



## **Evolution of Local self-Government in the Pre- Colonial South India**

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Panchayat Raj is not a new concept. The Panchayats have for centuries past formed an integral part of village administration in our country. The Panchayat or the institutions of the village council is as old as India's History and a part of her tradition. Although the form in which it exists today is much different from the system which prevailed in the ancient and medieval periods. From time immemorial, it had enjoyed the confidence of the people. The system survived in spite of turmoils and changes, because the village folk were fully confident of their own capabilities of sound thinkings and right approach to problems. Panchayat literally means an assembly (Yat) of five (Panch) which looks after the affairs of the village<sup>1</sup>. Wise and respected elders were chosen and accepted by the village community. Panchayat has a wide spectrum of activities covering executive, administrative and judiciary. The aim of their paper is an attempt to give a brief historical survey of the evolution of local self-Government of ancient and medieval South India with a special focus on the Cholas period.

In South India, the Panchayats had their roots in the past and as evident from the historical records, inscriptions and monuments. They played an important role in the integration and development of village life. From the historic period, South India was ruled by numerous Kings, the Chera, Chola, Pandyas of the Sangam age (300 BC to 300 AD) and south extreme was ruled by the Ayis, replaced by the Kalabhras (300 AD to 600 AD). The overthrow of Kalabhras opened the Pallava rule and helped the later Cheras, Cholas and later Pandyas for their restoration. After them the Medieval South was under the control of Vijayanagar Rulers and

extreme South was under the Venad kings. Village administration was strongly promoted for the welfare of their subjects under the hegemony of these rulers. In order to administer the country effectively a state has to be divided into smaller territorial compartments at the village level. This proves that the ancient and medieval South Indians had the institution of grass root democracy.

### **Decentralised Governance in the ancient period**

Though the Sangam rulers were despots, they adopted the policy of decentralisation by giving importance to the local administrative bodies in villages. The village was the fundamental unit of administration. Generally, it was a desolate condition. The Village assemblies mentioned in the ancient classics like Sangam literature dealt with the common matters of the village. A plethora of literary and epigraphical evidence is available to bear witness to the existence and working of the rural institutions of those days in south India. Traditionally, the villages looked after its administration. The village assemblies such as Manram”,Avai” and Ambalam” managed the local business. Manram was a local assembly. It met under the shadow of the tree. All the people of the village participated in the meeting. Ambalam was a building constructed on a slightly elevated platform. Most of the members were elders.

The village assembly enjoyed more power than the present day Panchayat. It settled petty disputes arising in the village. The members of the village assembly were called as Avaiyattan who were not remunerated for their services<sup>2</sup>. During the latter part of the Sangam age extreme South had been under the control of the “Ayi”. The Sangam literature mentions about Manram and Podiyil which were the village assemblies existed there<sup>3</sup>. There are inscriptional evidences too to see that there were village sabhas during the Ayi’s rule. The functions of the sabhas were mostly restricted to temple administration. There are also references in Pallium copper plate and the Partivapuram plates about a Sabha at Munchirai<sup>4</sup>, which exercised judicial powers under the supervision of the crown. Moreover, Huzur office plates refer to the purchase of certain land from the sabha of Munchirai by an Ayi king, Karunadatakkam, to build a temple for Lord Vishnu at Partivapuram<sup>5</sup>. The glorious history and culture of the sangam Tamils come to an end and enveloped by Kalabhras in or about 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD to the third quarter of the sixth century AD. The crowned monarchs of Sangam period lost their power and sunk in to obscurity. Finally after a prolonged dark political fall, the Pallavas and the Pandyas freed the tamil country from the Kalabhras yoke<sup>6</sup>.

The administration in the village was given due importance by the Pallavas (280AD to 580 AD). The village was the smallest Government unit under them. Traditional form of administration existed on the villages. The head of the village was called Nattar. The inscriptions of the eighth and ninth centuries which belong to the later pallavas mentioned three types of villages or town assemblies existed

there, namely Ur, the sabha and Nagaram. The Ur was an assembly that consisted of all classes of people who held land in the village. The sabha was a bhramin assembly that consisted of the land holders of the agrahara villages. In the Nagaram, traders and merchants predominated. Members elected were divided into required committees. The committees looked after the day today administration of the village. Especially, the committees concentrated more on the construction and maintenance of tanks, cultivable lands, roads etc.<sup>7</sup>

### **Local governance in the medieval period**

In the history of local self-Government, the Chola rule has been engraved on the golden leaves with diamond style. In fact, the Chola administration was built on the bedrock of rural local institutions. The most striking feature of Chola period from 850 AD to 1173 AD was the functioning of the autonomous rural institutions with vigour and efficiency.<sup>8</sup> The two Utharamerur (a village on Chengalpettu district of Tamilnadu state) inscriptions of Parantaka I dated 919 AD and 921 AD threw light on the nature and character of the village administration of the Cholas. A highly developed committee system(Variyams) for the administration of local affairs was evolved and the sabha of Utharamerur, which revised constitutional arrangements twice at short intervals in the reign of Parantaka I, is the typical example of a number of similar attempt going on everywhere to develop improved methods of administration<sup>9</sup>.

The part played by the village assemblies in the economic life of the village in medieval South India is noteworthy. The organisation of village assemblies enjoyed a good deal of autonomy was the most conspicuous feature of the Chola administrative system. While the central Government was responsible for defense, law and order and promotion of general and cultural advancement of the people, the village assemblies were allowed to function freely in the field of local affairs. The Brahmin assembly of Mahasabha, compared to non-Brahmin Ur, functioned more effectively in the Chola kingdom. Every grown up Brahmin in the village became the member of the assembly provided, he was sound in mind and body.

The functions of Ur and Sabha were of a wide and varied nature management of Temple, its properties, the tanks, gardens and charitable institutions in the temple as well as the settlement of disputes among the people were some of their important duties. Preservation and maintenance of public health, protection against robberies, offering relief to the needy, maintenance of water supply, irrigation, public roads and providing education to the young were the other services performed by the assemblies. Besides these Ur and Mahasabha, there were other popular bodies like the district assembly called 'Attar' and town assembly called 'Nagarattar.' In fact, their provincial and local administration, with the divisions of Mandalam, Kottam, Kootam and Gramam of governing councils and assemblies stand as a testimony to their administrative efficiency.<sup>10</sup>

Furthermore, the Kudavolai system, the ballot system of elections in the period of the Imperial Cholas clearly vindicate the fact that the Government was the Government of the people, and by the people, through the monarch was at the helm of affairs. The method of election for the local self-governing bodies under the cholas was known as 'Kudavolai Murai' or Pot ticket system'. According to this system, the name of the contesting candidates would be written on Palmyra leaves, put in a pot, shuffled and a child would be asked to takeout as many leaves as the total number of candidates needed to be elected. The candidates, whose names were written on he leaves taken out by the child, would be declared elected<sup>11</sup>.

The members thus elected could constitute themselves into various Variams' or Committees such as Eri Variam or Lake committee, Thottavariam or Garden committee, Pon Variam or Golden committee etc. and the members would discharge their respective function. The duration of the membership was one year. A big Banyan tree in the village or village Mandaba served as the office. The Account of books of the Panchayat were maintained by an officer designated as Karanathan'. This post was filled with meticulous care and the persons chosen for it were of sterling character. They presented the accounts in the Panchayat meetings. Thus, the Panchayats in medieval period proved efficient units of village administration, attending to all the civic amenities of the villages and also administered justice impartially.<sup>12</sup>

The Chola empire was divided the State into many territorial divisions for the administrative purpose. The Mandalams were again sub divided into several smaller divisions known as Kottams, Mandalams, valanadus and Nadus may correspond to our modern divisions of States, Districts and Taluks respectively. Ur or Taniyur a self-governing Village was the smallest unit of administration under the cholas.

The system of Chola administration was highly organised .The efficient the Cholas had three major type of administration divisions called (i) central government, (ii) Provincial government and (iii) Local government, have been well appreciated by many historians. Like the Chola rule, the second Pandya monarchs and the later Cheras (825-1102 AD) had village councils almost similar to that of the Cholas, had encouraged and allowed to exist, though there were slight changes in the mode of election duration of office and designation of the officers etc<sup>13</sup>.

After the disappearance of the Kulasekharas as the imperial power of Kerala, Venad rose to political prominence in the 12<sup>th</sup> century AD. It was during the reign the local assemblies and the day today affairs were managed by them. The inscriptions at Vellayini of 1196 AD, another at Trivandrum of 1209 AD and yet another at Manalikkara of 1235 AD all indicate that the local affairs were under the purview of the assemblies<sup>14</sup>.

Keralotpatti, a Malayalam literature mentioned about three types of Assemblies,(i.e.) Tarakuttam, Nattukuttam and Perumkuttam, flourished in Kerala from time to time for many centuries till recent past<sup>15</sup>. Nattukuttam was the National assembly represented by the whole country. In Kerala until the close of the Portuguese<sup>16</sup> epoch, Kootams were under the control of Nambudiris. The lower strata of the society had no representation in those bodies whether it was the Paravar koottam or Ayirani koottam. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century as a result of the fall in the number of Nambudiris, Nairs began to dominate in the affairs of the Kootams.

South India under the Vijayanagar rule (1336-1565AD) saw the introduction of Ayagar system in the villages. This brought out a set back to the tradition and local administration units. Under the Ayagar system 12 Government officials took over the village administration<sup>17</sup>. The Vijayanagar rulers inherited and continued to maintain healthy vigorous system of local administration, with the villages as the lowest unit. Each village was a self-sufficient unit. The village assembly, like the Panchayat of Northern India, conducted the administration of the area under its charge-executive, judicial and police through hereditary officers like the Senateova or the village Accountant, the Talara or the village watchman or commandant, the Begara or the Superintendent of forced labour and others. The village officers were paid either by grants of land or a portion of agricultural produce. The king maintained link with the village administration through the royal officer called the Mahanayakacharya, who exercised a general supervision over it<sup>18</sup>. Moreover, the local administration flourished in the chola period began to decline during the Vijayanagar rule. It lost its importance in 16<sup>th</sup> century, due to the introduction of Nayankara system in the provinces.

### **Conclusion**

A birds eye view on the evolution of decentralised administration in South India in the pre -colonial period proves that, the people's participation in the administration was there existed since ancient times. Dynasties and empires have risen and fallen, but local-self governments have survived. It had its zenith during the reign of the Imperial Cholas and declined after the Vijayanagar rule. The establishment of the British rule in 1800 marked the decline of the village panchayats. The one time little republics known for their self-sufficiency and independency lost their allegiance to the community. The village officials became part of the centralised machinery mostly manned by the aliens.

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## **Indian Politics in 1945-46 revisited**

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The victory in favour of Clement Attlee's Labour party in July 1945 marked a significant transformation of the Indian political scenario and the last stage of the British rule in India. As opposed to Churchill's hard core imperialism, Attlee was set on decolonization. After discussions in London, it was announced on 19 September 1945 that "it was the intention of the Attlee government to transfer power for full self-government in India." Based on the results of general elections, which were to be held in the coming winter, a central body would start designing the future constitution of India under 1942 scheme, with possible modifications if needed, and Executive Council of the Governor General was to be Indianite (Panigrahi 268). The partition of India was not generally envisaged yet, as it suited the strategic needs of Britain to leave behind a united India. However, Wavell knew well that ignorance of its possibility would not make it fade away. (Wolpert 249). As a matter of fact, as soon as the elections were announced in August, tempestuous political campaigns spread like a wildfire and effectively divided the country and its people. While the Congress claimed to speak for all Indians, irrespective of religion, the League claimed to be the mouthpiece of all Muslims. The elections ultimately "evolved into a plebiscite in favour of, or against, the idea of Pakistan" (Khan 32). Jinnah unleashed his 'poisonous propaganda' on the sole platform of Pakistan demand stating that it was a matter of life and death for Muslims (Wolpert 250-1) and every vote cast against the League "would help create Hindu Raj". Once again, Jinnah was playing on consciousness of Muslims using religion and fear of Hindu domination. But he was not the only one who was manipulating religious feelings in order to gain votes. Similar practices were adopted by the Congress, the Socialists, the Unionists and others. Bigotry,

chauvinism and exaggerated statements were to be the precursors of violent encounters that followed. The Congress manifesto underlined economic development and reforms but not even Nehru did refrain from utopian remarks; he observed that “Pakistan was a useless idea which meant slavery forever” (Khan 33-4). In addition to spreading anti-Pakistani sentiment, Congress was also mobilizing people against the British Government and towards immediate independence. Series of mutinies, workers' strikes and nationwide anti-British protests (Khan 25), encouraged by speeches of the Congress leaders, especially Nehru and Patel (Panigrahi 270), conclusively showed the British Government and Lord Wavell that transfer of power in India was inevitable. Last attempt to resolve political impasse without having to confront partition and ensure smooth withdrawal was made in a form of the 'Cabinet Mission' after general elections.

The 1945-46 elections were held first for the Central Legislature and soon after for the provincial legislative. The results clearly showed keen interest of Muslims in Pakistan idea and once and for all proved that the League was the sole representative of Indian Muslims, as it secured approximately 87 per cent of the vote in Muslim-majority areas and won all 30 seats reserved for Muslims in Central Legislature. Likewise, the Congress swept the polls in general constituencies with 91 per cent tally and captured 57 out of a total of 102 seats in central assembly, thus emerged as the strongest national party and formed ministries. Although the Muslim League had won almost all Muslim seats in the provinces, it could not form the government in any Muslim-majority province, except for Bengal and Sind. In the Punjab, the Congress came up with an offer of coalition on a condition that the League would abandon the claim for Pakistan (Panigrahi 271). It seemed as if it had been deliberately placed only to be refused since the Punjab province was “the key” to Pakistan in prevailing opinion (Mujahid 6). The Congress teamed up with the Unionists instead, who were predominantly of Sikhs. These developments struck massive blow to Jinnah ambitions of sovereign state and members of the League were threatening with violence if their dream was denied them. Hindu-Muslim bloody confrontations had already occurred during the election campaign, though on relatively small scale. Nobody could predict what would happen this time around. Social disorder bordering on civil war was surely not an exaggerating scenario, bearing in mind bitter antagonism between the communities, and later events unfortunately confirmed that. Reports made by the British delegation, which visited India in early 1946, suggested that “some form of Pakistan would have to be conceded” considering the heated attitude of Muslims, especially in Punjab (Wolpert 255). Everything depended on the outcome of the Cabinet Mission whose members, Stafford Cripps, Pethick Lawrence and V. Alexander, had been in India since March 1946.



The purpose of the mission was to bring the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League to an agreement regarding the framing of a new constitution for a self-governing, independent India through a constitution-making body and to set up a new interim government that would hold office while the constitution was being hammered out. There was a great deal of discussions whether India should be partitioned or whether union of India comprising British India and the states should be formed. Further, central and provincial responsibilities were discussed; residuary powers were to be assigned to the provinces and the questions relating to communal issues were to be voted upon by the two major communities representatives in the legislature. Jinnah was persistent on his stand for partition and fully independent sovereign state encompassing whole Muslim-majority areas in the North West (Baluchistan, Punjab, Sind and N W F Province) and in the East (Bengal and Assam) (Menon 246). He once again referred to the two-nation theory and Pakistan to be the only possible solution. But Petick Lawrence, the Secretary of State, ensured him that such 'combo' had very "little chance of acceptance" considering that large parts of Bengal and Punjab were inhabited by substantial number of non-Muslims, especially Sikhs and Hindus in Punjab (Wolpert 259). In addition, a set-up "on the lines claimed by the Muslim League would not solve communal problem" (Panigrahi 275). Partition of these areas would not be acceptable for Jinnah either, so the whole idea of sovereign state was put on hold. The Congress leadership represented by Azad (the President), Nehru, Patel and Khan also strictly opposed any kind of partition and wanted to establish strong Federal Government with the power gathered at the centre. Jinnah was forced to consider the Union, sustaining critics from his followers, which would have consisted of the Pakistan and the Hindustan groups, so-called 'three-tier Federation'. But insisted on separate constitution-making bodies for these groups. He mentioned that it would be the price for entering into the Union. He also demanded a parity of representation between the groups in the Union Legislature that might be established. The Congress on the other hand wanted "one constitution-making body for the whole of India and later for the groups, if so desired, by the provinces concerned" (Menon 263). It opposed two separate bodies for it would in principle allow the League to pursue Pakistan and disrupt the unity of India. It also rejected the possibility of the parity between 90 million Muslims and 200 million Hindus; Gandhi termed the idea "worse than partition" (Wolpert 266). The gap between the Congress and the League was so huge that after nearly three months of exhausting negotiations the leaders still could not reach a consensus. Their political views were apparently irreconcilable. The British, frustrated at Congress-League 'tussle', resented to present its own settlement on 16 May 1946 based on prolonged discussions. It was a last hope for a single Indian unity and a peaceful transfer of power.

The Cabinet Mission Plan envisaged a Union of India, embracing both British India and the States, which would deal with defence, foreign affairs and communications and have the power to raise finances for these areas of government activity. All other areas would be delegated to the provinces. The Union would have an executive and legislature representing both British India and the states. Any communal issue or question would be decided by a majority of votes of two major communities in the legislature. Provinces had an option to form groups and to elect their own executives and legislatures and were given right to call for a reconsideration of the terms of the constitution of the union and the group after every ten years by a majority vote of its Legislative Assembly. The Mission proposed the setting up of an Interim Government having the support of major political parties, in which all the portfolios would be held by Indian leaders, while constitution-making body would frame the constitution. Regarding constitution-making body, it would consist of representatives of all provinces proportional to its population (in the ratio of one to a million) and divided between the main communities (General, Muslims and Sikhs) in each province in proportion to their population. Representatives allocated to each community in a province would be elected by members of that community in its Legislative Assembly. Those would be separated into three sections:

Section A – Madras, Bombay, United Provinces, Bihar, Central Provinces and Orissa

Section B – Punjab, NWFP and Sind

Section C – Bengal and Assam

These sections would decide the provincial constitutions within their group and whether any group constitution should be set up. Provinces would have the power to opt out of the groups when the new Union constitution had come into force. After the group constitution had been settled the sections would reassemble, together with representatives of the Indian States, for the purpose of settling the Union constitution (Menon 264-6).

