

# **Muslim Communalism**



**Subject: History**

**Unit: Communalism: Ideologies and Practices**

**Lesson: Muslim Communalism**

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# Muslim Communalism

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# Muslim Communalism

## 11.3: Muslim communalism

### Campaign for purification

In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, when it was clear that the East India Company was the supreme power in the land, the Muslim elite was struck with anxiety. How could Muslims keep their religion and themselves together under the political domination of a non Islamic power? Especially when ordinary Muslims practiced many of the customs and religious beliefs of their Hindu neighbours? Shah Waliullah (1703-62), a leading **alim** of Delhi, proposed that Muslims must return to their basic doctrines and customs contained in the Koran and the Hadith (the authoritative sayings of the Prophet). He criticized the popular religious practices of Muslims especially the worship of **pirs** (saints) and their mazars (sacred tombs) and propagated **jihad** against the infidel. By purifying their religious practices, it was hoped that Muslims would regain their power. In making it necessary for Muslims to be faithful to the instructions of their scriptures, Waliullah inaugurated what may be called Islamization, that is, the campaign to make all Muslims follow strict Islamic laws and make them feel that they were pure Muslims who were separate from other religious communities.

In his days, Waliullah's teachings were not popular. But over time, Waliullah's teachings gave birth to different social and political tendencies. One of these tendencies later developed into communalism. Waliullah's son, Abd al Aziz, extended his father's ideas to declare that Hindustan was *dar ul harb* (the land of war, where Islamic laws were not in command) as distinct from *dar ul Islam* (the land of peace ruled by Islamic laws). Aziz was reacting intellectually against the imposition of laws by the East India Company. But he was not openly anti British. However his doctrine inspired Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi (d.1831) from Rae Bareli, to launch a military jihad against the British. When he returned from hajj in 1823, Barelwi declared religious war against Christians. He then turned against the Sikhs whose leader, Ranjit Singh, had prohibited the **azan** and desecrated mosques. But Sayyid Ahmad was decisively defeated by the Sikhs in 1831.

Sayyid Ahmad's creed was called Tariqah i Muhammadiyah (the path of Muhammad). He was not popular among fellow Muslims. He criticized Shias and their practice of carrying **tazias** as un-Islamic. He was distrusted by the Sunni majority who refused to give up their popular customs. Nevertheless, despite being a minority, the Tariqah extended the process of Islamization since it tried to 'purify' Islamic practices of their Hindu influences and underlined the need to be a true Muslim. Under Barelwi, Islamization had a more extensive impact since his **jihadis** were recruited from all over Northern India - from Punjab to Bengal. After his death, the Tariqah founded its headquarters in Patna and remained active till the last decades of the century. Another important consequence of Barelwi's career was his meeting with Titu Mir of Western Bengal, a former professional wrestler who became a reformer and preacher. Together with Haji Shariatulla of Eastern Bengal who led the Faraizi movement in Eastern Bengal, Titu made Bengal into an important site of communal conflict.

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Figure 11.3.1: Titu Mir

Source: <http://pd.cpim.org/2007/0304/1857-2.gif>

Both Bengal groups were committed to purifying Muslim customs such as pir worship, mohurrum ceremonies and so on, insisting on a strict adherence to the prescriptions of the Koran and the Hadith. Titu Mir's antagonism to the Hindu zamindars arose because of their illegal exactions called abwabs, some of which were used to finance Hindu ceremonies such as Durga Puja. He led a bloody uprising of **raiyats** and weavers against the British and the local Hindu zamindars. The British needed eleven regiments of the army to subdue him! While this was primarily directed against landlords, the uprising took an anti-Hindu form since Titu Mir's followers attacked the mandir and the market (symbols of the influence of local zamindars) and desecrated these with cow's blood. The Faraizis of Eastern Bengal, under both Haji Shariatulla and his son Dudu Mian, clashed with Brahmins and local zamindars together with British administrators and indigo planters. It should be noted that Muslims of other sects were also attacked by both reformer groups.

### **Value addition: did you know?**

#### **Babri Masjid controversy, 1853-57: the complex beginnings**

The fight over the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya shows that even in the 19th century power was not divided along communal lines. There are two versions. One version says that in 1853, believing that the Babri Masjid (also known as the Sita Rasoi temple) was Ram's birthplace, the **mahants** of Haunuman Garhi, the main mandir of Ayodhya, took over the building. An influential Maulvi from Amethi declared a jihad but his attempt to repossess the mosque was thwarted by both Wajid Ali, the Nawab and the British. In 1855, the Muslims managed to take over the mosque and retain it despite a Hindu counter offensive. Sickened by the trouble, a council of elders of both communities sat together to declare that both communities would be allowed to worship there. The second version says that in 1855 Muslims tried to oust the Hindu mahants who had taken over the building but were beaten back. The mahants rejected any compromise.

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Finally, the **maulvi** from Amethi declared jihad. Wajid Ali's religious heads ruled that the case did not merit jihad. Ali's troops fought and overcame the in a bloody battle. These two versions differ in details. But it is clear that the Hindu subjects under a Muslim Nawab were confident enough to enforce their claims against Muslims. For the Nawab it was a civic issue that needed compromise; once that was not possible, he took stern action against his unruly Muslim subjects. Some historians say that it was the British who encouraged the belief the Ram was born at that site.

**Source: Srivastav, Sushil. 1991. *The Disputed Mosque: A historical inquiry*. New Delhi: Vistaar Publications; Robinson, Francis, 2002. *The Muslims of Upper India and the shock of the mutiny*. In *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.**

### After 1857: the turn to education

1857 was a major turning point for the British - and for Muslim reformers. Before the uprising, the British had simply assumed that the Muslims and Hindus formed separate communities. But the mutiny showed that they could engage in united action. This scared the British and henceforth they began to undertake policies to ensure that Muslims would be treated as a separate community from that of the Hindus.

