

## SOUTH ASIAN IDENTITY AS ISLAMIC IDENTITY IN ENGLAND

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**Abstract:** *The question of Identity assumes great significance as social stratification sets in, heterogeneity takes shape and complexity increases, even if ethnicity is not very pronounced in such contexts. But in plural societies and cosmopolitan contexts multi-ethnic moorings play a significant role. We find an ethnic group's self definition at variance with that of the other; and interestingly in multicultural settings there are quite a few others to contend with. Besides, a given ethnic group may, and in fact does, resort to a kind of flexible ethnicity depending on the context in which it is operating or the locale or habitat in which it is living or the contingent situation that has arisen. From a sort of monolithic identity as Indian, some became Pakistanis and some of the Pakistanis became Bangaldeshis. But this aspect is just one of the dimensions in identity formation. Religion, Language, Region and a range of other factors contributed a variety in terms of identity. But from the point of the native Whites they were all Asians or Indians. Gradually, however, all were branded Pakistanis and then Muslims and eventually the racially loaded and highly derogatory Pakis.*

This paper focuses on, among other things, the repercussions that events in the Indian subcontinent have had on migrants from there to Britain. The Independence of India, birth of Pakistan, and subsequently that of Bangladesh, and other historical developments in South Asia have led to *fusions* and *schisms* of various sorts between South Asian migrants in England<sup>1</sup>. Also, their contact and interaction with the local population has, from time to time, prompted them to come together on common platforms to combat the issues of racism, social discrimination, political neglect, and economic despair. Since these fusions and schisms are phenomena guided by the dual aspects of conditions affecting them within the country of their present residence (England) as well as from without (*vis-à-vis* events unfolding in the Indian subcontinent), there is no uniform way in which South Asians respond to these developments in different geographical locations in Britain, as the nature

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and degree of demographic and social reproduction of the migrants varies from place to place depending on their social, economic and religious background, and their proportion in the general population in a given locale. Thus what is obtained in Leicester, for instance, is at variance with what is experienced in Bradford. While South Asian youth in Leicester combine with the Afro-Caribbean to organise themselves as a soccer team in their 'struggles against racism and for their civil, political, and economic rights' (Westwood 1995), in Bradford they think it more appropriate and pertinent to express their anger at the role of the government 'in relation to individuals' rights and in relation to the demands of specific groups,'<sup>2</sup> by burning a book. And thirty miles from Bradford is a town, H, where there are only six Pakistani families. All of them lead as invisible a life as possible; they make no claims on the public space, have no mosques, women try not to wear the veil to the extent possible, and do wear jeans and *western* clothes. Overall, here, clear attempts are made not to appear as different or distinct from the dominant white majority, and steps are taken to *merge* with the dominant cultural canvas in public places.<sup>3</sup> A similar, subtle, process can, at times, be perceived among those Pakistanis who live in the suburbs or outskirts of Bradford, away from the inner city concentration. In fact a debate has been on in Pakistani families living in the inner city areas of Bradford about moving to the suburbs but often there is no unanimity between the members of the families concerned. Jeffery (1976) has observed a similar phenomenon in Bristol.

Other concerns that this paper deals with are discourses relating to *homeland* and *mother tongue*—issues that are significant as regards nationality, citizenship and language in the realm of newer ethnic and identity constructions. In Bradford, where three out of four South Asians are from Pakistan, it is inevitable that the visibility of a South Asian in the public sphere assumes the tangible form of a Muslim. And from that emerge other constructions from the point of view of the (White) English *natives*: that all South Asians come from Pakistan; all South Asians are Muslims; all Muslims come from Pakistan; all of them have Urdu as their mother tongue as Urdu is the National Language of Pakistan; and the *revelation* that Urdu is indeed the *Muslim language*!<sup>4</sup> To what extent do such assumptions and stereotypes affect, support, alleviate or negate ethnic constructions of those who are the actors, the South Asians themselves? As a result of such external *impositions*, which the receiving society bestows on them, do new forms of thinking and novel patterns of behaviour emerge among migrants?

Rushdie, a twice migrant himself (from Bombay to Pakistan as a *mohajir*, and then to England), contends that

The effect of mass migrations has been the creation of radically new types of human being: people who root themselves in ideas rather than places, in memories as much as in material things; people who have been obliged to define themselves—because they are so defined by others—by their otherness; people in whose deepest selves strange fusions occur, unprecedented unions between what they were and where they find themselves. The migrant suspects reality: having experienced several ways of being, he understands their illusory nature. To see things plainly, you have to cross a frontier (1991: 124-5).



Rushdie also feels that the migrants' identity 'is at once plural and partial. Sometimes we feel that we straddle two cultures; at other times, we fall between two stools' (1991: 15).

### South Asian Migrants

Today there is hardly any validity in talking about South Asian migration to various parts of the world in blanket terms, ignoring space and time factors. Not only that socio-economic conditions and the degree of acceptability and/or hostility of the *receiving society*<sup>5</sup> varies in each context, but so does the socio-religious composition and make-up of the migrant group itself. Besides the spatial aspect in terms of geographical locations of the receiving societies, it is also important to pay attention to the time factor; the periods (in history) at which migrations occur. Or, as in the case of indentured labour, when were they herded together to plantations and farms by the colonial state. The nature, purpose, and economic drives of different migrant groups are different in each case. The receiving societies were themselves at various levels of socio-economic development, and also showed political diversity in terms of the nature and makeup of the state itself. So while dealing with what appears to be *just migrations*, we are touching larger issues that need to be addressed in the realm of political economy.

Among many other factors one significant aspect that has not received much attention in migration studies is what can be termed as the *Jump Factor*. By this I draw attention to numerous instances, almost all through the modern times, when people living within miles of a major town or city do not migrate there but to far and distant places quite often in another state, in a totally different linguistic, religious, and cultural zone. Also, they migrate across international borders skipping many industrialised cities or the capital of their own country. We have plenty of examples of people living in different villages of many of our states not migrating to Bangalore or Chennai or Patna but to Mumbai or Calcutta. Similarly, people from villages of Punjab on both sides of the border, or those from Sylhet touch Delhi or Islamabad or Dacca respectively, for the first time in their life, only to take an international flight to London or Bradford or Birmingham or Manchester. Village, caste and kin ties and an already existing established network enables them to do so<sup>6</sup>. Also, pertinent here is to point out that migration studies almost always dwell on why people migrate or talk about *push* and *pull* factors in a very clichéd manner. They do not try to probe as to why people do not migrate<sup>7</sup>. For instance, in spite of a high degree of industrialisation we have less than 30 per cent urbanisation in India. In many Latin American and African countries with far less industrialisation there are higher rates of urbanisation. But do we have probing studies to find out why our urbanisation is so low and why people do not migrate in large numbers, or why there is no exodus from the villages contrary to what is made out in the general rhetoric wherein migration is dished out almost as a footloose activity and not as an organised and highly networked exercise that it is. There is a strong nexus between space, territory and people's identity<sup>8</sup>.

We are looking at a range of societal contexts in which we find South Asians as immigrants. The receiving societies are, geographically, quite widespread: while Sri Lanka,



Mauritius and Malaysia are closer to home, South Africa, Fiji, Surinam and the West Indies, along with East Africa, Canada (British Columbia) and USA (California) are a world apart, and not just in the literal sense. All of the above can be considered as *old* migrations compared to the ones that led South Asians to Britain and the US, starting from the 1940s and 1960s respectively. The last mentioned, of course, is the most recent of all, and there, migration is still continuing. No doubt South Asian migrants can be seen in many different countries besides the above mentioned, particularly so in the Middle East. But these are not either in great numbers, as in the case of many European countries and Australia, nor have migrations to these locales been on for long periods; some are not even in the generally understood rubric of migrations, as in the case of the Middle East, where a large number of South Asian male workers have *stayed* on for quite some time renewing their work contracts every two or three years. The kind of demographic and socio-cultural reproduction that one associates with *settled* migrant groups has not yet occurred in some of the European countries and Australia where they are in relatively small numbers. While in the Middle East there is no possibility of these workers aspiring for citizenship of the states they are working in, even if they so desire, in some of the other contexts such possibilities have existed in varying degrees, even if it meant only a *second class citizenship*, overtly, as in the case of Sri Lanka, Malaysia, South Africa and some areas in the Caribbean, and not blatantly so in the case of Britain, USA, Canada and some other countries because of racism and allied reasons.

The kind of contacts the *old* and *new* migrants retain with their homeland is in a large measure determined by the state of telecommunication technology, nature and mode of international travel, their economic status, and the socio-cultural milieu in which the migrants find themselves. Those who went as indentured labour suffered disadvantages on all counts; telecommunication and travel facilities were primitive, to the point of being nonexistent, and combined with their economic plight they could hardly retain connections with their homeland. The *new* migrants, on the other hand, particularly those who went over to the US, encountered relatively few hardships. Retention of ties with the homeland influences the growth and reproduction of the migrants in the overseas context. For instance, the way religion is practised by Indians in the West Indies today is quite different from the way it is done in the US or in England.

According to Lessinger:

When Indian immigrants were first shipped as indentured sugarcane workers to the Caribbean in the late 1830s, they had few priests in their midst. As desperately poor sugar cane workers, the Caribbean Indian population had little sustained contact with India for many years. As a result, Caribbean forms of Hinduism and Islam have diverged from the forms practiced in India. (Caribbean Hindus in New York have their own separate temples.) Today, India's religious leaders of all denominations are concerned to maintain orthodoxy and standard forms of worship among Indian immigrants abroad (1995:50).

Though there are vague parallels, the lumping together of South Asian migration to Britain and the USA is not correct, I feel, due to the following reasons: the colonial connection between South Asia and Britain, the social, educational, economic and, to an



extent, religious background of those who migrated to these two places (due to which the way they were received in these two countries differed), and, of course, the period at which they arrived as migrants in these two countries. The comparison, in terms of differences in these two contexts, does not stop here. While we can argue that there was a marked degree of homogeneity, in each case, as regards the socio-economic background of the early and initial migrants to these countries, which is still portrayed to be so in general discourse, the ground reality is that a high degree of heterogeneity and diversity has set in in both contexts. In Britain South Asians started off with a lot of handicaps and drawbacks as the lowest of the lowly paid workers in the mills and factories of the expanding industries and booming economy of Britain. To start with there were only single male migrants from the subcontinent staying as *lodgers* and working shifts as a result of which there were, at times, three persons occupying a single bed *a la musical beds!* It was predominantly a serial male migration (like the different legs of a relay race) whereby a father would go back home and exchange the baton with his son, and a brother would do so with his sibling. All this changed during the mid- and late-1960s when the British Government imposed restrictions on fresh migrant workers coming into Britain. Those workers who were already there, stayed back, brought in their wives, children, parents and siblings, became *settled migrants*, and demographic and socio-cultural reproduction occurred locally, that is, in Britain<sup>9</sup>.

In the US context, however, it is a completely different picture. From the 1960s, particularly so during the 1970s and 1980s, many students who were on scholarships at various US universities stayed back and took up jobs after completing their studies, and were also joined by high level professionals like doctors and engineers, and more recently, computer-related professionals, from South Asia. The general profile, educational and class background of these migrants was much higher than that of any ethnic group in the US, including, at times, the Whites. Gradually, as a number of them obtained Green Cards or became American citizens, the process of family formation started, and the members of wider kin groups joined the already economically well-placed professionals. Such reproduction led to diversification in jobs and occupations and economic heterogeneity, as those who came and joined their sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, uncles, etc., had not only a different age range (because of the immigration of children and parents), but also differed in terms of their education, job experience, and class positions back home. Moreover, with the joining of wives (and women in general) the sex ratio of the groups changed too, and subsequently more and more children were born in the US of immigrant parents.

It is interesting to note that a sort of *reversal* is occurring in Britain and the US as regards the demographic, social and cultural reproduction of South Asians: while there is a perceived all-round upward educational and socio-economic mobility in the case of South Asians in Britain<sup>10</sup>, there is downward mobility in the economic realm for the South Asians in the US<sup>11</sup>.

### South Asians in England

Most of the early South Asian migrants to England (around 1940) were former seamen (some of whom had jumped ships) who were more than welcome to work in the munitions



factories and wartime industries. But what can be considered as an influx occurred during the 1950s. Prior to that no doubt there existed a small section of people from the subcontinent who could be described as a "middle-class group," that consisted of doctors, students and international businessmen (Robinson 1990: 273). But in the 1950s the nature and magnitude of immigration to Britain from the subcontinent changed drastically and took the form of large-scale chain migration. Describing this, Robinson says,

South Asians were no longer migrating in search of qualifications and professional experience but to fill gaps in the lower order of the British labour market. Migrants were largely unskilled and were drawn from specific areas of origin, sometimes even group of villages. They were young, often single, labour migrants seeking to meet financial targets set by the head of the extended family before returning to the villages of origin. They regarded themselves as economic transients and had a somewhat unfavourable opinion of British cultural and moral values (1990: 273-4).

Three regions in Pakistan, two in India, and two in Bangladesh contributed a predominant section of the emigrants to Britain. The Pakistanis were Pathans from the North West Frontier Province (NWFP), Punjabis from the province of Punjab that is to the west of and contiguous with the Indian state of Punjab, and the Mirpuris from *Pakistan Occupied Kashmir*. The Indians were drawn mainly from Punjab and Kutch in northern Gujarat. Bangladeshis were primarily from Sylhet and the maritime areas.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s another section of South Asians arrived in Britain, not directly from the subcontinent but from East Africa (particularly from Kenya and Uganda), after having lived there for decades and tasted sweet economic success. These people are referred to as *twice migrants*. Some of these *twice migrants* left Britain and went over to the USA and came to be known as *thrice migrants* (Bhachu 1995).

One should not conclude, going by the above, that Britain was an open society and allowed people to enter the country freely and work there. Racism in many sectors, including the work situation and recruitment into factories and other work places, is ubiquitous even today. By all counts it was even worse during the 1950s and earlier; still South Asians, Afro-Caribbean and others from the New Commonwealth made a beeline to Britain. While one of the explanations for this, as in most cases of mass chain migrations, can be found in *push* and *pull* factors<sup>12</sup>, it is also to be emphasised that Britain advertised for, invited and actively encouraged its erstwhile colonial subjects to fill the slots in its expanding economic enterprise as underclass production units. Robinson explains this succinctly: 'Given the antipathy which exists in Britain towards South Asians, there must have been clear reasons why, in the 1950s and 1960s, employers and government colluded in their acquiescence to immigration' (Robinson 1990: 276).

Another interpretation as regards the entry of South Asians to Britain comes from an interesting (and may be, an unexpected) quarter:

It sometimes seems that the British authorities, no longer capable of exporting governments, have chosen instead to import a new Empire, a new community of subject peoples of whom they think, and with whom they can deal, in very much the same way as their predecessors thought and dealt with 'the fluttered folk and wild', the 'new-caught, sullen



peoples, half-devil and half-child' who made up for Rudyard Kipling, the White Man's Burden. In short, if we want to understand British racism—and without understanding no improvement is possible—it's impossible even to begin to grasp the nature of the beast unless we accept its historical roots. Four hundred years of conquest and looting, four centuries of being told that you are superior to the Fuzzy-Wuzzies and the wogs, leave their stain. This stain has seeped deep into every part of the culture, the language and daily life; and nothing much has been done to wash it out (Rushdie 1991: 131).

Rushdie, further elucidates

They came here because they were invited. The Macmillan government embarked on a large-scale advertising campaign to attract them. They were extraordinary advertisements, full of hope and optimism, which made Britain out to be a land of plenty, a golden opportunity not to be missed. And they worked. People travelled here in good faith, believing themselves wanted. This is how the new Empire was imported (1991: 133).

New jobs were available in new as well as existing industries in the growing British economy and a large labour force was required to fill all those vacancies. Quoting Fevre, Robinson talks of

Two sets of circumstances where immigration of black labour may be beneficial. Both cases involve changes in the existing jobs rather than the addition of new ones. In one scenario, employers seeking to restructure in the face of declining competitiveness would invest capital in production processes which would degrade certain occupations to the point where white labour might either choose or be forced to withdraw. The example he [Favre] cites of this is the instigation of night shifts in the wool textile industry. Here the cost of new machinery made twenty-four hour running essential and operatives were required to supervise more machines. White women who could not legally be redeployed onto night shifts left the industry and were replaced by Asian men. In the second scenario, employers might attempt to reduce their unit labour costs rather than embark on restructuring. Here wages would not be maintained to the level necessary to attract white labour in the full knowledge that all vacancies would still be filled by Asians. In both these cases then, the use of Asian labour facilitated the painful and expensive process of adjusting to revised market conditions (1990: 276).

It was a desperate need of the hour to transform its industrial base and expand its economy that forced Britain to depend on South Asians, and other labour, thus enabling them to migrate to Britain. To quote Robinson, again, it was a

Utilitarian phenomenon, recruited to fulfill a specific function and allocated resources only in so far as was necessary to undertake this function. At the time, this role might not have been entirely alien or distasteful to Asians who fulfilled similar functions elsewhere in the world quite profitably. Indeed, given the avowed aim of many of the labour migrants to return home to the subcontinent once their immediate financial targets had been met, the somewhat ascetic and undistracting nature of residence in the UK might not have been unwelcome (1990: 279).

Till recently the desire to go back to their country of origin, their *homeland*, was highlighted in most discourses, academic as well as general, concerning migrants in Britain. Over the years this has taken a back seat and not much credence is given to it now. In fact

for quite sometime now, the term that has acquired currency is *myth of return* (Anwar 1979). Except for the Caribbean, some of whom have indeed returned, and which is one of the reasons for decline in their population in Britain, no other ethnic minority has, to any significant degree, carried out the *threat* of return to *homeland*! Instances of Indians and Pakistanis going back home are, of course, come across, but so also are cases of those who could not make ends meet back home and were "forced to return" to Britain (Anwar 1979).

There are about 3 million ethnic minorities<sup>13</sup> in Britain's population of 54.9 million (1991 census); that is, 5.5% of the British population are ethnic minorities<sup>14</sup>:

Total Population Percentage				
• Whites	51,873,794	94.50		
• Ethnic minority groups	3,015,051	5.50		
• Black ethnic groups	890,727	1.60		
• Black-Caribbean	499,964	0.90		
• Black-African	212,362	0.40		
• Black-Other	178,401	0.30		
			Muslims	Percent
• South Asian	1,479,645	2.70	667,366	45.10%
• Indian	840,255	1.50	50,415	5.99%
• Pakistani	476,555	0.90	462,258	96.99%
• Bangladeshi	162,835	0.30	154,693	94.99%
• Chinese and Other	644,678	1.20		
• Chinese	156,938	0.30		
• Other-Asian	197,534	0.40		
• Other-Other	290,206	0.50		
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>54,888,844</b>			

It is estimated that the Muslim population in England is one million. So the percentage of South Asian Muslims is 66.7%.

