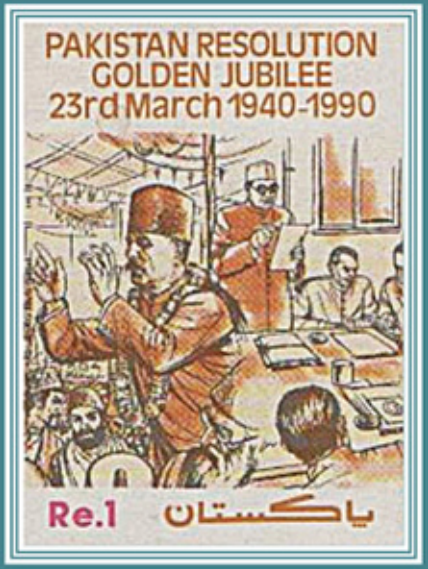
THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF MUHAMMAD IQBAL

Islam and Nationalism in Late Colonial India



Iqbal Singh Sevea

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The Political Philosophy of Muhammad Iqbal

This book reflects upon the political philosophy of Muhammad Iqbal, a towering intellectual figure in South Asian history, revered by many for his poetry and thought. He lived in India in the twilight years of the British Empire, and, apart from a short but significant period studying in the West, he remained in Punjab until his death in 1938. The book studies Iqbal's critique of nationalist ideology and his attempts to chart a path for the development of the 'nation' by liberating it from the centralising and homogenising tendencies of the modern state structure. These were highly relevant and often controversial issues during the years leading up to independence, and Iqbal frequently clashed with his contemporaries over his view of nationalism as 'the greatest enemy of Islam.' In rejecting post-Enlightenment conceptions of religion, he constructed his own particular interpretation of Islam that would provide solutions to all political, social and economic ills. In many ways, his vision of Islam – forged through an interaction with Muslim thinkers and western intellectual traditions – was ahead of its time, and since his death both modernists and Islamists have continued to champion his legacy.

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Dedicated to the memory of my grandfather,
Hakim Baba, who would have been glad that
I finally took interest in the man he named me after

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Glossary

adab/adabiyyat	etiquette
akhlaq/akhlaqi	ethics
alim (pl. ulama)	religious scholar trained in Islamic sciences
aql	knowledge, mind or rationality
ashraf	This term has been translated as Muslim nobility. It essentially refers to Muslims who trace their genealogy to communities from Arabia instead of the Indian communities who converted to Islam.
asliyyat	true essence or nature
aurat	woman
azadi	freedom
bagawat	rebellion
ba'ya	pledge of allegiance or the public acknowledgement of a caliph or ruler
bekhudi	used by Iqbal to describe the force that brings the individual ego in line with the social ego
bida	innovation, or the acceptance of un-Islamic practices
biradari	brotherhood
debache	preface
dhimmi	category of Islamic law signifying non-Muslims who were protected by a Muslim state. Though traditionally restricted to the 'people of the Book', namely the Jews and Christians, it has historically been expanded to include many other communities.
dil	heart

din/diniyyat	religion
duniya/duniya-i	world/worldly
fatwa (pl. *fatawa*)	legal opinion issued by the ulama
faqih (pl. *fuqaha)*	one who partakes in *fiqh*, a legalist
fitna	apostasy
fiqh	Islamic jurisprudence
ghazal	poem made up of couplets or two-line stanzas. The poem may contain any number of couplets. There is a strict rhyme pattern – AA, BA, CA and so forth. Each couplet represents a different thought and does not need the previous or following two lines to be understood.
hadith	tradition, an account of what the Prophet Muhammad said or did, or of his tacit approval for something said or done in his presence.
hijrat	migration
hukumiyyat	It is widely held that the term appears in the Quran to mean justice. Maududi, however, translated it to mean the sovereignty of God.
haq	truth
huriyyat	freedom
ijma	ideally connotes the consensus of the Muslim community. It is generally used, however, to describe the consensus of the ulama.
ijtihad	lit. 'exerting oneself'; used in Islamic law to refer to the use of independent reasoning in the interpretation of Islamic sources
ilm	knowledge
inquilab	revolution
insan-i-kamil	ideal man
ishq	love
izzat	pride or respect
jadidiyyat	modernist strand in Urdu literature which emerged in the early twentieth century.
kalam	theology
kalima	Islamic creed, '*la illa il Allah*'
khanajangi	internal feuds
khatam-i-nabuyiyat	culmination of the chain of prophethood in Muhammad
khudi	self, individual, ego

madrasa	school or seminary
mahdi	prophet
maktab	school for young children
maqalat	texts
maqulat	rational sciences
manqulat	'transmitted subjects' such as *hadith*, *fiqh* and *tafsir*
maslaha	the recognition of the common interests of the community
maslak	way or path
masnavi	poem of indefinite number of verses in the rhyme scheme of AA, BB, CC. It is often narrative in style.
mazhab	refers to a school of thought or jurisprudence within Islam. A number of *mazhabs* emerged in the first two centuries after the birth of Islam. The four main remaining Sunni schools are the Hanafi, Hanbali, Maliki and Shafi. These schools should not be seen as separate sects as there are a number of points on which they are similar. The major remaining Shia *mazhab* is the Jafari school. Most South Asian Muslims subscribe to the Hanafi school.
millat	religious community
miraj	the accession of Muhammad to heaven
mujtahid	renewer of the age
mulk	country
mulla	term used to describe an alim, it can have a derogatory connotation in the South Asian context
mutahida qawmiyyat	composite or united nationalism
nabi/nabuyiyat	prophet/prophethood
naqsh	sublimation
nasal	race
nizam	order
pargana	fiscal and administrative unit which can loosely be translated as a sub-district
pir/pirs	saint/saints
qawm/qawmiyyat	community/community consciousness
qismat	fate

qiyas	process of analogical reasoning in *fiqh*
Rashidun caliphs	the four 'orthodox caliphs' immediately following Muhammad – Abu Bakar, Umar, Usman and Ali
risala	journal or magazine
risalat	Prophethood of Muhammad
rubaiyyat	quatrain
sacha	true or real
sahaba	early Muslim community
sajjada nashins	descendants of Sufi saints who play an important institutional role linked to the administration of the Sufi shrines
sharia	Islamic law
shura	advisory board to the caliph
siyasat/siyasa/siyasi	politics/political
sunna	the practise of Prophet Muhammad
tafsir bil ray	interpretations of Islamic sources which were based solely on personal opinions and not on any recognised methodology
*tafsir*s	exegeses
taqdir	fate
taqlid	lit. imitation; refers to the acceptance of a religious ruling from someone who is regarded as a higher religious authority without necessarily asking for technical proof
tarjuman	interpretation
tauhid	unity of God
tazkira	collection of biographical notes
tehzib	culture
thet	real or authentic
turath	loosely translated as Muslim heritage
umma	generally used to refer to the worldwide community of Muslims
wahdat al-wujud	unity of being; a central tenet of many schools of Sufi philosophy
wali	saint or friend of God
waliyat	spiritual guardianship or trusteeship
waqf (pl. *aqwaf*)	endowment
watan	homeland
zakat	obligatory Islamic alms
zaleel	lowly or degenerate

Abbreviations

BL	British Library
IAP	Iqbal Academy Pakistan, Lahore
NAI	National Archives of India
NML	Nehru Memorial Library

Contents

Note on Translations and Transliterations

Many of the foreign words used in this monograph can be transliterated in multiple ways. A simplified style of transliteration without the dialectical marks has been employed. For purposes of standardisation, the *izafat* is indicated by an '-i-' and '*iyya*' is used in place of '*ia*'. In the case of the terms Jamaat-e-Islami and Tolu-e-Islam, however, the transliteration popularly employed by members of the said organisations has been retained. For the purposes of consistency, Persian words have also been transliterated as they are pronounced in Urdu. As far as possible, all personal names are cited as they have been spelt by the individuals themselves.

All foreign words used in this monograph, with the exception of sharia, alim and ulama, which are commonly used, have been italicised.

Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own.


INDIA, c. 1937
Under British rule
Princely States
Jammu and Kashmir
Srinagar
Peshawar
NW Frontier Province
Sialkot
Punjab
Qadian
Lahore
Ambala
United Provinces
Deoband
Bareilli
Sikkim
NEPAL
Delhi
Aligarh
Lucknow
Assam
BALUCHISTAN
Rajputana
Jaisalmer
Ajmer
Patna
Gwalior
Allahabad
Sind
Baroda
Bihar
Bengal
Central India
Karachi
West Indian States
Calcutta
Central Provinces and Berar
Orissa
BURMA
Daman
Bombay
Hyderabad
Poona
Hyderabad
Bombay
Bay of Bengal
Madras
GOA (Port.)
Mysore
Madras
Mangalore
Arabian Sea
Mysore
Pondicherry
Cochin
Travancore
Colombo
N
W
E
S

Introduction

Chu rakht-i-khwish az in khak
Hane guyand ba ma ashna bud!
Wa lekin kas nadanast in musafar
Che guft wa ba ke guft wa az koja bud!

When I prepared myself to depart from this earth
Everyone said, 'he was our friend'.
But no one really knew this traveller,
What he said and to whom and from where he came.

Muhammad Iqbal[1]

Shortly before his death in April 1938, the celebrated poet and activist intellectual, Muhammad Iqbal, engaged in a public debate with the leading Deobandi scholar, Hussain Ahmad Madani (1879–1957), over the compatibility of Islam and nationalism. Through open letters to newspapers, public statements and poetry, both men attacked each other's interpretations of Islam and respective political visions. Maulana Madani quoted extensively from the Quran and other Islamic sources to argue that Islam sanctioned the founding of political community upon the basis of territory. He even went to the extent of seeking to locate precedents for the idea of nationalism and the nation-state within the history of Islam. Iqbal, however, accused Madani of having strayed from the path of Islam in calling for the adoption of nationalism. Iqbal saw nationalism as 'the greatest enemy of Islam' and devoted much of his work to warning Muslims against adopting nationalism and the model of the nation-state. Unlike Madani and a number of his contemporaries, Iqbal argued that the

[1] Muhammad Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal (Farsi)* (Lahore, 1973), p. 1021.

adoption of modern political ideals and institutions such as nationalism would require a radical transformation of the structure of Islam itself. This rejection of nationalism centred upon Iqbal's own controversial construction of Islam as a complete system that could be contrasted against ideologies such as nationalism and socialism, and which provided solutions to contemporary political, social and economic problems.

This monograph examines the socio-political discourse of Muhammad Iqbal (1877–1938). It primarily studies his critique of the ideology of nationalism and his attempts to chart a path for the development of the 'nation' by liberating it from the centralising and homogenising tendencies of the modern state structure. Iqbal's engagement with the ideology of nationalism is used here as a foil for a broader analysis of the interaction between Muslim intellectuals and 'western'[2] or modern political and religious thought in late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century South Asia. The nation-state, which has clearly emerged as the dominant form of political organisation in the modern period, is more than a system of legal norms or the embodiment of sovereign authority; it is a socio-cultural phenomenon, an expression of modernity. Its victory over alternative forms of political organisation is reflected in the fact that the state has conquered our imagination, making it difficult to think of alternatives.[3] By focusing on the interaction between Muslim intellectuals and the institution of the nation-state, the present work seeks to provide an insight into both the interaction between Muslim thinkers and modernity and the evolution of Islam.

The interaction of Muslim intellectuals in India during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with western or modern political concepts gave rise to an interesting and rich political discourse not solely drawn from the repertoire of political ideas and symbols provided by Muslim heritage, or *turath*; 'Islamic' political concepts and institutions were themselves often re-interpreted and recast. Acknowledging the western impact on the political thought of Muslim intellectuals of his generation, Khuda Bukhsh (1877–1931)[4] noted that Muslims were 'forging

[2] It is recognised that the term 'West' is in itself a problematic category that carries cultural and political connotations. It was employed loosely by the intellectuals studied in this work to refer to the geographical entities of Europe and America, the colonial powers as well as modernity.

[3] Christopher W. Morris, *An Essay on the Modern State* (Cambridge, 1998), p. 46.

[4] Salahuddin Khuda Bukhsh translated Arabic, Persian and German texts into English and wrote widely on Islam and Muslims in India. Many of his essays were compiled in *Studies: Indian and Islamic* (London, 1927) and *Contributions to the History of Islamic Civilisation*, 2 vols. (Calcutta, 1929–1930).

fresh rules of religious interpretation, reconciling the needs of the hour with their allegiance to the past, justifying modern institutions by appeals to the Quran and the traditions of the Prophet'.[5] Yet it would not be fair to dismiss the work of the Muslim intelligentsia simply as a derivative discourse imbibed from the West. There was often a conscious attempt to adapt western or modern ideas to accord with what they perceived to be the message of Islam and the Indian context. The adoption or rejection of western political ideas and institutions was determined by each individual's evaluation of the West, the desirability of adopting western ways and the compatibility of these ideas and institutions with Islam.

THE SETTING: ISLAM AND MUSLIMS IN COLONIAL INDIA

The political decline of the Mughal, Ottoman and Safavid Empires in the eighteenth century did not signal a period of cultural and intellectual stagnation for Muslims. Various Islamic revivalist and reform movements were born out of the need felt by Muslims to re-interpret Islam within a deteriorating political context.[6] In India, the transformation of the East India Company from a commercial organisation to a territorial power in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries also spurred Muslim intellectuals to investigate the reasons for the growing dominance and prosperity of the West, specifically Britain. They often explained the rise of the West in terms of its scientific and technological advancement as well as the superiority and stability of its political institutions.[7] The major influx of modern ideas and institutions was, however, concomitant with the establishment of the colonial state in the wake of the suppression of the Mutiny of 1857 and the disempowerment of Muslims both within and beyond India.

Confronted by the new political context, spokesmen for the Muslim community openly discussed the causes for 'Muslim decline' and debated the utility of adopting western institutions and facets of western civilisation. Modernity, with its rationalism, institutions, ideologies and imperialism, brought into relief many new questions forcing the Muslim intelligentsia to re-evaluate 'Islamic' ideas and institutions. Polemical works by missionaries and the burgeoning orientalist literature produced

[5] Bukhsh, *Contributions*, ii, 74.

[6] See, for instance, Nehemia Levtzion and John O. Voll (eds.), *Eighteenth-Century Renewal and Reform in Islam* (New York, 1987).

[7] Gulfishan Khan, *Indian Muslim Perceptions of the West During the Eighteenth Century* (Karachi, 1998), pp. 332–364.

by scholars and officials alike further elicited responses from Indian Muslim intellectuals.[8] Maulvi Chiragh Ali (1844–1895),[9] for instance, acknowledged that his own re-assessment of Islamic institutions such as sharia (Islamic law) and the caliphate was chiefly a response to the writings of Malcolm MacColl, the Canon of Ripon, who wrote a series of articles and books critical of the Ottoman Empire and which described Islam as a rigid system that promoted theocratic and illiberal states.[10]

The re-examination of Islam and its institutions was not unique to the period under study. Indeed, the work of eighteenth-century figures such as Shah Waliullah, who attempted to shape an Islamic intellectual and theological response in the face of Mughal political decline, provided models that modern Muslim intellectuals drew upon. Moreover, prior to the interaction with western political discourse, Islam in India had interacted with and adapted to local political structures and necessities.[11] The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, however, proved to be a 'time of great ferment in the history of Muslim India'; one in which the perceived challenges to Islamic institutions, practises and traditions were more urgent and the responses more varied.[12] The period was characterised by the extensive adoption of print technology, the emergence of new Muslim educational institutions – both religious and secular – and the bourgeoning of Muslim movements that competed in the public arena to provide the 'true' Islamic perspective on a host of socio-political issues.

One response to the colonial context was reflected in the emergence of the Deobandi movement, the genesis of which lay in the establishment of the Dar-ul-Uloom madrasa (school or seminary) at Deoband in 1867.

[8] See Avril Powell, 'Maulana Rahmat Allah Kairanawi and Muslim Christian Controversy in India in the mid-19th Century', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1 (1976), pp. 42–63; and *Muslims and Missionaries in Pre-Mutiny India* (Richmond, 1993).

[9] Chiragh Ali's works include *The Proposed Political, Legal and Social Reforms in the Ottoman Empire* (1883) and *A critical exposition of the popular 'jihád', showing that all the wars of Mohammad were defensive; and that aggressive war, or compulsory conversion, is not allowed in the Koran: with appendices proving that the word 'jihad' does not exegetically mean 'warfare', and that slavery is not sanctioned by the prophet of Islam* (Calcutta, 1885).

[10] Chiragh Ali, *The Proposed Political, Legal and Social Reforms*, p. i. See also Malcolm MacColl, *The Sultan and the Powers* (London, 1896).

[11] Muzaffar Alam has shown how Islamic statecraft in India adjusted itself according to the needs of ruling a majority non-Muslim population. He asserts that the 'deeper meaning and content of the political and religious vocabulary in use changed significantly in the Indian context.' Alam, *The Languages of Political Islam in India c. 1200–1800* (Delhi, 2004).

[12] Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change* (Princeton, 2002), pp. 11–12.

Barbara Metcalf has argued that with the establishment of the colonial state the ulama (religious scholars, sing. alim) generally turned away from issues concerning the organisation of state and society and towards a concern with the moral qualities of individual Muslims. Instead of seeking to influence the state, the goal was now to create a community observant of detailed religious law and committed to a spiritual life through the dissemination of instruction in authentic religious practise and belief. The ulama thus focused their attention primarily upon education and religious propaganda. The founders of the Dar-ul-Uloom were at the forefront of developing the madrasa into an institution for bolstering Islamic education and cultivating the moral qualities of the individual Muslim. In line with this, emphasis was placed upon training in *manqulat* (traditionally transmitted) sciences such as *tafsir* (exegesis of the Quran), *hadith*[13] and *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), rather than *maqulat* (rational) sciences such as logic and philosophy, which were prioritised in the dominant pre-colonial system of Muslim education in India, the *dars-i-nizami*.[14] This was indicative of the fact that the aim of the Deoband madrasa was not to prepare its students for employment with the state and judiciary, but to train ulama who would be able to give shape to an Islamic revival by serving as spiritual guides, teachers, debaters and publishers.[15]

Through their writings, debates and *fatwa* (legal opinions, pl. *fatawa*), the Deobandi ulama sought to define 'true' Islam and oppose what they perceived as un-Islamic customs being practised by Muslims of the day. They contested the ideas of non-Muslim critics of Islam as well as other Muslim movements, such as the Ahl-i-Hadith, 'Barelwis' and the Ahmadiyya. Amongst the practises that the Deobandi ulama opposed were the observation of Prophet Muhammad's birthday, the practise of *sama* (musical sessions to induce ecstasy) and what they conceived of as 'excesses' associated with Sufism. They also asserted the authority of the ulama as interpreters of the sources of Islam and the need to adhere to the Hanafi school of law. In time, the name of Deoband came to represent a distinct *maslak* (way or path) of South Asian Islam.[16] With thousands of

[13] Tradition, an account of what the Prophet Muhammad said or did, or of his tacit approval for something said or done in his presence.

[14] For an informed study of the *dars-i-nizami* and the impact of the colonial state upon the system of education, see Francis Robinson, *The 'Ulama of the Farangi Mahall and Islamic Culture* (New Delhi, 2001).

[15] For a history of Deoband, see Barbara Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860–1900* (Princeton, 1982).

[16] Ibid., p. 136.

officially and unofficially affiliated madrasas, the Dar-ul-Uloom Deoband has arguably been the most influential Islamic seminary in South Asia.

Like the Deobandi movement, the Ahl-i-Hadith movement and the Ahl-i-Sunnat wa Jamaat, more commonly known as the 'Barelwi' movement, both looked to the ulama as the foci of religious leadership and sought to shape the Islamic renewal by encouraging strict adherence to sharia. The three movements, however, differed on what constituted the authentic sources of Islam, and they accused each other of faulty jurisprudential principles. The Ahl-i-Hadith called on Muslims to look directly to the Quran and *hadith*. They stressed the need to interpret the Quran and *hadith* literally and rejected the classical schools of law as well as the mediating power of Sufi saints.[17] This brought them into contention with the Deobandis, who accused the Ahl-i-Hadith of basing their views on individual opinions rather than the *hadith*. On their part, the ulama of the Barelwi movement held strictly to Hanafi law and were more open to customary practises and the intercessionary role of saints than the Deobandis. Following the example of the central figure of the movement, Maulana Ahmad Riza Khan (1856–1921), the Barelwi ulama actively engaged in oral and printed debates with other Muslim movements over issues such as the permissibility of *bida* (innovation) and the constituents of the *zaruriyyat-i-din* (essentials of faith). Like the Deobandi ulama, they established madrasas, published tracts and issued *fatawa* to provide guidance to Muslims.[18]

Another response to the colonial state was typified by the Ahmadiyya, who are the followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835–1908) of Qadian, Punjab, who proclaimed himself as the renewer of Islam. The formal foundations for the Ahmadiyya as a distinct religious community were laid in 1888, when Ghulam Ahmad published an *isthihar* (literally, 'advertisement') declaring himself the renewer of the age and called upon Muslims to offer him *ba'ya*, or allegiance. Ghulam Ahmad's use of the newspaper as a medium to call for people to offer him *ba'ya* is significant. The centrality of printing to Ghulam Ahmad's mission is reflected in the fact that he wrote more than eighty-eight books in Urdu, Arabic and Persian, and founded a number of journals, such as the Urdu weekly journal *al-Hakam* (*Wisdom*) in 1897 and the *al-Bard* (*Cold*) in 1902. The initial *isthihar* was followed shortly later by a formal initiation ceremony

[17] Little has been written on the Ahl-i-Hadith. For a succinct analysis of the movement, see Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India*, pp. 264–295.

[18] For a history of the Barelvis, see Usha Sanyal, *Devotional Islam and Politics in British India: Ahmad Riza Khan Barelwi and his Movement, 1870–1920*, New Edition (New Delhi, 2010).

held in Ludhiana.[19] In 1914, the movement split into two factions, one based in Qadian and the other in Lahore. This split essentially stemmed from differing interpretations of the founder's claim to leadership. The Qadian group subscribed to the view that Ghulam Ahmad was a continuation in the line of the prophets. The Lahore faction, on the other hand, rejected this view and argued that Ghulam Ahmad was a *mujtahid*, renewer of the age, and not a *mahdi*, or prophet. At the time and since, Ghulam Ahmad's claim to leadership has been dismissed as heresy by 'orthodox' Muslims who believe that Muhammad is the last in the line of the prophets. Opposition to the movement has ranged from demands for the Ahmadiyya to be constitutionally classified as non-Muslims to violent attacks such as the anti-Ahmadiyya riots in Pakistan of 1953 and 1974.[20]

A self-consciously modernist response to the colonial context was reflected in the theological writings and educational work of Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1817–1898). The Sayyid chastised the ulama and madrasas for failing to prepare Muslims to face the new socio-political and intellectual milieu. In the post-Mutiny period, Sayyid Ahmad Khan's writings focussed chiefly on the need to shape a rationalist interpretation of Islam, one which reconciled modern science with Islam, and on the urgency for Muslims to adopt modern and English education. His rationalist interpretation of Islam, which is discussed more fully later, was the result of his attempts to respond to criticisms levelled against Islam and to the broader challenges posed to religion by modern science.[21] Although his attempts to shape a new *kalam* (theology) attracted criticism from a broad range of Muslim figures, including the ulama and non-ulama, the Sayyid's efforts in the realm of education drew wider support amongst his contemporaries. The Sayyid believed that education was the key means through which Muslim decline could be redressed. With a view towards introducing western science to educated Indians, he had initially founded the Translation Society in Ghazipur in 1863; this was subsequently renamed the Aligarh Scientific Society. He also

[19] For a history of the Ahmadiyya, see Spencer Lavan, *The Ahmadiyyah Movement: A History and Perspective* (Delhi, 1974), and Yohanan Friedmann, *Prophecy Continuous: Aspects of Ahmadi Religious Thought and its Medieval Background* (Berkeley, 1989).

[20] Significantly, the Munir Commission that was convened in the wake of the anti-Ahmadiyya riots of 1953 failed to come up with a definition of 'Muslim'. In 1984, however, the penal code of Pakistan was amended to define Muslim as someone who subscribed to the finality of Muhammad's prophethood. The Ahmadiyyas were thus officially excluded from the fold of Islam.

[21] See C. W. Troll, *Sayyid Ahmad Khan: A Reinterpretation of Muslim Theology* (New Delhi, 1978).

established the journal *Tehzib al-Akhlaq* (*Social Reform*) in 1870 with the express aim of promoting western education and civilisation amongst the Muslims of India. His most significant contribution to the realm of education, however, was the establishment of the Aligarh Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in 1875. The Aligarh College was to emerge as an important centre of 'Islamic modernism', and a number of important intellectuals such as the renowned scholar in Arabic, Persian and Urdu, Shibli Numani (1857–1914),[22] and Mohsin-ul-Mulk Mehdi Ali (1837–1907)[23] were to be associated with it.

At the political level, the establishment of the colonial state led to concerns over the position of Islam in the new polity and debates over the relevance of 'Islamic' institutions. After all, the colonial state signified the emergence of a polity in which even the nominal symbolism of Muslim political authority was absent. One of the immediate effects of British political ascendancy had been a debate amongst the ulama and members of the intelligentsia over whether areas which came under British control remained *dar-ul-Islam* (land of Islam). Individuals such as Haji Shariat Allah, the founder of the Faraizi movement[24] in Bengal, declared areas under British control to be *dar-ul-harb* (land of war) and prohibited the performance of the Friday congregational prayers in these areas. Others like Abdul Haiy of the Farangi Mahal madrasa in Lucknow, however, drew from Hanafi law to argue that British India remained a *dar-ul-Islam* as long as Muslims were assured the right to practise their religion and pursue their livelihoods.[25] Some scholars rejected the entire debate. Chiragh Ali, for instance, argued that it 'was superfluous' even to raise

[22] Shibli taught at Aligarh for some sixteen years and was an advisor to the education department of the state of Hyderabad. He was also a leading figure in the establishment of the Nadwatul Ulama. His work includes writings on theology, literature, politics, history and biographies on Muhammad, Umar and Aurangzeb.

[23] Mehdi Ali attained the titles of Munir Nawaz Jang and Nawab Mohsin-ud-Daula in recognition of his services to the state of Hyderabad. Before proceeding to Hyderabad, he had served as the *tehsildar* (deputy collector) in Etawah. It was here that he came into contact with Sayyid Ahmad Khan. Although they differed in their views on religion, they worked together for the educational uplift of the Muslim community. Mehdi Ali was a staunch supporter of the Aligarh movement and was to become the secretary of the Muhammadan Educational Conference after the death of Sayyid Ahmad Khan.

[24] Shariat Allah asserted the need for Muslims to strictly observe their Islamic duties (*faraiz*). It was incumbent upon followers of the movement to, amongst other things, renounce 'un-Islamic' practises like revering Sufis and participating in Hindu festivals. For more on the movement and its impact, see Muin-ud-Din Ahmad, *History of the Fara'idi Movement in Bengal 1818–1906* (Karachi, 1965).

[25] Discussed in Peter Hardy, *The Muslims of British India* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 56–60 and 107–115.

the question of whether British India was a *dar-ul-Islam* or *dar-ul-harb*, as *fiqh* had been formulated with the assumption that Muslims were in political control. Colonial India presented a new context in which Muslims needed to re-think such socio-political categories. He proposed that India was neither a *dar-ul-Islam* nor a *dar-ul-harb*; as the Muslims in India were 'protected' by the British, it was instead a *dar-ul-aman* or *dar-ul-zimma*, the 'house of security or of protection'.[26]

With colonial rule came a host of new political institutions and structures. Particularly important was the introduction of representative political institutions. Shaken by their ignorance of tensions that led to the Mutiny of 1857, the British sought to establish consultative structures that would provide them access to public opinion. The Indian Councils Act of 1861, for instance, reconstituted the Viceroy's Legislative Council to allow for non-official Indian members and made provisions for the establishment of provincial legislatures. The Act was, however, limited in terms of its representative nature. The non-official members were chosen, not elected. Moreover, the powers to vote were restricted to the official members. It is worth noting here that Sayyid Ahmad Khan, who was himself nominated to be a member of the Council in 1878, had stressed the importance of including Indians in the Legislative Council. In his *Asbab-i-Bagawat-i-Hind* (*Causes of the Indian Revolt*), he argued against the view that the Mutiny had been a manifestation of the religious obligation of Muslims to revolt against non-Muslim rulers.[27] Instead he asserted that the root cause had been the disconnect between the British government and the people. The British had been unaware of any possible opposition to policies they sought to implement, and this in turn allowed for misunderstandings about British intent on the part of the people. There was thus an urgent need for the inclusion of Indians in the Legislative Council.[28]

As sections within India began to press for the expansion of representative institutions and the introduction of elected legislatures, Muslim figures grappled with the implications this would have on the position of Muslims in colonial India given its large Hindu majority. Particularly significant in this respect was the formation of the Indian National Congress in 1885 and its call on the colonial authorities to, among other things,

[26] Ali, *The Proposed Political, Legal and Social Reforms*, pp. 24–25.

[27] Sayyid Ahmad Khan, *Writings and Speeches of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan*, compiled by Shan Mohammad (Bombay, 1972), pp. 68–69.

[28] See Sayyid Ahmad Khan, *The Causes of the Indian Revolt*, with an introduction by Francis Robinson (Oxford, 2000).

expand the legislatures and allow educated Indians to have a greater say in governance. Some important figures such as Sayyid Ahmad Khan opposed the extension of the elective principle and warned Muslims (and non-Muslims, for that matter) against joining the Congress. A central element of the Sayyid's opposition to the Congress was the fear that the expansion of representative institutions would diminish the position and influence of Muslims.[29] He further argued that liberal forms of representation could only be effectively adopted in states where the people were bonded by a single 'community of race and creed' or where the 'advance of education' had rendered such differences insignificant.[30]

It should be underlined that far from displacing the salience of religious identities in the political sphere, the manner in which representative institutions were introduced in colonial India served to institutionalise 'Muslim' as a political category. Colonial policy on representation was informed by the assumption that the introduction of western representative institutions was unsuitable to India, where society was constituted by numerous caste, religions and races. Thus it was held that the representative institutions introduced at the legislative and provincial levels had to take 'communal interests' and categories into account.[31] Sections of the Muslim intelligentsia who feared that Muslims would be outnumbered by Hindus in elected legislatures themselves called upon the British to take cognisance of these categories in any future constitutional reforms. Most notably, a deputation of prominent Muslims called on the Viceroy, Lord Minto, in October 1906 to assert the need for the recognition of Muslims as a community with special political interests. The delegation stressed that in view of their 'political significance', Muslims should be given representation that exceeded their numerical proportion and called for the provision of separate electorates for Muslims.[32]

Consequently, the India Councils Act of 1909, which introduced a substantial element of electoral representation in most provincial legislatures, provided for separate electorates for Muslims. This Act effectively served to institutionalise political representation along religious lines. In subsequent deliberations over constitutional reforms, the All-India Muslim League, which had been founded in December 1906, would stake

[29] Sayyid Ahmad Khan, *Writings and Speeches*, p. 220.
[30] Ibid., pp. 156–157.
[31] Shabnum Tejani, *Indian Secularism: A Social and Intellectual History, 1890–1950* (Bloomington, 2008), pp. 113–141.
[32] See Francis Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims: The Politics of the United Provinces' Muslims 1860–1923* (Cambridge, 1974), pp. 144–174.

a claim to represent Muslim political interests. Such a claim proved to be problematic not least because there was no consensus amongst the Muslim community on issues of political development or leadership. Indeed, the Muslim League itself was not a monolithic body. Various strands of religious and political thought were represented within it. Nor was the Muslim League inherently antagonistic to the Congress. On a number of occasions both the Muslim League and the Congress attempted to formulate a united stance on future constitutional developments. One notable instance of this was the Lucknow Pact of 1916, an agreement on the communal composition of the central and provincial legislatures reached between the Congress and the League. Under the terms of the pact, the Congress accepted the provision of separate electorates for Muslims in the provincial and central legislatures, and both parties agreed upon a fixed proportion of seats for Muslims in the provincial legislatures. As will be shown, the Muslim League's claim to represent Muslims would itself be challenged by a host of socio-political bodies.

The introduction of new political structures in colonial India also led to debates over the centrality and continued relevance of Islamic institutions such as the caliphate and sharia. This was perhaps most tellingly exemplified in the Khilafat movement of 1919–1924. Western encroachments on the territories of the Ottoman caliph, particularly in the wake of the Allied victory in World War I, led to a movement in India to mobilise Muslims in support of the caliph and the integrity of the Ottoman Empire. Whether a reflection of the latent force of pan-Islamic sentiment or a campaign by Muslim elites in India to unite their community politically by means of religious and cultural symbols,[33] the movement brought debates over the significance – real or symbolic – of the caliph into the public arena. The Khilafat movement gave shape to a new form of public activism in defence of Islam and Islamic institutions. Leaders of the movement attempted to mobilise the masses through the print media, public meetings, processions and the establishment of organisations such as the All India Khilafat Committee and the Anjuman-i-Khuddam-i-Kaaba (Society of the Servants of the Kaaba), which sought to galvanise Muslims and raise funds to protect the holy sites of Islam. The Ali brothers, Shaukat (1873–1938) and Muhammad (1878–1931), both of whom were alumni of Aligarh and were at the forefront of the Khilafat movement, personified the new public activism. Apart from playing a leading

[33] Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India* (New York, 1982).

role in a number of Muslim socio-political organisations, including the Muslim League, they were also involved in the publication of newspapers such as the *Hamdard* (*Sympathiser*) and *Comrade*, which served to propagate particular views on issues affecting Muslims and Islam.

The Khilafat movement also brought a number of ulama into the political arena. Many of the ulama, particularly the Deobandis, who had de-emphasised politics, now came to view politics as an important instrument for public expression of religious concerns.[34] Maulana Abdul Bari (1878–1926), a leading scholar of the Farangi Mahal, was at the forefront of attempts to develop an organisation that would bring together ulama from various movements and sects to provide leadership to Muslims on issues such as the caliphate. His efforts culminated in the establishment of the Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind (Association of Islamic Scholars of India) in 1919. The aims of the Jamiyyat were initially broadly defined as developing unity among the ulama and providing leadership according to Islamic principles.[35] Over time, the ulama of the Jamiyyat developed more specific socio-political aims and challenged the claim by 'westernised' and 'secular' organisations such as the Muslim League to represent Muslim political interests. As the subsequent chapters will demonstrate, the ulama of the Jamiyyat became engaged in attempting to adapt what they conceived of as essential Islamic institutions within the political structures developed in colonial India. Particularly significant would be their attempts to develop mechanisms within the modern political structure that would allow for the provision of sharia.

The public involvement of the ulama in the realm of politics was also part of a wider attempt to confront the challenge posed to their authority by the emergence of modern Muslim intellectuals. The technological and educational developments of the late nineteenth century, primarily the expansion of printing presses and the establishment of modern educational institutions, led to the rise of a new class of intellectuals who were not trained in the traditional Islamic sciences but claimed the right to interpret Islam and speak for the Muslim community. Muhammad Iqbal was a part of this new group of self-proclaimed proponents of Islam who championed their right to *ijtihad*[36] and published widely on Islam.

[34] David Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam: Punjab and the Making of Pakistan* (Berkeley, 1988), p. 63.

[35] Minault, *The Khilafat Movement*, pp. 79–82.

[36] *Ijtihad*, which literally means 'exerting oneself', is a term used in Islamic law to refer to the use of independent reasoning in the interpretation of Islamic sources.

MUHAMMAD IQBAL: POET AND ACTIVIST INTELLECTUAL

Born on 9 November 1877, Iqbal was to achieve fame as one of the greatest Urdu poets of all time. Highlighting the special position which Iqbal occupies in South Asia, Ralph Russell stressed that Iqbal's call for bold, proud and self-confident action exercised a powerful influence on Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, nationalists and communists alike, thus establishing him in his lifetime as the most popular and influential poet of the whole Urdu-speaking community.[37] Allama Iqbal[38] was also a student of philosophy, an educationalist and a lawyer. Perhaps the most controversial aspect of his life was his involvement in the realm of politics. Referring to Iqbal as a 'casual politician', Rafiq Zakaria argued that although Iqbal was interested in politics, he had neither the time nor the inclination for the sustained work and constant contact with people that politics necessitated'.[39] The new opportunities for full-time political activity accorded by the India Councils Act of 1909 gave rise to a new breed of professional politicians in India.[40] Iqbal was not a part of this new emerging class, which pursued full-time political activity and often relied on the political newspaper as a source of income. His active involvement in politics and political organisations was intermittent, often ending with his resignation from positions of influence.[41] Rather than as a politician, it would be more accurate to see Muhammad Iqbal as an activist intellectual, an intellectual who sought to be directly involved in political and social affairs rather than standing aloof as an intellectual critic.[42]

'All men are intellectuals', Gramsci famously wrote, 'but not all men have in society the function of intellectuals'. The intellectual was defined by Gramsci according to the immediate social function performed instead of the nature of his training or profession. He noted that the category of the intellectual, understood in this sense, had undergone an unprecedented

[37] Ralph Russell, *The Pursuit of Urdu Literature: A Select History* (London, 1992), p. 176.

[38] Allama is an honorific that is often used to refer to Iqbal. It is derived from the term alim.

[39] Rafiq Zakaria, *Iqbal: The Poet and The Politician* (New Delhi, 1994), p. 56.

[40] Francis Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims*, p. 177.

[41] In a letter to Ragib Ahsan, dated 17 September 1933, for instance, Iqbal recorded that he was so disappointed with the state of Muslim politics in India that he had decided to end all active involvement in political affairs and concentrate on the development of Islam. Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, compiled by Sayyid Muzaffar Hussein Burney (4 vols., New Delhi, 1999), iii, 393–394.

[42] John L. Esposito and John O. Voll have discussed the rise of the Muslim activist intellectual in *Makers of Contemporary Islam* (Oxford, 2001), see especially pp. 17–22.

expansion in the modern period.[43] Drawing from Gramsci's writings, an intellectual is defined here not along the lines of profession or training but on the basis of the function he or she performed in society. The category thus includes individuals from a wide array of professions – doctors, lawyers, ulama and academics – who were involved in the writing, disseminating and debating of ideas.

Iqbal held key positions in a number of socio-political organisations and was involved in many crucial discussions and debates over the constitutional future of India. He was elected to the Punjab Legislative Council in 1927 and held various posts both in the All-India Muslim League and the Punjab Provincial Muslim League. In 1930, he presided over the meeting of the All-India Muslim League in Allahabad. It was here that he delivered his famous address in which he outlined his vision of a cultural and political framework that would ensure the fullest development of the Muslims of India. Iqbal also participated in the first two Round Table Conferences held in London between 1930 and 1931. These conferences were a series of meetings mediated by the British government to formulate the future constitution of India. Iqbal's involvement in the Round Table Conferences was not free from controversy. He resigned from the second conference, complaining that the Muslim and Hindu representatives at the conference were not committed to finding a solution to the constitutional and communal problems inflicting India. Iqbal's correspondence reveals that he was also interacting with a wide range of personalities from across the political spectrum, such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari, Madan Mohan Malaviya and Muhammad Ali Jinnah, to work out a political and communal solution to the stalemate between the Congress and the Muslim League over the political future of India. Iqbal was also involved with religious and socio-political movements such as the Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam (Society for the Service of Islam) and the All-India Kashmir Committee. Iqbal's major contribution to the sphere of politics lay, however, in his voluminous writings on the socio-political conditions of Muslims both within India and without, his criticism of prevalent socio-political ideologies and his vision of a future political order for India. He expressed his socio-political ideas in his published prose and poetry as well as in his correspondence, speeches and statements.

[43] See Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, edited and translated by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (London, 1971), pp. 7–14.

In response to calls for him to pen his biography, Iqbal wrote that his life was devoid of any extraordinary experiences that could serve as a source of inspiration to anyone; it was far more important to study his thought.[44] While the aim of the present work is to study Iqbal's socio-political discourse we begin with a brief sketch of his life,[45] introducing themes which will be developed more fully in the following chapters. Instead of approaching Iqbal's views as an expression of the timeless socio-political message of Islam, this work emphasises the role of the intellectual in actively interpreting the message of Islam. It is thus pertinent to keep in view 'the three-cornered relationship between certain types of ideas, their articulators, and the social structure of their environment'.[46]

Muhammad Iqbal was born in the city of Sialkot, Punjab, to a family of Kashmiri Brahmin ancestry originally hailing from Srinagar. Iqbal was born into a deeply religious family which traced its roots to his paternal great-grandfather, Baba Laleh.[47] According to family tradition, Baba Laleh had converted to Islam after coming into contact with a *wali* (saint, or friend of God) and was renowned in Srinagar for his piety and service to Islam.[48] Iqbal's recollections of his father, Nur Muhammad, provide an insight into the latter's spiritual nature and his Sufistic disposition. Iqbal spoke of seeing his father in a deep mystical trance radiating a halo of light that engulfed the room and of his father's ability to foretell problems that might afflict people.[49] The Sufistic disposition of Nur Muhammad was to have a profound impact on Iqbal. Sufism and mystic consciousness constituted an important theme in Iqbal's work, yet his views on Sufism have been the source of considerable controversy. Although he criticised the activities of certain Sufis for encouraging passivity and straying from the action-oriented message of Islam, as well as for being incapable of

[44] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, ii, 154.

[45] For a fuller biographical account of Iqbal's life in English, refer to Iqbal Singh, *The Ardent Pilgrim: An Introduction to the Life and Work of Muhammad Iqbal* (London, 1951); various articles in Hafeez Malik (ed.), *Iqbal the Poet-Philosopher of Pakistan* (New York, 1971); and Rafiq Zakaria, *Iqbal: The Poet and Politician* (New Delhi, 1994). More detailed accounts of Iqbal's life are available in Urdu: Abdul Majeed Salik, *Zhikr-i-Iqbal* (Lahore, undated) and Javed Iqbal, *Zinda Rud*, (3 vols., Lahore, 1984).

[46] J. P. Nettle, 'Ideas, Intellectuals, and Structures of Dissent' in Phillip Rieff (ed.) *On Intellectuals: Theoretical Studies, Case Studies* (New York, 1969), p. 163.

[47] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, ii, 607–608.

[48] See references to this in Salik, *Zikr-i-Iqbal*.

[49] In Attiya Fyzee's book on her recollections of Iqbal, there are various references to Iqbal's attraction to mysticism and his views on his father's religiosity: Attiya Fyzee Begum, *Iqbal* (Bombay, 1969).

receiving any fresh inspiration from modern thought and experience,[50] he remained keen to demonstrate the validity and importance of mystic consciousness.[51] This ambiguity in his stance on Sufism can be understood in terms of his attempts to divorce the practises of the Sufis of his day from the 'true Sufism' of his father, a mystic consciousness he felt he himself possessed.[52]

Although Nur Muhammad had received no formal education, he possessed a keen interest in the acquisition of knowledge about Islam, particularly about Sufism. His place of business served as a focal point for friends and scholars to discuss and debate various issues and books, thus earning him the nickname of *unparh falsafi*, or uneducated philosopher. In his later years, Iqbal was to reflect that his pursuit of western knowledge had distracted him from acquiring a good grounding in *dini ilm* (religious knowledge) from his father.[53]

The Kashmiri background of the family was important in shaping Iqbal's concerns and worldview. In the early twentieth century, famine and the policies of the Dogra rulers drove many Kashmiri Muslims to flee their native land and further augment the number of their brethren already resident in the Punjab. Kashmiri Muslims constituted an important segment of the populace in a number of Punjabi cities, especially Sialkot, Lahore, Amritsar and Ludhiana.[54] David Gilmartin has shown the salience of the *biradari* (brotherhood), ethnic divisions based on an ideology of descent, among the urban Kashmiri Muslims.[55] Iqbal's attachment to his Kashmiri lineage is evident from his poetic references to himself as a descendant of Kashmiri Brahmins. Particularly interesting is his poem, 'Ek Falsafah Zada Sayyid-zade Ke Naam' ('Addressed to a Philosophy Stricken Sayyid'), in which he mocked Muslims who were waylaid from the 'true faith' and 'creed' by their engagements with philosophy. He claimed that as a descendent of Brahmins, he, rather than the 'descendents of Ali', was entitled to and capable of partaking in philosophising.[56]

[50] Muhammad Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (New Delhi, 2003), p. v.

[51] This forms an important part of his chapter 'Knowledge and Religious Experience' in Iqbal's *Reconstruction*, pp. 1–27.

[52] It should be noted that Iqbal wrote that the genuine schools of Sufism 'have, no doubt, done good work in shaping and directing the evolution of religious experience in Islam'. Ibid., p. v. See discussion of his stance on Sufism in Chapter 3.

[53] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, ii, 157–158.

[54] Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam*, pp. 83–84.

[55] Ibid., pp. 82–88.

[56] Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, p. 480.

His personal letters further reveal his attachment to Kashmir and his concern over its apparent political, cultural and religious degeneration.[57] The Allama's concerns with the plight of the Muslims of Kashmir, coupled with the memories of his own family's *hijrat* (migration) from Srinagar, were to have a telling influence in shaping his views on the disempowerment of Muslims and the position of the community in India. Kashmiri leaders in the Punjab commonly expressed a Kashmiri identity which stressed both the common origins of Kashmiri Muslims as well as their common commitment to Islam.[58] Iqbal was actively involved in organisations such as the Anjuman Kashmiri Musalmanan (Society of Kashmiri Muslims). Established in Lahore in the 1890s, the Anjuman sought to produce articles and poems on the social problems of the Kashmiri Muslims and to stress their common heritage.[59] Later in life, Iqbal was to be an integral part of the All-India Kashmir Committee and a staunch supporter of Muslim protests in Kashmir against Dogra rule. As the president of the Kashmir Committee, he was actively involved in attempts to galvanise the Muslims of Kashmir to overcome sectarian difference and *khanajangi* (internal feuds) in order to 'unite under one leader and a single political association' and rise against the 'brutalities' inflicted on them by the Dogra rulers.[60]

Like most Kashmiri families in Punjab, Iqbal's family did not own land. Nur Muhammad earned his living as a tailor and embroiderer specialising in caps for *burqas* (veils). In fact, Iqbal's family was never financially well off, and Iqbal's elder brother, Atta Muhammad, only acquired a limited education. It was Atta Muhammad's job as a contractor with the British army which was to provide the necessary funds for Iqbal's higher

[57] Iqbal was extremely concerned with the decline in Kashmiri literature. He had planned to compile a *tazkira* (collection of biographical notes) on the poets of Kashmir and visualised the establishment of a society of educated Kashmiri Muslims to safeguard the remaining literature and to develop it further. In his analysis of the decline of Kashmiri literature, Iqbal put the burden of the blame on Muslim negligence and on Sikh and Dogra misrule of Kashmir. Muhammad Iqbal, *Iqbal Nama*: *Hisah Awal Majmuah Makatib-i-Iqbal*, compiled by Ita Allah Ayeem (Lahore, undated), pp. 58–59.