W. W. Hunter, a civil servant, recommended that the government should pay extra attention to the improvement of the condition of Muslims because they were backward. He argued that this was necessary to prevent Muslim rebellions. The government took his analysis seriously, despite the fact that Muslims were not uniformly backward throughout the country. While they were educationally and economically backward in Bengal, they were doing quite well in Punjab. The characterization of Muslims as uniformly backward helped in making Muslims see themselves as a group with special interests. Further, in the 1890s, with the Congress emerging as a threat, the government began to actively promote Muslims as a separate political interest. The Ripon reforms of 1882 introduced separate representation for Muslims in local bodies. This principle was later extended by the Morley Minto Reforms of 1909 to separate electorates in provincial councils. This laid the British open to the charge that they were dividing Indians in order to rule.

On their part Muslim reformers and leaders acted in different ways. Till 1857 the chief antagonist of Muslim reformers was British power - although they also targeted Hindus and fellow Muslims. The defeat of 1857 changed the nature of Muslim reform movements. The mass killing of rebels and city dwellers, the large scale expropriation of land and the complete change in the layout and populations of the cities of Islamic power and culture such as Delhi and Lucknow, forced Muslim intellectuals to accept British rule as an unchallenged fact. Accordingly they sought to preserve and empower the Muslim community *within* the world of British policies. They did this through various initiatives in education - and later, through political participation. This laid the grounds for later communal conflicts with Hindus.

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## Value addition: did you know?

### 1857: the British revenge

British action against Delhi and Lucknow, the seats of Indo Islamic culture, was devastating. Both cities were sacked. 30,000 were killed in Delhi. Those left were made to evacuate the city and much of their property was auctioned. In June 1858 Hindus were allowed back; Muslims were permitted to return three months later. But for five years the Jama Masjid was used as a barrack for Sikh soldiers. The greater part of Fatehpuri, the second largest mosque, was sold to a Hindu. All houses, mosques and bazaars within 448 yards of the walls of the Red Fort were destroyed. Lucknow had been regarded by travellers as more beautiful than the Kremlin for its buildings. Two fifths of the buildings were leveled to make way for wide roads on which the military could move swiftly. The Red Fort was turned into a barrack. In short, all the memories and standing symbols of everyday life of Muslims were erased. The intention was to humiliate Muslims and their past power. The effect of this on Muslims is seen in a small story. Hearing the sound of English boots that a disciple had worn, Maulana Abdur Razzaq of the Farangi Mahal said: "Although his feet tread on the ground, I feel they tread on my heart".

**Source: Robinson, Francis, 2002. The Muslims of Upper India and the shock of the mutiny. In *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press**

The most important educational venture was the Muhammadan Anglo Oriental College. Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan established it in 1877 at Aligarh. His main aim was to modernize Islam by blending it with Western science and literature. He believed that unless this mix was given to upper class Muslim students, they would never be able to compete with Hindus in gaining government employment. Sir Sayyid established the MAO college at Aligarh where students could acquire western knowledge together with Islamic thought. It is noteworthy that MAO College had Hindu students and did not serve beef in deference to their religious sentiments. Further, Sir Sayyid regarded Hindus and Muslims as co-residents of a single nation, although he believed that they formed different communities.

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Figure 11.3.2: Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan

Source: [http://www.indianetzone.com/photos\\_gallery/19/SayyidAhmad\\_10822.jpg](http://www.indianetzone.com/photos_gallery/19/SayyidAhmad_10822.jpg)

While Aligarh created an elite group of Muslim leaders familiar with both Islamic and Western cultures, other educational ventures were directed at less privileged Muslims such as members of the **qasba** gentry and service classes. In general, these institutions were training schools for **ulema** who were meant to preserve the purity of the community. Unlike Aligarh, they tended to keep a distance from state patronage. The oldest institution of this type was the Farangi Mahall (estd. 1694) that had devised the dars i nizami syllabus, which became a standard one for madrasas in the sub-continent. The most important seminary started after the mutiny, was the Dar al Ulum at Deoband (estd.1867). It exercised immense influence on Muslims all over Northern India. Ulema were trained in traditional learning and were not taught English or Western Science. But it ran its administration on modern principles of public subscriptions. It also passed a great number of fatwas (legal rulings) to regulate the personal conduct of Muslims - but kept out of political involvements. The Nadwat al Ulema (est.1894) at Lucknow provided a different kind of conservative initiative by trying to reconcile the different schools of ulema. All these institutions had their own syllabi and maintained different degrees of autonomy from the state.

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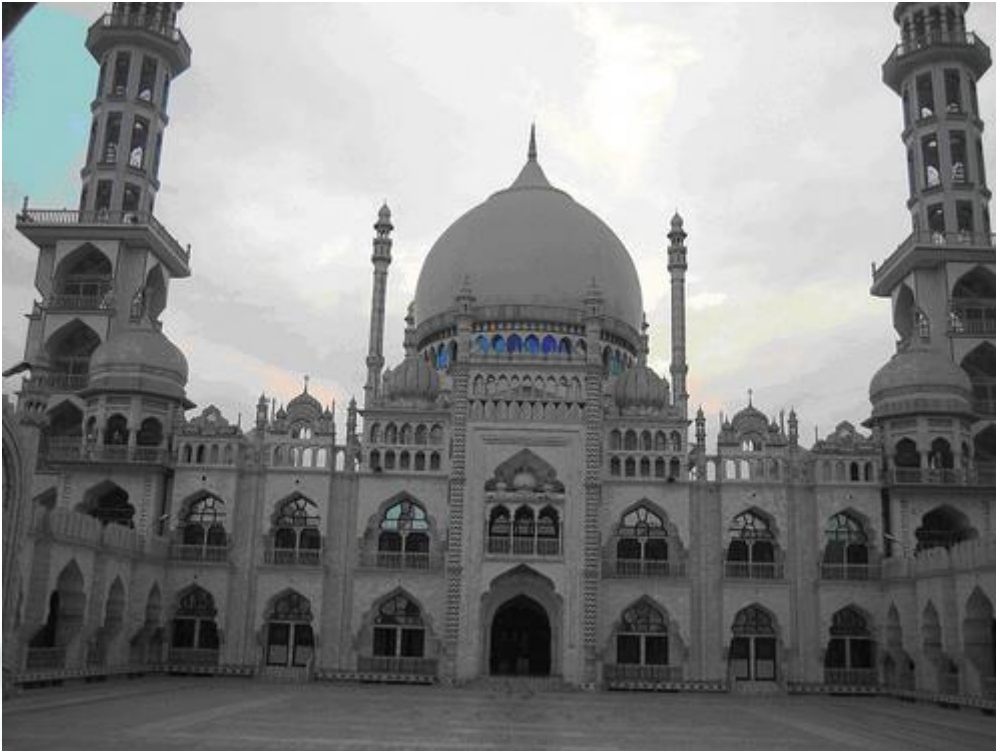