The ethnic minority population in Britain is not evenly spread across the country. Whereas the national average for rural habitation is 24%, only three per cent of the ethnic minorities live in rural areas. Seventy-one per cent of Pakistanis and 65% of Indians are concentrated in just six conurbations: Greater London, West Midlands, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, Tyneside and West Yorkshire. London is the core for both these groups as well as for the Bangladeshis—33% of Indians and 22% of Pakistanis live there (Skellington and Morris 1992: 44); 36,900 Bangladeshis, that is 22.7%, live in a single borough, Tower Hamlets, adjoining the City of London (Eade 1996: 218)!

In general, the settlement pattern of South Asians is governed by availability of work in a given area. Anwar explains

Their position ... in the labour market is a fundamental aspect of their position in British society. The type of work available to them not merely governs their incomes, it also helps to determine the areas in which they settle, where their children go to school, how



they interact with the indigenous population generally, their chances of participation in civic life, and their overall status in society. If Asians are granted access to only a limited range of occupations upon their arrival, there will be concentrations in certain factories and certain industrial sectors, and consequently, depending on their location, in certain towns, cities and regions (1990: 299).

Such concentrations mean that they are in a position to have a bearing on the electoral scene. Anwar says

According to the 1981 census, there were fifty-eight constituencies with more than 15% of the total population living in households with heads born in the New Commonwealth and Pakistan; the majority were of Asian origin. Nineteen of them had more than 25% and seven over 33% (with three approaching almost half...). There are many others with an ethnic minority population of between 10 and 15%. These figures do not take into account ethnic minorities where the head of the household was born in this country. However, it is estimated that in 1987 there are about 100 parliamentary constituencies in England with an ethnic minority population of over 10% (1990: 300).

Also, several studies by Anwar (1975, 1980, 1984 and 1988) have shown that of late the turnout of the Asian electorate has been higher than that of non-Asians. He says

Their membership of the political parties has increased; they have participated fully in the campaigns of the 1974, 1979, 1983 and 1987 general elections, and also been involved in several local elections. Asians have participated in the elections individually, through their organisations, and also through the Asian press. It is clear from the recent participation, both as activists and as voters, that in the future their influence in the political life of Britain is likely to increase. However, they still face an uphill task to participate fully without any fear of rejection or discrimination (1990:312).

In the light of the above, it is interesting to note that in certain circles there have been allegations that South Asians have made attempts to take over local Labour parties<sup>15</sup>. Perhaps it is relevant to draw a comparison with what is obtained in the US as regards political participation of the Asians. During the 1996 and subsequent Presidential elections the discourse/rhetoric was more directed towards donations by the Asians to the campaign funds of the Democratic and Republican parties than to actual participation in the electoral process. Some of these donations were alleged to be illegal and unethical. Besides, it is also to be noted that people from South Asia continue to live in the US on Green Cards for years together without obtaining US citizenship. On the other hand, almost all South Asians in Britain are British citizens. Moreover, those in Britain have had a head start of twenty to thirty years in terms of length of residence, compared to those living in the US. An important aspect that has a bearing on citizenship of South Asians living abroad is that while Pakistan and Bangladesh allow their citizens to have a dual citizenship, India does not. What it effectively means is that while people from the former two countries can, and do, continue to hold a Pakistani or Bangladeshi passport on obtaining a British or US one, Indians need to surrender their Indian passports if they opt for a different citizenship. In fact there has been a raging debate on this issue; Non-Resident Indians (NRIs—Government of India's label for the overseas population of Indian origin) have been clamouring for years for dual



citizenship.

Also, it is pertinent to note that a school of thought believes that lower class status spurs people to be more active politically

Political participation of British South Asians is more pronounced than in other contexts of contemporary migration...and this may be due in no small part to their present low status (as opposed to the affluence of other overseas South Asians).... Among all South Asian communities—including those in post-colonial contexts—socio-economic repression has stimulated political involvement and opposition while middle-class or elite status has abated it.... (Clarke, et. al. 1990: 22).

### South Asians in Bradford

Bradford is a city in West Yorkshire about eight miles from Leeds. It was a centre for wool textile industry till the early 1970s. Dahya observes that during the 1960s besides the wool industry

It has a number of expanding ancillary industries, notably light and heavy engineering, building and electrical engineering, and other allied industries, all of which are in strong competition for labour. This is probably why the figures for unemployment in Bradford since the Second World War have been below the national average (1974: 78).

The first settlers in Bradford from the subcontinent (in 1941) were former seamen who had landed in nearby ports such as Liverpool, Middlesbrough and Hull. They had no difficulty whatsoever in finding jobs in the textile mills. Around thirty of them lived as lodgers in Howard Street in houses owned by Poles (Dahya 1974: 84). The Irish who moved to the suburbs sometime after the advent of the Poles earlier owned these houses. A house was bought in Howard Street and converted into a mosque in 1959; this happens to be the second oldest mosque in England<sup>16</sup>. It is known as Jamia Masjid<sup>17</sup>. The group in charge of it is the Muslim Association of Bradford. Around 1965 an adjacent house was bought and the mosque was expanded. During the early 1980s another adjoining house was bought and the ground floor (American first floor) was converted into a *madrassa*, while the two upper storeys of all the three houses were connected to jointly function as the mosque. Subsequently, in the mid-1980s two more adjoining houses were acquired for the mosque; one is utilised as a day care centre for elderly men, and the other one is in a dilapidated state. Buying all these houses in a single row was not a problem as Pathans owned all these houses from Pakistan and they readily sold the houses to the Muslim Association of Bradford. Obviously, the initial establishment of the Howard street mosque was a joint effort and all sections of Muslims participated in this exercise and made significant contributions. Gradually the ranks of the migrants swelled as fresh immigrants from the subcontinent came to Bradford and the process of dispersal from Howard Street picked up, and the settlement pattern underwent a change. Subsequently more mosques were established. But a majority of Pathans continued to live in and around Howard Street, formed the Muslim Association of Bradford, and took over the responsibility of running the Howard street mosque. Currently there are about 60 mosques in Bradford.

As per the 1961 census the population of Bradford was 295,768. Of these 3,457 were Pakistanis, 1,512 were Indians and 984 were Caribbean. The 1991 census for Bradford is:



Total Population (1991 Census)	457,344
Pakistani	45,280
Indian	11,713
Bangladeshi	3,653
Other Asian	1,597
Black Caribbean	3,323
Black African	610
Black Other	1,403
Chinese	720
Other	3,020
Total	71,319
Total of Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi population: 60,646	

The South Asian population of Bradford is 16.92% of the total population. Pakistanis are 74.66% of the South Asian population, Indians are 19.31%, and Bangladeshis are 6.02%.

The early migrants to Bradford are quite nostalgic about the "good old days" when a Pakistani thought of, and treated, another Pakistani as a Pakistani *per se* and not as a *mohajir*, or Pathan, or Punjabi, or Mirpuri. Prior to that too the scene was quite congenial; anybody coming from the Indian subcontinent was sure of some sort of local support irrespective of whether one was a Muslim, Hindu or Sikh, and irrespective of the language one spoke. Dahya says,

During the early stages of their settlement in Bradford, Indo-Pakistanis (that is, Hindu, Muslim and Sikh immigrants) from the undivided India used to stay together. With the division of the subcontinent into two national entities in 1947, and with the arrival of fresh immigrants, older settlers began to differentiate themselves on the basis of national/ethnic origins. Later on, as a result of sponsorship the number of immigrants increased and new forms of sub-groups based, at first, on regional identity and, later, on the basis of village-kin group, emerged. Since 1960, with the arrival of wives and children, the village-kin group as a residential unit has gradually begun to ramify into nuclear households. Broadly speaking, the process of growth and subsequent development of the immigrant community is one of fusion of immigrants from different areas leading to a fission and segmentation on the basis of village-kin ties. That is, the process begins with the fusion of members of various ethnic/sectarian/national groups during which stage traditional attitudes on inter-ethnic/sectarian hostility is temporarily shelved (1974: 86-7)<sup>18</sup>.

As elsewhere, the chasm between Indians and Pakistanis widened in Bradford too after 1947. The Indian section consisted of mainly Gujaratis (both Muslims and Hindus) and Sikhs. The Pakistani section comprised of Mirpuris, Punjabis, Pathans (mainly Hindko speaking) and some from Chhachh, from West Pakistan, and Bengali speaking Muslims from East Pakistan. While there was a commonality of language between the Sikhs on the one hand, and the Punjabis, Chhachhis and Mirpuris<sup>19</sup> on the other, they were different in terms of their religious pursuits and nationalities. A section of the Gujaratis was Muslim and had a religious affinity with all the ethnic groups of Pakistani origin (including those from East Pakistan) but spoke a different language and had a different nationality. After 1971 another nationality, Bangladeshi, came into the picture. In days to come religious



identity overrode national differences and, on occasions, a sort of fusion was achieved on the Islamic platform.

A common religious identity between the different nationalities and ethnic groups, however, has not proved to be strong enough to forge a unity between these groups on all occasions; one of the primary reasons is due to the criss-crossing of doctrinal/denominational subscriptions among them. It is believed that a majority of the Mirpuris subscribe to the Barelvi tradition and are followers of *Pir Maroof*. The other denominations are Deobandis, who are close to the *tablighi jamaat*, and the *ahle-hadith*, generally referred to as the *wahabis*, whose activities are funded by Saudi Arabia. Besides the link that is commonly established between the Barelvis and the Mirpuris, no clear links seem to exist between any ethnic group and a particular denomination. One of the manifestations of doctrinal/denominational subscription occurs on the occasion of the celebration of *id-ul-fitr*, which marks the end of thirty days of fasting during the month of *Ramadhan*. While all over South Asia *id-ul-fitr* is celebrated on a single day in any given city/town/village on the sighting of the new moon, in Bradford the celebration is on for three successive days<sup>20</sup> by the followers of the different doctrines/denominations! While the Barelvis normally celebrate *id* on sighting the new moon, the Deobandis do so the day it is celebrated in Morocco; the contention being that Morocco is the nearest Muslim country and that is when it should be done in Bradford. And the wahabis like to celebrate the day Saudi Arabia does so<sup>21</sup>.

Given the overwhelming presence of Pakistanis in the South Asian population it is inevitable that the whites and other non-South Asians assume that all South Asians are *Pakistanis*. Except for the turbaned Sikhs who are easily recognised as different, all other South Asians are bracketed together as *Pakistanis*. Of late, due to the establishment of other places of religious congregation, like Hindu temples and *gurdwaras*, it is no doubt being slowly realised and recognised that there is religious and other forms of diversity (linguistic and culinary, for instance) among South Asians. Still, it is hard for any outsider to recognise/realise these differences on meeting a South Asian in the street. Certain markers like clothes, beards, veil or *hijab* can, and do, help at times, but not always. So a South Asian is identified by an outsider as a *Pakistani* and as almost all Pakistanis are Muslims, the extension of religious identity is synonymous with the *Pakistani* identity. In fact, on many an occasion non-Pakistani South Asian Muslims from India, Bangladesh or Sri Lanka, do not even protest such identification, or attempt to clarify their ethnic background, in a non-South Asian context. They just get subsumed into the *Pakistani* Muslim identity. We met a Muslim family that had migrated to Bradford from Sri Lanka soon after the 1983 ethnic clashes there. The family now identifies itself as *Pakistani*, and claims Urdu as its mother tongue. The halting Urdu spoken in the family in the presence of outsiders is distinctly akin to the Urdu spoken by *pattanis* (from Pathans; Urdu speaking Muslims in rural Tamil Nadu are called *pattanis*, and are thus distinguished from the Tamil speaking ones).

While this kind of *fusion* is understandable in the migrant context, it raises issues concerning the other end of the migration *continuum*, the *homeland* end. How easy is it for people in the migrant situation to make such *switches* as regards something as crucial as the homeland, particularly in the light of the body of *knowledge* that exists pertaining to



the discourse on *homeland*? To talk about an *imagined homeland* is one thing, but to *construct* a *homeland* in an *imagined* country is an altogether different imagination! It is not just this Sri Lankan family which has such imagining; Muslims from India as well as Bangladesh too, on occasions, fall in line with such imaginings in the predominantly Pakistani milieu. At times it has to do with things connected with Urdu, and thereby the notion of Urdu being a *Pakistani* language as it happens to be the national language of Pakistan, and Pakistan's national identity. Discourses in Urdu at the *Tablighi Jamaat* headquarters in Dewsbury, and at sermons and other religious congregations, play a vital role in strengthening the role of Urdu in South Asian Islamic practices, and the life of South Asian Muslims in general, and this too goes a long way in constructing a bond between Muslims and Urdu, and hence between Urdu and Pakistan.

In all public places in Bradford Urdu is the second most visible language; the first one, of course, is English. If and when a third language is added it is followed by a few others. For instance, if Gujarati is appended to English and Urdu then Punjabi, Bengali and Hindi follow it. Quite often this pattern is replicated in official pamphlets, circulars, handbills and the like circulated by the City of Bradford Metropolitan Council and other government agencies. The addition of Gujarati, Punjabi, Bengali and Hindi has come about during the course of the last decade. Prior to that Urdu was the sole language to *represent* migrants from the Indian subcontinent. People of Indian, and later Bangladeshi, origin felt they were being discriminated against, as Urdu was identified with Muslims and Pakistan. Though initially Sikhs did not mind Urdu, as many of them were familiar with it, gradually, however, they demanded the inclusion of Punjabi in the Gurmukhi script. Likewise, there were demands for the inclusion of Gujarati, Hindi and Bengali. Today, in Bradford, all major South Asian linguistic groups have a presence in the public arena where their respective languages have cornered spaces through a process of contestation and negotiation. Urdu, however, has relatively more visibility. But does it have to do with more people either having Urdu as their mother tongue or speaking the language? If the answer to this question is negative on both counts, then how does one account for Urdu playing a major role in Bradford *vis-à-vis* other South Asian languages? The explanation has as much to do with the receiving society's perception of the *immigrants* as with the state's (Britain's)<sup>22</sup> attempts to *promote* a language for the South Asians. Besides, the South Asians themselves, who during the initial phase were all from the same country, and a majority of whom were indeed Muslims and some did speak Urdu, had no hesitation in declaring and *adopting* Urdu as their mother tongue/language. We shall see below how there are exaggerated claims to Urdu as the mother tongue among certain sections of Muslims in Bradford. But before that let us first have a look at the position of Urdu in Pakistan.

The Indian subcontinent, on attaining independence from the British in 1947, was simultaneously partitioned into India and Pakistan. The latter had two wings, East and West Pakistan. While a majority of the population of Pakistan lived in the Eastern wing, where almost everyone spoke Bengali, the Western wing presented a mosaic of varied cultures and languages. The political power base was located in the Western sector, and Urdu became the national language of Pakistan in 1952; a language hardly spoken, as a



mother tongue, by any one indigenous in either wing of the country. Urdu was the mother tongue of Muslims who went over to West Pakistan from the region that comprises of the present Indian states of Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Of course, civil servants, officials, politicians, religious scholars and teachers, and a few urban dwellers in Pakistan were conversant with Urdu. The languages spoken in the different provinces of West Pakistan by predominant majorities were Punjabi (in Punjab), Sindhi (in Sindh), Baluchi (in Baluchistan) and Pushto (in the North West Frontier Province). Besides, there are a number of cognate languages and dialects that spring from these core ones.

Though linguistic differences (along with various cultural traits) between these groups do make them distinct ethnic entities, these differences did not get channelled into *nationalist* movements in any perceptible way for quite some time. Gradually, a *perception* set in that *mohajirs*, the group that had migrated from India, was *dominating* the others; and then it dawned on some that the Punjabis were predominant, in the job market and in the economic realm in general. Political differences and power struggles fuelled dormant ethnic tensions and a climax of sorts was reached when East Pakistan separated itself as an independent country and came to be known as Bangladesh, and the hitherto West Pakistan became Pakistan.

Urdu is taught as the first language in schools in all the four provinces of Pakistan. From the sixth class, that is, sixth up from entry level at primary school, English is also taught. In Sindh, Sindhi too is taught as a compulsory language from the sixth class, thanks to the efforts of the late Prime Minister Bhutto. However, it is significant that in the other regions provincial languages are not compulsory. There is an option in Baluchistan and NWFP to enrol for Baluchi and Pashto respectively, but in Punjab there is no such option to enrol for Punjabi; all students have to study only Urdu. In all provinces, from the sixth class onwards students can opt for either English or for Urdu as the medium of instruction for the different subjects of study.

Punjabi, Baluchi, Sindhi and Pushto do not have independent scripts, and like Urdu resort to the Farsi script. In Sindh, however, the Farsi script has been modified by adding improvised letters (of the Farsi alphabet itself) and has been made more conducive to Sindhi.

In a sense, Urdu was *alien* not only to East but also to West Pakistan. While Urdu was undoubtedly resented by the Bengali population of East Pakistan, a similar situation, if it were to occur in the West, would not have been surprising as in the latter wing too there was no group with which Urdu could be strongly identified; this feature, instead of acting as an impediment turned out to be a strength for the easy acceptability of Urdu as the national language. A parallel can be drawn with what is obtained in India. Hindi, the national language, is spoken by very few people in the south, east and north (for instance, Kashmir) of India. While India has been witness to quite a few anti-Hindi agitations (particularly in south India), West Pakistan has not experienced any such upheavals with regard to Urdu<sup>23</sup>. But it is interesting to note that the ethnic strife that often springs up in the urban areas of Pakistan, particularly in Sindh, is referred to by the official machinery and the media as *lisani jhagre* (linguistic clashes)<sup>24</sup>. When the *mohajirs* clash with the Sindhis, Punjabis, Baluchis or Pathans in any region of Pakistan it is not because the *mohajirs* speak Urdu but



because the *mohajirs* are perceived as *outsiders* who partake of the rare resources and opportunities. Also, it is to be noted that Memons (who speak the Kutchi dialect and originated from Gujarat, India) are still bracketed as *mohajirs* ignoring the fact that most Kutchis have lived in Sindh for as long as the Sindhis themselves! *Mohajirs* feel they are *persecuted* as they are considered *intruders*, and not for speaking a different language. With the above backdrop, let us examine the role Urdu plays in Bradford.