[58] Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam*, p. 85.

[59] Hafeez Malik and Lynda P. Malik, 'The Life of the Poet-Philosopher', in Hafeez Malik (ed.), *Iqbal: Poet-Philosopher of Pakistan*, p. 12.

[60] Statement from a poster printed by the Kashmir Committee, issued by Iqbal, M. Barkat Ali and Mohsin Shah, entitled 'A Sincere Appeal to the Mussalmans of Kashmir'. This poster, widely displayed in Srinagar, was a source of consternation to the Resident and the Dogra state. 'Translation of a Poster issued by Dr. Sir Mohammad Iqbal, President of Kashmir Committee and M. Barkat Ali and Mohsin Shah, Secretaries', *Sir Sheikh Iqbal Papers*, British Library, Mss Eur Photo Eur 209, fos. 18–20.

education. His non-aristocratic background and the socio-economic position of the family had a lasting impact on Iqbal's mannerisms: His 'unrefined' dress sense and distinctively Punjabi accent annoyed sections of the Urdu intelligentsia of Delhi and Lucknow.[61] It also fed his concerns with championing the rights of the non-landed and working classes of the Punjab, a commitment no doubt strengthened by his interaction with socialist ideas.[62] This non-landed background set Iqbal apart from many contemporary political figures in Punjab who hailed from landholding families and represented landed interests. In fact, Iqbal openly criticised the pro-landlord socio-economic policies of the Punjab Unionist Party, a cross-communal coalition of landed interests that was the dominant political force in Punjab from 1923 to the early 1940s. As a member of the Punjab Legislative Council, Iqbal called for the implementation of a progressive system of land taxation similar to an income tax. This, he argued, would tax the larger landholders while relieving the burden on the peasants.[63] He continued to call for reforms in land-taxation policies throughout his life. The Unionist Party was also attacked for privileging political interests and identity based upon property over those founded upon a common religion.[64]

As a child Iqbal was sent to the *maktab* (school for children) of Maulana Mir Hasan (1844–1929), who stressed the acquisition of a knowledge of Persian and Arabic in addition to *adabiyyat* (ethics and etiquette) and *diniyyat* (religion). This was to be a significant point in Iqbal's life, as it signalled the start of a lifelong connection between the teacher and loyal student[65] and the start of a relationship which was immensely influential in shaping the path of Iqbal's intellectual development and academic pursuits. Mir Hasan was closely aligned with the Aligarh movement and its aims. Although he had no knowledge of English himself, he was convinced of the need for Muslims to acquire western knowledge. In

[61] See anecdotes recorded in Salik, *Zhikr-i Iqbal*.

[62] See poems such as 'Lenin' and 'Karl Marx ki Awaaz' ('The Voice of Karl Marx') in Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, pp. 398–400 and 599 respectively. Particularly interesting is a *ghazal* (see definition on page 80) written during his stay in Europe in which he raised issues such as workers' rights and despotic rule. Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, p. 332. Iqbal's letters further reveal that he was attracted to socialist land policies and sought to study if they were in line with Islam's land policies. Iqbal, *Iqbal Nama*, pp. 183–185.

[63] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, edited by Shamloo (Lahore, 1944), pp. 75–82.

[64] See discussion in Chapter 5.

[65] It is said that Iqbal made his acceptance of knighthood contingent upon the recognition of Mir Hasan's contribution to the study of Islam. Mir Hasan was thus conferred with the title of Shams-ul-Ulama. Singh, *The Ardent Pilgrim*, p. 65.

line with his views, he encouraged Nur Muhammad to enrol Iqbal in the Scottish Mission School, where he himself also taught. In fact, when Nur Muhammad began to reconsider his decision to educate his son in a western institution, it was Mir Hasan who prevailed upon him not to withdraw Iqbal from the school. While attending the Scottish Mission School, Iqbal continued to study with Mir Hasan at his *maktab*. These lessons may have served to invest an Islamic foundation in Iqbal while being schooled in the traditions of western thought and literature. Mir Hasan, who was renowned for having committed thousands of Arabic and Persian poems to memory, also helped to cultivate Iqbal's interest in poetry and introduced Iqbal to the world of Arabic and Persian literature.

At the age of sixteen Iqbal joined the Scottish Mission College, which provided courses in liberal arts similar to those taught in English universities as well as courses in Persian and Arabic. After receiving his Faculty of Arts Diploma from this institution, Iqbal enrolled in the Government College, Lahore, where he studied Arabic, English literature and philosophy. It was here that Iqbal first came into contact with Thomas W. Arnold (1864–1930), who held the Chair of Philosophy. Arnold, author of *The Preaching of Islam*, was a renowned scholar of Islam and oriental languages, especially Arabic. Such was the recognition of his scholarship amongst the Muslim intelligentsia in India that in 1894 Sayyid Ahmad Khan had recommended that the Allahabad University appoint Arnold as its representative to the Congress of Orientalists, which was taking place at Geneva that year.[66] Arnold was also intimately involved in debates over the type of education best suited for the Muslim community, particularly debates over the utility of adopting western education, and had taught at Aligarh before joining the Government College. Iqbal acquired a knowledge of western thought from Arnold as well as modern methods of criticism.[67] Such was the influence of Thomas Arnold upon Iqbal that in 1904 the latter wrote a poem, 'Nala-i-Firaq' ('Song of Separation'),[68] lamenting Arnold's departure from India. It was also through Arnold that Iqbal came into contact with Shibli, who exerted an important influence on Iqbal's writing style and shaped his views on history and religion.

In 1905, Iqbal left India to pursue further studies in Europe. In his three years in Europe, Iqbal studied law at Lincoln's Inn and philosophy

[66] Sayyid Ahmad Khan, *Sir Syed's Correspondence: Selected Documents from the Sir Syed Academy Archives* (London, 1967), p. 203.
[67] Syed Abdul Vahid, *Iqbal: His Art and Thought* (Lahore, 1959), p. 7.
[68] Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, pp. 77–78.

at Trinity College, Cambridge,[69] and he gained a doctorate from Munich University. He also spent time studying German at Heidelberg University. His time in Europe allowed him to develop a deeper acquaintance with the works of writers such as Goethe, Milton and Wordsworth, works he had already read while studying in India. Not only was Iqbal attracted by some of the ideas expressed by these writers, particularly Goethe; he took some of their works as models for his own writings. His *Payam-i-Mashriq* (*Message of the East*), for instance, was essentially modelled upon Goethe's *West-Eastern Diwan*.[70] Iqbal's stay at Cambridge was particularly important in deepening his interaction with the work of Hegel and Nietzsche, two key western thinkers whose ideas were to find resonance in Iqbal's own work. Iqbal's study of Hegel's philosophy was directed by the famous neo-Hegelians, John MacTaggart Ellis MacTaggart and James Ward.[71] Nietzsche proved to be an inescapable influence, as his works were currently in vogue amongst the students at Cambridge.[72]

Although most biographies on Iqbal attempt to provide a brief sketch of his life in Europe, many important facets of his life and activities remain unstudied. Crucially, Iqbal's engagement with the works of western figures who examined and critiqued the modern condition remains unexplored. Nietzsche, of whose work Iqbal claimed to be unaware before his departure to Europe,[73] is particularly important in this context. Also crucial to the development of Iqbal's socio-political concerns was his involvement in a number of Muslim organisations while in Europe. He was a member of the Anjuman-i-Islam (Society for Islam), which was primarily an association of educated Indian Muslims in England founded in 1886 with the express aim of eradicating misconceptions about Islam and Indian Muslims.[74] It was as a member of this society that Iqbal delivered

[69] Iqbal was the Government of India Research Scholar at Cambridge.

[70] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, ii, 201. See also his preface to the *Payam-i-Mashriq* where he acknowledges Goethe's influence.

[71] See Iqbal's article 'McTaggart's Philosophy' published in the *Indian Art and Letters*, 6 (1932), pp. 25–31.

[72] Nehru, who was in Cambridge from 1907 to 1910, noted that Nietzsche was the rage in Cambridge in this period. Nehru, *An Autobiography* (New Delhi, 2003), p. 19.

[73] In a letter to R. A. Nicholson, Iqbal stressed that his article 'The Doctrine of Absolute Unity, As Expounded by Abu-L-Karim Al-Jilani' in *The Indian Antiquary*, 29 (Sept., 1900), pp. 237–246, in which he discussed Jilani's views on the perfect man, was written at a time when he was unaware of Nietzsche's work. Iqbal, *Letters of Iqbal*, edited by B. A. Dar (Lahore, 1978), pp. 141–142. It is important to note, however, that Iqbal refers to Hegel repeatedly in this article.

[74] The history and activities of the Anjuman-i-Islam have not been studied. There are references to the Anjuman in Peter Clarke's *Marmaduke Pickthall: British Muslim* (London, 1986).

his lecture on *Certain Aspects of Islam* at Caxton Hall in London. The Allama was also involved with the British Committee of the All-India Muslim League. In fact, he was even a member of the committee formed to draft the constitution of the association. His involvement with the Muslim League in London brought him into contact with Ameer Ali (1849–1928),[75] who was an important scholar of Islam and a leading political figure. Unlike Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Ameer Ali believed that it was important for Muslims to participate actively in politics. In 1908, he established the London branch of the All-India Muslim League; for a number of years, it was this branch that guided the policy of the League. Iqbal subsequently assisted Ameer Ali in writing *The Spirit of Islam*.[76]

Iqbal returned to India in 1908 and pursued a career as a lawyer and educationalist. Reflecting upon his career, he wrote:

> [U]pon my return from England, I was appointed as the top most professor of philosophy at Lahore Government College. I held this post for 18 months, teaching philosophy to the higher classes. After this period the government offered me the post but I rejected the offer. My importance to the government is clear from the fact that realising that I had difficulties in making it to the courtroom due to my classes in the morning, they ordered the judges to schedule all my cases in the later part of the day. For 18 months this was to be the arrangement. … In England I was appointed as a professor of Arabic at London University for six months. On my return to India I was appointed as the examiner to B.A. and M.A. classes in both Punjab and Allahabad Universities. I continue to hold this post. In the case of Allahabad University, I was in charge of two M.A. examinations while in the case of Punjab I handled a B.A. examination of Persian and two M.A. examinations for Philosophy. Apart from these positions, I have also taught political-economy, history and English to B.A. and M.A. classes.[77]

Iqbal spent the better part of his life in the city of Lahore. There he produced most of his work, and it was there that his poetic genius blossomed. Lahore of the early twentieth century was a culturally and intellectually bustling city. Not only an important centre of Urdu poetry, Lahore was also the hub of Urdu journalism, with many important journals and

[75] Trained as a barrister, Ameer Ali was a judge in the Calcutta High Court, a lecturer in Islamic Law at the Presidency College and a professor of law in Calcutta University. He established the Central National Muhammadan Association in 1877. In 1878, he was appointed as the member of the Bengal Legislative Council and nominated to the membership of the Governor General Council in 1883. His writings include the highly influential *The Spirit of Islam: A History of the Evolution and Ideals of Islam with a Life of the Prophet* (1891) and *A Critical Examination of the Life and Teachings of Mohammed* (London, 1873).

[76] Iqbal assisted Ameer Ali with the proofs and preparation of the index.

[77] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, i, 589–590.

newspapers such as the *Makhzan* (*Treasure House*) and the *Zamindar* (*Landholder*) based here. The *Zamindar* was an influential paper published by Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, whose fiery and distinctive style of journalism was to push out publications like the *Paisa Akbar* (*Penny Newspaper*), which were less polemical and more moderate in tone. The *Makhzan* was a journal established by Shaikh Abdul Qadir, a patron of Urdu literature and a close associate of Iqbal. The express aim of the journal was to shape an Urdu literature which could be an effective medium for the expression of important socio-political ideas.[78] Over the years, various important intellectuals such as Abul Kalam Azad (1888–1958)[79], Suleiman Nadwi (1884–1953)[80] and Iqbal were to be associated with *Makhzan*.

Lahore was also an important base of many important socio-religious movements, such as the Arya Samaj and the Singh Sabha movements, which had an all-India impact. Threatened by the activities of missions such as the American Presbyterian Church and the Arya Samaj, a section of the Muslim community in Lahore founded the Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam in 1884 with the aim of establishing schools, printing text books and setting up orphanages for Muslim children.[81] The Anjuman established a number of important educational institutions, such as the Madrasa-tul-Muslimeen, a primary school for Muslim boys, in 1886 and the Islamia College in 1907. Iqbal was a strong supporter of the Anjuman's educational activities and publications. For many years, the Anjuman's annual celebration was the occasion for the release of a new poem by Iqbal. Some of his most important poems such as 'Shikwa' ('The Complaint') and 'Khizr-i-Rah' ('The Traveller's Guide') were written specially for the Anjuman.

[78] See discussion in Chapter 2.

[79] Born in Mecca in 1888, Abul Kalam Muhiyyudin Ahmed descended from a renowned lineage of Muslim scholars. He was actively involved in journalism and wrote widely on socio-political and religious issues. He is generally known by his pen name, Azad, which he adopted because it symbolised freedom. He was actively involved in the Congress, serving as its president from 1940 to 1945, and in the Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind. Azad was independent India's first minister for education.

[80] A graduate of the Nadwatul Ulama, Suleiman Nadwi was to emerge as a prominent figure amongst the ulama of his generation. He wrote widely on theology and history, and was involved in the establishment of the Dar-ul-Musannefin (Academy of Authors) in 1914. Together with Shibli, he was involved in completing the multi-volume biography of Muhammad, *Sirat un-Nabi*.

[81] For an insight into the Anjuman's attempts to develop educational institutions, see Hafiz Nazir Ahmad Khan, *The English Translation of Fitratula: A Lecture, Delivered in Urdu by Maulvi Hafiz Nazir Ahmad Khan of Delhi on the 8th Anniversary of the Anjuman-i-Himayet-i-Islam* (Lahore, 1893). For a general account of the history of the Anjuman, see its official publications: *Anjuman Himayat-e-Islam Lahore: Diamond Jubilee, 24–26 March 1967* and *Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam, Lahore: A Short History and Account of its Constructive Activities* (Lahore, 1986).

Lahore, with its *mushairas* (poetic symposiums) and printing presses, rivalled Lucknow for supremacy in Urdu poetry. An active participant in the *mushairas*, Iqbal burst onto the literary scene in Lahore with his reading of the poem 'Nala-i-Yatim' ('Orphan's Cry') at the annual meeting of the Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam in 1899. Abdul Qadir recalled that Iqbal's reading of his poem 'Himalay' ('Himalayas') at a *mushaira* in Lahore met with such appreciation that there was a unanimous call for the poem to be published. Although Iqbal was hesitant, fearing that the poem was incomplete, Abdul Qadir prevailed upon him and the poem was published in the maiden edition of the *Makhzan* in April 1901.[82] The publication of the poem was significant as it introduced Iqbal to a wider public, winning him great acclaim and popularity.

Also in 1901, Iqbal's *Ilm-o-Iqthisad* (*The Knowledge of Economics*) was published, which was one amongst a burgeoning number of modern works on political economy published by Muslim writers in India. At the age of twenty-three, Iqbal started teaching Arabic, history and economics at the Oriental College in Lahore. During this period Iqbal taught Arabic and English works, and he also translated Arabic books into English. It was also in this period that Iqbal began to write the first of his scholarly articles and works. His first major poetic work was the *Asrar-i-Khudi* (*Secrets of the Self*) in 1915. It was followed by the publication of the *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi* (*Mysteries of Selflessness*) in 1917. His other works in Persian include the *Payam-i-Mashriq* (1923), *Zabur-i-Ajam* (*Persian Psalms*) (1927), *Javid Nama* (*The Eternal Book*) (1932), *Pas Cheh Bayad Kard Ai Aqwam-i-Sharq* (*What Then Needs to Be Done O Nations of the East*) (1936) and the *Armughan-i-Hijaz* (*Gift from Hijaz*), which was published shortly after his death. In 1924, Iqbal published a collection of his Urdu poetry under the title *Bang-i-Dara* (*Call of the Caravan*). The *Bang-i-Dara* contains many of his important poems including 'Tulu-i-Islam' ('The Renaissance of Islam'), 'Khizr-i-Rah', 'Shikwa' and 'Jawab-i-Shikwa' ('Reply to the Complaint'). *Bang-i-Dara* was followed by *Bal-i-Jibril* (*Gabriel's Wing*) in 1935 and the *Zarb-i-Kalim* (*The Rod of Moses*) in 1936. The *Zarb-i-Kalim*, which is divided into sections dealing with religion, education, politics, culture and women, is particularly significant for a study of Iqbal's socio-political thought. A collection of six lectures in English delivered by Iqbal at Madras, Hyderabad and Aligarh was published in 1930 as *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in*

[82] Abdul Qadir highlighted this in his *debache* (preface) to Iqbal's *Bang-i-Dara*. This preface has been re-published as the *debache* to the *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*. See p. 14.

Islam. Apart from these works, a number of articles by Iqbal on religion, literature, history and politics were published in various journals.

INVENTION OF IQBAL

Much ink has been spilt on the life and work of Muhammad Iqbal, yet he nevertheless remains one of the most controversial figures in modern South Asian history. Championed by some as one of the chief founders of Pakistan, he continues to be heralded by others as an unfailing patriot of India. The controversies that continue to shroud the legacy of Allama Iqbal result in no small measure from the utility attached to (mis)appropriating his name to legitimise various causes and socio-political stances. The importance attached to the appropriation of Iqbal's legacy is attested to by the fact that both Nehru and Jinnah have in their respective writings claimed the support of Allama Iqbal.[83] Across South Asia, Iqbal's name continues to be brandished in support of various religious, social and political views. Supporters of democracy in Pakistan, opponents of democracy,[84] socialists,[85] groups advocating territorial and racial nationalism, sections calling for the Islamisation of Pakistan, virulent opponents of the Ahmadiyya movement,[86] members of the same movement,[87] and

[83] Jinnah claimed that 'although hidden from the public, at that time', Iqbal had always supported and strived for the creation of Pakistan. See the introduction by Jinnah to Muhammad Iqbal, *Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah*, edited by Muhammad Ashraf (Lahore, 1963), p. 3. Nehru, on the other hand, in his *The Discovery of India* (New Delhi, 2004), has attempted to demonstrate that Iqbal was supportive of his political visions. See pp. 385–386.

[84] K. G. Saiyidain, a contemporary of Iqbal, argued that the 'progressives' had failed to study Iqbal's views on democracy and thus allowed reactionary radicals to appropriate the figure of Iqbal. Saiyidain wrote an article, 'Progressive Trends in Iqbal's Thought' in *Iqbal as a Thinker: A Collection of Essays on Iqbal by Eight Scholars of Eminence Presenting His Diverse Facets* (Lahore, 1944), pp. 42–106, with the express aim of reclaiming Iqbal as a 'progressive'.

[85] Faiz Ahmad Faiz, a committed socialist, was involved in the production of a documentary on Iqbal, the main thrust of which was to emphasise the socialist content of Iqbal's message. Faiz selected poems which touched upon the themes of revolution, anti-capitalism and socialism. This documentary was banned by the Ayub Khan regime. It has been reproduced by the Iqbal Academy Pakistan, Lahore, as part of a three-documentary set entitled *Muhammad Iqbal: The Poet Philosopher – Three Documentaries on Iqbal*.

[86] The Anti-Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, for instance, regularly refers to Iqbal's opposition to the Ahmadiyya movement and prominently quotes his statements against the movement on their official Web site. See various articles posted on http://alhafeez.org/rashid/ (25 May 2011).

[87] Maulana Hafiz Sher Muhammad, a prominent scholar of the Lahore faction of the Ahmadiyya movement, has written a tract in which he laments 'malicious attempts' by opponents of the Ahmadiyya to circulate statements by Iqbal to justify their opposition

organisations which seek to promote their own interpretations of Islam, such as the Jamaat-e-Islami, are amongst those who have sought legitimacy for their demands by claiming the support of Muhammad Iqbal. Interestingly, attempts have even been made to appropriate the figure of Iqbal in support of political demands outside of South Asia. In Indonesia, for instance, Iqbal has been proclaimed variously as a modernist,[88] an 'Islamist'[89] and a third-worldist icon.[90] Despite the large number of works on Iqbal, the available literature has failed to provide a sustained analysis of his political philosophy. His use of political categories such as 'nation', *qawm* and *millat*, his attempts to shape an 'Islamic response' to modern socio-political problems and his views on the development of the nation have yet to receive sufficient critical attention. The lacunae in the current historiography on Muhammad Iqbal are characteristic of wider flaws in the literature on Muslim figures and politics in modern South Asia.

The propensity amongst historians in India and Pakistan to classify figures as 'ours' and 'theirs' continues to detract from an accurate understanding of the lives and works of many Muslim leaders.[91] Much of the work done on the political thought or activities of the Muslim intelligentsia continues to revolve around the demand for Pakistan, attempting either to demonstrate their support for or opposition to Muslim separatism. Hence, politically laden and highly inadequate categories such as 'separatist' and 'Muslim nationalist' continue to be used to describe their political orientations. Much of the scholarship on Iqbal seeks either to appropriate him in support of the demand for Pakistan and to denounce him as a 'Muslim separatist', or to claim him as an Indian nationalist. Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, Hafeez Malik and Aziz Ahmad are amongst the

to the movement. He argues that any statements Iqbal made against the Ahmadiyya were due to the unhealthy practises developed by the Qadiani faction and that Iqbal continued to have good relations with the Lahore faction. He even asserts that Iqbal's religious views were influenced by Ahmadiyya thought. The figure of Iqbal is here being used in polemics between the two factions of the Ahmadiyya movement. M. H. S. Muhammad, *Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal and His Views on the Ahmadiyya Movement: His Views of, and Relations with, the Ahmadiyya Movement from Beginning to the End* (Columbus, 1995).

[88] See Nurdin Ashraf, *Pujangga Iqbal* (Singapore, 1985).

[89] See Mohammad Natsir, 'Pidato Pada Hari Iqbal, 21 April 1953, Di Jakarta' in H. Endang Saifuddin Anshari (ed.), *Kebudayaan Islam Dalam Perspektif Sejarah: Kumpulan Karangan* (Jakarta, 1988).

[90] Roeslan Abdulgani, the secretary general of the 1955 Bandung Conference, for instance, spoke of Iqbal as a third-worldist icon. Abdulgani, *Bandung Spirit: Moving On the Tide of History* (Djakarta, 1964), pp. 137–138.

[91] Aptly noted by Mushirul Hasan, 'Introduction' in Hasan (ed.), *Islam and Indian Nationalism: Reflections of Abul Kalam Azad* (New Delhi, 1992), p. 7.

scholars who have argued that Iqbal sought the creation of an independent sovereign nation-state for the Muslims of India.[92] On the other hand, scholars like Riaz Hussain, Mohammad Aslam Jawed and Sayyid Muzaffar Hussein Burney claim Iqbal as an undying 'Indian patriot'.[93] Burney even asserts that Iqbal envisaged the motherland as the only basis for national integration. He writes that Iqbal dreamt of 'building a new India on the basis of unity, mutual love and nationalism. To his mind, the only way of ensuring lasting harmony, love and brotherhood between different communities is that they should worship one idol: India'.[94]

Labelling Muslim intellectuals as 'separatist' or 'nationalist' has the effect of subsuming widely differing social, religious and political views within these binary categories, thus neglecting the vibrancy of the socio-political discourse of the period. Furthermore, attempts to fit Muslim intellectuals and statesmen into these neat categories require that statements or activities which may seem to complicate their characterisations as separatist or nationalist be glossed over or shown to be unimportant. A prevalent feature of conventional historiography is the attempt to posit rigid and arbitrary periodisations on the socio-political thought of the Muslim intelligentsia. Studies on Sayyid Ahmad Khan, for instance, seek to explain his political views and activities by arguing that it is possible to locate a clear shift in his political orientation towards 'Muslim nationalism'. He is generally characterised as having undergone two distinct phases in his political orientation. In the first phase, which lasted until 1884, he was an apostle of Hindu-Muslim unity. Sayyid Ahmad Khan's call on Muslims to refrain from joining the Congress, which was formed in 1885, is portrayed as having marked his transformation into a 'Muslim nationalist'.[95] Conversely, it is argued that Abul Kalam Azad, arguably the most prominent Muslim leader of the Congress and a vocal opponent

[92] See, for instance, Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, *The Struggle for Pakistan* (Karachi, 1965); Hafeez Malik, 'The Man of Thought and the Man of Action' in Malik (ed.), *Iqbal*, pp. 69–107, and 'Preface' by Malik, pp. xi–xv; and Aziz Ahmad, 'Iqbal's Theory of Pakistan' in Ikram Chagthai (ed.), *Iqbal: New Dimensions (A Collection of Unpublished and Rare Iqbalian Studies)* (Lahore, 2003), pp. 427–434.

[93] This stance is reflected in a number of works, including Riaz Hussain, *The Politics of Iqbal: A Study of His Political Thoughts and Action* (Lahore, 1971); M. A. Jawed, *The Unknown Iqbal* (Delhi, 1997); and Sayyid Muzaffar Hussein Burney, *Iqbal and National Integration* (Chandigarh, undated).

[94] Burney, *Iqbal and National*, p. 3.

[95] See, for instance, Hafeez Malik, *Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Muslim Modernization in India and Pakistan* (New York, 1980) and Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan* (London, 1967).

of the demand for Pakistan, underwent a radical metamorphosis from a 'Muslim nationalist' ('separatist') to an 'Indian nationalist'.[96]

Much of the current scholarship on Iqbal is founded, then, upon the attempt to identify distinct and discernible phases in his political orientation. It is generally argued that whereas Iqbal was an ardent Indian nationalist in the early phase of his life, his sojourn to Europe in 1905 ushered in a drastic change in his political orientation. Henceforth, Iqbal was to espouse 'Muslim nationalism' or 'Muslim separatism'.[97] Consequently, scholars claim to be able to locate vast differences in his thought between these periods. Such attempts detract from a comprehensive study of the continuities, complexities and evolution in the thought of Muslim intellectuals. In the case of Iqbal, an approach based largely on selective explorations of his works and speeches serves the need of those who seek to trace the 'development' of Iqbal from a poet calling for Hindu-Muslim unity to an ideologue demanding a separate nation-state for the Muslims of India; such an approach, however, makes a deeper understanding of his political philosophy and its evolution difficult.

STUDYING IQBAL'S VIEWS ON ISLAM AND POLITICS

It has been argued that it is possible to locate a shift in Iqbal's political orientation from Indian nationalism towards 'Islamic political theory'.[98] This is characteristic of a wider perception that Muslim intellectuals like Iqbal based their views on a set of fixed Islamic political ideals. This has enforced a false homogeneity on the views of Muslim intellectuals and detracted from an appreciation of the originality of Iqbal's views as well as the richness of the political imagination of Muslim intellectuals. It has also led some to assert that Iqbal's political views were merely expressions of Pan-Islamism.[99] The assumption that Muslims were in

[96] Malik argues that Azad 'made his triumphal entrance into Muslim intellectual life as a Muslim nationalist (1906–1920) who could not think in terms of political collaboration with the Hindus. He ended his life as an Indian nationalist, who would have no part of Pakistan.' Hafeez Malik, 'Abu'l Kalam Azad's Theory of Nationalism' in *The Muslim World*, 53, 1 (1963), pp. 33–40. Such an approach is also adopted by I. H. Qureshi, *The Muslim Community of the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent, 610–1947: A Brief Historical Analysis* (Delhi, 1985).

[97] See, for instance, Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism* and Malik, 'The Man of Thought'.

[98] See, for instance, Manzooruddin Ahmad, 'Iqbal's Theory of Muslim Community and Islamic Universalism' in *Selections from the Iqbal Review* (Lahore, 1983), p.143.

[99] Shireen Aslam, 'Pan-Islamism and Iqbal' in *Iqbal Review (Journal of Iqbal Academy Pakistan)*, 35, 3 (1994), pp. 23–38.

effect expressing similar Islamic political ideals has also resulted in the imposition of assumed meanings upon the political categories used by Iqbal.[100] Even works on Iqbal's religious thought have not adequately grappled with his interpretation of Islam and its sources. This is a subject which is particularly relevant in the context of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a period which witnessed intense debates over the authenticity of the sources of Islam and the rise of new interpretations of Islam as an ideology or system. Iqbal's religious discourse has often been described as a 'return' to the original teachings of Islam. Such works assume that certain key Islamic concepts have fixed meanings and ignore how Iqbal infused new meanings into traditional Islamic concepts such as *bekhudi*, *khudi*, *millat* and *qawm*. The contestation between differing interpretations of Islam is also left unexplored.

The available literature on Iqbal has also not problematised the political categories employed by him, specifically 'nation', 'nationhood', *qawm* and *millat*. Perplexed by Iqbal's condemnation of nationalism on the one hand and his championing of Muslim nationhood on the other, certain scholars have concluded that he had no fixed opinions on the issue of nationalism,[101] with some making even harsher criticisms of opportunistic equivocations, frustrating compromise and self-deception.[102] Underneath these explanations are certain problematic assumptions. Scholars have frequently assumed, first, that when Muslim intellectuals used terms such as *qawm* they were using the term to describe a nation. Scholars have also frequently equated the concepts of nation and nationhood as envisaged by Muslim intellectuals with western notions of the terms. The lack of critical engagement with Muslim political discourse in India is symptomatic of a wider lacuna in the study of the content and character of nationalist discourse and national imagination. No space is devoted to studying contending conceptions of community/nation or various forms of imagining the nation. It is assumed that the nation-state provided the ideal form of political organisation and that intellectuals and statesmen in the colonised world merely accepted it.

[100] See, for instance, Parveen Shaukat Ali, *The Political Philosophy of Iqbal* (Lahore, 1978) in which Abul A'la Maududi's politically significant interpretation of the Quranic term *hukumiyyat* as the sovereignty of God rather than the judgment of God has been presented as the cornerstone of Iqbal's political ideals.

[101] Moinuddin Aqeel, *Iqbal: From Finite to Infinite-Evolution of the Concept of Islamic Nationalism in India* (Karachi, 1996).

[102] Singh has argued that the contradictions in Iqbal's views and his work were the result of compromises, opportunism and self-deception that were characteristic of the entire middle class in colonial India. Singh, *Ardent Pilgrim*, pp. 76–8.

It has been suggested that Iqbal's overbearing concern with the individual led to a failure in postulating any clear views on society.[103] As with most political theorists, the individual's relationship with the community was an issue that Iqbal sought to address. In fact, his most significant contributions to political thought were the twin concepts of *khudi* (self-affirmation, or ego) and *millat* (used by Iqbal to refer to the religious community and equated with nation). Although he championed the need for the free development of the *khudi*, he saw the need to counterbalance it with the concept of *bekhudi*. *Bekhudi*, in Iqbal's use, essentially refers to the force that brings the individual ego in line with the social ego. Whereas a substantial amount has been written on Iqbal's concept of *khudi*, his ideas on *bekhudi* remain unstudied. In line with his conviction that it was in society that the individual finds security and preservation, Iqbal sought to formulate his views on the ideal form of organising society. Iqbal's critique of the nation-state and his call for the political reorganisation of India were the result of his attempts to relocate the 'nation' along the lines of religion, which he felt was the only way to secure the proper development of the individual. The Allama basically envisaged the existence of three socio-political ideals along which society could be organised – the western system of nationalism, socialism and Islam.[104]

Iqbal's writings reveal his concerns over Muslim decline and his attempts to chart a path for the regeneration of the community. His works not only focus on themes such as power and vision, but also contain references to political events, institutions and ideas. In fact, his main aim was to critique modern socio-economic and political ideologies, institutions and mentalities. Whereas works such as the *Asrar-i-Khudi* stress the importance of power and the need to develop the self, compositions such as his *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi* seek to highlight the importance of society and the principles along which the social organism should be organised. In numerous other poems and works, such as the *Pas Cheh Bayad Kard Ai Aqwam-i-Sharq*, he seeks to critique the prevailing socio-political mentalities and the views of other Muslim intellectuals and statesmen, as well as to lay out his plans for the future social, religious and political advancement of Muslims. Even his political activity, chiefly his involvement with the Muslim League and the All-India Muslim Conference, established in

[103] W. C. Smith described Iqbal as a thinker incapable of any insightful study of the links between the individual and the community. Smith, *Modern Islam in India* (Lahore, 1947), p. 133.

[104] Iqbal, *Letters and Writings of Iqbal*, compiled and edited by B. A. Dar (Karachi, 1967), pp. 80–81.

1928 with the aim of bringing together a wide range of Muslim leaders to speak on behalf of the Muslims of India, had been part of this wider aim of protesting against specific political institutions and ideals and shaping a socio-political framework which would allow individual communities or nations to develop in accordance with their own religious principles and ideals.

This monograph aims to provide a more insightful and comprehensive perspective on Iqbal's socio-political discourse by refraining from locating spurious breaks in his political orientation, by contextualising his thought and work firmly within the socio-political and intellectual milieu of the period, and by studying his political discourse in connection with his religious thought. The remarkable continuity of themes and concerns in Iqbal's work is perhaps best reflected in the prevalence of the same 'Hindu', Sufi and 'Indian' themes present in his early works in his magnum opus, *Javid Nama*, which was published in 1934.[105] Instead of viewing Iqbal's socio-political discourse through the prism of events that occurred after his death, namely the formation of Pakistan, this work will locate him firmly within the socio-political and intellectual milieu of the period in which he lived. His political visions will thus be studied in the light of the political and constitutional developments he was responding to and will be contrasted with those of his contemporaries.

Although focusing specifically on Iqbal, this monograph seeks to provide an insight into Muslim political discourse in modern India. This is not to suggest that there was a general evolution of Muslim political thought which culminated in the ideas of Iqbal. Instead, the lack of a normative 'Islamic' political tradition and the vibrancy of Muslim political imagination will be stressed. Although he is generally portrayed as having poetically expressed the mood of his times and as having laid the intellectual foundations of a programme that was later executed successfully by Jinnah,[106] in many respects Iqbal was a thinker, poet and politician who stood apart from his time. Despite its portrayal in conventional history texts, Iqbal's 1930 Presidential Address to the Muslim League did not capture the imagination of the Muslim community.[107]

Yet a study of Iqbal's political philosophy will contribute towards a more comprehensive understanding of Muslim intellectuals and the intellectual milieu of the period for a number of reasons. Iqbal lived in a period

[105] I have benefited here from a discussion with Faisal Devji.

[106] See, for instance, Fazlur Rahman, 'Iqbal, the Visionary; Jinnah, the Technician; and Pakistan, the Reality' in Chagthai, *Iqbal: New Dimensions*, pp. 421–426.

[107] See Chaudhari Khaliquzzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan* (1961), p. 196.

when newspapers, pamphlets, poems and *fatawa* were increasingly used to debate contemporary socio-political issues. The previously mentioned debate between Iqbal and Maulana Madani was one example of such exchanges. An examination of such debates will reveal the richness of the political imagination during the period under study.

An exploration of the engagement of Muslim intellectuals with western political institutions and ideas provides an insight into the wider interaction between the Muslim intelligentsia and modernity, as the acceptance or rejection of nationalism, liberalism and democracy was inherently linked to the issue of modernity itself. Acceptance or rejection of political ideas and institutions by Muslim intellectuals was contingent upon their assessment of the West and the utility of adapting its ideas and institutions, as well as their views on whether Islam was compatible with the socio-political aspects of modernity.

Iqbal's re-formulation of the concept of the nation and nationhood should not simply be understood as a re-assertion of Pan-Islamism. Confronted by the disempowerment of the Muslim community and the challenges of modernity, Muslim intellectuals in India turned to analysing Islam itself, re-interpreting Islam within the conditions and needs of the period. A clearer narrative on Muslim political discourse in India, one which will highlight the diverse and rich political imagination of Muslim intellectuals, requires an exploration of their interpretation of Islam; examination of the sources they drew from, both within and without the fold of Islam; and their engagement with western political concepts and with works by western theorists. This will provide a much needed insight, on the one hand, into the processes by which some Muslim intellectuals constructed a 'Political Islam', and, on the other hand, into the attempts by other Muslim intellectuals to show that Islam was not inimical to new political ideals and institutions. It is within this debate that I seek to locate the attempts by Muslim intellectuals, specifically Muhammad Iqbal, to grapple with the doctrine of nationalism and the concept of the nation-state.

OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

The first chapter provides a review of Muslim political discourse in India circa 1857–1940. It aims to provide a background for the debates over the utility of accepting nationalism and the nation-state as well as the arguments over the path to be adopted for the development of Muslims. Implicit in this chapter is a critique of approaches that seek to categorise

the views expressed by Muslim intellectuals as 'Islamic' or 'un-Islamic' and speak in terms of a normative or fixed political tradition in Islam. Stressing the vibrancy and richness of modern Muslim political thought, this chapter will highlight, on the one hand, the engagement of Muslim intellectuals with modern or western political ideas and, on the other, the varying 'Islamic' sources they drew from. It will be emphasised that differing views on the compatibility of Islam with western or modern political ideologies such as nationalism reflected varying interpretations of Islam.

Chapter 2 will examine Iqbal's perception of his role as an intellectual and poet, and will locate him within the spectrum of modern Muslim thought. The chapter will begin by exploring the socio-political context that shaped the concerns and worldview of the modern Muslim intellectual. In particular, attention will be paid to tracing the emergence of a more clearly defined Muslim community with distinct 'Muslim interests' and the trope of Muslim decline. The chapter will then discuss Iqbal's aims as a poet and intellectual, contrasting his views on modernisation and westernisation with those of his contemporaries. Problematising the conventional portrayal of Iqbal as a modernist, this chapter will argue that Iqbal's interpretation of Islam and his political discourse reflect the fact that, unlike modernists such as Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Iqbal conceived of colonialism as a totalitarian exercise of power that extended into the realms of culture, art and ideology. He thus differed from the modernists who called for the inculcation of western civilisation, the re-interpretation of Islam in line with modern conceptions of religion and the acceptance of modern political institutions. This chapter will also explore the attempts by the modern intellectuals to interpret the sources of and publish works on Islam. The expansion in print media facilitated the fragmentation of religious authority: Modern intellectuals challenged the position of the traditional religious authorities by publishing works on Islam.

The third chapter will study Iqbal's reconstruction of Islam as a complete system and empowering ideology that could be contrasted with modern ideologies such as Marxism and nationalism. Unlike many of his contemporaries who re-interpreted Islam in the light of modern notions of religion, Iqbal disputed the public/private dichotomy inherent in post-Enlightenment conceptions of religion. An examination of Iqbal's construction of Islam is important because his political philosophy was founded upon his perception of Islam as a complete system that could provide solutions to the political, social and economic problems of the day. Once again, instead of speaking in terms of a return to an authentic

Islam, the role of interpretation will be highlighted. In line with this, the influence on the Allama's writings of dissenting voices in the West, especially figures like Nietzsche who attacked Christianity for being a disempowering ethic, will be noted. Iqbal's concept of *khudi* and his views on the importance of the development of the individual will also be discussed here. Apart from highlighting his attempts to differentiate 'true Islam' from 'life-negating' religions such as Christianity and Buddhism as well as the pantheistic metaphysics embraced by many Sufis, this chapter will also explore his critique of the Ahmadiyya, who were accused of giving shape to a disempowering interpretation of Islam.

Iqbal's rejection of the ideology of nationalism and the institution of the nation-state will be explored in Chapter 4. Iqbal feared that the acceptance of the western ideology of nationalism would only serve to perpetuate intellectual hegemony. The centrality of society to the development of the individual further led him to reject what he perceived to be the atheist, over-organising and homogenising nature of the modern nation-state structure. Most important, his rejection of nationalism was founded upon the belief that nationalism was incompatible with Islam, which was a complete ideology in itself. The chapter will also discuss his attempts to relocate the nation along religious lines, freeing it from the boundaries of the territorially defined state. With a view towards highlighting the diversity of Muslim political discourse, the aforementioned debate between Iqbal and Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani over the adaptability of nationalism with Islam will be examined in detail.

Having studied his relocation of the nation along the lines of the religious community, Chapter 5 will explore his views on the development of the nation free from the homogenising and centralising tendencies of the modern state structure. The chapter will begin with a discussion of his views on the importance of 'national character' and 'self-discovery' in the development of the nation. It will be stressed that instead of aping the development patterns of the West, Iqbal sought to formulate a 'partly political, partly cultural' programme that would allow for each nation to develop according to its own character. Rejecting the equation of his 1930 Presidential Address to the Muslim League with the demand for the separate nation-state of Pakistan, this chapter will provide a critical analysis of his call for the creation of an autonomous Muslim state in the north-west of India by studying it in the light of his views on national development and national character. His demand for the political reorganisation of India will be located within the context of the constitutional developments of the period, chiefly the release of the Nehru Report and the

Statutory Commission Report, and it will be compared to the myriad of schemes proposed by Muslim intellectuals in the late 1930s. It should be noted that as the demand for the creation of a separate nation-state for the Muslims of India gained currency only in the late 1940s, to study Iqbal in the light of this demand would involve anticipating debates that occurred after his death.

1

Muslim Political Discourse circa 1857–1940

> [T]he younger generation of Indian Musalmans is not in a frame of mind to eschew politics. It may be, it is not yet, in the words of Lord Morley, 'intoxicated with the ideas of freedom, of nationality and self-government', but I say, it has sipped the strong wine of the intellectual vintage of Mill and Burke.
>
> Imam Ali, Presidential Address, All-India Muslim League, December 1908[1]

The conventional narrative on Muslim political thought in modern India seeks to trace an evolution from the 'separatism' of nineteenth-century Muslim figures such as Sayyid Ahmad Khan to the Muslim League's declaration that Muslims constituted a distinct nation whose development required the creation of a separate nation-state.[2] By asserting that there was a particular political ideal that developed in a linear fashion throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the richness of the political imagination and discourse of Muslim intellectuals is lost. The prevailing tendency to view the lives and works of modern Muslim intellectuals through the prism of the Partition of India has ensured that the demand

[1] *Foundations of Pakistan: All-India Muslim League Documents 1906–1947*, edited by S. S. Pirzada (2 vols., New Delhi, 1982), i, 49.

[2] See, for instance, Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism*; Aziz Ahmad and G. E. Grunebaum, *Muslim Self-Statement in India and Pakistan, 1857–1968* (Weisbaden, 1970); Hafeez Malik, 'Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's Contribution to the Development of Muslim Nationalism in India', *Modern Asian Studies*, 4 (1966), pp. 129–147; Lini S. May, *The Evolution of Indo-Muslim Thought after 1857* (Lahore, 1970); and Farzana Shaikh, *Community and Consensus in Islam: Muslim Representation in Colonial India, 1860–1947* (Bombay, 1991).

for Pakistan continues to engulf their political visions. There was, however, no single political ideal that evolved throughout the period culminating in the political demand for a separate nation-state. Muslim intellectuals were divided over the definition of nationhood, propounded varying views on the role of the state and charted differing paths for national development. These differences stemmed from their varying interpretations of Islam, the sources they engaged, the context in which they wrote and their differing roles as intellectuals. This chapter will focus on the broader terrain of Muslim political discourse in India circa 1857–1940.

The demand for the separate nation-state of Pakistan was first enunciated by Chaudhari Rahmat Ali (1897–1951)[3] in 1933. His idea of Pakistan centred on the belief that 'land is to nations what homes are to individuals and fields to farmers', hence nations had to strive to develop into states.[4] The principal facets of Chaudhari Rahmat Ali's political vision were his ascription to the western concept of the territorial nation-state and the belief that nations ensured their development only by achieving statehood. It should be noted that both these principles have been assumed to be the cornerstones of the political thought of all Asian and African intellectuals and statesmen. It is maintained that the separation of nation and state became hard to defend in an age when nationalism had become a major ideology, and that only by becoming states do nations adequately manifest themselves[5] and secure their development.[6] Yet a study of the Muslim intelligentsia in India reveals a vibrant arena of debate and discussion over the definition and location of the 'nation', the proper development of nationhood and the role of the state. In the words of W. B. Gallie, 'nation' and nationhood proved to be truly 'contested concepts'.[7]

[3] Chaudhari Rahmat Ali was born in Hoshiarpur, Punjab, and educated at the universities of Cambridge and Dublin. Ironically, although he coined the term Pakistan and was the first to enunciate a systematic plan for the formation of Muslim nation-states, he is largely neglected in the pantheon of Pakistani nationalist heroes. His political visions are credited to other figures such as Iqbal. He launched the Pak National Movement in 1933 and wrote a number of tracts on the need for the Muslims of India to have their own nation-states.

[4] Chaudhari Rahmat Ali, *The Millat and The Mission* (Cambridge, 1944), p. 13.

[5] Max Weber argued that a nation is a community of sentiment that would adequately manifest itself in a state of its own. Max Weber, *Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, translated and edited by H. H. Gerth and C. Wright-Mills (London, 1948), p. 179.

[6] Charles Taylor stated that nations have to acquire statehood to secure their development. See Taylor, 'Why Do Nations Have to Be States' in *Reconciling the Two Solitudes: Essays on Canadian Federalism and Nationalism*, edited by Guy Laforest (Montreal, 1993), pp. 40–58.

[7] W. B. Gallie, *Essentially Contested Concepts*, Offprint from Preceedings of the Aristotelian Society, 56 (1956), pp. 167–198.