Figure 11.3.3: Dar-al-Ulum, Deoband

Source: [http://farm3.static.flickr.com/2402/2438680863\\_8cd1951d6c.jpg](http://farm3.static.flickr.com/2402/2438680863_8cd1951d6c.jpg)

### Value addition: did you know?

#### Islamization and women

Many reformers wrote on the ideal Muslim woman, who could be a model for other women. Nazir Ahmad, an employee of the British, was associated with Sir Sayyid. He wrote the first bestseller in Urdu called *Mirat ul-Arus* (The Bride's Mirror, 1869). It was the story of two sisters; Akbari, the elder, was a spoilt girl who ruined her husband and their household. Asghari, the younger, was properly trained and hence had a very successful marriage; she even managed to open a little girls school at her house. In 1905, Ashraf Ali Thanawi of Deoband, published *Bihishti Zewar* (Jewelry of Paradise), a thousand page book that defines the ideal woman. She must be educated in order to know the religious law. She must manage her household efficiently, raise well-behaved children and fulfill her social obligations. Above all, she must follow her husband and be as obedient to him as she is to God. Both Nazir Ahmad and Thanvi believed that a girl must learn to integrate properly with her household and her society. But this meant that there was no space for women to think about public issues – or to reflect on inter community relations. In the 20th century, Begum Rokeya Hossein raised some new questions in Bengal. While upholding burqah, she campaigned against the seclusion of Muslim women from public life. Her most interesting story was *Sultana's Dream* (1905), a fantasy in which women take over the roles of men and produce a much better world. Begum Rokeya was also interested in the plight of women from other communities.

Source: Various



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The sense of Muslims as a separate and exclusive community was strengthened by the impact of print. Print was used widely from the 1830s. By the end of the century there were many provincial newspapers that created shared public concerns among Muslims. After 1911, newspapers such as *Comrade* popularized news about Muslims in non Indian Muslim countries. The publication of religious texts also expanded tremendously. These included publications of the Koran, making it accessible to new groups. Proceedings of sectarian debates, sometimes carried out in villages especially in Bengal, were also published and made popular. Print allowed a wider dissemination of Islamic learning and made the concern with being a pure Muslim, a widespread one. Also, creative literature popularized the wider world of Islamic history. Poems such as Hali's *Musaddas* (1879) popularized the glories of Islamic empires, while novels such Mir Mosharraf Hossain's *Bishad Sindhu* (1885-1890) - the first major novel by a Muslim Bengali - dealt with the martyrdom of Hossein. Together with newspapers, these publications helped to spread a pan Islamic consciousness.

From the last two decades of the 19th century, Muslim leaders got actively involved with colonial politics. The most important initiative came from Sir Sayyid who changed his idea of the Indian nation. From the 1880s he declared that India was made up two nations, one Hindu and the other, Muslim. He kept away from the Congress and denounced it as a conspiracy by (Hindu) Bengalis to monopolize government jobs. The shift had two reasons. Firstly, it was because of anti Muslim agitations. The 1880s - the decade when the Congress was founded - was when the anti 'go korbani' (cow slaughter) movement was conducted. It aroused communal feelings in the popular classes of both Hindus and Muslims: for instance, certain upwardly mobile caste groups such as the jolahas (weavers) became very active participants in Hindu Muslim quarrels in order to acquire social prestige among Muslims. On the other hand, the go korbani riots reinforced the distrust of Hindus within the Muslim upper classes that had set in with the anti Urdu agitation from the 1860's. The second reason was Sir Sayyid's opposition to the principle of competition for jobs that Congress demanded. As representative of aristocratic interests, he preferred nomination by government. In this situation, Sir Sayyid went on to found an exclusive organization for the Muslim public called the Muhammadan Educational Conference (1888). It provided an effective mobilizing platform at an all India level for elite Muslims. The Muslim League was founded at its 1906 meeting and effectively lobbied with the government to grant separate electorates to Muslims.

There was also another political trend among Muslims that ran parallel with the one above. It involved co-operation with the Congress. This tendency started with the concern for Islamic countries outside India. From the 1880s, Indian Muslims began to be agitated by the many wars that European countries waged against Islamic powers. The belief that Europe was trying to colonize the Islamic world became very acute in the 20th century. It culminated in the first mass all India movement of Muslims called the Khilafat movement (1919-21). This movement got a great push from young Muslim leaders who, after the revocation of the Bengal Partition in 1911, began to collaborate with the Congress. The Khilafat movement was coordinated with the Non Co-operation movement led by Gandhi. This was the first mass movement of Muslims and Hindus. Gandhi was appointed leader of both movements. Interestingly, members of both Farangi Mahal and the Nadwat were involved in the Khilafat movement. The Aligarh school also provided some of the key leaders of the Khilafat movement including Mohammed Ali and Shaukat Ali (also followers of Farangi Mahal teachers).

