernists as the 'Young party', and traditionalist as the 'Old party', only added to fragmentation. Robinson has opined that the communal issues: the Cawnpore Mosque dispute, debate about the status of the Aligarh University, need for a Muslim political party; wakf and Pan-Islamic issues, brought unity among the ulama, *sajada nashins* and the modernists, but only for a short period. Apart from redefining their identity vis-à-vis the colonial state, the Muslim elite had been struggling for personal and sectional interests, rather than putting up a communitarian strategy.<sup>67</sup>

Farzana Shaikh, seems to rationalise Pakistan in terms of its religious, economic and territorial distinctness.<sup>68</sup> In her research, she refreshingly tries to see Pakistan on a broader canvas, without demeaning it as a mere incident of history. She focuses on the 'ideological contextual dimension' as relevant to understanding colonial Muslim politics.<sup>69</sup> To her the Muslim concerns, both traditionalist as well as modernist, seemed to be addressing the predicament of a minority lacking political power. Muslim leaders could not imagine a Muslim Umma without a political identity, as politics was the extension of the religious fellowship spread over centuries. To Shaikh, many Indians defined themselves pre-eminently in terms of their religious and caste affiliations, even after the introduction of limited electoral politics. Sir Syed's efforts to convince his community to cooperate with the British, were deeply rooted in the Indian Muslim culture, defined by Farzana Sheikh, as "Mongol-Mughal Tradition".<sup>70</sup> The elite felt that an essential part of being a Muslim consisted of belonging to, and identifying with, the ruling power. Taj ul Islam Hashmi, Rafiuddin Ahmad and Tazeen Murshed have also worked along similar lines while investigating the construction of a Muslim Bengali identity.<sup>71</sup>

Mushirul Hasan's view is more in league with the idea of a unitary and composite India-wide nationalism.

The independence of the South Asian sub-continent in 1947 is usually considered to be an end point in historical studies on British India, being convenient and factual, it provided a rather partitioned perspective on the inherited themes from the Raj. Realising the necessity to fill the gaps due to continuities in procedures and institutions, a few scholars have attempted to seek commonalities and contrast in the pre and post-1947 South Asia. Yunus Samad has investigated the idea of a consensus-based nation-building in Pakistan, in the context of Muslim politics in the pre-1947 decades, in order to see what happened afterwards.<sup>72</sup> He provides a detailed account of constitutional and political history, linking the parties and personalities of an important era in both the phases. Samad highlights the communal tensions and inter-factional polarities, along with the demand for Pakistan from the Muslim minority provinces. Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah's work on politics of the Red Shirts or Khudai Khidmatgar Movement analyses the relevance of ethnic sentiments, transformed into an anti-colonial struggle for freedom in the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP).<sup>73</sup> Other similar works on the NWFP and Sindh, offer us a useful comparative analysis of identity politics among Muslim communities, which was initially enquired in to by Aziz Ahmad in a more holistic way.<sup>74</sup>

Punjab remained the battlefield during the closing phase of the Raj. The Unionist ministry, continuously encouraged by the colonial administration, did not let the AIML form its own ministry in the province until Partition. David Gilmartin extensively discusses the role of *sajada nashin*, *pirs* and *biradri*-based politics in his well-documented research, focusing on the shrine-related leadership. His study includes factional politics and the use of symbols in electoral politics, aimed at supporting the demand for Pakistan. Unlike the Deobandi strand of Islamic teachings, Sufis offered a decisive and timely support to the demand for Pakistan. Such a pattern was to be repeated in every other Muslim majority province. Sarah Ansari's work can be

seen as pioneering research on the role of Sufi saints and pirs in Sindh, and adds to what has been similarly suggested by Hamida Khuhro.<sup>75</sup>

Movements in Punjab seemed to be both trans-regionalist and localist simultaneously, even at a time when ethno-regional forces had assumed greater importance in South Asia and elsewhere. There was an immense need for a sustained debate on a coherent Punjabi identity. As the studies by P. H. M. van den Dungen, Imran Ali and Ian Talbot suggest, 'the Punjab Tradition' was rooted in the politics of cooption through patronage, with greater preference for rural agricultural interests.<sup>76</sup> Other than state, regional and class dimensions, there is a need to research socio-cultural movements in British India, and the MAI provides us a vital case study. In the absence of any objective research in English on the Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam, (MAI) one has to rely upon the infrequent and few references to the movement in the 'grand narratives' of the history of South Asian politics. In addition, just a handful of sketchy intelligence reports in the Pakistan National Archives and the India Office Library can be categorised as the 'official stance' on the movement, although a host of literature in Urdu has remained untapped.