The plan gave the opportunity to the Muslim-majority provinces to form groups with full legislative and executive powers with a weak central union only dealing with defence, foreign affairs and communications. Moreover, these groups were allowed to frame their provincial and group constitutions “unfettered by the Union in any way” and would have the power to secede from the union after ten years. Disappointed as they were, this 'version of Pakistan' had to be good enough for the League and Jinnah, at least for now, and they accepted the plan on 6 June 1946. However, “separate sovereign Pakistan was still the unalterable objective” (Menon 273) of the All-India Muslim League. The plan had encouraged them to do so in principle. Jinnah agreed to the Mission for another reason. Communal

tensions were rising up and extremists of his own party “were ready to launch jihad without further delay” (Wolpert 269-270) if instructed.

The proposal was complex and grouping of the provinces was probably the most controversial issue. Even though the Cabinet Mission rejected the concept of two separate and fully independent sovereign states of Pakistan and India and opposed the principle of partition, “Congress felt that the plan envisaged not one but several partitions after a few years.” There was a question of protection of minorities in these groups with no reliable answer (Panigrahi 278). Ambiguity of the 16 May statement caused it was interpreted differently. The Congress thought it was not compulsory for the provinces to enter particular group (Chatterji 138). Gandhi mainly objected the idea of grouping of the provinces on a religious or communal basis and their option of secession from the union. Another contentious problem was the composition and formation of the interim government. On 16 June the Cabinet Mission announced short term plan about its composition (Ghose 147). It was to be a coalition represented equally by the Congress and the Muslim League and other elements. Gandhi expressed in his letter to Pethick Lawrence that the National Government, as he labelled it, ought to be “strong, capable and homogenous . . . Without it, deep and universal corruption cannot end . . . There can therefore be no question of parity whether the Government is allowed to be formed by the Congress or the Muslim League. He also pointed out that “National Government be responsible in fact, if not in law, to the elected members of the Central Legislative Assembly, should precede the summons of the election of members of the Constituent Assembly.” (Gandhi 91:5-6). This last statement suggested, according to Lord Alexander, that Gandhi was trying “to secure power without a constitution coming into being and so to abandon the just claims of the Muslim League” (Wolpert 270). Finally, Gandhi criticised presence of the British troops in India and requested an unconditional withdrawal if the British intentions of granting independence to India was genuine (Gandhi 91:5). These ideas were not new at all, only underlined existed parallels between the Congress and the League.

The crux of the problem was the parity in the interim executive. The Congress was not willing to accept it after grabbing most of the 'general seats' in recent elections and Jinnah could not afford to waive it, as he had been fighting for it for too long. The Congress finally 'accepted' the 16 May proposal, on 25 June 1946, with reservations about “the limitations of the Central authority” and “the system of grouping of provinces” (Menon 277) but did not agree to 16 June Statement and refused to enter the interim government on two grounds. Jinnah, as the President of the Muslim League, insisted that he alone should nominate Muslim members to the Executive Council. The Congress, being a national organization, declared that it would nominate members from any community

including Muslim and others. It also claimed the right to nominate a member of the Depressed Classes community by virtue of the communal award agreed to earlier. Thus it would have six members to which Jinnah objected (Panigrahi 292). While the Congress had “turned down the scheme for the interim government”, it signified “its willingness to participate in the deliberations of the constitution-making body” (Tongo 13). Since the Congress had not accepted the plan in its entirety, Jinnah now thought that the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, would invite him to form the interim government as he stipulated earlier in discussions (Wolpert 272). Instead he decided to appoint a “caretaker government” for “a short interval” and remarked that they could “go ahead with the Constituent Assembly and constitution-making” during that interlude since cabinet mission was returning to England. (Menon 277). Jinnah was absolutely shocked at dishonesty of the Viceroy and the Cabinet Ministers who committed “a breach of faith” (Menon 283). He pointed to the paragraph 8 of 16 June statement which clearly stated that “in the event of the two major parties or either of them proving unwilling to join in the setting up of a coalition Government on the above lines, it is the intention of the Viceroy to proceed with the formation of an interim Government which will be as representative as possible of those willing to accept the Statement of May 16<sup>th</sup>.” The Viceroy answered that Jinnah had just misinterpreted the statement and he was not obliged to do anything of that sort (278). Jinnah's bitterness was multiplied by the statements of Jawaharlal Nehru who became President of the Congress on 6 July. At the press conference on 10 July he stated that “the Constituent Assembly . . . would be a sovereign body regardless of the policy statements from London [the Cabinet Mission] . . . Any further delay in the transfer of power would compel the Congress to directly clash with England. [He went on and said that], The Grouping scheme was unworkable . . . It would never come to fruition because in section A the Hindu majority provinces would be opposed, the North West Frontier Province would oppose its section B as would Assam in Section C, and provincial jealousies would thwart it . . . He also stressed the likelihood of a much stronger central government . . . because it cannot exist otherwise.” Maulana Azad, Muslim leader of the Congress, labelled it as “one of those unfortunate events which changed the course of history” (Dube 131). Jinnah characterized the statement as “complete repudiation of the basic form upon which the long-term scheme rests and all its fundamentals and terms and obligations and rights of parties accepting the scheme” (Menon 281). Reassurances from Pethick-Lawrence and Sir Stafford Cripps that the clauses of the Mission still stood had had little effect. There was no point of return. The period of “power vacuum” was to be substituted by “systematic breakdown” of the society as Jinnah had called for direct action to achieve Pakistan. At the meeting of the Council of the All-India Muslim League in Bombay on 27 July 1946, Jinnah “accused the Cabinet Mission of bad faith and of

having played into the hands of the Congress . . . He said that the League had gone to the limit of concession, but the Congress had shown no appreciation of the sacrifices it had made; the League therefore had no alternative but to adhere once more to the national goal of Pakistan” (Menon 283). Two days later, Jinnah and his Working Committee presented two resolutions hammered out after hearing the council's opinions. The first withdrew League acceptance of the Cabinet Mission's May proposals; the second charted the League's course of future direct action:

Whereas Muslim India has exhausted, without success, all efforts to find a peaceful solution of the Indian problem by compromise and constitutional means and whereas the Congress is bent upon setting up Caste-Hindu Raj in India with the connivance of the British; and whereas recent events have shown that the power politics and not justice and fair play are the deciding factors in Indian affairs; and whereas it has become abundantly clear that the Muslims of India would not rest contented with anything less than the immediate establishment of an Independent and fully sovereign State of Pakistan, the time has come for the Muslim nation to resort to Direct Action to achieve Pakistan to assert their just rights, to vindicate their honour and to get rid of the present British slavery and the contemplated future Caste-Hindu domination (Wolpert 282). After both resolutions were enthusiastically adopted, Jinnah concluded, “We have taken a most historic decision. Never before in the whole life history of the Muslim League did we do anything except by constitutional methods and constitutional talks. We are today forced into this position by a move in which both the Congress and Britain have participated. We have been attacked on two fronts . . . Today we have said good-bye to constitutions and constitutional methods. Throughout the painful negotiations, the two parties with whom we bargained held a pistol at us; one with power and machine-guns behind it, and the other with non-co-operation and the threat to launch mass civil disobedience. This situation must be met. We also have a pistol” (282).

'Direct Action Day' was set for Friday, August 16, 1946. Wavell did not seem to take this threat too seriously and failed to foresee the magnitude of the events which were about to come. It was not quite clear what Jinnah meant by direct action and against whom was it directed but it was presumed that riots between Hindus and Muslims are likely to occur, especially in the cities (Panigrahi 298-9). Jinnah instructed his followers “to conduct themselves peacefully and in a disciplined manner although his own usually precise and legalistic prose was vague enough to allow for violent interpretation (Khan 63). And indeed his call for direct action triggered carnage between the Muslims and the Hindus on unprecedented scale. A few days before the riots, Muslims of Calcutta had been preparing plans for direct action day. There was to be a massive gathering of Muslims and propaganda of Pakistani cause. By late afternoon on 16 August, the people went

berserk and Calcutta turned into a battlefield. Mass killings, looting, arson and rapes swallowed the city. The streets were soon congested by piles of dead bodies. Police and the military were deliberately deployed too late and there were signs that “state resources had been exploited by the murderers with the League's blessing.” There were heavy casualties on both sides as the violence was anticipated by the Hindus as well (Khan 64). “The fire of violence spread to East Bengal Abductions, forced marriages, compulsory conversion to Islam, destitution of whole families created distress, which was not to be compared to the mass deaths three years earlier by starvation in the province” (Chatterji 141). The implementation of politics “granted the violence legitimacy in the eyes of rioters.” They were told to fight for freedom, space and history even though very few could have imagined what these notions would mean (Khan 65).

Merciless skirmishes between the communities in Calcutta lasted almost a week. In first three days at least 4,000 people died and another 10,000 were injured (Khan 63). “Unofficial sources claimed that as many as 16,000 Bengalis were murdered between 16 and 20 August 1946” (Wolpert 286). This 'pogrom' initiated by the Muslim League will be forever remembered as 'the Great Calcutta Killings'. It was “a sound warning of what was likely to happen if Jinnah's Pakistan was not granted” (Panigrahi 302). The riots and terror continued well after the Day Action Day in many parts of India. The country was on the verge of civil war and the British did not seem to be able to handle it. On account of communal holocaust, Jinnah remarked:

If Congress regimes are going to suppress and persecute the Musalmans, it will be very difficult to control disturbances, there is no alternative except the outright establishment of Pakistan, We guarantee to look after non Muslim and Hindu-caste-minorities in Pakistan and protect and safeguard their interests in any way .That is the quickest way to India's real freedom and to the welfare and happiness of all the peoples inhabiting this sub-continent (Wolpert 287)

It is noteworthy that in Bengal, where the bloodshed took place, a League ministry, headed by Suhrawardy, was in power. Thus, they could have mitigate the tragedy. Instead, “the police remained inactive and the army was not called” . The end justified the means; the situation changed dramatically after the Calcutta killings and Wavell realized that “a much greater measure of toleration is essential if India is to survive the transition to freedom” (287). As the League revoked the 16 May plan on 29 July 1946, Wavell turned to the Congress, on 6 August, regarding the formation of the Interim Government. Nehru accepted the responsibility and voluntarily tried to negotiate the cooperation in coalition with Jinnah. They met twice, prior to the Direct Action Day, but both discussions ended up to be futile (Wolpert 283-4). Given the state of affairs it was not so surprising. It was

understood that the Government was to be formed in early September without Muslim League. Then, the Calcutta killings altered drastically the general view on Pakistan and left the country in turmoil. Deeply disturbed by the havoc that the slaughters in Calcutta had caused, Wavell appealed to Gandhi and Nehru on 27 August 1946 to accept a new formula of “grouping”, threatening not to convene the constituent assembly until they did so (Menon 302). He felt, obviously intimidated by recent events, that the Interim Government could not be formed without the League. Nehru did not fail to realize that Wavell was trying to appease the League and reported Wavell's attitude to his friends in England. Subsequently, Clement Atlee “overruled Wavell” and instructed him “to form the government with the Congress even if the League did not join” (Ghose 141). The Congress took over the interim government on 2 September and Nehru became, virtually, the prime minister of India and head of foreign affairs portfolio, with Patel in charge of home affairs and Baldev Singh in charge of defence (Wolpert 289). It was “a day of mourning” for the Muslim League as Jinnah put it (Ghose 149). But it was a historic day for the Congress in a sense. Gandhi recorded: “At last the way to purna swaraj has been opened. The whole of India has waited for this day for years and years, So far we have not secured full independence.” On 26 September, he had an interview with Wavell. Viceroy was eager to bring the Muslim League into government, so was Gandhi, but the issue of appointing Nationalist Muslim by the Congress to Executive Council remained. (Gandhi: 92-465). As before, Nehru and Gandhi opposed the Jinnah's claim to nominate all the Muslims. Wavell was convinced that the Congress would not change its stand (Wolpert 291) and approached Jinnah in secret allowing him to nominate five Muslims and a Scheduled Caste member from the ranks of the Muslim League (according to 6-5-3 scheme) and join the government (Tharoor 148). Jinnah's position was desperate; he had realized that he had to be more flexible in order to secure position in the government, recognizing that “it would fatal to leave the entire field of administration in the hands of the Congress” (Jalal 225). In early October, he was negotiating with Nehru and Gandhi about the set-up of the interim government. In a letter from 6 October, Nehru expressed his willingness to co-operate with Jinnah only “as a united team” and recognized the Muslim League “as the authoritative representative organization of an overwhelming majority of the Muslims of India.” (Gandhi 92:459). Jinnah refused to work as a team, which speaks volumes about his true intentions behind joining the interim government. According to Tharoor, Jinnah had done so tactically, “only to wreck it from within” (148). And subsequent events clearly justify her point.

The coalition was announced on 15 October, but the tussle was far from over, with communal rioting spreading to Bihar and the North Western Frontier. Jinnah forfeited all of his demands in order to be able to join the government on

October 26, 1946. Apart from the parity, “monopoly of Muslim representation” and the “right to veto on issues concerning Muslims”, Nehru was not willing to relinquish any of the three major portfolios either (Jalal 225). He used all its power to prevent the League from entering the government, since on the provincial level the League's influence was weak. Nehru was quite aware of Jinnah's real intentions because the League leaders, especially Liaquat Ali Khan, made their ultimate goal – Pakistan – no secret. In the end, the League was able to nominate a Scheduled Class member and take over the finance portfolio. Tension between the Congress and the League was glaring and there was no reconciliation or solution to “fundamental mistrust, suspicion, fear and hatred” (Wolpert 293-4). Appointed League's members of the government “worked as a separate and distinct wing” and Wavell was unable, due to his lack of political skills, “to ensure more effective co-ordination.” Smooth functioning of the government was thereby virtually impossible (Moraes 343).

Immediately after the formation of the government, Nehru insisted on League's acceptance of the May 16 Plan, since it was the condition for its entry into office. Jinnah argued that the Congress had never accepted the Mission's proposals unequivocally (Menon 321) and wanted the grouping cut, before he would bring the League into the Constituent Assembly, which was scheduled on December 9 (321). The Congress suggested that the grouping clause might be referred to the Federal Court for its interpretation. This was the major flaw of the Cabinet Mission all along, since the British had failed to guarantee the procedure of the Constituent Assembly and were unable to forestall the Congress from misinterpreting its spirit. On 21 November, Jinnah announced that no representative of the Muslim League would participate in the Constituent Assembly, thus he effectively “cramped constitutional process” (Moraes 343). Jinnah, Nehru and other Leaguers and Congressmen had been invited to London, in December, “in a last-ditch effort to salvage the situation”, but the talks failed because neither of them showed willingness to accommodate (Zakaria 126). However, the British government released the statement on 6 December declaring that “Should a Constitution come to be framed by a Constituent Assembly in which a large section of the Indian population had not been represented, His Majesty's Government could not of course contemplate—as the Congress have stated they would not contemplate—forcing such a Constitution upon any unwilling parts of the country” (Wolpert 301) and confirmed grouping of the provinces (Jalal 231). Nevertheless, the League would not participate in framing of the constitution till the very end. Not even after the Constituent Assembly meeting was held on 9 December 1946 (Chatterji 139) and Nehru accepted the 6 December statement. Attempts to compile “an agreed constitution for a united India [were] an idle dream” (Wolpert 309). Apparently, Jinnah had made his mind some time ago; the



League “continued to instigate violence across the country” and Jinnah declared that bloodshed “would not stop unless Pakistan was created” (Tharoor 148). By the end of 1946 onwards, the law and order situation had worsened considerably and even the capital felt insecure and incapable of dealing with communal outbursts (Jalal 178). Gandhi observed: “We are not yet in the midst of a civil war. But we are nearing it” (Khan 79). Untenable situation forced the British to a radical decision. On 20 February 1947, Clement Attlee announced “to take necessary steps to effect the peaceful transfer of power into responsible Indian hands by a date not later than June 1948.” It was desired that by fixing the exact date of withdrawal Indian politicians would come to an agreement about constitution. But given the circumstances, it was unlikely to happen and the question of how and to whom it should transfer powers was yet to be decided. Moreover, Lord Wavell was being replaced by Lord Mountbatten on the position of the Viceroy (Menon 338). He was to be the last Viceroy of India with enormously difficult task of wrapping up the British Raj. Penderel Moon recollected, in his book *Divide and Quit*: “This announcement of transfer of power meant Partition, and Partition within the next seventeen months”

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## **Contribution of Sayyid Qutub to the Development of Islamic Literature**

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Shaheed Sayyid Qutub was born in the district of Asyut in Egypt in 1906. One of his ancestors had migrated from Arabian Peninsula to Egypt. The historians have different opinions regarding the origin of his family. Abul Hassan Ali Nadwi says “ sayyid Qutub’s origin is in India, when I visited him he said to me that their sixth grandfather Fakeer Abdulla was an Indian, so that the Indian heritage is filled in our family”<sup>1</sup>

Sayyid Qutub was born to Ibrahim Qutub of the same family. His mother Fatima Husain Utman was an exemplary lady of strong faith. She had deep inclination and ardour towards the Quran. Moreover, it was she who infused in her son great zeal for the Quran. His father Ibrahim Qutub was a God fearing and saintly person. His profession was agriculture.

Sayyid Qutub was sober and sagacious right from his childhood. Besides the Quran, he developed strong liking for study books on various subjects. From the every tender age, his vast study became a topic of conversation in almost every household. One very significant characteristic that he showed from his childhood days was his instinct against excess and atrocities. He reacted very sharply against high – handedness and oppressive attitude. Sayyid had learnt the Quran by heart and now he had to make further studies. But due to state of uprising, he couldn’t take admission in Thajhizia Darul – Uloom with the delay of two years where students were prepared for admission in Darul Uloom College (Cairo university) for higher studies.