The visibility of Urdu in Bradford is, in a sense, somewhat misleading. There are very few people whose mother tongue is Urdu; among these are about fifty families<sup>25</sup> of *mohajirs*, who are, in fact, *twice migrants*, who went over from India to Pakistan after partition, and then moved to England. A publication of the City of Bradford Metropolitan Council, *District Trends 1984*, reports that people of Indian (including Indo-East Africans), Pakistani and Bangladeshi origin in the District in 1984 are 54,000. It tells us that 'one in five school children speaks a language other than English at home. Of this one fifth, 62% speak Punjabi, 15% speak Urdu, 8% speak Gujarati and 5% speak Bengali'. There are 33,480 Punjabi<sup>26</sup> speakers, 8,100 Urdu speakers, 4,320 Gujarati speakers, and 2,700 Bengali speakers. The rest, that is, 5,400 spoke other languages of the subcontinent<sup>27</sup>.

Going by this publication the number (and percentage) of Urdu speakers is quite high. Besides the fifty families of *mohajirs* there could be at the most another fifty families of Urdu speakers in Bradford. Even if we consider the average household size to be six (the Council booklet claims the average household size of *blacks* to be 5.8), the total number of Urdu speakers would come to 600 (out of a total of 54,000)—1.1%! In no way can the figure of 8,100 (15%) Urdu speakers be correct. Dahya, who did fieldwork in Bradford during the early 1970s, makes no mention of Urdu speakers at all (1974). There is no reason to believe that by 1984 the number of Urdu speakers in Bradford was 8,100.

The conclusion I draw from such a high figure is that parents/guardians have returned Urdu as the mother tongue in the school admission forms of the children when in fact Urdu is not their mother tongue. Such a practice is consistent with what was observed during the course of my fieldwork in Bradford—the tendency to claim Urdu as the first language spoken in the family, even if it was not the mother tongue. In fact people would mention Punjabi or Mirpuri as their mother tongue in the first instance and then make a switch to say that *now* it is Urdu. On occasions such a switch occurred when the informants discovered that we<sup>28</sup> were Urdu speakers.

In Bradford many a parent and elder goes to great lengths to make sure that children learn Urdu. Concerted efforts are indeed made to provide facilities for the learning of Urdu. But the enthusiasm of the parents<sup>29</sup> is not matched by that of the children. Outside the home it is English<sup>30</sup> that the children almost invariably use in talking to *outsiders* as also among themselves. Whatever knowledge of Urdu they have seems to have been acquired by watching movies, particularly *Hindi*<sup>31</sup> movies! Videocassettes of these movies are freely available in England, at times, even before the movie itself is released in theatres in India! It is no exaggeration to say that every South Asian household *owns* a videocassette recorder/player and colour television in Bradford. In fact, renting a VCR is just about eight to ten pounds a month.



Another sphere from where Urdu gets a spurt is the *Tablighi Jamaat*. During the early 1980s Dewsbury, about eighteen miles from Bradford, saw the construction of what is considered to be the largest mosque in Europe. It is a huge two-storey construction spread over a few acres, can easily accommodate over 2000 devotees at a time, and has facilities for a large number of people to stay over for the *ijtimas*. It is the *markaz* (headquarters) for all the *Tablighi Jamaats* in Europe. It also runs a *darul uloom* (theological training centre) and trains young Muslim men. During my visit and overnight stay at the mosque Muslim professionals from all over Britain had congregated. Sermons were delivered in Urdu and simultaneous translations were done into Arabic and English. The largest draw was for Urdu sermons; Afro-Arab and Southeast Asian professionals went in to listen to the Arabic and English translations respectively. Gujarati Muslims played a leading role in establishing the Dewsbury<sup>32</sup> mosque and continue to do so. Besides the *namaz* proper, all other discourses here, as also in mosques in Bradford that are managed by South Asians, are in Urdu.

*Divisive* ethnicity that exists not only between groups from different countries but also between nationalities from the same country, as in the case of the four nationalities from Pakistan, is given a back seat by recourse to a common feature, Urdu, which acts as a single platform to bring these groups together. The Urdu identity coexists with the Islamic identity. Is Islamic identity not strong enough to bring all the different Muslim groups together? Of course, it is; witness Muslim groups from various national, ethnic and colour backgrounds congregating to pray jointly in mosques. Also, the notion of *ummah* does provide a *bond* between Muslims who never ever meet face to face. But when they do meet face to face the *contact* ends the moment the activity at the mosque, whether it is *namaz* or a religious discourse, ends. It is the beyond (or after) the mosque context that assumes significance when Muslim groups with different backgrounds *share* the religious space but can not reach out to each other on leaving the place of congregation. Finding a feature besides the religious that can bring them together is the quest in such a context. As can readily be seen in Bradford Muslims have to have recourse, mostly, to English (or to Urdu if they know it), if they wish to communicate with each other. One of the extreme forms of a situation of this kind is seen, for instance, among Pathans, a majority of whom (in Bradford) speak Hindko, and others who speak Pushto; they revert to English to communicate with each other. They share the same religion, come from the same country, belong to the same sect/group, intermarry, but due to the linguistic divide they can be *aliens* to each other.

There is an *Urduisation* drive in Bradford, leading to exaggerated claims to Urdu as the mother tongue. Even Bangladeshi and Gujarati Muslims have taken to the learning of Urdu, which is quite contrary to the general picture that is obtained in the subcontinent. Urdu in fact has become the *official* language of Muslims. Paradoxically, there is limited contact between Urdu speakers and Muslims speaking other languages; or for that matter between Pakistanis who speak different languages, save for religious contacts in the mosques, or ceremonial, or *crisis situation* gatherings in the Pakistani Community Centre<sup>33</sup>. Mutual visits are governed almost entirely by the institution of *biraderi*<sup>34</sup>, which effectively excludes those who are not connected by ties of consanguinity and affinity. There is very little scope in such a situation for people not connected in some way to get drawn into the same social



circle. Those who speak languages other than Urdu do recognise the fact that Urdu speakers are better educated than themselves and relatively wealthier. At times, Urdu speakers are described as *hoshiar log* (clever people), who go into business or white collar occupations, never into manual labour, and avoid soiling their hands. Urdu speakers are adored for being highly educated and for their achievements. Nevertheless, there is very little contact between *mohajirs* and rest of the Pakistani people. Unlike the other groups *mohajirs* lack *biraderis*<sup>35</sup>, live mostly in the suburbs, and have very little to do with day-to-day inner city events. In any case, most of those who live in the suburbs, not just *mohajirs*, reorient their social circles and mutual visits on class lines. This is not to suggest, however, that upward economic mobility of those living in inner city areas leads to residential mobility to the suburbs. In fact there is hardly any correlation of the kind that is invariably established in many studies<sup>36</sup> between upward economic mobility and moving away from the inner city. Some of the very rich continue to live in the inner city areas, while those living in the suburbs are not all uniformly rich. Lack of social contact between different groups, which is so marked in inner city areas, is not characteristic of the suburbs. There is indeed intermingling between different Muslim ethnic groups in the suburbs. Unease exists between the two sections, namely, those living in the inner city and the suburbs. The discourse about the *other*, from both sides, reflects what they think of each other. Those living in the suburbs hold the inner city residents responsible for *bringing a bad name and shame* to the South Asians, for the backwardness of the *community*<sup>37</sup>, and castigate them for being lazy, for not trying hard enough to get jobs, for being on welfare, for just going through the motions in schools and not getting *properly* educated, for keeping their women in *pardah*, for not sending their daughters to schools, for drug pushing, pimping, and so on. This rhetoric sounds similar to that of the majority white community and a section of the press about immigrants: their socio-economic backwardness and underprivileged existence has to do with their own culture; racial discrimination and other forms of deprivation have almost no place here. If *we* can make it, the others too should, by dint of hard work, rather than crib about it. On the other hand, the inner city dwellers consider the suburbanites to be less Islamic<sup>38</sup> in their food habits as well as devotion to God, *very advanced*, not bothered at all about the *community*, would do anything to get a good job, and so on. But one of the terms that I heard on a few occasions being used for the suburbanites is *burger families*<sup>39</sup>.

The discourse pertaining to homeland for the suburbanites, alluded to above, and for many others living there, has a different meaning altogether; it is an imagining of undivided, pre-partitioned Indian subcontinent of pre-1947. It is not just nostalgia but the construction of a sub continental *community*, strong enough to challenge outside aggression, powerful enough economically, and politically stable and democratic. Partition of the subcontinent into three countries has no place in this discourse; partition divided the *community*, an artificial chasm between *one* people, all of whom are being exploited by their respective politicians. *We* are the ones who are divided on the basis of religion, caste and language. Why blame the British for our own shortcomings and faults?



## Conclusion

Pakistan as the homeland fits in with the migrants' *real* places of origin as far as it pertains to Pakistanis *proper*; but what is interesting is the way it is imagined as *homeland* at the level of the *Pakistani community*, subsuming Muslim groups from India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. However, there is scope as well as place for contesting the construction of a *Pakistani homeland*; a larger space is claimed for the *other* kind of homeland which, of course, includes Pakistan but also simultaneously extends to include India and Bangladesh—a *homeland* at the sub continental level.

In Bradford *Urduisation* has very little to do with, or does not promote, solidarity between *mohajirs* on the one hand and rest of the Pakistani groups on the other. It has more to do with the construction of *Pakistani-Islamic* identity whereby differences between various Muslim linguistic groups from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh get disguised. Of course it is conceivable that a South Asian Muslim identity could emerge in such a context but due to the predominant presence of Pakistanis in the Muslim population of Bradford, it is the *Pakistani-Muslim* identity that gets constructed. Apparently, Islam alone is not a very strong element for ethnic solidarity in a multi-ethnic Islamic context; subscription to a particular doctrine/denomination (like Deobandi or Bareilvi) plays a role in cutting across ethnic lines, but also raises the issue of the *ummah*, within Islam, being influenced by doctrines, as exhibited on the occasion of *Id*, for instance. So Islam is not as monolithic and *fused* from within as those who panic, fume and fret about its *fundamentalism* would have us believe. But if Urdu is being used to *bind* different Muslim groups, and to overcome this weakness (of Islam not being *monolithic*), then it is quite paradoxical as Urdu itself is not a common language at all for all Muslims. Urdu derives its importance, from among other things, from its position as the (*symbolic*) national language of Pakistan, and is a symbol of Pakistani unity. So in Bradford *Urduisation* is almost a part and parcel of *Islamisation*, and both together are considered crucial in expressing/creating a Muslim ethnic identity.

## NOTES

1. Fieldwork for this study was conducted for about ten months in Bradford during 1992-93 while I was on a Commonwealth Academic Staff Fellowship with an affiliation as an Academic Visitor in the Department of Anthropology at the London School of Economics, and Prof. C.J. Fuller as my Academic Associate. I also had a parallel affiliation at the Department of Social and Economic Studies, University of Bradford, as an Honorary Visiting Research Fellow, which was arranged by Dr. Janet Bujra. I thank both the LSE and the University of Bradford for providing academic hospitality. I also thank The Commonwealth Universities Foundation, and the British Council for financial support. During January and February 1997 I carried out further fieldwork in Bradford with a grant from the Rockefeller Residency Institute, Triangle South Asia Consortium, Center for International Studies, Duke University. I thank Dr. Waqar Ahmad, Head of The Ethnicity and Social Policy Research Unit, University of Bradford, who provided office space, computer and photocopying facilities, and helped in numerous ways. Dr. Mohammed Khurshid Khan has been my eternal trouble-shooter, key informant and constant companion in Bradford; I am highly indebted to him.



Some of the material in this paper has been presented in seminars/talks earlier. Many friends have commented on earlier versions, suggested modifications, and have contributed in various ways to make my work understandable to others. While thanking them, I absolve them of any responsibility if my work is still as clear as muddy water.

2. See Metcalf (1996) who further elucidates this point: 'At the root the crisis had much to do with the colonial past as anything intrinsic to Islam. In British India, put simply, the government had little use for law at the cost of public order. Following communal disturbances in 1924 over the publication of a book called *Rangila Rasul* (The Merry Prophet), an article was added to the [Indian] Penal Code allowing books likely to stir up religious sentiment to be banned. That law, like many others, was continued in the successor states and indeed used by Rajiv Gandhi to ban *Satanic Verses* itself. Little wonder that British Muslims expected the government in Britain to act as it had in the colonies—but it never had and did not now (Ruthven 1990: 87, 102)'.
3. Also, my observation at the Bradford Interchange seems to fall in line with what is obtained in this town, H: girls going to schools and colleges bring spare dresses and change into those before reaching their educational institutions; on the way back home they revert to the clothes they wore while leaving home. While clothes, which are part of their culture, are adhered to at home and in the neighbourhood, and to a large extent in public places, at the same time to strike a balance with their peers, or fulfil peer expectation, or avoid peer teasing or ridicule, assumed or real, appears to be constantly at the back of the minds of those who adopt such a practice.
4. Also see Kalam (2004: 19-29) for a process of Urduisation in the context of South India.
5. I prefer to use receiving society to host society as the latter lends a positive tinge, which is almost always absent in the migrant situation. Besides, the terms *mezbaan* (host) and *mehmaan* (guest) have very deep and profound connotations in the context of South Asian (as well as Arab) notions of *mehmaan-nawazi* (hospitality).
6. See Kalam 1997 (pp.79-95), and the other articles in this volume.
7. For a perspective on why people do not migrate see Jean-Luc Racine (Ed.) (1997).
8. See Kalam 2003 (pp.69-84).
9. Kalam (1993, 1994).
10. See Ceri Peach who has utilised what he calls the "illuminating generalisations about ethnic minority groups in Britain ... to divide them into the Jewish and Irish models of settlement. Broadly speaking, what I have termed the 'Irish' model is seen as blue collar, manual labour dominated, council house tenured, inner city, while the 'Jewish' model is seen as white collar, self-employed, owner-occupied and suburban" (1996: 15-16).
11. Khandelwal says, 'In the early 1990s, after many years of this process of diversification, Indians in New York are employed not only in professional occupations but also at newsstands, tollbooths, auto shops, and candy stores, and work as taxi drivers, clerks, and salespersons. This occupational variety is only one aspect of the larger diversity, which is also expressed in the social organization of the Indian population through mushrooming religious, regional, caste and other associations, and their expression in different cultural standards' (1995:180). Lessinger too makes similar observations about New York Indians: 'Like every ethnic group, this one is internally divided, full of contestation and debate, and changing rapidly. In particular I am concerned to show the class stratification among Indian immigrants, since this has been underplayed in previous accounts....' (1995: xiv). It would be interesting to examine if such occupational diversity and



economic heterogeneity leading to class stratification is/was present among the Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in the US.

12. See Hira Singh (1987) for the push factors in the context of Punjab. It is to be noted that the Punjab Land Alienation Act of 1901, which was supposed to prevent non-agricultural groups, that is money lenders and absentee landlords, from appropriating the land of the agricultural "group/class/tribe," had, in fact, little or no effect in preventing land alienation, nor did it curtail migration due to indebtedness and landlessness. The fact that emigration from Punjab continued for over fifty years and beyond (that is, after 1901) shows how toothless the legislation was. See Gilmartin (1988) and McLane (1977) for Punjab Land Alienation Act 1901.

For a different perspective on push and pull factors from that commonly come across, see Lessinger (1995), particularly the chapter "Migration and the Development of a Transnational Perspective: A Global Economy and a Global Work Force." She says, 'It is clear that there is no single impetus for migration and no single profile of a typical immigrant. Amid the many varieties of migrant and many reasons for relocating, class stratification in the country of origin has a great deal to do with who decides to migrate, the circumstances of departure and the migrant's ultimate destination. Moreover pre-migration class status continues to shape the migrant's career after arrival' (1995: 72). She also argues that 'The development of a global economy, which moves businesses, jobs and cultural influences back and forth across international borders, has helped create a new kind of migrant, whom I have called transnational. The transnational immigrant has social networks, which are not confined by national borders' (1995: 157).

13. Sri Lankans are not a census category, as yet; hence they are subsumed under the "Other-Asian" category.
14. The immigrant population in the US in 1990 was only 8 percent—a decline from the 1910 figure of about 15 percent (Lessinger 1995: vii).
15. I thank Chris Fuller for drawing my attention to this.
16. The Shah Jahan Mosque in Woking (London, Surrey) happens to be the oldest.
17. An interesting contestation to this is shaping up through the efforts of Markazi Jamiyat Tabligh-ul-Islam (Central Tabligh-ul-Islam) which is in the process of constructing a new Jamia Mosque, a purpose built mosque, in Southfield Square. This group owes allegiance to Pir Maroof and the Barelvis. Besides, two more new purpose built mosques are coming up, one by a faction of Pir Maroof's group, and another by the Ahle-Hadith. The latter group is close to the Deobandi and Tablighi Jamaat people (as of February 1997; my most recent field visit to Bradford).
18. Cohen argues that gradually, 'the group [becomes] more and more distinct, sometimes even reviving old customs. This ethnic continuity or revival can be found in almost all societies, both developed and underdeveloped (Cohen 1969). In many situations migrancy is not a developmental phase but a structural status' (1974: xiv).
19. Of late Mirpuris have been making concerted attempts to have an independent identity as *Azad Kashmiris* and on occasions do point out that they are not *Pakistani*.
20. This happened during the last week of March 1993, during the period of my fieldwork. In fact the debate on this issue has gone on for quite some time in Bradford to celebrate *id* on a single day but there has been no consensus.
21. A number of my informants contend that there is an economic dimension too that plays a role in *id* being celebrated on successive days; even though there are about sixty mosques in Bradford, not all *imams* can lead the *id* prayers. Hence if spread out on successive days each *imam* gets



more chances to lead *id* prayers and derives more economic benefits. But I must admit that I am yet to grasp, in any clear way, the latent religio-economic aspects of *id* prayers and celebration.