Unlike its contemporary Khaksars and Khudai Khidmatgars, the MAI has received very little attention within the realm of intellectual history, or even in the accounts of political history. It may be partly due to the fact that officials confiscated the historical records dealing with the movement during the Anti-Ahmadi disturbances in the Punjab, in 1953. The material presently available on the MAI and its leadership is scattered, and mostly in Urdu, and presents all kinds of formidable challenges for a historical inquiry. The biography of the movement by its patron-in-chief, Afzal Haq, is a primary source, though it has suffered from censorship, and gives an 'incomplete' story of the events.<sup>77</sup> The eight volumes of Ghulam Nabi Janbaaz Mirza<sup>78</sup> in Urdu, provide a personal and often one-sided view depending upon the party sources yet occasionally lack the context and continuity in the events. It offers a wealth of

information on several leaders and developments, spanning two decades of the MAI's history. CID reports prepared by the Punjab police during the different campaigns of the MAI, provide primary information on its organisation, strategies, leadership and official responses. Urdu newspapers such as *Zamindar* and *Inqilab* are the precious primary sources on Punjab's partition, along with the official records held under the India Office Library catalogue both in Islamabad and London. The MAI literature (pamphlets, tracts, pictures and newspaper cuttings, all in Urdu) offer substantial information on the ideology, strategy and leadership patterns of the MAI in the fluctuating political situation, during the 1930s and 1940s.

## Notes and References

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- 1 Saiyid Athar Abbas Rizvi, *Shah Wali Allah and his Times: A Study of Eighteenth Century Islam, Politics and Society in India* (Canberra: Ma'rifat Publishing, 1980). His most famous work is *Hujjat Allah al-Baligha*. See Shah Wali Allah, *The Conclusive Argument from God* (tr) Marcia K. Hermansen (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1996).
  - 2 For details, see Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, *Ulema in Politics: A Study Relating to the Political Activities of the Ulema in the South Asian Subcontinent from 1556 to 1947* (Karachi: Maaref, 1972). Also, see Barbara Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982); and M. Qasim Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodian of Change* (Karachi: Oxford University Press [hereafter OUP], 2002).
  - 3 C. A. Bayly, *Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press [hereafter CUP], 1988).
  - 4 For further debate on the situation in Lucknow, see Francis Robinson, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims: the Politics of the United Provinces' Muslims, 1860-1923* (Cambridge: CUP, 1974); also see C. A. Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazars: North Indian Society in the Age of British Expansion, 1770-1870* (Cambridge: CUP, 1990).
  - 5 The term has been used by a wide variety of historians, especially in Britain. For instance, see Judith M. Brown, *Modern India: The Origins of an Asian Democracy* (Oxford: OUP, 1994).
  - 6 The Indian purists conducted a holy war against the Sikhs and were destroyed; then they took on the British, who kept launching military campaigns to wipe them out, but never finished the job. These purists set up, what the British called the "fanatic camp", deep in the mountains of the North-West Frontier, the borderland between Afghanistan and what is today Pakistan. From there they were repeatedly engaged in a series of uprisings. This forgotten holy war continued for almost a century and left the Pushtuns thoroughly "jihadised". The followers of Syed Ahmed and Shah Ismail, who led the resistance against the Sikhs and then the British from places such as Sathana and Burner in Pushtun regions, were called

Wahabbis while most of ordinary Muslims usually followed Sufi orders. The Darul-Ulum at Deoband, a religious seminary to teach the literalist version of Islam was set up on modern university lines. Deoband came to be seen by many Muslims as a bastion of piety at a time when Islamic values were under threat from Western materialism, and thousands of young men flocked to study there. By the end of the 19th century, Deoband had become the leading religious authority in Asia and its graduates had set up hundreds of similar *madrasas*. Today, there are 10,000 Deobandi-associated *madrasas* worldwide and maintain their own regional networks. For detail on *madrasas*, see Qasim Zaman, "Religious Education and the Rhetoric of Reform: The Madrasa in British India and Pakistan", in *Journal of Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 41, 1999.