The linguistic, religious and cultural diversity in India, the position of Muslims as members of a minority community as well as their interpretation of the message of Islam led Muslim intellectuals to grapple with definitions of nationhood, political community and the paths towards national development. Their concerns were heightened by the increasingly dominant view that the political unity of India ultimately hinged on the unity of culture.[8] Whereas sections of the Muslim intelligentsia in India championed the call for national integration on a secular basis, others expressed reservations about the call for integration, arguing instead for the compatibility of sectional and national interests.[9] Some stressed the need for a more 'Islamic' legal-political order for Muslims. Yet others called for the broadening of Islamic categories such as *dhimmi*[10] and *umma*[11] to include Hindus and other communities in India so as to facilitate the further integration of Muslims and non-Muslims into a single political entity; thus they were in essence calling for Islamic political categories to be fundamentally reconstituted.

CURRENT HISTORIOGRAPHY

It has been argued that any real understanding of the difficulties involved in shaping a constitutional settlement between the Congress and the Muslim League must depend on a discussion of the chief differences that characterise Islamic and liberal-democratic approaches to politics.[12] The demand for Pakistan has thus been portrayed as the Muslim League's 'final battle against liberal democracy in India' on the basis of Islamic

[8] Such a view was enunciated by many Indian intellectuals and politicians. See, for instance, A. J. Appasamy, *The Cultural Problem: Oxford Pamphlets on Indian Affairs*, 2nd edn., April (Madras, 1943).

[9] Speaking at the National Integration Conference in June 1962 in New Delhi, Maulana Abul Lais, *amir* (leader) of the Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, argued that the development of national interests was only possible with the free development of sectional interests; the development of the latter did not imply that the former would be ignored. He called for the free political participation of organisations formed to safeguard the interests of particular classes or communities. *National Integration and Jamaat-e-Islami Hind: An Interview regarding the Discussions between the Amir Jamaat-e-Islami Hind and the Committee on National Integration and Communalism* (Delhi, 1962).

[10] A category of Islamic law signifying non-Muslims who were protected by a Muslim state. Although traditionally restricted to the 'people of the Book', namely Jews and Christians, it has historically been expanded to include many other communities.

[11] Generally used to refer to the global Muslim community.

[12] Farzana Shaikh, 'Muslims and Political Representation in Colonial India: The Making of Pakistan', *Modern Asian Studies*, 20, 3 (1986), p. 539.

political norms.[13] Such an assertion is problematic on a number of levels. First, Islam is seen to provide a set of fixed political stipulations, hence no space is allowed for the interpretation of Islam. Furthermore, Muslim intellectuals involved in propagating 'separatism' are seen to personify Islamic political ideology, whereas those who opposed the Muslim League or the demand for Pakistan, especially the so-called nationalist Muslims, are portrayed as acting against the grain of Islamic political thought. This culminates in the strange paradox of Muslim intellectuals and spokesmen at the forefront of demands for the creation of Pakistan – supposedly acting in accordance with Islamic political ideology against 'liberal conceptions of politics' – in essence voicing a demand for the creation of a nation-state, a key product of western liberal socio-political thought.

Such essentialist portrayals stipulate that Islam provides a fixed set of political and social ideas and institutions which determine the thought and political actions of Muslims. Farzana Shaikh has argued that the political thought and actions of *ashraf*[14] Muslims in India stemmed from the experience or memory of 'Mughal political culture' and Islamic political ideals.[15] Her work illustrates the tendency to enforce a homogeneity on the socio-political thought of Muslim intellectuals. By drawing on a particular definition of *ijma* (consensus)[16] as an agreement that establishes itself only in the long run, Shaikh has argued that a certain strand of political thought, namely the demand for Pakistan, was in the long run representative of the views of the Muslim intelligentsia as well as the Muslim masses.[17]

Shaikh's work is also reflective of a wider approach current in works on Muslim political thought in general. It is often asserted that Islam has provided a definite and well-defined set of normative political ideals which are not open to interpretation, appropriation, challenge or modification. Adherents of such a view speak of 'political Islam' as clearly

[13] Ibid., p. 554.

[14] This term has been translated as 'Muslim nobility'. It essentially refers to Muslims who trace their genealogy to communities from Arabia instead of the Indian communities that converted to Islam.

[15] Shaikh, *Community and Consensus*.

[16] The term is ideally used to refer to the consensus of the Muslim community, but it has generally referred to the consensus of the ulama.

[17] Shaikh draws on Aziz Ahmad's definition of *ijma* as a slowly accumulating pressure of opinion over a long period of time, whose strength lay precisely in its ability to convey gradually and over time, without the pressures of transient popular demands, the 'true' interests of the community. *Community and Consensus*, see especially pp. 29–35.

locatable and definable, neglecting the varying political traditions, ideals and practises visible in the history of Muslim societies.[18] These studies not only prize certain textual sources as more orthodox than others, but also tend to neglect actual political practises in Muslim societies. Questioning such an approach to the study of Muslim politics, James Piscatori and Dale Eickelman emphasise that theory is often influenced by practise, and call on scholars to focus on the actual political practise in Muslim societies.[19] Reviewing the evolution of social-political thought in Islam, Indian Muslim intellectuals, such as Khuda Bukhsh, themselves highlighted that political theories within the fold of Islam had been shaped by circumstances.[20]

Aspects of Muslim heritage and theology can serve to reinforce central normative assumptions of both conservatism and liberal social democracy.[21] The assertion that Islam is not able to accommodate modern political institutions and ideas has been challenged by Piscatori in his study on Islam and the nation-state. Basing his argument on actual political practise as well as the salient role accorded to interpretation in Islam, Piscatori has not only shown that Muslim thinkers and leaders have accepted modern political institutions, particularly the nation-state, but also questioned the view that there is a clearly defined and fixed 'political Islam' stipulated in the 'orthodox' texts.[22]

This emphasis on the role of interpretation, modification and change challenges the image of Islam as a fixed unified tradition providing a single pattern of perfection and socio-political ideals. A lively debate rages over the extent to which the actions of Muslims in South Asia are determined by a normative tradition of Islam as opposed to the social environment. Scholars such as Imtiaz Ahmad have suggested that the religious and customary practises of Muslims are determined by the socio-cultural environment in South Asia rather than Islamic high culture.[23] Such an approach is questioned by those who see it as part of a political project that seeks to show the 'Indianness' of Muslims.[24] More fundamentally, it

[18] See, for instance, Bernard Lewis, *The Political Language of Islam* (London, 1988).
[19] James Piscatori and Dale Eickelman, *Muslim Politics* (Princeton, 1996).
[20] Bukhsh, *Essays: Indian and Islamic* (Delhi, 1977), p. 25.
[21] Terrance Carroll, 'Islam and Political Community in the Arab World' in *Middle East Studies*, 18 (1986), p. 185.
[22] James Piscatori, *Islam in a World of Nation-States* (Cambridge, 1986).
[23] See, for instance, *Ritual and Religion among Muslims in India*, edited by Imtiaz Ahmad (New Delhi, 1981).
[24] See, for instance, Francis Robinson, *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia* (New Delhi, 2001), pp. 5–6.

is argued that such a view fails to appreciate that Islam has provided a pattern of perfection, which, although clouded by imperfect knowledge at times, constitutes the true Islamic path.[25] Yet scholars on both sides of this debate largely continue to speak in terms of a normative unified tradition of Islam.[26] In the case of the latter, Muslim actions are determined by this normative tradition, whereas for the former, Muslims in South Asia are seen to be straying from this normative tradition. Alternative interpretations of Islam remain unexplored.[27]

It is commonly asserted that the 'separatist' Muslims in India charted a path of national development guided by 'Islamic political thought'. Conversely, the nationalist Muslims are often accused of having forsaken 'Islamic' political ideals in favour of 'western' political concepts. Such assertions are complicated by the fact that many Muslim intellectuals across the political spectrum claimed Islamic justifications and antecedents for their political formulations. More significantly, the very issue of whether Islam provided any socio-political institutions proved to be a moot point amongst the Muslim intelligentsia in India. Invariably, these differences and debates were founded upon contesting interpretations of Islam.

Another problematic aspect of the historiography stems from the uncritical association of terms such as *qawm*, *millat*, *shura* and *jamuriyyat* with western political categories like nation and democracy. In order to gain an insight into the autonomous collective imagination of community on the part of Muslim intellectuals in India, there is an urgent need to problematise the key terms they employed in their social-political discourse, particularly 'nation', '*qawm*' and '*millat*'. *Qawm* can be interpreted variously as community, ethnic group, race or nationality. The genealogy of the term *millat* and its precise meaning is not clear, but there is a consensus that it is generally used in the Quran to refer to a religious community. In his *Dictionary of Islam*, Thomas Patrick Hughes

[25] Ibid., pp. 44–66. It should be noted here that Robinson acknowledges that this pattern of perfection has to be interpreted in human circumstances and that, over time, there is a movement between visions of perfect Muslim life and those which ordinary Muslims lived.

[26] Aptly highlighted by Veena Das in 'For a Folk-Theology and the Theological Anthropology of Islam' in *Contributions to Indian Sociology* (n.s.), 18, 2 (1984), pp. 293–300.

[27] Das and Robinson have engaged in an interesting debate over whether Islam has provided a normative pattern of perfection, as well as over the space for alternative, non-elite and folk interpretations of Islam. See Das, 'For a Folk-Theology' and Robinson, 'Islam and Muslim Society in South Asia: A Reply to Das and Minault' in *Contributions to Indian Sociology* (n.s.) 20, 1 (1986), pp. 97.

quotes from Ali ibn Muhammad al-Jurjani's fourteenth-century work, *Kitabu't-Ta'rifat* (Book of Definitions), to show that *millat* is expressive of religion as it stands in relation to the prophets. As such, it is distinguished from *din*, that is, religion as it stands in relation to God; and from *mazhab*, which signifies religion with reference to various schools of law within Islam.[28] The term, however, underwent significant changes in the course of time. It came to occupy a central role in the Ottoman Empire's *millat* system, whereby the central administration of the empire perceived local religious communities as parts of communities with an empire-wide dimension under their respective ecclesiastical leaderships.[29] Similarly, scholars have generally been guilty of assuming, first, that when Muslim intellectuals used terms such as *qawm* they were using the term to describe a 'nation'. Moreover, as noted in the Introduction, scholars have also uncritically equated the term *qawm*, whether defined as a 'nation' or not, with the western conception of nation.

The lack of critical engagement with Muslim political language and discourse in India is symptomatic of a wider inadequate analysis of the content and character of nationalist discourse. Studies seeking to provide general explanations for the origins and spread of nationalisms often do not focus on the content and character of nationalist discourse. Ernest Gellner, for instance, stated that the character and content of nationalist discourse is of no consequence and is not worth analysing.[30] Scholars like John Plamenatz, who have employed sociological explanations to account for the different course of nationalism in different parts of the world, also seem to indicate that nationalism poses only a trivial problem in the history of political discourse.[31]

Others have placed more emphasis on the content and character of nationalist discourse. Elie Kedourie has stressed the need to approach the study of nationalism in the West from the perspective of a history of ideas. Kedourie views nationalism as an ideology, a form of secular millenarianism, which stemmed from the elaborations of Kantian conceptions on the autonomy of the human being by thinkers such as Fichte

[28] T. P. Hughes, *Dictionary of Islam: Being A Cyclopaedia of the Doctrines, Rites, Ceremonies, and Customs, Together with the Technical and Theological Terms, of the Muhammadan Religion* (New Delhi, 1999), p. 348.

[29] For a genealogy of the term *millat* and a discussion on the *millat* system, see *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Edn., vol. 7, pp. 61–64.

[30] Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (New York, 1983), pp. 123–126.

[31] Partha Chatterjee has adequately discussed the approaches and failings of scholars like Plamenatz in Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* (London, 1986).

and Herder.[32] In what is arguably one of the most influential works on nationalism, Benedict Anderson termed the nation an 'imagined community' and called for the need to explore the style of imagination as well as the processes and institutions which allow for the imagination of the nation.[33] Yet although there is a general consensus that nationalism was an ideology which had its origins in Europe, there have been few sustained attempts to study how the ideology of nationalism and the attendant ideas of the 'nation' and nation-state were accepted, rejected and/or adapted by intellectuals and statesmen in the rest of the world. The West is seen to provide modular forms of nationalism for the rest of the world to choose from.[34] Although Kedourie does question the utility of generalist theories on the spread of nationalism, emphasising instead the need to look at the pervasiveness and powerful influence of western/rational thought,[35] he is less convincing when he states that the vast majority of Asian and African thinkers uncritically accepted the western political idiom, without realising its assumptions and implications, in the belief that it was the only possible language in the world.[36]

The conventional perception is that Asian and African intellectuals and statesmen adopted not only the terminology of the nation and nationhood, but also the belief in the need for congruency between the boundaries of the nation and state. In their work *Asian Forms of the Nation*, Tonnesson and Antlov concluded that there is an agreement amongst Asian intellectuals that two of the crucial elements constituting a nation were state and territory.[37] In other words, the task they undertook was either to 'imagine' their existing states into nations through the instrumental use of language or culture, or to strive to form their nations into states. It is interesting to note that even studies devoted to examining 'cultural nationalism', as opposed to 'political nationalism' and 'religious nationalism', have either acknowledged its inability to extend beyond a small strata unless it adopts state-oriented strategies,[38] or have stressed the importance of territory to the conceptions of nation.[39] In his study on

[32] Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism*, 4th expanded edn. (Oxford, 1994).
[33] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London, 1994).
[34] Ibid.
[35] Elie Kedourie, *Nationalism in Asia and Africa* (London, 1971), p. 45.
[36] Ibid., p. 61.
[37] Hans Antlov and Stein Tennesson (eds.), *Asian Forms of the Nation* (Richmond, 1998).
[38] See, for instance, John Hutchinson in his *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism* (London, 1987), especially p. 15.
[39] See Peter van der Veer, *Religious Nationalism: Hindus and Muslims in India* (Berkeley, 1994) and Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism* (Cambridge, 1997).

the state and nation in African thought, Benyamin Neuberger argued that the separation of state and nation became hard to defend in an age when nationalism had become a major ideology, thus the link between the nation and state was, for African statesmen and intellectuals, a truism.[40] Neuberger's views seem to be in consonance with the work of Benedict Anderson. No space is devoted to the study of varying philosophical and political attitudes or the impact of different historical processes in Asia and Africa.[41]

Partha Chatterjee has provided a more sophisticated and nuanced formulation of the pervasive impact of western rational thought and its political conceptions on nationalist thought in the East. By delineating knowledge itself as a source of power and domination, he has sought to study the influence of western rational thought in shaping the assumptions underlying the ideological formulations of nationalists in the East.[42] Chatterjee has aptly noted that the neglect of the colonised intellectual's freedom of imagination has resulted in autonomous forms of community imagination being thus far overwhelmed by the history of the post-colonial state.[43] In the case of Iqbal and other Muslim intellectuals of nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century India, the creation of the state of Pakistan continues to swamp interpretations of their political visions and ideals.

INFLUX OF WESTERN POLITICAL IDEAS AND INSTITUTIONS

Hamid Enayat claims that prior to the European encroachment in the late eighteenth century, Muslims rarely studied politics as isolated from religion. He suggests that Muslim elites had traditionally dealt with problems such as the nature of the state, the varieties of government and the powers of the ruler within the unassailable walls of the sharia, and that it was only under the trauma of European domination that Muslims began to produce works specifically on political topics.[44] However, Enayat's argument does not take into account medieval *akhlaqi* (ethical) literature,

[40] Neuberger, 'State and Nation in African Thought' in *Journal of African Studies*, 4, 2 (1977), pp. 198–205.

[41] Indeed, one of Neuberger's aims is to refute the case for European and African uniqueness and to argue for 'the existence of universal rules and trends that lead to the building of states, nations and nation-states'. Ibid., p. 205.

[42] Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought*.

[43] Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton, 1993), pp. 4–13.

[44] Hamid Enayat, *Modern Islamic Political Thought: The Response of the Shi'i and Sunni Muslims to the Twentieth Century*, New Edn. (London, 2005), p. 3.

which 'represented in fact the best example of the appropriation into the medieval Muslim intellectual world of non-Islamic and in strictly juristic terms even anti-Islamic ideas'.[45] *Akhlaqi* texts, particularly writings that took the work of the thirteenth-century scholar Nasir al-Din Tusi as a model, provided a philosophical, non-sectarian and humane solution to the emergent problems that Muslim societies encountered. Furthermore, sharia itself was redefined in these works in part to signify a kind of a protest against an overly legalistic approach.[46]

Nevertheless, it can be argued that confronted by European political, economic and intellectual domination and spurred by the rise of the printing presses, modern Muslim intellectuals began to write on political developments and issues with a new vigour. Both western and 'Islamic' political ideas and institutions were actively discussed in the public realm as intellectuals grappled with political developments across the world as well as the condition of their own societies. These intellectuals drew upon a wide range of sources, both western and Islamic. Although the works to be discussed were primarily on political topics, they were not necessarily isolated from religion. New political concepts such as the nation-state and democracy raised questions about the utility and space for older 'Islamic' institutions such as the caliphate and sharia. Moreover, the acceptability of western institutions hinged upon their compatibility with Islam.

Before proceeding to discuss the engagement of Muslim thinkers with western political thought, a brief survey of the types of literature they produced and key facets of their writings is in order. There was a burgeoning of the public sphere in the second half of the nineteenth century: Members of the Muslim elite attempted to use newspapers, journals and tracts as a means to inform public opinion, discuss the contemporary condition of Muslims and usher in social and religious reforms. Margrit Pernau's work on the Urdu newspaper *Delhi Urdu Akhbar* (*Delhi Urdu Newspaper*), which was founded in 1837, has shown that the new print media provided a link between the traditional local public opinion and the new public that was no longer based on direct interaction but rather on imagined communities. Furthermore, newspapers like the *Delhi Urdu Akhbar* consciously aimed at forming public opinion and providing a forum for discussion.[47] The salience of newspapers and journals in shaping and influencing public opinion is attested to by the fact that

[45] Alam, *The Languages of Political Islam*, p.11.

[46] Ibid., pp. 11–12.

[47] Margrit Pernau 'The *Delhi Urdu Akhbar* Between Persian Akhbarat and English Newspapers' in *The Annual of Urdu Studies*, 18 (2003), pp. 105–131.

Sayyid Ahmad Khan noted that even British newspapers and writings, particularly works on religious and fiscal issues, were being discussed in the public arena, even by people who did not have direct access to these works.[48]

Printing ushered in an era of pamphlet wars as scholars delved into both Islamic and western resources to find answers to contemporary problems.[49] Urdu newspapers and journals regularly featured articles on the economic, political and social impact of British rule on India as well as discussions on political developments around the world. The weekly journal *Paigham* (*Message*) sought to provide its readers with an evaluation of the impact of British rule on India, as well as to acquaint them with political concepts such as democracy and the political, economic and ideological developments that arose out of the French Revolution.[50] The importance attached to political discussions is reflected in the fact that Ghulam-us-Saqlain, founding editor and chief contributor to the monthly journal *Asar-i Jadid* (*Effect of Modernity*), sought through his journal to familiarise Muslims with concepts and ways of governance. The primary aim of the *Asar-i Jadid* was to contribute to '*qawmi taraqi*' (community progress) and '*tamdani islah*' (civilisational reform) by dealing with *tamdani* (civilisational) rather than *ilmi* (intellectual) issues. Yet much space was dedicated in this journal to the discussion of politics and political ideas, as it was felt that in order to secure the *tamdani* improvement of Muslims, it was essential first to raise their political concerns and to familiarise them with political ideas and concepts.[51]

The need for people in India to be familiar with new political ideas and principles to ensure proper political and economic development was stressed by a number of intellectuals and statesmen. For instance, Aftab Ahmad Khan (1867–1930), an alumnus of Aligarh and prominent member of the Muslim League, expressed the desire of a section of the Muslim elite when he argued that it was necessary for Muslims to familiarise themselves with western political thought, as the British expected their subjects to be aware of politics and were actively seeking to train them in modern political principles.[52] Even those who argued against Muslim

[48] Sayyid Ahmad Khan, *Writings and Speeches*, p. 66.

[49] Robinson, *Islam and Muslim History*, pp. 80–82.

[50] See 'Hindustan Pehle Kushal Ta Ya Aab Hain', *Paigham*, 14/10/1921, pp. 17–18; 'Haqiqat Jamuriyyat', *Paigham*, 28/10/1921, pp. 6–7; and 'Inquilab France', *Paigham*, 23/9/1921, pp. 5–7 respectively.

[51] *Asar-i Jadid*, 1, 1 (January, 1903), pp. 1–6.

[52] *Muslim League Documents 1900–1947*, edited by Sarif al Mujahid (2 vols., Karachi, 1990), i, 71.

participation in the political sphere stressed the need to understand political ideals that had led to the development of other countries. It has already been noted that intellectuals in eighteenth-century India had begun to observe and analyse socio-political concepts, ideas and institutions current in the West. The growing dominance and prosperity of the West was often explained in terms of its superior political institutions. By the late nineteenth century, the Utilitarian ideals of John Stuart Mill had found a place in the rhetoric of important individuals such as Sayyid Ahmad Khan. In a speech to the Scientific Society at Ghazipur on 9 January 1864, the Sayyid stressed that the science of political economy had been perfected by Europe, thus making earlier 'Islamic' texts redundant. These texts had only served to leave the people of India in the dark on the workings of the government and fiscal issues. He thus called for the translation of sections of Mill's *Political Economy* for the purposes of instructing the people.[53] Furthermore, terms such as 'democracy', 'liberalism' and 'nation' were transliterated into Persian and Urdu, and soon found a prominent place in the writings and political language of Muslim intellectuals.

Attempts by the Muslim elite to instruct Muslims in politics and new methods of governance resulted in the publication of translations, original and critical works dealing with political economy, and articles introducing the lives and works of western and eastern political thinkers. The *Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College Magazine* published a series of articles, entitled 'Political Science', which sought to introduce its readers to the basics of political science and its aims and methodology.[54] One of the purposes of the first article was to contest the views of those who felt that politics was not a valid subject of serious study.[55] These articles provided a detailed discussion on the forms of governance and military strength of 'six of the leading countries in the world', namely England, Italy, Austria, France, the United States and Germany.[56] The author's stated goals were to discuss contemporary military developments in Europe and to draw from its political history to provide lessons for India.[57] Similarly,

[53] Sayyid Ahmad Khan, *The Aligarh Movement: Basic Documents: 1864–1898*, edited by Shan Muhammad (2 vols., India, 1978), i, 16.

[54] The first of this long running article was entitled 'Political Science: Is Ki Wasiaat aur Taziqa Bahesh'. *Muhammad Anglo-Oriental College Magazine*, 5, 10 (Dec., 1897), pp. 342–354.

[55] Ibid., p. 352.

[56] *Muhammad Anglo-Oriental College Magazine*, 7, 10 (01/07/1899), pp. 198–215.

[57] Ibid., 7, 11 (15/7/1899), pp. 5–17.

Ghulam-us-Saqlain, in a series of articles entitled 'Political Economy', stressed that the development of *qawm* and *mulk* (country) was dependent on an understanding of the principles of political economy. In the course of these articles, he rejected mercantilist ideas and championed the relevance of Adam Smith's ideas on trade for the development of internal and external trade.[58]

Contrary to the common assumption that Muslim intellectuals drew their ideas strictly from Islamic sources, a perusal of Urdu journals and newspapers of the period reveals that contributors regularly drew from and quoted the work of individuals such as Francis Bacon, Mill and Sir John Robert Seeley. Excerpts from their works were also regularly translated and published.[59] Tolstoy's writings, for instance, were translated into Urdu and promoted as essential reading providing important and interesting insights into freedom and colonisation.[60]

Intellectuals such as Haroon Khan Sherwani (1891–1980), who published a series of articles on the lives and works of various western and oriental political thinkers, sought to assess the works of political thinkers critically and to evaluate their wider contributions to political theory. Sherwani's writings included articles on Tusi, Machiavelli, Ghazzali and Farabi. An interesting feature of Sherwani's work was his attempt to compare the contributions of Muslim political thinkers with those of western thinkers such as Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau. He argued that Muslim political thinkers were in fact superior to western political thinkers because they had dealt with issues like the rise of the state structure and regulation of transactions within the state centuries before their western counterparts, and because the work of Muslim intellectuals was far more practical than the idealistic visions of state of nature and political processes propounded by western thinkers.[61] Muslim thinkers, he stressed, had managed to make a more important contribution to

[58] See, for instance, Ghulam-us-Saqlain, 'Tijarat ke Mutaliq Chand Khiyalat' in *Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College Magazine*, 4, 11 (1/11/1896), pp. 437–438.

[59] The 28/10/1921 edition of the *Paigham*, for instance, carried an article entitled 'Haqiqi Jamuriyyat' (True Democracy), which was essentially an excerpt translated from an American article which sought to define democracy and evaluate the democratic claims by governments around the world. *Paigham*, (28/10/1921), pp. 6–7.

[60] *Ittihad*, 51, p. 15.

[61] See, for instance, 'Al-Farabi's Political Theories' in *Islamic Culture*, 12 (July, 1938), pp. 288–305; 'El-Ghazzali on the Theory and Practice of Politics' in *Islamic Culture*, 9 (July, 1935), pp. 450–474; and 'The Place of Oriental Thought in the Field of Political Science', in *Islamic Culture*, 2 (July, 1928), pp. 398–413.

political theory primarily because many were themselves statesmen, hence they had intimate knowledge of the political process,[62] and because they employed a methodology which was strongly grounded in history.[63]

Attempts were also made by various organisations and institutions to publish tracts and articles to inform Muslim political opinion directly. The Muslim League, for instance, set out to publish a series of political tracts dealing with the burning questions of the day. The first tract in this series, entitled *A Talk on Muslim Politics* – thousands of copies of which were circulated together with vernacular papers – aimed to provide a brief statement on the political ideals of Indian Muslims as well as to instruct them on the position they should occupy in relation to the government and other Indian communities.[64] The ulama also sought to utilise the printing presses to guide the community in both religious and worldly matters. During the period under study, the *fatwa* was increasingly used to discuss the relevance of specific Islamic institutions and the desirability of new social, economic and political practises, as well as to instruct the Muslims on political action.[65] In 1922, for instance, the *Dar-ul-Ishaat Hind* of Delhi issued a *fatwa* signed by some 500 ulama asserting the significance of the caliphate to Islam.[66] Maulana Azad and Maulana Abdul Bari were amongst the ulama who utilised the *fatwa* for political mobilisation and to direct political action.[67] The *fatwa* was also used to discuss the acceptability of specific political institutions and practises.[68] In time, ulama such as Hussain Ahmad Madani also

[62] Sherwani, 'The Place of Oriental Thought', pp. 399–400.

[63] Sherwani, 'El-Ghazzali', pp. 450–474.

[64] Home Department (Political) (B), National Archives of India, October 1910.

[65] For a discussion on the changing nature of the *fatwa* in the modern period, see Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India*.

[66] Home Department (Political) (B), 1922.

[67] An interesting instance of the use of the *fatwa* for political mobilisation is a meeting held on 14 June 1921, at the Jama Masjid, Meerut, where Muslims were called upon to remain prepared for a *jihad* against the British, which would be initiated by Azad and Bari through the issue of a *fatwa*. Home (Political), 1921.

[68] Deoband had a Department of *Ifta* (juristic rulings) that covered a wide range of legalities, minutiae of ritual, social, or political problems as well as decisions of *panchayats* and official courts that came under the purview of Muslim personal or family law. Between 1911 and 1951 nearly 150,000 *fatawa* were pronounced by the department in Deoband. Figures from *History of the Dar-ul-Ulum Deoband: The Great Religious Achievement of the Muslims of the Subcontinent, The Headspring of Islamic Education and Culture and the Revival of the Community – A Historical Survey of the Great Religious and Educational Services and Political Activities of the Dar al-Ulum, Deoband*, compiled by Sayyid Mahboob Rizvi and translated by Mumtaz Husain F. Quraishi (2 vols., Deoband, 1980), i, 156, 261–262.

produced tracts and books that dealt specifically with political topics. Madani formulated his views on composite nationalism in his book, *Mutahida Qawmiyyat aur Islam* (*Composite Nationalism and Islam*), to challenge the views of those who argued that territorial nationalism was incompatible with Islam.

As the British began to officially assume political, legislative and juridical control over the largest body of Muslims in the world with the establishment of the colonial state in 1858, a host of new issues came to the forefront of Muslim socio-political discourse. It has already been noted that the establishment of the colonial state led to a debate amongst the ulama and members of the intelligentsia over whether areas under British control remained *dar-ul-Islam*. Although detailed discussion of these debates is beyond the scope of this monograph, it should be noted that those engaged in this debate were in effect re-interpreting Islamic sources such as the *hadith* and the *sunna* (practise of the Prophet) to justify, oppose or accommodate contemporary situations. These debates were the precursors of later conflicting interpretations of Islamic sources with regards to the legitimacy of *jihad* (struggle) against the British, political co-operation with non-Muslims and the position of the Muslim minority in a future independent India.

By the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the desirability and legitimacy of Muslims being ruled by non-Muslims had become an issue that was widely discussed and debated in the public arena, and intellectuals and religious authorities looked to Islamic sources and history to help them respond to the new situation. Shibli argued that whereas Muslims had throughout history generally been in political control, Muslim history, the Quran, *hadith* and *fiqh* did provide clear precedents and instructions to guide Muslims under the rule of non-Muslims.[69] A particularly interesting pamphlet, *Insidad-i-Sidition* (*Eradicating Sedition*), was produced by Muhammad Jalil-ur-Rahman in 1910 in reaction to what he perceived to be the danger of 'rising sedition' amongst the Muslims in India. Rahman was the Urdu tutor to the son of the Raja of Sirmur and had published widely on legal issues. In the preface to his pamphlet, he stated that although he had eschewed writing on political issues in the past, he was forced to write this pamphlet to show that according to '*sache Islam*' (true Islam) Muslims owed loyalty to their rulers even if they were non-Muslims.[70] The pamphlet provides quotations from Islamic sources and

[69] Shibli Numani, *Maqalat Shibli,* (7 vols., Azamgarh, 1999), i, 156–161.
[70] Muhammad Jalil-ur-Rahman, *Insidad-i-Sidition*. Home (Political), October 1910.

discusses the nature of 'true Islam', an Islam which was not affected by changes in the political order or structure.

The rise of western political dominance and its introduction of new ideas and institutions as well as the seeming attack on Islamic institutions such as the caliphate were seen by sections of the Muslim community as a threat not only to Muslim states but to Islam itself. In 1912, the Calcutta-based Persian-language newspaper, *Nama-i-Muqaddas Hablul Matin* (*Annals of the Sacred Bond of True Believers*), reproduced a speech delivered by a student of the Maktab Akhvat Kamin, in which it was stated that the expansion of European powers into the Middle East was not simply a threat to Muslim countries because the 'enemies do not want to conquer countries only. They want to blot out Islam'.[71] This was a theme that was to be repeated in the writings and speeches of a number of Muslim figures. Writing in the *Zamindar* on 14 June 1921, Azad stated that by limiting the freedoms of Muslims and by disrupting Islamic institutions such as the caliphate, the British had shown themselves to be the enemies of Muslims and Islam.[72]

Tellingly, Iqbal wrote that 'modern Islam and her problems' arose out of 'the political humiliation of Islam'. According to Iqbal, this 'political humiliation' had climaxed in 1799 with the fall of Tipu Sultan, symbolising the 'extinguishment of Muslim hopes of political prestige in India', and the destruction of the Turkish fleet in the battle of Navarino.[73] Iqbal felt that 'modern Islam and her problems', emerging at a period of western political and intellectual dominance, was characterised by a host of new questions and controversies over Islam and its institutions:

> Does the idea of Caliphate in Islam embody a religious institution? How are the Indian Muslims and for the matter of that [sic] all Muslims outside the Turkish Empire related to the Turkish Caliphate? Is India *Dar-ul-Harb* or *Dar-ul-Islam*? What is the real meaning of the doctrine of *Jihad* in Islam? What is the meaning of the expression 'from amongst you?' What is the character of the tradition of the Prophet foretelling the advent of Imam Mahdi? These questions and some others which arose subsequently were, for obvious reasons, questions for Indian Muslims only. European imperialism, however, which was then rapidly penetrating the world of Islam was also intimately interested in them. The controversies which these questions created form a most interesting chapter in the history of Islam in India.[74]

[71] Home (Political), June 1912.
[72] Home (Political), 1921.
[73] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 124–125.
[74] Ibid., p. 125.

One characteristic feature of 'modern Islam and her problems' was that the role and continued relevance of Islamic institutions such as the caliphate, sharia and *waqf*[75] were increasingly debated. The resumption of *waqf* lands by the colonial administration affected the fortunes of Muslim families dependent on them as well as the educational and religious institutions supported by these endowments.[76] It was also seen by some as an infringement of Muslim law. Ameer Ali, for instance, stated that it amounted to the 'practical destruction of one of their [Muslim] cherished institutions, with which a great part of their religious, social life is bound up'.[77]

Institutions such as *waqf* and the caliphate were to serve as symbolic rallying points for Muslim discontent. A number of Muslim figures publically defended the utility and importance of *waqf* and argued that British lack of understanding of the importance of the *waqf*, due to the stress on perpetuities, led to the failure of the British to recognise the significance of *waqf* for the development of Muslims.[78] The public mobilisation of Muslims around the symbol of the caliph in the 1920s has already been noted. Yet there were many other figures who had openly attacked any defence of traditional Islamic institutions such as the caliphate, which they felt had no place in the modern era. In his tract *Facts About the Khalifate*, Faizul Karim challenged a *fatwa* in support of the caliphate issued by the principal *pirs* (saints) and ulama of Sind, arguing instead that Muslims had no cause to be concerned by the rise of nationalism in the Middle East and a subsequent threat to the caliphate; after all, the Islamic institution of the caliphate had ended thirty years after the death of the Prophet. [79] He goes on to warn Muslims against being lured to the defence of archaic institutions which had no place in contemporary society.

The new socio-political environment confronting the Muslim community, coupled with the colonial state's educational, political and socio-economic policies, spurred debates and discussions over the role of

[75] *Waqf* (pl. *aqwaf*) are religious endowments typically denoting land or property for religious or charitable purposes. It should be noted that they were also used by individuals to ensure that their property remained firmly within their families by declaring their property as a *waqf* and ensuring their family members as the trustees.

[76] Apart from cases of direct resumption of *waqf* property by the colonial state, British jurisdiction held that because *aqwaf* were deemed to be charitable property, they were to be held by the public, not in private hands. See Gregory C. Kozlowski, *Muslim Endowments and Society in British India* (Cambridge, 1985), especially pp. 131–155.

[77] Ameer Ali, *The Right Hon'ble Syed Ameer Ali: Political Writings*, edited by Shan Muhammad (New Delhi, 1989), p. 86.

[78] Ibid., pp. 69–70.

[79] Home (Political), July, 1919, fo. 30.

'Islamic' social and political institutions in the modern period and about the appropriateness of adopting new policies, institutions and methods for the development of the Muslim community. One of the issues which was to come to the fore was whether Muslims should and could adopt western socio-political ideas and institutions. On a practical level, sections of the Muslim community were afraid that the acceptance of democratic and liberal forms of representation would only result in their being swamped by a Hindu majority. The issue of accepting or rejecting western socio-political ideas and institutions, however, also posed more theoretical and fundamental questions on the role of Islam, the place of sharia in the state and how Muslims were to develop. Such issues were to engage individuals like Iqbal, Madani and Chiragh Ali.

Many intellectuals looked to countries like Japan, China and the United States to provide models for the development of India. Journals and newspapers evaluated the social, religious, economic and political progress in these countries, emphasising the lessons India could draw from them.[80] Political and intellectual developments in China and Japan, especially after the latter's victory in the Russo-Japanese War, were particularly commented upon. China was praised by some intellectuals for adopting new ideas from the West while retaining its own traditions and ways; this was seen as the chief reason for its rapid development.[81] The progress of Japan was explained in terms of its 'political revolution and adoption of Western representative institutions'.[82] In his Presidential Address to the Fourth Session of the Muslim League in December 1910, Syed Nabiullah stressed that the dramatic progress of Japan, manifested in its ability to match western powers, had shown that Sayyid Ahmad Khan's call on Muslims to refrain from involvement in politics was dated. The need of the hour was to follow the lead of the Japanese in gaining political training and demanding western-style political institutions.[83]

INTERACTING WITH WESTERN POLITICAL DISCOURSE, RE-INTERPRETING ISLAM

In order to highlight the diverse and rich political imagination of Muslim intellectuals, an exploration of their interpretation of Islam and an

[80] 'Amerika ke Jashuoon ki Herat Angez Taraqi' in *Paigham* (12/10/1921), p. 18; and Ghulam-us-Saqlain, 'Asia ki Taraqi aur Japan' in *Asar-i Jadid*, 2 (1904), pp. 509–516.
[81] 'Cheen ki Herat Angez Taraqi', *Paigham* (/11/1921), pp. 2–3.
[82] *All-India Muslim League Documents*, i, 160–161 and 336–337.
[83] Ibid., p. 160.

examination of the sources they drew from, both Islamic and western, is required. This will provide a much needed insight into the processes by which some Muslim intellectuals constructed a 'Political Islam', and into the attempts by others to show that Islam was not inimical to new political ideals and institutions. Rather than approaching the political views of Muslim intellectuals simply as a return to an authentic Islam, the following will demonstrate that their ideas were a hybrid born out of a rejection and acceptance of various facets of modernity.[84]

This is not to deny that there is an Islamic corpus on politics or that Muslim history has provided models of political organisation or behaviour. It has already been noted that Muslim intellectuals in India drew upon the political works of jurists, theologians and philosophers such as Ghazzali, Farabi and Tusi. Moreover, the early Islamic community under the Prophet and the Rashidun caliphs has also provided a model for socio-political organisation to which Muslims have looked throughout the ages. Some have also argued that socio-political prescriptions can be located in the *hadith* and the Quran. Looking back to the verses and sayings of the Prophet from the Madinan period, Ghulam Ahmed, for instance, has gone to the extent of arguing that the Quran provides a 'constitution' for the organisation of the state, a constitution which is elastic enough to suit different places, periods and nations.[85]

Such texts and historical models of political organisation provided important sources for Muslim intellectuals to draw upon. Islam, however, meant different things to different intellectuals. They attributed different meanings to it, and drew from varying sources within the Islamic tradition (as well as without) in developing their socio-political thought. This is reflective of a wider debate over the authenticity of sources such as the *hadith*, a debate which had important religious, legal and political implications. Whereas tracts and articles were written by the likes of Maulvi Muhammad Ali (1876–1951), the head of the Lahore branch of the Ahmadiyya movement, in defence of the veracity of *hadith* as the basis for the organisation of the religious, social and political

[84] 'Many ideologies to be found in the Third World are based on influences received from Europe in a colonial context … Some anthropologists call this process an exogenously-induced cultural change, or acculturation, and associate distinctly colonial, Eurocentric elements with these concepts. We consider that the acculturation concept can also be applied in critical analyses if it is divested of these elements, especially since it then points to the existence in a non-Western society of aspects of two cultures within a single ideology'. Bassam Tibi, 'Islam and Modern European Ideologies' in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 18, 1 (February, 1986), p. 26.

[85] Ghulam Ahmed, *Dastur Istate Madina Quran Izam Hisah Madani,* (Hyderabad, 1961).

life of Muslims,[86] and figures such as Suleiman Nadwi looked to the sayings of the Prophet to find answers to politically relevant questions,[87] sections of the Muslim intelligentsia rejected the *hadith* literature as de facto legitimations of socio-religious and political practices. Chiragh Ali, for instance, refused to accept the *hadith* as authentic sources of Islam, asserting that all sorts of political systems could be and have been defended by an appeal to them.[88] The Quran, he argued, was the only authentic source to which Muslims could look back to, hence, any socio-political formulation had to be based solely on a proper interpretation of the Quran.

Others who stressed the contributions of later epochs to the development of Islam and Islamic political theory looked to the contributions of Muslim philosophers and 'foreign' influences. Ameer Ali based his views on the 'political spirit of Islam' on the works of Muslim philosophers such as Ibn Rushd.[89] While acknowledging that the Quran and *hadith* provided the foundation for a new type of social order and political organisation, Bashiruddin emphasised the fact that in studying 'the principles of the political philosophy of Islam, we must examine sources both native and foreign which have moulded into a polity the beliefs, practices and institutions of the Arab people'.[90] An appreciation of Islamic political theory thus required an understanding of the social structure, political culture and psychology of the early Muslim communities and the foreign influences that interacted with the teachings of the Quran and *hadith* to shape the Islamic polity.[91]

The reactions of Muslim intellectuals to political realities, namely the acceptance or rejection of western socio-political institutions and concepts, often hinged upon or reflected their interpretation of Islam. It would not be accurate to describe the relationship between their thought and western ideas merely as 'borrowing'; nor should their socio-political discourse be seen merely as a rejection of modern socio-political ideas on the one hand, or as a compromise and accommodation of them on the other. In many cases certain aspects of the basic Islamic symbol

[86] Muhammad Ali, 'Collection and Preservation of Hadith' in P. K. Koya (ed.), *Hadith and Sunnah: Ideals and Realities*, 2nd edn. (Kuala Lumpur, 2003), pp. 23–57.

[87] See discussion of Nadwi's correspondence with Iqbal over political issues in the next two chapters.

[88] Chiragh Ali, *The Proposed Political, Legal and Social Reforms*, p. xix.

[89] Ameer Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*, see especially pp. 288–289.

[90] M. A. Bashiruddin, 'The Political Theory of Islam' in *Islamic Culture*, 8 (October, 1934), p. 587.

[91] Ibid, p. 597.

system were developed in response to the western challenge.[92] Because these intellectuals worked within the context of their cultural heritages to respond to the challenges of modernity, there is a need to reflect on the dialectical relationship involved in their response to modernity and their interpretation of Islam.

This does not imply that their reconstruction of Islam was in any way false or inauthentic. Individuals such as Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Chiragh Ali and Iqbal were intimately attached to Islam; they looked to Muslim history, theology, sources and its repertoire of symbols to help them face the challenges of modernity. They did, however, attribute varying meanings to Islam, each believing that their interpretation was a return to the true, authentic Islam. There is, therefore, a need to go beyond merely structural explanations of social and cultural analysis and to take ideas, cultural imagination and discourse seriously.[93]

Faced with new political concepts and institutions, there was a tendency amongst sections of the intelligentsia to attempt to link aspects of the *turath* with western institutions and concepts in order to show the compatibility of these western ideas and practices with Islam. Traditional institutions such as the *shura*[94] and *ba'ya* were linked with democracy,[95] resulting in the assertion that the nascent Muslim community provided the earliest and truest example of a democratic socio-political system.[96] Some Muslim thinkers have emphasised the flexibility of Islam in the public sphere and have used this flexibility to interpret Islam in terms congruent, or at least in very positive dialogue, with one or more western ideologies.[97]

[92] I draw here from William E. Shepard's analysis of 'radical Islamism' in 'Islam and Ideology: Towards a Typology' in *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 19, 3 (August, 1987), pp. 314–317.

[93] I draw here from Ali Mirsepassi's critique of 'modernisation' theory and Marxism for dismissing 'native' cultures as false or illusionary consciousness, and his call for cultural imagination and discourse to be taken seriously. Mirseppasi, *Intellectual Discourse and the Politics of Modernisation: Negotiating Modernity in Iran* (Cambridge, 2000).

[94] The *shura* was essentially an advisory board to the caliph.

[95] *Ba'ya* refers to the pledge of allegiance or the traditional public acknowledgement of a caliph or ruler. Tibi has argued that attempts by contemporary Muslim scholars and statesmen to link the two terms stem not from any shared meanings between the terms but from the desire to make democracy compatible with the *turath*. Tibi, 'Islam and Modern European Ideologies', p. 16.

[96] See, for instance, Azad, in 'Khilafat Rashida Islamia ka Nizam-i-Jamuri' in *Haqiqat-i-Fana-o-Baqa (Kufr-o-Islam)* [a posthumous collection of Azad's early writings] (Delhi, 1966), pp. 75–84.

[97] Shepard, 'Islam and Ideology: Towards a Typology', pp. 311–313.

Such efforts were also no doubt spurred in part by accusations that Islam was theocratic, undemocratic and antithetical to modern liberal socio-political ideals. It has already been noted that Chiragh Ali's *The Proposed Political, Legal and Social Reforms in The Ottoman Empire and Other Mohammadan States* was written in response to MacColl's assertion that Islam was a rigid system that promoted theocratic and illiberal states. In their attempts to dispel the images of a theocratic and illiberal 'Islamic polity', scholars such as Ameer Ali indulged in apologetics which sought to locate democratic and liberal practices and concepts in Muslim history. The case for a 'liberal Islam' was made through the equation of terms such as *huriyyat* (freedom) with the principle of liberty[98] and through the assertion that Islam itself was founded upon liberal principles.[99] At times such efforts translated into attempts to show that new western political concepts and practices, such as democracy, were originally derived from Islam itself. Abdullah Yusuf Ali (1872–1953), for instance, argued that democracy in principle 'flows directly from the fundamental views of Islam', and that Muslim philosophers such as Abu al-Hasan Ali ibn al-Mawardi (972–1058) had stipulated safeguards against 'certain failures of democracy' such as 'popular gusts of passion' and the risk of certain groups getting a greater voice while others were excluded from the representative institutions.[100]

In *The Spirit of Islam*, a work written primarily for a western readership, Ameer Ali speaks of a 'political spirit' of Islam that is akin to modern political structures and ideals. Dismissing charges levelled against Islam, he asserts that Muhammad had ushered in a democratic system which wrestled control away from any particular group or tribe,[101] displacing the feudal structure of society. Islam is heralded for freeing the people from feudalism, not only in the Arab lands but also in Spain, and for enfranchising them.[102] The political structure under the Rashidun caliphs was described as a system that was based on the suffrage of the people, that provided for a constitution and that was 'Republican'.[103] The term

[98] Abdullah Yusuf Ali stated that the 'principle of Liberty, *Huriyyat*, is insisted upon with great force by Marwadi [sic] … The liberty consists in the liberty of person and in the free use of all things lawful. Private property is lawful and encroachments on it are encroachments on liberty'. 'The Religious Polity of Islam' in *Islamic Culture*, 7 (January, 1933), p. 13.