22. The idea that people coming from the same region or country may belong to different religious groups or castes, or that they may speak a variety of languages even if they belong to a single religious group, does bewilder those who have very little to go by beyond Oriental constructions. And here we are talking about those who have based their constructions on handed down-watered down versions of Orientalism, coloured further by their own prejudices and racial hatred. Also, monolithic constructions of the *other* helps in attacking/undermining the *other* in a concerted manner; if the *other* is complicated by the presence of another *other* then, may be, the degree of hatred or *attack* needs to be modified or altered and an exercise to determine which one of the *other* is worse has to be undertaken. So may be it is better to avoid doing this by subscribing to and retaining *monolithic* constructions of the *other*!
23. Urdu, in most circles has a literary *aura* (in real terms) and assumes the role of a *pure* language and occupies a high position; a language around which lot of *aspirations* are woven. It is not in contestation with other languages in Pakistan. On the other hand, in post-partition-India, because of its *association* with Muslims Urdu has indeed suffered (see, for instance the movie *Mohafiz [In Custody]*). It is also worth pointing out that in South India, Hindi is in contestation with the South Indian languages, and hence the resentment as a Northern *imposition*. But English does not, apparently, contest with South Indian languages in the same way. In North India, however, English is in contestation with Hindi, and the latter is in contestation with Urdu!
24. Though terms like *fitna* and *fasaad* exist in Urdu, why these are not used is an interesting question. To what extent the use of a term like *lisani jhagre* is influenced by colonialism needs to be probed. I thank David Gilmartin for prompting me to explore the colonial connection. Also, perhaps clashes/conflicts between different Muslim groups makes it difficult for those involved to project the event to the outside world due to the implicit existence of the notion of *ummah*. Besides, it is likely that due to the foisted monolithic construction of Islam from without, Muslims, at times, are reminded that there does exist a unity among different Muslim groups spread throughout the world.
25. Many of my *mohajir* informants are convinced that there are not more than 300 mohajirs, distributed in about 50 families, in Bradford.
26. Mirpuris are subsumed here.
27. Page 52.
28. I could not interview women in the inner city areas due to *purdah* restrictions. My wife, Nagina, did the *interviews* (which were mostly friendly chats) of women in the inner city areas. I use *we* to distinguish these situations and to subsume the joint interviews of women we did in the suburbs and outer city areas. Nagina *joined* conversation classes/courses that were run for Asian women in different *community* centres, and acted as an interpreter between the English teachers and the women, some of whom knew rudimentary Urdu. She also helped Urdu teachers in teaching the Farsi script to Punjabi, Mirpuri, Gujarati and Bangladeshi women.
29. Gujarati and Bangladeshi parents too are enthusiastic about making their children learn Urdu.
30. The general contention of teachers, in ethnically mixed British schools, that South Asian children do not perform well due to inadequate knowledge of English does not appear to be true; my experience of attending classes in a couple of schools in Bradford does not convince me that South Asian children have problems with English. They are as good at it as *native* children. The



reasons for their low attainment and underachievement may lie elsewhere, including low teacher expectations. See Driver (1980), Taylor and Hegarty (1985), and Kalam (nd).

31. As is common knowledge all the so-called *Hindi* movies are made in what is generally referred to as Hindustani; there are indeed more of Urdu words than Hindi ones. Also, lyrics of most songs are almost fully in Urdu.
32. Also see Metcalf (1996).
33. People from different countries gathering together as Muslims at the Pakistani Community Centre *transform* themselves (or get appropriated) from Muslims to *Pakistani Community*.
34. The composition of *biraderi* may vary depending on the context, but a simplistic definition is that it consists of people who are cognatically related and from whom it is desirable to choose spouses; a group within which perpetual marriages take place, but it can *expand* to include fresh groups. As to how crucial *biraderi* is, and what kind of role it plays in the realm of kinship, can be gathered from the following example of a Pakistani Punjabi family: Till sometime back two brothers and a sister of R lived in Bradford. But while the brothers moved to London with their respective families, the sister went over to Pakistan with her husband and children. When R's wife was in hospital for her fourth delivery, the three older children were left in the care of Social Services. Subsequently two families from R's village in Punjab have moved in a couple of houses away from R's and his *biraderi* has been re-established. One morning R, who lived next door to us, introduced me to a person I had not met before, saying 'meet S, my brother.' After shaking hands I said 'when did you come from London?'. He looked uneasy and said 'I have never been there.' At this point R intervened and pointed to the house beyond his own and said 'he lives there.' I was a bit perplexed, as he had never told me that his brother had moved back to Bradford. I said 'I am sorry, but I thought your brother lives in London.' R said 'yes, two of my brothers live in London.' After a couple of days when I met R, I asked 'how is your brother?' R said 'must be fine, I haven't received any news of them during the last few days.' Then I asked 'how is S?' R said 'he is fine; nice chap, from my own village, my *biraderi*, came here recently from the village to join his wife, been married for six years, wife was born here, she went over to Pakistan, got married there and returned, made two more visits to the village after marriage, they have two kids, both kids were born here, S could not get entry permit till four months back, he resigned his clerical post in the army.... and is happy now. I am also glad that one from the *biraderi* has come over.' An affinal relationship existed between R and S; they were not even cousins but in S's presence R always used the term brother to refer to him.

*Biraderi*, as an institution, helps camouflage class divisions/distinctions; for instance, those who opt not to move to the suburbs, do talk about how they cannot take a unilateral decision without the *biraderi* being taken into confidence.

Also see Anwar (1979), Gilmartin (1994), Jeffery (1976), and Sifullah-Khan (1974), for their accounts/definitions of *biraderi*.

35. In fact it is arguable if they did develop any *biraderis* at all after migrating to Pakistan.
36. Jeffery (1976) is one of the exceptions.
37. This account is based on a *conversation* that took place in my presence, at the home of a *mohajir* family living in the suburbs, between the head of the concerned household who had invited me and my family for supper, his next house neighbour, a Sikh who had cut his hair and beard and did not wear a turban, and an Ahmadiya who lived two houses away. Our host had invited the others so as to introduce them to us. Such a gathering would have hardly taken place in the inner city areas.



38. The *mohajirs* are, at times, described as half-Muslim, signifying that they are half-non-Muslim or half-Hindu!
39. Apparently the term has its origins in the cities of Pakistan where it is used for upper class and upper middle class families who frequent fast food restaurants. In the context of Bradford, however, it also signifies that the suburban dwellers are very lax about their food habits; not particular about *halal* meat; eat in places where pork is served, etc. The term is quite loaded in its application and the imputations its use carries, has derogatory implications. It is not to be confused with the *burgers* of Sri Lanka who are akin to Anglo-Indians in the Indian context.

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## ISLAMIZATION OF MOROLAND IN THE PHILIPPINES

*Shahed Hassan*

**Abstract:** *Moroland in the Philippines has been in news for a number of years. It contains a heavy concentration of Muslim population. The present paper traces the history and the process of spread of Islam in this part of Asia pinpointing a number of historical events and episodes which provide the readers some idea about how Islam was accepted and institutionalised in Moroland. The spread of Islam in this part of Asia did not only involve dissemination of religious doctrines and rituals, it involved, as well, interplay of political, economic and social factors through which Islam got ingrained in the psycho-pathology of Muslims of this region.*

The entire Malay world, composed of Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei and the Philippines, has a heavy concentration of Muslim Population. The spread of Islam in this part of Asia did not only involve dissemination of religious doctrines and rituals, it involved, as well, interplay of political, economic and social factors. In fact, Islam has become ingrained in the psycho-pathology of the Muslims in the region.

It is, therefore, the Muslims in the Philippines feel proud of having an older history as an identifiable community. In this regard Majul writes, "By adopting Islam, a segment of the population of the Philippines became part of a wider religious community extending from the Pillars of Hercules to the borders of China. These people in the Philippines gained from Islam a high sense of religious community, new laws, a more developed political organization, a new system of writing, and, above all, a new ethical outlook of life" (Majul 1973:78).

Generally, the term 'Moro' is used to refer to the Filipino Muslims. In a way the term reflects the historical saga of the Muslims in the Philippines. During 16th century when the Spaniards found that the inhabitants of the southern islands of the archipelago were Muslims, they called them Moro after the North African Muslim natives, the Moors, who descended from ancient Mauritania. Historically speaking, the Moors of North Africa, under the leadership of the Arabs, ruled Spain for eight centuries. Therefore, the Spaniards applied the term Moro to anyone who was a Muslim. Gradually, the term turned into a label of contempt as many native Muslims of the archipelago refused Spanish religious colonialism. In fact, 'Moro' came to connote a people who were regarded as ignorant, treacherous,

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polygamous, savage, pirates, slaves and otherwise troublesome individuals. Even up to the first half of the twentieth century many Filipino Muslims insisted to be called 'Muslims' or 'Muslim Filipinos'. They become sensitive to being called 'Moros'. However, in the 1970's, as the fighting between the separationist Muslims and the government troops in the south escalated, the term 'Moro' came back into common use and was accepted by both sides. It is in this context that Peter Gowing said, "If the tragic conflict has accomplished nothing else, it has at least given the Muslims a new confidence and self-awareness. Some only speak of themselves as the Bangsa Moro (the Moro nation) as distinct from the Bangsa Filipino. At one point, the separatist movement identified itself as the 'Bangsa Moro Republic'; but nowadays the documents of the Moro National Liberation Front (having opted to press for autonomy rather than independence) speak of the 'Bangsa Moro Islamic Government'. In fact, 'Moro' is promoted by the MNLF in the southern Philippines as a designation overriding the old group designations of 'Tausug', 'Maranao', 'Maguindanao', and the like" (1979: IX-X). In spite of a generic term like 'Moro' the Muslim Filipinos still identify themselves with their respective ethno-linguistic belongingness.

According to H.J. de Graff Islam was propagated in ancient Malay world or Southeast Asia by three methods i.e. by Muslim traders in the course of peaceful trade; by preachers and holy men who set out from India and Arabia specifically to convert non-believers and increase the knowledge of the faithful; and lastly by force and the waging of war against heathen states (1970:123).

Although it is difficult to pinpoint which of these three methods of spreading Islam was the most important, it appears that preachers sometimes had strong commercial links and had begun their mission as merchants. Sometimes, if circumstances were favourable, they emerged as warriors in the holy wars against the non-believers. Nevertheless, it is maintained that, so far as chronology and geographical pattern of the spread of Islam is concerned, it is clear that the trading element was the most important in determining events (*ibid.* 1970:124).

In this sense, Islam subsequently followed trade. It was in North Sumatra where the trade route from India and the West reached the archipelago. Malacca, being the most strategic trade center of the area at that time, became the great stronghold of the faith, and from here Islam was disseminated along the trade routes northeast of Brunei and Sulu and Southeast to the north Java ports and the Moluccas.

Islamization of the Philippines occurred along with or following the Islamization of Borneo, Celebes (former Sulawesi) and the Moluccas. Scholars believe that being expelled from China in 878 A.D., the Arab merchants were forced to look for a new trade-route. It was in this manner that they discovered a new route starting from Borneo, passing through Sulu, Palawan and Luzon of the Philippines up to Formosa, then finally to Japan where Chinese goods were available. These Arab merchants were the ones who contributed significantly to the propagation of Islam in the southern Philippines.

According to Majul, "... by the end of the thirteenth century or at the beginning of the fourteenth century there was already a settlement or colony of foreign Muslims in Jolo island" (Majul, 1974:5).



Because of regional differences in the pace of spread, Islamization of the Philippines could better be described from three perspectives: Islamization of Sulu, penetration of Mindanao and spread over Luzon.

The main sources of information regarding the coming of Islam in Sulu are the *tarsilas* (genealogies) and traditions of Sulu. Although the Sulu *tarsilas* were not written as scientific histories, they contain elements which are sources for clues as to the beginning of Islam in the Philippines. On the basis of such clues, the coming of Islam in Sulu is attributed mainly to Karim ul-Makdum in the middle of the 14th century, but studies also show that others have preceded Makdum in Sulu. Jainal D. Rasul says:

of added historical significance is the discovery of a grave at Bud Datu in Jolo, showing a marker made by Syrian hard stones. Sometimes in March 1965, Prof. Mohd. Zaiton a native of Alexandria, Egypt, succeeded in putting together several scattered fragments of this marker and deciphered the name of Ahmed Timhar and the year 710 A.H. calculated to be 696 years post or 1273 A.D. This discovery was confirmed by Dr. Abdur-rauf, now with Washington Islamic Center. The Muslim year 710 A.H. is equivalent to the Christian year A.D 1273 (Rasul 1970:51).

However, it is asserted that Karim ul-Makdum practiced magic and medicine and was responsible for converting the Sultan of Malacca, Muhammad Shah, to Islam. He continued an eastward journey and reached the islands of Sulu and Mindanao around the year 1380 and made a number of converts in Sulu. At present, there are claims that his grave lies in the island of Sibutu and the people of Tapul claim to be his descendants. In Buwansa, the old Capital of Sulu, a mosque was built for him (Saleeby 1908:42).

Saleeby also says that ten years after Makdum, a prince from Menangkabaw called Raja Baginda arrived in Sulu supposedly after passing through Sambuwangan (Zamboanga) and Basilan. The Tausugs engaged Raja Baginda in battle and desisted only when they came to know that Baginda was a Muslim. It is probable that even some *datus* aligned with him for the purpose of defeating the other enemy *datus* in Sulu. This could account for Baginda's acceptance by the Tausug despite the fact that he was not a trader or a traveller but a political figure out to conquer new lands (*ibid*). Scholars, therefore, believe that his significance in the history of Sulu is that, as a powerful foreign Muslim, he strengthened Islamic consciousness in the area (Majul, 1973:56).

Sulu *tarsilas* and traditions also speak of another Arab missionary, Sayyid Abu Bakr, who arrived in Sulu towards the middle of fifteenth century. Abu Bakr lived with Raja Baginda and later on married Raja Baginda's daughter. After the death of his father-in-law Abu Bakr proclaimed himself as the first Sultan of Sulu. This explains the fact why Sulu political structure developed after the Arabian Sultanate system. Abu Bakr is referred to in Sulu as Sultan Sharif ul-Hashim and is credited with having further consolidated Islam and shaped political institutions along Islamic line. During his reign Abu Bakr impressed in the minds of the *datus* the Islamic precept of unity, hence a centralization of political and commercial contacts with other parts of the Islamized Malay islands increased, which served to integrate Sulu into an expanding *dar al-Islam* (abode of Islam) in insular Southeast Asia



(Majul, *ibid*). Islam in Sulu was further strengthened in the last quarter of the sixteenth and the early decades of the seventeenth century. This was possible because of the increasing dangers of Western colonialism and Christianization, which prompted political alliances with neighbouring Muslim territories. Moreover, the continuous missionary activities of the Muslim groups helped in preserving Islam in Sulu.

It is held that Islam was brought to Mindanao in the early sixteenth century. The scholars believe that Sharif Muhammad Kabungsuwan, a descendant of Sharif Maraja of Johore, came to the mouth of Pulangi River was the first Muslim missionary in Mindanao. Although there are mythological stories claiming that Muslim missionaries were at work in Mindanao well before that time. Maguindanao tradition speaks of a certain Sharif Awliya who introduced Islam in a place not far from the present-day Cotabato City. He is said to have come to Mindanao in search of Paradise. While he was looking for it on the hill of Tantawan, he found a *houri* (celestial maiden) who was sent to him from heaven. Sharif Awliya married the *houri* and she subsequently bore him a daughter name paramisuli, whom Sharif Maraja, an Arab missionary from Johore, married. Maguindanao tradition believes that Sharif Kabungsuwan is the descendant of Sharif Maraja (Gowing: 1979:19).

However, despite the possibility of earlier Muslim missionaries in Mindanao, Sharif Kabungsuwan is acknowledged as the pioneer of Islam in that island. Maguindanao tarsilas also indicate that he was the son of an Arab father and a Malay mother. Local tarsilas further claim that Kabungsuwan's father, also a Sharif, was a descendant of the Prophet Muhammad.

The traditions of Mindanao do not testify whether Sharif Kabungsuwan had first settled near Illana Bay and then moved to Cotabato, or vice versa; but in any case, both the Illanun and Maguindanao peoples claim that they were Islamized because of his influence. In fact, Sharif Kabungsuwan is universally portrayed as having been a devout and learned Muslim. By religious preaching and political diplomacy, Kabungsuwan established himself as a power in the Cotabato-Malabang region (Gowing:1979:21).

Kabungsuwan is reported to have married the daughters of local datus, thus establishing his position among the native aristocracy. He laid the foundation of Maguindanao Sultanate, though he and his immediate successors were known as Sharifs or Datus. It was Kabungsuwan's great-great-grandson, Quadarat, who was the first Maguindanao ruler spoken in the tarsilas as "Sultan" (Saleeby:1905:56).

From Catabato and Malabang Islam spread to other parts of Mindanao. It arrived in Sarangani Bay and the Gulf of Davao and reached also the shores of northern Mindanao. It also entered among the agricultural Maranao communities around the Lake Lanao. According to some local traditions Sharif Kabung suwan himself went to lanao and converted many Maranao datus.

Another Lanao tradition claims that a "Sharif Alawi" came, possibly from Cotabato, to the shore of Tagoloan River or the present Misamis Oriental. He and his followers carried the banner of Islam to Bukidnon and to the Lake Lanao (Majul:1973:72). However, as of now, the exact date for the coming of Islam to the Maranao is not known, but it is speculated



that the process of Islamization in Lanao started in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century and was completed by the late nineteenth century.

Spread of Islam beyond Sulu and Mindanao possibly started during the sixteenth century. Apparently, it was the Muslim traders from Borneo who brought Islam to Mindoro and Southern Luzon. It is believed that Rajah Sulaiman and his uncle Rajah Matanda, who joined the former in administration, and Rajah Lakandula of Tondo were blood relatives of the Brunei Sultan. Beside, Manila had a profitable trade Link with Brunei and Malacca. From the reports of the contemporary Spanish observers, it is apparent that Islamization was only in its early stages among the Fillipinos of the Southern Luzon at the time of the conquest of Manila (Gowing: 1976:24).

Beside Manila, other parts of Luzon was also touched by Islam. It is reported that in the sixteenth century the king of Brunei sent a group of preachers to Balayan or present day Batangas Province. Nevertheless, Islamization in this part of the archipelago was in its initial stage at the time of Spanish conquest. In this regard, Renato Constantino says, "If history had taken its course undisturbed, the Muslims might have Islamized the whole archipelago. They could have seized the leadership in nation building—Instead of the more developed society expanding its influence over the others and diffusing its culture and social organization throughout the less developed ones, Spanish conquest aborted this historical trend, developed the regions, and froze the evolution of what had once been the more advanced society — the Muslim south" (Constantino, 1975:25-26).

It is, therefore, not a mistake to say that if the Spaniards had delayed their invasion of the island for another generation, there would have been a different story about the Islamization of the Philippines.