- 7 For more details on them in a contemporary perspective, see Charles Allen, *God's Terrorists: The Wahabi Cult and Hidden Roots of Modern Jihad* (London: Little Brown, 2006).
- 8 Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's life and achievements have attracted an entire spectrum of writings in Urdu and English. See Shaikh Muhammad Ismail Panipati (ed.), *Maktubat-i-Sir Syed* (Urdu) (Lahore: Majlis-i-Taraqqi-i-Adab [hereafter MTA], 1959) (ed.), *Maqalat-i-Sir Syed* (Urdu), vol. 1-16 (Lahore: MTA, 1961-65); and David Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation: Muslim Solidarity in British India* (Delhi: OUP, 1996). Also see Shan Muhammad (ed.), *Writings and Speeches of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan* (Bombay: Nackikketa Publications, 1972).
- 9 A pioneer Muslim jurist and historian of Islam, Syed Ameer Ali's life was a role model for this emerging Muslim middle class. He wrote a history of Islam and later on lived in London projecting a better image of Islam among the British through a wide range of activities. He was also the founder of the London Branch of the All India Muslim League (AIML). See Syed Ameer Ali, *A Critical Examination of the Life and Teachings of Muhammad* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1873); *A Short History of Saracens* (London: Macmillan, 1921); and *The Spirit of Islam* (London: Methuen, 1965). Also see Syed Razi Wasti (ed.), *Memoirs and Other Writings of Syed Ameer Ali* (Lahore: Peoples Publishing House, 1968); and Shan Muhammad (ed.), *The Right Honourable Syed Ameer Ali: Political Writings* (New Delhi: Ashish, 1989).

- 10 His efforts led to greater introspection among Muslims of Bengal at a time when they suffered from a wide variety of disadvantages. For further details, see Rafiuddin Ahmad, *The Bengal Muslims 1871-1906: Quest for Identity* (New Delhi: OUP, 1981).
- 11 For further details, see Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan: 1857-1964* (London: OUP, 1967). Also see his *Studies in Islamic Culture in Indian Environment* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964); and *An Intellectual History of Islam in India* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1975). Also see S. M. Ikram, *History of Muslim Civilization in India and Pakistan: A Political and Cultural History* (Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, 1989); and his *Modern Muslim India and the Birth of Pakistan: 1858-1951* (Lahore: Shaikh M. Ashraf, 1970). Ikram's Urdu books included *Ab-i-Kausar*, *Roud-i-Kausar* and *Mauj-i-Kausar* (Lahore: Ferozsons, 1952).
- 12 David Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation: Muslim Solidarity*, p. 323. Also see A. B. Rajput, *Muslim League: Yesterday and Today* (Lahore: Shaikh M. Ashraf, 1948).
- 13 For a study focused on Punjab since 1919, see Craig Baxter (ed.), *From Martial Law to Martial Law* (trans. By Mahmud Ali) (Lahore: Vanguard, 1985).
- 14 This argument has been upheld by a number of historians including David Page, Ayesha Jalal, Ian Talbot and Yunas Samad. See David Page, *Prelude To Partition: The Indian Muslims and the Imperial System of Control 1920-1932* (Karachi: OUP, 1987), pp. 245-258; Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge: CUP, 1985); and, Ian Talbot, *Provincial Politics and the Pakistan Movement: The Growth of the Muslim League in North-West and North-East India* (Karachi: OUP, 1988).
- 15 See, M. Naeem Qureshi, *Pan-Islam in British Indian Politics: A Study of the Khilafat Movement 1918-1924* (Leiden: Brill, 1999); and Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilisation in India* (Delhi: OUP, 1982).
- 16 For further details on the Hindu nationalist movements, see Craig Baxter, *The Jana Sangh: A Biography of an Indian Political Party* (Bombay: OUP, 1971); and, Pralay Kanungo, *RSS's Tryst with Politics: From Hedgware to Sudarshan*