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Islamic exclusiveness, in other words, was double sided. It could lead to emphasizing differences with members of other religions and even produce antagonism. But it also produced, through pan Islamism, a culture of political collaboration with Hindus.

## The Muslim predicament in the 1920s

As we saw in another lesson, the 1920s was a period of mass violent communalism.

The political and social closeness that Hindus and Muslims achieved during the Khilafat\Non Co-operation movement was now turned around, as Muslims and Hindus engaged in bitter and murderous campaigns against each other. Riots broke out almost immediately after the withdrawal of the movement. Communal leaders became very influential. In Punjab, roving maulvis preached that it had been a sin to have supported Gandhi, and advocated a boycott of non-Muslims. Local rural leaders such as Pir Abu Bakr, who claimed to be the pir of Assam and Bengal, had opposed the Non-Cooperation/Khilafat movement; they now led successful campaigns against Hindus in both the countryside and the city. Some Swarajist leaders turned to organizing Muslims in riots; Huseyn Suhrawardy who was later to head the Muslim League in Bengal, turned to communal mobilization that included local slum leaders. The Tanzim (education\propaganda) and Tabligh (organization) movements were developed in North India as an answer to the Shuddhi and Sangathan movements among the Hindus. The Bengal Pact had cemented Hindu Muslim unity by assuring the Muslim majority of Bengal they would be getting a larger share of jobs and educational opportunities once Swaraj was achieved. Its revocation embittered Muslims and made many suspicious of the freedom struggle led by Hindu leaders.

The number of riots in the 1920s was unprecedented. In UP alone, there were 91 outbreaks between 1923-27! The two worst riots took place in Kohat (NWFP) and Kolkata. In Kohat (1924) the Muslims evicted the Hindus in retaliation against the circulation of an anti-Prophet leaflet. 155 died in those riots. In Kolkata (1926) riots carried on for over a month and saw 138 dead. The main form of Muslim communal mobilization was the objection to the playing of music before mosques by Hindu processions. Significantly, there was little objection to music played by British troops – just as communal Hindus did not normally object to cow killing by the British. Riots took place primarily in urban centres. But between 1926 and 1931 there was a series of rural riots in Bengal. There were fewer deaths in rural riots. The dominantly Muslim peasantry desecrated Hindu objects of worship and destroyed records of debts. Their main targets were Hindu landlords and moneylenders.

<b>Value addition: from the sources</b>
<b>Riots: two police reports</b>
1863: Hooghly <b>Imambara</b> , the <b>Daroga's</b> report.
It says that the wedding procession of Jodoo Nath Seal (from the banker community) was passing the Emambara with "beatings of tom-toms". The "Emambara men" threw "bricks and clubs" on the procession. The Seals then got a police order permitting the procession. The <b>mutawalli</b> was warned. Despite this when the procession passed the

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Emambara again, they attacked the processionists and the policemen who accompanied them. Finally another police party under the Daroga went and arrested many of the men from the Emambara. It may be added that there was no more violence after this.

1926: Calcutta Riots, the Police Commissioner's report.

An Arya Samaji procession was passing by a small mosque in a crowded part of the city. The **muezzin** was calling out for evening prayers. The musicians were made to stop playing. But one drummer played on. Some Muslims then attacked the procession. In response, the processionists looted shops and buildings, attacked the masjid and the Muslims. Soon more Muslims gathered and both parties helped themselves to a cart transporting bricks. Muslims took control of the streets, stopping and beating Hindu passersby. The police came and stopped the fighting in the main streets, but it continued in the lanes. The next day a Hindu temple was damaged and the following day it was burnt. By this time people were being murdered and armed processions roamed the streets. Many masjids, mandirs and gurdwaras were freely attacked and desecrated and riots spread to the rest of the city. The police report also says that the fight was initially between Muslims and Arya Samajis; it later became a fight between Muslims and "up-country Hindus" and still later, also involved Bengali Hindus. The report also notes that newspapers played an important role in provoking violence through their biased reports. These riots went on for over a month.

**Source: Archival**

Symbols such as 'music before mosques' made Muslims across India feel they were an embattled community trying to protect its religious rights against the Hindu majority. The newspapers that reported both news and rumours of riot violence further intensified the impact. Riots were not easily forgotten and often led to mutual boycott of communities from having any social or economic relations with one another. Nevertheless Muslims remained divided.

Muslims of India formed a diverse number of communities and classes. For instance, Muslims of the United Provinces were concentrated in urban areas where they consisted of small traders and influential government servants. Some were big landlords including Taluqdars. Many prided themselves on being erstwhile rulers of the country. On the other hand, the Muslims of Eastern Bengal, where they formed the majority, were peasants. They saw themselves as oppressed by Hindu landlords – since the majority of landlords were Hindu. The latter were resented for their extraction of abwabs and for charging interest on loans. Such diverse social constituencies had different political interests.

There was as yet no all India organization that could command an influence in different provinces. The Muslim majority provinces of Bengal and Punjab were dominated by parties that depended on the support of non Muslims. Nor was there an ideology of Muslim nationalism that could match Hindutva. Politically the Muslims were fragmented and confused as the majority felt they may have separate political destinies – but within the same country. This condition began to change from the late 1920s.