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# THE HINDI MUSALMAN—A RETROSPECTION

*Shibani Roy and S.H.M. Rizvi*

**Abstract:** *The strength of a secular state rests heavily on the peaceful co-existence of several religious groups, many of them being numerically minority groups. These minority groups have their own ethnic identity by which they maintain their specific territoriality, religion, language, physical features, attire, customary practices and institutions. During the pre-colonial period these groups lived within their respective polity and governance. The main thrust of the present paper is on one of the largest minorities of India which is grouped under the category of Muslims. Throughout the history of Mughal rule, except a few sporadic attempts by some zealots, sharia was not imposed. Islam's contact with Hindu way of life has been spread over a span of about twelve long centuries. Muslims arrived in India in three distinct movements—first as traders and missionaries to India's western and southern coasts, then in the expanding wave of conquests and immigration movement of Central Asian Turks, Afghans and Persians. India has assimilated almost all races and cultures that entered the land at different times by broadening her faith and her social structure. On reviewing the situation of partition of India and creation of Pakistan we find that the Muslims of western, southern, central and north eastern areas were not affected by the partition. They had opted to stay back in their homeland. This sense of belongingness amongst the Muslims is tangible and remains not only at an ideological or philosophical level, but is something concrete, fool proof and lively, touching each aspect of one's life. Treating all Hindi Muslims at par and stamping them with the ideal typical Islamic valuation will not meet with success. In India the strength of the people lies in their diversity. Thus, the first Indian census of 1881 had returned 19.7 per cent Muslims and had further elaborated that these dispersed aggregate of Muslims, forming neither a collective nor a distinct society for any purpose, political, economic and social. The British colonial officers in their writing had emphasized that Muslims whose religious rituals had a very strong tinge of Hinduism and who retained caste and observed Hindu festivals and ceremonies remains true even after 120 years since the first census, and even today, the non Muslims and Muslims cannot regard this Muslim entity as monochromatic except may be from an exclusively political angle.*

Secularism is not an alien concept that is imported out of compulsion after Independence. Rather it is an integral and natural feature of our national culture and ethos. The term *Secculum/Saccularis* had been coined in ecclesiastical Latin to connote the word as opposed to church, religious belief, rule and monastic principles. In time it was heavily loaded with political strategy when it is used as 'secular state' or 'ideology'. The strength of a secular state rests heavily on the peaceful co-existence of several religious groups, many of them being numerically minority groups. These minority groups have their own ethnic identity by which they maintain their specific territoriality, religion, language, physical features, attire, customary practices and institutions. During the pre colonial period these groups lived within their respective polity and governance.

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Religion and spirituality had always been associated with power and authority within both the worlds – natural and supernatural, whether that be the Vatican, Caliphate or Raja and Rajguru duo. Thus, politicization of religion and vice-e-versa is not the gift of democracy, rather religion, religiosity and power had been synonymous. The fear of the unknown, the supernatural, had pervaded over human psyche since time immemorial and is still being used by people in authority to coerce and discipline the believers in harmony with the statute. With the passage of time and advancement in science and technology the importance and authority of religion did not diminish. Though scientific discoveries were responsible for considerably eroding certain religious doctrines yet, each discovery led to another unknown factor and till date man is intrigued by human body, brain and behaviour. The classic case of 1633 A.D – Galileo's trial and humiliation before the church is neither exceptional nor unique. Religion had always held sway over all that was mundane. Even today the politicking demarcation, compartmentalization and isolation of land and people in the name of religion would pale the efforts of the church in upholding religion. The main thrust of the present discussion is on one of the largest minorities of India who are grouped under the category of Muslims. In a country which has minority groups, the Muslims come under censure by the majority group. The apprehensions of the majority group is not totally biased or baseless since historic events and the present situation of borders and frontiers ably depict the volatile nature of the border posts. Since, the first census operation of 1881, taken more than 120 years back, till the present census of 2001 all the followers of Islam are categorized as Muslim. These Muslims were stereotyped in a particular socio-cultural frame by the non-Muslims. However, nobody ever deemed to question this categorization – Muslims. Yes, they were followers of Islam but their inbuilt dissimilarities in physical features, dress, language, custom, manners and general life style did not evoke any response. In the caste ridden Indian society these Muslims were comfortably aligned in the caste hierarchy in a village and town. By socio-demographic data attempts are made to delineate the fact that the commonality of the Indian Muslims is merely imaginary and a ploy to suit the demand of political exigencies.

Our subcontinent is abundant with historic incidents wherein the local chieftains had sought help from outsiders to subjugate another neighbourhood chieftain, eventually loosing land and authority at the hands of his 'benefactor'. Besides, the land being prosperous and progressive in its religious indoctrination gave refuge and succour to traders, preachers and philosophers. Many world religions of today were born in this land with a handful of followers. Indian culture and its people have been termed as tolerant towards other cultures. That is because Hinduism is the very acme of spiritual understanding and knowledge, hence it easily assimilates whatever is superimposed over it churning out a more savory and mellowed religious understanding.

It is widely believed as well as contested in some quarters that the Aryans entered India around 1000 B.C. By 544 B.C (still debated). Buddha attained *Nirvana* and started preaching the religion of *ahimsa*. By 527 B.C (debated) Darius I acceded to the throne of Persia. By 518 B.C he deputed Scylax to a naval expedition down the Indus river with the result that North West India was conquered by them and the first Persian satrapy in India



was formed. During 326 B.C Alexander invaded India. The Greek cultural and physical characteristics are still available in the remote villages of Tehri Garhwal (Jaunpur) region of Uttaranchal. The Sakas or Scythians came into power in Indus valley and western India by A.D 40. The Parthian King Gondophores came to north west India by 52 A.D. Within this time St. Thomas started preaching in India. By 622 *Hijri* era begins. Mohammad-bin-Qasim invades Sind by 711 A.D. By 1026 Mahmud of Ghazni sacks the Somnath Temple. In the first battle of Tarain during 1191 Prithvi Raj Chauhan, the king of Delhi, routs Mohammad Ghori. The very next year Mohammad Ghori defeats Prithvi Raj Chauhan in the second battle of Tarain. By 1206 Qutbuddin Aybek establishes the slave dynasty at Delhi. The Mongol warrior Chenghis Khan invades India by 1221. Jallaluddin Firoz Khilji establishes the Khilji dynasty at Delhi by 1290.

Marco Polo the great Venetian traveler visits India by 1298 A.D. His travel accounts vividly depict the socio-cultural milieu of India at that period. Ghiyasuddin Tughluk founded the Tughluk Dynasty at Delhi by 1320 A.D. Ibn Batuta the Arabian traveler arrived in India during 1333. His travel accounts written in Arabic highlights upon the social condition of India during that period. By 1398 A.D Timur – the Turk, invades India. The Lodi dynasty began during 1451 A.D with Bahlul Lodi ascending the throne at Delhi. On trying to review the Deccan plateau historically one can recount the rise of Bahmani dynasty (1424 A.D), Adil Shah dynasty at Bijapur (1489 A.D), Nizam Shahi dynasty at Ahmadnagar and lastly Kutub Shahi dynasty at Golconda (1518 A.D).

The year of 1498 forms another eventful year when Vasco da Gama, the Portuguese sea farer, landed at Calicut coast thinking they had discovered the new world. The entry of Portuguese in India is marked in the year 1510 who captured Goa making Albuquerque as the Governor. The establishment of Moghul dynasty in India came through during 1526 by the first battle of Panipat, wherein Babar defeated the Lodhis. Another important event in the western frontiers of India between 1469 to 1539 was the birth and death of Guru Nanak Dev who preached the dictates of Sikhism. In the year 1539 Sher Shah defeated Humayun, the successor of the Moghuls, and declared himself as the Emperor from Delhi. By 1555 A.D Humayun succeeded in dethroning Aslam Shah, the successor of Sher Shah, from Delhi throne and with the succession of Akbar to the Delhi throne in 1556 A.D a new era dawns for the Indian populace. In 1564 Akbar abolished *Jiziya* (tax) imposed on the Hindus. Another important alliance which took place in the Deccan plateau in 1565 was the alliance of Muslim rulers of Deccan followed by the battle of Talikota wherein the Vijayanagar empire was routed out. During 1582 Akbar proclaims *Din-e-Ilahi*, a divine faith, wherein Islam and Hinduism were synthesized.

Prior to Akbar's death during 1600 English East India Company and during 1602 Netherland's East India Company were constituted. The Dutch opened factory at Pulicat in 1609, while the British built their factory at Masulipatan. Meanwhile, between 1605 – 1658 Jahangir, Shahjahan and Aurangazeb acceded to the throne of Delhi. During this phase Aurangazeb reimposed *jizya*, while Dara Shikoh the eldest of the sons of Shah Jahan, a scholar by his own right, devoted his scholarship towards understanding Hinduism, translating the important Hindu literature into Persian and ably synthesized the two religious



philosophies. The experts on this period opine that Dara Shikoh established the structure of his syncretism based on the view that the Upanishads were the ultimate source and fountain head of all monotheism. He claimed that the mysteries of the Quran became intelligible to him through the study of Upanishads. He translated the Upanishads with the help of some Brahmans. He had further added that 'Kitab-i-maknun' (i.e. 'the concealed scripture') mentioned in Quran are actually reference to Upanishads. Dara Shikoh's syncretism was not a movement away from Islam towards Hinduism but it was an effort to underline that what was common between the two religions.

His syncretistic effort towards the two religions was criticized and condemned by a section of clergy. This was manipulated, since, the clergy were taking keen interest in the war of succession in the Mughal dynasty. Nevertheless, it was affirmed that though Dara Shikoh intellectually was impregnated and influenced by Hindu philosophy, he remained a convinced and avowed Muslim. The official chargesheet of Aurangazeb against Dara Shikoh specifically mentions that he did not confine himself to traditional Sufism but turned to Hindus and their faith, kept constant company with Hindu yogis and *sanyasis*, regarded their scripture as the word of God and had them translated. Moreover, he did not wear a Muslim insignia but a Hindu legend '*prabhu*' on his ring. Apostasy was given as the official reason for his execution (Kazim, Mohammad, 1868). The confinement and untimely death of Dara Shikoh speaks volumes regarding religious orthodoxy of that period and its politicization. During this period all the Sunni successors of states were bound to a centralized spiritual authority of the Abbasid Caliphate based in Turkey. The Caliphate delegated the ruler of the successor state legal authority in his own territory and a claim to the loyalty of his subjects. Aurangazeb had ascended to the Delhi throne by the support and good will of the Abbasids in the year 1658.

By 1699 Guru Govind Singh created *khalsa*. And in 1739 Nadir Shah of Persia conquered Delhi. The year of 1742 becomes important when Duplex was declared as the French Governor of Pondicherry. The first Anglo French war fought on the Indian soil was in the year 1748. The British defeated the Nawab of Bengal Sirajuddaulah and Meer Jafar in the Battle of Plassey in 1761. At the third battle of Panipat, Ahmed Shah Abdali the ruler of Afghanistan defeated the Marathas. With the defeat of Meer Qasim by the British at Buxar 1764, the British obtained the Diwani Rights in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Clive became the Governor of Bengal. By 1831 India witnessed the uprising of the Sikhs in Punjab under the leadership of Raja Ranjit Singh and the first Anglo-Sikh war was fought and the defeat of the Sikhs hastened the annexation of Punjab by British. The first war of Independence was fought in 1857. By 1858 British Crown took over the Indian Government. With the proclamation at Delhi Durbar in 1877 as Queen Victoria being Empress of India, British rule was formally established. The Indian National Congress held its first meeting during 1885. The year 1906 saw the formation of Muslim league. During 1919 with the support of Mahatma Gandhi, Ali brothers and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad started the *Khilafat* movement i.e. restoration of Turkish Khilafat. This period had a perfect Hindu-Muslim amity. The Moplah Muslim rebellion was during 1921. However, by 1923 Khilafat movement fizzled out since Kemal Pasha declared Turkey as a secular state. Thus, the two world wars



fought between the years 1914 to 1945 ushered in worldwide changes. In India, Independence was ushered but with the bifurcation of the country, since Muslim league opted for a state of Pakistan based on the religious consideration.

The main purpose of chronologically tracing the historic events in India was to highlight upon the fact that the repeated invasion by invaders when typified we confront a situation as follows. Prior to the setting of the Christian era Aryans (?) in 1000 B.C., Persians in 518 B.C., while Greeks in 326 B.C. came to India. Their entry and departure from the country makes history, while their prolonged stay over centuries and their miscegenation with the local populace given rise to amalgamation, blending and sometimes diffusion of cultures. The Indian scenario when viewed after the stone age has two specific trends, first that of the Euro-centric approach initiated by the colonial rulers, wherein the Aryan Invasion Theory (AIT) was established. However, on collating the empirical data on archaeology, linguistics and population genetics the contemporary historians are rethinking the theory of invasion and have highlighted the concept of indigenous Indians. Their conceptualization is primarily based on Flood Myth, along with the skeletal remains of the indigenous variety of horse which had only 34 ribs i.e. the *Equus Sivalensis* (the Siwalik horse) as against 36 ribbed Central Asian or European variety. Further, linguistically the Harappans with a script but not literature and Aryans (?) with literature but no script viewed retrospectively seems to be ambiguous. Hence, the extinction of Harappa in face of the invading Aryans does not stand the scientific enquiry. So the Aryans being an indigenous group of people who had blended the pan Indian (meaning hereby that greater India extended from Afghanistan to Java i.e. South-East Asia of today) religious ethos in their religious scriptures, which in time and space, was practiced, professed, developed and modified in different regions under various form and names.

With the end of Vedic period prior to 2500 B.P the Veda and Mahabharat had been composed. The Buddhist period began from 2500 B.P. The first Persian naval expedition commanded by Scylax set up its first Satrapy in North West India. They were Majusi i.e. fire worshippers. With Alexander's invasion of India by 2326 B.P. Greek religio-cultural influence came to India but could not take roots since, Alexander died soon after. The coming of Saka/Scythians into power in the Indus valley brought idolaters with worship of multiform deities akin to Greek Gods and Goddesses. Some experts believe that the Hindu system of reckoning (Luni Solar system) adopted the Saka system first adopted by King Salivahanas. The Parthians who followed the Saka came from Southern and Eastern side of Caspian sea. Their religious orientation is unknown. However, it is believed that the scythian elements among them were fire worshipper keeping the ever lasting fire.

The era 622 witnessed the beginning of Hijra. The Persian and Arabs were not strangers to the subcontinent, since trade and religious philosophy, architecture, medicine, astronomy had always attracted the rulers of the middle east dynasties. In this regards ample historical and archaeological facts are found. The conquer of Sind by Mohammad-bin-Qasim in 711 established the first significant victory of the Arabs in India. This was followed by Mahamud Ghazni's (1026) victory till Kanauj and sack of Somnath temple. He was Persian by parentage but a Turkish slave from Ghazni i.e. Afghanistan. Next was Mohammad Ghori (1191)



again a Turk who reached till Punjab Tarain, which is 27 miles from Bhatinda. Mohammad Ghori (1192) was next, a Turk and reached till Punjab. Qutubuddin Aibak was a manumitted slave and a general with Mohammad Ghori who reached till Delhi. All of them were Sunni by faith and had the sanction and patronage of the Caliphate. Chenghis Khan (1221) a Mongol came and plundered and is said to be a non-Muslim. Jalaluddin Khilji (1290) belonged to a Turkish tribe settled in Khalj a place in Afghanistan. Thus he had adopted Afghani manners and customs. Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq (1320) was a Turk and not a Mongol as believed by some of the experts. He belonged to the Taghlik tribe of Turkey. It is said that his father Malik Tughluq a Turkish slave married a Jat woman who gave birth to Ghiyasuddin. After establishing his dynasty in Delhi Tughluq got his brother married to a Hindu prince and their son was Sultan Tughluq. Timur (1398) is referred to as Aksak Timur in Turkish and Timur-i -lung in Persian due to his injured foot. He was from Transoxiana i.e. Turkey. The coming of Bahlul Lodi (1451) and establishing the Lodi dynasty in Delhi was another significant period of entry of Afghans. Lodi belonged to the Shahu Khel of the Lodi tribe. Babar (1526) was the product of Timur and Mongol parents. The Mongols were referred to as Moghul in Persian and hence the dynasty of Delhi. The Mughal permanency at Delhi was however intercepted by Sher Shah Suri (1539) an Afghan and Nadir Shah (1739) from Persia, Ahmad Shah Abdali (1761) from Afghanistan had attacked northern India nine times in a period of twenty two years. With ascendance of Akbar to the Delhi throne in 1556 A.D Mughal empire was firmly established.

## II

Thus, on tracing the entry of *Parakiya/Mlechha* to the subcontinent we have Greeks, Scythians, Parthians, Arab, Turks, Mongols, Persian and Afghani. With this variety of ethnic base (refer table-1) one is left to muse over the holisticity and homogeneity of Islam and Muslims in India. The above reflects upon the dovetailing of physiognomic variance and variety in manners and customs of the Hindi Muslims. Further, confirming the fact that in India religion had always been at the centrality of politics.

At the time of advent of Muslims in India, Islam was firmly seated in Arabia and the reins of power were in the hands of Khalifa Umar and Usman (634-643). Though there was no organized Muslim invasion but the Arabic and Persian historiographers affirm that information about Hind were collected as part of military intelligence. The military expedition of Muhammad Ibn Qasim (711) in Sind was the first successful invasion but that too with the aid of Brahmans in order to defeat Dahir - the king of Sind, who had adopted the policy of prosecution of Brahmans and professed Buddhism. This invasion remained restricted to a limited geographical area, and that too for a brief period of time, and had been under the control of Umayyad dynasty. The first missionary (*dai*) of Ismailis arrived in Sindh in 883. In Sunni Islam the offices of *Khalifa* and *Ameer* - the former a spiritual head and the latter a temporal head, were conjoined in one individual. But in practice the Khalifa, due to political exigencies, often delegated his authority to an *Ameer* who exercised effective power but recognized the spiritual authority of the *Khalifa*. The



first organized invasion of Mahmood of Gazni was in eleventh century, which coincided with crystallization of the concept of *Khilafat*, wherein a Khalifa was vested with absolute authority in all matters of state both civil and religious as long as he ruled in conformity with the law of the Quran and Hadis. Mahmood of Gazni and later invaders, by seeking legal sanction of their monarchy from the Khalifa, thus extended Islam in India.