- (Delhi: Manohar, 2002). See B R. Goyal, *Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh* (Delhi: Rathakrishna Prakashan, 2000); and, Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics 1925-1990s: Strategies of Identity Building, Implantation and Mobilisation* (London: Hurst, 1996). For Sikh politics, see Himadri Banerjee (ed.), *The Khalsa and the Punjab: Studies in Sikh History, to the 19th Century* (New Delhi: Tulika, 2002); and Gurharpal Singh, *Communalism in Punjab: A Study of the Movement up to 1967* (New Delhi: Ajanta, 1994). Also see [www.sgpc.net](http://www.sgpc.net).
- 17 The real complaints by the sepoys had begun to mount in the 1850s. The General Service Enlistment Act of 1856 demanded that they should serve abroad, some Hindus believed it as exposing them to the risk of pollution. Then, the amalgamation of a wider range of caste and religious groups had further complicated the situation at a time when the salaries of the sepoys had also been drastically reduced. The rumours that the cartridges for the new Lee Enfield rifle would pollute their caste and creed also turned to be an immediate cause. C. A. Bayly, *Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire*, p. 180.
- 18 Syed Mahmood, *History of English Education in India* (Aligarh: 1895), cited in Waheed-uz-Zaman, *Towards Pakistan* (Lahore: Publishers United Limited, 1985), p. 2.
- 19 *Ibid.*
- 20 Born in Delhi, Syed Ahmad Khan joined the East India Company, and rose to the position of a judge. During 1857, he continued to serve in an official capacity. After this uprising, he wrote his famous pamphlet, *Essay on the Causes of the Indian Uprising*; followed by his other important piece, *Loyal Muhammadans of India*, in order to defend Muslims against the British charge of sedition and disloyalty. In 1875, he established the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh, with help and assistance provided by British. After his retirement in the following year, he worked as a member of the Governor-General's legislative council from 1878 to 1883.
- 21 Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, *The Struggle For Pakistan* (Karachi: University of Karachi, 1984), pp. 19-20.
- 22 Before the 1860s, a few teachers at the Delhi College taught European literature and science, and trained some young

- Muslims, who spoke English and obtained official positions; but the Muslim public was indifferent or even hostile to them. There were, however, small groups of modernist Muslims who had developed a Muhammadan Literary Association in Madras in 1852.
- 23 All these movements had indirect links with the schools in Mecca, Madina and Cairo where a meticulous reinterpretation of law and tradition was slowly in progress.
- 24 C. A. Bayly, *The Indian Society: And the Making of the British Empire*, pp. 164-170.
- 25 Religious movements, as well as the emerging forms of Muslim modernism, responded to an increasingly unfamiliar world. Although the initiatives for the revival and reform were a usual phenomenon in the history of Islam, yet during the late nineteenth century, the challenges to the existing institutions, traditions and practices were more alarming, and the Deoband movement was one of these varied responses. For the early history of Dar-ul-Uloom Deoband, see Barbara D. Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982).
- 26 See M. Qasim Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: The Custodians of Change*, pp. 160-170.
- 27 Zia-ul-Hasan Farooqi, *The Deoband School and Demand for Pakistan* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1963); also see Farhat Tabassam, *Deoband Ulema's Movement for the Freedom of India* (New Delhi: Manak Publications, 2006).
- 28 See Usha Sanyal, *Ahmad Riza Khan Bareilwi: In the Path of the Prophet* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2005).
- 29 For details on Tablighi Jamaat, see Yogindar Sikand, *The Origin and Development of the Tablighi Jamaat: A Cross Country Comparative Study, 1920-2000* (Hyderabad: Orient Longman), 2001.
- 30 Society for the Supporters of Islam.
- 31 Ahmad Saeed, *Islamiya College Ki Sad Sala Tareekh 1892-1992* (Urdu), vol. 1, (Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1992), pp. 1-19.
- 32 Sarfraz Hussain Mirza, *Muslim Women's Role in the Pakistan Movement* (Lahore: Punjab University, 1981), p. 12; also see Dushka H. Saiyid, *Muslim Women of the British Punjab:*