### **Negotiations, elections, partition**

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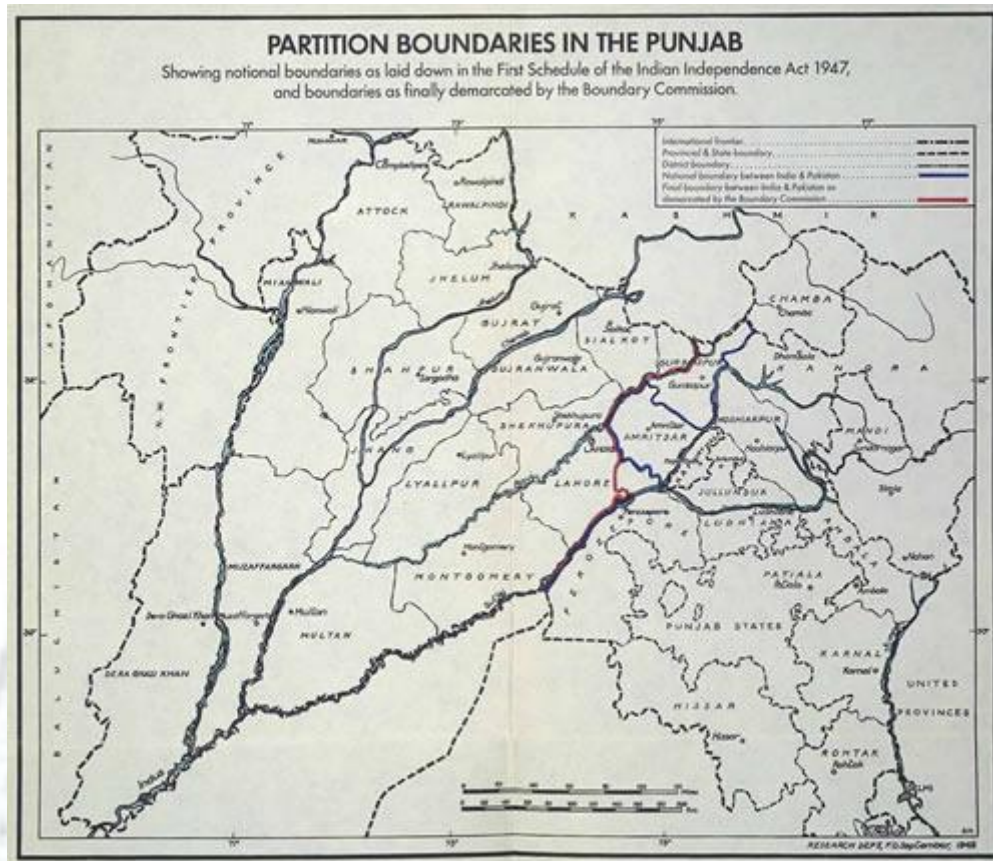


Figure 11.3.4: Partition map of Punjab

Source:

<http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/findhelpregion/asia/india/indianindependence/map3/punjabpartitionboundaries.jpg>

The loss of inter community trust meant that Muslim leaders wanted safeguards to protect their community from domination by the Hindu majority. This led them to demand that independent India should be a loose federation with strong provincial governments. On the other hand, the Congress vision of a strong nation state demanded a sturdy centre with limited powers to the provinces. This difference explains why so many complicated negotiations failed to avoid partition.

There had been an all India agreement between Muslim and Hindu leaders before the 1920s called the Lucknow Pact (1916). But it was the Shimla Conference that began to prepare seriously for a self governing India. Here, Hindu and Muslim leaders tried to work out a common charter of reforms to present to the Simon Commission (1928). The Muslim side was led by Jinnah. During this period he agreed with the Congress in opposing separate electorates. On their part, the Congress - In the first rounds of negotiations - agreed to Jinnah's proposals which included demands for reserved Muslim seats at the centre and in Muslim minority provinces and so on. But uncompromising opposition from the Hindu Mahasabha leaders - whose influence had been strengthened by the preceding wave of communal mobilization in the mid 1920s, scuttled the agreement. Feeling

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betrayed, Jinnah said that this was the "parting of ways". He then brought out a 14 point programme which, among other demands, revived the slogan of separate electorates. This programme was substantially repeated by Muslim leaders in the Round Table Conference at London with Gandhi (1932).

Muslim participation in Civil Disobedience was low, since many saw the Congress as a Hindu party. Also, Muslims remained politically divided. The 1937 elections revealed that the Muslim League was very weak. It secured only 109 out of a total of 486 reserved Muslim seats. Further, it got only two out of 86 seats in Punjab and 29 out of 117 in Bengal, the two Muslim majority provinces. Punjab was ruled by the Unionists, a Muslim landlord party that drew on Hindu support, while Bengal was dominated by the Krishak Praja Party, a peasant based organization that also appealed to low caste Hindus.

Yet, within a short period, the Muslim League revived and developed into an all India mass party. In order to meet the challenge of an enlarged electorate (about 5 million new voters had been enfranchised by the Government of India Act, 1935), Jinnah introduced 2 **annas** membership for the Muslim League. The League, which had been dominated by landlords, now recruited 100,000 members and became a mass party. It also launched a powerful campaign against the Congress ministries. It issued three reports on the condition of Muslims under Congress rule, pointing to the riots, the singing of Bande Mataram, the promotion of Hindi and so on. These charges may not have been substantial. Riots in the Congress ruled states were not more than in others; stanzas in Bande Mataram that offended Muslims, were dropped; Urdu was encouraged. But the Muslim masses were not convinced. The League rapidly gained popularity and by the early 1940s, they ran governments in four provinces.

The Congress had miscalculated. With a massive electoral victory, it demanded that the League should subject itself to the overall command of the Congress. The Congress also wanted abolition of landlordism to which the League was opposed. While Congress alienated the League, its own attempt to reach out directly to the Muslims through the Mass Contact Programme united Muslim leaders against it. The Congress was not trusted. Among other things, it was closely associated with the Mahasabha: in Sind the two were identified in the popular mind. It was only in 1938 that the Congress decided that its members could not belong to the Mahasabha. But such decisions came too late.