[99] Bukhsh, *Contributions*, ii, 69–70.

[100] A. Y. Ali, 'The Religious Polity of Islam', p. 8.

[101] Ameer Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*, p. 282.

[102] Ibid., p. 286.

[103] Ibid., pp. 277, 278, 283.

'Republic' was often used by the Muslim intelligentsia to describe the early political community established by Muhammad and expanded by the Rashidun caliphs.[104] Ameer Ali's views on the modernising and liberalising potential of Muslim political theory were echoed by Bashiruddin when he stated that the arrival of Islam in India led to the first attempt 'to transcend the narrow conception of a communal polity and build up, on a wider synthesis of cultures and peoples, a theory of citizenship based upon the recognition of the common, secular loyalties of different races and civilizations, as a sufficient bond of political union'.[105]

Abul A'la Maududi (1903–1979)[106] was highly critical of attempts by the 'modernists' to equate Islam with new western political ideas and practices. He lamented:

> With certain people it has become a sort of fashion to somehow identify Islam with one or the other system of life in vogue at the time. So at this time also there are people who say that Islam is a democracy, and by this they mean to imply that there is no difference between Islam and the democracy in vogue in the West. Some others suggest that Communism is but the latest and revised version of Islam and it is in the fitness of things that Muslims imitate the Communist experiment of Soviet Russia. Still some others whisper that Islam has elements of dictatorship in it and we should revive the cult of 'obedience to the Amir'. All these people, in their misinformed and misguided zeal to serve what they hold to be the cause of Islam, are always at great pains to prove that Islam contains within itself the elements of all types of contemporary social and political thought and action. Most of the people who indulge in this prattle have no clear idea of the Islamic way of life. They have never made nor try to make a systematic study of the Islamic political order – the place and nature of democracy, social justice and equality in it. Instead they behave like the proverbial blind men who gave altogether contradictory descriptions of an elephant because one had been able to

[104] Bashiruddin, for instance, speaks of the 'Republican period' in Islamic history and of Muhammad having a 'Republic'. See 'The Political Theory of Islam', pp. 585–599.

[105] Ibid., pp. 594–595.

[106] Maududi was born in Aurangabad to a family renowned for its links to the Chisti Sufi order and its religious learning. He acquired his early learning at home before joining the Madrasa Furqaniyah and the Dar-ul-Ilum, Hyderabad. His education at the latter was cut short by the death of his father, and he was to a large extent self-taught. He found employment as a journalist and was to edit a number of papers such as the *Taj* and the organs of the Deoband, *al-Jamiyyat* and *Muslim*. In 1933, he became the editor of the *Tarjuman-i-Quran*. This journal was to become the chief vehicle through which he expressed his views on Islam and politics. Although initially associated with the Deoband, his later religious and political writings would lead to acrimonious exchanges between him and the Deobandis. He has authored a number of influential works, including *al-Jihad fi al-Islam* (Lahore, 1948) and *Tajdid-o-Ilhya-i-Din* (1940). In 1941, he founded the Jamaat-e-Islami with the aim of striving – intellectually, morally and politically – towards the development of an Islamic society.

touch only its tail. [sic] The other its legs, the third its belly and the fourth its ears. Or perhaps they look upon Islam as an orphan whose sole hope for survival lies in winning the patronage and the sheltering care of some dominant creed. That is why some people have begun to present apologies on Islam's behalf.[107]

Maududi felt that the writing of apologetic pieces and the equation of new western concepts and institutions with aspects of the Muslim heritage reflected the adoption of a defensive stance by Muslim scholars and failed to explain the socio-political ideas presented by Islam.[108] Essentially, Maududi's attack reflects a key difference in the political discourse of Muslim intellectuals in India, one which stemmed from diverging interpretations of Islam itself and centred on whether Islam presented a social and political structure.

Partly in response to assertions by orientalists of the inflexible and unchangeable nature of Islam, and partly resulting from the need to shape an Islam which could adapt to new sciences and technology, a section of the Muslim intelligentsia argued that Islam did not present a social-political structure, thus it 'could adapt itself to the social and political revolutions going on around it'.[109] Khuda Bukhsh asserted that Islam had repeatedly yielded to the pressure of progressive ideas and evolved like other great religions. He argued that the sanctioning of *bida* and the principle of *maslaha*, defined as the recognition of the common interests of the community, had provided channels through which new socio-political ideas could override even long-established practices.[110] In his survey of Muslim political history, Ameer Ali argued that the case of Arab rule in Spain furnishes one of the most instructive examples of the adaptability of the political character of Islam to all forms and conditions of society.[111] It has already been noted that sections of the Muslim intelligentsia conceived of Islamic political theory as a structure that had evolved with the expansion of the Arab empire and the incorporation of foreign ideas on politics and social organisation. Furthermore, some claimed that the new western ideas and practices represented the best way to carry out the traditional injunctions of Islam under modern conditions.[112]

[107] Maududi, *Political Theory of Islam* (Karachi, 1969), p. 1.
[108] Maududi, *al-Jihad fi al-Islam* (Lahore, 1948), p. ii.
[109] Ali, *The Proposed Political, Legal and Social Reforms*, p. ii.
[110] Bukhsh, *Contributions*, ii, 72–76.
[111] Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*, pp. 286–287.
[112] This observation has been made by Shepard in his study on Muslim politics in the Middle East. See Shepard, 'Islam and Ideology', p. 313.

Dismissing claims that Islam presented its followers with a binding political and social structure revealed in the Quran and the *sunna*, Chiragh Ali set about first to prove that the *sunna* was not a reliable source on which to base an interpretation of Islam,[113] and that it had been used to support widely differing political structures.[114] Second, he asserted that the Quran, which he accepted as the sole reliable source for an analysis of Islam, stipulated no socio-political structure.[115] All the political, social and legal reforms recommended by him in his work, *The Proposed Political, Legal and Social Reforms in the Ottoman Empire and Other Mohammadan States*, are based on the authority and justification of the Quran.[116] Having challenged the views of those who sought to argue for an Islamic socio-political and legal structure based on the *hadith* and *sunna*, Chiragh Ali proceeded to argue that Muslims who state that the Quran reveals the basis of such a structure are guilty of an erroneous interpretation of the Quran. He argued that the 'more important civil and political institutions of the Mohammadan Common Law based on the Koran [sic] are bare inferences and deductions from a single word or an isolated sentence', inferences and deductions which have not taken the least notice of the spirit of the Quran.[117]

Chiragh Ali's work reveals a number of significant themes. First, it demonstrates that the changing political scenario in India, coupled with the ascendancy of new western political concepts, led Muslim intellectuals to analyse whether Islam provided a socio-political and legal structure. Furthermore, it reveals that in their interpretation of Islam, Muslim intellectuals during this period accepted different Islamic sources. This was to culminate in varying interpretations of Islam, particularly over the issue of Muslim law and its significance for the development of Muslims. The dismissal of the *sunna* and *hadith* as inauthentic sources of Islam by Chiragh Ali implied that there was no basis for 'Muslim Common Law'. The true development of Muslim societies, he argued, lay in the development of a 'secular' state legal system through the incorporation of elements of foreign law, and not in the maintenance of a spurious corpus of legal edicts.[118]

[113] Ali, *The Proposed Political, Legal and Social Reforms*, pp. xviii-xxi.
[114] He writes that 'every religious, social and political system was defended, when necessary, to please a Khalif or an Ameer to serve his purpose, by an appeal to some oral traditions'. Ibid., p. xix.
[115] Ali, *Proposed Political, Legal and Social Reforms*, pp. iv–xxxvi.
[116] Ibid., p. xxxii.
[117] Ibid., p. xv.
[118] Ibid., pp. xxxvii–xxviii.

A resonance of this call for the adoption of new 'secular', state-centric legal codes can be found in the works of figures such as Asaf Ali Asghar Fyzee,[119] Wahed Hussain[120] and Abdullah Yusuf Ali. The last argued that although the Prophet enunciated specific ceremonial and private laws for Muslims, all public laws formulated during his lifetime stemmed from eternal principles of justice and righteousness common to mankind.[121] Hence, 'a Muslim community may decide, as it has actually decided in some instances, to adopt the Swiss Code or the Code of Napoleon' as a matter of convenience.[122] The identification of Islam with any particular set of concrete institutions, these scholars argued, resulted in narrowing the bounds of Islam.[123] Such views were seriously contested by others like Iqbal and the ulama of the Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind, who felt that the development of the Muslim community lay not in the development of a uniform state legal structure but in the provision of a separate Muslim legal code.

The late nineteenth century witnessed the growth amongst some intellectuals of an approach towards understanding Islam as an object which might be analysed, conceptualised and presented as a system.[124] An implication of this was that Islam for some Muslims came not just to describe a relationship with God, but also to be conceptualised as a system which was comprehensive, complete and covered all aspects of human life. Wilfred C. Smith has argued that this shift in the meaning of the term Islam was partly a result of the impact of the West and the need for Muslim intellectuals to respond to works by western orientalists on Islam.[125] It is proposed here that Islam, as reconstructed by intellectuals such as Iqbal and Maududi, who spoke of Islam as a political ethic and ideology, be seen in the light of their attempts to establish an 'Islamic' vision of life set against the West and its ideological and political domination.

[119] Fyzee, *Modern Approach to Islam*.

[120] Hussain argued that 'in the primitive state of society law, religion and politics were regarded as the same, and therefore inseparable. But with the progress of human thought, they have been separated and each of them is considered as a distinct branch of science, though inter-related'. *Administration of Justice during the Muslim Rule in India: With A History of the Origin of the Islamic Legal Institutions* (Calcutta, 1934), p. 57.

[121] Ali, 'Religious Polity of Islam', p. 6.

[122] Ibid., p. 13.

[123] Ibid.

[124] See Robinson, *Islam and Muslim History*, pp. 91–93, and W. C. Smith, 'The Historical Development in Islam of the Concept of Islam as an Historical Development' in B. Lewis and P. M. Holt (eds.) *Historians of the Middle East* (London, 1962), pp. 484–502.

[125] Smith, 'The Historical Development in Islam', p. 499.

CONCLUSION

It was noted earlier that the Dar-ul-Ishaat Hind of Delhi issued a *fatwa* in 1922 asserting the importance of the caliphate to Islam. Apart from demonstrating support for the caliph, this *fatwa* reflected the view of a section of the Indian Muslim intelligentsia which rejected a division between the realms of religion and politics. The Ali brothers, Shaukat and Muhammad, who were actively involved in procuring this *fatwa*, chastised Muslim figures who sought to concentrate solely on 'religious reform' by avoiding involvement in political affairs; they argued that the 'whole religion of Islam deals with politics … how can you run away from it!'[126] Alarmed by such politically significant interpretations of Islam, officials of the Home Department sought to circulate articles, *fatawa* and tracts which could demonstrate that such views were based on erroneous interpretations of Islamic sources. Amongst the works the British looked to circulate were a commentary on the Quran by Maulvi Muhammad Ali and an Urdu pamphlet by Maulana Haji Hakim Nadir Hussain of Sirberha entitled *Ulama aur Quran* (*The Ulama and the Quran*).[127] These were works which argued for a demarcation between the realms of religion and politics.

This incident reflected the wider contestations in the public arena over the nature of Islam and its relation to politics. Debates that began on the impact of colonial rule and political institutions raised questions about how men and women identified themselves and what they could believe, invariably touching upon the very nature of Islam itself.[128] In highlighting diversity and interpretation, this chapter has questioned the assertion that there is a single fixed political tradition in Islam. It has been demonstrated that the public arena witnessed vibrant debates over the nature of Islam and the development of Muslims. In fact, the expansion of the print media itself facilitated the rise of modern Muslim intellectuals who, by interpreting Islamic sources and publishing works on Islam, challenged the position of the traditional religious authorities. The next chapter will explore Iqbal's perception of his role as a modern Muslim intellectual and poet, and will contrast his views on modernisation with those of his contemporaries – both the modern intellectuals and the traditional religious leadership.

[126] Speech delivered by Muhammad Ali at the Second Oudh Khilafat Conference held at Lucknow on 26 February 1921. Home Department (Political), May 1921.

[127] Home Department (Political), 1922.

[128] I draw here from Albert Hourani's observation of similar debates in the Middle East. Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age: 1789–1939* (Cambridge, 1983), p. iv.

2

'Mera Payam Aur Hai'

Iqbal's Role as an Intellectual and Poet

Nazar atey nahin be-parda hiqayaq un ko
Ankh jin ki hoyi mahkoomi-o-taqlid se kour
Zinda kar sakti hain Iran-o-Arab ko kyun kar
Ye Firangi Madiniyyat ke jo hain khud lab-i gour?

They do not see the truths which are veiled
Whose eyes are laden by slavery and blind imitation,
How are they to revive Iran and Arabia
These who are themselves enchained by western civilisation?

Iqbal[1]

In a poem addressed to the students of Aligarh, Iqbal differentiated himself from both the traditional religious authorities and the 'modernist' intellectuals associated with that institution by declaring 'mera payam aur hai' (the message I bring is different).[2] Whereas he attacked the traditional religious authorities for their inability to gain any inspiration from modern thought, he chastised the modernists for being intellectually captive to western ideas. Instead of employing neatly defined and homogenising categories such as 'modernist',[3] 'authenticist'[4] and 'Islamist' to bracket Iqbal, this chapter lays the basis for a comprehensive understanding of

[1] Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, pp. 531–532.
[2] Ibid., p. 114.
[3] See, for instance, Saiyidain, 'Progressive Trends in Iqbal's Thought'; Fateh Mohammed Malik, 'Iqbal's Reconstruction of Political Thought in Islam' in Malik (ed.), *Iqbal's Reconstruction of Political Thought in Islam* (Leicester, 2004), pp. 19–43; and various articles in Al-e-Ahmad Saroor (ed.), *Jadidiyyat aur Iqbal* (Srinagar, 1985). Aziz Ahmad has characterised Iqbal as a 'neo-modernist' in his *Islamic Modernism*, pp. 141–156.
[4] See Robert D. Lee, *Overcoming Tradition and Modernity: The Search for Islamic Authenticity* (Colorado, 1997).

the Allama's socio-political discourse by studying his perception of his role as a poet and intellectual, and by locating him within the fluid spectrum of modern Muslim thought. It is argued here that the key to understanding Iqbal's socio-political discourse lies in the recognition that he anticipated later third-worldist critiques of colonialism as a totalitarian exercise of power which extended into the realms of culture and ideology, and sought to challenge western intellectual hegemony. It should be noted from the outset that a distinction is not made between Iqbal as a poet and Iqbal as an intellectual; poetry was the medium that allowed him to function as a public intellectual.

In studying Iqbal's role as a poet and intellectual, this chapter will draw upon the writings of figures such as Gramsci, Trotsky and Fanon, who stressed the link between culture and politics. Challenging the view that the intellectual was a social category distinct from wider society, Gramsci spoke in terms of the 'organic intellectual' who emerged out of his social group and sought to express its interests and ideology.[5] More importantly, he situated the intellectual firmly within the context of power and hegemonic conflict. He essentially argued that people were not solely controlled through coercion, and that non-coercive institutions such as cultural associations, clubs and religious institutions – all of which were subsumed by him under the category 'civil society' – were mediums through which dominant social groups and the state constructed ideological hegemony.[6] Implicit in his concept of hegemony was the interconnectedness of culture and power. In Gramsci's scheme, the intellectual, through participation in the public arena, was a key element in the construction, maintenance and disruption of this hegemony.[7] In stressing the importance of winning 'intellectual power', Gramsci argued that intellectuals ushered in political, structural and economic change through the disruption of an existing hegemony and the construction of a counter-hegemony.[8] Literary and cultural products thus played an important socio-political role.

This was also a dominant theme in the works of Fanon and Trotsky who called upon the intellectual to give shape to a 'literature of combat'

[5] Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, pp. 5–23.

[6] See his writings on hegemony, power and civil society in Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* and Gramsci, *Selections from Cultural Writings*, edited by David Forgacs and Geoffrey Nowell-Smith and translated by William Boelhower (London, 1985).

[7] Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebook*, pp. 12–13.

[8] Gramsci, *Selections from Cultural Writings*, p. 41.

and a 'new literature' which would disrupt older power structures.[9] Although it is not suggested here that Iqbal drew directly from the work of Gramsci or Trotsky, Iqbal's perceptions of his role as an intellectual and poet must nevertheless be studied in the light of such ideas on the political role of the intellectual and literature that were current in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The approach in this chapter is both diachronic and synchronic: diachronic as it will begin with a discussion of the socio-economic and political milieu that shaped the concerns and worldview of the modern Muslim intellectual. Mindful of Gyanendra Pandey's warning that historians have often erred in assuming the fixity of the subjects being studied, be they society, nations or communities,[10] this chapter remains alert to the fact that there were numerous forces in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries which pushed the Muslim community in new directions. In many ways, the Muslim community was transformed by the colonial experience. The following discussion will focus on the emergence of a more clearly demarcated Muslim community with distinct 'Muslim interests'. In particular, attention will be paid to the prevalence of the rhetoric of Muslim decline and the figure of the 'backward Muslim' in the public arena.

Having discussed salient aspects of the context which shaped the modern intellectual's worldview and aims, the chapter will attempt to situate Iqbal within the spectrum of modern Muslim thought by comparing and contrasting his views on progress, modernisation and westernisation with those of his contemporaries. Eschewing the rigid economic determinism of classical Marxism, scholars have emphasised the diversity of views expressed by individuals at a particular socio-historic moment.[11] In fact, this heterogeneity of views is in itself seen as an important factor in spurring the development of intellectual activity.[12] Instead of speaking in terms

[9] See discussion of Fanon's 'combat literature' below. For Trotsky's writings on 'new literature' see Leon Trotsky, *Literature and Revolution*, foreword by Lindsey German (London, 1991), pp. 43–52.

[10] Gyanendra Pandey, *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism and History in India* (Cambridge, 2001), p. 4.

[11] Gramsci, for instance, noted that a given socio-historic 'moment' was never homogeneous, and that many different voices can claim to represent the 'moment'. *Selections from Cultural Writings*, pp. 92–98.

[12] Generally, scholars have explained this diversity in terms of the roles played by educational institutions (Brym), social processes (Wuthnow) and the internal organisation of the intellectual field itself in the socialisation of intellectuals (Collins). See Robert J. Brym, *Intellectuals and Politics* (London, 1980), pp. 55–68; Robert Wuthnow, 'State Structures and Ideological Outcomes' in *American Sociological Review*, 50, 6 (Dec., 1985),

of a single 'Muslim viewpoint', this chapter examines the multivalent debates that occurred in the public arena. Questioning the conventional categorisation of Iqbal as a modernist, it will highlight his opposition to the modernising or westernising trends advocated by figures like Sayyid Ahmad Khan.

Finally, the chapter explores the fragmentation of religious authority ushered in by the expansion of the print media, which allowed modern intellectuals such as Iqbal and Sayyid Ahmad Khan to publish works on Islam and to challenge the position of the traditional religious authorities. The modern Muslim intellectuals were distinct from the ulama as they were not grounded in 'traditional' religious training. Two points of qualification are, however, necessary before proceeding further. First, the traditional religious leadership should not simply be dismissed as Gramscian 'traditional intellectuals' who were wedded to a former socio-economic structure.[13] As will be highlighted later, the ulama were responsive to developments in the socio-economic, political and intellectual milieu. In fact, the establishment of the Dar-ul-Ulum Deoband *madrasa* and the Nadwatul Ulama bears testimony to the point that the 'traditional' religious education of an alim – both at the curricular and institutional level – was not static; it was revamped according to the needs of the period. The main aims of the ulama who founded the Nadwatul Ulama in 1894 were to shape a new curriculum for theological education, one suited to the modern period, and to establish an umbrella organisation that would be able to guide and monitor the curriculum taught in the disparate *madrasas* of India.[14] The ulama and Sufis also participated actively in the public arena to meet the challenges posed by the new intellectuals. Second, although the ulama and the new intellectuals were from different educational backgrounds, they did not inevitably have totally different worldviews. Consequently, this monograph does not view Muslim religious and political discourse in South Asia in terms of an alim-non-alim dichotomy.

pp. 799–821; and Randall Collins, 'A Micro-Macro Theory of Intellectual Creativity: The Case of German Idealist Philosophy' in *Sociological Theory*, 5, 1 (Spring, 1987), pp. 47–69 and 'Toward a Theory of Intellectual Change: The Social Causes of Philosophies' in *Science, Technology, and Human Values*, 4, 2 (Spring, 1989), pp. 107–140. Many of these works have drawn from Gramsci's ideas.

[13] In Gramsci's view, the ecclesiastics were a typical example of the traditional intellectuals who were wedded to a pre-modern feudal economic structure. Gramsci, *Selections from Prison Notebooks*, p. 6–7.

[14] Suleiman Nadwi, *Hayat-i-Shibli* (Azamgarh, 1970), pp. 298–319.

A NEW MUSLIM COMMUNITY

Policies ushered in by the colonial state, coupled with the perceptions harboured by British officials and orientalist writers, led to the reconfiguration of Muslim consciousness and the emergence of a more clearly defined and distinct Muslim identity. This is not to suggest that Muslims in contemporary South Asia constitute a homogeneous and clearly defined community. Yet a more clearly demarcated official legal and political category of 'Muslim' did emerge as a result of the legal and political institutions of the period. Various studies have shown how the environment created by the colonial state,[15] the employment of census categories[16] and missionary activities[17] spurred the hardening of communal identities between the Muslims and other religious groups. For the purposes of the present study, it is important to discuss briefly the emergence of 'Muslim' as a legal and political category.

Changes in the legal structure resulted over time in the definition of a more clearly locatable Muslim identity. The Hastings Plan of 1772 established a hierarchy of civil and criminal courts charged with the task of applying indigenous legal norms in all suits. Henceforth, in 'all suits regarding inheritance, marriage, caste and other religious usages or institutions, the laws of the Koran with respect to Mahomedans, and those of the Shasters [sic] with respect to the Gentus [Hindus]' were to be invariably adhered to.[18] The demarcation of a Hindu and Muslim law clearly rested on the presumption that a single set of legal codes would be applicable to all people professing adherence to a single religion. This ignored contradictions within the sharia as well as the importance of custom and local autonomy in practise. In the pre-colonial period, many local communities had guarded their autonomy, operating under the umbrella of imperial tolerance in order to retain localised institutions, practises and norms, which operated in derogation of a strict application of the sharia.[19] It also ignored differences between Sunnis and Shia as well as distinctions within *mazhabs* (legal schools). The colonial administration's

[15] See, for instance, Sandra B. Freitag, *Collective Action and Community: Public Arenas and the Emergence of Communalism in North India* (Berkeley, 1989).

[16] See, for instance, Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*, 2nd edn. (New Delhi, 2006).

[17] See Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries*.

[18] Quoted in Roland Knyvet Wilson, *An Introduction to the Study of Anglo-Muhammadan Law* (London, 1894), p. 92.

[19] David Gilmartin, 'Customary Law and Shariat in British Punjab' in K. P. Ewing (ed.), *Shariat and Ambiguity in South Asian Islam* (Berkeley, 1988), pp. 43–62.

attempts to apply a single law for Muslims were contingent upon the ability to codify a single and unified 'Muhammadan law'. Hasting's plan rested on treating certain classical Islamic texts, such as the *al-Hidaya* and *al-Sirajiyya*, as binding legal codes. It was also based on a belief in the primacy of the text over interpretative practise. In their preference for textual sources, the courts were inclined to endorse highly orthodox forms of Islamic law which were applied more widely and rigorously than in the pre-colonial period.[20]

In all, the attempts to codify and standardise the sharia both changed the nature of Islamic law and clearly demarcated 'Muslim' as a legal category – a category invested with a new sense of fixity. As each individual was now linked to a state enforced religious identity, individuals and groups found themselves in a position of needing to operate within their state-defined social space in order to secure the economic, political, social and religious patronage of the state.[21] The subsequent displacement of Islamic criminal law and procedure by British-based rules in the wake of changes ushered in by Lord Cornwallis further served to redefine social identity, as the sharia was now shorn of its civil and criminal components and redefined as 'Islamic personal law'.[22]

Reforms in the nature of political representation, namely the ushering in of separate electorates with the India Councils Act of 1909, had led to the emergence of 'Muslim' as a separate political entity. As noted previously, the founding of the Congress gave rise to a debate over whether Muslims and Hindus shared common political interests and whether they constituted a political community. Muslim intellectuals and statesmen grappled with the question of whether the political interests of the two communities overlapped. They also sought to locate the areas, if any, in which these interests overlapped. Badruddin Tyabji's[23] personal papers reveal an interesting exchange between him and other leading Muslim figures, such as Ameer Ali and Sayyid Ahmad Khan, in this regard. Tyabji, who presided over the third session of the Congress, argued that Muslims and Hindus had common political interests when it came to

[20] M. R. Anderson, 'Islamic Law and the Colonial Encounter in British India' in David Arnold and Peter Robb (eds.) *Institutions and Ideologies: A SOAS South Asian Reader* (London, 1993), p. 165.

[21] Ibid., pp. 181–182.

[22] Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam since 1850* (New Delhi, 2001), p. 140.

[23] Badruddin Tyabji (1844–1906) was the first Indian to be called to the bar in Bombay in 1867 and was to go on to become a justice in the Bombay High Court. He was one of the founders of the Anjuman-i-Islam and a key member of the Congress party.

the development of the country.[24] However, even Tyabji felt that there were interests which were specific to the Muslim community[25] and that Muslim leaders needed to form conferences and organisations to work for the moral, political and social uplift of their community.[26]

This section has highlighted how changes in the legal and political realms spurred the development of a more distinct Muslim consciousness. Nevertheless, even though the colonial authorities had given shape to a fixed legal and political category, divisions within the community remained, ensuring that 'Muslim' was far from a clearly demarcated social entity. It has been argued that accommodation to customary practises ensured that 'Muslim' remained more of an abstract legal category than a social entity whose life was ordered according to the precepts of religious doctrine.[27] Attendant with the application of Islamic law was the issue of the definition of a Muslim. If Muslim law was to be applied, the courts had first to define who a Muslim was, and this was by no means a straightforward issue.[28] In his influential study on Muslim law, N. P. Aghnides quoted from the work of the eleventh-century scholar, al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, to show that there are a number of conflicting ways in which a Muslim has historically been defined. Aghnides highlighted that al-Baghdadi differed from the Karamites, who claimed that any person who states that 'there is no God but God and Muhammad is his messenger' is a Muslim. Al-Baghdadi, on the other hand, would only define someone as a Muslim if

> he believed in the createdness of the universe, the unity, eternity, justice and wisdom of its Creator, and would not liken others to God, nor deny any of His attributes; believed in the prophecy and mission of all the prophets, and in the truth of the prophecy of Mohammed, as well as in his mission to all nations;

[24] Tyabji to Ameer Ali dated 3/12/87. *Badruddin Tyabji's Personal Papers*, NAI (Microfilm).

[25] He noted that 'it is the duty of all educated and public spirited citizens to work together quite irrespective of caste, color, or creed. But in regard to matters that affect our community separately or specially, I hold to be equally the duty of all enlightened Mahomedans to do what they can individually and compoundly to ameliorate the condition of our own people.' Tyabji to Ameer Ali, undated. *Tyabji's Personal Papers*.

[26] Tyabji was responding to Ameer Ali's invitation to join a conference of 'cultivated Muslims' to chart out a path for the development of the Muslim community to be held at Calcutta on the 3 December 1887. See Ameer Ali to Tyabji and Tyabji to Ameer Ali in *Tyabji's Personal Papers*.

[27] Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty*, p. 142.

[28] Fyzee has highlighted a number of legal cases in which the judges attempted to define what constituted a 'Muslim'. *Outlines of Muhammadan Law*, 4th edn. (New Delhi, 2003), pp. 60–64.

believed in his teachings and the Koran as the source of divine revelation; finally, if he believed in the obligation of the five prayers, the giving of *zakat* [obligatory Islamic alms], the fast of *Ramadan*, and the pilgrimage to Mecca.[29]

A number of Muslim intellectuals were involved in the attempts to define the Muslim and to demarcate the boundaries of Islam. Ameer Ali proposed that a Muslim be defined as anyone who professes the religion of Islam, accepting the unity of God and the prophetic character of Muhammad.[30] Iqbal also contributed to this debate. In fact, extracts from his lectures 'Muslim Community' and 'Islam as a Moral and Political Ethic', in which he defined the boundaries of the Muslim community and the nature of Islam, were reproduced in the Census Report of 1911.[31] Iqbal's attempts to define the categories Islam and Muslim will be discussed in subsequent chapters. Suffice it to note here that he was amongst a number of Muslim intellectuals who sought to draw the boundaries of the community, boundaries that included certain sects while excluding others. This was particularly pertinent to the long, drawn-out controversy over the claim by the Ahmadiyya to be Muslims. The issue of defining the boundaries of Muslim also had a clear political relevance, as the likes of Ameer Ali sought to offset the large numerical superiority of the Hindu community by encompassing various Muslim sects within the ambit of Islam while excluding the untouchables from the category of Hindu.[32]

MUSLIM DECLINE AND THE FIGURE OF THE 'BACKWARD MUSLIM'

In 1871, W. W. Hunter observed that the Muslims of India were a 'race ruined under British rule'.[33] The reaction of the Muslim community to the colonial state and the impact of British rule on Muslims is far more complex than suggested by Hunter and others who have shared his view.[34] One of the key presumptions which underlies such generalisations is that the Muslims of India constituted a homogeneous community which

[29] Nicholas P. Aghnides, *Mohammedan Theories of Finance with an Introduction to Mohammedan Law and a Bibliography* (New York, 1916), pp. 135–137.
[30] Ameer Ali, *Mohammedan Law*, 5th edn. (2 vols., Calcutta, 1929), ii, 22.
[31] *Census of India, XIV, Punjab*, part 1, pp. 162–165.
[32] Ameer Ali, *Political Writings*, p. 191.
[33] W. W. Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans* (New Delhi, 2002), p. 145.
[34] Much of the scholarship on Muslim separatism in India starts with the assertion that Muslims were a community that was economically devastated by British rule and that this was a major cause for Muslim separatism.

was uniformly affected by the establishment of British rule. Studies have shown that the Muslims of India were not any more adversely affected by the agrarian and revenue policies of the colonial state than Hindus. Even the confiscation of lands and resumption of pensions in the aftermath of 1857 did not particularly affect Muslims.[35] Over time, the introduction of bureaucratic reforms such as the compilation of 'records of connection', aimed at preventing the formation of cliques of relatives in public service, the ushering in of caste and communal proportions, and the introduction of educational requirements for government positions did translate into a loss of appointments for Muslims who had hitherto held a higher proportion of government posts than their share of the population in states such as the United Provinces.[36] Yet research has shown that the Muslim share in the government service was better than often alleged.[37]

In all, the economic impact of the establishment of the colonial state in India was far more diversified than suggested by Hunter; it was primarily dependent upon the location and the socio-economic position of the individual Muslim. Although the office-holding Muslim aristocrats and weavers of Bengal were adversely affected, British rule ushered in security for the Muslims of Punjab and wealth for the Muslims of Bombay who were involved in shipping.[38] It is not uncommon to find Muslim landholders such as Nawab Shamsoodeen Khan of Ferozepur, Punjab, acknowledging that their 'property, estate and honour' were 'all derived from the Government'.[39] This non-uniform economic impact was a fact recognised by spokesmen for the Muslim community themselves. In a lecture entitled *Islam and British Rule* delivered in November 1904 in London, Ameer Ali asserted that Muslims were not a homogeneous group that was similarly affected by British rule. He stressed that Muslims in different parts of the country were at different stages of development and that it was wrong to speak in terms of a general backwardness of the community.[40]

Drawing from the work of scholars who have critiqued simplistic assertions of the economic deprivation of the Muslim community, this chapter analyses the forces that gave shape to the discourse of Muslim

[35] Hardy, *The Muslims of British India*, pp. 61–91.

[36] Robinson, *Separatism among the Indian Muslims*, especially chapter 2.

[37] Zafarul Islam and Raymond L. Jansen, 'Indian Muslims and the Public Service' in *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan* (*Dacca*), IX, 1 (June, 1965), pp. 85–149.

[38] Hardy, *Muslims of British India*, p. 31.

[39] Nawab Shamsoodeen Khan to Governor-General. Foreign Department (Political) 1835, file number 17.

[40] Ameer Ali, *Syed Ameer Ali: Political Writings*, p. 179.

decline and the image of the 'backward Muslim'. The loss of Muslim political dominance in India had an important psychological impact on the former Muslim aristocracy. This sense of degradation or loss of *izzat* (pride or respect) was reflected in an article in the *Tehzib al-Akhlaq* in which the author stated that a *qawm* could only claim to have *izzat* if they were the rulers of the country or had a share in the process of ruling.[41] Although the former Muslim aristocracy did not necessarily all lose a means of livelihood, they had lost a way of life.[42] The crumbling of the social, cultural and political world which they were accustomed to and its displacement by the rule of an alien power were interpreted as a substantial decline in the fortunes of Muslims in India. In time, colonial policies marginalised segments of the older Muslim aristocracy even further. The Muslim elite in the United Provinces, for instance, feared that policies such as the introduction of the Nagri script, the prioritisation of an English education and the possible introduction of competitive examinations for civil service would deprive them of coveted positions in the government service.[43]

The fear of becoming backward, more than actual backwardness, drove sections of the Muslim elite to galvanise the community to deal with its position in India.[44] Concern over Muslims falling behind their Hindu counterparts gave rise to a discourse on backwardness and the emergence of the figure of the backward Muslim.[45] Education was one of the key arenas in which the figure of the backward Muslim was constructed. If we consider the evidence, it is not possible to speak in terms of a uniform Muslim response to English education, as Muslims in a number of provinces were not any more adverse to English education than non-Muslims. For instance, the 1901 Census of Punjab and the North West Frontier Province indicates that Muslim male literacy rates, including in English, were higher in these two provinces than the literacy rates amongst Hindus or Sikhs in these provinces. Whereas the ratio

[41] 'Humari Qawm ko Kya Karna Chaihiye' in *Tehzib al-Akhlaq: The Mohammedan Social Reformer*, 1879, May-September, p. 4.

[42] Hardy, *Muslims of British India*, p. 49.

[43] Amply discussed by Robinson in *Separatism among the Indian Muslims*.

[44] I draw here from Hasan, *Islam in the Subcontinent: Muslims in a Plural Society* (New Delhi, 2002), p. 11.

[45] For an insightful discussion of the birth of the category of the 'backward Muslim' and its emergence as an identity, see Sanjay Seth's, 'Constituting the "Backward but Proud Muslim": Pedagogy, Governmentality and Identity in Colonial India' in Mushirul Hasan and Nariaki Nakazato (eds.), *The Unfinished Agenda: Nation-Building in South Asia* (New Delhi, 2001), pp. 129–150.

for literacy in English was estimated at 1:11 for Muslims, it was 1:14 for Hindus and 1:20 for Sikhs.[46] Similarly, educational figures for the North Western Provinces and Oudh for the year 1899–1900 reveal that the proportion of Muslims attending schools, including secondary institutions where instruction was in English, was higher than the proportion of Hindus.[47]

Despite this, the perception that Muslims had as a community lagged behind their Hindu counterparts prevailed. This is reflected in the fact that members of the Select Committee For the Better Diffusion and Advancement of Learning Among the Muhammedans of India, which had organised an essay competition to locate the reasons for Muslim apathy towards modern education, rejected the views of essayists who argued that the proportion of Muslims in government institutions was not necessarily less than that of Hindus. Instead, the Select Committee declared that Muslim backwardness in education was an 'accepted fact' and called for a greater mobilisation of the community at district and *pargana* (loosely translated, sub-district) levels to take up English education.[48] A number of organisations, such as the Muslim Educational Conference founded by Sayyid Ahmad Khan in 1886, were established to encourage the children of aristocratic Muslim families to acquire modern education.

The image of a Muslim community lagging behind Hindus and the subsequent attempts to encourage Muslim enrolment in schools served as an impetus for new definitions of Muslim identity, particularly stressing the homogeneity of the community and the need to regain its 'lost' unity. Disunity was believed to be one of the reasons for Muslim backwardness and stagnation. Sayyid Ahmad Khan's concern over disunity within the ranks of the community was reflected in his address to the Muslim Educational Conference in 1886, where he lamented that

[46] *Census of India, 1901, vol. XVII, Punjab and NWFP*, i, 269–270.

[47] Figures for 1899–1900 :

	Hindus	Muslims
Scholars in secondary stage learning English	0.3	0.56
Attending public schools	8.56	10.38
Schools of all sorts	9.83	16.94

General Report on Public Instruction in the North-Western Provinces Oudh for the Year 1899–1900, pp. 182–183.

[48] Report of the Members of the Select Committee for the Better Diffusion and Advancement of Learning among the Muhammadans of India, in *Basic Documents*, ii, 339–367.

although Muslims were seen as belonging to one *qawm*, they remained unaware of the problems and needs of their co-religionists in other parts of India.[49] Such concerns spurred attempts to develop a sense of cohesiveness amongst Muslims. The Muslim Educational Conference did not limit itself to carrying out solely educational activities. It also aimed at creating a feeling of solidarity amongst the disparate Muslims of India who lived in comparative isolation and had hitherto lacked a common platform. Attempts were also made in educational institutions such as Aligarh to overcome sectarian division by providing both Shia and Sunni theological education.[50] Furthermore, initiatives by the Muslim Educational Conference and the use of Urdu as the language of instruction in institutions such as Deoband contributed to the development of Urdu as a lingua franca and a uniting factor for the Muslims in the wake of the phasing out of Persian.[51]

THE TROPE OF MUSLIM DECLINE AND THE 'POLITICAL' ROLE OF THE URDU POET

The foregoing discussion has sought to trace the emergence of a more clearly defined Muslim community with distinct 'Muslim interests' as well as the idea of Muslim backwardness. As internal developments were compounded by the decline of Muslim power in the Middle East, 'Muslim decline' established itself as a key trope in Muslim literature and discourse. Images of a conquered race amplified the work of Muslim writers as lamentation over Muslim decline emerged as a principal theme in the poetry of the period. Khwaja Altaf Hussain Hali (1837–1914)[52] reflected the spirit of the times when he wrote:

[49] Quoted in K. Ali, 'Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's Role in Inspiring Self-Assertion and Freedom among Muslims' in *Sir Syed Centenary Paper* (Karachi, 1998), p. 110.

[50] Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism*, p, 36.

[51] See Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India*, pp. 102, 199–200, 206–210. For the contribution of Aligarh and the Muslim Educational Conference to the development of Urdu language and literature, refer to Abdul Rashid Khan, *The All-India Educational Conference: Its Contribution to the Cultural Development of Indian Muslims–1886–1947* (Karachi, 2001), pp. 151–183.

[52] A student of Ghalib's, Hali's poetic and academic genius flourished after he found employment in the Lahore government book depot in the mid-1870s. He was to be closely associated with Sayyid Ahmad Khan and imbibed his views on the need for a reformed and simplified Urdu literature. Encouraged by the Sayyid, Hali wrote the *Musaddas-i-Madd-o-Jazr-i-Islam* (*The Ebb and Flow of Islam*) in which he discussed the contemporary decline of the Muslims of India. Hali's *Musaddas* (1879) and his *Muqadama Sher-o-Shairi* (1890) are generally described as amongst the most influential works of modern Urdu poetry.

Pasti ka koi had se guzarna dekhe,
Islam ka gir kar na ubharna dekhe;
Maane na kabhi ke mad hai jazar ke baad,
Darya ka hamaare jo utarna dekhe.

Behold the degradation sinking far too deep,
Oh, the fall of Muslims, gone beyond retrieve;
You'll deny that each ebb is followed by the flow,
If our river, run stark dry, you once perceive.[53]

Literature, particularly poetry, proved to be the medium as well as the site for debates over Muslim decline. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the work of Muslim Urdu poets which had previously focussed largely on the elite, expanded to deal with the material conditions of the Muslim community, reflecting a new communitarian ethos.[54] Indeed, influenced by orientalist and Romantic writings, the concept of literature had by this time come to be seen as an expression of 'national character' and 'national spirit'.[55] The impact of western aesthetic and intellectual influences further drove Urdu poets to question whether their poetry reflected truth and reality, and to re-evaluate the impact of their works on the morality and condition of the community.[56] The form and style of Urdu poetry, particularly its emphasis on love themes and decadence as well as its strictness of form, were increasingly connected with the intellectual and moral decline of the community.[57] It is argued that Hali's critical evaluation of classical Urdu poetry in his *Muqaddama-i-Sher-o-Shairi* (*Assessment of Poetry*) ensured that no subsequent Urdu poet could undertake to write without a concern for the impact of his verse on the development of the community.[58] Whereas classical Urdu poetry was

[53] K. C. Kanda, *Masterpieces of Urdu Rubaiyat* (New Delhi, 1998), pp. 96–97.

[54] See discussion in M. S. Jain, *Muslim Ethos: As Reflected in Urdu Literature* (New Delhi, 2000).

[55] Vinay Dharwadker, 'Orientalism and the Study of Indian Literatures' in Carol Brekenridge and Peter van der Veer (eds.), *Orientalism and the Post-Colonial Predicament* (Philadelphia, 1993), pp. 158–168.

[56] Faruqi argues that the western intrusion generated, for the first time, tensions over the role and nature of Urdu poetry. Influenced by debates in the West surrounding Platonic and Aristotelian views on poetry, Urdu poets were forced to take a stand on whether their poetry represented truth or fiction. Faruqi, 'Images in a Darkened Mirror: Issues and Ideas in Modern Urdu Literature' in *Annual of Urdu Studies*, 6 (1987), pp. 43–54.

[57] This was reflected in the writings of a host of critics of Urdu literature. A particularly interesting and controversial exposition of this view was by Sayyid Abdul Latif, a contemporary of Iqbal, who traced the emergence of ideas such as freedom and liberty in Urdu literature solely to the English influence upon Urdu literature. See *The Influence of English Literature on Urdu Literature* (London, 1924).

[58] Faruqi, 'Images in a Darkened Mirror', pp. 43–54.

generally condemned as both a source and a cause for the degeneration of the Muslim community, the likes of Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Hali sought to shape a 'reformed' Urdu literature that could serve as a means of working towards a renewal of the community.

Increasingly, Urdu poets were concerned not only with form and stylistics, but also with the impact of poetry and the role of the poet. Muhammad Hussain Azad (1830–1910)[59] was impressed by the important social and political role accorded to poetry and poets in the West. Poetry, he felt, had been utilised more than prose to express complex and important themes. In a lecture to the Anjuman-i-Punjab (Society of Punjab), which was established in 1865 with the aim of developing vernacular literature, Muhammad Hussain Azad called for reforms that would allow for Urdu poetry and poets to play a similarly constructive role in India.[60] Apart from opening themes, imagery and forms of Urdu poetry to criticism and scrutiny, calls were also made for a re-evaluation of the role of the poet and the purpose of his work. Hali, who shared Muhammad Hussain Azad's views on the constructive role played by poetry in Europe, lamented that whereas poets in the West had contributed to society both socially and politically, they were in India looked down upon as *zaleel* (lowly).[61] The demand for reforms in literature was not simply a call for the adoption of modern aesthetics, but rather an attempt to shape a poetics which could be used both for social criticism and to impart a social, religious, ideological and political message. After World War I, the growing awareness amongst Urdu writers of changing literary activity and purpose in Europe further inspired the use of Urdu literature as a source of reflecting upon and criticising society.

Apart from a few experiments with blank verse, Urdu poets rarely adopted new forms from the West; instead more entrenched styles such as the *ghazal*[62] were used to express new ideas on various topics such

[59] Muhammad Hussain Azad was a leading advocate of English education and reform in Urdu literature. He was closely associated with G. W. Leitner and his Anjuman-i-Punjab, rising to the position of its secretary in 1867. In 1867, he was appointed to the position of Assistant Professor in Arabic at the Government College, Lahore. Apart from a number of important textbooks, his key works include the *Ab-i-Hayat* (1860) and the *Nairang-i-Khayal* (1880). The former has been widely described as one of the most important canons of modern Urdu literature.

[60] Muhammad Hussain Azad, *Maqalat Maulana Muhammad Hussain Azad*, edited by Aga Muhammad Baqr (Lahore, 1966), pp. 451–453.

[61] Hali, *Muqadama-i-Sher-o-Shairi* (Lahore, 1950), pp. 2–6.

[62] A *ghazal* is a poem made up of couplets or two-line stanzas. It may contain any number of couplets. There is a strict rhyme pattern – AA, BA, CA and so forth. Each of its couplets is capable of standing alone and does not need the previous or following two lines

as politics, education and the socio-economic condition of the Muslim community. As political developments and nationalism came to be discussed more widely in Urdu poems, the conventional images of *aashiq* (lover), *mashuq* (beloved) and *raqib* (rival) were invested with new political meanings to symbolise nationalism, socialism and imperialism.[63] Those who seek to paint Iqbal as a modernist poet often neglect the fact that the Allama himself utilised the popular medium of the *ghazal* to express his religious, social and political views.[64] It is worth noting here that there was a significant difference between the *jadidiyyat* (modernist) and progressive writers over the role of literature and the models to adopt. Whereas the progressives, inspired by Soviet-realism, strove to employ literature as an active medium to shape the ideological, political and social development of society, the *jadidiyyat* writers advocated a new aesthetic – one in which poetry was not philosophy, not a demonstration and did not provide a programme.[65] This was a debate which was to come to the fore of Urdu literature shortly after Iqbal's death.

For his part, Iqbal claimed that he did not subscribe to the view of 'art for the sake of art'. Poetry, for the Allama, was a means to express his philosophy and provide a programme for the development of the Muslim community, India and the East in general. To this effect, Iqbal did not concentrate on the critique of classical forms of poetry or the use of Persian imagery, as did Hali and Muhammad Hussain Azad. His primary concern lay in the ability of the poet to express a message for the constructive development of the community.

In a letter to Maulana Suleiman Nadwi written in 1921, Iqbal recorded that he did not perceive of himself as a poet. Rejecting any interest in the art of rhyme, he stated that poetry was solely a means

to be understood. This apparent lack of unity of themes and its strict rhyme pattern have been critiqued by modernists.