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<sup>1</sup> Mudakirathun Shaeun Fu Sharkil Arabi, Abul Hasan Ali nadwi , page 53

Some Islamic Scholars saw that he had spent a few years on his life in atheism. Sayyid Qutub's friend Sulaiman Fayad wrote:

“ He spent 11 years as an atheist until his book “ Social Justice in Islam “ was published. After that he returned to calm and serenity of Islam. But the Islamic scholar Abdul Fathah Khalid said that Sayyid Qutub did not spend any second in his life as an atheist or rebel”<sup>2</sup>

From 1948 to 1950, Sayyid Qutub stayed in America with an official delegation and got an opportunity to study educational system there. The delegation was meant to study and import those American programmes in Egypt. But Sayyid Qutub made a critical study of American educational and training system and found it unfit and unsuitable for the eastern atmosphere. He rather ridiculed western system of education and put down his ideas and criticism in the form of a book, which could see the light yet. He made a very strong argument that American system of education was the gift of western environment and hence his social and cultural psychology could not absorb it nor could it bring about any good to our social setup.

From then on, he set to preach that educational system must be molded according to Islamic spirit and values. Although he had to face opposition in the way of his call to adopt such an educational system but he never budged an inch from his mission. His personality was made of qualities like confidence, courage, and determination.

He came from America with firm conviction that Islam is the only panacea for all human maladies arising out of the western material approach to life. He was utterly convinced that Islam alone shows the way to balanced life and determined and purposeful activities. He gave a clarion call and made fervid appeal to Muslim youths to adorn their lives with pure Islamic tenets to be, fair and pure and to keep away from polytheism and innovations and he illumined with the light of faith and action.

He stayed in America for only two years where he studied system of education in colleges and universities. He passed sometime in Wilson Teachers College in Washington and Stanford University in California. He also itinerated in New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles etc...and halted in England, Italy and Switzerland for a few weeks on his way home. He saw there devastating evils in culture, politics, social intercourse and society. These deep study and keen observation rendered him utterly firm in his conviction that Islam and its lasting values are supreme and unsurpassable. At the same time, a new zeal and confidence emerged in him to exhibit the truth and purity of Islamic culture and

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<sup>2</sup> Sayyid Qutub from birth to martyr, Khalid, page: 234

values to the entire world of humankind. From then on, he used to pass at least ten hours in reading and writing.

It was this spirit, which compelled him to think over forming a body of the youths to translate Islamic tenets and values into action. He was thinking on this line that he came to know about Al Ikhwan Al – Muslimoon formed by Hasanul Banna. Sayyid Qutub felt without loss of time that it was the body, which was the centre of his wishes and interpretation of his dreams. He joined the body in 1951. Yousuf Azm, the great scholar in Islam wrote “when he decided to join in Ikhwan the situation was very complicated but he avoided that and joined in the Islamic Movement”<sup>3</sup>

In 1952, when members of Al Ikhwan came out of jail after suffering much hardships and tortures they resumed their journey of faith and conviction under the leadership of Hassan al – Hudhaiby. Sayyid Qutub was appointed the member of the working committee and secretary of the information department. On March 3, 1953 he was sent to Damous to take part in social welfare conference and delivered several lectures there. On December 2, 1953, the working committee of Al Ikhwan sent him to participate in national Islamic conference as its representative. On July 5, 1954, Sayyid Qutub was appointed as editor of the official organ of “Ikhwan-ul-Muslimoon” but the organ was closed on December 10, 1954 by the government of Nasir because its fearless comments had created commotion in the official circle. It opposed Anglo Egyptian pact tooth and nail which was concluded on July 7, 1954, between Nasir and British. When Jamal Abdul Nasir became the target of attempted murder, the youths of the Ikhwan were falsely implicated and with the result, about five thousand Ikhwans were put to jail and seven Ikhwan leaders were served with capital punishment.

Among the arrested persons was Sayyid Qutub too who was nabbed while he was suffering from fever. He was meted out very harsh treatment and when his vital organs were adversely affected, he was admitted to a military hospital on May 3, 1955. He writes in “in the Shade of Quran” about his prison experience “we were denied in prison the light of sun when the ray of sun came through very small hole of prison we strove to see and fondled our faces, hands and all bodies with sun light”<sup>4</sup>

False powers were always anxious from the believing courage and determination of Sayyid Qutub it was a fact that falsehood, however powerful, has complete absence of moral power. Sayyid Qutub's call to pure and perfect of Islam was labelled as the rebellion against the government of the day. Nasir and his coterie shot at Sayyid Qutub very arrow of atrocity but no charge and no

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<sup>3</sup> Shaheed sayyid Qutub: His life, school and influences , yousuf Azm, page: 36

<sup>4</sup> Fee dilalil Quran , sayyid qutub , page : 2899

punishment, physical and mental could deter him and stop his advancing steps towards truth and righteousness. When he was asked by the Government to apologize his own deeds he replied “ The index finger that indicates in the prayer that God is only one disagrees to supporting the autocratic government”<sup>5</sup>

At last, Sayyid Qutub was put to gallows on August 29, 1966. Setting aside appeals of compassion from almost all religious, political and social circles of the world. Sayyid Qutub’s contributions are not only in the field of Arabic language and literature but also in Islamic knowledge, philosophy, psychology, and sociology. His services are divided in to three areas of literature: Islamic thoughts, Islamic principles, and Ikhwan movements. His interpretation of Quran “In the shadow of Quran” is considered a great work on Quran studies.

With the advent of Islam, and its rapid spread among the pagan Arabs, who were very much involved in literary activities, the Islam begun to make its impact on their literature also as in all other aspects of there social life. Gradually Islamic literature developed in Arabic as an active branch of Arabic literature. This branch of Arabic literature found its tremens development in the modern period under strong and constant involvement of great Arab thinkers and philosophers like Jamaludhin Afghani, Mohammed abdu, Abbas Mahmood al Aqad... etc, Their valuable contributions in this field have no doubt, made a remarkable contribution to Arabic literature which can not be ignored. The works of Sayyid Qutub are considered an inseparable part of this branch of Arabic literature.

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## **Dimensions of Sulh-i-Kul and the religious thoughts of Akbar**

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Akbar is a historical figure about whom legend began to accumulate almost in his life-time and varied forms of it developed as time passed. How Akbar has been seen, whether through hostile or admiring eyes tell us much about the different ideological trends that have prevailed since Akbar's time.

**Keywords :** Abul Fazl, Abdul Kadir Badouni, Sulh-i-kul, Jharokha Darshan, Mansabdar

Akbar's concept of Sulh-i-kul has been analyzed in detail by historians in the context of prevalent sufi concepts in central and West Asia and India, as also in the broad context of liberal *nirguna* saints such as Kabir. However, little effort has so far been made to examination the context of the ideas and beliefs put forward in the country by *bhakti* saints during Akbar's own life time.

Akbar's concept of Sulh-i-kul, which evolved gradually and his concept of sovereignty had obvious politico. Cultural implications. Thus, according to Abul Fazl, a ruler who was endowed with *farr-i-izidi* (the devine light), has a paternal love towards his subjects so that he did not allow sectarian differences to "raise the dust of strife". This in turn, implied understanding "the Spirit of the age" or what was called *Mahabharat* yuga dharma. It implied daily increasing trust in God, and belief in prayer and devotion so that he (the ruler) was not dependent on any set of

religious leaders. He believed in justice which implied curbing the tyrants and ensuring that inconsiderateness did not “over step the proper limits”. He also sat on the eminence of propriety which itself has been interpreted in different ways. At one level it implied considerateness so that “those who have gone astray have a way left to return without exposing their bad deals to the public gaze” But at another level by propriety is meant maintenance of “the health of the body politic” and “equilibrium”. For the purpose Abul fazl divides the society into four groups : warriors, artificers and merchants, the learned and the husband men and labourers. He concludes by saying. “It is, therefore, obligatory for a king to put each of these in its proper place and by Uniting personal ability with due respect for others, to cause the world to flourish.”<sup>1</sup>

We need to find out that after failing in the mission of appeasement of Muslim fundamentalists what actual thoughts came into the mind of Akbar which culminated in 1579 leading to the period of Mahzarnama from 1579-1605. It is even presumed that during this period only Akbar introduced *Din-I-Illahi* embracing almost every religions.

Now coming back to sources during this period our literary sources during this time period would be *Akbarnama* and *Ain-i-Akbari* of Abul Fazal. These books were read before Akbar and he gave consent to it<sup>2</sup>. Therefore, it was not the writing of some layman. Moreover it does not contain only the thoughts of Abul Fazal. In this there are the thoughts and views of his protector. However the write was also a scholar of eminence. However critics like Abdul Kadir Badoauni and the Jesuit father’s gave not too much of attention to this book. However we will try to put the entire things in correct perspective. After reading *Akbarnama* and *Ain-i-Akbari* one may feel that Akbar with his strong belief in the Almighty wanted to find an outlet but his belief of Almighty was diametrically different from fundamentalist Islam and Hinduism. In his view, as according to the views of Sufism human beings as according to the limits of their Knowledge understand and worship the Almighty. God is formless (*Bcsurat*) and that without taxing your mind to the extreme (*Chira-Dasti-i-Khyal*),<sup>3</sup> God cannot be understood. In the worship and understanding of God physical activity is also fit and alright<sup>4</sup>. Worship presumed to belief that true worship of God can only be done by Raushandil<sup>4</sup>.

Therefore Akbar was against idol worship of Hindus and the performance of *Namaj* by the Muslims. Akbar’s denunciation and criticism of idol worship becomes pronounced when the writer of *Akbarnama* considers Todarmal as a simple man because he was making sorrow after the loss of idol to be used for the purpose of worship. Akabr believes the Todarmal was a blind follower of religious obscuraniticism<sup>6</sup>. This Minister was rebuked by Akbar and was told that nothing is better than the service of poorest people<sup>7</sup>.

Akbar gave great importance to light or vision and it is generally because light is formless and therefore in the chapter of *Ain-i-Akbari*, *Ain-I-Rehnamuni* and *Ain-I- ibadat Gazihan*, the source of light of sun is worshipped<sup>8</sup>. Akbar even said that sun containing light is beneficial for the rulers. Therefore they sing and praise it and it is like worship of Almighty. However, fundamentalists believe that Akbar is worshipping Sun<sup>9</sup>. Presumably Akbar's mind may have been attracted by ancient Persian festival of *Nauroj* in which the worship of sun and light may have played an important role. Somehow or other Akbar was attracted by that ancient concept.

From *Ain-Rehnamuni* it is evident that Akbar in relation to God was attracted by the concept of pantheism. God in fact breaks the barrier of division. Beauty which attracts the heart enlightens thousand veils.

As according to Akbar to speak about the evilness of *Satan* is in fact limiting the complete authority of God<sup>10</sup>. At the same time Akbar also did not believe in the concept of Diving *Avtars* (incarnation). Akbar also attacks the Hindu way of life whereby he suggests that in India no one claims to be prophet because everyone who claims to be prophet declares himself as a God.

Akbar also declares that there is a close relationship between divine ruler and cultural ruler. The very vision of emperor is equivalent of worship of God<sup>11</sup>. Similarly the emperor acting as dispenser of Justice and his ruling over the world is true manifestation of worship of God<sup>12</sup>. Therefore, in the *Ain* rule of the emperor is presented as *Far-i-Azadi* and divine light<sup>13</sup>.

The ruler rules because he is projected by the God to rule over the world. Therefore, Akbar believes that there is a close bonding and direct relation between God and the ruler. In this there is the restriction of any religion. Since, he was attracted towards pantheism he declares that religions as well as this world are illusion (*Ain-Rehnamuni*)<sup>14</sup>. The completion of rituals of the religion is basically imitation. In relation to that Akbar praises wisdom (*Akal*) and disapproves imitation (*Takliya*) because if imitation would have been an accepted form of behavior then every prophet would have followed only traditions and new patterns and vision of thought would not have emerged<sup>15</sup>.

In fact Akbar by advocating such thoughts was paving ways for the emergence of classical Islam as against fundamentalist Islam. This tradition which Akbar formulated was the concept of using wisdom, reason and logic as against blind aping of the tradition.

Thus Akbar finds in the Islamic religion and his other contemporary religions wide differences which were due to obscurantist visions, rituals and understanding. Here the point which is to be noted is that in the entire *Akbarnama* and *Ain-i-Akbari* while mentioning Islamic religion very neutral words have been employed. Islam has not been said Islam. The word employed here is *Ahmadikesh* or the principles of *Muhammad* i.e. *Mohammadi Siddhantha*. Not here the word, it

is very evident that it was first of all used by Akbar later it was used by Abul Fazal after insistence from Akbar. In Persian literature this word has not been used in any occasion. Was Akbar in any kind of belief that Islamic religion which stands on the tenets of peace, contains so many values that a single word like Islam cannot be employed for it?

Akbar did not believe in any kind of restriction which was employed by Islamic law. In fact he used to criticize traditions associated with Islam. In fact Akbar's criticism of the treatment of daughters in Islamic law is very interesting. In Islamic religion daughters get little in matter of inheritance though being on a weaker side, they should be given more<sup>16</sup>. He used to get impatient with Hindu religious traditions and beliefs. Very distinctly he criticized child marriage and was under the impression that this work annoys God<sup>17</sup>.

Akbar's very scientific mind has nothing to do with missionary or proselytizing propaganda. In fact he had a very parochial kind of vision. According to him knowledge or any kind of specialized knowledge should be for a limited enlightened category of people. He had stated an example in that context where Shah Tahmasp had punished a servant who was showcasing knowledge. "If servant or *Gulam* starts talking of knowledge (*ilm*) then there will be disturbances of other kind of activities." His view was more harsh in context of divine knowledge and he believed in hard degree of retractions to be employed for the purpose.

"Acquiring knowledge is not for every house and that every people cannot acquire enlightenment. If somebody reached till the status of enlightenment he should keep quiet on account of fear from dangerous people. In fact when he talks about the enlightenment that simple people will say him maniac and would not believe him and cruel people would take his life on account of kufr and profanity (*Ain-i-Rahnamuni*). He did not want to give divine message to the people. Artisan must acquire high degree of proficiency in his work. This is concomitant to worship of God<sup>18</sup>. Thus it is very evident that if Akbar had any idea or vision of spiritual unification it was only confined to patrician. In fact when the concept of nation was not present at that time at that point of talking or thinking about national unification would be nothing more than chronological error.

The organization and ritualism for the propagation of religious truth and while elaborating on this truth the specialized divisional thought of Akbar should also be taken into consideration. Professor S. R. Sharma had already stated that Akbar did not intend to start any religion neither he had coined the word *Din-i-illahi* nor he had employed this concept. But in respect to this concept former views are so strong that even the caliber of able translator like Blochmann commits mistake. In the translation and subsequent interpretation of *Ain* and while interpreting statement of Badauni Blochmann translates *Halk-i-Iradat* and *Silsila-i-Muridan* in two passages as Godly religion and new religion<sup>19</sup>.

Akbar while addressing his disciples as *Iradat-i-Ghazinan* and *Murid* employs various Sufi terminologies. From this it becomes very clear that he wanted the status of *Murshid* or spiritual visionary or rather it should be understood that for certain categories of disciples he wanted to become complete spiritual master. The description of Abul Fazal clears the entire thing. Whoever wants to become the disciple or follower of Akbar he should go through various stages making the admission very difficult<sup>20</sup>.

Only after getting the complete satisfaction relating to honesty and integrity of the candidate he was given entry into *Silsila-i-Iradat*. Here one translation of Blochmann has completely changed the meaning of fundamentals. Abul Fazal says in case of admission, despite difficulties and very strong employment of restrictions from every denomination, groups and categories of thousands of thousands of people were successful in winning the confidence of the emperor. They believed that getting into this coterie was a sure indicator of good fortune.<sup>21</sup>

In other words out of thousand candidates only few get entries into it. Blochmann considers this unknown unaccepted candidate as people employed in new religion<sup>22</sup>.

Now we should move on to the main restrictions on the accepted disciples as well as the work they are supposed to perform<sup>23</sup>. The maxim of his preaching has been beautifully explained by his son Jahangir who after his coronation started filling *Murid* in a similar way as done by his father. No disciple should be in conflict with other religions and thus should not waste of time by entering into conflict with other religions. His disciple should enter into *Sulh-i-kul* (*Universal Peace*) with other religions. Except for war and hunting they should not kill anyone with their hands, nor they should adopt weapon for the purpose<sup>24</sup>.

This was the universal principal of *Sulh-i-kul*. Now there is no evidence in which Akbar wanted to make his disciples anything more than the committed supporters. At the same time they were also not a curious band of supporters propagating his new concepts and way to life.

But at the same time in the eyes of general public Akbar was also not against the establishment of his pious position. As far as the idea goes no Hindu ruler ever employed the concept of *Jharokha Darshan* whereby ruler stands near the windows for the vision of normal public. These people considers *Jharokha Darshan* a pious work. From this it is very much clear that these ruler were either half God or at least a pious living object whose very *darshan* has religious significance<sup>25</sup>. Thus it was a clever practice of instilling a sense of reverence amongst the general populace. It is also very clear that on the basis of purity or piousness Akbar did not want the support of general populace. At the same he did not want his religious thoughts to be projected from his behaviors. The original principle of pantheism was to teach before his adopted disciples in a wiser way but

	total	Hindu	Persian
5000 and more	08	01	04
3000 to 4500	13	03	05
1000 to 2500	37	06	06
500 to 900	63	12	12
200 to 450	159	24	45
	280	46	72

at the same time the principles of *Sulh-i-kul* was now to become the universal principle to be employed by the ruling dispensations.

The writer of *Dabistan-i-Majahib*

while studying religion on a comparative basis in the 17<sup>th</sup> century has given a very perfect statement. He says that the principles behind the religious tolerance of Akbar was basically due to the presence of patrician elements in almost every religions and dynasties<sup>26</sup>. Now, there is no need to give evidence for this. This is a very clear statement. Here however this should also be taken into principle that this was not only confined to Hindus but also to Shia groups. In 1595 among the *Mansabdars* of Akbar the true picture emerges in this way<sup>29</sup>. Excluding the sons and grandsons of the emperor the living Mansabdar in 1595

In the group of Mansabdars the percentage of Hindus was 17%. Now 17% should be construed a safe participation. It is not a negligible participation. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century after Akbar during the next three Mughal emperors rule the percentage of Hindu Mansabdars increased<sup>30</sup>.