Though the Khalifa did not interfere in Sultan's freedom in his own territory among his Muslim subjects but by giving sanction ensured the legality of his rule and assumed the symbol of association that bound their territory with Islamic world. Hence, there was an expansion of *Darul Islam*. Alauddin's son Tughlaq (1320-51) was the first ruler in India who regarded his empire as a part of *Darul Islam* but did not insist upon strict promulgation of the *Sharia* (Islamic Law). On the basis of numismatic evidence it may be stated that authority of Khalifa of Arab was accepted practically throughout the period of pre-Mughal rule in India, as the source and sanction of emperor's legal authority. The Moghuls were of Barla and Turk extraction, but their self identification with Mongols had become a part of their heritage. The Mongol pressure throughout the centuries accelerated the inflow of people who came from the heartlands of Islam. They were the vehicle to bring in new values and ideas generated elsewhere in the world of Islam. As for example at the court of Iltutmish in Delhi the first wave of these people escaping from hordes of Chengiz Khan brought administrators from Iran, painters from China, theologians from Bukhara, divines and saints, craftsmen and men and maidens from every region, doctors adept in Greek medicine and philosophers from all over. The wave of Muslim immigration reached another peak during the reign of Balban, after Halaku's sack of Baghdad. Hence, the Mughal empire shared a common Turko-Mongol heritage noticeable in its systems of administration and remained preoccupied essentially with the process of incorporation of the whole of Indian sub-continent in their empire and the evolution of a *modus vivendi* with the Hindus. Mughal School of Painting, Indo-Persian School of Poetry in the form of *ghazal* are testimony to the contribution of Persian painter Abd al Samad and Turkish commander Sidi-Ali-Reis, Katib-e-Rumi who composed Persian ghazals.

Throughout the history of Mughal rule, except a few sporadic attempts by some zealots, *sharia* was not imposed. Moreover, in a few instances we find that liberalism was the policy of the rulers. As for example during the struggle for dominance of Shia Islam, the north-western frontiers remained a disturbed area. The sea route to Arabia was also not safe due to the presence of Portuguese ships in Arabian sea. The tension developed over these difficulties was impediment to perform pilgrimage by the prospective Haj pilgrims. The Chief of religious affairs of Akbar's court had issued a decree that the Haj was no longer binding on Indian Muslims as the land route was held by Shias and the sea routes by the Christian Portuguese. When the threat to pilgrims was over Akbar not only allowed the former to proceed for Haj but also defrayed their expenses. Akbar's policy of Indianisation of the administration and culture of his empire had to face challenge from Sunni Islamic clerics who dubbed his policy as heresy and not based upon *sharia*. Akbar made an impact on his subjects who inspite of embracing Islam, continued with some pre-change customary practices.



Akbar's religious views and actions were against the established policy of exclusiveness and his liberal views invited the criticism of Islamic clerics such as Shiekh Ahmad Sirhindi who blamed Akbar for failing to uphold the interests of Indian Muslims. A number of Hindu social ceremonies such as Rakhi, participation in Deepavali, wearing of sacred thread (*zunnar*) and submitting to a saffron *tilak* (*qashqa*) being daubed on forehead were a few examples his subjects attempted to imitate. His official policy of discouraging animal slaughter ('cow protection'), was influenced by his partial vegetarianism. Abstention from animal slaughter are virtues commended by Sufis too. The acceptance of *Gangajal* as drinking water had far reaching consequences. It was brought by Muslims and Hindus as well even at far off places like Deccan. By far the most far-reaching influence of the palace was that of the *hom* (sacred fire) kept in the palace by his Hindu princesses (Aziz, 1964).

He accorded permission to the converts to revert to their ancestral faith upholding the dictum of Islam as deciphered from Quran "*La ikraha fiddin*" (let there be no compulsion in religion, Quran II, 256). He even forbade marriage between cousins postulated by Muslim law but forbidden by majority of Hindus.

The Hindus specially the Rajputs were influenced by syncretism of Mughal rulers. They were also aware of Shia-Sunni cultural dichotomy. The latter remained operative in the war of succession in Mughal dynasty. In this war Aurangzeb, in order to grab the reins of power, sought the support of Sunni kings such as Subhan-Quli-Khan - the Uzbek ruler of Balkhynd emphasized the principle of Sunni solidarity as the basis of Mughal-Uzbek alliance. Murad - the rightful heir and inclined towards Shia Islam, when denied his place, sought support from Shia kings of Persia who took offence at Aurangzeb's Sunni fanaticism. Gujarat's contact with Islamic world was a reaction to the Portuguese challenge in the Indian ocean. Besides, naval expedition on the coast of Gujarat Muslims from Turkish provinces as well as from East Indies and East Africa continued to come and settled here. They contributed to the growth of a composite Gujarati Muslim culture.

The contribution of Rajasthan specifically in the development of Hindi language is a fine example of shared cultural characteristics. Hindi is more or less a product of nineteenth century. But literature written in Devnagari script in four closely related north Indian languages-Rajasthani, Brijbhasha, Maithili and Awadhi from the eighth century onwards also bears the same generic name. The Hindi literary tradition which cuts across the distinction between dialects began with the bardic poetry of Rajasthan written between 700 and 1300 A.D. This later became the chief vehicle of Hindu heroic poetry of resistance to the conquests of invading armies.

### III

Islam's contact with Hindu way of life has been spread over a span of about twelve long centuries. Hinduism is a large aggregate of beliefs developed in course of many centuries evolving from the sacrificial hymns of the Ved to the philosophical speculation of Upanishad, the discipline of Yog, the metaphysical subtleties of Vedant and the passionate devotion of Bhakti. Islam on the other hand is bound by an austere central discipline revolving round Quran the *Vox Dei* and Hadis the *Vox prophetarum* and whatever speculation it has evolved or



borrowed from external sources has been more or less adjusted to these two primary sources of religious authority.

Muslims arrived in India in three distinct movements first as traders and missionaries to India's western and southern coasts, then in the expanding wave of conquests and immigration movement of Central Asian Turks, Afghans and Persians. Arabs, even before advent of Islam, had carried on a tradition of maritime trade across the Arabian sea since, repitition nearly the dawn of history. Arab traders who settled down on western coasts between seventh and ninth century were allowed to propagate Islam. The inter-marriage with indigenous women resulted in formation of many groups. Some joined the services of Hindu princes. Several Muslim groups such as Labbe, Mapilla, Nawait, Siddi etc. thrived in western and southern coasts and their descendants still survive. The historiographers and social analysts agree that it is doubtful if any one of such invasions extending over about 800 or 900 years was purely religious invasion to spread Islam.

Islam like Christianity, is a proselytizing religion though Quranic injunctions discourage forcible conversion. The underlying emphasis behind tolerance is the Quranic concept of the equal power of God over good and evil. It is by His will that evil and unbelief exists as the antithesis of goodness and faith.

*Wa la sha-a-rabbuka la amna  
Manfil-arzi kulluhum jami-ari  
Afa anta tukri hun-nasa hatta  
Yakunu mu miniin*

“And if thy Lord willed, all who are in the earth would have believed together. Wouldst thou (Muhammad) compel until they are believers?” The epitome of Quranic approach is the oft quoted verse “*la ikraha fid Din*” (Quran II, 256) “let there be no compulsion in religion”. In the conversion of large masses the use of force was an exception rather than a rule.

There were many factors which acted as stimulant in embracing Islam by the masses. Proselytization by Muslim traders and settlers on Indian coasts specifically the Arabian coast ( e.g. Gujarat, Kutch, Lakshdweep etc) was not regarded as a serious challenge by Hindu Rajas who did not impose any restrictions on conversion to Islam. Such conversions were not considered as threat perception by the strategists. Hinduism offered a much more solid resistance to the spread of Islam, but its *varna-pratha* which was its Achille's heel. By embracing Islam those who had no place in the *varnapratha* or had a low place in it, theoretically, assumed equality with the ruling class. Such conversions were also to better the chances of appointments. The peaceful propagation of Islam by Sufis was favoured by many Muslim rulers. Most of the Sufi orders at one time or other regarded conversion as one of their primary spiritual objective in India. Moplah of Kerala were converted to Islam by the disciples of Malik-ibn-Dinar (d. 749), Labbai of Trichinapally by Nisar Shah (d. 1039), Memon of Kutch by Abdulla Khariazi, Khoja of Gujarat by Nursatgar etc. are a few examples of such mass conversion. The foundation of Chisti Khanqah at Ajmer in thirteenth century was as much a missionary as a religio-mystical activity. Sayyed Ali Hamdani of



Kubrawiya order of Sufi missionary is credited to have taken with him an entourage of 700 disciples to undertake proselytization of Kashmir.

Economic betterment did not necessarily follow the conversion. Most of the converts retained their skill or non-skilled ancestral profession and thus brought into Islam some rudimentary features of *varna-bhed*. Artisans and petty merchants were perhaps the first to accept Islam. Agriculture was not a favourite profession with Muslims except in Bengal, the north-west and Kashmir.

Muslims were considered as *mlechha*, *yavana*, *parakiya* and the segregation over time and space widened the gulf. The political antagonists ensured that social intercourse of Muslims with other communities by way of establishing commensality or marital relationship does not get any momentum. Nevertheless, Hinduism and Islam made impact on each other's culture.

The politics of power gradually encouraged the Hindu and Muslim alike to give up many practices which they had imbibed from one another and which had formed bridges between the two communities. During the last part of British Raj the Muslim leaders had become habituated to speak of Muslim as a community and as a minority. The politics of separatism and exclusiveness culminated on June 3rd, 1947 when the two large political parties accepted the Mountbatten Plan for partitioning the subcontinent of India into two sovereign states India and Pakistan.

India has assimilated almost all races and cultures that entered the land at different times by broadening her faith and her social structure. In most countries where Islam reached, its followers have also assimilated the land into the mainstream of Islamic culture but India is the only exception where neither has Islam been overpowered by India nor has India been absorbed into the Islamic world.

However, religious minorities within a country with their relative strength play a creative role in the development of a secular state. Besides their role in political arena these communities contribute in developing a commonly shared cultural heritage too. Since Islam being the largest minority religion our focus would remain confined to Muslim communities in the present paper.

#### IV

##### **Socio-economic and Demographic Differentials**

The study of socio-economic and demographic differentials between the majority Hindu and minority Muslims in India (Sharif 1995) revealed that the growth of Muslim is higher than that of other religious groups. Muslims have been found to be dwelling relatively more in urban areas and are mostly self employed since their share in regularly paid jobs is low. Similarly the work participation of Muslim women is extremely low. The land holding is relatively worse and Muslim work on non-agricultural occupation in substantial proportion in rural India. They are by far the least educated compared with Hindus and Christians. The scenario is same if one studies the student population both in rural and urban areas as well. Moreover the Muslim women are the least educated of all rural categories such as



Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes etc. On economic front and in comparison of index of levels of living the Muslims are socio-economically worse off in all parts of the country.

The higher growth of Muslim has been a subject of speculation by demographers who sometimes projected the phenomenon of immigration and thus clouded the focus of attention from socio-biological to socio-political axis. The levels of fertility as measured by GMFR (General Marital Fertility Rate) and TMFR (Total Marital Fertility Rate) are higher for Muslims in both rural and urban areas. The CMR (Child Mortality Rate) among both the urban and rural Muslims is comparatively low. Hence a combination of a positive growth of population and a low child mortality seems to have enabled a marginally higher growth of Muslim population in India.

The census figures of 1991 indicate that Muslim constitute 12.12 per cent of total population of India. Lakshdweep has the highest per cent of Muslims, that is, 94.31 per cent followed by states of Assam (28.43%), West Bengal (23.61%) and Kerala (23.33%). Though census figures of Jammu and Kashmir are not available, however, the estimated percentage of Muslim stands out as 64.19 making Jammu and Kashmir as the second state having the largest concentration of Muslims in India. The other states where the proportion of Muslims is above the national average are Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. In the remaining states and Union territories this proportion is below the national average (refer table-2).

There are 466 districts in the country. Since no census was undertaken in Jammu and Kashmir hence out of remaining 452 districts in the country 325 districts have proportion of Muslims below the national average of 12.12 per cent, while 127 districts fall above the national average. It is observed that Muslims in highest range of 31.01 per cent and above cover 30 districts (refer table-3). Majority of such districts are located in Assam bordering Bangladesh and Uttar Pradesh bordering Nepal. The demographic analysts assert that high proportion in Assam is attributed to migration. In retrospect based upon the census undertaken during nineteenth century it can be stated that erstwhile United Provinces had 13.74 per cent Muslims in 1881 which enhanced to 15.43 per cent in 1941 and before the partition of the country. Similarly Bihar had a percentage of 13.89, Orissa had 12.00, Bombay Presidency had 8.47, West Bengal had 25.38, Assam 22.36, Madras Presidency had 7.88, Travancore and Cochin 7.3, Madhya Bharat 6.66, Bhopal state 13.99, Hyderabad state 12.8, Vindhya Pradesh 2.30, Rajasthan 9.00 and Ajmer 15.40 per cent (refer table-4).

The 1951 census was the first census after the country was partitioned on the basis of religion. Let us see how it affected the proportion of Muslim population in various political segments. In Uttar Pradesh the Muslim proportion to the total population which stood at 13.74 in 1881 steadily enhanced to 15.43 in 1941 but had declined in 1951 to 14.28. This decline is explained entirely by departure of some Muslims to Pakistan. In 1991 census this proportion has risen to 17.33 hence more than the proportion stood even at the time of first census of 1881. It may be borne in mind that not much has changed in the physical contours of Uttar Pradesh from the erstwhile United Provinces.



On the other hand when the Dravid areas are taken into account we find a steady and constant figure of Madras Provinces showing 7.38 per cent in 1941 which increased to 7.96 in 1981. Travancore and Cochin depict a similar consistency in population growth from 1901 census onwards and which ranges between 6.50% in 1901 reaching to 7.80% in 1951. Madhya Bharat shows a similar trend 6.46% in 1921 census which increased to 6.66% in 1931, declining to 6.24% in 1951. The decline may be attributed to reorganization of the state for carving out Madhya Pradesh. The Bhopal state in 1931 showed 12.31% Muslims which increased to 13.99% in 1941 and 15.38% in 1951. This may be attributed to influx of Muslims from other states in the wake of partition of the country.

The Hyderabad state again shows a consistency from 1901 to 1931. The percentage varied between 10.30% to 10.60% in 1941. The percentage lies at 12.80% which declined to 11.80% in 1951. The sudden increase may be attributed to immigration from other neighbouring states of India. While the decline to 11.80% in 1951 may be attributed to the aftermath of partition of India.

Vindhya Pradesh shows consistency in Muslim population. The Rajasthan state shows consistency in Muslim population from 1881 to 1941. The percentage of population varying between 8, 9 and 10 per cent which depletes to 6.21% in 1951. Similarly the census of Ajmer shows variation in population between 1881 to 1941 census, fluctuating between lowest of 12.50% in 1881 to highest 20.50% in 1921, which comes down to 15.40% in 1941. However, the figure decreased to 4.60% in 1951. The high concentration of Muslims in Ajmer may be attributed to the presence of the saint's shrine, who is not only revered but a large number of Muslim families attached to management of this shrine draw their sustenance from it. The sharp decline after partition may be explained by the phenomenon of migration to neighbouring Pakistan and reorganization of Rajasthan state wherein Ajmer was merged with the parent state of Rajputana.

In retrospect the partition of India was the single largest social factor which made impact on growth/depletion of Muslim population. From table-4 it is evident that except Orissa, Madras, Travancore, Cochin, Madhya Bharat and Vindhya Pradesh the remaining states and provinces have registered a decrease in population within a period of 10 years (1941 to 1951). The exception to this general trend is the state of Bhopal where instead of decline in wake of partition, the Muslim population registered a growth from 13.99% to 15.38% in 1951. As discussed earlier the only plausible reason may be inclusion of certain families in the general Muslim population who took shelter with the hope that a state governed by a Muslim Nawab may provide security from the trauma of partition. Another significant point emerges about the Dravid Muslim. If we look to the 50 years related with Travancore, Cochin including Madras Presidency, we do not find any perceptible change in population of Muslim due to the partition. Hence it can be safely assumed that this segment of the Muslim population remained untouched and unmoved by partition upheavals. If we look at the population figures of Hindus in the same period we find that for the first time since 1881 the Hindus have shown a rise in proportion to the total population in then 1951 census. Their population which was 86.1 per cent in 1881 declined to 85.05 in 1951 census. The decline was attributed to result of conversion of Hindus to Sikhism or



Christianity and to the higher rate of increase of population among the Muslims. Nevertheless, it did dawn on the minds of analysts that the increase may be due to the exodus of Muslims to Pakistan and coming of Hindus to India and to the reversion to Hinduism of the converted Sikhs and Christians.

It may be recalled that Christians were 48000 in 1881. They kept on increasing at each census till their figure reached 208,000 in 1931. In 1941 the population declined and stood at 1,63,000 and in 1951 it further declined to 1,24,000. The main cause of these reductions is identified as reversion to original religion of converted persons according to reports of Census Commissioners. In addition to this it was also claimed that departure of British nationals and appreciable number of Anglo-Indians from the country are the factors which supported the reduction in proportion.

The fall in population figures throughout India in case of Muslims was attributed to the migration to the new State and the same fall in population figures of Christianity was ascribed to reconversion. During the post-partition censuses the increase in Muslim population was generally ascribed to a higher fertility rate and incidences of polygamous marriages. But this myth was exposed when a census of polygamous marriages was undertaken by none other than Professor B.K.Roy Burman, the then Deputy Registrar General, who by training was a demographer and by profession was an anthropologist. As a part of 1961 census a survey of consanguineous and affinal marriages was undertaken in 587 sampled villages. The methodology was adopted in selection of locales of study in such a manner that the sample represented different types of villages particularly villages containing one dominant community with one dominant occupation. Villages containing dominant scheduled tribe of state and fair size multiethnic villages containing variegated occupation. In a sample of 99457 married males and their spouses it was found that Muslims had the lowest percentage (5.73%) of polygamous marriages. Furthermore, in Rajasthan (3.86%) and Gujarat (5.73%) the frequency of polygamous marriages among Muslims was further lower than the average, at national level. (Census of India, 1961).

Rajasthan specifically exhibit appreciable change in proportion of Muslim population. If we look at population figures from 1881 we find that the proportion of Muslims in Rajasthan was 9 per cent while Ajmer (considered to be a territory under the British Raj) had a population of 12.50 per cent. In 1941 census too the proportion of Muslims remained unchanged. But in 1951 census the percentage of Muslim population in Rajasthan (inclusive of Ajmer) was drastically reduced to 6.21 per cent. This sudden decrease was ascribed to emigration to Pakistan and the immigration of Hindus from Pakistan since in 1941 the Hindu population in Rajasthan was 75 per cent and in 1951 it has risen to 90.7 per cent. Similarly in Ajmer too the Hindu population in 1941 was 80.2 per cent and in 1951 census it had risen to 86.50 per cent.