While the League had become popular, most of its demands had been conceded: separate electorates, provincial autonomy and Muslim domination in Punjab and Bengal. Lacking a positive demand, it turned to the demand a separate Muslim homeland. A similar claim had been made by Mohammed Iqbal, the great poet and philosopher of Punjab, in the Muslim League conference of 1930. Later Rahmat Ali, a Cambridge student, made a similar though clearer proposal. But at that time these proposals were not taken seriously. The 1940 resolution too was neither clear nor persuasive. It planned to unite Muslims of different parts of India separately under different states and not as a single nation state.

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Even Pakistan was not mentioned. The resolution was probably designed as tool to bargain with the Congress to get more federative powers.



Figure 11.3.5: Lahore resolution

Source: <http://www.pakistantwist.com/img/lahore-resolution/p0601050401.jpg>

The early 1940s were tense. The Khaksar organization of Punjabi Muslims organized themselves in paramilitary formations. Although banned by the Sikander Hayat government, it set off similar actions among Hindu organizations in reaction. Continuing incidents of riot kept mutual suspicions alive at a popular level. Fears were deepened by the expectation that because of their losses, the British would be withdrawing from India - leaving Hindus and Muslims to decide who would rule the country. It was in these conditions that there were three rounds of negotiations between the Congress and the League to sort out how power would be shared in independent India. These were the Cripps Mission (1942), the Rajagopalachary initiative and the Cabinet Mission (1946).

The negotiations did not follow a predictable pattern. The Congress accepted the Cripps Mission plan, because Nehru wanted to concentrate on the **anti-fascist war**. But Jinnah rejected the Cripps Mission on the flimsy ground that it did not mention Pakistan. At that time, Jinnah was looking for a loose federation or confederation rather than a nation that would be absurdly divided by over a thousand miles. He was looking for an excuse to call off negotiations. Ironically, he accepted the later Cabinet Mission plan - although it rejected Pakistan. By this time Jinnah was quite desperate to avoid partition and accept a confederation. But Nehru rejected the Cabinet Mission plan. The war was now over. Nehru could now work on his vision of an economically modern India which demanded a strong centre and weak provinces.

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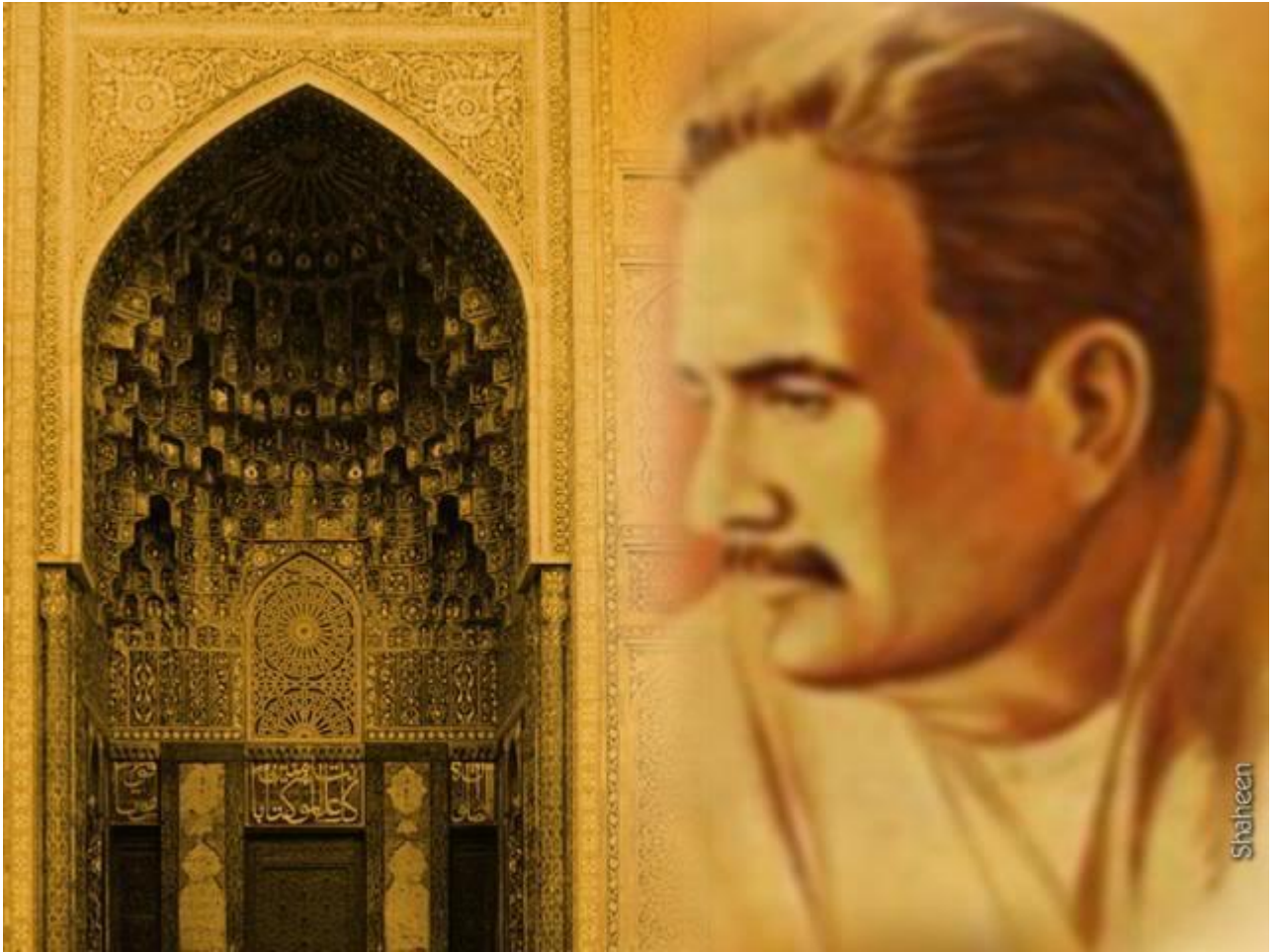
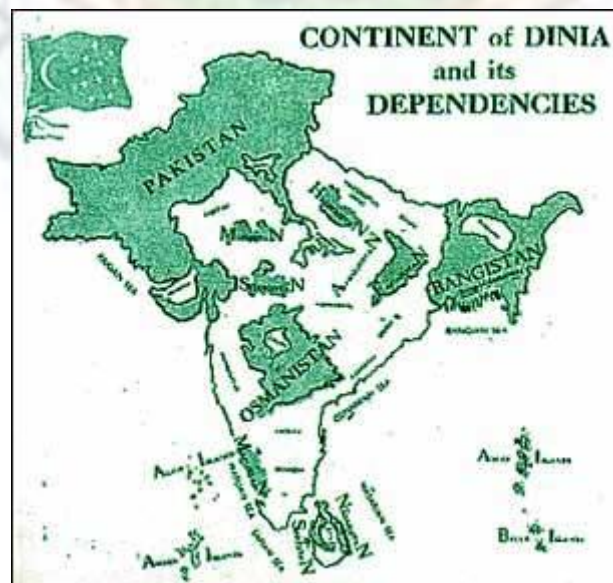