Here it should also be emphasized that in the last 25 years of Akbar's rule, the policy of religious tolerance was at the maximum level. The tolerance of Shia segments as well as absence of conflict between Shias and Sunnis has also been well explained. Therefore Jahangir very proudly boasts that in the rule of his father Shias and Sunnis lived and *Namaj* in the same Masjid. Whereas in other place they were in conflict with each other<sup>31</sup>. This policy becomes very much clear in the hanging of Mirza Faulad from the description of Abul Fazal. Mirza Faulad murdered Ahmad Chattani, a Shia religious cleric. Every religious group has the freedom to worship God in their own way but they are not free to fight with each other. Mullah Ahmed was very determined and openly supported *Imamat*. He also used to question the Shias and Sunnis. But in spite of high profile officers giving evidence Akbar did not show any leniency towards the murderer of Mullah Ahmed<sup>32</sup>.

From the description of Abul Fazal nowhere it is clear that the writer or Akbar was attracted towards Shiaism. In the works of Dr. A. Abbas Rizwi there is a projection of the view that Akbar was only against Sunni Obscuraniticism,<sup>33</sup> but there is no basis for it. The non-Muslim Shia clerics were no more liberal than the Sunnis. In the religious thoughts of Akbar no where it is pronounced or appears that there was some tilt towards *Shiaism*. Nowhere the personality of Ali has been glorified.

As far as internal differences and debate of Islam is concerned Akbar made the Mughal emperor a neutral power. This in itself was sufficient cause to give distress to the Sunni Ulemas. Up till now Sunni Ulemas were in the front and were responsible for the distress of Shia intellectuals. Shia intellectuals believed that domination can only be acquired through the torturous path of inspiration and not through the torturing of the opponents. But then it can also not be certified that in the last years of Akbar's rule there was loss of face for the Islamic religion.

Badouni's constant criticism of Akbar for bringing Islam into a kind of distress could be construed as the result of the disturbed mind of Historians. Badouni felt that the decline of the influence of Ulemas could be seen as the indicator of the decline of Islam. In the destruction of Masjid the statement of Badouni has been supported by Jesuit father<sup>34</sup>.

Jesuit fathers were inclined to believe that during the rule of Akbar he completely ignored the Islamic religion. For the criticism of these two sources there is a need to study the religious policy of the Mughal Emperor<sup>35</sup>.

For understanding Jahangir's rule there is an important source by the name of *Tarikh Khan Jahani* which has been written by one of the trusted Afgan Mansabdars Khan Jahan Lodhi, Dependent Niyamtullah in 1618. The writer is not a religious fundamentalist and praise Khan Jahan Lodhi for when Mughal emperor Jahangir was very scornful of the Rajputs at that point of time he used to praise their valour and devotion. But the writer at the same time of the death of Akbar presents the conditions and the changes with the coming of Jahangir's rule.

The might and the rule of the Paigambar which withered like the red flower due to the scorching heat once again got back into the life after the coronation of Jahangir and Mosques, Khanqah and Madarsas which in the last 30 years had become the abode of wild beasts and birds has once again been full cleaned<sup>36</sup>.

Thus the saying of Jesuit that Mosque was employed for different purposes could not be considered wrong. There was definitely a certain amount of truth in the statement of Badayoni.

Now the question arises as to whether Islam was subjected to torture during his rule and whether the image of Islam has suffered on account of that. A contemporary religious personality Sheikh Ahmed Sirhindi while writing a letter after coronation of Jahangir suggests the same. According to Sirhindi at the time of distress the greatest misfortune of Islam was that muslims were allowed to use their religion and Kafirs were also allowed to do the same. But in the near past Kafirs were allowed to do the rituals very freely but muslims were not allowed to do so. In case they did they were put to death. Thus a kind of religious obscurantism was prevailing at the time and contemporary religious clerics were expert in doing that<sup>37</sup>.

If there was the element of torture than those working for the cause of Islam should have protested because in the case of torture of people in a religion a certain category of people would definitely protest against that.

In respect to that there is an interesting work by Mohammad Sadiq in *Tadqa-i-Shahjahani* which has been written in the year 1636-37. In this book life history of Muslim religions scholars of different times have been given. The writer charges Akbar that during the last period of his rule Akbar deviated from Islam. He called the various Quarter Mystics and religious clerics and punished them<sup>38</sup>. But according to him punishment of hanging was given to only one man by the name of Hazi Thraneswari. He was basically a revenue collector and he was appointed on the recommendation of Abul Fazal. He was hanged in the year 1600 on the basis of criticism of Hindus. Muhammad Sadiq also did not call him *Shahid*. Thus it is not very clear whether it is a religious matter. Abul Fazal was called in the court of Akbar. Believing that he might be punished he went there in a very short time but Akbar allowed him to go back immediately<sup>39</sup>. Thus there are only very little cases where punishment has been done and if there is a list of martyrs there is a very little list of it.

Besides that in our evidence there is a contradiction which cannot be very easily tackled. In the last years of Akbar's rule mosques were built. The most important example of this is the building of mosque at Rajmahal in Bengal by Man Singh. In local traditions Akbar has been considered as traditional Muslim King. According to Archeological report in place of mosque temple was to be constructed but later on Akbar built the Jama Masjid<sup>40</sup>. Thus it could not be held that the public Muslim practice of observance of *Namaj* was stopped. It is true that in the province of Punjab there was ban on the killing of cows. Jahangir also continued this practice<sup>41</sup>. But that does not mean that Islamic observances were forcibly stopped.

Thus in the absence of torture why could it be believed that in the last year's of Akbar's rule Islam had to suffer. The neutral policy of Akbar might have allowed Muslim patrician elements to not to give protection to Islamic practices and Muslim Scholars. Akbar's adoption of pantheism and calling Islam only as Ahmadi Kesh could not be ignored by this nobility. In this perspective the letter written by Mirza Aziz Koka in 1595 from Mecca to Akbar is very interesting. From the Pure city of Mecca this foremost Mansabdar has charged Akbar for considering himself as Paigambar and his abhorrence of the religion of Muhammad.

He was warned Akbar to remain aloof from treacherous Mansabdars who give more preference to kafirs than Musalmans and continue to encourage their policies<sup>42</sup>. These nobility or Mansabdars must have thought of continuing with the



policies of the emperor as a wiser step and therefore were not inclined to give grants to the muslim religious scholars and their institutions<sup>43</sup>.

On account of the absence of patronage from the nobility, the flow of royal money must have diminished on the strength of which these Mosques, Madrasas and Khanqads were continuing. The channel of royal patronage were *Murugh* or revenue grants. Badayon declares that how later on through different schemes the flow of grants in the form of cash were curtailed<sup>44</sup>. Abul Fazal suggests that in order to prevent cheating or swindling of money these measures were installed. The land given in the form of Jagir was now given to be declared villages. Later on Jagirs of 500 *bighas* were confiscated in the absence of approval from the Badshah. After the 3/4<sup>th</sup> of every 100 *bighas* of *Jagirs* were confiscated. In this only the Jagirs of Irani and Turani ladies were not touched as matter of exception. If any one wanted to transfer any land he has to leave over 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the land. Large number of *Kazis* “Turban bearing vicious bearded people” and “dull minded trousure and Kurta wearing people” appropriated land. Anyone having 15 *bigha* or more of land had their land forfeited after death. In order to acquire these lands once more their heirs would have to come before the emperor for placing their rights over the land which was a costly process. Any *Jagir* less than 100 *bighas* they were also investigated by the *sadar* (Central minister of Jagir). Abul Fazal himself used to see whether they were not acquired for less interest<sup>45</sup>. Thus these policies against *Jagirdar* influence can be imagined. In this important professional religious scholars were also there and therefore now it became too difficult ore continue the Mosques and Madarsas with old pomp and splendor. Most probably to similar organizations patronage was stopped and therefore were later renounced.

From this conclusion what emerges is that on account of a very clever mind Akbar from different sources adopted different religious thoughts and after weighing on the scale of his mind, renounced many of them. All this resulted in the opening of *Sulh-i-kul*. In the class of nobility, Hindus and Shias were included. The opponents of *Sulh-i-kul* criticized Akbar for it. In the plurality of Indian Culture and presence of countless religious elements, Akbar wanted to prepare a homogeneous kind of ruling class.

Thus Akbar was a visionary whose policies are now being nurtured for an egalitarian India. According to the author of *Dabistan*, a remarkable work on contemporary religions, Akbar’s espousal of religious tolerance was the working of high degree fo political foresight aiming to construct a nobility of diverse religious compositions so that no single group might occupy a position of dominance<sup>46</sup>. Thus, by injecting Rajputs and Irans a couter balance had been created against Sunni nobility. Thus sthrough this policy of checks and balances he was maintaining the empire which became the strongest empire in the latter half of the Sixteenth century<sup>47</sup>.

There is no doubt that the *Sulh-i-kul* put an end to the domination of orthodox Ulema on the policies of government and administration but there is no evidence that Akbar wished to abjure Islam or to deprive the Muslims of their legitimate rights. He vowed only to liberate and dissociate himself from the traditional and imitative religion<sup>48</sup>.

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## **The Edge of Volcano**

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The years 1945-46 were very significant with regard to the decisive shift in the British policy. Penderel Moon has perceptively described the time as ' The Edge of a Volcano'.<sup>1</sup>

After the Shimla Conference, the year 1945 saw two important events, the fall of Churchill and the surrender of Japan. At London, the Labour Government headed by Attlee took office and on August 21, 1945, announced that general elections to the central and provincial legislatures would be held in the coming winter. However, neither Attlee nor Wavell made any mention of independence.

Gandhi and Nehru were both doubtful and incredulous about Labour attitude to India.<sup>2</sup> Jinnah insisted that no solution would be acceptable except on the basis of Pakistan. In one of his first electioneering speeches, Jinnah said,<sup>3</sup> "We are determined not to submit to any scheme of an All India Union, interim or otherwise, and we will resist any attempt to impose such a union upon us. The just and only solution of India's constitutional problem lies in the establishment of Pakistan and Hindustan." He said that the deadlock in this country was not so much between India and Britain as between the 'Hindu Congress' and the Muslim League.

Nehru said that the elections were the spring boards to reach our

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<sup>1</sup>. Moon, Penderel, (ed. ), Wavell's Journal, Vol. VIII.

<sup>2</sup>. Azad, M.A.K.; India Wins Freedom, p.118.

<sup>3</sup>. The Indian Year Book and Who's who, 1947, The Times of India, p. 930.

destination which is Swaraj.<sup>4</sup> He observed that it was better to be miles and miles away from the Muslim League. We did our best to come to an understanding with the Muslim League in the past. We now come to the conclusion that it was in the best interests of the country to keep away from the League. There could be no understanding with the Muslim League with its present leadership and polity, even if the demand for Pakistan is granted. He said, a vote for the Muslim League was no vote for Pakistan. It was only a vote for a popular organisation which represented certain solidarity of Indian Muslims.

Nehru declared that the time for slogans was over. They wanted practical works the solid work as revolution or freedom could not be achieved by shouts or sentimental overflows of enthusiasm. It was the duty of the leaders to direct the enthusiasm and spirit of the people in the right and proper channels.<sup>5</sup> He declared that the Congress was not a party but a movement for freedom. It embodied the nation.<sup>6</sup> will for freedom and was open to all who believed in its freedom and independence. It was the voice of the nation.<sup>3</sup> He stated, that the Congress stood and laboured for the independence of India, for equal rights and opportunities for every citizen of India for sixty years. It stood for the unity of all communities and religious groups in India and for tolerance and goodwill between them. The Congress envisaged a free, democratic state with fundamental rights and civil liberties of all its citizens guaranteed in the constitution. The political freedom must encompass and comprise economic and social freedom also.<sup>7</sup>

The elections to the central legislative assembly were held and the results came by the end of Dec. 1945. The Congress won an overwhelming success in the general constituencies. The Muslim League won every Muslim seat, the Nationalist Muslims losing their deposits in many cases. The Congress secured 91.3 p.c. of the votes cast in Non-Mohammedan constituencies and the Muslim League 86.6 p.c. of the total votes cast in Mohammedan constituencies. The final figures were :

Congress	57
Muslim League	30
Europeans	8
Independents	5
Akali Sikh	2
Total	102 seats

Both the parties were jubilant over their victories. The Muslim League

<sup>4</sup>. Hindustan Times, Oct.6, 1945, p.5.

<sup>5</sup>. Gopal,S.(ed.); Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru, Vol. 14, p. 85.

<sup>6</sup>. Ibid, pp. 92-93.

<sup>7</sup>. J.N. Papers, N.M.M,L., Delhi.

celebrated 11 Jan. 1946 as its day of victory. The elections to the Central Assembly were a 100 p.c, success to the League. On the other hand, the Congress had already issued a bulletin on 6 Jan. 1946 declaring that the Congress stood vindicated, it was the biggest, strongest and most representative organisation in the country.<sup>8</sup>

In the provincial elections too both the Congress and the League did extremely well. The final figures were :

Seats won by cong.	Seats won by League	Central seats	Muslim seats	Others	Total
923	423	846	492	247	1585

It is apparent that the Elections did not product any agreement, between the Congress and the League. The rivalry and hatred between the League and the Congress which the elections of 1937 had created, came into prominence by the 1946 elections. Sardar Patel asserted: "The door for any negotiation with the Muslim League is not closed. The Congress is not going to make any offer to it."

### **INA TRIALS**

Before the polling started an event occured which became a landmark in the history of India's freedom struggle.

About 25,000 Indian soldiers had joined the Japanese after the fall of Singapore and constituted themselves into an Indian National Army (INA) under the leadership of Subhash Chandra Bose to fight the British. The Britigt, authorities charged them of waging `war against the king' and accused them of `being "guilty of gross brutality in the method employed to induce their fellow prisoners to Join them." A military tribunal was set up and the British committed, the colossal blunder of holding the first trial inside the Red Fort at Delhi. The three accused included a Hindu, a Muslim and a Sikh.

Addressing the workers of the Kashmir National Conference at Srinagar Nehru demanded that the Government of India should`clarify the position of the prisoners of the Indian National Army. Dharam Yash Dev wrote, "Jawaharlal lies at last spoken out what millions in India and *thousands* of Indians in every other part of the world have been thinking about the past few weeks."<sup>9</sup>

Nehru said, he liked to honour them for their struggle for freedom and for their sacrifices. The main lesson which INA men taught was not only the love and *regard for`the* country and of independence, but discipline

<sup>8</sup>. Menon, V.P.; The Transfer of Power in India, pp. 225-26.

<sup>9</sup>. Quoted in Anita Singh, The Role of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, in the Transfer of Power, unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, B.H.U., p.162.

and organisation and the unity they had forged among themselves. The communal problem which we were facing today was solved by them in their ranks. He asserted that honour and respect should be paid, to them for this especially.

On Dec. 21, 1945, by a resolution of the A.I.C.C, the INA Defence Committee was created in Bombay. It consisted of Tej Bahadur Sapru, Bhulabhai Desai, Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. K.N. Katju, Raghunandan Saran and Asaf Ali (convenor) .

Popular enthusiasm was aroused throughout the country. Demonstrations were held at Bombay, Calcutta, Lahore, Lucknow, Madura, etc. The agitation became countrywide when the Muslim League lent its support to the defence of the accused.<sup>10</sup> On Jan 4, 1946, the C-in-C remitted the sentences of transportation for life passed by the Court Martial on Shah Nawaz, Sehgal and Dhillon and confirmed the sentence of cashiering and forfeiture of arrears of pay and allowances. Nehru expressed his happiness over the release of the three INA Officers and said that in the circumstances this was the only option for the British.<sup>11</sup>

INA trial stirred the people who realised that the time had come to end the obnoxious rule of the British. INA became the symbol of the fight for independence of India. Nehru was one of the leaders who participated most actively to stir up the feelings of the masses though he was not the only one to do the same.

#### RIN REVOLT :

There was mounting discontent among the Naval ratings serving in 'HMTS Talwar' the signal school at Colaba, Bombay and this discontent became evident on the eve of the 'Navy Day' on Dec. 1, 1945, when slogans of 'Quit India' 'Revolt Now', 'Kill the British', ' Kill the White Dogs' etc. were noticed painted on the buildings surrounding the Parade ground.<sup>12</sup>

On Feb. 18, 1946, about 1000 ratings of the RIN on HMTS TALWAR Stuck work in protest against "unequal treatment to Indian officers and men" by the British.<sup>13</sup> They were joined the next day by 20,000 ratings from the shore establishments. The strike continued for three days and on Feb. 21, 1946, it developed into a pitched battle between them and the British troops.

Pt. Nehru said, "Indian people today are proud and virile and determined to be free. That flame of freedom runs through us all, whether we are civilians or

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<sup>10</sup>. Menon, V.P.; Transfer of Power in India, p. 223.

<sup>11</sup>. Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru, Vol.14, p. 368.

<sup>12</sup>. Home Department (Political) Internal Section, F.No. 5/21/46 Poll I, N.A.I.

<sup>13</sup>. 2. Ibid.

armymen. He asserted that it also made evident that the iron wall which the British had created, between the Indian army and the Indian people had collapsed and broken to pieces. The Indian armymen who mostly hailed from the peasant class were as keen to end political and economic exploitation *in* the country as their 'brothers' in fields and factories.<sup>14</sup>

However, he did not encourage the element of violence. He expressed that the valuable work of the Indian National Congress would certainly be wasted if people gave expression to the urge for freedom in terms of violence which would only benefit the opponents who possessed superior violence on their side.<sup>15</sup>

Gandhiji, Sardar Patel and Pt. Nehru called upon the people to desist from violence<sup>16</sup> and on Feb. 23, 1946, the ratings of the signal school, Bombay surrendered with a declaration: "We surrender to India and not to Britain."<sup>17</sup> They were joined later by ratings from other naval establishments like Madras, Calcutta, Sind and Bahrain.

### **THE CABINET MISSION :**

The general elections had served as an eye-opener to the British who realised their inability to hold the tide of freedom anymore. The INA trials and the RIN Revolt made it blatantly clear that the British could no longer count on the Indian Army to hold down India. The threatened or actual strikes in the Railways, in the Posts and Telegraph Department and in various state and private industrial concerns compelled the British to realise the economic and social ills of India could be cured only by government which had the people's support. Attlee was convinced of the necessity of taking early action and on Feb. 19, 1946, a day after the RIN Revolt, he announced the dispatch of the Cabinet Mission to discuss with Indian leaders as to the best way in which political power could be eventually transferred to Indian hands. The Mission was composed of Lord Pethick Lawrence, the Secretary of State, Sir Stafford Cripps, the President of the Board of Trade, and Mr. A.V. Alexander, the first Lord of the Admiralty.