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- From Seclusion to Politics* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), pp. 84-102.
- 33 P. H. M. van den Dungen, *The Punjab Tradition: Influence and Tradition in Nineteenth Century India* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1972), p.11.
- 34 He was Deputy Commissioner in Dera Ghazi Khan District in British Punjab. Since the 1860s local officials had been warning of the increasing influence of moneylenders over rural peasantry. See his book, S. S. Thorburn, *Musalms and Moneylenders in the Punjab* (Edinburgh: W Blackwell, 1886).
- 35 The British policy remained dominantly pro-rural. For instance, Michael O' Dwyer tried to further the interests of the rural peasants, whom he considered to be the basis of the stability and prosperity of the province. He also favoured the martial races of the Punjab, because of their pro-British role during the uprising of 1857 and then the First World War. His successor, MacLagan, was also a friend of the rural classes, and the National Unionist Party came into being with his full support in 1924. Malcolm Darling was one of the few administrators who had a balanced view towards the rural and the urban pressure groups.
- 36 For detail on the canal colonies, see Imran Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism: 1885-1947* (Karachi: OUP, 2003).
- 37 See the Introduction in Ian Talbot, *Freedom's Cry: The Popular Dimensions in the Pakistan Movement and Partition Experience in Northwest India* (Karachi: OUP, 1996).
- 38 For further details, see Lini S. May, *The Evolution of Indo-Muslim Thought from 1857 to the Present* (New Delhi: Uppal Publications, 1987).
- 39 See Imran Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism 1885-1947*, pp. 238-239.
- 40 I. H. Malik, "Muslim Nationalism and Ethno-regional Postulations: Sir Fazl-i-Husain and Party Politics in Punjab" in Pritam Singh & Shinder Thandi (eds.) *Globalisation and the Region: Explorations in Punjabi Identity* (Coventry: Association for Punjab Study, 1996), pp. 201-232.
- 41 Syed Nur Ahmad, *Mian Fazl-i-Husain: A Review of His Life and Work* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel, 2001), p. 50.
- 42 Fazl-i-Husain (1865-1936) had started participating in politics since 1903, and during the First World War, he refuted the

- validity of the provincial politics of Michael O'Dwyer. In a session of the First Punjab Provincial Conference in 1917, he openly criticised the British policy, which to him had turned Punjab into the 'worst treated province in India having no Executive Council, no High Court'. In later years, Fazl-i-Husain proved a dynamic personality, having some influence even on the Viceroy. He was an efficient Punjabi politician, who brought together all the communal elements on one platform, and formed the Unionist Party. It was the most influential political organisation in the province with cross-communal roots, which ruled the province triumphantly just before Partition. See Azim Husain, *Fazl-i-Husain: A Political Biography* (Bombay: Longman, 1946), p. 89.
- 43 Sir Shafi was another acclaimed Muslim leader in the Punjab, who also started his political career in 1907. In 1913, he presided over the AIML's annual session at Lucknow, but in 1917, he resigned from it and founded his own All-India Muslim Association and worked as its General Secretary. He served in the Punjab Provincial Council as well as in the Imperial Legislative Council for several years. In 1919, he became the Education Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council. He was also given the prestigious positions of the Law Member, and later, became the Vice-President of the Council.
- 44 Syed Nur Ahmad, *Mian Fazl-i-Husain: A Review of His Life and Work*, p. 22.
- 45 Lala Lajpat Rai (1865-1927) was involved in the Hindu reformist movements, such as the Arya Samaj, while retaining a keen interest in Punjabi politics. In 1905, he was one of the representatives from Punjab in an INC delegation deputed to London. Because of his efforts for the nationalist cause, he was selected as the President of the INC in 1920. He visited the United Kingdom and United States extensively; where he met revolutionaries and published several works called *Young India*. He wrote various articles on immigrants and official policies in *The New Republic*, *The Nation*, *Masses*, *Outlook* and the *New York Evening Post*. He launched his Home Rule League in America in 1917. For details, see I. H. Malik, *US-South Asia Relations 1784-1940: A Historical Perspective* (Islamabad: Area Study Centre, 1988), pp. 194-197.