[63] Gopi Chand Narang notes that as nationalism became a recurring theme in Urdu literature, older imagery was invested with new meanings symbolising political stances and views. Gail Minault has also highlighted how poets used older imagery of the garden, wine and goblet in new ways, infusing a political message into this old imagery. See Narang, *Urdu Language and Literature: Critical Perspectives* (New Delhi, 1991) and Minault, 'Urdu Political Poetry during the Khilafat Movement' in *Modern Asian Studies*, 8, 4 (1974), pp. 459–471.

[64] Ralph Russell has rightly noted that modern scholars have neglected that Iqbal had drawn concepts from the *ghazal*. Russell, *The Pursuit of Urdu Literature* (London, 1992), p. 82.

[65] I draw here from a differentiation between the *jadidiyyat* and progressive writers highlighted by Faruqi quoted at length in Mehr Afshan Farooqi, 'Modernity in Urdu Poetry and the Enigma of Miraji' in *The Annual of Urdu Studies*, 8 (2003), pp. 585–586.

through which he had sought to express and criticise the conditions of the period.[66] Castigating the 'dogma of Art for the sake of Art' as a 'clever invention of decadence',[67] Iqbal continually strove to differentiate his poetry from the literary products of many of his contemporaries, whose beautifully crafted verses he faulted for failing to deliver a message that could inspire a revolution in thought and action.[68] In contrast to these, Iqbal described his own work as a '*nala-i-jung*', or a song of war.[69] Indeed, the stated aim of the bulk of Iqbal's writings had been to generate an *inquilab* (revolution) in the minds of his readers rather than to indulge in '*fan ki barikoon*', or 'the intricacies of art'.[70]

Although much attention has been focussed on translating Iqbal's poetry and exploring his poetic style, little attention has been devoted to analysing his views on the role of the poet and poetry itself. Over the years, Iqbal's fascination with poetry had developed from an interest in the quality and intricacies of verse to an appreciation of the impact of the message carried in the works. At one stage, disillusioned by poets who were more concerned by form than content, Iqbal had even contemplated giving up poetry.[71] This concern with the impact and message of poetry rather than mere stylistics is reflected in the fact that he prized Arabic poetry of the days of the Prophet, which he believed to be hard hitting and message driven, as the highest form of poetry.[72] Iqbal's views on the role of the poet as an intellectual and critic of society were shaped in part from his readings of the work of figures such as Emerson, Matthew Arnold and Goethe. In poems such as 'Rukhsat-i Bazm-i-Jahan' ('Leaving the Gathering of the World'), which was based on Emerson's writings, Iqbal drew upon the Romantic notion that the role of the poet was to

[66] Iqbal, *Iqbal Nama*, pp. 195–196.

[67] Quoted in Iqbal, *Secrets of the Self*, p. xxii.

[68] In his poem '*Hunar-o-ran-i-Hind*' (Artists of India), he lamented that the fantasies of contemporary artists are the deathbed of love and passion, and that far from being inspiring, their work only tends to enfeeble nations. Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, pp. 128–129. It should be noted that a portion of his *masnavi*, *Asrar-i- Khudi*, was devoted to critiquing poets who indulged solely in poetising, lamentation and lovemaking, as well as discussing the 'true' nature of poetry, which was to inspire and impart a message of action. Iqbal, *The Secrets of the Self, Asrar-i-Khudi, A Philosophical Poem*, translated with introduction and notes by Reynold A. Nicholson (London, 1920), pp. 30–42.

[69] Iqbal, *Iqbal Nama,* pp. 380–381.

[70] Ibid., p. 108.

[71] Abdul Qadir who was with him at this time in England, tried to prevail upon him not to give up poetry. In response, Iqbal wrote a couplet, 'Please someone take my message to the editor of Makhzan, nations that are striving and dynamic take no pleasure in poetry.' Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, p. 136.

[72] Iqbal, *Stray Reflections*, pp. 81 and 145–148.

transcend mere artistic expression and to employ poetry as a means to serving the higher purposes of society.[73]

Urdu prose writing, which had a shorter history than its lyrical counterpart, witnessed similar attempts at reform, stemming largely from Sayyid Ahmad Khan's attempts to shape a new, simple and concise prosaic style to discuss *ilmi* (intellectual), *duniya-i* (worldly) and *dini* (religious) subjects. The Sayyid rejected the Urdu literature produced by the ulama for being overly concerned with stylistics and for not distinguishing between religious and worldly writings.[74] Such reforms were developed further by literary figures like Hali, Shibli and Abdul Qadir. The last, a close associate of Allama Iqbal, launched his journal, *Makhzan*, in Lahore with the stated aim of going beyond the call for stylistic reforms and developing Urdu prose into a viable medium for the development of society.[75] Iqbal regularly contributed both poetry and prose to the journal. His long association with *Makhzan* and his interaction with the individuals involved with it shaped his own views on the role of literature.

Through his poetry and prose, Iqbal sought to provide a message of renewal. Literature or art was not just a reflection of the conditions of society; it was a means of shaping a regeneration. In line with this, Iqbal argued that the role of the poet and intellectual was not to wallow in lamentation but to chart a path of action, to blaze the path of regeneration:

> Create a new style for thy song,
> Enrich the assembly with thy piercing strains!
> Up, and re-inspire every living soul!
> Say 'Arise!' and by that word quicken the living!
> Up, and set thy feet on another path;
> Put aside the passionate melancholy of old!
> Become familiar with the delight of singing;
> O bell of the caravan, awake![76]

Indeed, the poet's work and *kalam* (pen) was in itself a reflection of the strength of the community.[77] The Allama thus distinguished his own poetics and writings from that of many of his contemporaries, who

[73] Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, pp. 63–65.

[74] Sayyid Ahmad Khan, *Maqalat-i-Sir Sayyid*, collected by Muhammad Ismail Panipati (10 vols., Lahore, 1960), v, 291–299. See also, Shibli, 'Sir Sayyid Marhoom aur Urdu Literature' in *Maqalat-i-Shibli*, (7 vols., Azamgarh, 1954), ii, 57–65.

[75] Abdul Qadir, 'Anjuman-i-Urdu' in *Makhzan*, 8, 2 (November, 1904), pp. 1–8.

[76] Iqbal, *The Secrets of the Self*, p. 11.

[77] In a letter to Maulana Girami, Iqbal asserted that Girami's pen reflected that the Muslim community still possessed some of its strengths. Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, i, 776.

were concerned with stylistics and forms. He argued that his own work presented a clarion call to the community as well as a programme for its development. This activist concern with social and political reform makes Iqbal's work a good example of what Fanon calls the 'literature of combat', a literature which challenges colonial hegemony and seeks to chart a new path for development.[78]

CHALLENGING COLONIAL HEGEMONY, CHARTING A NEW PATH FOR DEVELOPMENT

A number of Muslim intellectuals subscribed to the view that progress lay in the adoption of not just modern knowledge and institutions, but also facets of western civilisation. Such views were clearly reflected in Sayyid Ahmad Khan's call for reforms in a wide range of issues, such as food habits, work ethic and education.[79] He asserted that the *talim* (education) provided in colleges and universities would not in itself lead to the development of right *akhlaq* (ethics). There was an urgent need for *tarbiyyat*, a term he used to denote training in culture, civilisation and ethics. His stated aim was therefore to provide *tarbiyyat*.[80]

A more detailed discussion of the Sayyid's views on education is undertaken in Chapter 5, but it is worth noting that his views on educational and civilisational reform resonate with Utilitarian views on the emancipatory role of English education and western civilisation. For the Utilitarians, only western literary education provided the means for the exercise of reason and the development of moral will.[81] Besides calling for the acquisition of 'useful knowledge' which was essential for scientific, political and economic progress, Sayyid Ahmad Khan and a number of other Muslim intellectuals called for the inculcation of morality, virtue and 'civilisation' from western history and literature.

[78] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, preface by Jean-Paul Satre, translated by Constance Farrigton (London, 1990), pp. 193–194.

[79] See various articles by the Sayyid calling for the adoption of western traits such as table manners and work ethic in Khan, *Maqalat-i-Sir Sayyid*.

[80] Ibid., ix, 14–20.

[81] Gauri Viswanathan has traced the influence of Utilitarian ideas on the development of the education system in India. She has also critiqued conventional studies, such as David Kopf's *British Orientalism and the Bengali Renaissance: The Dynamics of Indian Modernisation 1773–1835* (Berkeley, 1969), for failing to explore how the system of education served to fortify British hegemony and position of superiority. See Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India* (New York, 1989).

While acknowledging that there were several works on history written by Muslim and Indian authors, the Sayyid argued that these works did not contain information which was necessary for the improvement of the civilisation and morality of men. The need of the hour was for translations of western works which 'described the discovery of and improvements in the arts and sciences as well as descriptions on the laws and systems of government and virtues and vices'.[82] In 1904, Sayyid Riza Ali (b. 1882), an alumnus of Aligarh and prominent leader of the Muslim League, echoed Sayyid Ahmad Khan's views when he asserted that the basis for shaping a Muslim renaissance lay in the work of Bacon, Shakespeare and Locke rather than Muslim classical education.[83] Riza Ali's assertion was made in opposition to attempts to establish a school for advanced Arabic studies at Aligarh.

Unlike Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Riza Ali, Iqbal's writings reveal that he conceived of colonialism as a totalitarian exercise of power extending beyond the coercive reach of overt structures of colonisation, such as military subjugation and economic extraction into the realms of culture and ideology. Iqbal's *Bandagi Nama* (*Book of Servitude*), which is essentially a polemical attack on the impact of imperialism, highlights his fear of ideological and intellectual domination.[84] In this work, the condition of slavery is used to describe physical domination but is also extended to refer to domination in the realms of art, religion and thought.[85] This fear of domination by alien forms of expression and aesthetics renders questionable the common assertion that Iqbal was a modernist who furthered Hali's and Muhammad Hussain Azad's attempts to put Urdu poetry on the paths of modernity by casting aside more traditional metres and forms of poetic expression in favour of more modern, primarily western ones.

More importantly, the *Bandagi Nama's* rejection of artists and intellectuals who were 'dominated by the ideas of others' and 'blinded by slavery and imitation' reflects a theme central to much of Iqbal's poetry. An individual who was enamoured by the ideas of others, Iqbal stressed, lost the essential knowledge of the self. Addressing the products of Sayyid

[82] Khan, *Basic Documents*, i, 14–15.

[83] Quoted in Gail Minault and David Lellyveld, 'The Campaign for a Muslim University, 1898–1920' in *Modern Asian Studies*, 8, 2 (1974), p. 156.

[84] Iqbal wrote that it was better to live for a millennium in a dangerous desert infested with scorpions, ants, venomous snakes and fiery winds than spend a moment in servitude. Iqbal, *Gulshan-i-Raz Jadid (New Garden of Mystery) and Bandagi Nama (Book of Servitude)*, translated by B. A. Dar (Lahore, 1964), p. 65.

[85] Iqbal spoke in this work of artists who are 'slaves". These 'slaves' sing only 'songs of death' and paint works which are dominated by 'death themes". Ibid., 66–71.

Ahmad Khan's attempts at educational and civilisational reform, Iqbal wrote:

> *tera wajood serapa tajli afrang*
> *ke tu wahan ke imarat-garoon ki hain taimeer*
> *magar ye paikar-i-khaki khudi se hai khali*
> *faqat neem hain tu, zarnagar-o-be shamsher.*
>
> Your existence is totally the dazzle of the West,
> For you are an edifice constructed by the builders there.
> But this form of dust is bereft of the Self; you are nothing but a gold-ornamented
> Scabbard without a sword.[86]

Iqbal's critique of modernist institutions like Aligarh and his own educational proposals will be discussed in Chapter 5. It is, however, pertinent to note here that educational institutions were seen by the Allama as important tools for the cultivation of hegemonic power. The modern educational institutions in India were media which perpetuated Muslim disempowerment by detracting the Muslim from a knowledge of himself while strengthening western cultural and political hegemony. They were geared, he argued, solely towards the production of functionaries for the colonial state. Such views reflected the concerns of those who, like the Sheikh-ul-Hind, Mehmood Hasan (1851–1920), lambasted the contemporary college system in India for producing nothing but 'cheap slaves'.[87]

In this way, Iqbal anticipated later third-worldist and post-colonial critiques of colonialism by figures such as Frantz Fanon, Albert Memmi and Jean-Paul Sartre as a 'complete system' extending to the realms of politics, culture and society.[88] A number of third-worldist intellectuals have argued that colonialism not only colonised but also created the very spaces and subjects of colonisation. The created subjects, or 'fabricated natives', are alienated from their true selves and 'mythified' in their own inferiority.[89] Alienation, which disturbs the colonised subject's frame of

[86] Iqbal, Kulliyat-i-Iqbal, p. 495. English translation from D. J. Matthews *Iqbal: A Selection of the Urdu Verse* (London, 1993), pp. 132–133.

[87] This statement was read out by Shabbir Ahmad Usmani. *Sheikh-ul-Hind Hazrat Maulana Mehmood Hussein Sahib ka Khutbat Sardarat jo Jalsa Ifteta Muslim National University Aligarh Mein 14 Safar 1339 Mutabiq 29 August ko Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani ne Parh Kar Sunaya* (Delhi, undated), p. 7.

[88] See, for instance, Jean-Paul Sartre, *Colonialism and Neo-Colonialism*, translated by Azzedine Haddour, Steve Brewer and Terry McWilliams (London, 2001).

[89] Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin White Masks*, translated by C. L. Markmann (New York, 1967), pp. 83–141.

reference and vision, is a major theme in Iqbal's work. Throughout much of his work, Iqbal links the disempowerment of Muslims, India and the East to the alienation of the colonised subjects from their own *asliyyat*, or true essence.[90]

Such concerns are often reflected in Iqbal's poetry through the use of the imagery of 'vision' and 'sight'. In a number of his works, Iqbal refers to the 'sight' or 'vision' of the Muslim, Indian and/or person of the East being 'captured", 'imprisoned' and 'entrapped' by the 'beauties", 'sights", 'lights' and 'grandeurs' of the West. Western civilisation, he warned, corrupted both the heart and 'vision'/'sight'.[91] In his *Javid Nama*, Iqbal uses the imagery of 'vision' and 'gaze' to express his concern over the loss of autonomy and the fear of having one's identity defined and therefore fixed by the gaze of the more powerful.[92] Whereas the process of domination was likened to the capturing of one's sight, resistance was described in terms of eyes which refused to be blinded or dominated by the sights of Europe and which held fast to their own frame of reference. He wrote, for instance:

> *kheira na kar saka mujhe jalwa-i-danish-i-firang*
> *soorma hai meri ankh ka khak-i-madina-o-najaf.*
>
> The grandeurs and lights of the west failed to entrap me
> I have lined my eyes with the dust of Medina and Najaf.[93]

Re-empowerment was described in terms of the regaining of vision or the strengthening of the sight. In his poem 'Tariq ki Dua' ('Tariq's Prayer'), Tariq, the Muslim general who conquered the Iberian Peninsula in the eighth century, prays to God to turn the sight of Muslims into swords and to re-bless them with the vision they have since lost.[94]

Anticipating later third-worldist writings, Iqbal argued that colonial narratives 'discovered' or created colonised spaces and bodies as premodern spaces requiring 'tutelage' in modern ideas and institutions.[95] The colonised subject is shaped as an inferior being who needs to be saved, taught and civilised. He reversed such colonial constructions by linking the weakness of the East directly to its loss of vision, that is, its

[90] See, for instance, his poem, 'Khuftaghan-i-Khak se Istafasar' ('Interrogation of the Dead'). Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, p. 38.
[91] Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, p. 533.
[92] Majeed, 'Pan-Islam and 'Deracialisation' in the Thought of Muhammad Iqbal' in Peter Robb (ed.) *The Concept of Race in South Asia* (Delhi, 1995), pp. 324–326.
[93] Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, p. 397.
[94] Ibid., p. 397.
[95] See his poem 'Intidab', which translates as 'tutelage". Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, p. 613.

blind imitation of the West and the uncritical adoption of facets of its civilisation.

Iqbal's rejection of western philosophy in the latter part of his life is conventionally presented as evidence to substantiate the view that his thought was derived from purely Islamic sources. It would be more accurate to view his polemics against Hegel and other western thinkers as a rejection of western intellectual domination.[96] Moreover, Iqbal's rejection of western thought should be seen in the light of his attempts to escape the 'prisonhouse of reason' in which colonised intellectuals found themselves locked. Partha Chatterjee has noted that

> the discourse of Reason was not unequivocally liberating. The invariable implication it carried of the historical necessity of colonial rule, and its condemnation of indigenous culture as the storehouse of unreason, or (in a stage-of-civilisation argument) of reason yet unborn, which only colonial rule could bring to birth (as father, mother or midwife – which?), made the discourse of Reason oppressive.[97]

One method through which Iqbal sought to escape this oppression of rationalism and reason was through the elevation of *ishq* (love, or the realm of the heart) over *ilm* or *aql* (knowledge, mind, rationality) in both his poetry and philosophy. In his philosophical writings, although acknowledging the importance of the empirical approach, he stressed the importance of the heart over sense perception in the comprehension of Reality.[98] Rationalism and *ilm* or *aql*, he argued, led only to dissatisfaction and hunger, apart from serving to perpetuate colonial hegemony. It was *ishq* that provided fulfilment and the cure for the 'modern maladies'.[99] Europe had built philosophical, theological and socio-political systems on rationalism; all of these had failed to achieve the 'fire of living conviction', which was found in the realm of the heart alone.[100] In his poetry, Iqbal described the realm of the heart as the true locus of knowledge of the self and the only source for the re-empowerment of the colonised. The pursuit of reason and rationalism would only serve to 'entrap' them further. This is perhaps best reflected in a line from his *Bal-i-Jibril*, in which he called on his people to escape the colonisation of the physical

[96] In his 'Ek Falsafah-zadah Sayyid-zadeh Ke Naam' Iqbal wrote, 'Hegel ka sadaf gauhar se khali' ('Hegel's oyster shell is without a gem'). *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, p. 480.

[97] Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments*, p. 55.

[98] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 15.

[99] The contrast between *ilm* and *ishq* is a constant theme in his poetry. See, for instance, his poem 'Aqal aur Dil' ('Intellect and the Heart') in Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, pp. 41–44.

[100] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 179.

realm by taking recourse in the realm of the heart, where there was no western domination.[101]

Through his emphasis on the realm of the heart, Iqbal challenged both the modernists and the ulama. The elevation of the realm of the heart escaped the western hegemony implicit in the educational reforms and rationalism advocated by the modernists, yet it also created an autonomous space for the individual Muslim to interpret Islam. He called on the Muslim to look to his own heart to find true Islam instead of looking to the *mulla*, a term used to describe an alim which can have a derogatory connotation.[102] Figures such as Iqbal utilised print media, particularly poetry, to galvanise the Muslim community by appealing to the realm of the heart,[103] rather than the legalistic and rationalist discourse which characterised the work of the traditional religious leadership and the modernists.

FRAGMENTATION OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY

The foregoing discussion has attempted to locate Iqbal within the spectrum of modern Muslim thought by highlighting the differences between him and the modernists. Iqbal's critique of the intellectual captivity of the modernist intellectuals had important implications for his religious and political discourse. The next chapter will examine his attempts to shape an empowering interpretation of Islam that contested both the work of the ulama and the writings of the modernists. First, however, this chapter will explore the attempts by Iqbal and other modern intellectuals to carve out a space for themselves to interpret and write on Islam.

In an article published in *Makhzan* in 1904, Iqbal wrote that just as numerous human communities have disappeared in the course of the evolution of man, numerous religions have come and gone as man developed new intellectual and spiritual needs. It was thus essential for religious leaders to re-evaluate their religions continually in the light of new conditions and knowledge, as well as to present its religious principles in ways that would fulfil the new spiritual and intellectual needs of the people.[104] The traditional religious leadership, both the ulama and the Sufis,[105] were

[101] Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, p. 323.

[102] Ibid., p. 325.

[103] Aptly highlighted by David Gilmartin in his 'Democracy, Nationalism and the Public: A Speculation on Colonial Muslim Politics' in *South Asia*, 14, 1 (1991), pp. 123–140.

[104] Iqbal, 'Qawmi Zindagi' in *Makhzan*, 8, 1 (October, 1904), pp. 26–27. *File of Iqbal's Works* (3), March 1902–1905, Iqbal Academy Pakistan, Lahore (IAP).

[105] It is not assumed here that the ulama and the Sufis constituted two exclusive categories. The terms are used separately here mainly because Iqbal was to critique the Sufis

attacked for failing to provide a modern interpretation of Islam. Iqbal was not alone in doing so; the traditional religious leadership was widely criticised by the modern intellectuals both for failing to pay attention to the *duniya-i-taraqi* (worldly progress) of Muslims and for being incapable of gaining any inspiration from modern thought to present an interpretation of Islam suited to the modern period.[106] Iqbal felt that Muslims had in the past ensured that Islam remained relevant and responded to contemporary conditions by critically re-examining Islam according to the needs of the time.[107] Muslims around the world, he argued, were generally either engaged in a struggle for freedom or grappling with Islam; this situation had given rise to many questions and issues which were unfortunately not being met by the religious leadership.[108] Consequently, this 'immense task' had fallen on the shoulders of the modern intellectual, who had to 'rethink the whole system of Islam without completely breaking with the past'.[109]

This attempt to carve out a space for modern intellectuals to interpret Islam and to chart a path for the development of Muslims must be seen in the light of the fragmentation of religious authority that occurred in the wake of the expansion in print culture and education.[110] In this regard, Iqbal believed that the role of the Muslim intellectual was to provide a re-interpretation of Islam and its institutions in the light of the modern context, an interpretation which would liberate Muslims from the clutches of both modernity and tradition as well as reveal a message of physical and intellectual empowerment for Muslims and the colonised East in general. Like many other colonial intellectuals, Iqbal reflected the East-West dichotomy in his assessment of the political and intellectual context of the period. Thus he interpreted the decline of Muslim powers and India within the perspective of a wider disempowerment of the East.

for developing a separate metaphysics and philosophy. The usage of the terms is also in accordance with Iqbal's use of the terms in his work.

[106] Sayyid Ahmad Khan, for instance, wrote an article, 'Din aur Duniya Ka Rasta', in which he criticised both the pirs and the maulvis for failing to pay attention to the issue of *duniya-i-taraqi*. Khan, *Maqalat-i-Sir Sayyid*, v, 82–86.

[107] Iqbal, *Iqbal Nama*, p. 148.

[108] Iqbal felt that they had failed to meet the challenge primarily because they were either engaged in *khidmat parasti* (servitude) or were simply ignorant.

[109] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 97.

[110] I draw here from Piscatori and Eickelman who have argued that the expansion of print allowed for the 'fragmentation of religious authority', where religious interpretation was no longer limited or dependent upon the trained religious elite but open to anyone who could publish. See *Muslim Politics*, especially pp. 40–68 and 131–135.

Although the Muslims of India were not able to contribute physically to the social and political struggles of Muslims elsewhere, Iqbal felt that they were uniquely placed to make an important contribution to Islamic thought, one which could lead to a rejuvenation of Muslims and Islam.[111] He frequently stressed that the intellectual and political issues confronting the Muslims of India were of relevance to the whole of Asia, and that a resolution of the cultural and political issues confronting the Muslim and Hindu communities in India was important to Islam and for the relations between the East and West.[112] Muslim intellectuals in India were thus called upon to write on socio-politically relevant issues, evaluate the utility of adopting western institutions and ideologies, and determine whether these ideals and institutions were compatible with Islam. Such was the task that Iqbal set for himself and his contemporaries.

The modern intellectuals based their right to interpret Islam and its sources upon the principle of *ijtihad*. They claimed that *ijtihad* was a cardinal principle of Islam and that the notion that the gates of *ijtihad* had been closed with the formation of the different schools of law, or *mazhabs*, was not historically grounded.[113] It was even asserted that the idea had been fabricated by the ulama to secure their positions and perpetuate their monopoly over the sources of Islam.[114] It was, they argued, the stress on *taqlid* (lit. imitation or to follow)[115] over *ijtihad* by the traditional religious authorities that led to their failure in providing guidance to Muslims of the day.

The ulama were also attacked for their failure to draw inspiration from modern thought and experience, a result of their ignorance of modern knowledge and intellectual developments in the West. Interestingly, Sayyid Ahmad Khan contrasted the ulama of his day with those of the period in which the Muslim world first interacted with Greek thought. He argued

[111] 'Mera ek mudat se ye aqaida hai ke Hindustan ke Mussalman jo siyasi aitbar se digar mamulk-i-Islamia ki koi madad nahin kar saktey, damaghi aitbar se un ki bahut kuch madad kar saktey hain'. ['I have been convinced for some time that the Muslims of India, who are unable to help other Muslims states politically, can play an important role in helping them intellectually'.] Muhammad Iqbal to Sayyid Suleiman Nadwi in Iqbal, *Iqbal Nama*, pp. 148–149.

[112] Iqbal, *Letters and Writings*, pp. 68–69.

[113] See, for instance, Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, pp. 148–150.

[114] See Maududi's discussion on the 'world-worshipping' ulama, who fed the idea that *ijtihad* was 'sinful' and who vehemently opposed attempts by Muslims to practise independent judgement in his *A Short History of the Revivalist Movements*, translated by Al-Ashari, 2nd revised edn. (Lahore, 1972), especially pp. 25–78.

[115] *Taqlid* refers to the acceptance of a religious ruling from someone who is regarded as a higher religious authority without necessarily asking for technical proof.

that contact with Greek philosophy had led people to believe that their religious principles were false, but the ulama of the day had risen to the challenge by either re-interpreting religion in the light of philosophy or proving the principles of Greek philosophy to be dubious. The ulama of his day, however, had failed to provide an Islamic response to modern science and knowledge.[116] In fact, a number of the new intellectuals argued that the inability of the ulama to respond to modern knowledge primarily resulted from the fact that a number of their religious propositions and presuppositions were constructed upon principles derived from Greek philosophy, principles which had been shown to be false by developments in science and modern thought.[117] The ulama had erroneously constructed the principles derived from Greek philosophy as the science of Islam and had perceived any challenge to these principles as a threat to Islam itself.[118]

This critique was extended to the literature produced by the ulama. An exchange between Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Mohsin-ul-Mulk Mehdi Ali is instructive here. The Sayyid lamented that there were no works on Islam which allowed for a comparison of the principles of Islam with those of modern science. Although there were a large number of *tafsir*s (exegeses) produced by the ulama, he stressed that these were largely no more than listings of verses and classifications of the verses as Meccan or Medinan.[119] In response to Mohsin-ul-Mulk's rejection of his views as *la-mazhabi* (irreligious) and his refusal to accept the Sayyid's writings on the Quran as a *tafsir*, Sayyid Ahmad Khan argued that it was first necessary to establish the principles upon which *tafsir*s were to be written and judged.[120] Iqbal echoed such views when he argued that although the available *tafsir*s had served their purpose previously, they contained many things which did not appeal to the modern mind and which failed to deal with issues that were of crucial importance in the modern period.[121] The modern intellectuals sought to fill the gap through the publication of *tafsir*s and works which can broadly be classified as topical *tafsir*s, that is, commentaries that deal with specific Quranic subjects such as divorce, leadership and politics.[122] Essentially, the new intellectuals felt

[116] Khan, 'Quran Majeed ki Tafsir ke Usul' in *Maqalat-i-Sir Sayyid*, ii, 199.
[117] Ibid.
[118] Apart from the article by Sayyid Ahmad Khan quoted previously, see Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 156.
[119] Khan, *Maqalat-i-Sir-Sayyid*, ii, 225.
[120] Ibid, pp. 229–257.
[121] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, ii, 493.
[122] Jansen has noted that apart from the complete 'uninterrupted' *tafsirs*, there are 'topical' *tafsirs* which deal with specific Quranic subjects. He has also noted that it is, however,

that they were better placed to write on Islam as they could incorporate new intellectual developments and methodologies in their works. Iqbal felt that they were also better placed to write on Islam as they were aware of the latest scholarship on Islam in the West; they could also play an important role by translating western works on Islam into Urdu to provide the ulama with an idea of what was being written in Europe.[123]

Muhammad Iqbal wrote neither a *tafsir* nor a *tarjuman* (interpretation) of the Quran. He had planned to expand his unpublished article on *ijtihad*, written in 1925, into a book entitled *Islam as I Understand It*. This work was to present his *jati rai*, or personal opinions, on Islam.[124] The Allama had also started work on a book on the Quran. In a letter to Ross Masud, personal secretary to the Nawab of Bhopal, in which he requested funds from the nawab to enable him to complete this work, Iqbal wrote that he believed that this work would be an important contribution to modern Islam.[125] Iqbal had aimed to divest Islam of the Magian, Iranian and Greek overlays which Islam had acquired over the centuries and to shape a return to the 'pristine message of Islam'.[126] Although neither of these books, nor some articles which he had been working on, were completed because of ill health, his notes to these works provide an insight into his views. Apart from various speeches and published prose writings and poems, further insights into Iqbal's views on Islam can be gleamed from his *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, a collection of lectures that Iqbal delivered in 1929 in Hyderabad, Madras and Aligarh.

Claims by the modern intelligentsia to interpret Islam and their critique of the traditional religious authorities did not go unchallenged. The ulama responded by disputing the right of the new western-educated intellectual to practise *ijtihad* and by stressing the importance of *taqlid*. They essentially argued that the lack of religious training and poor grounding in *fiqh* detracted from the western-educated individual's ability to speak on Islam. Their views were rejected as *tafsir bil ray*, interpretations which were based solely on personal opinions and not on any recognised methodology. Such interpretations, they argued, were dangerous, as they led to the development of factions and sects within the fold of Islam.[127]

impossible to draw a sharp distinction between the 'topical' commentaries and books about the Quran and books about Islam. J. J. G. Jansen, *The Interpretation of the Koran in Modern Egypt* (Leiden, 1980), pp. 13–14.

[123] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, i, 177–178.

[124] Iqbal, *Iqbal Nama*, p. 47.

[125] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, iv, 116–117.

[126] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 106.

[127] See, for instance, Madani's assertion that Maududi's *maslak* is un-Islamic. Madani, *Maududi Dastur aur Aqaid ki Haqiqat* (1956).

An open letter by Maulana Madani addressed to the *amir* of the Jamaat-e-Islami, Maududi, in which he refuted the religious views of the latter provides interesting insights into the ulama's response to the new intellectuals. Although this letter was written in 1949, placing it beyond the time period studied in the present work, it is perhaps the most succinct statement of a traditionally trained alim's views on the rise of the new interpreters (and interpretations) of Islam. This letter specifically attacked the work of Maududi, but at a more general level it refuted the right of the new western-educated intellectual to interpret Islam. Madani began by accusing Maududi of trying to build a new Islam, one that was based on principles and ideas which were against the ahl-i-Sunnat and ahl-i-Jamiyyat (the Sunnis).[128] He stated that Maududi, like every western-educated 'professor' who has some knowledge of Arabic no matter how limited, claimed the right to publish his *tafsir* and present his ideas as the definitive views on Islam. Such writings, which were merely *tafsir bil ray* and not in accordance with any valid methodologies of interpretation, constituted *fitna* (apostasy or rebellion).[129] Madani argued that the history of Islam revealed how groups have drifted astray from the teachings of Islam by following such inauthentic and divisive interpretations. The western-educated intellectual was armed only with his Oxford or Cambridge degrees and felt that this was sufficient qualification for him to interpret Islam. Just as no one could claim to be a doctor unless he had the necessary medical qualification, Madani stressed that it was immaterial how well qualified one was in various subjects. One required a thorough training in religious subjects before one could claim to speak on Islam.[130]

Madani not only questioned the qualifications of the western-educated intellectuals to interpret Islam; indeed, he rejected their very right to practise *ijtihad*. Modern intellectuals, he argued, were wrong in calling for people to abandon the practise of *taqlid*. He quoted from the Quran to substantiate his view that the forsaking of *taqlid* would lead to grave danger, as the freedom claimed by individuals to interpret Islam would

[128] Madani, *Maktubat Sheikh-ul-Islam*, p. 406. The terms *ahl-i-Sunnat* (people of the tradition of the Prophet) and *ahl-i-Jamiyyat* (people of the *Jamiyyat* or people of the union) are used to refer to Sunni Muslims who are often described as the *ahl-i-Sunnat wa Jamiyyat* (people of the way of the Prophet and the *jamiyyat*).

[129] Madani stressed that Maududi is not the only one who has committed such *fitna*. He specifically highlighted the Khaksar movement as another instance of a group propagating false interpretations of the Quran. Madani, *Maktubat Sheikh-ul-Islam*, ii, 407 and 409.

[130] Ibid., pp. 410–411.

lead people away from the path of *din* and *mazhab*.[131] The gates of *ijtihad* had been closed in the fourteenth century when all doctrinal and legal issues had been resolved by the ulama and the *fuqaha* (legalists). The need of the day was for Muslims to abide by what had been recorded in the annals of Islam and to practise *taqlid* of leading figures such as Imam Hanafi, Imam Maliki and Imam Shafi.[132]

Sections of the ulama also sought to confront the challenge posed to their authority by organising themselves in associations which aimed to provide leadership to the Muslim community on religious and non-religious issues, and by actively publishing journals, newspapers and pamphlets. One of the most prominent organisations established by the ulama was the Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind. The wide remit of the Jamiyyat is clear from the fact that it aimed to provide guidance for Muslims not only in strictly religious and *shari* (legal) matters but also for Muslim political and social development. In fact, the Deobandi alim, Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani (1886–1949), specifically stressed the political and intellectual role of the Jamiyyat when he stated in the annual meeting of the Jamiyyat in 1925 that the ulama in modern India had thus far failed to provide an intellectual understanding and interpretation of politics in Islam, and that the Jamiyyat aimed to correct this.[133]

The traditional religious authorities actively participated in the expanding public arena through the publication of newspapers, tracts, journals, magazines and biographical literature.[134] The Sufis also produced such publications both to respond to criticisms levelled against them and to shape a revival and reform of Sufism. Jamaat Ali (d. 1951), for instance, asserted the centrality of his journal, *Risala Anwar-al-Sufiya* (*Journal of the Light of the Sufis*), as the means of communication with his followers by stressing that it was incumbent upon his followers to read the journal.[135] The Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind published two newspapers, *Muslim* and *al Jamiyyat*, which carried articles on a wide range of issues from political developments in Europe to reviews of recent scholarship on Islam. In fact, it could even be argued that that these publications

[131] Ibid., pp. 414–415.

[132] Ibid., p. 415.

[133] *Khutbat-i-Sardarat Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind*, 1921–1972, NML (Microfilm).

[134] Robinson has explored the foray into the public arena by the ulama of the Farangi Mahal, particularly their publication of the journal *an-Nizamiyya* and their publication of biographical literature. Robinson, *The 'Ulama of the Farangi Mahal and Islamic Culture in South Asia* (New Delhi, 2001).

[135] Noted by Arthur F. Buehler in *Sufi Heirs of the Prophet: The Indian Naqshbandiyya and the Rise of the Mediating Sufi Shaykh* (Columbia, 1998).

essentially performed the role of the *fatwa* because they relayed the views of the ulama on various social, economic and political issues to the general public.

Politics, specifically the future political framework of independent India, was an issue that was widely covered in the Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind's publications. Apart from their newspapers, the ulama published a number of tracts in which they presented their views on the future political structure of India.[136] Through these publications the ulama sought to challenge the right of the new intellectuals to speak on the political principles of Islam and to refute their claim to provide leadership to the Muslim community. An article published on 1 November 1938, for example, argued that the Muslim League and its supporters were seeking to benefit by giving politically motivated and false interpretations of the Quran and *hadith*.[137] In a number of their articles and tracts, they attacked the new intellectuals and statesmen for lacking, first, knowledge of Islam and, second, the moral virtues required of someone to lead the community.[138] Interestingly, Iqbal's political views were rejected as the views of a person who was totally ignorant of both Islam and politics.[139]

It has already been noted that this chapter does not seek to classify religious and socio-political discourse in South Asia in terms of an alim and non-alim dichotomy. Despite his criticisms of the ulama, Iqbal was closely associated with a number of the leading ulama of his generation and agreed with them on various matters. His letters to the alim Suleiman Nadwi in which he inquires about the 'Islamic perspective' on a host of doctrinal and non-doctrinal issues bear testimony to the fact that he also drew upon their views and experience in developing his own religious and political ideas.[140] It is generally assumed that Iqbal and other modern intellectuals were opposed to the ulama having any role in the future development of Islam and Muslims. Although debates over the role of the ulama in the future political structure of India will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5, it is important to note here that Iqbal recognised the important role the traditional religious authorities could play in shaping

[136] As will be discussed in Chapter 5, some of the ulama used newspapers and tracts to oppose the demand for Pakistan.

[137] 01/11/38, *al Jamiyyat*, NML (Microfilm).

[138] This was a characteristic feature of the tracts they published to refute the claims by the Muslim League to represent Muslims. See, for instance, Madani, *Civil Marriage aur League* (Delhi, undated).

[139] 05/01/31, *al Jamiyyat*.

[140] Discussed later.

the revival of Muslims and Islam. He looked to some members of the ulama, particularly Azad, Shibli and Suleiman Nadwi, to play a more active role in guiding the Muslims of India by giving lectures in various parts of India[141] and by publishing works on key issues.[142] Recognising the sway and influence Sufi organisations exerted, especially in rural areas such as Punjab, Iqbal looked to figures like the prominent Chisti Sufi and scholar, Hasan Nizami (1878–1955), to shape a Muslim revival. In fact, in April and May of 1931, he worked to organise a conference of *sajjada nashins* (descendants of Sufi saints who play an important institutional role linked to the administration of the shrines) and ulama, the express aim of which was to chart a plan to 'protect Islam' and to aid Muslims politically and economically.[143] It will be clear from subsequent chapters that although Iqbal was highly critical of a number of the ulama of his day, there were a host of issues on which his views were closer to those espoused by sections of the ulama than those of the modernists.

CONCLUSION

It is clear from the foregoing discussion that the Allama conceived of colonialism as a totalitarian exercise of power that extended beyond physical domination into the realms of culture and ideology. Accordingly, Iqbal's '*nala-i-jung*', or 'song of war', encapsulated the realms of art, philosophy, religion and politics. Iqbal envisaged that his main role as an intellectual and poet was to resist colonial hegemony and to help shape the re-empowerment of the Muslims and the East.

By exploring Iqbal's perception of his role as an intellectual and locating him within the spectrum of modern thought, this chapter has sought to lay the basis for an analysis of Iqbal's reconstruction of Islam, his interaction with western socio-political ideals and his views on the development of the Muslims. As the next chapter will demonstrate, unlike the modernists, Iqbal did not call for Islam to be interpreted in the light of

[141] In a letter to Nadwi, he stated that the work of the eloquent ulama had brought about some improvement in the conditions of the Muslims in Punjab, and that he had sought, in vain, to arrange for Shibli to tour the region. He called on Nadwi to travel to the Punjab, asserting that his presence would definitely have an impact on Muslims. Iqbal, *Iqbal Nama*, pp. 77–78.

[142] A particular case in point is Iqbal's appreciation of the writings of certain ulama on the 'Qadiani issue'. He noted that Azad's writings had been successful in stemming the expansion of the movement and called on the ulama to produce more works on the issue. Iqbal, *Iqbal Nama*, p. 199.

[143] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, iii, 194–195.

modern conceptions of religion. Nor did he call for the blind adoption of western political institutions and development patterns. Instead, challenging the traditional religious elite and the modernists alike, Iqbal sought to construct Islam into a complete and empowering ideology for both Muslims and the colonised East – an ideology or system that could be contrasted with western socio-political ideologies and systems such as nationalism and socialism. This reconstruction of Islam will be studied in the next chapter.

3

Reconstruction of Islam

Rindi se bhi agha, shariat se bi waqif
Pocho jo tasuf ki to Mansoor ka shani
Is shaks ki hum par haqiqat nahin khulti
hoga ye kisi aur hi Islam ka bani

Aware of the way of drunkenness, familiar with the sharia,
Asked about Sufism he proves to be the equal of Mansoor,
It is not possible to get to the truth of his reality,
He must be the advocate of a different Islam.

Iqbal[1]

In his autobiographical poem 'Zuhd aur Rindi' ('Piety and Libertinism'), Iqbal described himself as the harbinger of a 'different Islam'.[2] The Allama's political philosophy was founded upon his interpretation of Islam as a comprehensive system which could be presented as an ideology of protest against western physical and ideological domination. The aim of this chapter is to discuss salient aspects of Muhammad Iqbal's reconstruction of Islam, particularly his assertion that Islam was 'something more than a creed'[3] – that is, a complete system and ideology – and his promotion of it as an empowering ethic for Muslims and the colonised East in general. Such a construction contested, on the one hand, universalist ideologies such as Marxism and, on the other, what were perceived as the other-worldly and ascetic tendencies of religions such as Christianity and Buddhism.

[1] A stanza from Iqbal's autobiographical poem, *Zuhd aur Rindi*. Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, pp. 59–60.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Iqbal, *Thoughts and Reflections*, edited by S. A. Vahid (Lahore, 1964), p. 51.

Although his interpretation of Islam as a 'system' and an 'ideology' was to influence Maududi and others who were to give shape subsequently to a more defined 'political Islam', Iqbal's views were by no means unchallenged. It was noted in the previous chapter that a number of prominent ulama refuted the right of new western-educated intellectuals like Iqbal to practise *ijtihad*. Iqbal's attempts to shape an Islamic polity were lambasted by figures like Madani, who suggested that Iqbal's work reflected the fact that he lacked any understanding of either Islam or politics.[4] Iqbal's interpretation of Islam will be compared and contrasted here with those of other leading Muslim figures of the period.

Finally, the chapter will also explore Iqbal's views on the Ahmadiyya movement. As noted in the Introduction, Iqbal's views on the Ahmadiyya have been the source of considerable controversy. Scholarly work on Iqbal's views on the Ahmadiyya movement has thus far been limited to highlighting his rejection of the founder's claim to prophethood as un-Islamic. Iqbal's concerns over the wider social and political implications of the movement, for both Islam and India, remain unexplored. It will be shown in this chapter that Iqbal rejected the movement as an attempt to provide a theological and revelational basis for Muslim decline and disempowerment. Such a study provides an interesting comparison of Iqbal's reconstruction of Islam with a contemporaneous movement dismissed for failing to provide an empowering and 'authentic' interpretation of Islam.

'RETURN' TO AN EMPOWERING AND 'AUTHENTIC' ISLAM

The previous chapter highlighted Iqbal's call for Muslim intellectuals to provide a new interpretation of Islam suited to the modern context, an interpretation which would provide a message of physical and intellectual empowerment for Muslims as well as the colonised East. Such calls for a new interpretation/re-interpretation/reconstruction essentially encapsulated a call for a return to '*thet*', '*sacha*' or 'true' Islam.[5] Individuals as varied as Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Iqbal, Madani and Maududi strove to provide authentic Islamic solutions to contemporary problems. The attempt by scholars to locate some theological arguments – as well as political

[4] See page 97. Also see discussion of the debate between Iqbal and Madani over nationalism in the next chapter.

[5] Sayyid Ahmad Khan described his discourse as a restatement of the '*thet* Islam'. See, for instance, Khan, *Maqalat-i-Sir Sayyid*, iii, 23–27. Others such as Iqbal, Madani and Maududi spoke of their own writings as a return to '*sacha*' or 'true' Islam.

actions and ideas – as 'Islamic' while dismissing others as 'un-Islamic' or 'extraneous to Islamic culture' has detracted both from a proper analysis of the work of Muslim thinkers and also from an understanding of the evolution of Islam.[6]

The evolution of Islam must be understood in the light of wider developments in the concept and definition of religion itself. The concept of religion has not remained static; its relationship with nature, science, society and politics has been re-negotiated over time. Muslims, like non-Muslims, have re-interpreted their religious traditions in view of these developments. It is, therefore, important to study modern Muslim thought in the context of developments in religious thought that occurred in the wake of the Enlightenment. The 'rise' of reason and science and the work of figures such as Newton and Locke challenged older notions of religion and gave rise to newer conceptions of the role of religion and theological stances. Two post-Enlightenment strands of religious thought will be discussed here – the demarcation of a 'religious' and 'temporal' sphere, and the idea of 'natural religion'. As modern Muslim intellectuals mainly encountered these developments in the colonial setting, their responses need to be understood in the light of orientalist writings and missionary activities and, more generally, within the context of colonialism.

The dominant contemporary definition of religion[7] as an autonomous realm of belief and activity separate from the 'temporal' realm of politics and economics emerged only in the wake of the Enlightenment. Influenced by the work of intellectuals such as John Locke, who sought to 'distinguish exactly the Business of Civil Government from that of Religion, and to settle the just Bounds that lie between one and the other',[8] religion

[6] Hamid Enayat, for instance, states that his concern is not with ideas put forward by Muslim thinkers but with ideas which are Islamic. He writes that 'it is not enough to extol a writer for his brave new ideas without first ascertaining the extent to which his creedal, epistemological and methodological premises have ensured the continuity of Islamic thought'. Enayat, *Modern Islamic Political Thought*, p. ix.

[7] Anthropologists have debated the utility of using the term 'religion' and the possibility of reaching a universal definition of the term. Talal Asad, for instance, has argued that it is not possible to have a universal definition of religion, because its constitutive elements and relationships are historically specific and because any definition will itself inherently be the historical product of discursive processes. See Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore, 1993), pp. 27–54. Others such as Benson Saler have defended the use of the term religion as an autonomous category of study and argued for the possibility of providing a universally acceptable definition of the term. See *Conceptualizing Religion: Immanent Anthropologists, Transcendent Natives, and Unbounded Categories* (New York, 2000).

[8] John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration* (Indianapolis, 1983), p. 26.

was now defined as having an essence which was autonomous from the essence of economics, science or politics. It was thus relegated to the purely private realm, having no influence in the economic, legal and political organisation of society. Although such a conception of religion had developed in response to problems specific to Christian theology,[9] its prevalence as the 'modern' definition of religion ensured that non-Christian and non-western intellectuals had to respond to it. It should be noted, however, that although such a definition of religion is dominant, it is by no means universally accepted. In many societies religion was – and is – not seen as a separate category of action and experience.