The Cabinet Mission, which arrived in New Delhi on March 24, unlike the Cripps Mission, carried no scheme of constitutional advancement tailored in Britain and the Viceroy was to be an effective partner in the Indian problem

The Mission spent the first week in Delhi, conferring with the Governor-General on their future programme, and familiarizing themselves with the Indian situation by discussing with the members of the Executive Council and the Provincial Governors. The next fortnight was spent in interviewing the leaders of

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<sup>14</sup>. The Hindustan Times, March 4, 1946, p.5.

<sup>15</sup>. Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru, Vol.15, p.18. 3,

<sup>16</sup>. Home Deptt. (Pol.) F.No. 5/21/46 Poll I, N.A.I. 4.

<sup>17</sup>. Home Deptt. (Pol.) F.No. 5/5/46, Pol II, N,A.I.



the opposition parties both in the Central and Provincial Legislature, representatives of the minorities and special interests, Rulers of the states and a host of others.

The task was sufficiently daunting.<sup>18</sup> The crucial issue was united India versus Pakistan. The Congress steadfastly adhered to the concept of a United India whereas the Muslims League firmly stood for Pakistan. There was no room for the Muslim League compromise on the issue of Pakistan. Jinnah said, "It is a question of our very existence."<sup>19</sup>

On April 7 and 9, the Muslim League organised a convention of the Muslim Legislatures, central and provincial, and reiterated the demand for Pakistan. Jinnah said that the League would be willing to join an interim government at the centre provided its demand for Pakistan was unequivocally accepted, and a guarantee was given for its implementation.

He declared his firm opposition to a single constitution making body, wanted a sovereign constitution making body for Pakistan separately and added that questions like defence could be settled by these two bodies by negotiation and treat. He also expressed,<sup>20</sup> "There can be no compromise on the issue of Pakistan as a totally sovereign state. We will fight for it, and if necessary we will die for it, but take it we must or we perish."

The Congress view was presented by Maulana Azad who declared that the primary basic demand of the Congress was for independence to be embodied in a constitution comprehending the whole of India and made by a Constituent Assembly. But for the intervening period it was necessary to set up a provisional government which would be responsible for arranging the various stages from the formation of the constituent assembly onwards. On the composition of the provisional government the Congress was not agreeable to parity of Hindu and Muslim members.<sup>21</sup>

Nehru declared that the Congress was not going to agree to the League demand for Pakistan under any circumstances whatsoever - even if the British agreed to it. For him, the mission carried special significance for Attlee, the Prime Minister, and Cripps, one of the members of the Mission, were his personal friends and had promised him before the outbreak of the Second World War, that the next Labour Government would effect a complete transfer of power to a constituent assembly based on universal adult franchise.

From May 5 to 12, tripartite discussion between the Congress, the Muslim League and the Cabinet Mission were held in Simla. The disagreement between

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<sup>18</sup>. Moon, Penderal, Divide and Quit, p. 44.

<sup>19</sup>. The Hindustan Times, April 5, 1945, p.4.

<sup>20</sup>. Ashraf, M.f Cabinet Mission, and After, p. 19.

<sup>21</sup>. Tara Chands History of the Freedom Movement on India, vol. IV, p. 464.

the Congress and the League proved too wide to be reconciled. There upon, the Mission announced their own decision in an outline scheme on May 16, which had the approval, of His Majesty's Government.

The Mission proposed<sup>22</sup> an interim government which would carry on the administration of India until a new constitution making body based on a three tiered constitutional structure to work out the details, could be formed. The proposal for a three-tiered constitution provinces, groups of provinces and a union, ensured for the provinces a large measure of autonomy. They would, be joined with the rest of the country in a union confined to the control of defence, foreign affairs and communications. There was a provision for a province to have the right to secede from the union after 10 years. The states would in the preliminary stage be represented by a negotiating committee, The country was divided into three zones-section B & C included Muslim majority provinces whereas the remaining provinces were kept in section, A.

Azad and Nehru met the Viceroy on the same day and Nehru expressed his anxiety over the vagueness of the proposals regarding the states and the failure of the document to clarify the issue of independence.<sup>23</sup> Wavell interpreted Nehru's anxiousness as an evidence of 'real Congress objective' - immediate control of the centre, so that they could deal with Muslims and Princes and then make at leisure a constitution to suit themselves.<sup>24</sup>

Jinnah described the Cabinet Mission statement as 'Cryptic with several Lacunas'<sup>25</sup>. On June 6, 1946, the Muslim League accepted the proposal, subject to innumerable reservations and reiterated that a separate sovereign Pakistan was still "the unalterable objective of the Muslims in India."<sup>26</sup> On June 8, Jinnah reminded the Viceroy that he had committed to him that there would be twelve portfolios, viz, 5 League, 5 Congress, 1 Sikh, and 1 Indian Christian or Anglo-Indian. The Viceroy indicated that 5:5:2 ratios was in his mind but said that he had not give any assurance on this issue.

Nehru suggested a 15 member interim governments<sup>27</sup> and Azad pointed out that they were opposed to parity in any shape or form. The Viceroy now suggested an Executive Council of 13 members, 6 Congress (including a Scheduled Caste), 5 Muslim League and 2 minority representatives. However, the Congress rejected the formula and a complete deadlock was reached.

On 16 June, the Mission issued a statement according to which interim

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<sup>22</sup>. Shiva Rao, B.; The framing of India's Constitution, Vo1.I, pp. 159-176.

<sup>23</sup>. Wavell, Viceroy's Journal, p. 271.

<sup>24</sup>. Ibid, p. 271.

<sup>25</sup>. Menon, V.P.; Transfer of Power in India, p. 269.

<sup>26</sup>. Misra, B.B.; The Indian Political Parties, p. 573.

<sup>27</sup>. Mansergh, N, (ed, ); Transfer of Power, Vol.vii,pp.886-87.

government was to consist of 14 members, 6 Congress (including a Scheduled Caste), 5 League, 1 Sikh, 1 Indian Christian and 1 Parsi. It was made clear that if either of both of the two major parties proved unwilling to join, the Governor-General would proceed with the formation of an interim government which would be as representative as possible of those willing to accept the statement of May 16. The Viceroy's assurances to Jinnah and his insistence that the Congress should not nominate a Muslim, certainly influenced the Congress Working Committee's decision on June 25 at Delhi where it rejected, the proposals for an Interim Government.

Jinnah was apprised of the Congress decision by the Mission which stated that the scheme of June 16 had, therefore, fallen through and it proposed to set up a coalition Government including both parties as soon as possible. Jinnah accused the Mission of having gone back on its word.<sup>28</sup>

The A.I.C.C. met on July 6-7 at Bombay and the considerable opposition accepted the Constituent Assembly Scheme under Gandhi's influence. Nehru became the Congress President and remarked that it was not a question of the Congress accepting any plan, long or short. It was merely, a question of their agreeing to enter the Constituent Assembly and, nothing more than that.<sup>29</sup> Jinnah characterised Nehru's statement as a complete repudiation of the basic form upon which the long term scheme rested. Lord Pethick Lawrence and Sir Strafford Cripps clarified in both houses of Parliament that the Congress leaders had categorically stated their intention of going into the Constituent Assembly with the object of making it work. Grouping was an essential feature of the scheme and the Provinces had the right to opt out of the groups after the first election under the new constitution when with a wider electorate the matter could be made an election issue.<sup>30</sup>

But Jinnah was far from being satisfied. He criticised the Mission as well as the Congress and declared that the League was left with no option but to adhere to the national goal of Pakistan. The League withdrew its acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan of 16 May and resolved to resort to 'direct action' to achieve Pakistan. The League called upon the Muslims to observe August 16 as 'Direct Action day'. The threatening attitude of the League and the likely repercussions of the 'direct action' mellowed down the Congress attitude. Wavell too explained to Nehru that the principal grievance of the League was the feeling that the proposals with regards to grouping would not be given a fair chance.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>. Mansergh, iJ, (ed. ); Transfer of Power, Vol. VIII, p.1.

<sup>29</sup>. Azad, M.A.K.; India Wins Freedom, p. 178

<sup>30</sup>. Kapur, A.C.; Constitutional History of India, p.877. I

<sup>31</sup>. Menon, V.P.; The Transfer of power in India, p. 84.

The Congress clarified that it objected only to grouping being forced upon a Province and not to the principle of grouping. The Congress Working Committee by a resolution on August 10, accepted the scheme in *its* entirety. Meanwhile, elections to the Constituent Assembly were held in July 1946. The Congress won almost all the General seats whereas, the League won almost all the Muslim seats. As regards the formation of interim government, Nehru expressed the inability of the Congress to co-operate on the basis suggested by the Viceroy. Jinnah too refused to accept Viceroy's proposal in view of the League resolution of July 29. The British, who strongly felt the necessity of a representative government to control the deteriorating situation in the country, decided to invite Nehru to form the interim government.<sup>32</sup>

The Congress accepted the offer and Nehru wrote to Jinnah offering five seats to the League with the assurance that the names proposed by the League would be accepted by the Congress.<sup>33</sup> Jinnah did not accept Nehru's offer.

The League celebrated August 16 as 'Direct Action Day' which was accompanied by large scale riots especially in Calcutta where for four days riot, murder, arson and pillage were rampant. Nearly 5000, were dead and over 15,000 injured and the British Governor remained imperturbable but inactive.<sup>34</sup> The communal frenzy spread to Punjab and later to Noakhali and Tipperah, In fact, the whole country was in the grip of Muslim League hooliganism.

On September 2, the Interim Government was sworn in and the League decided to fly black flags.

Ultimately the efforts of Nehru and the Viceroy succeeded and on Oct.13,1946, Jinnah informed Wavell about the decision to nominate five members of the League to the Indian Government. The Interim Government was reconstituted on Oct. 25, 1946. But the League members were determined to wreck the Government from within. Nehru expressed his apprehension that "their (the League's) coming in would have little value and in fact might even be harmful to all concerned if it was really a prelude to inner as well as outer conflicts." Liaquat Ali said that Nehru's anger was due to the League's refusal to recognise the "fiction of his leadership in the Government". It was a deplorable state of affairs and Sardar Patel admitted in Nov. 1946, that the Government was in a state of paralysis.<sup>35</sup>

However, the league had made no formal decision regarding the acceptance of the Long-term proposals. When on Nehru's insistence, Wavell asked Jinnah to

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<sup>32</sup>. Ibid, p. 288.

<sup>33</sup>. Menon, V.P.; *The Transfer of Power in India*, p. 228.

<sup>34</sup>. Moon, Penderal, *Divide and Quit*, p. 58.

<sup>35</sup>. Kapur, A.C.; *Constitutional History of India*, p. 381. 55.

do so, he asked the Viceroy to announce immediately the postponement of the Constituent Assembly and concentrate on peace and order in the country. Jinnah's plea was rejected and the Constituent Assembly was summoned on Dec. 9, 1946. Whereupon the League decided to boycott the Constituent Assembly. The League also advocated compulsory grouping of the Provinces in Section B and C and the right of the Groups to frame the constitutions of the constituent provinces. The Congress on the other hand, claimed the right of the Provinces to frame their own constitutions, and to decide whether they would join a group or stay out of it at the initial stage of the Constituent Assembly. The British Government invited the representatives of the Congress, Muslim League and the Sikhs to a conference to be held in London on Dec. 9, 1947.

The talks, however, fell through and Jinnah either raised his demand for Pakistan, the alternative to which he declared, was civil war.

The INA trials, the RIN revolt and the outcome of general elections convinced the British of the necessity of complete transfer of power into Indian hands. The Cabinet Mission envisaged a union but outlined Pakistan. Nehru expressed apprehension regarding the grouping being forced upon the provinces. The League rejected the plan and launched its Direct Action Programme which led to a series of communal disturbances all over the country. The Congress accepted the plan in its entirety but it was too late. The League boycotted Nehru's Interim Government and entered later only to bring the entire administration to a standstill. With the country on the verge of civil war, partition was increasingly been accepted as the only option left.



## Saddam Hussein, the pioneer of Gulf war

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The Middle East extends from the Eastern Mediterranean to the North West frontier of India and states like Turkey, Egypt, Palestine, Iran, Saudi-Arabia and Jordan come under this belt.

The dawn of April 28, 1937 witnessed the birth of a future legend named Saddam Hussein. He was born in an ordinary peasant family in the village of al-Auja, near the town of Tikrit, about 160 km, from Baghdad. Saddam spent his childhood in hardships. His father's identity is a controversial issue. Some say that :

“Saddam's father Hussein al-Majid abandoned his wife Subha and their children. Her husband gone Subha married another peasant Ibrahim Hassan. Ibrahim treated Saddam harshly and Saddam's mother was forced to send her son to her brother Khayrallah Tulfah - a school teacher in Baghdad.<sup>1</sup>

Khayrallah Tulfah brought up Saddam on the lines of Nazi cult and he :

“Initiated him in a Nazi Cult of intrigue, violence, ruthlessness, dictatorship and genocide of ethnic minorities.<sup>2</sup>

After completing his secondary education, Saddam joined the Baath Party under the leadership of Abdul Karim Qasim and took part in a coup against King Faisal II of Iraq in 1958. But Saddam was not to stop here; he :

“Made an abortive attempt on the life of the Prime Minister Abdul Karim

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<sup>1</sup>. Mittal, N.S., *An Unfinished War : Saddam under siege* New Delhi, 1991, P : 26.

<sup>2</sup>. *Ibid* : 1991, P : 26

Qasim.<sup>3</sup>

Being unsuccessful Saddam fled to Damascus where he stayed for three months and from there he went to Cairo and I stayed there for three years. He started studying law there, left it unfinished & returned to Bagdad and began Participating' the violent activities of the Irqi Baath Party. He killed his own brother-in-law at the command of his maternal uncle.

Saddam married Sajida in 1963. She was his cousins, daughter of Khayrallah Tulfah, after the assassination of Qasim. Saddam was enlisted as an interrogator and torturer in the Nihayyah Palace. In the year 1963 he acquired a honourable position in the Baath Regional command which was parties highest decision making body in Iraq. The Jihax Haneen, the secret security organisation emerged as a security force within the party in accordance with the wishes of Saddam Hussein.

The Baath Party came into power on July 30, 1968 and al-Bakr, the Secretary-General of the party and chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council1 became the President of Iraq and Commander-in-Chief of the Irqi Armed Forces. Al-Bakr appointed Saddam as his deputy and made him the in charge of internal security and Vice President of Iraq. During this period Saddam's early life and his maternal Uncle's teachings began reflecting. He insisted on being addressed as Deputy. He started behaving in a high-handed manner and:

“Under his leadership opponents of the regime were publicly humiliated, tortured and eliminated with the help of the security mechanism under his full control, and loyalty to the regime became synonymous with the loyalty to the Deputy.<sup>4</sup>

Saddam Hussein believed in family loyalties, still he went abroad leaving his family behind. Saddam Hussein's cold and calculating personality is evident from the fact that :

“He went ahead forging family ties with the man of tomorrow al-Bakr since 1963, through the good offices of his wife Sajida. Gen Ahead Bassan al-Bakr was his distant cousin Sajida offered her sister for his son and accepted two of his daughters for two of her brothers. Thus, he knit a close family relationship with al-Bakr. It was a foresight.<sup>5</sup>

Gradually Saddam acquired complete control over the party and the State. He could not bear to continue as a Deputy for long and so he puts his plans into action. He pressurized al-Bakr through his family members to give up the President ship of Iraq. Al-Bakr being familiar with the domineering nature of Saddam

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<sup>3</sup>. Gupta Shekhar : Iraq Ready for War, India today, March, 1991, P : 22

<sup>4</sup>. Mittal N.S. An Unfinished War : Saddam Under Siege, New Delhi : 1991, P : 27

<sup>5</sup>. Mittal N.S. An Unfinished War : Saddam Under Siege, New Delhi : 1991, P : 27

Hussein, vacated his seat which was filled by Saddam Hussein. This was the first milestone in the history of Saddam's terrorising conduct.

As soon as Saddam Hussein became the President of Iraq he invaded Kuwait and annexed it. At this event Mr. Bush, the u.s. President called Saddam Hussein the re-incarnation of Hitler; this remark infuriated the former Like Hitler, Saddam too organised a secret state Police system. It is a network of security and intelligence services, It consists of five departments - the first one being *Mukhabarat* or General Intelligence Agency, conducts internal and external spying *Estikhabarat* or Military Intelligence Agency. The purpose of this agency is,

“The task of annihilation of all those Irqi citizens in Iraq and abroad who earn the wrath of Saddam Hussein.<sup>6</sup>

The next thread of the network of Security and intelligence *Amn al.Am* or State Internal Security Agency. It works in cooperation with *Mukabarat* and carries on the most brutal torture and assassination network on behalf of Saddam Hussein. It is an internal spy agency.

*Estikhabarat* or Military Intelligence is another thread of this agency, Its duty is to keep an eye on Iraqi Military Officers. This intelligence section helped Saddam to keep his military Generals and Officers separate. This ensured his safety too. Apart from this his policy is to shift capable men from one wing to another. He went as far as the execution of capable men on fabricated grounds.

Saddam took special care for his personal security and safety. *Jihaz al—Khas* is the special apparatus of President Affairs Department. It runs and operates all kinds of secret political and financial activities and conducts foreign accounts. The Iraqi President appointed his close blood relation as the head of this agency.

*Amn al—Hizb* is the intelligence & security agency of the party. The agents keep a close watch on party members and office bearers, They supervise and control all the party branches, it is through this agency that Saddam suppresses dissent within the party by eliminating his disparagers and ensures his security.

Saddam was aware of the conspirators around him so he tightened his security by building a network of security agencies. Like Hitler<sup>1</sup> Saddam wove a net work of spy agencies and it seemed as if one half of Iraq were spying over the other half.

Iraq under the domination of Saddam Hussein had become a terrorised piece of land where even children and infants were not spared incase they opposed him. His ruthless conduct did not spare his ministers. The London-educated physician Riyadh Ibrahim became the victim of this blood thirsty tyrant when he suggested him to step aside temporarily till a peace accord with Iran was finalized.