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- 46 For the history of the Sikh community in Punjab see Andrew J. Major, *Return to Empire: Punjab Under the Sikhs and British in the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1996).
- 47 The interpretations on the Ghadr movement, its origin, leadership, membership, strategy and failures may differ, though, it was the first-ever radical, international, modern, secular and a multi-ethnic movement of South Asians, who used all the modern means in its organisation. Several reasons could be quoted for the downfall of this movement in the context of geo-political, financial and tactical conditions. For original sources on the movement and the revolutionaries, see I. H. Malik, *US-South Asia Relations 1784-1940: A Historical Perspective*, pp. 90-228. Also see Harish K. Puri, *Ghadr Movement, Ideology, Organisation and Strategy* (Amritsar, Gurunanak Dev University Pres, 1983); *Ghadr Party, Its Role in India's Struggle for Freedom* (New Delhi: Communist Party of India, 1997); and, Gurdev Singh Deol, *The Role of the Ghadr Party in the National Movement* (New Delhi, Sterling Publishers, 1969).
- 48 Almost all the prominent leaders of the movement joined the famous session of the Khilafatists in 1919, held at Hazro, Attock. The masses responded enthusiastically to the call by their leaders. According to Malik Lal Khan, a five-mile long procession with 4000 horses, displayed the fervour amongst Muslims. See I. H. Malik, *Sikandar Hayat Khan: A Political Biography*, p. 20.
- 49 *Ibid.*
- 50 In 1921, the Punjab Legislative Council had the following composition: Nominated-23, elected-Muslims-35, Sikhs-15, Hindus and others-21- total-94. Muslim members being in a majority, held the balance of power in the Council. The rural members amongst them founded a Rural Block, which formed the Rural Party under the leadership of Fazl-i-Husain. The priorities of this party included being open to all communities, to work for the uplift of less developed rural areas, and to sponsor programmes and measures to protect the 'backward people' of the Punjab. The Punjab National Unionist Party emerged from this Rural Party of the Muslim zamindars, and brought together aristocracy from various communities of the Punjab. See Ian Talbot, *Khizr Hayat Tiwana: the Punjab*

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- Unionist Party and the Partition of India* (Richmond: Curzon, 2000); also see Qalb-i-Abid, *Muslim Politics in the Punjab 1921-1947* (Lahore: Vanguard, 1992).
- 51 One such faction in Punjab comprised of Shahabuddin, Mian Ahmad Yar Khan Daultana and their cohorts; while another consisted of the Noons, Tiwanas and their friends. See I. H. Malik, "Muslim Nationalism and Ethno-regional Postulations: Fazl-i-Husain and the Party Politics in Punjab", in Pritam Singh and Shinder S. Thandi (eds.), *Globalisation and the Region: Explorations in Punjabi Identity* (Coventry: Association for Punjab Studies, 1996), pp. 192-232.
- 52 *Ibid.* A tussle began after Mian Fazl-i-Husain vacated his seat in the VEC, as the race to fill up the position started between the two groups-Sikandar Hayat Khan and Maliks-, which was occupied by the former with the help of Mian Fazl-i-Husain.
- 53 The new Prime Minister had to face an alarming force in the form of a revitalized AIML, which had been focusing on the Muslim majority provinces to establish its support base. The Sikandar-Jinnah Pact during the Lucknow session of 1937 was a breakthrough for the League, which could not have happened during the life of Mian Fazl-i-Husain; yet many urban Leaguers, like Malik Barkat Ali, never trusted the Unionists. For details, see M. Rafique Afzal (ed.), *Malik Barkat Ali: His Life and Writings* (Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1969); and *Guffar-i-Iqbal* (Urdu) (Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1969).
- 54 See Syed Nur Ahmad, *Martial Law Say Martial Law Tak*, p. 17.
- 55 For details, see David Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam: Punjab and the Making of Pakistan* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1988). The other parties in the 1940s could not come up with the similar solid but unified political solution of the Muslim problem in India and were thus brushed aside.
- 56 See Frances W. Pritchett, *Nets of Awareness: Urdu Poetry and its Critics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).
- 57 I H. Malik, "Muslim Nationalism and Ethno-regional Postulations: Fazl-i-Husain and the Party Politics in Punjab"