Another product of post-Enlightenment thought was the concept of natural religion, which stressed that the validity of a religion was based on its compatibility with the laws of nature and science.[10] This view emerged out of the writings of Isaac Newton and others, who developed the ontological argument that the clear design in nature indicated that there was an Intelligent Designer. The workings of nature were in themselves evidence of God. Newton, for instance, wrote that the fact that nature was rightly ordered and dispatched demonstrated that there is a Being that is incorporeal, living, intelligent and omnipresent. The order in nature could not spring from any natural cause but an Intelligent Agent. In response to challenges posed to religion by developments in scientific knowledge, it was argued that the 'work of God', nature, could never be opposed to the 'word of God', revelation. This strand of religious thought was perhaps summarised best by Thomas Paine, when he wrote that it

> is only in the CREATION that all our ideas and conceptions of *word of God* can unite. The Creation speaketh a universal language, independently of human speech or human languages, multiplied and various as they may be. It is an ever existing original which every man can read. It cannot be forged; it cannot be suppressed. It does not depend upon the will of man whether it shall be published or not; it publishes itself from one end of the earth to the other. It preaches to all nations and to all worlds; and this *word of God* reveals to man all that is necessary for man to know of God.[11] (italics added)

The idea of natural religion not only implied that true revelation, as opposed to false revelation, never contradicted the laws of nature and

[9] Asad, *Genealogies of Religion*, p. 42.

[10] Newton, 'The Argument for a Deity' in *Enlightenment Reader*, Isaac Kramnick (ed.) (New York, 1995), pp. 96–100.

[11] Thomas Paine, *The Age of Reason: Being an Investigation of True and Fabulous Theology* (Boston, 1852), pp. 31–32.

science, but also that religious texts could only be truly interpreted in the light of scientific knowledge.

Although these strands of religious thought stemmed from differing theological stances, both culminated in the argument that religion was compatible with modern intellectual, political and economic developments. In the case of the former, religion was clearly demarcated from 'temporal' affairs, hence, its authority was limited to the 'private' or 'spiritual' realm. For the proponents of natural religion, religion could never go against principles, ideas or systems which had emerged from the application of reason. In short, the two chief strands of religious thought which emerged in the wake of the Enlightenment essentially concluded that religion could adapt to any new developments in the socio-political environment. The following discussion will show that Muslim modernist responses to the post-Enlightenment developments in the concept of religion coalesced around two positions – first, that Islam was in no way incompatible with the laws of nature and, second, that the division between the public and private was implicit in Islam.

ISLAM IN THE MOULD OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT

A number of Muslim figures ranging from Sayyid Ahmad Khan to Nawab Nizamat Jung (1871–1955) spoke of Islam as a 'natural religion'[12] and the Quran as a 'rational book'.[13] In an article published in the *Tehzib al-Akhlaq* in 1879, Sayyid Ahmad Khan spoke of a 'modern approach to religion' that was opposed to the 'traditional approach'. Just as there had been a change in the principles of philosophy over time, there was a clear shift in the principles of religion in the modern period. The 'traditional approach to religion' was characterised as one where the individual searched for God in the dark with his eyes closed, and the 'modern approach' was described as one where the individual looked for Him in the light with his eyes wide open.[14] The need of the day was for a re-interpretation of Islam in the light of the 'modern approach' which was guided by developments in knowledge and science. The Sayyid argued that Islam was in no way opposed to developments in modern knowledge or to the laws of nature and science. As Islam was a 'natural religion', nothing in Islam

[12] Sayyid Ahmad Khan described Islam as a 'natural religion' and even argued that God has described Himself in the Quran as 'nature'. Khan, *Maqalat-i-Sir Sayyid*, xv, 146–153.

[13] Nizamat Jung, *An Approach to the Study of the Quran* (Lahore, 1947), pp. 10, 13, 14–15.

[14] Khan, *Maqalat-i-Sir Sayyid*, iii, pp. 23–27.

or the Quran could contradict the laws of nature, reason and science.[15] The 'work of God',[16] he argued, echoing Paine, could not be opposed to the 'word of God'.[17] The belief that Islam was incompatible with modern intellectual developments stemmed from the false association of Greek philosophy with Islam.[18]

The Sayyid called for revelation to be interpreted in the light of modern knowledge of the laws of nature and science. In his *tafsir* on the Quran, miracles and other supernatural phenomena are explained in terms of science and natural developments, and verses which seemed to indicate phenomena opposed to the laws of nature and science were explained as metaphorical.[19] Both the Sayyid and other proponents of natural religion suggested that if future progress in science and knowledge invalidated the foundations of contemporary knowledge systems, Islam and the Quran had to be again re-interpreted in the light of the new intellectual developments.[20] The wider implication of interpreting Islam as a 'natural religion' was to posit it as an elastic religion that was able to adapt to new intellectual and temporal developments. Islam was thus compatible with any political and economic system that emerged out of the principles of reason and intellectual development.

Such presentations of Islam as a 'natural religion' did not go unchallenged. Mohsin-ul-Mulk, who was a staunch supporter of Aligarh, accused the Sayyid of going beyond the reconciliation of religion and science or nature into deliberate misguiding and deception.[21] Reflecting Calvinist reactions to the concept of natural religion, modern Muslim proponents of natural religion were attacked for shaping a concept of God on the basis of their scientific views.[22] Revelation, it was argued,

[15] He uses the discredited notion that the sun revolves around the earth as a case in point. He argues that there has been a misconception that the Quran holds to the view that the sun revolves around the earth. This view is not found in the Quran; it was the result of the work of thinkers of the past and has been unfairly attributed to the Quran. Sayyid Ahmad Khan, *Akhiri Mazamin* (1898), pp. 21–23.

[16] It is interesting to note that the Sayyid directly transliterated the English terms 'word of God' and 'work of God' into the Urdu script and did not attempt to coin Urdu expressions for them.

[17] Khan, *Maqalat-i-Sir Sayyid*, ii, 206, 229–237.

[18] See, for instance, Khan, *Maqalat-i-Sir Sayyid*, vii, 213–215.

[19] For a good discussion of this, see Troll, *Sayyid Ahmad Khan*, pp. 177–187.

[20] See, for instance, Sayyid Ahmad Khan, *Maqalat-i-Sir Sayyid*, ii, 256–257.

[21] Ibid., p. 218.

[22] One of the axes of the ensuing theological debates was the position and power of God. The Sayyid was accused of displacing God from the day to day functioning of the universe through his focus on nature. He responded by arguing that his theological views did not in any way reduce the power or the position of God, and that God was the Cause of

could not be equated with science. In fact, Sayyid Ahmad Khan was mocked by some of those opposed to his views as a *nachari* (naturist) for reducing God to nature. For instance, in a lecture delivered to the Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam in 1893, Maulvi Hafiz Nazir Ahmad Khan attacked Aligarh for being a *nachargarh* (nature-house).[23] In response to his critics naming him 'Hazrat Nachariya' ('Sir Nature'), the Sayyid declared himself shocked and stated that those accusing him of inventing a new Islam did not realise that he was merely going back to true Arab Islam: They were accusing him of inventing a new Islam through *ijtihad* when they themselves were failing to practise *taqlid* of Arab Islam.[24]

An alternative strand of modern religious thought was represented by Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Shibli. Reacting to the view that the sources of Islam could only be interpreted in line with the laws of nature and science, they argued that religion and science essentially dealt with different realms of activity. Religion and science were defined as having their own 'bounds', each unconcerned with the activities of the other. Any 'trespass' on the part of one into the 'bounds' of the other was to be 'taken as a declaration of war'.[25] Nevertheless, even for Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Shibli, Islam and science did not conflict with or invalidate each other. The idea that there was an 'opposition between the religion and the science is an outcome merely of a mistake, or of trespassing the boundaries of either'.[26] Although Shibli has been portrayed as an intellectual with a 'medieval mind' who reacted unfavourably to the Sayyid's modernist interpretation of Islam,[27] both his and Mohsin-ul-Mulk's theological stance was actually in line with modernity's conception of religion as an autonomous sphere distinct from science, politics and other temporal fields of activity.

In essence, both the strands of modern Muslim religious thought previously described stressed the adaptability of Islam to modern intellectual and socio-political developments. Proponents of both schools drew from a number of examples from within the tradition of Islam to demonstrate

the ordered functioning of nature. Khan, 'Kya Nachar Ke Man-ne Se Khuda Mastad Ho Jata Hain' in *Tehzib al Akhlaq*, 1, 5 (1895), pp. 75–76.

[23] Khan, *The English Translation of Fitratula: A Lecture, Delivered in Urdu by Maulvi Hafiz Nazir Ahmad Khan of Delhi on the 8th Anniversary of the Anjuman-i-Himayet-i-Islam* (Lahore, 1893), p. 7.

[24] Khan, '*Nachar*' in *Maqalat-i-Sir Sayyid*, xv, 146–153.

[25] Mohsin-ul-Mulk, *The Propagation of Islam: A Lecture Delivered in Urdu*, translated and published by The Mohammadan Tract and Book Depot, Punjab (Lahore, 1893), pp. 37–50. Numani, *Maqalat-i-Shibli*, vii, 58–60.

[26] Mohsin-ul-Mulk, *The Propagation of Islam*, pp. 41–42.

[27] Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan*, p. 83.

this. In contrast, Muslim intellectuals who spoke of Islam as a system or polity had either to assert the uniqueness of Islam or to critique the modern concept of religion. As noted earlier, a number of Muslim intellectuals rejected the apolitical interpretation of Islam and emphasised the space of the political in Islam. We should take note in this regard of Muhammad Ali's response to the British journalist Valentine Chirol's writings on Sayyid Ahmad Khan. With specific reference to the Sayyid's educational reforms and his political stance of non-involvement in political agitation and unstinting loyalty to the British, Chirol stated that he was fundamental in achieving a synthesis between Muslim orthodoxy and western learning.[28] He declared that no other Muslim leader 'has deserved or enjoyed greater influence over his co-religionists'.[29] Chirol rejected the politically active generation of Muslim intelligentsia typified by the Ali brothers: He felt they were not only moving towards political upheaval, but because of their tendency to mix religion and politics, they were also straying from the Sayyid's attempts to convert Muslims 'to a more liberal and tolerant interpretation of their ancient faith'.[30] This elicited a strong response from Muhammad Ali, who stated that

> Sir Syed Ahmad Khan is very much revered by us but the world knows that the Musalman public never went to him to learn the Islamic law. There were many things in which he excelled … but in spite of this, no one relied upon him to the extent of believing that as Islam which Sir Syed laid down. Sir Valentine Chirol is welcome to such an Islam and such a faith, but this is certainly not our faith.[31]

In addition to deriding the accretion of un-Islamic practises, Allama Iqbal lamented that even at an intellectual, philosophical and theological level the message of Islam had been clouded by Greek classical, Judeo-Christian and modern or western ideas.[32] He argued that the interpretation of Islam in the light of modern western conceptions of religion had served to detract from the empowering and authentic principles of Islam. Prefiguring more recent critiques of the binary juxtaposition of the 'spiritual' and the 'material' by figures such as Foucault and Asad, Iqbal spoke of Greek classical thought and Christianity themselves as complex

[28] Valentine Chirol, *India*, *with an Introduction by H. A. L. Fischer* (London, 1926), p. 147.
[29] Chirol, *Indian Unrest: A Reprint, Revised and Enlarged from 'The Times', with an Introduction by Sir Alfred Lyall* (London, 1910), p. 131.
[30] Chirol, *India*, p. 148.
[31] Speech delivered at the Second Khilafat Conference at Lucknow on 26th February 1921. Home Department (Political), May 1921.
[32] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, iii, 695–698.

exercises of power which effected 'religion' as a sphere detached from the sphere of the 'material', that is, science and politics. The influence of Greek philosophy and Christian thought detracted from an understanding of the centrality of power to Islam and also led to Islam being limited to the private realm.

This is not to suggest that Iqbal's religious thought should be approached as an autonomous Islamic discourse. The influence of dissenting voices in the West on colonised intellectuals should not be neglected. Like many other Muslim figures, Iqbal drew heavily from the work of critics of contemporary western society, such as Matthew Arnold, Nietzsche and Tolstoy. Muslim intellectuals and preachers had long sought to respond to the attacks by Christian missionaries in India by drawing on western critiques of Christianity. In their early debates with missionaries, the ulama based their arguments upon secondary references and lacked any deep insight into the philosophical and theological debates occurring in Europe. Their arguments thus tended to focus primarily on issues such as the corruption of the Bible.[33] Iqbal was part of a burgeoning group of western-educated intellectuals who were more aware of western philosophical works and knowledgeable of the intellectual climate in Europe. Not only were they better placed to provide an intellectual response to anti-Islam polemics, they also incorporated western ideological developments and methodologies into their interpretations of Islam.

In Iqbal's reconstruction of Islam, one can locate a resonance of the views of a number of western thinkers such as Marx, Engels and Nietzsche, who attacked religion for functioning merely as a source of solace for the exploited while allowing the exploiters to perpetuate their social control.[34] Christianity, they argued, had served such purposes especially well because of its stress on other-worldliness and its promise of rewards for the poor and the weak in the hereafter.[35] Particularly salient was the work of Nietzsche, who had argued that the ascetic and other-worldly nature of Christianity had given shape to a 'slave morality'.[36]

[33] See Powell's discussion on the *munazara* (public disputations) between the ulama and Christian missionaries in *Muslims and Missionaries*; see especially pp. 217 and 242–254.

[34] See Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Marx and Engels on Religion* (Moscow, 1957).

[35] Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A Book for None and All*, translated and with a preface by Walter Kauffman (New York, 1995), pp. 30–33.

[36] Nietzsche, *On The Genealogy of Morals*, translated by Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollindale, *Ecce Homo*, translated, edited and introduction by Walter Kauffman (New York, 1989), pp. 34–35.

In a telling adaptation of Nietzsche's portrayal of the attempt by the lambs (Jews) to subdue the conquering birds of prey (Romans) by winning them over to their religious and moral views,[37] Iqbal used the imagery of the conquest of the race of the tigers by the race of the sheep. He did so to illustrate his point that Muslims had declined because they had been lured away from the true empowering message of Islam. The tigers were lured away from their true nature of conquest and sovereignty by the sheep, who convinced them that paradise was for the weak alone and that life is rendered unstable by the exercise of power. The tigers who embraced the religion of the sheep were lulled to slumber and eventually conquered.[38] Plato was portrayed as one of the 'philosopher[s] of the sheep' whose influence drew Muslims away from action and self-assertion.[39] The tale of the tigers and the sheep needs to be contextualised within the light of the physical and intellectual conquest of the Muslim world by the West.

Iqbal conceptualised power as a constructive and positive force. He derided the post-Enlightenment approach of dichotomising the material and the religious, as well as the even earlier intellectual tradition that viewed power as repressive. His entire reconstruction of Islam as an empowering ethic was founded upon the view that power, and political concepts, could not be viewed as belonging to a separate material realm. The dominant view of seeing power as a repressive structure that needed to be controlled, argued Iqbal, was itself the result of divorcing power from the realm of religion. This is brought out in a number of his poems, such as 'Quwaat aur Din' ('Power and Religion'):

Shikander-o-Changeez ke hatoon se jahaan mein
sau bar hoyi hazraat-i-insaan ki qaba-chak
tarikh-i-umim ka yeh paigham azali hain
'sahib nazraan! nasha-i-quwaat hain khatarnak'
is sheel-i-subak sibar-o-zameen gheer kea gay
aql-o-nazar-o-ilm-o-hunur hain khus-o-khashak
la-din ho to hain zehar hilahil se bhi bar kar
ho din ki hifazat mein to har zehar ka taryak.

At the hands of Alexander and Genghis on this earth
Numerous times has mankind been tattered and torn.
The history of mankind calls out
'Attention Sir! The intoxicant of power is dangerous'.
A quickly flowing flood it spreads over all,

[37] Nietzsche, *On The Genealogy of Morals*, pp. 34–36, 40–46 and 52–54.
[38] Iqbal, *Secrets of the Self*, pp. 52–55.
[39] Ibid., pp. 56–58.

> Art, insight, intellect and skill are carried along like straw.
> If it is divorced from *din* then it is the worse of poisons
> But if it is in the protection of faith then it is the antidote of all poisons. [40]

Moreover, the adoption of modern conceptions of religion detracted from an appreciation of the proper role of Islam, which provided principles for guidance in every field of activity. The ancient cultures of Asia as well as Christianity, he argued, had approached Reality exclusively from within and moved outwards. Christianity sought an independent content for spiritual life that could be elevated, not by forces of a world external to the soul, but by the revelation of a new world within. With Islam, the ideal and the real were not two opposing forces; the life of the ideal consists not of a total breach with the real, but in the endeavour of the ideal to appropriate the real with a view to eventually absorb it.[41] Islam recognised the world of matter and pointed to a way to master it with a view to discovering a basis for a realistic regulation of life.[42] The relegation of Islam solely to the private realm went against the spirit of 'true' Islam, which provided a basis for the social, economic and political organisation of society.

ISLAM, AN EMPOWERING ETHIC

In his *Memorial Verses*, Matthew Arnold quotes Goethe as having said that 'Art still has truth, take refuge there'.[43] Referring to this line, Iqbal stated in a letter to Sheikh Aijaz Ahmad that he brought a similar message to the Muslims of the day, just as Goethe had to the German people during the upheaval and disempowerment in the wake of the Napoleonic conquest. The only difference was that he sought to replace the word 'art' with 'religion'. Art, he argued, provided peace but lacked power. Religion encapsulated both peace and power.[44] Unlike Christianity, which denounced power, Islam embraced power as a constructive force. Contrasting the Christian and Islamic approaches to God and power, Iqbal wrote that 'Christianity describes God as love' and 'Islam as power'.[45]

[40] Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, p. 491.
[41] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 9.
[42] Ibid., p. 10.
[43] Charles W. Elliot (ed.), *English Poetry From Tennyson to Whitman: Harvard Classics* (Montana, 2004), p. 1182.
[44] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, ii, 373.
[45] Iqbal, *Stray Reflections*, p. 10.

Contesting the views of critics such as the German scholar Oswald Spengler (1880–1936), who argued that the decline of Muslims had been a result of the centrality of the idea of destiny in Islam and its 'life negating theology', which had led to the complete negation of the ego,[46] Iqbal stressed that true Islam was an action-oriented and self-affirming system. He refuted the view that Islam culminated in the negation of the ego. The self-affirming or ego-affirming message of Islam was central to his reconstruction of Islam. Although he conceded that the idea of destiny runs throughout the Quran,[47] he explained that according to the Islamic view on God, the future pre-exists in the organic whole of God only as an open possibility and not as a fixed order of events with definite outlines.[48] The kind of fatalism which critics of Islam speak about when they use terms such as *qismat* and *taqdir* (both translated loosely as fate) had only crept into the fold of Islam as a result of Greek-inspired philosophical thought, political expediency and the gradually diminishing force of the life-impulse that Islam had originally imparted onto its followers.[49]

Iqbal's views on Sufism have been the centre of a considerable amount of controversy. Whereas some have portrayed him as an opponent of Sufism who rejected it as an un-Islamic practise,[50] others point to the heavy influence of Sufi poetry and ideas in his work, particularly those of Rumi.[51] It is clear that Iqbal did not reject the validity of mystic consciousness. In his *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, he stressed that 'the region of mystic experience is as real as any other region of human experience and cannot be ignored merely because it cannot be traced back to sense-perception'.[52] Iqbal asserted that Islam provided a system of belief in which thought and intuition were organically linked.[53] In order to secure a complete vision of Reality, sense perception had to be supplemented by the perception of the heart or a mystic conscience:

[46] See discussion on Spengler's views on Islam and religion in *Reconstruction*, p. 109.
[47] Ibid., p. 109.
[48] Ibid., pp. 78–79.
[49] Ibid., pp. 110–111.
[50] See, for instance, Shahid A. Chaudhary, *Sufism is Not Islam: A Comparative Study* (New Delhi, 1998), pp. 193–206.
[51] See, for instance, Erkan Turkmen 'Perfect Man in the Eyes of Rumi and Muhammad Iqbal' in *Iqbal Review* (Oct. 1999), pp. 95–106 and S. V. R. Nasr, 'Iqbal's Impact on Contemporary Understandings of the Islamic Polity' in *Iqbal Review*, 42, 4 (2001), pp. 2–22.
[52] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 23.
[53] Ibid., p. 2. See especially his critique of Ghazzali and Ibn Rushd for their failure to understand that intuition and the intellect were complementary. Ibid., pp. 4–6.

The 'heart' is a kind of inner intuition or insight which, in the beautiful words of Rumi, feeds on the rays of the sun and brings us into contact with aspects of Reality other than those open to sense-perception. It is according to the Quran, something which 'sees', and its reports, if properly interpreted, are never false. … [T]he vista of experience thus opened to us is as real and concrete as any other experience. To describe it as psychic, mystical, or supernatural does not detract from its value as experience. … The total-Reality, which enters our awareness and appears on interpretation as an empirical fact, has other ways of invading our consciousness and offers further opportunities of interpretation. The revealed and mystic literature of mankind bears ample testimony to the fact that religious experience has been too enduring and dominant in the history of mankind to be rejected as mere illusion. There seems to be no reason, then, to accept the normal level of human experience as fact and reject its other levels as mystical and emotional.[54]

On the other hand, Iqbal did sharply criticise Sufism for failing to provide an empowering intellectual, artistic and spiritual response to the modern age. Iqbal recorded in a letter to Hasan Nizami that he had an inclination towards Sufism, and that this inclination was further accentuated after he studied western philosophy. A critical study of the Quran, however, brought a change in his views.[55] In fact, he felt that Sufism, as practised in India, had been one of the chief contributors to the ethical and intellectual decline of the Muslims of India.[56] Essentially, he sought to differentiate between early/Arab/'higher' Sufism and contemporary forms of Sufi beliefs and practises that he labelled as 'false Sufism'.[57] As a result of the work of Sufi theologians and philosophers such as Ghazzali, Sufism, which in its 'higher' manifestation referred solely to the pure mystic consciousness, had gained metaphysical and philosophical bases.[58] Both resulted in disempowerment, and Iqbal described his own work as a *bagawat* (revolt) against this.[59]

The attempt to demarcate between a 'true' and 'false' Sufism indicates that it is possible to locate Iqbal's critique of Sufism within the ambit of neo-Sufism, a twentieth-century reform movement, inspired by the work of figures such as Ibn Taymiyya and Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi, which sought to reassert the transcendence of God and the importance of sharia.[60] Of

[54] Ibid., pp. 15–16.
[55] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, i, 448–449.
[56] Ibid., iii, 542.
[57] See, for example, his reference to 'false Sufism' in Ibid., i, 614.
[58] *File on Iqbal*, IAP, vol. 24, fo. 5.
[59] Iqbal, *Iqbal Nama*, p. 203.
[60] The term 'neo-Sufism' was coined by Fazlur Rahman to describe the reformist efforts that arose from within the fold of Sufism in the late nineteenth century. For a critical

note here is Iqbal's association with Hasan Nizami, who himself actively sought to reform Sufism as it was practised in the twentieth century and, in his own words, aimed to present 'Islamic Sufism in a new way and a fresh manner'.[61] Apart from publishing a number of works on the topic, Nizami also organised the Halqa-i-Mashaikh (Circle of Masters), which sought, amongst other things, to reform the practises and ceremonies performed at Sufi shrines, which were not seen to be in line with the sharia and *tariqa* (path, Sufi order).[62] Responding to the charge that he was an enemy of Sufism, Iqbal argued that he was opposed only to Sufis who taught a message of renunciation and resignation, and that he was merely repeating criticisms that had been made by numerous Sufis themselves.[63]

Iqbal's writings on Sufism echoed Nietzschian views on the disempowering interpretation of religion provided by the ascetic priests. Much like Nietzsche's 'life negating priests' who negated the will to power through the spread of ascetic ideals and practises, the Sufis were attacked for perpetuating disempowerment through their philosophy, metaphysics and art. For Nietzsche, the ascetic priest – described by him as the ultimate 'agent of nihilism' – responded to disempowerment and decline by invalidating the 'value' of struggle and glorifying suffering and poverty instead. While the priest provided some meaning to the suffering of the people, he only served to weaken and perpetuate enfeeblement, turning Christianity into a storehouse of 'consolation' and 'narcotics'. Nietzsche stressed that ascetic beliefs had emerged as a reaction to the decline in life. By turning the will against itself, the priest led to self-laceration and mortification of the will.[64] He further warned that the ascetic priest is confined to no particular age or race; he is a universal phenomenon that prospers everywhere and emerges in every society.[65]

Iqbal's call for a poetics of action and power and his description of his own work as a *nala-i-jung* have already been noted in Chapter 2. Sufi poetry was attacked for its excessive lamentation and self-negating themes. Iqbal argued that such themes predominated primarily because much of Sufi literature had been produced during periods of political

discussion of 'neo-Sufism', see Elizabeth Sirriyeh, *Rethinking and Rejection of Sufism in the Modern World* (Surrey, 1999), pp. 11–21.

[61] Quoted in Carl Ernst and Bruce Lawrence, *Sufi Martyrs of Love: Chisti Sufism in South Asia and Beyond* (New York, 2002), p. 114.

[62] Ibid., pp. 113–118.

[63] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, i, 485–486.

[64] Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, pp. 125–143.

[65] Ibid., p. 117.

decline.[66] It sought to reconcile the disempowered individual to his position of decline by stressing the ideal of self-negation and rejection of the material world. Works by Sufi luminaries such as Hafiz (1325–1389) were deprecated for serving to lessen the will to life and action.[67] Iqbal's criticisms of Hafiz in his *Asrar-i-Khudi* sparked off protests from sections of the Muslim community, forcing Iqbal to clarify his views. In a letter to Akbar Allahabadi,[68] he expressed his concern that Sufi literature acted as 'narcotics' which lured the people away from the realities of the situation.[69] The people of India, both Hindus and Muslims, were drawn to the life-sapping literature of the Sufis because they had yet to realise the true cause of their 'disease' and decline. This, he argued, was characteristic of Asia in general and only served to instil the wrong worldview, which encouraged the disease to fester.[70]

Much of Sufi metaphysics and philosophy were founded upon the idea of *wahdat al-wujud* (unity of being) and the attendant concepts of *fanaa* and *baqa*. The twelfth-century Sufi and philosopher Ibn Arabi had formulated the concept of *wahdat al-wujud*, which stated that there was no true existence except for the ultimate Truth or God and that everything had emerged from it. This laid the philosophical basis for the pantheistic idea that the spiritual aim was to merge into God. This self-negation and merger into God was known as *fanaa* or *baqa*.

Iqbal sought to demonstrate that pantheism was alien to the teachings of true Islam and an inauthentic Sufi concept. He argued that there was no concept of pantheism in the early stage of Sufism. Such ideas only seeped in with the influx of Persian and neo-Platonic influences. Shaped by the ideas of Plotinus, who stressed the essential unity of God and the individual, Sufism came to perceive the rise of egoism, or the separate existence of the individual from God, as the cause of the Fall of man.[71] In direct contrast to this, Iqbal argued that the 'Quranic legend of the Fall has nothing to do with the first appearance of man on this planet'; its aim is rather 'to indicate man's rise from a primitive state of instinctive appetite to the conscious possession of a free self'.[72] Iqbal argued that

[66] Iqbal, *Iqbal Nama*, pp. 44–45.
[67] See, for instance, Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, i, 515.
[68] Sayyid Akbar Hussain (1846–1921), better known by his nom de plume Akbar Allahabadi, was renowned for his satirical poems which critiqued contemporary society and individuals.
[69] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, i, 723–726.
[70] Ibid., 485–487.
[71] *File on Iqbal*, IAP, vol. 24, fo. 2.
[72] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 85.

the legend of the Fall did not represent any moral depravity, nor did it narrate the tale of the casting of man to earth as a punishment for the original sin. Instead, he celebrated it as the rise of self-consciousness and the birth of free choice.[73]

Iqbal's philosophy and religious thought centred upon his construction of a *khudi*[74] (self, individual or ego) which continually strove for its development and self-affirmation. He argued that '[o]nly that truly exists which can say "I am",' and that it is 'the degree of the intuition of "I-amness" that determines the place of a thing in the scale of being'.[75] The *khudi* fortified its 'I-amness' through struggle and the assertion of its selfhood. Contrary to the ideal of the Sufis, Iqbal argued that the *khudi* did not negate itself even in the direct presence of God. The *miraj* (the accession of Muhammad to heaven) and his return to earth without being merged into God was presented by Iqbal as evidence to argue against the concept of *fanaa*. The direct experience of God as the Other Self was itself a stage in the development of the *khudi*; by not merging into God the *khudi* returned stronger. [76] He stressed that *fanaa* was not an authentic Islamic or Sufi idea, but a late accretion into the fold of Sufism resulting from Buddhist and Indian influences. Whereas Islam strove to empower, the twin ideas of *fanaa* and *baqa* served only to disempower Muslims. Interestingly, he argued that the ulama, in the course of their criticisms of the Sufis, had attached the later concept of *fanaa* to the earlier stages of Sufism as well, thus helping to feed the image that it was an authentic Sufi doctrine.[77] The Allama suggested that 'higher Sufism' propounded a stage beyond *fanaa* and *baqa*; it did not entail the extinction of the self, but a complete surrender to the divine Ego.[78] He pointed out that his

[73] Ibid., 84–85. He went on to argue that free choice and self-consciousness were essential for goodness. 'Now goodness is not a matter of compulsion; it is the self's free surrender to the moral ideal and arises out of a willing co-operation of free-egos. A being whose movements are wholly determined like a machine cannot produce goodness. Freedom is thus a condition of goodness'.

[74] Iqbal's choice of the term *khudi* is interesting. It is reflected in his notes that the term *khudi*, which was used in Persian 'in a simple sense' to refer to the 'colourless fact of I', was chosen because he wanted a term without any metaphysical or ethical significance to describe the uniqueness of each individual. 'Allama Iqbal's Essay on Nietzsche', *File on Iqbal*, IAP, vol. 25, p. 1. It was meant to be a translation of the English term 'individual', as he could not find a sufficient term in Urdu for it. Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, i, 504.

[75] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 56.

[76] Ibid., pp. 23 and 117–118.

[77] *File on Iqbal*, IAP, vol. 24, fo. 5.

[78] Ibid., vol. 25, fo. 13.

condemnation of self-negation was not tantamount to a condemnation of self-denial in the moral sense; he was only focussed on refuting those forces of conduct that led to the extinction of the self as a metaphysical force.[79]

The link between the *khudi* and society was indispensable to the individual's development. Iqbal postulated that the *khudi* was linked to society by the mysterious force of *bekhudi*. In Sufi usage this term essentially referred to the stage of losing awareness of one's selfhood and was associated with the idea of *fanaa*. Iqbal, however, re-worked the concept in line with his re-empowering interpretation of Islam. Although Iqbal's views on the *khudi* have received much attention, his attempts to re-configure the Sufi concept of *bekhudi* have been neglected. The concept of *bekhudi* and its link with the individual will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter, but suffice it to note here that although Iqbal maintained *bekhudi* as the power that links the individual to the social body, he rejected the notion that it entailed a negation of the self.

Iqbal stressed that Islam recognised and empowered the individual more than any other religion because the idea of individuality was a guiding principle in the entire system of Muslim law and ethics. The position of the *khudi* in Islam was contrasted with that of the individual in Buddhism, Christianity and other Magian religions. Analysing the structure of Buddhism, he concluded that it taught the message of inaction and that it negated the individual.[80] Whereas Christianity recognised the reality of human personality, the individual was believed to be too weak to free himself and was thus stuck in constant expectation of a redeemer or saviour.[81] Magian culture – which included Christianity, Judaism, Zoroastrianism as well as Chaldean and Sabean religions – was generally characterised by the constant expectation of a messiah.[82] In contrast to this, Islam not only recognised the personality of the individual, but it also enhanced it by disengaging it from the coattails of prophethood. He stated that the 'idea of Finality [of prophethood] is perhaps the most original idea in the cultural history of mankind'.[83] Furthermore, Islam provided the message of an ever-expanding world that was continually being shaped by God and his co-worker, the individual. The adoption of the

[79] Ibid., fo. 2.
[80] Iqbal, *Islam as an Ethical and Political Ideal*: *Iqbal's Maiden English Lecture 1908*, edited by S. Y. Hashimy (Lahore, 1955), pp. 59–60.
[81] Ibid., p. 60.
[82] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 94, 106.
[83] Ibid., p. 94.

Aristotelian idea of the fixed universe by theologians and philosophers had clouded the original Quranic view of a dynamic and ever-growing universe.[84]

Individual personality was the central fact of the universe, and it had the quality of growth and corruption.[85] Iqbal argued that the theory of evolution had brought despair instead of hope and enthusiasm for life to the modern world because of the 'unwarranted modern assumption' that man's present structure, mental and physiological, was the final stage in biological evolution.[86] Although he appreciated Nietzsche's ideas on the immortality of man, he felt that they presented similar problems as the 'modern' theory of evolution. These were contrasted with the Islamic conception of evolution. Iqbal argued that it was possible to locate the genesis of the idea of evolution in the work of figures such as Rumi, and that this was completely in consonance with the view of the Quran. Iqbal asserted that unlike the modern theory of evolution, which robbed man of his faith in his own future, the formulation of the theory of evolution in Islam brought tremendous enthusiasm for the biological future of man.[87] In Iqbal's reading of the Nietzschian superman, he was purely a 'biological' creation as opposed to the 'Islamic' concept of the *insan-i-kamil* (ideal man) who was the product of moral and spiritual forces.[88] The Allama also disagreed with the Nietzschian idea that the rise of the superman was an inevitability, stressing that such a view – just as was the case with the 'modern' theory of evolution – failed to inspire mankind to strive and struggle for its development.[89] On Nietzsche's concept of the superman, he wrote:

> His birth is inevitable; how can the prospect give me any inspiration? We can aspire only for what is absolutely new, and the absolutely new is unthinkable in Nietzsche's view, which is nothing more than fatalism worse than the one

[84] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, pp. 67–70.

[85] 'On Nietzsche', *File on Iqbal*, IAP, vol. 25.

[86] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 121.

[87] He argued that one can locate the genesis of the idea of evolution in Rumi's work and that this is completely in consonance with the view of the Quran. It is interesting to note that Iqbal compared the 'modern' concept of evolution with the 'theory of evolution in the world of Islam'. Iqbal points out that the same idea can affect different cultures differently. Whereas the 'modern' man was robbed of his faith in his own future, the theory of evolution in Islam brought into being Rumi's tremendous enthusiasm for the biological future of man. See Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, pp. 120–122 and 186–187.

[88] 'Allama Iqbal's Essay on Nietzsche', *File on Iqbal*, IAP, vol. 25, pp. 6–7.

[89] This was part of a wider critique of Nietzsche's ideas on time and the theory of eternal recurrence. Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, pp. 115–118 and 187.

summed up in the word 'qismat'. Such a doctrine, far from keying up the human organism for the fight of life, tends to destroy its action-tendencies and relaxes the tension of the ego.[90]

The Allama's views on the development of the *khudi* through the cultivation of a particular type of character will be discussed in detail in the subsequent chapters. It is, however, important to note here that he spoke in terms of three broad periods in the development of religious life – faith, thought and discovery. In the first period, religious life appears as a form of discipline which the individual or the group must accept as an unconditional command, without any rational understanding of the ultimate meaning and purpose of the command. Although this attitude may be of great consequence in the social and political history of a people, it is not of much consequence with regard to the individual's inner growth and development. Perfect submission to discipline is followed by a rational understanding of the discipline and the ultimate source of its authority. In this period, religious life seeks its foundation in a kind of metaphysics – a logically consistent view of the world with God as a part of that view. In the last period, metaphysics is displaced by psychology, and religious life develops the ambition to come into direct contact with the ultimate Reality. It is here that religion becomes a matter of personal assimilation of life and power and the individual achieves a free personality, not by releasing himself from the fetters of the law but by discovering the ultimate source of the law within the depths of his own consciousness. The final period of religious life is characterised by the discovery of the 'ego as an individual deeper than his conceptually describable habitual selfhood'.[91] Iqbal emphasised that he used the term religion (read 'true Islam') in the sense of the last phase.[92]

The lack of understanding of religion in its 'highest manifestation' (third phase) fed the view that religion was merely a kind of well-meaning biological device calculated to build barriers of an ethical nature around human society to protect the social fabric against the otherwise unrestrained instincts of the ego. This had culminated in the prevalence of the view in Europe that Christianity had already fulfilled its biological mission.[93] Islam, however, had a role to play in guiding both the individual and society. Intellectual developments in the West and the failure of

[90] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 116.
[91] Ibid., pp. 181–184.
[92] Ibid., p. 181.
[93] Ibid., pp. 191–192.

religious leadership in the East had forced the people to look to alternative non-religious systems such as socialism and nationalism to guide and order society. Islam, rather, was as an ideology and a complete system for the organisation of society.

ISLAM AS AN IDEOLOGY OR COMPLETE SYSTEM

In contrast to a number of Muslim intellectuals who spoke (and continue to speak) of Islam as an 'ideology' without elaborating on what they meant by the term, Iqbal presented Islam as an ideology that could be contrasted with modern western ideologies such as nationalism and socialism.[94] Describing Islam as a 'social *nizam*' (order),[95] he argued that it provided a solution to the economic and political problems of the day.[96] The Allama believed that amongst the religious systems in the world, Islam was the best suited for the organisation of life as it applied to every aspect of the life of the individual and society. In a letter to the under-secretary of state for India, Lord Lothian, Iqbal stressed that it was time for England and Europe to take a serious interest in Islam, not just as a culture and religion, but as an 'economic system' which provided practical solutions to contemporary problems.[97]

Iqbal's reconstruction of Islam contested modern notions of religion that stressed the clear demarcation between the public and private, and challenged conceptions of ideology which sought to differentiate the psychological functions of ideology from its cognitive beliefs. Clifford Geertz has argued that where 'science is the diagnostic, the critical, dimension

[94] Interpretations of Islam as a system or ideology have been influential in shaping the views of contemporary 'Islamists'. It should be noted, however, that even self-proclaimed liberals and modernists have described Islam as a system or ideology. In the early 1950s, Syed Abul Latif, who was based in Osmania University, Hyderabad, attempted to gather an international body of intellectuals in India to draft a comprehensive and definitive work on Islamic law and *hadith*. In his report on the proposed gathering, Latif noted that terms such as 'light of the Quran' or 'Quranic ideology' have been used loosely by Muslim intellectuals without any attempt to define what they meant. He thus proposed that one of the aims of the gathering should be to define these terms and to debate if terms such as ideology could be used with regard to the Quran and Islam. Syed Abul Latif, *Toward Reorientation of Islamic Thought (A Fresh Examination of the Hadith Literature): A Critical Resume of Views Advanced by Scholars on the Memorandum of the Academy Suggestion of the Need for a Fresh Examination of the Hadith Literature* (Hyderabad, 1954), pp. 20–21.

[95] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, ii, 494.

[96] Ibid., p. 495.

[97] 'Allama Iqbal's letter to Lord Lothian dated 17 March 1933', *File on Iqbal*, IAP, vol. 5, fo. 404.

of culture, ideology is the justificatory, apologetic, one'.[98] A distinction is thus made between religion as a symbolic system, where it has made an important psychological and therapeutic contribution to society, and a cognitive explanatory system, where it has appeared weak.[99] For Iqbal, Islam as an ideology had an important symbolic as well as cognitive role. As an ideology, Islam was not a superstructure built upon a specific economic base; it was the basis upon which economic, political and social structures were constructed. The cognitive role of Islam was central to the construction of it as a complete system. Iqbal's letters and notes, particularly his correspondence with Suleiman Nadwi, provide an insight into his attempts to inquire into the 'Islamic viewpoint' on a host of non-religious temporal issues, such as taxation,[100] the right to private property[101] and the powers of the executive.[102]

In his early writings on Islam and politics, Iqbal heralded the democratic and liberal credentials of Islam by locating precedents for democracy and liberalism within Islamic socio-political principles and practises.[103] He had even argued that by spreading democracy and 'improving the political ideals of Asia', the British were essentially continuing the task that Muslims had started but failed to accomplish.[104] His construction of Islam as a complete system, however, rested on the premise that Islam was a distinct ideology. Although aspects of Islam could be similar to aspects of other systems and ideologies, Islam was not to be equated with these systems. This clearly marked him off from figures who argued that Islam could adopt modern ideas and institutions without affecting its basic principles.

The genesis for the construction of Islam as an alternative ideology lay in Iqbal's belief that the problems of the day – capitalist exploitation, aggressive nationalism, incessant warfare –were the direct consequence of western forms of organising society. In a letter to Suleiman Nadwi written in January 1934, for instance, Iqbal recorded his concerns over the failure of political ideologies and systems in Europe. Europe, he noted, was witnessing the decaying of democratic structures and the emergence

[98] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Culture: Selected Essays by Clifford Geertz* (New York, 1973), p. 231.
[99] See 'Introduction' in Robert Bocock and Kenneth Thompson (eds.), *Religion and Ideology* (Manchester, 1985), pp. 6–8.
[100] Iqbal, *Iqbal Nama*, p. 132.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, iv, 36.
[103] Iqbal, *Islam as Ethical and Political Ideal*, p. 95.
[104] Ibid., p. 96.

of dictatorship. It was also in the throes of a war against capitalism. It was such concerns that led him to study if Islam could provide a solution to contemporary problems where other ideologies had failed.[105]

Contrasting Islam with Christianity, he described the latter as a purely monastic order which had gradually developed into a 'vast church-organization'.[106] Unlike Islam, Christianity was not a polity. Europe's uncritical adoption of the Manichean duality between spirit and matter had further spurred the separation of the spiritual and the temporal, resulting in the total exclusion of Christianity from the life of European states.[107] Unlike Christianity, Islam was a 'civil society' from its origins, although Sufism, with its emphasis on detachment and asceticism, had detracted from an understanding of Islam as a social polity.[108]

The difference between Islam and Christianity was traced by Iqbal to the special role of Muhammad as a *nabi* (prophet) and the fact that Islam, unlike Christianity, promulgated a law. As Christianity emerged as a powerful reaction against the spirit of legality manifested in Judaism, it stayed clear from setting a law and emphasised other-worldliness as its spiritual ideal instead.[109] Quoting from Friedrich Naumann's *Briefe über Religion* (1903), Iqbal claimed that Christianity 'attached no value to the preservation of the State, law, organization, production'.[110] More interestingly, Iqbal argued that there were essentially two aspects to *nabuyiyat* (prophecy) – the first being the revelation of a path towards spiritual development and the second being the establishment, or laying the foundation for the establishment, of a socio-political institution. If only the first aspect was fulfilled, as was the case with a number of religions, the founder of the religion had not performed the functions of *nabuyiyat*, but rather only *waliyat* (guardianship).[111] Muhammad was a *nabi*. He had thus fulfilled both the functions of *nabuyiyat* and had laid the basis for a socio-political organisation. Iqbal further argued that the

[105] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, iii, 449–450.

[106] Iqbal, *Speeches, Writings and Statements of Iqbal*, edited by Latif Ahmed Sherwani, 3rd (Revised and Enlarged) edn. (Lahore, 1977), p. 4.

[107] He thought that the best thinkers of Europe were realising this mistake, but its statesmen were indirectly forcing the world to accept it as an unquestionable dogma. Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 5–6.

[108] In addition to the other-worldliness preached by Sufism, Iqbal felt that Sufism had also attracted the best Muslim minds, thus leaving the state in the hands of intellectual mediocrities. Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 150.

[109] Ibid., p. 166.

[110] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 166.

[111] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, iv, 213 and 219–220.

khatam-i-nabuyiyat, or the culmination of the chain of Prophethood in Muhammad, meant that no one coming after Muhammad would fulfil both aspects of *nabuyiyat*.[112] As the final revealed system, Islam provided the basis for the ideal and most complete system of social, political and economic organisation.

So, for Iqbal, whereas Christianity accepted the adoption of a separate political creed alongside its religious creed,[113] Islam united religion, politics and ethics. Echoing Iqbal's views, Abul A'la Maududi argued that the chief difference between Christianity and Islam was that the former was not a 'social creed'. It was concerned solely with the salvation of the individual, not society, and it prescribed that the individual's salvation lay in his cutting himself off from this world.[114] There was, however, a significant difference in Iqbal's and Maududi's views. Iqbal argued that Islam and Christianity were primordially different in their nature. In his writings, Christianity seems like a stage in the evolution of the ideal and most complete system: Islam.[115] Maududi, on the other hand, argued that Christianity, like all *din*s, was revealed as a set of laws, and that these authentic principles of Christianity had been lost because of a corruption of its original teachings and theology.[116] Muhammad Ali expressed a similar view when he argued that the true message of Christ had been changed beyond recognition by Paul's teachings and the Hellenistic influences that clouded the work of later writers on Christianity. The division between politics and religion was thus not intrinsic to Christianity, but rather the result of the corruption of its authentic message.[117]

For Iqbal, Islam organised society on the basis of *tauhid*, the oneness of God. The principle of *tauhid* not only signified the unity of God but provided a basis for the development of man and society. As a polity, Islam was a practical means of making the principle of *tauhid* a living factor in the intellectual and emotional life of mankind.[118] The next chapter will

[112] Ibid., pp. 220–221.
[113] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 166.
[114] Maududi, *West versus Islam*, English version by S. Waqar Ahmad Gardezi and Abdul Waheed Khan, second edn. (Lahore, 1992), p. 82.
[115] A similar observation has been made by Shepard on Qutb's views on Christianity: *Sayyid Qutb and Islamic Activism: A Translation and Critical Analysis of Social Justice in Islam* (Leiden, 1996), pp. 47.
[116] Maududi, *Islamic Law and Islamic Constitution* (Lahore, 1969), pp. 157–158 and 170–171.
[117] Ali, *My Life: A Fragment – An Autobiographical Sketch of Maulana Mohammed Ali*, edited and annotated by Mushirul Hasan (New Delhi, 1999), pp. 139–141.
[118] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 147.

show how the Allama contrasted the displacement of universal ethics and the growth of a plurality of national systems of ethics, which accompanied the establishment of nation-states, with the humanistic and unifying socio-political ethic presented by Islam.[119]

Iqbal was not alone in stressing the humanistic and unifying role of Islam. This was a constant theme in the work of many Muslim intellectuals keen on demonstrating that Islam had played a beneficial role in the socio-political development of the world. Mohsin-ul-Mulk emphasised the unifying impact that the polity of Islam had on the warring Arab tribes and *qawm*s,[120] and traced the prevalence of such an ideal in Islam to its birth in an environment characterised by warfare, disintegration and a lack of common ethics.[121] Iqbal echoed these views when he wrote that Islam was born at period when the old principles of human unification such as blood relationships and 'throne-culture' were failing. Thus, the task it set for itself was to establish a new basis for human unification.[122] However, Iqbal went further than many of his contemporaries in constructing Islam into a socio-political ethic on the basis of the principle of *tauhid* and the *nabuyiyat* of Muhammad.