Saddam thanked him for the suggestion<sup>0</sup> and as soon as the meeting was

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<sup>6</sup>. Mittal N.S. An Unfinished War : Saddam Under Siege, New Delhi : 1991, P : 30



over Ibrahim was arrested and despatched to the torture chamber, Ibrahim's wife on learning about the episode, pleaded with Saddam to forgive and release her husband. Saddam promised that she would have him back the next day and issued directions to his secret police in the matter. According to Sahib Hakkim, head of the organisation of Human Rights in Iraq<sup>0</sup> Ibrahim's body was delivered to the house the next day in a black bag. It was chopped in little pieces.<sup>7</sup>

The Middle East Watch, a branch of the Human Rights Watch says that Saddam's secret services are so quick and vigilant that people suspected of disloyalty to Saddam suddenly disappear and their dead bodies are delivered by the Iraqi Police to their relatives who are forced to sign a certificate that the person died an accidental death. Thus, Iraq had turned into a non-democratic state changed with the dictatorship of Hitler and breath-taking terrorism of Saddam.

"In non-democratic system force is the main agent of political change. Hussein knows this only too well and he has spared no effort to transform the Military into an ideological force loyal only to him. Scores of party Commissars have been deployed throughout the armed forces right down to the Battalion level.<sup>8</sup>

Saddam Hussein rightly called the blood thirsty tyrant was going to kill his own son Uday because he interfered in his affairs, Enraged by this interference :

"Hussein put his son behind bars and pledged to try him on Murder charges but after a highly emotional campaign by his wife and Adnan Khayrallah he relented and sent Uday into a luxurious exile in Switzerland.<sup>9</sup>

Khayrallah became a marked man due to this incident and so he had to give his life in a mysterious helicopter Crash.

The Gulf War made Saddam a legendary figure. He became Arab hero of the general public. The fear which he sent down into the hearts of people ultimately turned him into a god-like image. People named their new-born babies after him and he was proud to be called the "knight of Arab Nation." He knew that Arabs were very sentimental about the liberation of Palestine. In a very diplomatic way Saddam presented himself

"In the role of the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar who destroyed Jerusalem in B.C. 587. and the great German Chancellor Otto Von Bismarck. i.e. pretended to unite Arabs and thereby create the vast Abbasid Empire which lasted 500 years, with himself as the Caliph.<sup>10</sup>

Saddam exploited the sentiments of the Arab masses by speaking of Arab dignity, liberation of Palestine and the destruction of Israel.

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<sup>7</sup>. Mittal N.S. An Unfinished War : Saddam Under Siege Parade, 1991, P.P. : 57-58.

<sup>8</sup>. Karsh Efraims : A Biography of Saddam Hussein Parade, 1991, P.P. : 57-58.

<sup>9</sup>. Kanch Iraw : A Biography of Saddam Hussein Parade 1991. Ps58.

<sup>10</sup>. Mittal N.S. An Unfinished War : Saddam Under Siege Parade, 1991, P.P. : 57-58.

By conviction. Saddam is a first class populist, so he declared that “Allaho Akbar” (God is Great) should be sewed into the Iraqi flag, In this way Saddam built his cult of personality on themes of blood and glory. Artists painted his portraits in blood with the caption ‘Our Leader Struggler’ & the students praised him.

Saddam spent 25 million dollars to restore the city of Babylon. The paintings installed there reflect Saddam’s exalted sense of his place in history. He sees himself as an heir to King Nebuchadnezzar and has been depicted in the paintings shaking hands with King Nebuchadnezzar,

“King of Babylon from far sea to far sea. Far sea to far sea’ is interpreted as the area covering modern Iraq, Kuwait, and Syria. Jordan and Israel, Saddam has nurtured in his mind the ambition to bring this area under his sway ardently.<sup>11</sup>

Saddam successfully created a false picture in the minds of people that he was a staunch enemy of corruption. With the help of his agents, he spread the story of a Baghdad Mayor, shot dead by Saddam for receiving kickbacks and stashing money in the foreign banks. But today it is a well known fact that Iraqi President is guilty of about 10 billion dollars from his : Country’s Oil revenues.

A New York - city investigator Jules Kroll was appointed to track down the details of Saddam’s foreign accounts and investment. It is to be noted here that :

“Kroll alleges that 5 percent of Iraq’s oil revenue savings that amounted to 200 billion dollars during the past one decade had been skimmed off by Saddam. It has also been learnt that the Japanese firms doing business in Iraq had been paying a kickback of 2.5 percent to Sad Lam. in foreign currency Saddam had set up certain front companies which had been bagging Government contracts in Iraq, making enormous money and transferring the profits to a secret accounts in foreign banks through a number dummy firms. According to

Kroll, Abu Dhabi based BCCI was one of the prominent banks in handling Iraqi money, There was a Planarian connection, the Montana Management, through which Saddam acquired 8.4 percent stake in the Hachetto, a famous publishing concern in the U.S. As soon as this fact came to be known in the stock market, the share value of Hachette fell by 4.3 percent in a single day for the simple reason that Montana had restored to the panic selling the Hatchet stock held by it.<sup>12</sup>

Saddam had dealing with a middle man in New York who was willing to sell sophisticated and advanced armament and military technology to Iraq. This firm gave faked bills to the Iraqi Government and, :

“Amounts overcharged used to be deposited in foreign banks for personal use of Saddam. After the revelations, the U.S. Government closed the machine-tool

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<sup>11</sup>. Mittal N.S. An Unfinished War : Saddam Under Siege Parade, 1991, P.P. : 38,39.

<sup>12</sup>. Mittal N.S. An Unfinished War : Saddam Under Siege Parade, 1991, P.P. : 39, 40.

firm and seized Wadis palatial mansion and financial holdings in U.S. One of Wadi's seized bank accounts contained more than \$ 200,000. Wadi was subsequently expelled from the U.S. in March 1991.<sup>13</sup>

Saddam Hussein wanted to make Iraq an invincible World Power, for which he needed funds in the U.S. for raw materials and for manufacturing nuclear weapons. There is a possibility that money in the foreign banks may be for his family and himself in case he is ousted from power and this fact cannot be denied.

Thus, Saddam Hussein emerged as a ruthless dictator for whom over-ambitiousness and multiplying power was only a small milestone to make him omnipotent. Powers death and massacre were mild words in his personal dictionary.

However, it is undeniable that Saddam would be removed from the office in the same manner as he removed his predecessors while carrying out his ruthless massacres, the fear of his own dooms day lurked in his mind. The U.S. dollars assured him support in his imminent disaster.

Saddam was a dictator consumed by the ambition to hold per and to grow from power to power. For him neither the life nor will of the people had any sanctity nor the public funds, To him power was the only reality and all the means that lead him to power were pure and sacred. He held fast to the rules of Nazi cult instilled in his mind by his maternal uncle Khayrallah Tulfah. He believed in the existence of an absolute identity of interests and personality between the leader and the nation, Hitler took Germany for his pride and Saddam utilized Iraq troops as his owns. He built Iraq a strong and powerful state, over the Arab realm, to fight for the causes dear to his heart.

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<sup>13</sup>. Ibid, Delhi, 1991, P.P. : 40, 41.



## **The traditional Society of Indian Muslims in eighteenth century**

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By the beginning of the eighteenth century, Muslim society in India was composed of descendants of Turkic, Afghan, Persian and Arab immigrants, and of Indian Muslims who had embraced Islam in different regions and circumstances, and under varied pressures. The immigrants, who themselves belonged to distinct culture groups, brought with them the characteristic features of their ethnic and non-Islamic religious backgrounds. In the course of time, the interaction of their various ideas and values contributed to the rise of cultural traditions which were radically different from those of their birthplaces; Muslims, while retaining the broad basic framework of their religion, evolved healthy traditions of toleration, and of peaceful coexistence with the indigenous population. A great deal of similarity developed in the dress and ornaments of Hindus and Muslims. Though the eating habits of the members of the two religious groups differed in important respects, especially in the eating of meat, these difficulties did not undermine their social relations. They appreciated each other's religions and social taboos and adjusted their lives in an atmosphere of social amity and mutual understanding. Hindu and Muslim peasants, artisans, craftsmen and merchants worked in close co-operation with each other. Hindu bankers, merchants and money-lenders controlled trade and commerce and exercised considerable influence over the finances of the government. They were the backbone of society.

The use of Persian served as a strong unifying bond between the Hindu and Muslim upper classes. Translations of some Hindu religious works into Persian widened the outlook of those Hindus who were linked with the Mughal administrative machinery; and an atmosphere of sympathetic understanding of the spiritual problems of the two major religions of India was thus created. The verses

of Sa'di, Rumi and Ijafi regulated the patterns of social behaviour of Hindus and Muslims alike. The educational policy and the translation scheme undermined Brahmanical superiority in the interpretation of Hinduism. The obscurantism and bigotry of Aurangzeb disturbed the Hindu and Muslim nobility alike. The control of the Hindus over the revenue and the financial policies and administration of the Mughals had made even the Muslim theologians and other religious functionaries dependent upon them for the verification of their land grants. The occasional outbursts of the theologians and the Sufis against the Hindu administrative officers of the Mughals should be ascribed to their failure to make the administrative machinery subservient to their demands.

The system of state employment evolved by Akbar, known as the *mansabdari* system, absorbed all types of landed interests such as Raj puts, Bundelas, hill rajas, Jats, Marathas, and the Muslim tribes and ethnic groups, into the same graded hierarchy, with definite salaries either in the form of a *jagir* (assignment of land) or partly in cash and partly, for each *mansab* (rank) and for the number of horsemen maintained. They constituted the upper crust of society. Their tribal, racial, or ethnic interests conditioned their alliances and enmities; religion played hardly any significant role in political and official dealings. The secular laws of the government exercised an overriding control over the administration.

The *zamindars* were those who held various types of hereditary land rights. From the highest Raj put chieftains down to the petty 'intermediaries' at village level, all were known as *zamindars*. They were ambitious, restless and given to intrigue. Akbar assimilated them to the Mughal administrative machinery by offering them *mansabs* commensurate with their status and ability. The emperor's paramount authority to appoint, depose, or reduce rank kept them under proper control and various other restrictions ensured their loyalty to the emperor. They collected the revenue from the cultivators and credited the state's share to the imperial treasury through the official revenue collectors. They maintained law and order in their jurisdiction, protected the roads and other means of communication and were required to promote cultivation. Their rights and privileges were superior to those of the other cultivators in the village. The dispossessed Afghan nobles among the Muslims enjoyed large and compact *zamindari* interests. Under them, a considerable number of other Afghans and their retainers controlled many villages. The *zamindars* of other caste groups also held compact areas under their control. This enabled them to rebel without much inconvenience and on the slightest provocation. Religious and racial questions added to the confusion. The system itself was responsible for the frequent Jat, Sikh and Afghan revolts in the north and those of the MarathAs and the Deccan Muslims in the south. Grants were also made for religious and charitable purposes to scholars, theologians, and members of respectable families who had no other means of livelihood. The descendants of

the Muslim saints, and of the Prophet, were the greatest beneficiaries under this system. Subsequently they also came to hold compact *amindari* interests in different villages. These grants were liable to be resumed at the death of the assignee, though some grants were hereditary. The conditions under which grants were made were not always complied with by grantees; and any interference on the part of the administrators to curtail the privileges of the beneficiaries met with strong resistance.

The peculiar features of the Mughal administrative system produced three types of villages. There were villages consisting exclusively of a Hindu or Muslim population, and there were others with a mixed population. The exclusively or predominantly Muslim villages had their mosques with *imams*, *mullas* and other religious functionaries, who played a vital role in directing village life into healthy channels, and exhibited restraint, understanding and sympathy in the celebration of religious festivals and other communal functions. The tomb of a genuine or legendary saint or a martyr was an object of veneration to Hindus and Muslims alike. Revivalistic and puritanical movements could not eradicate all syncretic tendencies.

The pressure on the supply of jagirs, the demand for which increased at the end of the seventeenth century because of the costly military campaigns of Aurangzeb 'Alamgir in the impoverished Deccan, and the need to reconcile Deccani nobles, unbalanced the Mughal administrative machinery. Aurangzeb's policy of breaking the *zamindar* cliques by encouraging them to embrace Islam, and thus driving a wedge into their ranks, strengthened their parochial and separatist tendencies. Those *zamindars* who did not pay revenue unless military force was applied against them, were a perpetual source of trouble to the Mughal administration. At the end of the seventeenth century, in combination with other recalcitrant's, such people rose in rebellion in several places. Some of them used religious slogans to rally support for their cause, and ambitious religious leaders lent a willing ear to them. In the eighteenth century these *zamindars* assumed the role of autonomous chiefs.

The war of succession after the death of Aurangzeb dealt a heavy blow to the straitened resources of the empire; and the prodigality of Shah 'Adam Bahadur Shah (1707-12) shattered the basis of *the jagirdari* system. Subsequently, to the detriment of the interests of the central government, encroachments were made on crown land which began to be assigned *as jagirs*. An attempt to replenish the treasury by introducing a revenue-farming system aggravated the crisis. The powerful factions at the court began to bid for the profitable and most easily manageable jagirs, and the leading aspirants for power embarked upon a scramble for the key positions of the empire. Gradually some mansabdar also acquired permanent zamindari rights.

Formerly the Mughal nobles had intrigued to gain the favour of their masters; now they assumed the position of king-makers. The leading Muslim factions unhesitatingly set out to seek the protection of the Marathas, the Rajputs and the Jats whenever it suited their purpose. Zu'l-Faqar Khan, the all-powerful *wazir*, obtained the abolition of the *jizya* through Jahandar Shah, whom he raised to the throne in 1712.. Even the reversal of the policy of Aurangzeb did not save the Mughal empire from dissolution. Failure to keep pace with technological developments in other parts of the world and to introduce much-needed administrative reforms precipitated its downfall. Nadir Shah's invasion of 1739 left the imperial capital, Delhi, bleeding and prostrate. The surrender of Sind, Kabul and the western parts of the Panjab to the invader made the Mughal frontiers vulnerable to successive invasions by the Afghan chief, Ahmad Shah Durrani (1747-73). His rise contributed to the encouragement of the Indian Afghans, who began to make a fresh bid for supremacy over the ruins of the Mughal empire. The Afghan chief Najib al-Dawla assumed the role of a fifth columnist. A headlong collision between the rising Maratha power and the ambitious Afghans, both of whom were making a bid for political supremacy in northern India, became inevitable. On 14 January 1761, a fierce battle was fought between Ahmad Shah Durrani and the Marathas at Panipat in which the Maratha power was worsted. The Durrani invasion drained the impoverished Mughal empire of its entire resources; Najib al-Dawla suppressed the Jat incursions, but the Sikhs, who had gradually consolidated their power, obtained supreme control of the whole of the Panjab. In less than ten years the Marathas reappeared before Delhi; but neither they nor the Mughals could withstand the gradual penetration of the British into India. The battle of Panipat exposed the weakness of the Indian powers.

On the decline of the central authority at Delhi, there arose along with the Hindu states a number of Muslim principalities which pretended to *owe* nominal allegiance to the Mughal emperors, but to all intents and purposes were independent. Of these the most important in the north were Bengal, Oudh (Awadh) and the trans-Gangetic powers, and in the south, the Asaf Jahi state of Hyderabad (Deccan). They tried to reorganize their administrations on traditional lines, and their courts became the rendezvous of unemployed artists, craftsmen, musicians and poets, mainly Muslims.

Except for the Mujaddidi Naqshbandis, all the mystic orders in India followed the principles of *wajahat al-wujud*. At the end of the eleventh/seventeenth century, Shah Kalim Allah Jahanibadi (1729) revived the past glories of the Chishtis at Delhi. He tactfully but firmly opposed the religious outlook of Aurangzeb, denounced him as presumptuous, and sought to stimulate the interest of all sections of Indians in his own preachings. His disciple, Shaykh Nizam al-Din Aurangabadi (1730), preached the humanitarian teachings of the Chishtis in the

Deccan, His activities in Aurangzeb's camp in the Deccan stifled the Naqshbandi influence. About 1747, his son, Shah Fakhr al-Din, moved to Delhi, and plunged himself into the teaching of Hadith and Sufism. The Mughal emperor, a large number of important nobles, princes and princesses vied with one another in exhibiting their devotion to him. Till his death in 1785, his teachings inspired many of the Sunnis of Delhi, and were acceptable to Shi'as, as well as to many Hindus. The influence of his disciples extended from Delhi to the Panjab in the west and to Ruhilkhand in the east.

The most eminent Saint and the theologian of the twelfth/eighteenth century was Shah Wali Allah of Delhi. He was born on 4 Shawwal 1114/3 March 1703, and received his early education from his father, whom he succeeded in 1719 as the head of the *madrassa* which he had founded in Delhi. In 1731 he visited Mecca on Pilgrimage, and studied Hadith under some eminent scholars at Medina; he came back to Delhi on 14 Rajab 1145/31 December 1732. His studies in Arabia and contacts with other scholars of the Islamic world sharpened his intellectual faculties and extended his outlook. He began to feel a mystical confidence which enabled him to discard taqlid (acceptance of religious authority) without compromising his belief in the innate perfection of the *Shari'a* he asserted that the pursuit of Islamic ordinances conferred far-reaching social and individual benefits upon Muslims. His *magnum opus*, *Hujjat Allah al-baligha*, draws extensively upon the works of Ibn Miskawayh, al-Farabi and al-Ghazali; it reflects a deep understanding of the importance of the process of historical change and socio-economic challenges. His *Sbari'a-state*, which he sought to reorganize on the model of the government of the first four caliphs, was the *sine qua non* of a peaceful and prosperous life for all ages and times. 'Adi (justice) was the golden mean which preserved the framework of all political and social organizations. *Tawazun* (equilibrium) in economic life ensured the proper development of a healthy society. An excessive burden of taxation on the revenue-producing classes-peasants, merchants and artisans-undermined the health of the body politic.

In a letter addressed to the Mughal emperor, the *wazir* and the nobles, he gave practical suggestions for the remedying of the defects in society and the administration. His letter to Ahmad Shah Durrani details the chaotic condition of the imperial court, and includes a brief account of non-Muslim powers such as the Jäts, the Marathas and the Sikhs. It was written mainly to seek the goodwill of the conqueror; and it would not be realistic to interpret it as an invitation to that adventurer to invade the country and restore the glory of Islam. Ahmad Shah Durrani, who had already invaded India on four earlier occasions, hardly needed any invitation for the invasion of 1761, or briefing about the state of affairs of the non-Muslim powers. Mirza Mazhar Jan-i Janan, another eminent saint of the times, had no respect for the Durrani army and for him it was a scourge of God.