The census at district level show that districts of Rajasthan bordering Pakistan have registered rise in Muslim population at a higher rate than those districts which are away from the border. As for example Ganganagar shares its borders with Pakistan. The total population of Muslims in 1951 was 20,305 and in 1961 it was 34,891. The rise in Muslim population for the district as a whole has been 71.83 per cent in 1951-61. The proportion of



Muslims to total population rose from 3.22 in 1951 to 3.36 in 1961. The following groups of tehsils showed high increase in Muslim population.

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| (a) Ganganagar Tehsil                  | 177.01 per cent during 1951-61 |
| (b) Karanpur and Padampur              | 94.93 per cent during 1951-61  |
| (c) Raisinghnagar and Anupgarh Tehsils | 256.34 per cent during 1951-61 |

Besides, the tehsils of Hanumangarh, Suratgarh, Nohar and Bhadra showed high increase of 51.10 and 54.18 respectively. Bikaner is another district on the border. The population increased from 39876 in 1951 to 50264 in 1961 or 26.05 per cent. Bikaner and Nokha tehsil have highest concentration of Muslims. Jaisalmer is another district on Pakistan border. The proportion has increased from 20.33% in 1951 to 26.40 % in 1961. The increase over 1951-61 has been 67.00%. Barmer another border district which has shown a decadal increase of 68.42%. In Pachpadra and Siwana tehsils the proportion of Muslims to total population in 1951 was 5.75 and in 1961 it was 4.21. The growth rate of Muslims in these two tehsils taken together has been a mere 15.47 per cent whereas in Barmer, Sheo and Chohatan the Muslim proportion has gone up from 13.13% in 1951 to 17.76% in 1961 and decadal growth rate has been 75.39 per cent. The high percentage of Muslims in the border districts of Rajasthan and their recurring fluctuation reflects upon the trans border commensality of the coreligionists which is dependent on dialect, customs and manners. Similar phenomenon is witnessed in the international borders of north east, where a tribe is split into two sides of the international border, but retain social and marital ties with the other.

It may be interesting to note that Jaipur, Jhunjhunu, Tonk and Sirohi districts inside the border show a low inter-censal change in Muslim population during the same period. Moreover, Sikar, Churu, Nagaur, Banswara, Bhilwara, Bundi, Chittorgarh, Dungarpur and Udaipur districts have also shown increase less than the general average of 26.20% for the state during 1951-61. To summarize the population dynamics of Muslim of Rajasthan it may be stated that since 1951 and up to 1991 there has been a consistent increase in Muslim population. In 1951-1961 in the entire state the increase was 32.62 per cent and in 1981-91 it stood at 41.46 per cent and hence higher than in many other states.

### **Language**

There are many misconceptions about Muslims among the elites and common men in our country. One of these is that Urdu is the language of Muslims. It is a notion that Urdu is the mother tongue of majority of Muslims. Many writers, statesmen, political analysts, political leaders, civil servants agree that besides the personal law, the discrimination meted out to Urdu and propagation of Hindi is most critical in the entire range of Hindu-Muslim relations. But it is inconceivable to many such intelligentsia, that neither a Pangal Muslim of Manipur would claim Urdu as his mother tongue nor a Garia and Maria Muslim of Assam would vouchsafe that Urdu is the language of their religion. Let us see how many Muslims claim Urdu as their mother tongue (refer table-5). Lakshwadweep is the only territory which has a Muslim percentage of 94.13 but out of 48765 Muslims only 37 (0.007) claim Urdu as



their mother tongue. Assam with a Muslim population of 6373204 claim the second highest concentration of Muslim population has only 3935 persons who claim Urdu as their mother tongue thus bringing the percentage of Urdu speakers as low as 0.06. Urdu, even in its region of origin, has lost its claim to be the mother tongue of Muslims. In Uttar Pradesh only 51.82 per cent Muslim claim Urdu as their mother tongue. It is surprising to find the concentration of Muslims claiming Urdu as their mother tongue, in the states of Andhra Pradesh (93.86%), Orissa (86.90%), Karnataka (85.59%) and Maharashtra (75.17%). This is a recent phenomenon which had been witnessed in the last census and has political undertone. In Rajasthan not even one third (27.04%) of Muslims claim Urdu as their mother tongue.

Urdu, a Mongol word, meaning a 'military camp' and its use as the name of the language spoken by the army did not begin until well into the seventeenth century. The language which is known as Urdu today was called by a number of names by Muslims who were developing and using it, e.g. Hindawi or Hindi, Dehlavi (or dialect of Delhi), Dakhani (dialect of Dakhin), it is claimed that the language came to be called Urdu in the reign of Shahjahan and Aurangzeb, during the latter's expeditions in the Deccan. This was done with a purpose to distinguish the northern indigenous language from its Dakhani variety which had borrowed Hindu cultural vocabulary on a larger scale and had already achieved literary distinction. The name Urdu applies to a language descended from one or more of the dialects of Sauraseni Prakrit adapted by the Muslims through unrestrained borrowings from Persian and written in the Persian script. Whereas all the other Hindi dialects used by Hindus continued to be written in the indigenous Devnagari script.

Urdu is essentially a language developed by Muslims who were either converts to Islam or had settled down in India and married. It served as a means of communication with the Hindu tradesmen or peasant or menial and in the home with the womenfolk who were quite often of Indian origin. Only in larger sense can it be called a language which developed as a synthesis of Hindu and Muslim cultures in India. It developed rather as a means of contact between two mutually exclusive cultures. These literary languages under the influence of rival revivalism in the nineteenth century emphasized in their parallel and rival growths not the fusion but the deep rooted spiritual antagonism of the two cultures. Dayananda – the founder of Arya Samaj was the first to give a conscious and definite expression to the view that Hindi should be the pan-Hindi language of India.

Conversely Sayyad Ahmad Khan regarded the loss of Urdu language as detrimental for the Indian Muslims as the loss of their religion. Hence, Hindi was promoted as *Aryabhasha* and the British official policy allowed in 1872-73 to replace Urdu by making Hindi as the written medium of recording in law courts. The climax of British policy regarding Hindi came when Sir Anthony MacDonnell the then governor of North Western Province enforced Hindi in place of Urdu in lower courts. Many political analysts claim that struggles for Hindu and Muslim separatism had passed on from the linguistic to directly political field. In contemporary situation Urdu teaching is restricted to selected few non-formal educational institutes referred as *madarsa*. The language nurtured by shared cultural heritage of Muslims and Hindus was overpowered by vested interests and this vital cultural



link between the two religious communities was broken to augment the policy of exclusiveness.

In Rajasthan less than one third (27.04%) population of Muslim claim Urdu as their mother tongue. In neighbouring Gujarat there are only 15.18 per cent Muslim who assert Urdu as their mother tongue. Nevertheless, most of the Islamic literature in India is written in Urdu language as major religious schools are governed and managed by Urdu knowing Islamic clergy. Of 39 Muslim occupational groups living in Rajasthan there is no group claiming Urdu as their mother tongue and Mewari, Harouti, Marwari are the dialects/languages claimed to be spoken at their homes. Moreover, the Ghosi (herdsmen) celebrate gopashtmi and on Deepawali day colour the horns of their cattles. Govardhanpuja too is celebrated. Similar numerous examples are available to affirm that in India the pan-Islamic traditions at many places do not form a part of local traditions maintained by Muslim groups (Rizvi et al 2000).

## V

Physical anthropological studies conducted among Bohra, Khoja and Memon draw the same conclusion that most of these groups are derived from indigenous Hindu groups. The genetic distance when worked out with the help of percentile frequencies of genes corroborate the theory that indigenous Hindu Population is the founder population of many Muslim endogamous groups (Rizvi and Roy, 1984).

It may be borne in mind that two factors have contributed to mental evolution and make up of Indian Muslims. On the one hand there has been the influence of Islam and the philosophy of life represented by it. On the other there has been the pervasive influence of Indian culture and civilization. These two forces have acted steadily throughout the centuries and shaped a Muslim's life and character. If the Hindi Muslim is distinct from his counterpart in other parts of the world, this is due to the interaction of these two forces at many levels. Lastly the political climate of the subcontinent and the world at large also affects the population.

In the development of a secular state such minorities play a creative role and to assess their contribution genesis of these groups is imperative. Efforts are required to understand each and every Muslim group in the perspective of Indian civilization before making any generalization about this religious minority of India.

On summing up we can say that right from the inception, the Muslim invaders had been trying to superimpose on their rival, and make the other subservient. Thus till 18th century it was a constant war amongst the followers of Islam. The Arab versus the Turk versus the Tuglaq, Ghori, Lodhi, Mughal and Persian. Though, most of them had the patronage of Khalifa, yet, history reveals that the generals deputed by the Khalifa had an urgency to become independent and to establish a dynasty of their own. Besides, they being from different culture milieu, stood apart from each other in their habits and customs. In the socio-religious sphere Vedic, Buddhist followed by Brahman supremacy culminated into Bhakti movement, Sikhism. Christianity which had established itself as early as 14th – 15th century had wide acceptance in the subcontinent. Yet, when the century old freedom



struggle culminated, two countries were carved out of the Indian subcontinent. The demand for Pakistan was legitimised on the basis of demographic facts wherein many spatial pockets Muslims were numerically dominant. Yet, even after partition Muslims remained a numerically dominant group in India. This was due to the fact that the mass exodus of Muslim from India to Pakistan was confined to few Urban centers of Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Bengal. These Urdu speaking gentry are referred to as 'muhajir' in Pakistan. The word being derived from 'Hijrat' or 'first flight' thereby meaning migrants. Amidst the diversified ethnic groups of Pakistan e.g. Sindhis, Punjabis, Makrani, Balochi and Pathan, the 'muhajir' also acquired a separate ethnic identity, thereby, submerging their individual identities of Bihari, Hyderabad, Dehalvi, Lucknowi, Bareilvi into one Urdu speaking 'muhajir' group.

In contrast, in India, the Muslims of western, southern, central and north eastern areas were not affected by the partition. None of the Keralite, Tamilian, Andhrate, Oriya or Kannad Muslims migrated to Pakistan; they had opted to stay back in their homeland like many other Muslim families. With the passing of five decades of the progress of the subcontinent, they too had their normal growth rate pattern. Mostly being confined in their respective culture – linguistic milieu. However, when figures are juggled for demographic reasons, specially on basis of religion, the percentage of 12 appears to be statistically significant and figuratively usable for political maneuvering. Except for the religion, nothing is common to them, neither at somatoscopic level nor at molecular level, dress, customs and rites. Thus, like the diversified Muslim invaders, the Hindi Muslims are diversified themselves in line with the majority population. Hence in India Islam was indigenised merging with the vast populace with different religious orientation. The cultural tolerance of the people and land has been its main strength to retain its diversified milieu. We have the Muslim Mangniar (bards) of Rajasthan singing praises for the jajman family, Khasi Muslim woman handling the entire commerce in the market, the Koya Muslim of Kerala and in Lakshdweep woman tills her land and owns it too, the Pangal of Manipur still practicing marriage by elopement and the Uttar Pradesh Muslims confining their woman in purdah. This conglomeration is unique to India and can be vouchsafed as indigenous.

On reviewing the situation of partition of India and creation of Pakistan we are confronted by an uniformity in the northern half of India i.e. the Doab region. Beginning with Rajasthan, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Bengal one witness the exodus of Muslims from India to Pakistan and coming of Hindu families to India across the border. The 1941 census shows 14 per cent Muslims, while 1951 census shows 12 per cent Muslims in India. Thus the 2 per cent Muslims who migrated were the ones who had opted for a separate land. But the exodus was only from the Northern half, which does not include areas beyond the Godavari. The Kashmiri Muslim's future rested on the imaginary line of control, POK remaining the bone of contention between the two countries. Thus the Kashmiri Muslims did not migrate to Pakistan. The Muslims within Kashmir and up to Kanya Kumari range were not affected. The reason appears to be linguistic. The Muslims residing in the Northern half Doab were tied down with a common factor of lingua franca i.e. Urdu. Which had developed and flourished here over centuries. In spite of each area having its respective



dialect like Punjabi, Haroti, Karwari, Khadi boli, Bhojpuri, yet at the level of religious community Urdu remained a common factor among them while in the southern half including Orissa the case was not so. Here each of the state had strong literary support. The important being Tamil, Telugu, Kannad, Oriya and Malayali. The Muslims of these areas absorbed within the cultural milieu of the respective region. They probably never could develop an affinity with the Urdu speaking Muslims of Doab. Dravid exemplified strong unity amidst the linguistic diversity. The lack of linguistic homogeneity of Dravid and Oriya reflected upon absence of exodus from here to Pakistan – the new found nation. On the other hand the language Bengali and its linguistic strength coupled with religious affinity created Eastern wing of Pakistan. It was this strong religio-linguistic affinity which ultimately severed link and a war of liberation culminated in creation of Bangladesh – an independent nation.

The root question is why a separate nation for the followers of Islam? Keeping all the historical facts in mind we deduce that in the Indian scenario which was well structured by the *Varna Prastha*, purity/pollution reigned supreme in the mundane activities of the people. *Parakiya/Mlechha* words had been used to represent the *ahindu* (If Hinduism is a religion) inhabitants of the land including Muslims. The communities of different religious denominations had coexisted without excessive confrontation. The coming of the British and their divide and rule policy adequately fanned Hindu-Muslim differences for political and administrative gains. On leaving the country they left their mark by creating two nations. The Mughal Emperor Akbar's conceptualization of Dine-e-Elahi could never gather momentum. Dara Shikoh's philosophical understanding became the cause of his disqualification as the rightful claimant to the throne and ultimately untimely death. Though Akbar resisted the clergy being a powerful Emperor, for Dara Shikoh it was fatal. Thus the actual blending of Hindus and Muslims at customary and philosophic level could never be achieved at any moment of history in our subcontinent. However, at individual level these two communities were acceptable to each other.

The non-acceptance of the two groups at the community level, might have been engrained within the religious fabric. The Islamic temporal and sacred were particularly standardized and regimented. For example *prayer/namaz*, ablution prior to praying, the place mosque, timing, particular quotations from Quran, its language-Arabic, dress code, posture everything is predetermined and there cannot be the slightest digression. Same is applied to food habits-the animal has to be sacrificed in the name of God, the month of fasting or Ramzan. All these situational conformity are further substantiated by the Muslim emulating the entire life pattern of the Prophet with regards to personal attire, manners and etiquette (*Hadith*) along with the practices followed by him and commended. The Muslim seminaries and their clergy diligently review and reinterpret these for dealing with new situation facing the community in the form of *fatwa*. These are communicated to the masses for strict adherence. These established channels between clergy and masses are not merely recommendations by the clergy but have the weightage of religious command which sensitizes the conscience of the Muslims with awe, fear and respectful deference of the religious command. These 'fatwa' becoming doubly forceful when uttered by the Imam



(leading the prayer) as 'Khutba' after the Friday prayer. Thus, the daily individual prayer at the mosque to Id festivity are community affair, where the sense of belongingness builds up at a tender age reaching maturity and total conformance to the patterned existence by adulthood. Hence, the imposing serenity of a concrete mosque amidst thatched roofs in a village or the grandeur of the mosque at Aligarh Muslim University depicts and reflects upon the centrality of the religion which is community based.

This sense of belongingness amongst the Muslims is tangible and remains not only at an ideological or philosophical level, but is something concrete, fool proof and lively, touching each aspect of one's life. The simple act of eating whether that be venison, fowl or fish restricts and segregates them from the other communities. The strongly religionized in group feeling and the wide spread belief that a Muslim can lead an Islamic life only in a Islamic state where the script, dress, slaughtering of animals are done as prescribed, further strengthens the sense of belongingness. If we refer to it as the Islamic consciousness, this consciousness is well expressed in the world Darul Islam a place where the faithful reside. Opposed to it is the Darul Harb, where the infidels rule. Darul Islam literally meaning 'Land of Islam' is a country in which the edicts of Islam are fully promulgated. Opposite to this is Darul Harb literally meaning 'Land of Warfare' and is referred to as a country ruled by infidels and which is not been subdued by Islam. It is a country in which peace has not been proclaimed between the Muslim and unbelievers. A Darul Harb becomes a Darul Islam on one condition, namely, the promulgation of edicts of Islam. Similarly Darul Islam again becomes a Darul Harb on three conditions.

- (i) That the edicts of the unbelievers be promulgated and the edicts of Islam be suppressed.
- (ii) That the country in question be adjoining a Darul Harb and no other Muslim country lie between them (that is when the duty of *jihad* or religious war becomes incumbent on them and they have not the power to carry it on).
- (iii) That no protection (*aman*) remains for either a Muslim or a *zimmi*.

Hence when the edicts of unbelievers are promulgated in a country it is sufficient to constitute it a Darul Harb.

Whether India is considered as Darul Islam or Darul Harb the answer was given way back in 1820 when British regime faced the threat of a crescent army in south east and composed mainly of Bengali peasants who reposed their faith in leaders like Sayed Ahmad and Titu Mian. The famous case put up on trial for treason and cessation by British Court brought forth a '*fatwa*' jointly given by grand muftis belonging to the Hanafi and Shafai sects at Makkah and decided that "as long as even some of the peculiar observances of Islam prevail in a country it is Darul Islam". The decision of the mufti of Maliki sect was similar to the decision of the above Mufti. It proclaimed "a country does not become Darul Harb as soon as it passes into the hands of the infidels but when all or most of the injunctions of Islam disappear there from" (Aziz, 1964). The Shia doctor of Law decided that even if a country becomes Darul Harb, a *jihad* is not lawful until the armies of believes are led by a rightful Imam.



Hence, the declaration and demarcation of Pakistan for Muslims was not made merely as a political stance but it had clear intonation and support of the religion. However, the masses which moved were not equipped to interpret the religious dictum of Darul Islam. For the people migrating from India Pakistan became Darul Islam and the ideal typical and those who clamoured for it perceived it a complete redefinition and reinstallation of identity, prestige and values. What happened to their dreams can be assessed from the label 'Muhajir' on the western sector and in the eastern sector the western supremacy and oppression led to revolt and liberation. In contrast none of the Gujarati, Kannad, Malayali, Telegu and Tamil Muslims migrated. They remained within their respective pockets. They did not have any common linguistic bondage, their respective regions giving them succour socially, culturally and economically. However, with time it is Dravid Muslims who have come under the industrial migration and gone to the gulf countries in large numbers. Thus Pakistan which was Khaleej for the northern belt Muslims, for the Dravids gulf countries is the Khaleej today. The Dravid Muslims are now returning Urdu as their mother tongue in large numbers. Hence, the porous international borders of east which are comparatively peaceful, has periodic rise in Muslim population. There are some families who have dual citizenship as well. On the other hand the turbulent western border which had been under constant threat has increase of Muslim population only in the districts of Barmar, Jaisalmer, Shri Ganganagar and Bikaner.