Figure 11.3.6: Portrait of Muhammad Iqbal

Source:

[http://pakistankakhudahafiz.files.wordpress.com/2009/11/002\\_allama\\_iqbal\\_mehrab.jpg](http://pakistankakhudahafiz.files.wordpress.com/2009/11/002_allama_iqbal_mehrab.jpg)



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Figure 11.3.7: Map of partitioned India by Rahmat Ali

Source: <http://beacononline.files.wordpress.com/2008/09/pakistani-map.jpg>

In the 1946 election the League swept the Muslim seats, while Congress got over 90% of the non Muslim seats. The Pakistan idea was gaining followers – because it promised to fulfill the different desires of separate Muslim groups. The Muslim peasants of Bengal and Punjab saw in it the hope of liberation from Hindu (and Sikh) landlords and moneylenders; the middle class professionals and salaried were beginning to veer towards it by 1942; and the industrialists, sweetened by war time contracts given by the League ministries, began to hope for better investment opportunities. On the other hand, Gandhi, Nehru and Patel did not seem averse to the idea. Above all, the accumulated decades of communal mobilization and violence had deepened mutual distrust.

## Value addition: biography

### Jinnah's career: a window to the times?

Jinnah's political career shows the perplexities and strange changes of 20th century inter- community politics. Born in the Khoja merchant community of Bombay, he was part of a minority sect within Indian Muslims. He later converted to Shi'ism. He began his political career in 1905 as Secretary to Gokhale; both were moderates who believed in slow constitutional change within the British Empire. In these years Jinnah was against separate representation for Muslims and only changed his views when the Congress began to ally itself with the new crop of nationalist Muslim leaders from about 1913. He joined the Muslim League while retaining his links with the Congress. Trusted by both sides, he played an important role in getting the Lucknow Pact accepted. But Jinnah was uncomfortable with mass politics. He was too much of a constitutionalist to support Gandhi's Non Co-operation movement. Also, he kept his distance from the Khilafat movement since he opposed mixing religion with politics. He became a forgotten leader in this period. He sprang to prominence again in the 1924-26 Legislature where he was a part of the Independent Party with Pt. Malaviya among others. From 1927 to the first Round Table Conference in 1930, he staked his political reputation to repeatedly enter into negotiations with Congress and other Hindu leaders to produce Hindu Muslim unity. He failed because of opposition from Hindu communalists on the one hand and opposing factions of Muslim politicians on the other hand. At the same time, after adopting the 14 point programme, he also became more committed to exclusive Muslim politics. He stayed away from Indian politics in London till 1934 when he was called back to unite the warring Muslim factions. From this point to the formation of Pakistan, Jinnah outmaneuvered his opponents, both Muslim and non-Muslim. Significantly he tried to retain his distance from religion. Pakistan was founded as a secular state.

**Source: Wells, Ian Bryant. 2005. *Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity: Jinnah's early politics*. Delhi: Permanent Black.**



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Figure 11.3.8: Jinnah on Time magazine cover

Source: [http://www.martinfrost.ws/htmlfiles/aug2007/part\\_india11.jpg](http://www.martinfrost.ws/htmlfiles/aug2007/part_india11.jpg)

The intensity of riots in 1946 made it almost certain to Hindus and Muslims that they would not be able live together in peace. After the rejection of the Cabinet Mission, Jinnah called for Direct Action Day in which a feast of rioting broke out: over 4000 were killed in Calcutta, roads were choked with dead bodies; stray killings carried on till independence. Riots broke out in Bombay which consisted of stabbings in which an equal number of Hindus and Muslims were killed. There were also riots by Eastern Bengal peasants while Hindu peasants of Bihar attacked Muslims: 7000 died in those riots. The wave of rioting then spread to Northern India especially in many cities and rural districts of Punjab. Under these circumstances, there was little criticism of the leaders when they sat with Lord Mountbatten to draw up plans to partition India.