Shah Wali Allah was wholly sincere in his devotion to the cause of Islam, and had a firm faith in its power. 'If it so happens', he wrote, 'that the Hindus are able to obtain complete domination over India, the Divine Mystery would force their leaders to embrace Islam in the same manner as the Turks formerly did.'

<sup>1</sup> Though his ancestors had migrated to India in the seventh/thirteenth century, he considered himself an alien, and exhorted his followers to abandon 'the customs of 'Ajam and the habits of the Hindus'.<sup>2</sup> His Arabic works subsequently found considerable popularity in Egypt and other Arabic-speaking countries which were experiencing an increasing tension because of the conflicts between eclecticism and revivalist movements. His disciple, Sayyid Murtaza of Bilgram (near kannauj), achieved immense celebrity in Egypt. He wrote commentaries on al-Ghazali's *Ihya 'ulum al-din* and other works on Hadith and fiqya. Shah Wali Allah died in 1762.

His son, Shah 'Abd al-'Aziz (1746-1824), vigorously followed the traditions of his father. He wrote a detailed refutation of the beliefs of the Twelver Shi'a, which aroused considerable sectarian bickering. Mawlanā Sayyid Dildar 'All, the contemporary Shi'a *mujtahid* of Lucknow, and his disciples, published several polemical works in refutation. His younger brothers, Shah Rafi' al-Din, Shah 'Abd al-Qadir and Shah 'Abd al-Ghani, co-operated with him in strengthening the cause of Sunni orthodoxy. The first two translated the Qur'an into Urdu. Students from Western Islamic countries also attended their seminaries.

*The fatwa* which he wrote after the Emperor Shah 'Alam was taken under the protection of the East India Company (1803) is regarded as a very revolutionary document, but it hardly solved any of the problems of the contemporary Muslims. In the *fatwa* he addressed the puppet Mughal emperor as the Imam of the Muslims, and accused the British of wantonly demolishing the mosques and restricting the freedom of *dbimmis* and Muslims alike. Their non-interference with practices such as the Friday and 'Id prayers, the call to prayer, and cow-slaughter, did not according to him merit any respect, because they felt no obligation to show such tolerance. He therefore declared that India was now *dar-ul Harb* (the abode of war, i.e. outside the Islamic oecumene). The fact that he did not take the same view of the domination of the Marathas, who had previously exercised supreme control over the emperor, cannot be defended on theological grounds. It seems that he examined the situation historically. Instances of Hindus exercising absolute control over the Muslim powers were not wanting in Indian history; but the supremacy of a foreign power was unprecedented. Neither Shah Wali Allah nor Shah 'Abd al-'Aziz realized the strength of the challenge of the

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<sup>1</sup>. Wali Allah, *Tafhimat-i Ilabiyya* (Delhi, 1936), I, 215-16.

<sup>2</sup>- Wali Allah, *Wasiyat Nama* (Lucknow, n.d.), 7.

West, and they left Muslim society in a backward condition, torn with sectarian strife and groping in the dark.

Shah 'Abd al-'Aziz's nephew, Isma'il Shahid, and his disciple Sayyid Ahmad Barelwi (1786-1831) made further contributions to the practical and theoretical aspects of the *jihad*. Sayyid Ahmad was born at Rae Bareilly, in the Shi'i state of the nawabs of Oudh. He was not interested in literary education. In about 1804, he travelled to Delhi, and studied there under Shah 'Abd al-Qadir, one of the sons of Shah Wali Allah. After approximately two years' stay he left for his native land. In 1810 he joined the Pathan chief, Amir Khan, and obtained considerable training and experience in guerrilla warfare. When Amir Khan surrendered and was recognized as the ruler of Tank (November 1817), Sayyid Ahmad came back to Delhi. His experience as a soldier and his achievements as a mystic elicited the immeasurable admiration of Shah 'Abd al-'Aziz. Shah Isma'il, son of Shah 'Abd al-Ghani, and Shah 'Abd al-'Aziz's son-in-law, 'Abd al-Hayy, both became Sayyid Ahmad's disciples. Like a roving missionary, accompanied by his disciples, he visited a number of towns in modern Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Bengal, where they militantly sought to suppress popular religious practices, and combated the prejudice against the re-marriage of widows.

In 1821 Sayyid Ahmad came to Calcutta, and set off for Mecca. A study of the Wahhabi movement there seems to have strengthened his zeal for militant Muslim revivalism; and in 1824 he returned to India with his mind full of ideas of *jihad*. A large number of disbanded sepoy soldiers of the East India Company, unemployed Pathan followers of Amir Khan, Ruhillas and the supporters of the rulers of Sind warmly responded to his declaration of *jihad* against the Sikhs, whom he imagined he would be able to overthrow easily. In 1826 he left for the North West Frontier; patched up alliances with some tribal chiefs; and obtained considerable success in early skirmishes against the Sikhs. On 11 January 1827 he assumed the title of imam; he then wrote to the rulers of Bukhara and Herat, explaining the differences between an imam and a sultan, and urging them to help him without any fear for their own thrones. Shah Isma'il also wrote a treatise on the subject. Their arguments did not convince the Central Asian rulers, and their activities aroused considerable suspicion among the neighbouring Islamic powers and tribal chiefs. Yar Muhammad Khan, the chief of Peshawar, strongly opposed Sayyid Ahmad, whose followers defeated him heavily in 1830. The Sayyid formed a government in accordance with his ideas of a pious Islamic state. His attempts to stamp out the practice of giving daughters to the highest bidders, the enforcement of Islamic taxes on the poor tribes who had joined him in the lust for gold, and other rigorist judicial and economic laws, estranged the tribes from his followers, who were known as the *mujabida* or 'fighters in the *jihad*'. His decree permitting his Indian disciples to take the young girls of the tribes as wives, provoked a

violent storm of hostility against the mubabids, and the tribes began to desert them. In the beginning of 1831 the Sayyid made a dash as far as Muzaffarabad in Kashmir, was defeated, and returned to Balakot, where he fell fighting against a strong force of Sikhs in May 1831. The claims of Sayyid Ahmad to the imamate, his assumption of a status akin to that of the Rightly-guided Caliphs, his schemes for puritanical reforms, and the indiscreet interference of his followers with the lives of the tribes, brought rapid disaster to his plans of conquest and of founding an ideal Islamic empire extending from Peshawar to Calcutta. His schemes were too narrowly based to fit into the framework of contemporary Islamic society. The British authorities actively welcomed unrest on the frontiers with the Sikhs, and connived at the flow of arms, money and men from their Indian possessions to the Sayyid. The movement of Sayyid Ahmad, though known as a Wahhabi movement, had no organic connexion with Muhammad b. ‘Abd al-Wahhab’s movement, and was called by its followers the *Tariqa i-Muhammadiyah*. His followers were divided into several branches; some even went to the extent of calling him a messiah.

Political disintegration and social degeneration after the death of Shah ‘Alam Bahadur Shah I brought little economic dislocation, and was not a corollary of intellectual or moral decay. The traditional seminaries of Delhi, and the *dars i-nizami*, or the curriculum of the oriental learning evolved at Lucknow in the eleventh/seventeenth century, produced some eminent scholars in several branches of the traditional learning, and regional literatures were also greatly enriched. The development of Urdu was a singular contribution of the period. Scholars like Tafaçul usayn Kashmiri who flourished in the reign of Aaf al-Daula in Oudh, learnt English and Latin, and compiled some valuable mathematical works. Mirza Abu Talib Khan, also called Abu Talib Landani (‘the Londoner’), who was born at Lucknow in 1752, served the court of Oudh and the East India Company in various capacities. In the years 1798-1803 he travelled to Europe and wrote a detailed account of his experiences in the *Masir-i talibi fi bilad-i Afranji*, which he completed in 1804. He took a keen interest in British social, political and economic institutions, and assessed them in his work with a remarkable degree of comprehension.

The Rajputs, Jats, Marithas and Sikhs who carved out independent principalities followed the broad pattern of the Mughal administration and welcomed the presence of talented Muslims at their courts; thus the general economic equilibrium of the Muslims remained undisturbed. The battles of Plassey (Palasi) in 1757 and Buxar in 1764 put an end to the independence of Bengal. The series of revenue legislative measures passed between 1772 and 1790 culminating in the permanent settlement (1793) of Lord Cornwallis replaced the old class of Zamindars, mainly Muslims, with speculators comprising Calcutta *banians*

(bankers), moneylenders and subordinate employees of the East India Company. The Muslim aristocracy, which took pride in its extravagance, had not the ready cash to profit by the new regulations as did the Hindus. The high-handedness of the Company's agents undermined the monopoly of the Muslim weavers, who possessed hereditary looms and adhered to the traditional system of manufacture. Subsequently the unfair competition of the manufacturers in England and the unwillingness of the Company either to protect the Bengal cotton industry from the repercussions of the Industrial Revolution, or to share with the Indians the widened horizon of their industrial experience, reduced the region to a plantation for the production of raw materials and a dumping-ground for cheap manufactured goods from the West.

A large section of the Muslim artisan class fell back upon the land for its livelihood. The Company's increasing interest in commercial crops such as jute, indigo, tea and opium, and the rapid development of a money economy undermined, especially in Bengal, the basis of Indian cultivation. A considerable number of Muslim agriculturists disposed of their land to Hindu bankers, and were soon reduced to the position of landless labourers. Suspicion of the British, their indifference towards the lot of the Muslims, and the high-handedness of the newly emerged landed aristocracy, prepared a breeding ground for several militant Muslim revivalist movements, which were regarded as offshoots of the Wahhabi movement.

The movement which Hajji Shari 'at Allah (1781-1840) started in East Bengal after his return from Mecca in 1818 was popularly known as the Fara'izi movement, because of the emphasis which the adherents of the movement laid on the observance of fara'iz or obligatory religious duties. Shari'at Allah's long stay in the Hijaz (1799-1818) had imbued him with the spirit of the Wahhabi reforms, and driven him away from the mainstream of Bengali life. He set himself the task of restoring the puritanical customs of early Islam in rural Bengal. His followers emphasized that India under British rule was dar al-barb, and therefore it was not lawful to perform Friday prayers or those of the two 'Ids. A section of the Muslim peasantry became hostile to their uncompromising and fanatical attitude, and Hindu landlords helped the recalcitrant's. In 1831 a major clash between the parties dealt a severe blow to the plans of Eiajji Shari'at Allah and he retired into seclusion. His son Hajji Muhsin, alias Dudu Mian (1819-62), who after 1838 led the movement started by his father, divided most of East Bengal into districts and appointed a *kbalifa* (agent) to each. He took a determined stand against the levying of illegal cess by landlords and indigo planters. Copying the Arabs, who ate locusts, he insisted that his disciples should eat grasshoppers. The cultivators and the village artisans responded enthusiastically to his preaching. The Hindu *zamindars* and his Muslim opponents, whom he forcibly tried to convert to his

mission, implicated him in a number of criminal suits; he served several terms of imprisonment and died on 24 September 1862.

A similar revivalist movement based on socio-economic grievances was started in West Bengal by Mir Nithar 'Ali, popularly known as Titu Mir, a well-known Calcutta wrestler who in 1821 had come under the influence of Sayyid Ahmad of Rae Bareilly. His followers wore a distinctive dress and would only eat with members of their own brotherhood. The landlords imposed a tax which was quite heavy for a poor peasant on each of them, which came to be known as the Beard Tax, for all of them wore beards. This gave rise to a number of minor riots and ultimately Titu Mir fell fighting against a military contingent sent to crush his uprising on 19 November 1831. The revivalists had little success in eradicating superstitions and backwardness in rural Bengal, and made themselves a target of attack by British officials and Hindu *zamindars*. Their zeal for reforms was praiseworthy, but they were antiquated and short-sighted.

The changes introduced into the revenue and judicial administration by Hastings and Cornwallis between 1772 and 1793 deprived the Muslims of all the higher posts that they had so far retained. By the end of the 1820s, the Anglicization of Indian institutions, and the increased opportunities for the British to obtain home comforts, including the presence of their families in India, tended to set British administrators apart from Indian life. They became increasingly authoritarian and race-conscious, and the need to read and understand Persian or Hindustani was hardly felt. They regarded the use of native languages as a necessary aid to administration; few, indeed, took any cultivated interest in them.

Muslim scholars in India, who during the previous centuries had depended entirely on state patronage, suffered from its disappearance. Until the end of the eighteenth century, the Muslims took a considerable interest in the service of the East India Company. Some of them wrote historical works of singular importance under the patronage of their English masters. Between 1800 and 1804, the encouragement of John Gilchrist of the Fort William College, Calcutta, contributed to the publication of works of outstanding value. Scholars from all over northern India applied to the authorities of the College for appointment. Even Mir Taqi Mir, the distinguished Urdu poet, applied for a position, but did not succeed because of his advanced age.

In 1835 the 'anglicist' defeated the 'orient lists' and all the funds appropriated to education were directed to English education alone. In 1826 an English-language class was started in the Calcutta *madrassa*, which had been established in 1781; but already the Bengali Hindus had made considerable headway in learning English. The potential control by missionaries of the English education made the Muslims suspicious of the intentions of the government. They protested in vain against English being made an official language. Gradually there

emerged in Bengal a class of uncovenanted government servants, medical practitioners, lawyers and their clerks, printers and publishers, who had acquired English as a commercial investment, and came to possess an outlook and ideology vitally different from that of previous generations. The Persian poets no longer stimulated the interest of the Bengali Hindus-in fact, Persian and Arabic words were deliberately purged from Bengali and a Sanskritised dialect was evolved for literary purposes. This effectively disqualified Muslim Bengalis from acquiring even minor posts in the government.

Bombay and Madras, the two other Presidency towns, did not witness the same process of economic distress. The influential and well-to-do Muslims in these towns, particularly in Bombay, were mostly descendants of Arab merchants. The Khojas and Bohras, who for centuries past had controlled trade in Gujarat and Bombay, maintained an independent organisation for the betterment of their own communities. They also spent a portion of their obligatory religious taxes for the advancement of the Muslims in general. They kept their solidarity intact, and responded to the need to acquire an English education as far as it promoted their commercial interests. The Muslim landed nobility of the North-Western Provinces (created in 1843) and other parts of India that subsequently came under the control of the British, were not, as in Bengal, supplanted by a new class of Hindu zamindars; but they long remained suspicious of the government's intentions in spreading English. James Thomason, the lieutenant-governor of the North Western Provinces<sup>3</sup> (1843-53) realized the potential dangers of the predominance in the public service of Bengalis educated in English. He designed a scheme of vernacular education which helped the Muslims to maintain their position in the lower ranks of government service. To all intents and purposes, the vernacular in that province meant Urdu, the language of Muslim intellectuals and Hindus who served Muslim chiefs.

Delhi College, founded in 1824, where English was also taught as a subject, stimulated considerable interest among Muslims; some of its pupils obtained commanding importance in the last years of the nineteenth century. It was primarily an institution of oriental learning, and used Urdu as the medium of instruction. The teaching of physics and chemistry and the experiments in laboratories stimulated considerable interest among the pupils. A body of scholars under its auspices translated a number of books from English and Persian into Urdu, which were published in Delhi, Agra and Lucknow. The College produced a galaxy of outstanding scholars who made singular contributions to the healthy

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<sup>3</sup>. The former name of the old province of Agra, later incorporated in the United Provinces (i.e. of Agra and Oudh), and today known as Uttar Pradesh.

development of the social and intellectual life of the second half of the nineteenth century.

The most formidable resistance to British imperialistic designs was made by the Marathas and the court of Mysore. The latter owed its glory to Hyder Ali, a man of humble origin, who with resourcefulness and admirable courage took control of the Hindu state of Mysore, overthrew his rivals, and in a very short time reorganized the administration on sound lines. After his death on 7 December 1782, his son, Tipu Sultan, succeeded him. He introduced military reforms of far-reaching importance, created a navy, established armament factories, promoted trade and industries and reorganized the civil administration. His efforts to make alliances with the Ottomans, Persia and Kabul were in vain. The French did not respond to his overtures, and the Nizam of Hyderabad and Marathas found his power a challenge to their own existence. Yet he effectively resisted the British, and died defending his independence on 4 May 1799.



**Revisiting Eurocentric Belief System from Samir Amin's Lens**  
**The Impasse of Actually-Existing-Capitalism**

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**Abstract**

Actually-existing-capitalism has dragged us to a decisive point in history where we have two alternatives; more devastation or possible positive progress. Capitalism-in-crisis gets more problematic when it is alloyed with Eurocentric distortion, after which we find ourselves at a flawed standpoint-an incomplete and faulty worldview which affects the idea of the very basic nature of knowledge, history, and civilizations.

Dominant Euro centrism is getting more and more problematic and we reach at an "impasse" due to it. The aim of this paper is to analyze the widely perceived, much propagated centrality of Europe and how it dragged us into the impasse of actually-existing-capitalism. There arises a paradox from allowing Eurocentric distortion being applied to Non-West and its three themes of knowledge claims, power to define, and capitalist exploitation is discussed. The referent point of this discussion is Samir Amin, as a political economist, who saw capitalism and Euro centrism and what was the alternative he adopted and will that alternative be helpful in finding a way out of contemporary dilemmas.

(Key words: Euro centrism, Actually-existing-capitalism, Imperialism, Post colonialism, Orientalism, Historicism)



## Introduction

*Afrikan Proverb: Until lions write their own history, the tale of the hunt will always glorify the hunter.*

Every discussion of the contemporary world affairs and world system has the mention of capitalism and western model of development as its defining feature. The world is deemed to be westernized, not because the western model is practicable and favourable to all but because West has for centuries had the power to redefine things in its own way, in a way which was suitable to its mission of dominating the Non-West as much as possible. The West defined what reality is, and what humanity/ human nature is like. During the process it was made sure that every non-western alternative is considered obsolete or accepted after being westernized. This narrative of validating what's western and discrediting non-crediting was in currency since Renaissance, in general, and for the last two centuries in particular. Even learned scholars were okay with this particular way to see the world, especially its history.