Iqbal spoke in terms of three forces or socio-political ideals that could shape the development of mankind – 'western civilisation', communism and Islam.[123] Western civilisation was defined as a system founded upon a scientific methodology calling for the separation of the state and church, whereas communism was a system that based its philosophy on materialism and called for the negation of the church.[124] Unlike a number of his contemporaries, Iqbal did not perceive of communism as a weapon that could be used against the colonising powers. Marxism could not be heralded as a liberating ideology as it was itself an ideological construct of the West, and thus was seen within the context of colonialism as a totalising system of power.[125] Nevertheless, the emergence of Marxism as

[119] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 5–6.

[120] Mohsin-ul-Mulk Mahdi Hassan, *Tehzib al Akhlaq 3* [Collection of Mohsin-ul-Mulk's Writings] (undated), p. 81.

[121] He argued that the differences between the political ideals enunciated by Moses and Muhammad stemmed largely from the different social and historical contexts in which they lived. Ibid., pp. 82–83.

[122] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 139.

[123] 'Allama Iqbal's Notes on Islam as I Understand it', *File on Iqbal*, IAP, vol. 25.

[124] Iqbal, *Letters and Writings*, pp. 80–82.

[125] Robert Young noted that Marxism provided third-world intellectuals with a liberating discourse. Robert J. C. Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford, 2001).

a rival ideology to 'western civilisation' had itself spurred Iqbal and his contemporaries to interpret Islam as an ideology that could contest western ideologies and provide solutions to contemporary problems. This was, for instance, the underlying impetus in Azad's article 'Jamuriyyat ke Bahd Socialism bhi Ek Galthi Hain' ('After Democracy, Socialism is also a Mistake'), in which he reframed Islam – in response to the emergence of both the 'man-made systems or ideologies' of democracy in America and France as well as an opposing system of socialism in Russia – as an ideology which provided the 'true' solutions to the political and economic problems of the day.[126]

Iqbal's critique of the basis upon which 'western civilisation' and communism sought to organise society will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter. However, it is pertinent to note here that he saw the two ideologies as fundamentally similar because they both sought to perpetuate the separation between the state and the church, and because they were born out of the materialistic approach.[127] Both had failed to realise that man was essentially a spiritual being. Communism had developed out of Hegel's ideas on the dialectic and history, and it rose 'in revolt against the very source which could have given it strength and purpose' when it displaced God as the generator of the historical and dialectical process.[128] The materialistic approach served to de-centre man as the shaper of history, reducing the development of the world and mankind to the dictates of economic determinism. Moreover, it had also given rise to many of the problems that plagued modern society. Economic exploitation, colonialism, warfare and the rise of dictatorships in the West were all seen to be direct results of the materialistic basis of the ideologies that organised society.

Although Nietzsche had successfully highlighted the failings of modern civilisation, Iqbal lamented that he had failed to prescribe the right solutions, as he too failed to provide a spiritual rule for society.[129] Even Nietzsche's methodology was based on materialism. Comparing Nietzsche's and Marx's views on history, Iqbal argued that both thinkers believed that the process of history was determined by economic forces and that the only important principle was that might is right. The

[126] Abul Kalam Azad, *Dawaat-i-Haq* (Delhi, undated), pp. 5–28.

[127] In his *Javid Nama*, he compares the materialistic basis of communism and imperialism. He writes that 'westerns have lost the realm of the soul', hence they seek to base their ideologies and systems on the basis of their 'stomachs'. Iqbal, *Javid Nama,* p. 53.

[128] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 188.

[129] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 195.

materialistic approach characteristic of the systems evolved in Europe culminated in the neglect of love, justice, duty, virtue and other principles. Humanity, argued Iqbal, was in need of three things – a spiritual interpretation of the universe, spiritual emancipation of the individual, and basic principles of a universal import directing the evolution of human society on a spiritual basis.[130] Iqbal's critical review of the basis of western and modern ideologies and his writings on the need for a spiritual interpretation of the universe and the spiritual emancipation of the individual had an important influence on later 'Islamists' within South Asia and beyond, including Maududi and Ali Shariati (1933–1977). Shariati, one of the leading ideologues of the 1979 Iranian Revolution, acknowledged that Iqbal's discourse on the nature of Islam and the need for a spiritual interpretation of the world influenced the development of his own views.[131]

One fundamental difference between Iqbal and Maududi was that, unlike the latter, Iqbal did not seek to present a fixed Islamic/Quranic constitution, sharia or political structure. Maududi spoke in terms of a fully worked-out Islamic legal and political structure that needed to be implemented and not evolved.[132] Iqbal, on the other hand, stressed the flexibility of the Islamic *nizam*. To understand this apparently contradictory stance one needs to look at the 'Islamic' sources from which Iqbal drew as well as his methodology in interpreting these sources. There are two important points to note about Iqbal's interpretation of the Quran: He believed that it provided a timeless and eternal message and that it was not a fixed legal code.

Iqbal refuted the views of a number of his contemporaries who sought to contextualise the verses of the Quran within the socio-political and intellectual milieu in which they were revealed. By locating the verses within the context of the period, these individuals were able, first, to point to the specific conditions which led to the revelation of particular injunctions and, second, to argue that these injunctions were specific to the context and not necessarily universally applicable. On the other hand, Iqbal argued that the object of the Quran is to provide universal and timeless values and as such its methodology is seldom historical. He points to the method employed in the Quran in dealing with older legends that had been earlier narrated in the Bible and the Torah to demonstrate this. Scholars had, he argued,

[130] Ibid., p. 179.

[131] Ali Shariati, *Marxism and Other Western Fallacies*, translated by R. Campbell (Berkeley, 1980), pp. 94–95.

[132] See discussion on Maududi's views on the state in the Conclusion.

neglected the Quranic method of complete or partial transformation of legends in order to invest them with new ideas, thus adapting them to the advancing spirit of the times.[133] He argued that in order to give the legends a universal moral and philosophical import, the Quran omits the names of people and localities which tend to limit the meaning of the legend by giving it the colour of a specific historical event.[134]

The Quran was not, however, a legal code and did not provide the details of a legal or political structure. Instead, the Quran only laid the broad principles and foundations along which society – politics, economics, and legal and social life – was to be organised. It laid the basis for a polity in which there was 'no distinction between the Church and the State'.[135] The principle of *tauhid*, which Iqbal believed was the foundational principle for the ideal socio-political structure, was laid out in the Quran. He looked to the *sunna* of the Prophet as well as to the work of Muslim jurists and intellectuals to see how the Islamic *nizam* developed. It should be noted that his views on the development of the Islamic political structure and the sharia need to be studied together. As a *nabi*, Muhammad had brought the broad principles along which a legal and socio-political structure was to be organised. Fulfilling his role as a *nabi*, he laid the basis for this structure in his lifetime. His political, social, legal and economic organisation and his conducting of war were all part of his mission of establishing the basis of the Islamic structure. It was then the role of the intellectuals to develop this Islamic system in view of the practise of the Prophet and within the principles laid down in the Quran.[136]

AHMADIYYA AND 'ORTHODOX ISLAM'

It has already been noted that Muhammad Iqbal's views on the Ahmadiyya movement have been the source of considerable controversy. This is largely because both supporters and opponents of the movement have

[133] He stated that although this was an uncommon method of dealing with legends in religious texts, it was, however, commonly employed in non-religious texts. He pointed to *Faust*, in which Goethe had given an entirely new meaning to the legend of the Fall as an example. Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 82.

[134] Ibid., pp. 80–82.

[135] Iqbal, 'Political Thought in Islam' in *The Sociological Review*, 1, 3 (1908), p. 252.

[136] See, for instance, the primacy he gave to the role of Muslim legalists in the development of Muslim political thought in his article 'Political Thought in Islam'. In this article, he highlighted the different strands of political thought that emerged from their work. See also his letters to Suleiman Nadwi, compiled in the *Iqbal Nama*, in which he discussed the role of interpretation and *naqsh* (sublimation) in the process of determining the Islamic view on politics.

tried to appropriate Iqbal.[137] However, Iqbal's contact with a number of individuals who were associated with the movement also stoked the controversy.[138] Sialkot and Lahore were both important centres of Ahmadiyya activity. Iqbal's own brother, Atta Muhammad, was himself believed to be a follower of the movement, and his teacher, Mir Hasan, was closely associated with a number of Ahmadiyya. Although Iqbal had initially expressed optimism about the aims of the movement, fears that it would split the unity of Islam and that it presented a theology which sought to reconcile the Muslims with disempowerment moved him to reject it vigorously.[139] Iqbal believed that the rise and spread of the movement had serious theological and socio-political implications for Islam as well as India. Iqbal's criticisms of the Ahmadiyya movement were targeted chiefly at the Qadiani branch of the movement, as he felt that they represented the original views of the Ahmadiyya.[140]

By asserting the prophethood of its founder, the movement contravened one of the two central pillars of Islam – the finality of the Prophet. This, Iqbal argued, ruptured the unity of the Muslim community. It is interesting to note Iqbal's attempts to differentiate between the Ahmadiyya and the Ismaili community in this respect. Although he recognised that the Ismailis had their own leader in the form of the Aga Khan, and that they subscribed to a different set of theological views, Iqbal stressed that they had not elevated their leader to the position of a prophet. Consequently, they had remained within the fold of Islam and posed no threat to its unity.[141] Comparing the Ahmadiyya movement with another revivalist movement which had emerged from within Islam, Baha'ism, Iqbal stated

[137] Even in his lifetime, Iqbal found himself appropriated by various people in support of their views on the movement. On 13 November 1910, Iqbal wrote to the editor of the journal *Paigham* to state that an article published on 9 October, which claimed to present Iqbal's views on the Ahmadiyya movement, had misrepresented his views. The article asserted that Iqbal acknowledged the *haq* or 'truth' presented by the movement. Iqbal claimed that he had given no such interview and that he had till then not commented on the movement. He acknowledged that he was associated with many people who were either adherents or supporters of the movement. As Sialkot was an important centre of the Ahmadiyya movement, he had the opportunity to interact with many people who were associated with it on his trips back to Sialkot, but he asserted that at this point he had made no statement of his views on the movement. See letter in Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, i, 429–431.

[138] The Ahmadiyya regularly highlighted his close relations with their leaders. See, for instance, 'Dr. Muhammad Iqbal's Bitter Attack on the Ahmadiyya Community' in *Review of Religions*, 34, 6 (June, 1935), pp. 201–202.

[139] See, for instance, Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 103.

[140] Ibid., p. 120.

[141] The cultural and national importance of *risalat* is discussed in greater detail in the next chapter. See pp. 172–176.

that as Baha'ism openly departed from Islam it posed no threat to the internal structure or unity of Islam. The Ahmadiyya movement, on the other hand, 'retains some of the more important externals of Islam with an inwardness wholly inimical to the spirit and aspirations of Islam'.[142] Baha'ism, he added, had been 'more honest' than the Ahmadiyya movement, as it had broken from Islam.[143]

The Ahmadiyya movement was perceived as a threat to the 'very structure' of Islam.[144] The constant expectation of a messiah amongst the Magians in the pre-Islamic era had led to religious communities constantly disintegrating, with new communities emerging around new prophets. Islam brought an end to this constant fissuring through its message of unity.[145] The Magian concept of perpetual expectation of a prophet, out of which the Ahmadiyya movement had emerged, would only serve to encourage further religious adventurism, exaggerating disunity and splintering the Muslim community. In an open letter to Jawaharlal Nehru written in 1936, Iqbal wrote that the Ahmadiyya posed a grave threat to Islam, as the conceptual structure of Islam was extremely simple. Unlike other religions, Islam was not based on race but purely on the solidarity of religion founded upon the principles of *tauhid* and the *risalat* (prophethood) of Muhammad. A rejection of either one of these would tear the fabric of Islam. In fact, Iqbal argued that this simplicity in the conceptual structure of Islam had made the allegation of heresy within Islam very difficult and rare, because one would have to contravene two very broad principles that united an array of theological and philosophical views.[146]

Apart from splitting the unity of Islam, Iqbal argued that the expectation of a messiah which characterised the Ahmadiyya movement served to perpetuate disempowerment. Nietzsche had argued that the doctrine of seeking redemption through Christ had been a masterstroke of the priests who sought to perpetuate a slave mentality.[147] Reflecting such views, Iqbal argued that the expectation of salvation through a messiah had only served to disempower and reconcile people to a position of decline. His stress on the empowering role of the Islamic conception of Finality

[142] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 95.
[143] Iqbal, *Speeches, Writings and Statements*, p. 162.
[144] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 97.
[145] Ibid., p. 94.
[146] While acknowledging that mutual allegations of heresy have been made by theologians and sects, Iqbal drew from Hurgrounje's view that such debates actually provided an impetus to synthetic theological thought. Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 119.
[147] See, for instance, Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, p. 92.

which 'cut the Muslim community from the coattails of prophethood' has already been discussed. The Ahmadiyya stress on a continued prophecy would only detract from the individual striving to achieve his own as well as society's development, as he would continue to look to the arrival of a messiah to salvage him. The Ahmadiyya were thus playing a role similar to Nietzsche's life-negating priests.

The promise of a messiah served to sap the *khudi's* will and destroy his desire for internal reform. Iqbal advocated Ibn Khaldun's and Bergson's views of the historical process as a free and creative movement, rather than a process which has been planned beforehand.[148] Struggle and *ijtihad* were important elements in the development of man and society. By predicating solutions to contemporary problems upon the arrival of a messiah, the belief in the perpetual expectation of a prophet weakened the *khudi*.[149] It forced the individual into a situation of slavish surrender and continued to tie him to the strings of expectancy, dampening his desire to effect a change himself. Comparing it with 'orthodox Islam', Iqbal stated that the Ahmadiyya movement retains the discipline of Islam but destroys the will which the discipline was intended to fortify.[150]

For Iqbal, the Ahmadiyya movement was not an 'abrupt phenomenon in the history of Muslim religious thought in India',[151] but the culmination of ideas that had arisen in the wake of the decline of Islam in 1799, the year that marked the fall of Tipu Sultan and the destruction of the Turkish fleet in the battle of Navarino. The ulama who approached the movement solely from the theological point of view had failed to comprehend the wider socio-political implications of the movement. It was important to engage the Ahmadiyya within the light of the history of Islamic thought in India.[152] Following the decline of Islam in India, a number of Muslim leaders had sought to reconcile Muslims to the new socio-political environment, and had even succeeded in winning some members of the ulama to their cause.[153] Commenting on the religious and political stances which arose out of these efforts, Iqbal wrote that the life history

> of nations shows that when the tide of life in a people begins to ebb, decadence itself becomes a source of inspiration, inspiring their poets, philosophers, saints, statesmen, and turning them into a class of apostles whose sole ministry is to

[148] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 102.
[149] Ibid., p. 131.
[150] Ibid., pp. 131–132.
[151] Ibid., pp. 127–128.
[152] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 123–125.
[153] Ibid., pp. 125–126.

glorify, by the force of a seductive art of logic, all that is ignorable and ugly in the life of their people. These apostles unconsciously clothe despair in the glittering garment of hope, undermine the traditional values of conduct and thus destroy the spiritual virility of those who happen to be their victims. One can only imagine the rotten state of a people's will who are, on the basis of divine authority, made to accept their political environment as final.[154]

Iqbal rejected the Ahmadiyya as a movement which sought to provide a theological and revelational basis in support of those who were striving to reconcile Muslims to the new socio-political environment in the wake of colonialism.[155] The movement was described as an attempt to reconcile Muslims to political subjugation and decline, and was accused of inventing a theology and building a community whose creed was political servility.[156] Such criticisms must be situated within both the context of the movement's theological belief in the need for a messiah and its political stance. As noted earlier, Iqbal felt that the expectation of a *mahdi* who would bring salvation to the people disempowered the individual. The individual's development did not lie in internal reform or in his striving against external adversities; his salvation lay solely in the arrival of a messiah. The individual was thus reconciled to the position of social, economic and political decline.

Criticisms against the movement also stemmed from its open advocacy of loyalty to the British. The Ahmadiyya put such a high premium on proclaiming their loyalty that an oath of loyalty to the British government was even incorporated as one of the confessions of faith.[157] Their political stance is clear from an article published in their English-language journal, *The Review of Religions*, in the wake of the Mappila uprising of 1921, in which it was stated:

> Night and day, early and late, in his speeches and in his writings, the Promised Messiah [Mirza Ghulam Ahmad] exhorted his followers to remain loyal to the British government, to render it any possible help it stands in need of and even included loyalty to the government among the ten conditions of initiation into the Ahmadiyya movement.[158]

The British government was credited with establishing a system of rule that allowed for all faiths to be propagated freely in India. Such a situation, they argued, had never existed in India before the arrival of the British.

[154] Ibid., p. 128.
[155] Ibid., p. 126.
[156] Ibid., p. 127.
[157] *The Review of Religions*, 24, 2 (Dec., 1925), p. 2.
[158] Ibid., 20, 9 (Sep., 1921), p. 368.

A number of Ahmadiyya writings highlighted the British toleration of all religious activities – even to the extent of allowing for Christianity to be criticised openly – and stressed that this was a blessing for the movement.[159] In fact, Ghulam Ahmad often stated that the establishment of the colonial state had not only brought prosperity to his family, but also created the free and tolerant atmosphere that was necessary for the propagation of his message of renewal of Islam. Ghulam Ahmad had even attributed this tolerance to the indulgent nature of Queen Victoria herself.[160] It may well have been in response to this that Iqbal characterised the movement as an attempt to provide a revelational basis for India's subjugation.[161]

CONCLUSION

Iqbal's presentation of Islam as an empowering and complete ideology posed a challenge to dominant conceptions of both religion and ideology. His critique of the modern conception of religion is reflected in the work of a number of his contemporaries and later figures who claim his influence. Maududi, for instance, rejected the influence of the 'Christian concept of religion', which he felt fed the view that the best that could be hoped for was for 'some sort of adjustment between religion and science'.[162] Ghulam Ahmad Parwez (1903–1986), the founder of the Tolu-e-Islam movement in Pakistan, was to argue that Islam challenged not only the truth and validity of particular religions, but the very conception of 'religion' itself.[163] Parwez distinguished between *din*, which he defined as a complete, divinely revealed code, and *mazhab*, which he equated with the popular modern conception of religion.[164] Common to such constructions of Islam was that they defied the demarcation between the public and the private. This set figures such as Iqbal, Maududi and Parwez apart from those intellectuals who argued that Islam did not present a socio-political system. Allama Iqbal's presentation of Islam as a complete ideology had important implications for the compatibility of Islam with modern or western political ideologies such as nationalism and socialism. The next chapter will study his assessment of the ideology of nationalism and the institution of the nation-state.

[159] See, for instance, *The Review of Religions*, 13, 5 (Feb., 1914), pp. 121–122.
[160] Noted in Friedmann, *Prophecy Continuous*, p. 22.
[161] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 127.
[162] Maududi, *Islam vs. West*, p. 85.
[163] Ghulam Ahmad Parwez, *Islam: a Challenge to Religion* (Lahore, 1968).
[164] Ibid., p. 4.

4

Rejecting Nationalism, Relocating the Nation

Our essence is not bound to any place;
The vigour of our wine is not contained in any bowl;
Chinese and Indian alike the sherd that constitutes our jar,
Turkish and Syrian alike the clay forming our body,
Neither is our heart of India, or Syria or Rum,
Nor any fatherland do we profess except Islam.

Iqbal[1]

Pakistan is the Fatherland of the Pak Nation.

Chaudhari Rahmat Ali[2]

In his Presidential Address to the All-India Muslim Conference in 1932, Iqbal stated that 'the present struggle in India is sometimes described as India's revolt against the West. I do not think it is a revolt against the West; for the people of India are demanding the very institutions which the West stands for'.[3] The Allama's own 'revolt against the West', namely his refusal to accept the transplantation of western institutions and political theories, was manifest primarily in his critique of the political ideology of nationalism, and its constituent concept of the mono-cultural and territorially defined nation-state. This chapter seeks to examine Iqbal's views on nationalism and his attempts to relocate the 'nation' along religious lines. It will be shown that Iqbal disputed the territorial founda-

[1] Iqbal, *The Mysteries of Selflessness*, p. 29.
[2] Chaudhari Rahmat Ali, *Pakistan, The Fatherland of the Pak Nation* (Cambridge, 1947), p. 21.
[3] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 52–53.

tions of western formulations of nation and nationhood, and rejected any conflation between the concept of nation and state.

Walker Connor has noted that an insightful study of nationalism and nationalist thought requires that scholars refrain from employing the term nation as a substitute for the state.[4] Without grappling with Iqbal's attempts to carve out a separate space for the 'nation' by raising it beyond the limitations imposed upon it by the boundaries of the territorially defined state, a clear perspective on the Allama's political thought cannot be established. Attempts to link Iqbal's discourse on the nation with the demand for the creation of the state of Pakistan have resulted in misconceptions regarding Iqbal's thought. Even scholars who emphasise Iqbal's assertion of the non-territorial nature of the Muslim nation have sought to reconcile his 'Pan-Islamism' or 'universalism' with territorial nationalism.[5]

This chapter demonstrates that the Allama rejected the ideology of nationalism and the modern nation-state structure. It argues that his view of colonialism as an exercise of power extending beyond physical domination into the realm of intellectual hegemony inspired his rejection of calls for the adoption of western political ideas and institutions. The mere transplantation of western political ideas and institutions, Iqbal argued, would only serve to perpetuate colonial domination, even after de-colonisation. The chapter also discusses his views on the link between the individual and society. Society was an indispensable medium for the development of the individual; hence the basis upon which the social body was organised – territory, race, religion – was crucial. The Allama's assessment of nationalism reflected his views on the undesirability of an atheist society as well as his rejection of an over-organised and homogenising state structure. Foregrounding the entire discussion will be

[4] See Walker Connor, 'The Dawning of Nations' in Atsuko Ichigo and Gordana Uzelac (eds.), *When is the Nation? Towards an Understanding of Theories of Nationalism* (New York, 2005), pp. 40–46.

[5] S. G. Fatimi has argued that Iqbal's idealist visions of a Pan-Islamic polity faded away when he was confronted with political realities during his time as a member of the Punjab Legislative Council. Fatimi, 'Islamic Universalism and Territorial Nationalism in Iqbal's Thought' in Waheed Qureshi (ed.) *Selections from Iqbal Review* (Lahore, 1983), pp. 14–28. Manzooruddin Ahmad has also asserted that Iqbal sought to reconcile territorial nationalism with Islamic universalism. Ahmad, 'Iqbal's Theory of Muslim Community and Islamic Universalism in Waheed Qureshi (ed.) *Selections from Iqbal Review*, pp. 45–68. A. H. Dani has sought to reconcile this issue by asserting that Iqbal actually moved from a phase of Islamic universalism to a phase of 'Pakistani nationalism'. Dani, *Founding Fathers of Pakistan* (Lahore, 1998).

Iqbal's views on the incompatibility of new political ideologies such as nationalism with Islam, seen by him as a polity and ideology. The intra-Islamic debates over the acceptability of nationalism and the nation-state structure will also be explored.

Having demonstrated his rejection of the western conception of a territorially defined nationhood, the chapter will study his re-imagination of the nation along the lines of the religious community, or *millat*. Examining the use of terms such as 'nation', '*qawm*' and '*millat*' by individuals such as Iqbal, Madani and Sayyid Ahmad Khan will contribute to an understanding of differing constructions of nationhood[6] on the one hand, and of an emerging 'Islamic political language' on the other.

Although the term nation is at the heart of modern political discourse and there is a consensus that the nation has to be distinguished from other forms of collective identity, there is no agreement among scholars about the subjective and objective factors that delineate or define the nation.[7] Weber spoke of the nation as a 'prestige community'. Nations cannot, he argued, be defined by any objective criteria such as language, common blood or membership of a given polity. Instead, we have to look into the fact that the idea of the nation stands in a very intimate relation to prestige interests for its advocates. The significance of the nation thus lies in the apparent superiority associated with the cultural values preserved and developed through the cultivation of the group.[8]

The 'prestige factor' associated with the use of the term nation ensured that Muslim and non-Muslim intellectuals adopted the term in their socio-political discourse. Social or political demands were increasingly made in reference to nations rather than 'communities'. Weber observed that groups which had previously perceived of themselves as a race came to speak of themselves as a nation, claiming this quality as an attainment.[9] This was clearly reflected in the fact that figures such as Ameer Ali and Mohammed Nomani argued that it was crucial for the Muslim community in India to be addressed as a 'nation' rather than a 'minority'

[6] This monograph seeks to contribute to more recent works which have studied differing constructions of nationhood. See, for instance, Umut Ozkirimli, *Theories of Nationalism: A Critical Introduction* (New York, 2000), especially p. 228; Prasenjit Duara, 'Deconstructing the Chinese Nation' in *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, 30 (July, 1993), pp. 1–26.

[7] For a succinct introduction to the problems associated with defining the 'nation', refer to John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (eds.) *Nationalism* (Oxford, 1994), pp. 3–5, 15–16.

[8] Max Weber, *Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, pp. 170–173.

[9] Ibid., p. 174.

or a 'race' in order for it to be recognised as an important factor in the determination of government policies.[10] As sections of the Indian intelligentsia spoke of nationhood as something that had to be achieved for communities to be part of the modern world and to justify their demands,[11] a myriad of religious, regional and caste communities came to be labelled as nations. Even figures like Iqbal, who were critical of the blind imitation of western political thought and institutions, could not escape the epistemologies of modernity. By the early twentieth century, the term nation was widely used by Muslim intellectuals to indicate a socio-political community. There was, however, no consensus on what the term meant.

LOOKING BEYOND PAN-ISLAM: LOCATING IQBAL'S CRITIQUE OF NATIONALISM

Before proceeding to discuss Iqbal's rejection of nationalism and the nation-state, it should be reiterated that Iqbal's views should not be approached merely as a return to 'Pan-Islam'. Nor should his espousal of a non-territorial conception of nationhood be explained simply as a re-statement of the supposed Quranic conception of nationhood. Such assertions assume that there is a fixed normative political Islam and thus ignore Iqbal's construction of an Islamic approach to politics. They also fail to highlight the wider relevance of Iqbal to the field of nationalist and political thought. The role of the state vis-à-vis religious and ethnic communities and the importance of territorial jurisdictional units in defining nationhood are highly debated issues in liberal political thought itself.[12] Iqbal's critique of nationalism is all the more relevant in light of the fact that he wrote his major works during a period in which the first systematic studies on nationalism and theorisations on nationhood began to emerge.[13]

[10] Ameer Ali, *The Right Hon'ble Syed Ameer Ali: Political Writings*, edited by Shan Muhammad (New Delhi, 1989), p. 190; Mohammed Nomani, *Whither Muslim India*, serial number 1 (Aligarh, 1940), p. 12.

[11] See, for instance, Jogindar Singh, *The Cultural Problem*: *Oxford Pamphlets in Indian Affairs*, 2nd edn., (April, 1943).

[12] Tamir argues that homogeneous nation-states were revealed as a pipedream, and the illusion that liberal and national ideals could be fully accommodated within one political framework could thus be expected to fade away. See Yael Tamir, *Liberalism and Nationalism* (Princeton, 1993). See also Will Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community and Culture* (Oxford, 1989) and Julia Kristeva, *Nations Without Nationalism* (New York, 1993).

[13] See an excellent review on the history of the discourses and debates of nationalism in Ozkirimli, *Theories of Nationalism*, pp. 12–59.

Iqbal's views can be located within the general context of intellectual – Muslim and non-Muslim, western and non-western – responses to the rise of the modern nation-state, and parallels can be drawn between his work and the views expressed by other critics of nationalism. Iqbal interacted with and drew from wider non-Islamic critiques of nationalism and modern forms of socio-economic and political organisation. The Allama's work reflected the concerns of intellectuals who were disturbed by the powers of the modern-state structure and the diminishing role of religion in society. It is worth noting here that Iqbal discussed his views on nationalism and his reservations over democracy with western figures such as Edward Thompson.[14] In fact, Iqbal's opposition to the shattering of human unity into contending nation-states, which is widely portrayed as an 'Islamic' or 'Pan-Islamic' strand in his thought, has been a major theme in the work of critics of the nation-state.

Although conceding that the concept of the nation-state had played a useful role in the formation of smaller political units and in stimulating a healthy rivalry between these units, Iqbal stressed that such benefits had been vastly exaggerated. The formation of nation-states had led to a great deal of misunderstanding of international motives and opened up a vast field for diplomatic intrigue.[15] Furthermore, the emphasis on the peculiar traits and characteristics of peoples had ignored the broad human element in art and literature.[16] These views are perhaps most poignantly expressed in the *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi*, in which the development of territorial nations is likened to the whittling down of humanity and its dismemberment into various tribes.[17] Iqbal looked to western works and thinkers such as Sir Arthur Keith to support his views,[18] claiming that

[14] Edward John Thompson (1886–1946), father of E. P. Thompson, was a missionary and academic in India and then in Oxford. See Mary Lago, *India's Prisoner: A Biography of Edward John Thompson, 1886–1946* (London, 2001). For Iqbal's letters to Thompson see Iqbal, *His Political Ideas at Crossroads: A Commentary on Unpublished Letters to Professor Thompson*, edited by S. H. Ahmad (Aligarh, 1979) and various letters from Iqbal to Thompson in *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*.

[15] Iqbal, *The Muslim Community*, pp. 17–18.

[16] Iqbal, *Stray Reflections*, p. 95.

[17] Iqbal, *Mysteries of Selflessness*, p. 32.

[18] Iqbal drew on Keith's work, asserting that 'race-building' was incompatible with the necessities of the modern economy, in order to demonstrate that the division of humanity into nation-states was against the 'spirit of the time'. Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 140–141. It is noteworthy that Iqbal's attempt to draw from Arthur Keith is very selective. Although he rightly drew from Keith to show that nationalism is a manifestation of older tribal instincts, he neglected that Keith supported the 'prejudices' that were products of the tribal instincts and were an important aspect of nationalism. See Arthur Keith, *Nationality and Race from an Anthropologist's Point of View: Being the*

whereas the statesmen of Europe were forcing the world to accept the political system of the nation-state, Europe's best thinkers were warning against its disastrous implications.[19]

One particular thinker whose work resonates in Iqbal's writings on nationalism is Lord Acton (1834–1902). As a student in Cambridge, Iqbal would have had ample opportunity to become familiar with the work of Acton, who had been the Regius Professor in Modern History and who was a fellow at Iqbal's college, Trinity. Acton was a stringent opponent of the ideology of nationalism and the institution of the nation-state. His opposition to nationalism centred on three points – the centralising tendency of the modern state; the incompatibility of Catholicism and nationalism and the attempts by the nation-state to subdue the church and religion; and the desire of the state to homogenise diverse groups by asserting that the boundaries of the nation and the state must be congruent.[20]

ISLAM, THE NATION-STATE AND MODERNITY

Political institutions and practises that had evolved in the West were touted by western intellectuals and statesmen as the sole models of political modernity, models which had to be adopted by the rest of the world. No political salvation was achievable outside of these western or modern models. Modernity in the political sphere had come to embody two principal facets: the development of a political space autonomous of the religious and private realm; and the consecration of nationalities/'nations' as the key socio-economic and political units.[21]

In his analysis of Islam, Weber wrote that the patrimonial nature of Muslim political institutions hindered the development of capitalism, rational law and facets of modernity that had developed in western states.[22] It is often argued that the lack of an autonomous 'political space'

Robert Boyle Lecture Delivered before the Oxford University Junior Scientific Club on November 17, 1919 (London, 1919) and *The Place of Prejudice in Modern Civilization (Prejudice and Politics): Being the Substance of a Rectorial Address to the Students of Aberdeen University* (London, 1931).

[19] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 5.

[20] See Timothy Lang, 'Lord Acton and "The Insanity of Nationality"' in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 63, 1 (Jan. 2002), pp. 129–149.

[21] John Stuart Mill asserted that free institutions were impossible in a country made up of different nationalities. Mill, *Utilitarianism, Liberty, and Representative Government* (London, 1948), p. 361.

[22] For a discussion of Weber's views on Islam, see Bryan S. Turner, *Weber and Islam: A Critical Study* (London, 1974).

in Muslim societies proved to be a major obstacle to political modernity, leading thus to the failure of the modern state in the Islamic world.[23] Muslim intellectuals who were keen to demonstrate that Islam was not a barrier to the advancement of modernity met such accusations by either asserting that the distinction between the political and the religious realms was inherent in the political practise of the Prophet and the Rashidun caliphs, or by arguing that if such a division could develop in the West, it could likewise develop in Islam. In other words, Islam was not any more inimical to the development of the modern state than Christianity.

Chiragh Ali, for example, dismissed claims 'that a religious revolution is required before the work of political reform can begin in a Mohammadan state'.[24] The Quran and the teachings of Muhammad did not present obstacles to innovation in any sphere of life, whether political, social, intellectual or moral.[25] Division between state and religion did not present a challenge which had to be met by a radical change to Islam. Referring specifically to the tendency amongst orientalists to quote traditions and Arabic proverbs which asserted the patrimonial nature of the 'Islamic polity', Chiragh Ali argued that proverbs such as 'Al Mulko vad Din-o-Tawaman'[26] were mere sayings and not Muslim religious maxims.[27]

By asserting that the Prophet Muhammad had not interfered with the civil and political institutions in the Arab lands, Chiragh Ali hoped to dispel the idea that the political structures in place in Muslim states were derived from an 'Islamic' normative political tradition and were somehow immutable.[28] Second, he sought to show that neither Muhammad nor the Rashidun caliphs had laid the foundations of a polity that wed the state to religion. Others were to assert that the link between the state and religion was first introduced by the Persians, hence it was not a part of the early Muslim community established by the Prophet and the *sahaba* (early Muslim community).[29] Modernity demanded the

[23] Bertrand Badie quoted in Oliver Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*, translated by Carol Volk (London, 1994), p. 205.

[24] Chiragh Ali was responding to Major R. D. Osborn, who had made this claim in his work *Islam under the Arabs* (London, 1876). Ali, *The Proposed Political, Legal and Social Reforms*, p. xxxi.

[25] Ibid., p. xxxv.

[26] This proverb can be translated as 'The state and religion are twins'.

[27] Chiragh Ali, *The Proposed Political, Legal and Social Reforms*, p. xxxvi.

[28] Ibid., p. xxi.

[29] See, for instance, Bukhsh's stressing of this in his translation and commentary on C. H. Becker's *The Origin and Character of Islamic Civilisation* in Bukhsh, *Contributions to the History of Islamic Civilisation* (Calcutta, 1930), pp. 3–4.

separation of theology and politics. Such a division, it was argued, had been effected in Europe only in the middle of the eighteenth century, and the 'enlightened Mohammadans of Turkey and India are in this nineteenth century striving to do the same, and this will, in no way, affect their religion'.[30]

Chatterjee has argued that the history of nationalism is essentially constituted by two different histories: the history of the 'spiritual domain' and the 'domain of the outside', or the 'material domain'. Whereas the colonised were able to imagine their own communities in the 'spiritual domain', in the 'domain of the outside' they had no choice but to choose its forms from the gallery of 'models' presented by the experience of modern and primarily western nation-states.[31] It can be argued that Iqbal and others such as Maududi not only attacked the project of political modernity, but they also constructed an Islamic polity which opposed the primary foundation of the modern liberal state by extending Islamic tradition beyond the specified spiritual domain into the material. Such a construction can be understood in the light of the power and intrusive scope of the modern state itself. The rise of the modern state necessarily involved the expansion of state power and concern over vast domains of social life previously outside its purview – including that of religion. A consequence of this has been that modern politics and the forms of power it deploys have become a condition for the practise of many personal activities. To the extent that the institutions enabling the cultivation of religious virtue become subsumed within legal and administrative structures linked to the state, the project of preserving these virtues will necessarily be 'political'.[32]

As discussed in the previous chapter, a section of the Muslim intelligentsia constructed Islam into an ideology and a system. An important implication of this was that Islam was seen as a comprehensive and complete system covering all aspects of human life – religious, social, economic and political. Iqbal's reconstruction of Islam as an ideology and a complete polity was the result of his attempts to establish a vision of life set against the West and its ideological and political domination. Consequently, Islam could not simply adapt modern political ideals and institutions. The adoption of modern ideals such as the nation-state and

[30] Ali, *The Proposed Political, Legal and Social Reforms*, pp. xvii–xviii.
[31] Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments*, pp. 6–11.
[32] Charles Hirschkind, 'What is Political Islam?' in *Middle East Report*, number 205 (Oct-Dec, 1997), p. 13.

liberalism would lead to a radical transformation of the structure of Islam itself.[33]

Such an interpretation of Islam set Iqbal apart not only from modernists such as Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Chiragh Ali, but also from Deoband-inspired movements. It has already been noted that the modernists argued that the Quran did not provide a social or political structure; they attempted to demonstrate historically that Islam had frequently adapted to various forms of governance and political structures.[34] However, although they denied that Islam should be approached as a polity, they took pains in their works to argue that the essential 'spirit of Islam' was not dissimilar to modern social-political ideals. They spoke of the spirit of Islam as being 'republican' and 'democratic', stressing that the system of government under the Rashidun caliphate was based on 'the principles of democracy'.[35] Ameer Ali in *The Spirit of Islam* spoke of a 'political spirit of Islam' which is akin to modern political structures and ideals, one which is based on suffrage of the people, provides for a constitution and leads to the establishment of a 'Republic'.[36]

Contrary to post–September 11 portrayals, the Deobandis did not preach a fixed brand of Islamic politics.[37] Barbara Metcalf has argued that a striking feature of many Deoband-inspired movements is the extent to which politics is seen as an 'empty box' to be filled according to what seems to work best in a given situation.[38] Metcalf has rightly stressed the pragmatic nature of the political activities of Deoband-inspired movements. The extent to which Deobandis have grappled with new political structures and argued for the compatibility of Islam with new political ideologies and institutions, however, remains to be studied. The acceptance of nationalism and the nation-state by sections of the Deobandis will be explored in greater detail later; suffice it to note here that they

[33] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 6–7.

[34] Chiragh Ali stated that Islamic history demonstrates that the traditions of the Prophet have been used to defend and legitimise different religious, social and political structures. *The Proposed Political, Legal and Social Reforms*, p. xix.

[35] Denying assertions that Muslim states were theocratic in their system of governance, Chiragh Ali argued that Muslim law was based on the principles of democracy and that the 'first four or five Khalifates were purely republican in all their features'. *The Proposed Political, Legal and Social Reforms*, p. iii.

[36] Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*, pp. 268–290.

[37] See, for instance, a report by the U. S. Navy Chaplain Corps, '"Deobandi Islam": The Religion of Islam', dated 15th of October 2001. http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/2001/index.html (6 June 2011).

[38] Barbara Metcalf, *'Traditionalist' Islamic Activism: Deoband, Tablighis, and Talibs* (Leiden, 2002).

argued that individuals like Iqbal and Maududi who rejected the ideology of nationalism were blind to the political as well as the intellectual conditions and constraints in India. The Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind's newspaper, *al-Jamiyyat*, carried a series of articles by Maulana Basheer Ahmad rejecting Maududi's views on nationalism and Islam; in them, Ahmad argued that a careful study of the life of Muhammad would show that the Prophet acknowledged the political and intellectual conditions of the period instead of sticking to a set of fixed political directives.[39] On the permissibility of the interaction between Islam and other systems, and referring specifically to the question of whether Islam could correlate with the modern political ideology of nationalism, Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani wrote that the

> assumption that Islam and its adherents cannot confederate and interact with any other system is unacceptable. Although Islamic jurisprudence and sharia contains written views on several matters, there remain uncountable things that are allowed, and in which each person is free to act upon as per his *expediency*. *Among these are kingdoms, their ordinances and organizations, etc., that are used as ways and means of expediency.* If certain resolutions are mooted by an agricultural or a commercial or an industrial establishment and practical action is taken to implement them, being Islamic, our participation would not be illegal from any point of view. There are many collective ordinances in the sharia that are based on Islamic rule. These do not address the individual, but Caliphs and Sultans. When there is no Islamic government, it is *neither obligatory nor permissible* that an individual or a unit of Muslims act upon it.[40] (emphasis added)

As will be shown later, sections of the Deobandi ulama argued that modern political institutions such as the nation-state could be adopted by the Muslims with the proviso that allowance was made for certain 'Islamic' institutions and practises within the state.

NATIONALISM AND NATIONHOOD THE 'WEAPONS' AND 'NARCOTICS OF IMPERIALISM'

Many intellectuals in India welcomed the attainment of nationhood, expressed in the development of a culturally uniform nation-state as the culmination of a universal process born out of modern social and economic structures which all progressive communities had to go through. Nationalism was understood as an integral part of the political and economic advancement of a hitherto politically divided and economically

[39] *al-Jamiyyat*, 24/11/38.
[40] Madani, *Composite Nationalism*, pp. 133–134.

backward people, and as a progressive stage in the historical evolution of human societies.[41] Nehru reflected such a belief when he spoke of the communal, economic and political problems inflicting India as the symptoms of a community which had yet to develop 'nationhood'.[42] The political maturity of a people was measured against the attainment – or the lack – of nationhood. Chaudhari Rahmat Ali, for instance, compared the achievement of nationhood to 'what majority or manhood is to individuals. That is, it marks their coming of age, their realization of the elementary status as a people, and their assumption of the essential obligations of that status'.[43] Culturally diverse states had to overcome their differences and shape a homogeneous mono-cultural nation. Alternatively, cultures had to aspire for their own territorial states that would facilitate their development and progress. [44]

The 'derivative discourse' of nationalism dictated the political visions and demands of a number of Muslim figures, such as Chaudhari Rahmat Ali, whose Pak Plan is generally conflated with Iqbal's political vision.[45] Ali's Pak Plan, inaugurated in 1933 with the establishment of the Pak National Movement, called for the carving out of a number of sovereign Muslim nation-states in areas where there were sizable Muslim populations. The Pak Plan will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. It is, however, important to note here that the Plan was founded upon the view that the survival and development of the Muslim nation was contingent on the creation of territorial states.[46] The importance of territory as a marker of nationhood had been internalised by a number of intellectuals in India ranging from V. D. Savarkar to Chaudhari Rahmat Ali and F. K. K. Durrani.[47] The importance of territory as a marker of nationhood

[41] MacLaughlin has aptly highlighted that the modern nation-state was seen by intellectuals of the period as an alternative to the idiocy of rural life and precapitalist parochialism. Jim MacLaughlin, 'Nationalism as an Autonomous Social Force: A Critique of Recent Scholarship on Ethnonalism' in *Canadian Review of Studies in Nationalism*, XIV (1987), p. 1.

[42] Nehru, *Discovery of India*, p. 385.

[43] Chaudhari Rahmat Ali, *The Millat and the Mission* (Cambridge, 1944), p. 12.

[44] See, for instance, Charles Taylor, 'Why Do Nations Have To Be States' in Gary Laforest (ed.), *Reconciling the Two Solitudes: Essays on Canadian Federalism and Nationalism* (Montreal, 1993).

[45] The term 'derivative discourse' is drawn from Partha Chatterjee's examination of nationalist discourse in India in *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World*.

[46] Chaudhari Rahmat Ali stressed that 'land is to nations what homes are to individuals and fields to farmers', and it is 'land that makes their fatherlands, sustains their physical life, and symbolizes their wealth, prestige and power'. Ali, *The Millat and the Mission*, p. 13.

[47] Territory was an important marker of nationhood for Savarkar, who argued that only religious groups which had their key religious sites in India were part of the Indian or Hindu nation. See Savarkar, *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu* (New Delhi, 1989).

was perhaps best reflected in the writings of Durrani, who rejected the views of western intellectuals who based nationhood on the possession of 'certain characteristics' – ethnicity, language or race – or, like Renan, on the possession of a shared history and the desire for a common future.[48] Such definitions of nationhood were deemed to be 'too liberal'. Durrani argued that the definition of nationhood could only be based on the possession of, or the desire to possess, a territorial state.[49] He drew from Henry Sidgwick's argument in the *Elements of Politics* that a people could only achieve and ensure its nationhood and development by becoming a state.[50]

Others, however, cautioned that nationalism was not the culmination of the universal process which all communities passed through on their way to socio-political and economic advancement, but rather a political concept born out of the specific history of Europe. On a visit to Japan, Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941) warned the 'no-nations' of the East to be wary of adopting unessential western ideas that did not serve their advancement as a people.[51] Similarly, Iqbal stressed that western political ideology and civilisation were not presenting ideals which were universal, and that it was important that western ideologies be studied and appreciated within the context of the facts which had led to their evolution. Warning that nationalism was an idea born out of specific historical and intellectual developments in Europe, he called upon those enamoured by the idea of the nation-state to undertake a critical appreciation of the context that had determined its birth in Europe. Such arguments reflect a perception of colonialism as a totalitarian exercise of power and concerns over intellectual and ideological hegemony.