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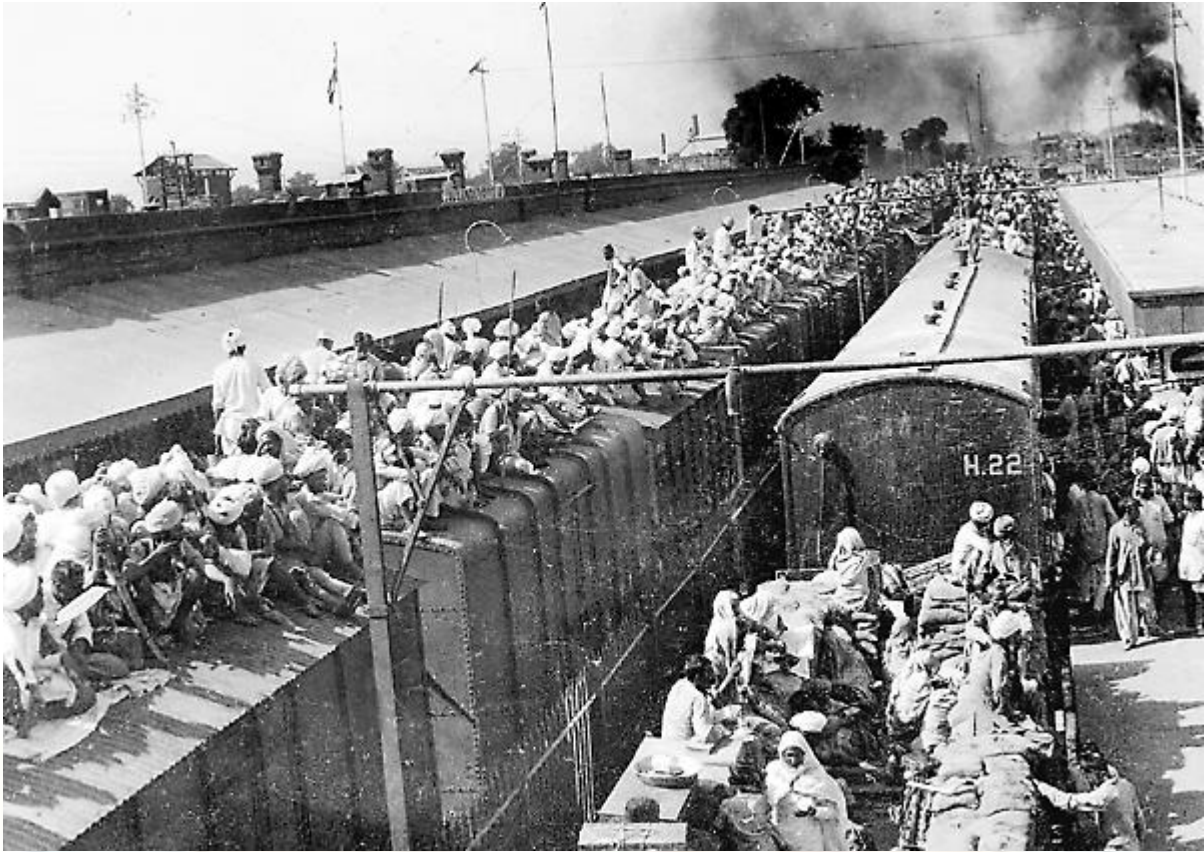


Figure 11.3.9: Migration during partition, 1947

Source: <http://thoughtworld.files.wordpress.com/2009/06/partion1.jpg>

### Summary

- Islamization began with Muslim ulema trying to keep their community together under British power.
- Islamization led to conflicts with British, other Muslim sects and the Hindus.
- The experience of British repression in 1857 led many Muslim intellectuals to start educational institutions.
- Print made Muslims more conscious of their separate status.
- Between the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Muslims were divided between co-operating with the Congress and opposing the Congress.
- Despite the turn to communalism after Non Co-operation\Khilafat movement, Muslim politics remained for long without an all India leader, ideology or organization.
- The Muslim League revived massively after the 1937 elections due to their successful criticism of Congress ministries.

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- The partition negotiations do not show that Jinnah was dedicated to partition.
- The main difference in the partition negotiations was whether India should have a weak centre or strong states.

## 11.3: Exercises

### Essay questions

- 1) How did Shah Waliullah's ideas lead to the rise of Islamic militancy?
- 2) What were the main trends in Islamic educational organizations in the second half of the 19th century?
- 3) Analyze the main issues that led to a failure of the partition negotiations.

### Objective questions

Question Number	Type of question	LOD
1	Multiple choice question	1

### Question

British policy towards Muslims after 1857 was marked by (choose any two options):

- a) Brutal suppression
- b) Disregard of Muslim interests
- c) Attempt to make Muslim intellectuals their allies.
- d) Divide Muslims

**Correct Answer / Option(s)**

a) and c)

### *Justification/ Feedback for the correct answer*

The British wanted to both teach Muslims a lesson and at the same time give them incentives to make them loyal to the British.

### *Resource/Hints/Feedback for the wrong answer*

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b) and d): The British needed to look after Muslim interests to make them their allies. And they were interested in uniting the Muslims so that they would get greater support and would have less fear of a Muslim rebellion.

**Reviewer's Comment:**

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Question Number	Type of question	LOD
2	Multiple choice question	1

### Question

Shah Waliullah played the most important role in starting:

- a) Orthodoxy
- b) Islamization
- c) Jihadi war

<b>Correct Answer / Option(s)</b>	b)
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### *Justification/ Feedback for the correct answer*

Islamization best describes Waliullah's project, since he campaigned to make Muslims strictly follow Islamic doctrines so that they could retain the power of their community under British rule.

### *Resource/Hints/Feedback for the wrong answer*

Orthodox ulema need not engage in campaigns to purify Islam of its popular practices; Waliullah himself did not declare jihad against British power and was more interested in making Muslims pure.

**Reviewer's Comment:**

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## Glossary

**Alim** (plural **Ulema**): One who has knowledge (ilm) of Koran, traditions, law.

**Pir**: spiritual guide who was also worshipped

**Raiyats**: peasants

**Azan**: call to prayer

**Jihad**: holy war that can be against another religion or at a spiritual level against oneself

**Tazia**: Shia banners used especially in Muharram processions

**Qasba**: small town

**Annas**: unit of measurement of currency; 16 annas were equal to a rupee

**Anti-fascist War**: war against Nazi led Germany and its allies.

**Mahant**: head of a Hindu temple

**Maulvi**: A Muslim religious teacher

**Imamabara**: place of Shia worship

**Mutawalli**: keeper of a mosque

**Daroga**: non-officer level member of the police

**Muezzin**: one who calls out to the faithful to pray at the mosque

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