Euro centrism is a way to conceive the world with a western-centric bias. Western civilization used to remain the only case study and then the only criterion for judging things. It is a thought pattern where the defining perspective is western. It is biased towards a mythical version of European civilization which is constructed over a "West vs. Rest" notion of history. The centrism is diverse in its definition of Europe or West. Sometimes it includes the old west (Europe as a continent) as well as new west (Australia and North America), other times it is just Europe and yet at some other times it is only Western Europe.

The word Euro centrism was first used by Samir Amin while referring to an ideology. Samir Amin's work on Euro centrism and actually-existing-capitalism plus his take on "unequal distribution" is one the strong and more recent diagnoses of capitalism-in-crises. The need to restructure world system is the most favoured answer to the impasse of contemporary world. What is of great concern to all in the know is that we are very far from attaining the materialization of that answer. The major reason of our being unable to reach the much desired destination is that we had not yet broken the Eurocentric basis of capitalism (Amin, 1989) and had not yet developed an alternative social theory to replace the current dominant system, the system which is creating a havoc in our lives, which is the reason of our contemporary crises, and which is the basis for exploitation of such an extremity we had never thought of.

Capitalism, is primarily an economic system where the means of production are privately owned. It is capital-ism, every individual person can own capital. Its defining features include capital accumulation, private property, voluntary exchange, wage labor, competitive markets, and a price system. Capitalism is both the most favored as well as the most hated system. It is seen as a system with

merits due to its better production, innovative action through competition ending in economic growth and its productivity benefits in regards to societal prosperity. At the same time other people think of it as a system of oppression where only some people get benefited, where competition to exploit people's resources is at large, where resources are owned by only some people and interests of only some people get materialized at the expense of the interests of the majority of people. It is thought of as a system where profit is given importance over social good, natural resources, and environment. It is thus an engine of inequality, corruption, and economic instability. Since Karl Marx's times, people had been continuously scrutinizing capitalism for its merits and demerits. Karl Marx had the claim of doing the scientific analysis of capitalism and pointing out its inherent contradictions. He was very much successful in discerning the economic base of the dominant system at that time in Europe. He viewed the best alternative in dialectical materialism/ historical materialism. His three laws of proportionality, law of concentration and falling rates of profits constitute a very unique analysis of capitalism. Karl Marx's critique of capitalism is still one of the finest critiques of capitalism and how it affects the poor people.

Capitalism-in-practice or actually-existing-capitalism which is a system, "which in its worldwide expansion, has generated a center/ periphery polarization impossible to overcome within the framework of capitalism itself. (Amin, 1989) Samir Amin had decided to work on Universalist aspect of historical materialism to develop it as a sound alternative. He was up to a great extent successful in his mission of expanding historical materialism to the major world outside Europe.

While we study Karl Marx's contribution to the scientific analysis of what's wrong with capitalism and Samir Amin's addition to the critique of actually-existing-capitalism and Euro centrism, what is worth considering is the nature of alternative which Karl Marx and Samir Amin is presenting. Some people do favor to these analyses but other people have much to say about the discrepancies in these versions. Karl Popper considered Liberalism and Marxism as versions of the same historicism and, "Historicism is a poor method, a method which does not bear any fruits". (Popper, 1957) What we need to know about historicism is that belief in prediction of future human history (with an "end of history) is superstitious. We are unable to provide any such prediction either scientifically or by any other rational method.

Actually-existing-capitalism has dragged us to a decisive point in history where we have two alternatives; more devastation or possible positive progress. Capitalism-in-crisis gets more problematic when it is alloyed with Eurocentric distortion, after which we find ourselves at a flawed standpoint-an incomplete and faulty worldview which affects the idea of the very basic nature of knowledge, history, and civilizations.

Dominant Euro centrism is getting more and more problematic and we reach at an “impasse” due to it. The aim of this paper is to analyze the widely perceived, much propagated centrality of Europe and how it dragged us into the impasse of actually-existing-capitalism. There arises a paradox from allowing Eurocentric distortion being applied to Non-West and its three themes of knowledge claims, power to define, and capitalist exploitation is discussed. Then, we had a look on how Samir Amin, as a political economist, saw capitalism and Euro centrism and what was the alternative he adopted and will that alternative be helpful in finding a way out of contemporary dilemmas.

The paper is divided in to the following segments:

1. Centrality of Europe?
2. Paradox of Non-West
3. Samir Amin and World Systems

### Centrality of Europe?

Capitalism as a system had been acclaimed as the best system for all in the know. It had its critiques even in the days of its full bloom. What is of much importance here is to know that Marxism, which is presented as the best counter system, had its problems of being eurocentric and historicist. (Amin, 1989) (Chakrabarty, 2000) This means we have to be very careful in constructing our worldviews and perceiving alternatives to the capitalism-in-crisis. This is our dilemma and that’s why we need to look for voices less or not Eurocentric in their nature and of course for a system which is less problematic. We cannot replace a well understood problem with a problem we don’t even know of and which can bring with difficulties, we are not prepared for.

Eurocentric worldview is presenting western worldview as the only favourable worldview. When it is applied to history, it is apologetic towards western colonialism. It is also termed as eurocentrity and western-centrism. As an academic term, it was extensively used in discourses related to humanitarian aid, development, decolonization, neocolonialism and in debates about the Third World. Eurocentric view of the world was propagated through encyclopedias and literary works. Maps were designed in a manner showing Europe as the centre of the world. Owing to the combined effects of religious, scientific, and commercial revolutions, Europe was thought of an exceptional continent. Political and industrial development was often cited as the reason for the European supremacy in trade and politics.

There are two main bodies of arguments about the centrality of Europe; one group is of those in affirmation and the other group is of the arguments to show the mythical nature of the Eurocentric claims. Arguments which are in favour of and are part of Eurocentric thought can be found in oriental studies, discourses of Barbaric Civilizations, Child Civilizations, White Burden, Manifest Destiny,

Oriental Despotism, and so on. Euro centrism has its validity sought in the concept of European exceptionalism. European exceptionalism is supported by a vast collection of theories and approaches like works on Great Divergence, European Miracle, Age of Discovery, Renaissance, Orient, Occident, and Colonialism. It was how the apologetics for colonialism and western imperialism were developed. It was how civilization missions were rationalized.

Johann Heinrich Zedler (1741) in one of the accounts claimed that though Europe as a landmass was the smallest among the four discovered continents, it has due to some reasons got a position that can suffice to place it on top of all others. Georg Friedrich Hegel with his lectures on Philosophy of History had provided much to the Eurocentric world view of viewing the world between the West and East (the Rest in some cases). For him, history was initiated in East but it was bound to end in West, especially in the constitutional monarchy of Prussia. He supported western superiority and presented the (baseless) argument of the static nature of India and China lacking “inner momentum”. (Hegel & Forbes, 1975) Hegelianism remained one of the most important schools of thought in history writing so in this way eurocentrity found scholarly support which it needed for its propagation.

Even Max Weber, who is considered on the most brilliant modern sociologists and whose work is cited as an authority on modern social science, cannot resist euro centrality. For him, modern state and capitalism were special to Europe and cannot have developed somewhere else, Oriental countries like China and India lacked what was necessary for these strictly European specialties to develop. (Weber) Euro centrism is embedded in how we perceive social world and that is why we are still struggling with finding a better understanding of social reality.

There arises a serious need of perspectives capable of analyzing Euro centrism for its drastic effects and placing the West/ Europe fairly on the world map and in our worldviews. Arnold J. Toynbee had pointed out Eurocentric bias in world history writing. There are over 20 civilizations in the world and it is being warned that just to “westernize” nonwestern countries. Euro centrism comes out of as a result of “three misconceptions manifested by self-centerment, the fixed development of Oriental countries, and the linear progress.” (Toynbee, 1987) This was a much needed truth to be told on time. With distortions of “Eurocentric bias”, a deep rooted analysis is impossible. It was better to carry it out to the verandah and beat it with a stick.

Euro centrism is in thoughts of Non-West as these people are good at receiving ideas. The ideas gets popularized through media and rationalized through specialists’ researches and reports. It was not out there before Renaissance and it only got full developed in 19<sup>th</sup> century. (Amin, 1989) We urgently need to know ways other than western ones to know/ to acquire knowledge. There had to be some other ways of “knowing and being” which are “not mirrors of the West”. For

this we need to “deconstruct the definitional power of the West”. (Sardar, 1999) Euro centrism is everywhere where there is defining power of the West is present. What is favored by the Euro centrism is valid, legitimate, and logical. As a matter of fact, western civilization was a minor tradition but it got spread to the whole world. Now the West is “not located in a geographical space but in the present days of globalization, it has covered globe with its own desires, images, politics, and consumer and cultural products.” In short, the whole world faced a process of westernization, in result of which its Non-Western part got “de- Westernized” (it lost its Non-Western nature).

Euro centrism is inherent in western social science disciplines and the theories of these social sciences are thus “indispensable and inadequate”. In most of these theories the concept of historicism is inherent which means that there is a model for every society to evolve upon. The problem with this is that the model is single and is based on secular model which cannot be applied to nonwestern society (India, for instance). He had a problem with historicism, the belief that all societies had to pass through a developmental path similar to Europe. (Chakrabarty, 2000) Historicism is present in European models. We have to take care of it as it as a serious problem. We don't need to pass a linear developmental similar to Europe.

The “coloniality of power” is another problem which runs across the modern social sciences and area studies which make the current practices inadequate. (Mignolo, 2012) We tend to think in binaries and get trapped in dilemmas of understanding. We need to diagnose the main core of the problem.

Among other voices, Hien Luu had vividly analysed the effects of Eurocentrism under the title; *Euro centrism: It affects you, too*. She iterates that “When an incomplete story is presented — where we read only of the brilliant successes and discoveries of the Western world and, at the other end of the spectrum, of the plights of the “suffering” or the ills of the “bad guys” — it is all too easy for non-Western societies to be demonized and de-legitimized. Similarly, and especially for students, it is difficult to be motivated, inspired or empowered when one is among the “other. Euro centrism is accomplishing the very opposite. Instead of encouraging unity, we are encouraging uniformity through establishing the Eurocentric way as the way. “Unity without uniformity,” as Professor George Lipsitz of UC Santa Barbara puts it, is a unity “forged tactically by appreciating differences yet recognizing similarities.” (Luu, 2011) From this, we can know how our bias towards superiority of European civilization play with us both in giving unneeded importance to all things western and refraining to give worthwhile importance to the nonwestern contributions to world heritage.

Another account goes, “... the fact that the Industrial Revolutions took place in Europe, gave the continent the definite lead on the world stage. Add to this mix the, dangerous, component of social-Darwinism and you have an overconfident

people that can 'scientifically' claim it has the right to dominate the rest of the 'inferior' world. What's more, we even have the obligation to educate the 'others' so they can become just as superior as we are, the so-called 'White man's burden'. (Houtkamp, 2011) It is not that people don't have rationalizations for their fallacious arguments in favor of superiority of European civilization. They surely had got much of these. What they need to understand is that this is a mere rationalization of a mythical worldview.

### **Paradox of Non-West**

The problem of Euro centrism leads us to a dilemma which has very much unwanted implications for all of us. This problem is at its extreme for people in non-West who face devaluation of all things important to them which drags them towards a paradox-the paradox of non-West.

### **Knowledge Claims**

Euro centrism, while it was developing, was provided with mythical history versions of both West and East. A lot of things nonwestern are considered as unscientific, irrational, and contrary to what is required for the historical progress. They were the barbaric Rest for centuries, and then their civilizations were "child civilizations" that were to be developed on the pattern of West. No other pattern unthinkable for centuries. First part of the paradox is related to the claims of knowledge. In Europe, Sciences were initiated again, histories were written, politics was looked into and this resulted in a claim that much of the modern knowledge is western. West seems to have developed at the expense of the Rest. Samir Amin had pointed out that the dominant culture of Eurocentric capitalism was provided with an eternal "West" and as its counterpart an equally artificial conception of the "Other", "the Orient", or "the East". The product was a western history "a progression from the Ancient Greece, through the Medieval Period, into the modern world." Eurocentric worldview had been presented as a self-defining truth but its case has no sound basis-we need to know of its origins-the mythical origins. The first task for anyone who wishes to construct a genuine universalism is to detect these errors in order to determine their origins". (Amin, 1989) Europe has a claim for all things fine in the modernity. This claim was tried to be rationalized with the designing of myths like "the christianophile myth", "orientalism", and myth of "Greek ancestry". (Amin, 1989) (Bernal, 1987) (Said, 1978) This whole process of myth production didn't stop at some point in history-we are still provided with myths about development and prosperity.

With this we come to the second theme of the paradox of the Non-West.

**Power to Define:** According to Orientalist discourses, non-Western heritage is a heritage of barbarism, despotism, conservatism, opposition to progress, and being stuck in the "dark past", as seen from western lens. Its contributions to the world

history and cultural heritage are illegitimated through the use of defining power of the West. (Sardar, 1999) “If Euro centrism is intrinsic in the way we think and conceptualize, it is also inherent in the way we organize knowledge. Virtually all the disciplines of social sciences, from economics to anthropology, emerged when Europe was formulating its worldview, and virtually all are geared to serving the needs and requirements of western society and promoting its outlook. The ideology of science and technology is the most formidable of all the forces that keep development entrenched and ensure that Euro centrism continues unabated. (Science and technology) thus take on the classical form of ideology, being an inversion to reality. (Sardar, 1999) It is now known near and far that non-West had its own science and literature, contribution to politics, a rich culture, and pluralistic societal norms. But this very obvious fact is facing challenged from academia because of Eurocentric thought patterns. The western knowledge claims and the power to define is considered sufficient to state that what is western is legitimate and valid for us to take while we go on the path of scientific progress and establishing liberal utopia. Meanwhile, the European economic, political/ ideological systems, and social approach are considered the only option and this is the “end of history”.

Here, we reach at the third theme of the paradox aforementioned.

Capitalist Exploitation:

All developing societies are caught up in a time warp where they can never really catch up with the west. The present of the Non-West is the past of the West. The future of the Non-West is the present of the West. When the Non-West reaches the point of arrival where it becomes ‘developed’, it has already become the past of the West. The Non-West thus has no real future. (Sardar, 1999) Within the current system, democracy is impossible for people in the periphery because of the two-fold inequality—a global “unequal distribution of resources” and local exploitation. (Amin, 1989) This exploitation is a harsh reality of our times but people are lulled with perceptions like, “People are responsible for their condition” or in other words,

“People think is an individual failure rather than an engineered human system”.

Samir Amin and Analysis of World Systems

Samir Amin had worked on world systems and was a theorist of the “Dependency” school of thought. He pointed out that, “The reconstruction of histories (the Eurocentric one) was carried out around a myth where an opposition between an alleged European geographical continuity and the world to the south of the Mediterranean is forged and this is where the new center/ periphery boundary lie. The whole of Euro centrism lie in this mythic construct. The subsequent unfolding of history of the capitalist conquest of the world showed that this conquest was not going to bring a homogenization of the societies of the planet on the basis of the

European model. On the contrary, this conquest progressively created a growing polarization at the heart of the system, crystallizing the capitalist world into fully developed centers and peripheries incapable of closing the ever widening gap , making this contradiction within “actually existing” capitalism-a contradiction insurmountable within the framework of the capitalist system- the major and most toxic contradiction of our time”. “Nazism” according to him, “far from being an aberration, always remains a latent possibility, for it is only the extreme formulation of the thesis of Euro centrism”. (Amin, 1989) Samir Amin indicated that we have reached at a stage where, while remaining in the current system, we don't have any options to choose out of the menu of actually-existing-capitalism, the stage he called an “impasse”. He explained that the challenges of our time are due to the dominant Euro centrism amalgamated into the capitalist system at its basis.

Euro centrism is just one part of the ideology of the capitalism and our problems arise from here, from the core of capitalism, and, as obvious, our solutions don't lie here. Solution lies in an analysis for an alternative social theory. The analysis has three consequences:

1. History is to be rewritten in a new way. The current Eurocentric version just serves for European superiority.
2. Analyzing Euro centrism is like looking for answers to the most difficult questions of social theory. What is tragic is that the “conceptual tools required for answering those questions are very much incomplete and insufficient. Only economics can be termed scientific. Politics and ideology are full of “reflections and dogmatisms.
3. Like every system, capitalism “cannot be overturned by only criticizing its weaknesses.” Capitalism answers real questions. We need some “correct positive responses” to it. “We have for us a long, arduous, and complex task of reconstruction”.

The system should not be a culturalist and provincialist evasion or an "inverted Euro centrism". It should not be a fundamentalism/ nihilism incapable of universal acceptance. It should be an actual universal system with a truly beneficial output. We don't need distractions with improper responses. And the new system based on the critique of Euro centrism and containing the critique of Capitalism in all the dimensions of it is what we need the most now.

Samir Amin ended his book “Euro centrism” with some sentences which seem contradictory to his claim in favour of historical materialism as the capable alternative system. He wrote, “It is clear that the nature of this (proposed) human society cannot be predicted. The future is still open. It is still to be lived”. These



sentences are in opposition to historicism but historical materialism is historicist. The debate still goes on.

A comparison can be drawn between Susan Strange's 1999 thesis on "Westfailure" system (the Westphalian system as a failure) Samir Amin's work on Euro centrism. (Strange, 1999) Susan Strange and Samir Amin both took capitalism as problematic but what's different in both the analyses is that Susan Strange saw Westphalian state-system amalgamated with the capitalism as a problem while Samir Amin thought the problem is with Euro centrism's conjunction with capitalism.

### **Conclusion**

After a detailed consideration of Euro centrism and actually-existing-capitalism from different standpoints, we reach at some conclusions. We are sure that the world in real is not Eurocentric, that mythical histories are of no help, and rather harmful and is a hurdle in our path to understand social reality. We are in need of a social theory which will be capable for the alternative system to be based on.

We know that the paradox of non-West is due to the West and its versions of social systems, and there is a need for alternative viewpoints in regards to each and every field of social world. We now know that we need to know the world anew-only then we will be able to materialize our dreams of better future in a fairer world.

Europe was a local history with a global ambition to annihilate rest of the world cultures, and incorporate "other" economies into its system. The need is to bring back pre-colonial economic and cultural heritage of non-Western world.

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