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- in Pritam Singh and Shinder Thandi (eds.), *Globalisation and the Region: Explorations in Punjabi Identity*, pp. 217-217.
- 58 It is not possible to define feudalism in definite wording, however, it takes roots in those societies which depend on agricultural products; in the system land is distributed among landlords and the status of peasants is reduced to as subjects; the landlords usurps the surplus products using political, social and religious authorities. Three elements of European feudalism: slavery, guild, and church were not there in the Indian feudalism. The caste system had taken the place of guild and church. See R.S. Sharma, "How Feudal was Indian Feudalism" in T. J. Byres and Harbans Mukhi (eds.), *Feudalism and Non-European Societies* (London: Frank Cass, 1985), p. 256.
- 59 Pakistan inherited the same religio-political tradition in its politics. See Sayyid A. S. Pirzada, *The Politics of the Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam Pakistan, 1971-77* (Karachi: OUP, 2000).
- 60 Its origins lie more convincingly in the struggle between Hindu and Muslim missions in the early 20th century over the religious affiliation of the people. The philosophy of Tabligh can be traced back in the teachings and ideas of eighteenth century Indian Muslim scholar, Shah Wali Allah of Delhi who began a reform movement to spread a form of Islam in society interpreting through Quran and Hadith and by finding a common ground among four different schools of *Fiqh*. Maulana Ilyas Kandhalwi founded the Tablighi Jamaat in 1920. For details on the ideology and organization, see Yogindar Sikand, *The Origin and Development of the Tablighi Jamaat: A Cross Country Comparative Study 1920-2000* (Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2001).
- 61 For detail, see Avril Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in Pre-Mutiny India* (Richmond: Curzon, 1993); also see Avril Powell (ed.), *Rhetoric and Reality* (London: OUP, 2006).
- 62 The Ahmadiyya movement was founded in 1889, but the name Ahmadiyya was not adopted until about a decade later. In a manifesto dated 4 November 1900, the founder explained that the name referred to Ahmad, the alternative name of Prophet Mohammad. According to him, 'Mohammed', which means 'the praised one', refers to the glorious destiny of the prophet who adopted the name from about the time of the Hegira; but 'Ahmad' stands for the beauty of his sermons, and

- for the peace that he was destined to establish in the world through his teachings. According to Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, these names thus refer to two aspects of Islam, and in later times it was the latter aspect that commanded greater attention. In keeping with this, he believed that his objective was to establish peace in the world through the spiritual teachings of Islam.
- 63 For details of the ideology, movement, organisation and leadership see [www.themodernreligion.com/aut-muslim-main.htm](http://www.themodernreligion.com/aut-muslim-main.htm) and [www.alislam.org/library/messiah.htm](http://www.alislam.org/library/messiah.htm).
- 64 The state's priorities to strengthen the rural elite for the sake of strong administration and prohibiting the essentialities of politics slowed down the growth of a middle class, which also suffered from religious and ideological ruptures.
- 65 See for instance, works by Peter Hardy, Barbara Metcalf, David Lelyweld, Khalid Bin Saeed, Hafeez Malik, Lawrence Ziring, Hamza Alvi, Anwar Syed, K. K. Aziz, Paul Titus, Ian Talbot, David Gilmartin and Stanelly Wolpert.
- 66 Francis Robinson, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims: The Politics of Muslims in United Provinces, 1860-1923* (Delhi: Manohar, 1993); Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge: CUP, 1985).
- 67 See Paul Brass, "Elite Groups, Symbol Manipulation and Ethnic Identity Among the Muslims of South Asia", in David Taylor and Malcolm Yapp (eds.), *Political Identity in South Asia* (London: Curzon, 1979), pp. 35-77.
- 68 Farzana Shaikh, *Community and Consensus in Islam: Muslim representation in Colonial India 1860-1947* (Cambridge: CUP, 1989).
- 69 *Ibid.*, p. 5.
- 70 *Ibid.*, p. 79.
- 71 See Taj-ul-Islam Hashmi, *Pakistan as a Peasant Utopia: The Communalisation of Class Politics in East Bengal 1920-1947* (Oxford: Westview, 1992); Tazeen M Murshed, *The Sacred and the Secular: Bengal Muslim Discourses 1871-1977* (Calcutta: OUP, 1995).
- 72 Yunus Samad, *A Nation in Turmoil: Nationalism and Ethnicity in Pakistan, 1937-58* (New Delhi: Sage, 1995).

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- 73 Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Ethnicity, Islam and Nationalism: Muslim Politics in the North West Frontier Politics 1937-1947* (Karachi: OUP, 1999).
- 74 See Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan 1857-1964* (London: OUP, 1967).
- 75 Sarah F. D. Ansari, *Sufi Saints and State Power: The Pirs of Sind, 1843-1947* (Cambridge: CUP, 1992); also see Hamida Khuhro, *The Making of Modern Sindh: British Policy and Social Change in the Nineteenth Century* (Karachi: OUP, 1999).
- 76 Imran Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism 1885-1947* (Karachi: OUP, 2003).
- 77 Afzal Haq, *Tarikh-i-Ahrar* (Lahore: Maktaba-i-Tabsra, 1968).
- 78 Ghulam Nabi Janbaz Mirza, *Karavan-i-Ahrar*, vol. 1-8 (Lahore: Maktaba-i-Tabsra, 1968).