In the light of the forgoing retrospection on changing demography of the Muslims in India, along with certain fundamental issues governing Islam and its followers, we are able to demarcate the key factors.

1. India marked out by regional specificity
2. In Indian caste ridden social system the religious minorities are slotted in the caste hierarchy of each region.
3. The perpetuation of variety of socio-cultural norms overrides the religious commonality. Here Urdu as lingua franca of Indian Muslim failed during partition e.g. Dravid Muslims, Oriya, Gujarati etc.
4. The Islamic sense of belongingness and situational conformity forms the basis of the concept of Darul Islam.
5. Muslim invaders themselves were from a variety of ethnic, cultural and linguistic background.

While people of India had such intent freedom with respect to manners, customs and religious philosophy that the Islamic regimentation in spiritual and temporal life of the people did not gather momentum in this land. After conversion they continued with certain pre-Islamic tradition. Akbar, an able administrator, had felt the pulse of his subjects and had tried to amalgamate the two traditions. However, such attempts were nipped in the bud in spite of having mass acceptance. The total lack of migration from Dravid is an standing example of point 3. While the consistency of population for 100 years in some of the states reflects upon the people flocking around Islamic seat of power i.e. Darul Islam. On the



other hand high concentration of Muslims in districts bordering Pakistan reflects upon people of Doab region trying to increase their proximity with Darul Islam of Pakistan.

The recent industrial nomadism of Dravid Muslims and their attempt at religious unification is their reaction to lack of economic sustenance in their home land. While the imposition of unifying fundamentalist stands with regard to religion meets with resistance and secessionist trend, as experienced in the case of Bangladesh.

In Indian context, unification of any religious group will meet with resistance. More so, in the case of Islam, since, each regional segment has its unique cultural variation, which continue and flourish within the larger fold of Indian Islam. Though, Akbar and Dara Shikoh failed to blend Hinduism and Islam. The people of India have given Islam a new character and flavour that of variety. This can be accepted as such and need not be evaluated from the fundamentalist's viewpoint and in this subcontinent Muslims need not be gauged with ideal typical Islamic yardstick. The Hindi Muslims had been and will remain as a minority community in this secular state and the fear of superimposition of one religion by the other would always remain a chief ploy to be used by the vested interests. Since, history depicts that each war was fought within the religious backdrop.

While within the religio-cultural domain the attempt at making an exclusive identity with regards to language, dress, ritual and territory to enhance unification amongst co-religionist meets with intensified resistance. This has been proven true and time tested in this subcontinent. Mainly because here the religious philosophies had reached to such refinement that an illiterate farmer and a Vedic Pandit could attain spiritual bliss within their respective domain. The freedom and variety in religious and cultural affairs was not only limited to one religious group but to most of others and more importantly to the people. Hence, the respective regional variations had always kept the individual religious fervor within limits.

Thus treating all Hindi Muslims at par and stamping them with the ideal typical Islamic valuation will not meet with success, since it is not true and in India the strength of the people lies in their diversity. Thus, the first Indian census of 1881 had returned 19.7 per cent Muslims and had further elaborated that these dispersed aggregate of Muslims, forming neither a collectivity nor a distinct society for any purpose, political, economic and social. The British colonial scholars in their writing had emphasized that Muslims whose religious rituals had a very strong tinge of Hinduism and who retained caste and observed Hindu festivals and ceremonies remains true even after 120 years since the first census, and even today, the non Muslim and Muslims cannot regard this Muslim entity as monochromatic except may be from an exclusively political angle.



**Table 1**  
**Bharat-cauldron of Ethnic Identities**

<i>Era</i>	<i>Invaders</i>	<i>Origin</i>	<i>Religion</i>	<i>Area of Influence</i>
3000 BP	Arya	Sindhu region	Vedic	North
2518 BP	Skylax	Persia	Majusi	North West
2326 BP	Alexander	Greece	Greek	North West
40 (Year)	Saka/Scythian	Skythia (North of Black Sea)	Multiform deities akin to Greeks referred as idolators and polytheists	West
52 (Year)	Gondopheres	Parthia (West Asia) South-east of Caspian sea	Majusi	North West
711 (Year)	Muhammad bin Qasim	Arab	Islam (Sunni)	Sindh
1026 (Year)	Mahmood of Ghazni	Persian by parentage	Islam (Sunni)	Gujarat, Kannauj
1191 (Year)	Muhammad Ghorī	Turkey	Islam (Sunni)	Punjab, Sindh, Tarain (near Bhatinda), Thaneswar
1206 (Year)	Qutubuddin Aibao	Manumitted slave general in Army of Ghorī	Islam (Sunni)	Delhi
1221 (Year)	Gengis Khan	Mongolia	Non-Muslim	Sunam
1290 (Year)	Jallaluddin F. Khilji	Turkish, settled in Khalj (Afghanistan) adapted Afghan manners and customs	Islam (Sunni)	Delhi
1320 (Year)	Ghiasuddin Tughlaq	Qaraunah Turk belonged to Taghlik tribe of Turkey. Father Turkish Slave and mother a Jat Woman	Islam (Sunni)	Delhi
1398 (Year)	Aksak Timur alias Timur-e-lang	Transoziana-Turkey	Islam (Sunni)	Delhi
1451 (Year)	Bahlal Lodi	Afghanistan belonged to	Islam (Sunni)	Delhi
Shahu clan				
1526 (Year)	Babur	(khel) of Lodi tribe Barla Turk, Timur from father Gengis Khan from mother Uzbekistan	Islam (Sunni)	Delhi
1539 (Year)	Sher Shah Suri	Afghan	Islam (Sunni)	Delhi
1739 (Year)	Nadir Shah	Persian	Islam (Sunni)	Delhi
1761	Ahmad Shah Abdali	Afghanistan	Islam (Sunni)	Delhi



Table 2  
Population Dynamics of Muslims in Time and Space

State/Union Territory	1951	1961	% increase 1951-61	1971	% increase 1961-71	1981	% increase 1971-81	1991	% increase 1981-91	% to State/UT total population (1991)	2001	% increase 1991-2001
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Andaman & Nicobar Island	4783	7398	54.67	11655	57.54	16188	38.89	21354	31.91	07.61	29265	37.05
Andhra Pradesh	2410168	2715021	12.65	3520166	29.65	4533700	28.79	5923954	30.66	08.91	6986856	17.94
Arunachal Pradesh	NA	1008	NA	842	-16.47	5073	502.49	11922	135.01	01.38	20675	73.42
Assam	1995936	2765509	38.56	3592124	29.89	NA	-	6373204	-	28.43	8240611	29.00
Bihar	4373360	5785631	32.29	7594173	31.26	9874993	30.03	12787985	29.50	14.81	13722048	07.00
Chandigarh	NA	1467	NA	3720	153.58	9115	145.03	17477	91.74	2.72	35548	103.40
Chattisgarh#	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	409615	-
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	159	443	178.62	740	67.04	1932	161.08	3341	72.93	2.41	6524	95.0
Daman & Diu	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	7144	NA	9048	26.65	8.91	12281	35.73
Delhi	99501	155453	56.23	263019	69.19	481802	83.18	889641	84.65	9.44	1623520	82.49
Goa	14008	14166	1.13	32250	127.66	41317	28.11	61455	48.74	5.25	92210	50.04
Gujarat	1451214	1745703	20.25	2249055	28.88	2907744	29.29	3606920	24.05	8.73	4592854	27.33
Haryana	NA	290438	NA	405723	39.69	523536	29.04	763775	45.89	4.64	1222916	60.11
Himachal Pradesh	15253	25619	67.96	50327	96.45	69613	38.32	89134	28.04	1.72	119512	34.08
Jammu & Kashmir	NA	2432067	NA	3040129	25.00	3843451	26.42	NA	NA	64.19*	6793240	-
Jharkhand#	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3731308	-
Karnataka	1950077	2328376	19.40	3113298	33.71	4163691	33.74	5234023	25.71	11.64	6463127	23.48
Kerala	2374598	3027639	27.50	4162718	37.49	5409687	29.96	6788364	25.49	23.33	7863842	15.84
Lakshadweep	21018	23789	13.18	30019	26.19	38173	27.16	48765	27.75	94.31	57903	18.74
Madhya Pradesh	1050298	1317617	25.45	1815685	37.80	2501919	37.79	3282800	31.21	4.96	3841449	17.02
Maharashtra	2436357	3034332	24.54	4233023	39.50	5805785	37.15	7628755	31.40	9.67	10270485	34.63
Manipur	37197	48588	30.62	70969	46.06	99327	39.96	133535	34.44	7.27	190939	42.99

Contd.....



State/Union Territory	1951	1961	% increase 1951-61	1971	% increase 1961-71	1981	% increase 1971-81	1991	% increase 1981-91	% to State/UT total popula-tion(1991)	2001	% increase 1991-2001
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Meghalaya	NA	23019	NA	26347	14.46	41434	57.26	61462	48.34	3.46	99169	61.35
Mizoram	NA	203	NA	1882	827.09	2205	17.16	4538	105.80	0.66	10099	122.54
Nagaland	520	891	71.35	2966	232.88	11806	298.04	20642	74.84	1.71	35005	69.58
Orissa	176338	215319	22.11	326507	51.64	422266	29.33	577775	36.83	1.83	761985	31.88
Pondicherry	NA	23470	NA	29143	24.17	36663	25.80	52867	44.20	6.54	59358	12.28
Punjab	284993	393314	38.01	114447	70.90	168094	46.87	239401	42.42	1.18	382045	59.58
Rajasthan	991246	1314613	32.62	1778275	35.27	2492145	40.14	3525339	41.46	8.01	4788227	35.82
Sikkim	124	1207	873.39	335	-72.24	3241	867.46	3849	18.76	0.95	7693	99.87
Tamilnadu	1442935	1560414	8.14	2103899	34.83	2519947	19.77	3052717	21.14	5.47	3470647	13.69
Tripura	136940	230002	67.96	103962	-54.80	138529	33.25	196495	41.84	7.13	254442	29.49
Uttar Pradesh	9028992	10788089	19.48	13676533	26.77	17657735	29.11	24109684	36.54	17.33	30740158	27.50
Uttaranchal#	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1012141	-
West Bengal	5118269	6985287	36.48	9064338	29.76	11743259	29.55	16075836	36.89	23.61	20290543	26.22

\* Based upon 1981 population data

# Newly carved states.



**Table 3**  
**Number of Districts in Different Ranges Showing**  
**Percentage of Muslims to Total Population**

<i>State/U.T</i>	<i>30.01</i>	<i>15.01- 31.00</i>	<i>7.01- 15.00</i>	<i>3.01- 7.00</i>	<i>1.01- 3.00</i>	<i>1.00 and below</i>	<i>Total</i>
India (Excluding Jammu & Kashmir)	30	58	148	95	580	63	452
Andhra Pradesh	01	01	10	06	03	02	023
Arunachal Pradesh	00	00	00	00	06	05	011
Assam	10	03	04	03	03	00	023
Bihar	04	11	24	02	01	00	042
Goa	00	00	00	02	00	00	002
Gujarat	00	02	08	07	02	00	019
Haryana	01	00	02	01	05	07	016
Himachal Pradesh	00	00	00	02	03	07	012
Karnataka	00	03	15	02	00	00	020
Kerala	03	05	03	03	00	00	014
Madhya Pradesh	00	01	10	19	13	02	045
Maharashtra	00	02	17	08	03	00	030
Manipur	00	01	01	01	01	04	008
Meghalaya	00	00	01	00	01	03	005
Mizoram	00	00	00	00	00	03	003
Nagaland	00	00	00	01	00	06	007
Orissa	00	00	00	02	04	07	013
Punjab	00	00	01	00	02	09	012
Rajasthan	00	01	14	10	02	00	027
Sikkim	00	00	00	00	01	03	004
Tamilnadu	00	00	06	12	03	00	021
Tripura	00	00	02	01	00	00	003
Uttar Pradesh	06	20	23	07	02	05	063
West Bengal	04	07	03	03	00	00	017
Andaman & Nicobar	00	00	01	00	01	00	002
Chandigarh	00	00	00	00	01	00	001
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	00	00	00	00	01	00	001
Daman and Diu	00	00	01	01	00	00	002
Delhi	00	00	01	00	00	00	001
Lakshdweep	01	00	00	00	00	00	001
Pondicherry	00	01	01	02	00	00	004



**Table 4**  
**General Distribution of Muslim Population in States (Per 100)**

<i>Regions</i>	<i>1881</i>	<i>1891</i>	<i>1901</i>	<i>1911</i>	<i>1921</i>	<i>1931</i>	<i>1941</i>	<i>1951</i>
United Provinces	13.74	13.82	14.38	14.39	14.46	14.98	15.43	14.28
Bihar	NA	NA	NA	NA	12.25	12.73	13.89	11.36
Orissa	NA	NA	NA	NA	12.40	11.90	12.00	12.00
Bombay	NA	NA	NA	NA	07.94	08.12	08.47	08.09
Bengal	NA	NA	NA	NA	26.14	26.83	25.38	19.85
Assam	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	22.36	22.08
Travancore & Cochin	NA	NA	06.50	06.70	06.80	07.00	07.30	07.80
Madhya Bharat	MA	NA	NA	NA	NA	06.46	06.66	06.24
Bhopal State	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	12.31	13.99	15.38
Hyderabad State	NA	NA	10.40	10.30	10.40	10.60	12.80	11.80
Vindhya Pradesh	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	02.63	02.30	02.13
Rajasthan State	09.00	08.00	10.00	09.00	09.00	10.00	09.00	06.21
Ajmer	12.50	13.70	15.10	16.20	20.50	17.30	15.40	04.60

(Based on Census Reports).



**Table 5**  
**Muslims and Urdu Mother Tongue (In Descending Order)**

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>State/U.T</i>	<i>Muslim Population (1991)</i>	<i>Population of Persons Returned Urdu as Mother Tongue</i>	<i>Percent to Muslim Population</i>
1.	Andhra Pradesh	5923954 (8.91)	5560154	93.86
2.	Orissa	577775 (1.83)	502102	86.90
3.	Karnataka	5234023 (11.64)	4480038	85.59
4.	Maharashtra	7628755 (9.67)	5734468	75.17
5.	Bihar	12787985 (14.81)	8542463	66.80
6.	Goa	61455 (5.25)	39944	64.99
7.	Delhi	889641 (9.4)	512990	57.66
8.	Uttar Pradesh	24109684 (17.33)	12492927	51.82
9.	Sikkim	3849 (0.95)	1703	44.24
10.	Madhya Pradesh	3282800 (4.96)	1227672	37.40
11.	Haryana	763775 (4.64)	261820	34.28
12.	Tamilnadu	3052717 (5.47)	1036660	33.96
13.	Rajasthan	3525339 (8.01)	953467	27.04
14.	Chandigarh	17477 (2.72)	4570	26.15
15.	Gujarat	3606920 (8.73)	547737	15.18
16.	Pondicherry	52867 (6.54)	6170	11.67
17.	Arunachal Pradesh	11922 (1.38)	1370	11.49
18.	Himachal Pradesh	89134 (1.72)	8252	09.26
19.	West Bengal	16075836 (23.61)	1455649	09.05
20.	Mizoram	4538 (0.66)	349	07.69
21.	Andaman and Nicobar	21354 (7.61)	1492	06.99
22.	Nagaland	20642 (1.71)	1381	06.69
23.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	3341 (2.41)	198	05.93
24.	Punjab	239401 (1.18)	13416	05.60
25.	Meghalaya	61462 (3.46)	2863	04.66
26.	Daman and Diu	9048 (8.91)	84	00.93
27.	Kerala	6788364 (23.33)	12625	00.18
28.	Manipur	133535 (7.27)	193	00.14
29.	Tripura	196495 (7.13)	173	00.09
30.	Lakshadweep	48765 (94.31)	37	00.07
31.	Assam	6373204 (28.43)	3935	00.06

\*No Census was conducted in state of Jammu and Kashmir

\*\*Figures in parantheses are percentage of Muslim Population in State / Union Territory.



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## THE HINDI MUSALMAN—A RETROSPECTION

*Shibani Roy and S.H.M. Rizvi*

**Abstract:** *The strength of a secular state rests heavily on the peaceful co-existence of several religious groups, many of them being numerically minority groups. These minority groups have their own ethnic identity by which they maintain their specific territoriality, religion, language, physical features, attire, customary practices and institutions. During the pre-colonial period these groups lived within their respective polity and governance. The main thrust of the present paper is on one of the largest minorities of India which is grouped under the category of Muslims. Throughout the history of Mughal rule, except a few sporadic attempts by some zealots, sharia was not imposed. Islam's contact with Hindu way of life has been spread over a span of about twelve long centuries. Muslims arrived in India in three distinct movements—first as traders and missionaries to India's western and southern coasts, then in the expanding wave of conquests and immigration movement of Central Asian Turks, Afghans and Persians. India has assimilated almost all races and cultures that entered the land at different times by broadening her faith and her social structure. On reviewing the situation of partition of India and*

*creation of Pakistan we find that the Muslims of western, southern, central and north eastern areas were not affected by the partition. They had opted to stay back in their homeland. This sense of belongingness amongst the Muslims is tangible and remains not only at an ideological or philosophical level, but is something concrete, fool proof and lively, touching each aspect of one's life. Treating all Hindi Muslims at par and stamping them with the ideal typical Islamic valuation will not meet with success. In India the strength of the people lies in their diversity. Thus, the first Indian census of 1881 had returned 19.7 per cent Muslims and had further elaborated that these dispersed aggregate of Muslims, forming neither a collective nor a distinct society for any purpose, political, economic and social. The British colonial officers in their writing had emphasized that Muslims whose religious rituals had a very strong tinge of Hinduism and who retained caste and observed Hindu festivals and ceremonies remains true even after 120 years since the first census, and even today, the non Muslims and Muslims cannot regard this Muslim entity as monochromatic except may be from an exclusively political angle.*

Secularism is not an alien concept that is imported out of compulsion after Independence. Rather it is an integral and natural feature of our national culture and ethos. The term *Secculum/Saccularis* had been coined in ecclesiastical Latin to connote the word as opposed to church, religious belief, rule and monastic principles. In time it was heavily loaded with political strategy when it is used as 'secular state' or 'ideology'. The strength of a secular state rests heavily on the peaceful co-existence of several religious groups, many of them being numerically minority groups. These minority groups have their own ethnic identity by which they maintain their specific territoriality, religion, language, physical features, attire, customary practices and institutions. During the pre colonial period these groups lived within their respective polity and governance.

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