Iqbal and Tagore were concerned with the ideological domination of the East by western political and social thought. Ideas were in themselves sources of power, control and domination. They warned that the uncritical replication of western ideologies and institutions would only serve to entrench the source of weakness further.[52] Iqbal's rejection of the ideology of nationalism was part of his wider critique of western imperialism and domination – physical as well as intellectual – and modernity. It has been noted in the previous chapters that although both Iqbal and the modernists agreed that there was a fundamental need to re-interpret Islam in the

[48] See Ernest Renan, 'What is a Nation?' in Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny (eds.), *Becoming National: A Reader* (Oxford, 1996), pp. 41–55.
[49] F. K. K. Durrani, *The Future of Islam in India* (1929).
[50] Ibid., pp. 6–18.
[51] Rabindranath Tagore, *Nationalism* (New Delhi, 1994).
[52] Ibid., p. 20.

light of modern developments, the Allama did not subscribe to the view that Muslims should imbibe political and social ideals as well as facets of civilisation from the West. He warned against the ideological domination to which the uncritical inculcation of ideas and ideals could give shape. Writing on the impact of the adoption of new western political ideals by the Hindus, he argued that these new ideals had seized their entire soul, and that in the long term they would be transformed into an absolutely new people. 'Nations are mothers of ideals', he argued, 'but ideals, in the course of time, become pregnant and give birth to new nations'.[53]

Iqbal came to speak of the political and economic ideologies of the West, especially nationalism, as distorting types of consciousness and as a system of ideas determined by the need to promote western domination.[54] More important, he saw the blind acceptance or mere imitation of these ideologies as a negation of the will to power. Nietzsche had famously described alcohol and Christianity as 'European narcotics' that detracted from the will to power. He essentially argued that it was the inability to generate power that gave rise to the desire for these 'narcotics'.[55] In his poem 'Khizr-i-Rah', a work in which Iqbal made references to political events which had shaken the Muslim world, he described 'western civilization' and 'nationhood' as the 'narcotics of imperialism'.[56] Colonised intellectuals who called for the acceptance of nationalism were manifesting their weakness and their inability to develop their own ideologies.

Iqbal and Maududi were more alarmed by the intellectual domination of the Muslim community than non-Muslims, as they believed that Islam had provided a civilisation and a complete ideology of its own. The adoption of such alien ideals and institutions would involve a reinterpretation or a total rejection of the foundational principles of the Muslim socio-political structure.[57] Unlike other religious systems, Islam had provided a basis for resistance and a source of re-empowerment. It is interesting in this regard to note Iqbal's equation of the acceptance of nationalism with theological movements such as the Ahmadiyya.[58] In his view, nationalism was acceptable to the Ahmadiyya community for two

[53] Iqbal, *Stray Reflections*, p. 34.
[54] Interestingly, Hegel's metaphysics was criticised by Iqbal as an intellectual justification of the capitalistic structure of society. Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 111.
[55] See, for instance, Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols: A New Translation by Duncan Large* (New York, 1998), p. 38.
[56] Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, p. 264.
[57] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 6–7.
[58] Ibid., pp. 111–143.

fundamental reasons: It did not accept Islam as a socio-political ideology, and the movement was itself an attempt to reconcile Muslims to the position of political and intellectual domination.

In an article published in the daily newspaper *Ehsaan*,[59] Iqbal argued that 'European imperialism demanded the break-up of the religious unity of Islam', and that no 'other weapon would serve the imperial interests better than the propagation of the British concept of nationhood'.[60] This statement reflects Iqbal's concern over the shattering of the unity of the Muslim *umma* into individual nation-states, each of which would be an independent focus of loyalty and identity. Iqbal's poetry is full of references which sought to impress upon the Muslims that they were part of a wider non-territorial community of belief. Iqbal's imagining of the Muslim community as an extra-territorial community will be discussed in greater detail later; suffice it to note here that in his poetry he compared the creation of separate nation-states to the creation of idols.[61]

Iqbal's description of nationalism as a 'weapon' against Muslims must also be located within the context of the expansion of western domination in the Middle East, which was concomitant with and often linked to the rise of nationalism or the rise of independent bases of political authority which formally broke away from the Ottoman Empire. In the aftermath of the break-up of the Ottoman Empire, a number of Muslim intellectuals wrote of how nationalism had been used as a 'weapon' by the western powers to effect the downfall of the 'Muslim empire'.[62] More important, Iqbal's reference to nationalism as a 'weapon' must be studied in the light of his fear that the mere imitation of western political ideals and institutions would lead to intellectual domination. It is in this sense that Iqbal equated the demands for the adoption of nationalism with the demands for the adoption of western civilisation.

INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY: REJECTING THE ATHEIST, OVER-ORGANISED AND HOMOGENISING NATION-STATE

Although he championed the need for the fullest development of the *khudi*, Iqbal located its development firmly within the ambit of the social

[59] *Ehsaan* is an Islamic concept that requires the Muslim to obtain perfection or excellence.

[60] Iqbal, *A Commentary on Unpublished Letters to Professor Thompson*, p. 36.

[61] In his poem 'Wataniyyat', for instance, he described the nation-state as an idol or false god created by modern civilisation. Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, pp. 160–161.

[62] Madani, *Composite Nationalism*, pp. 97–98.

body. Reacting to nihilistic tendencies of modernists who devalued the role of society, Iqbal argued that society was an indispensable medium for the development of the individual. His views on society have, however, been generally neglected by scholars; some have even suggested that Iqbal's overbearing concern with the individual led to his failure to postulate any clear views on society.[63] The categorisation of Iqbal as a modernist, premised upon an excessive emphasis on the individualistic strand in his thought, has further detracted from a comprehensive understanding of his views on the development of the individual and society. This section argues that the centrality of society to the development of the individual led Iqbal to reject what he perceived to be the 'atheist', 'over-organising' and 'homogenising' basis of the modern nation-state structure. This would culminate in his relocation of the nation along the lines of the religious community, or the *millat*.

The two key works in which Iqbal discussed his views on the development of the individual and society are his *Asrar-i-Khudi* and *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi*. Conventionally, these texts are studied as separate literary works. The emphasis on the *khudi* and his criticisms of Sufi poets such as Hafiz for stifling the development of the individual in his *Asrar-i-Khudi* has led to the work being described as a *masnavi*[64] which sought to provide the modernist message of the free development of the individual.[65] The *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi*, on the other hand, is widely characterised as a work which sought to curb the threat of excessive individualism. Contrary to such views, the ideas expressed in the two works are not distinct. Iqbal's personal letters and notes reveal that the *Asrar-i-Khudi* and the *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi* were not written as separate poems but rather were conceived of as parts of the same *masnavi*.[66] In fact, Iqbal had also hoped to write a third part to the *masnavi* in which he planned to discuss the problems which could confront the Muslim community in the future and the solutions presented in the Quran.[67] In order to gain a comprehensive

[63] Smith, *Modern Islam in India*, p. 133. Mazheruddin Siddiqi has also suggested that Iqbal had no clear ideas about society and social process. Siddiqi, *The Image of the West in Iqbal* (Lahore, 1956), p. 31. Muhammad Ashraf Chaudhari has argued that Iqbal's lack of knowledge of sociology led to his failure to discuss the role of the state. Chaudhari, *The Muslim Ummah and Iqbal* (Islamabad, 1994).

[64] The *masnavi* is a poem of indefinite number of verses in the rhyme scheme of AA, BB, CC. It is often narrative in style.

[65] See, for instance, K. A. Rahim, *Iqbal: The Poet of Tomorrow* (Lahore, 1968).

[66] In his letters he spoke of the *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi* as the second *hisah* (part) of the *Asrar-i-Khudi*. See, for instance, Iqbal, *Iqbal Nama*, pp. 23–24, where he spoke of his aim to write a second *hisah* of the *Asrar-i-Khudi*, in which he would show what 'true Islam' is and demonstrate how Sufism had detracted from the empowering message of Islam.

[67] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal,* i, 618.

insight into Iqbal's views on the individual and society, it is imperative to approach the ideas developed in the parts of the *masnavi* as expressions of the whole of his ideas.

Both the *Asrar-i-Khudi* and the *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi* stress the importance of the link between the individual and society. The development of the individual in the first part of the *masnavi* is not envisaged outside the bounds of society. Three stages in the movement of the *khudi* towards uniqueness are discussed in the *Asrar-i-Khudi* – obedience to law, self-control and divine vice regency.[68] The first two stages required the individual to bind himself to the 'ideals' and 'laws'.[69] Developing these ideas further in the *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi,* Iqbal stated that it was only as a member of society that the individual became conscious of the ideals.[70] These ideals and laws were the principles according to which the community or social body was organised. Unlike Nietzsche's superman, who had to pass beyond good and evil and essentially become a law onto himself, the Allama posited that because the individual was conceived of as a spiritual being, the development of the individual could only be assured through a social organisation that was based on a spiritual ideal and bound together by religious laws.[71]

However in Iqbal's view, an indifference to religion cut to the core of the territorially demarcated nation. Distressed by nationalist calls for the assimilation of the different religious groups in India on a 'secular' basis,[72] Iqbal recorded in a letter to Edward Thompson that his foray into the realm of politics had been dictated by his interest in Islam as a moral polity and the fear that nationalism would lead to atheism.[73] It was endemic in the nation-state system, he argued, that religion be relegated to the private realm; thus, the only factor uniting the people of the nation-state would be 'irreligiousness'.[74] Contrary to the views expressed by individuals such as Chiragh Ali, Iqbal perceived the relegation of religion to the private realm in Europe and the calls for such a move in the East to be a disastrous innovation. There was no utility, he argued, in aping this aspect of 'political modernity', as even the best thinkers of

[68] Iqbal, *Secrets of the Self,* pp. 72–84.
[69] See, for instance, Ibid., pp. 73–74.
[70] Iqbal, *Mysteries of Selflessness*, pp. 5–8.
[71] 'Allama Iqbal's Essay on Nietzsche', *File on Iqbal*, IAP, vol. 25, pp. 7–8.
[72] In the *Javid Nama* Iqbal wrote that 'the western lords, in their deceit, have taught the cult of nation-worship, have thus lured the faithful from their creed'. See Iqbal, *Javid Nama*, pp. 50–51.
[73] Iqbal, *Unpublished Letters to Professor Thompson*, p. 72.
[74] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, edited by A. R. Tariq (Lahore, 1973), pp. 233–234.

Europe realised the falsity of such a divide, which had resulted in the total exclusion of Christianity from the life of European states.[75]

It is important in this regard to explore Iqbal's views on socialism, which he felt provided an alternative socio-political basis for the organisation of society. Although the extent of Iqbal's engagement with socialist ideas remains a moot point, it is nevertheless clear that he appreciated its rejection of territorial nationalism and viewed it as an alternative ideology for the organisation of society.[76] His staunch conviction that no system could be established on an atheist foundation, however, led to his rejection of socialism. Commenting on the Russian Revolution, he wrote that 'no system or society can rest on an atheistic basis. As soon as things settle down in that country and its people have time to think calmly, they will be forced to find a positive foundation for their system'.[77] It is imperative to note that the Allama subscribed to the view that human life advances by means of a dialectical tension between negation and affirmation. Drawing from a strand of Muslim theological thought which approached the Islamic creed (the *kalima – la illa il Allah*) not only as a statement of dogma but also as a signifier of deeper mystical truths, Iqbal argued that the *kalima* had two parts to it, *la* signifying negation, and *illa* signifying affirmation, which together revealed the message that development was possible only through the dialectics of negation and affirmation.[78]

It was only by saying no to forces which weakened the self and by saying yes to those which strengthened it that the individual could truly develop.[79] While *la* was crucial to the demolition of the idols of modern civilisation, negation had to be followed by affirmation. Socialism, by revolting against monarchy, capitalism and religious exploitation, had successfully passed the stage of 'no'. It had, however, failed to find a positive foundation to build upon.[80] Only religion could provide the positive foundation on which to construct a social organism. It was argued that 'the stability of life in the world comes from the strength of faith'.[81]

[75] Ibid., pp. 5–6.

[76] See, for instance, his attempt to interpret Islam in the light of socialism. Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, iii, 694–695 and *Iqbal Nama*, pp. 183–185.

[77] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 151.

[78] See, for instance, Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, p. 525

[79] 'Life in its essence, begins with "*la*" ends with "*illa*". It is the message of death when "*la*" is separated from "*illa*". Iqbal, *What Should Then Be Done O People of the East: English Rendering of Iqbal's Pas Cheh Bayad Kard Ay Aqwam-i-Sharq by B. A. Dar* (Lahore, 1977), stanzas 56–57.

[80] Ibid., stanzas 267–290.

[81] In his poem *Tulu-i-Islam*, Iqbal cited the religious basis of Turkey as the reason for its having emerged stronger than Germany in the post-war era despite the fact that both had been allies in the First World War. Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, p. 270.

Iqbal's views on the development of human consciousness and society through a dialectical tension were also influenced by Hegelian and Marxist thought. Such was Iqbal's attraction to Hegel's theory on the advancement of life and the universe through a perpetual conflict of opposing forces that he sought to trace the prevalence of a similar strand of thought in the work of Muslim thinkers and poets.[82] Even though Iqbal rejected certain elements of Hegel's philosophy in the later stages of his life, aspects of the latter's thought had played a formative role in the development of his worldview. Particularly important was Hegel's view on society as the means through which the Absolute Mind – God – manifested itself.[83] The 'nation', according to Hegel, was the centre of history because God concretises Himself in nations. History was conceived in terms of 'nations' and 'spirits of nations'. Iqbal imbibed from Hegel not only the importance of society, and more specifically the 'nation', but also the essentially non-atheist nature of the nation. This is clearly reflected in his statement that the world 'in all its details, from the mechanical movement of what we call the atom of matter to the free movement of thought in the human ego, is the self-revelation of the "Great I am".'[84]

The Allama also feared that the overbearing political structure which was characteristic of the modern state would limit the development of individual personality. Such concerns were shared by other Indian intellectuals such as Tagore, who feared that the development of an over-organising and homogenising state structure would engulf society.[85] Lamenting the tendency of modern society and civilisation to reduce the individual to a nameless part of a huge machinery, and likely drawing on Nietzsche's denouncement of the state as a power which intimidated man into conformity,[86] Iqbal argued that the individual was not a thing to be exploited, but a personality which was to be allowed to develop and achieve self-fulfilment. 'In an over-organised society', he wrote, 'the individual is altogether crushed out of existence'.[87] The 'over-organisation' of society, be it at the hands of the ulama, Islamic legalists or the modern-state structure, was to be resisted because it would stifle the development

[82] See, for instance, 'Bedil in the Light of Bergson', *File on Iqbal*, IAP, vol. 25.

[83] Iqbal's notes reveal his appreciation of Hegel's views on the attempts of the Absolute Mind to objectify itself in the form of the universe. See Ibid.

[84] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 71.

[85] See Tagore's views on society and politics in *Nationalism*.

[86] Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*, 1:11. For a discussion of Nietzsche's vigorous attack against the state, see Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, 4th edn. (New Jersey, 1974), pp. 157–178.

[87] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 151.

of individual personality. Iqbal's concern with the development of the individual drove him to be wary of all forms of political (and religious) structures that sought to control the life of man, be it kingship, autocracy, nationalism, democracy or the state structure. Asserting that the ultimate fate of a people does not depend as much on organisation as on the worth and power of individual men, he rejected the modern-state structure, calling instead for systems which allowed for the development of 'self-concentrated individuals'.[88]

ORIGINS OF THE NATION-STATE AND ITS INCOMPATIBILITY WITH ISLAM

It has been shown earlier that a leading section of the Muslim intelligentsia enunciated the view that modern political ideals and institutions were universally applicable, and that in adopting these, the Muslims of India were essentially charting an enlightened path.[89] Contrary to such views, Iqbal traced the specific development of the idea of territorial nationality in Europe to the shattering of religious unity and the subsequent search for an alternative secular basis for national life.[90] Luther's revolt against the church led to the complete displacement of the universal ethics of Christ and the growth of national and narrower systems of ethics.[91] Iqbal stated that although Luther was perfectly justified in his revolt against the church structure, he had not realised that in the peculiar conditions which obtained in Europe, his revolt would eventually culminate in the complete displacement of the universal ethics of Christ by the growth of nation-states.[92] The attack on Christian dogma by philosophers like Rousseau, whom Iqbal describes as 'the great father of modern political thought',[93] further spurred the break-up of the 'one' into the 'ill-adjusted many'.[94]

By tracing the foundation of the modern nation-state structure to the work of Luther and Enlightenment thinkers, Iqbal sought to highlight

[88] Ibid.

[89] One proponent of such views was Chiragh Ali, *The Proposed Political, Legal and Social Reforms*, pp. xvii–xviii.

[90] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, edited by A. R. Tariq (Lahore, 1973), p. 233.

[91] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, p. 163.

[92] Iqbal, *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*, pp. 162–163.

[93] Iqbal's interaction with the thought of Rousseau reveals the complexities in his own thought. In formulating his views on political structures Iqbal both drew upon and criticised Rousseau's views.

[94] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 5.

that the nation-state was a product of specific historical and intellectual developments in Europe and not a universal ideal. Far from aiding progress and development, the blind acceptance of the ideology of nationalism outside of Europe in countries which had not witnessed similar historical and intellectual developments would be detrimental to the development of communities. Unlike many of his contemporaries who claimed that the communal problems in India were the manifestations of problems associated with a traditional society yet to successfully achieve 'nationhood', Iqbal argued that it was the very fact that the people of India had been blinded by western political concepts and ideals such as nationalism which had led to communal clashes.[95] They had rejected more authentic and more essential forms of socio-political organisation for alien ideals.

Iqbal declared nationalism to be the greatest enemy of Islam.[96] Writing to Sayyid Muhammad Shahid-al-din Jaffari in 1923, he noted that the export of the political ideal of nationalism into the East had spurred him to write on the nature of 'true Islam'. He stated that though he had been one of the first in India to call for a *mutahida qawmiyyat* (composite or united nationalism), he rejected such views as his ideas matured.[97] His study of Islam had led him to conclude that nationalism was not only incompatible with Islam, but it was a threat to the very principles of Islam.[98]

The displacement of a universal ethic by national systems was possible in Europe primarily because Christianity was a purely monastic order which had gradually developed into a 'vast church-organisation'.[99] Luther's revolt was directed against this 'church-organisation' and not against any system of socio-political structure. Furthermore, the uncritical adoption of the Manichean duality of spirit and matter in Europe had led to the separation of the spiritual and the temporal, resulting in the total exclusion of Christianity from the life of European states. A Luther in the world of Islam, however, was an impossible phenomenon, first, because Islam did not have a 'church-organisation' similar to that of Christianity and, second, because Islam was a polity.[100] Because Islam stressed the organic unity of the church and the state and was in itself

[95] He wrote, for instance: 'We think that a staunch Muslim is one who wants to suck the blood of the Hindus and staunch Hindu is one who is the killer of Muslims. We are book worms. Our diet is western books'. Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, i, 98.

[96] Ibid., ii, 271.

[97] Ibid., pp. 493–494.

[98] Ibid., pp. 494–495.

[99] Iqbal, *Thoughts and Reflections,* pp. 162–163.

[100] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 6. Also see his *Islam as a Ethical and Political Ideal.*

a system of polity, the adoption of the idea of the nation-state would require a radical transformation of the structure of Islam itself. It was not possible to retain Islam as an ethical ideal and to reject it as a polity.[101]

It has already been noted in the previous chapter that Iqbal argued that Islam organised society on the basis of *tauhid*, and that the principle of *tauhid* both signified the unity of God and provided a basis for the development of man and society. Iqbal contrasted the displacement of universal ethics and the growth of a plurality of national systems of ethics which accompanied the establishment of nation-states with the humanistic and unifying socio-political ethic presented by Islam.[102] In his poem 'Mekka aur Geneva' ('Mecca and Geneva'), he wrote:

> *is daur mein aqawm ki sohbat bi hoyi am*
> *poshidah nigahoon se rahi wahadat-i-adam*
> *tafreeq melal hukumat-i-afrang ka maqsud*
> *islam ka maqsud faqat millat-i-adam*
> *mekka ne diya khak-i-geneya ko yeh paigham*
> *jamiyyat aqawm ke jamiyyat adam*
>
> In the present age in which the company of nations is common,
> Hidden from sight is the unity of Adam;
> Differentiation is the aim of western governance,
> The purpose of Islam is only the community of Adam.
> Mecca has sent this message to the men of Geneva:
> The association of nations or the association of Adam?[103]

Iqbal took objection to any insinuation that his reference to the humanistic ideals of Islam stemmed only from his attachment to his faith.[104] He argued instead that his concern with Islam in this regard was directed by 'practical and not patriotic concerns'. Far from having an exclusive spirit, Islam ignored minor differences amongst mankind and called for a universal unification of mankind on the basis of the maxim 'Come let us unite on what is common to us all!'[105] More interesting, Iqbal believed that the aim of developing a truly human consciousness was unique to Islam, setting it apart from other religious and social systems:

> The history of religions conclusively shows that in ancient times religion was national as in the case of Egyptians, Greeks and Iranians. Later on, it became

[101] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 6.
[102] Ibid., pp. 5–6.
[103] Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, pp. 519–520.
[104] This statement was made in response to a charge levelled against Iqbal by a certain Mr. Dickinson. Iqbal, *Thoughts and Reflections*, p. 99.
[105] Ibid., pp. 99–100.

racial as that of the Jews. Christianity taught that religion is an individual and private affair. Religion having become synonymous with private beliefs, Europe began to think that the State alone was responsible for the social life of man. It was Islam and Islam alone which, for the first time, gave the message to mankind that religion was neither national and racial, nor individual and private, but purely human and that its purpose was to unite and organize mankind despite all its natural distinctions.[106]

RELOCATING NATIONHOOD: THE *MILLAT*

Iqbal's interpretation of Islam as a polity and his attack on the atheist nature of the nation-state led him to postulate that the individual ideally belongs to a supra-territorial community of believers, the *millat*.[107] In a lecture delivered at the Aligarh College in 1910, Iqbal stated that the essential difference between the Muslim community and other communities consisted in Muslims' 'peculiar conception of nationality'. He stressed that

> [i]t is not the unity of language, or country or identity or economic interest that constitutes the basic principle of our nationality. It is because we believe in a certain view of the universe, and participate in the same historical tradition that we are members of the society founded by the Prophet of Islam. Islam abhors all material limitations, and bases its nationality on a purely abstract idea, objectified in a potentially expansive group of concrete personalities. It is not dependent for its life-principle on the character and genius of a particular people, in its essence it is non-temporal, non-spatial.[108]

The Allama clearly visualised the Muslims of India as part of a wider 'nation' of believers bound together by the teachings of the Prophet and the message of the Quran. This is further implied in his statement that 'Islam is something more than a creed, it is a community, a nation. The membership of Islam as a community is not determined by birth, locality or naturalization; it consists in the identity of belief'.[109]

Iqbal's use of the term *millat* is interesting. As noted earlier, there is a consensus that the term is generally used in the Quran to refer to a religious community, and that it was defined in the *Kitabu't-Ta'rifat* as

[106] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 206–207.
[107] 'The Faith of all individuals provides material
For community building;
It is the force which shapes
The destiny of the Community'
Matthews, *Iqbal*, p. 53.
[108] Iqbal, *The Muslim Community*, pp. 16–17.
[109] Iqbal, *Thoughts and Reflections*, p. 50.

religion as it stands in relation to the prophets, as distinguished from *din*, religion as it stands in relation to God, and from *mazhab*, which signifies religion with reference to various schools of law within Islam. The term, however, underwent significant changes in the course of time. It came to occupy a central role in the Ottoman Empire's *millat* system, whereby the central administration of the empire perceived religious communities in local contexts as parts of religious communities that had an empire-wide dimension under their respective ecclesiastical leaderships. Iqbal recognised that the term had come to encompass new meanings and claimed that in modern Arabic, Persian and Turkish it had come to be used in the sense of the term 'nation'. He stated that he himself used the word *millat* in this latter sense.[110]

Iqbal postulated that the basis of the Muslim *millat* is a common belief in *tauhid* and *risalat*. He elaborated that the body and soul of the *millat* are composed of a belief in the unity of God; this very unity is the basis for the unity of thought amongst Muslims.[111] On the importance of prophethood as a focus of loyalties, he writes:

> Prophethood turned us into a community inspired
> With unity of expression, mode and ideal,
> A multitude inspired with one aim and ideal merges into unity,
> When the unity is complete it turns into *Millat*.[112]

Iqbal's attempts to base Muslim identity on the principles of *tauhid* and *risalat* must be seen in the light of his attempts to fashion an identity that encompassed Muslims who adhered to different *mazhabs* and sects within the wider 'Islamic fold'. This was in line with his own attempts to re-fashion an Islam which was not strictly demarcated along the lines of *mazhab*, one which drew from different schools of *fiqh* and stressed the right to *ijtihad*.

Although he recognised the existence of different schools of thought and varying strands of theology within the fold of Islam, the Allama insisted that an adherence to the principles of *tauhid* and *risalat* united all Muslims.[113] It was only when one of these key principles was refuted that a group fell beyond the boundaries of Islam. Iqbal actively sought to

[110] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 203–204.

[111] Iqbal, *Secrets of Collective Life: Being a Descriptive and Comprehensive Translation of Allama Iqbal's Rumuz-i-Bekhudi*, translated by A. R. Tariq (Lahore, 1977), pp. 25 and 78–85.

[112] Couplets from the *Rumuz-i-Bekhudi* translated by and quoted in A. S. Ahsan, 'Iqbal on Muslim Fraternity' in *Iqbal Review*, XXV, 1 (April 1984), p. 2.

[113] Iqbal, *Qadianism*, 2nd edn. (Colombo, 1957), p. 14.

breach the factional differences within the Muslim community by playing down the Shia-Sunni schism, laying the blame for these divisions on the lack of vision of the *mullas* rather than on historically rooted differences. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, Iqbal called for the Ahmadiyya to be excluded from the fold of Islam because their reverence of their leader as a prophet of God was tantamount to a refutation of the principle of *risalat*.[114] On the other hand, in the very same tract in which he chastised Ahmadism, the Allama strove to demonstrate that the Ismailis were a group that was within the fold of Islam. It is interesting to note that the Aga Khan, who played a prominent role in a number of organisations like the Muslim League and the Muslim Educational Conference, was also exalted as a true leader of the Muslim community. This may have been because Iqbal saw in him an individual with considerable influence and recognition both within India and internationally, a leader who could unite the various 'sects' of Islam and champion the cause of Muslims. It should be noted that Iqbal subscribed to the view that the task of uniting all Muslims could only be achieved by a 'great personality' and not through the work of organisations.[115]

While stressing the international dimension of the *millat*, Iqbal recognised the importance of a visible focus for the life of any community:

> Peoples win their bond
> And order from a focus,
> And that same
> Perpetuates the nation's sum of days.[116]

Drawing on the example of the people of Moses, he stated that the loss of a focus leads to the death of a nation. 'When they gave up their focus from their grasp', he wrote, 'the thread was snapped that bound their congregation each to each'.[117] For the Muslim *millat*, the Kaaba serves as the international focus, and the pilgrimage there also helps to destroy the attachment to one's native land.[118]

Hegel defined the *volksgeist*, 'spirit of a people', as consisting in the historical and living unity of the culture of a specific people; it pervaded

[114] He argued that 'any religious society historically arising from the bosom of Islam, which claims a new prophethood for its basis, and declares all Muslims who do not recognize the truth of its alleged revelation as *Kafirs*, must be regarded by every Muslim as a serious danger to the solidarity of Islam'. Iqbal, *Qadianism,* (Lahore, 1957), p. 2.

[115] Iqbal, *Letters and Writings*, pp. 4–5.

[116] Iqbal, *Mysteries of Selflessness*, p. 50.

[117] Ibid., p. 51.

[118] Iqbal, *Secrets of the Self*, p. 77.

them all and unified them into an organic totality. Hegel's stress on organic totality led him to postulate the view that nothing in a specific human culture can be understood in isolation; its religion, politics and art were all expressions of the one *volksgeist*.[119] Iqbal's discourse on national culture draws upon such ideas of organic unity. Culture was heralded by the Allama as an important social bond for the nation. The assimilation of the individual into the culture of Islam was essential for the creation of a uniform mental outlook and represented a means of giving a definite purpose and ideal to the community.[120] Iqbal emphasised that

> the unity of religious belief on which our communal life depends, is supplemented by the uniformity of Muslim culture. Mere belief in the Islamic principle, though exceedingly important is not sufficient. In order to participate in the life of the communal self the individual mind must undergo a complete transformation and this transformation is secured, externally by that uniform culture which the intellectual energy of our forefathers has produced.[121]

The idea of geographically defined 'cultural areas' was, however, refuted. Great stress was laid on the fact that Islamic culture is a universal culture not indebted to the genius of any one particular people.[122] The importance of this mixed heritage is emphasised in his poem 'Tulu-i-Islam' ('The Renaissance of Islam'), in which he called on the Muslims once more to 'receive from the court of God the glory of the Turkamans, the intellect of the Indians and the eloquence of the Arabs'.[123]

Culture, religion and the other aspects of the nation were organically linked. Thus the culture of each nation, itself a religious community, was intrinsically linked to its religious precepts. In Iqbal's *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, he attacked Spengler's assertion that Muslims were part of the Magian cultural group and took pains to demonstrate the originality of Muslim thought, refusing to accept any definitive influence that Greek thought could have had on the development of Muslim culture.[124]

The Magian, according to Iqbal, was one who accepted the existence of false gods, though he did not worship these gods. Furthermore, Iqbal emphasised that one of the important features of Magian culture is the perpetual expectation of the coming of a messiah. The '*cultural meaning* of the doctrine of finality [of the Prophet] in Islam' (emphasis added) clearly

[119] T. Z. Lavine, *From Socrates to Sartre: The Philosophic Quest* (New York, 1989).
[120] Iqbal, *The Muslim Community*, p. 22.
[121] Ibid., p. 20.
[122] Ibid., p. 21.
[123] Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, pp. 267–273.
[124] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, pp. 124–146.

signified that the Muslims could not be a part of the Magian 'cultural group'.[125] Spengler had failed to appreciate the value of *tauhid* and *risalat* as determinants of Muslim culture and nationhood. Iqbal also attacks Spengler's preference of basing his judgements on the 'vulgar beliefs' practised by Muslims rather than 'the history of Muslim thought'.[126] This emphasis on Muslim law and thought as important aspects of Muslim culture is reflective of an attempt to base the unity of the *millat* on a single high culture of Islam rather than on diverse local practises.

QAWMIYYAT VERSUS *MILLAT*: CONSTRUCTING A POLITICAL LANGUAGE

Muhammad Iqbal's opposition to conceptions of nationhood which wed the nation to the territorial state culminated in a public debate with Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani, the chief protagonist of the concept of *mutahida qawmiyyat* (composite or united nationalism). Generally, this debate is described as one between a 'Muslim separatist', or the proponent of the 'two-nation theory', and a 'Muslim nationalist'.[127] Such a characterisation detracts from an understanding of its contents and significance. It was essentially both an intra-Islamic debate over the acceptability of the ideology of nationalism and the institution of the nation-state, as well as a deliberation on the location of 'nationhood' or political community.

The debate between Iqbal and Madani centred upon their respective equation of *millat* and *qawmiyyat* with the 'nation' or political community. As Muslim intellectuals adopted the term nation into their socio-political discourse, the term was equated with traditional categories such as *qawm*, *millat* and *umma*. The lack of fixity and the ambiguity of these terms is clear from the fact that they were used variously and often interchangeably by Muslim intellectuals to describe their 'national' or socio-political communities. The debate between Iqbal and Madani must be located within the context of the ambiguity and looseness of these categories.[128] In the course of the debate, they not only contested each other's

[125] Ibid., pp. 145–146.

[126] Ibid., pp. 143–144.

[127] See, for instance, Richard Bonney, 'Introduction: Iqbal's Reconstruction of Political Thought in Islam' and Malik 'Iqbal's Reconstruction of Political Thought in Islam' in Fateh Mohammed Malik (ed.), *Iqbal's Reconstruction of Political Thought in Islam*, pp. 16–18 and 28–36 respectively.

[128] Javed Majeed has noted that this debate should be studied within the context of the changes in the meanings attached to these terms. He has not, however, dealt with the contents of the debate. See Majeed, 'Pan-Islamism and 'Deracialisation'', pp. 310–314.

equation of the term nation with 'Islamic' categories – *qawm*, *millat* and *umma* – but also sought to define these categories, thus constructing a political language.

Qawm was a term employed by both Muslim and non-Muslim intellectuals in India to describe a myriad of social and political groupings – linguistic, regional, caste, religious and 'national'. It has already been pointed out that scholars have generally translated the term *qawm* as nation in the territorial sense of the term. A critical examination of the use of the term *qawm* by figures like Sayyid Ahmad Khan demonstrates the looseness and ambiguity of the term. Scholars have generally pointed to Sayyid Ahmad Khan's use of the term to describe the Hindu and Muslim communities and concluded that he envisaged them as separate nations.[129] However, in an address to the Indian Patriotic Association in 1883, Sayyid Ahmad Khan referred to the Hindus of Bengal as a *qawm*.[130] This is merely one instance of the Sayyid's ambiguous use of the term *qawm* to refer to caste, regional and linguistic communities subsumed within the label 'Hindu' and 'Muslim'. It is interesting in this context to note that in his *Asrar-al-Sanadid* (*Monuments of the Great*), a descriptive catalogue on the monuments of Delhi, the Sayyid employed the term *qawm* to describe ethnic groups, clans and *biradaris*. Different members of the Mughal royal families are listed as belonging to different *qawm*s.[131] Sayyid Ahmad Khan also used the term to describe the wider group constituted by the various communities which resided within the territorial boundaries of India. In a speech made at Gurdaspur on 27 January 1884, he stated that he used the term *qawm* in the sense in which it was used in the 'old history books', to indicate all the people living in the same country.[132]

[129] Scholars such as K. K. Aziz and Hafeez Malik have equated his use of the term *qawm* with nation and concluded from his use of the term to describe Hindus and Muslims that he envisaged the Hindus and Muslims as different nations which could not live together, thus laying the foundations for Muslim separatism. See Malik, *Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Modernisation of India and Pakistan*; 'Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's Doctrines of Muslim Nationalism and National Progress' in *Modern Asian Studies*, 3 (1968), pp. 33–51; 'Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's Role in the Development of Muslim Nationalism in the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent' in *Islamic Studies*, 4, (1966), pp. 68–91; and K. K. Aziz, *History of Partition of India: Origins and Development of the Idea of Pakistan* (3 vols., New Delhi, 1988), i, 13–22.

[130] Khan, *Writings and Speeches*, p. 162.

[131] I. H. Siddiqui, 'Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's Approach to History and History Writing' in *Sir Syed Centenary Paper* (Karachi, 1998), p. 121.

[132] Khan, *Writings and Speeches*, pp. 265–266.

The concept of *qawm* as espoused by Sayyid Ahmad Khan is best understood as a community rather than as a nation or clearly defined political entity. His multiple uses of the term further indicate that *qawmiyyat* was a form of community consciousness that was not limited to the confines of the community as an 'actual' social group.[133] Community consciousness shifted with changes in circumstances, situations and context. A Punjabi Muslim could, for instance, belong to the Muslim *qawm*, the Punjabi *qawm* and to the Indian *qawm*. The *qawm* as a grouping and rallying point was thus able to reconstitute itself and shift its boundaries. The extent of the *qawm* was, however, limited by the Sayyid to the territorial boundaries of India. The Muslims of India were not envisaged as part of a wider Pan-Islamic nation or community. The shared culture between the Hindus and Muslims, as well as their shared experiences had, he argued, moulded a Muslim community which was different from Muslim communities elsewhere.[134]

Although Iqbal and Madani themselves continued to use the term *qawm* in ways which retained its ambiguity, the term assumed a more definite form in their writings on nationalism, particularly in the course of their debate. By the early twentieth century, the term nation had been transliterated into Persian and Urdu and, like other western concepts, had been associated with indigenous terms. This equation of modern terms such as nation with 'Islamic' terms served in effect to legitimise the process of adoption by suggesting Islamic precedents for the modern concepts. *Qawmiyyat* was one of the terms that came to be equated with the concept of territorially defined nationhood.

It will be useful to begin by briefly sketching the history of the exchange between Iqbal and Madani. This will serve to contextualise this particular debate and provide an insight into the vibrancy of religious and political debates in the public arena during the period under study. Madani's concept of *mutahida qawmiyyat*, discussed in greater detail later, was founded upon the premise that 'in the present age *qawmein* [nations] are based upon *awatan* [homelands] and not *nasal* [race] or *mazhab* [religion]'.[135] This assertion that the Muslims and non-Muslims of India were part of the same political community or nation had important

[133] I draw here from the view that in any discussion on the political action of community it is pertinent to view community as a form of consciousness, not just as an 'actual' social group. See Rayond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (London, 1983), p. 75.

[134] See, for instance, Khan, *Writings and Speeches*, pp. 201–205.

[135] Madani, *Maktubat-i-Sheikh-ul-Islam*, iii, 124.

political implications, not least because Madani and other members of the Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind based their political stance, particularly their support for the Congress and opposition to the Muslim League, on this concept. The ulama of the Jamiyyat believed that the failure of the ulama to play a leadership role in the political arena in the modern period was one of the reasons for the political decline of Muslims and the stagnation of Muslim political thought.[136] They felt that it was the role of the ulama to provide an Islamic perspective on politics and guide the future political development of India. It was claimed that *mutahida qawmiyyat* was an exposition of the 'true Islamic perspective' on *qawmiyyat* and politics.[137] The concept was extensively promoted by the Jamiyyat through the publication of tracts, the issuing of *fatawa* and through their newspaper, the *al-Jamiyyat*.[138] The *al-Jamiyyat* proved to be an important medium through which they also promoted their views on Islam and politics in general. The newspaper carried numerous articles attacking those who opposed the joint political participation of Hindus and Muslims in the nationalist struggle.

Iqbal was highly critical of the views promoted by the members of the Jamiyyat. His opposition did not stem from the fact that he was opposed to the participation of the ulama in the realm of politics, as suggested by some. As has been shown, Iqbal had himself envisaged a role for the ulama in the religious, social and political revival of Muslims. Nor was it because of their call for cooperation between Muslims and non-Muslims. Iqbal was opposed to the ulama of the Jamiyyat primarily because he feared that they had strayed from the path of Islam in advocating a conception of nationhood 'which no true Muslim could accept'.[139] Iqbal attacked Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani publicly through his statements, letters to newspapers and in his poetry. In a satirical poem which was published in the vernacular press, Iqbal wrote:

Ajam hanuz nadanad rumuz-i-din warna
ze Deoband Hussain Ahmad! In cheh b'u al-ajeebi ast
surood bar sar-i-minbar ke millat az watan ast
cheh bi-khabar ze muqam-i-Muhammad Arabi ast

[136] Khutbat-i-Sadarat Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind, 1925. *Khutbat-i-Sadarat Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind, 1921–1972*, NML (Microfilm)

[137] See, for instance, Muhammad Mian in his introduction to the *Millat-i-Islam ke Mujtahid Jalil Sheikh-ul-Islam: Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani ke Muktasir Halaat Zindagi* (Delhi, 1949), p. 15.

[138] Madani, *Pakistan ki Cheestan: Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind ka Wazi Faisla* (1940).

[139] Iqbal, *Iqbal Nama*, p. 158.

be-mustafa berasan khwish ra, ke din ke hame u'st
agar be u naraseedi, tamam bu-lahabi ast

Ajam[140] still does not understand the mysteries of *din*, otherwise
Why would there be such strangeness from Hussain Ahmad of Deoband?
The melody from his pulpit is that *millat* [nation] comes from *watan* [homeland],
He is so unaware of the position of Muhammad the Arabian.
Reach out to the chosen one because *din* is all his,
If you do not reach out to him, it is Bu Lahabi.[141]

In response to public attacks by Iqbal, Madani used his address to a gathering of the ulama in Delhi in February 1938 to clarify his own views as well as present the true Islamic view on nationhood.[142] He also sought to argue that Iqbal had erred in conflating the concepts of nationhood and *millat*. He stressed that the nation, or political community, according to Islam was founded on the basis of *qawmiyyat* – a concept which was totally different from the concept of the *millat*. This debate continued to rage in the public arena until the death of Muhammad Iqbal in April 1938. Shortly after Iqbal's death, Madani published his *Mutahida Qawmiyyat* in which he sought to present his perspective on the debate.[143]

The key point of contention between Iqbal and Madani was over the equation of the term *qawmiyyat* with the Islamic conception of political community. Both Iqbal and Madani looked to traditional Islamic sources – the Quran, *sunna* and *hadith*s. Madani recognised that the term *qawm* was flexible and that Arabic lexicons equated it with a number of different groupings: a group constituted solely by men; a group of both men and women; descendants of a grandfather; and so on.[144] In light of the varying connotations of the term in the Arabic language, Madani sought to define the term in accordance with the 'Quranic viewpoint'.[145] The aim was to unravel the 'true' meaning and connotation of the term, which appeared more than two hundred times in the Quran.[146] Highlighting

[140] Non-Arab Muslim areas.

[141] Bu Lahab or Abu Lahab symbolises the enemy of Islam who refuses to accept the truth of Islam and the oneness of God. Sura 111 of the Quran prophesises that he will perish in fire. This satirical poem is part of the posthumously published *Armughan-i-Hijaz*. Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, p. 691.

[142] The statement was issued by him at a gathering in Delhi to celebrate Maulana Nur-ud-din's completion of his *Tarjuman-i-Quran*.

[143] Madani, *Composite Nationalism*, pp. 16–17.

[144] See *Composite Nationalism* for his discussion on the various meanings of term *qawm* according to Arabic dictionaries. Ibid., pp. 56–66.

[145] Ibid., pp. 66, 76–77.

[146] Ibid., p. 67.

that the term described different groupings when used as a definite or indefinite noun, Madani argued that although there were verses in the Quran which spoke of Muslims and non-Muslim as separate *qawm*s, there were numerous verses which spoke of them as members of the same *qawm*.[147] In cases where the term is used as an indefinite noun, or has been used with an *alif* and a *lam*, it speaks solely of Muslims. However, where the term appears as a *muz'af* (possessive noun) and the *muz'saf elaih* (pronoun) is a Muslim or the Prophet, the term refers to the political community established between the Muslims and non-Muslims.[148]

Madani concluded that according to the 'Quranic viewpoint', *qawm/qawmiyyat* referred to the political community established between both Muslims and non-Muslims on the basis of kinship, language, territory or any other objective basis.[149] It is important to note that Madani not only provided a definition of the term *qawm/qawmiyyat*, but he effectively located precedents for the idea of nationalism and the nation-state within the history of Islam. Challenging Iqbal's equation of *millat* with nationhood, Madani quoted extensively from the Quran and a number of Arabic, Persian and Turkish dictionaries to argue that the term *millat* had a fixed meaning, and that it could not be used to refer to anything apart from *din* and sharia.[150]

It was noted earlier that Madani's view on politics was founded upon the belief that contemporary Muslim intellectuals and statesmen should develop their views in the light of the prevailing political and intellectual contexts and constraints. This had important implications for his use of the term *qawmiyyat* and his views on the basis of political community. It was clear from Madani's definition of the term *qawm/qawmiyyat* that the 'Quranic viewpoint' allowed for the political community to be established upon a number of objective material and spiritual markers such as race, religion and homeland. However, he promoted a political community founded upon the basis of territory as the most pertinent form of *qawmiyyat* in the contemporary age. This was because the possession of a common homeland was the most important marker of political community in the modern period.[151] It was thus argued that Islam did not require that a nation or *qawm* share the same religion or culture.[152] Madani was

[147] Madani, *Maktubat-i-Sheikh-ul-Islam*, ii, 367. See also Madani, *Composite Nationalism*, pp. 66–78.
[148] Madani, *Composite Nationalism*, pp. 69–70.
[149] Madani, *Maktubat-i-Sheikh-ul-Islam*, ii, p. 126.
[150] Madani, *Composite Nationalism*, p. 64.
[151] See Madani's justification of nationalism in Ibid.
[152] See Ibid., pp. 83–89.

quick to point out that he was speaking merely about the Quranic view of politics and not about *mazhab* and *din*, both of which were not dependent upon territory in any sense.[153]

The concept of *mutahida qawmiyyat* stipulated that the people of India constituted one *qawm* or nation despite their religious, linguistic and racial differences. It was argued that Islam permitted Muslims to form a united front with non-Muslims on the basis of *wataniyyat* (homeland), *nasal* (race), *rang* (colour or ethnicity) or language.[154] Muhammad had himself, it was argued, formed such a united political front in Medina with non-Muslims.[155] There was no barrier, according to Islam, to Muslims entering into *siyasat-i-mulki* (politics of the state) with non-Muslims.[156] Madani argued that the Quran had not provided any strict decree on the issue of the formation of political community between Muslims and non-Muslims. Although there were instances where such a political community was prohibited, there were others where it was not only permitted but obligatory.[157] Madani's concept of *mutahida qawmiyyat* was based upon his view that Islam sanctioned the formation of the political community, or the *qawm*, on a number of objective criteria, and that Islam as a religion allowed for political reforms in the light of the prevailing context. Given the contemporary situation where territorially demarcated nationhood was the most important political formation, and the fact that the Quran had not stipulated against the formation of political community with non-Muslims on the basis of territory, Madani promoted the political unit established on the basis of *mutahida qawmiyyat* as the political formation sanctioned by Islam. Madani's reference to the Covenant of Medina, issued by the Prophet to regulate relations between the different groups in Medina (including non-Muslims), further demonstrates his desire to show that the true Islamically sanctioned political community was founded upon the basis of *qawmiyyat*, and not the *millat*.

Madani also disputed the view promulgated by Iqbal and the editor of *Ehsaan* that territorial nationalism was opposed to Islam, as nationalism for Islam had to be based upon human dignity and brotherhood. The Maulana argued that such a conception of political community was impractical and had no precedence or sanction in Islam.[158] Claiming that

[153] Madani, *Maktubat-i-Sheikh-ul-Islam*, ii, 124–125.
[154] Ibid., pp. 375–376.
[155] Madani, *Composite Nationalism*, p. 77.
[156] Ibid., p. 103.
[157] Ibid., p. 104.
[158] Ibid., p. 93.

there was no such stipulation in the Quran or precedent in the life of the Prophet, he challenged the editor of the *Ehsaan* to quote a verse from the Quran or a *hadith* to substantiate such a view.[159] Madani also contested Iqbal's views on the Quranic use of the term *umma* and his claim that the *umma* is superior to the *qawm*.[160] Madani disputed Iqbal's assertion that the *umma* defines a group which has forsaken its *qawm*s and joined a new religious group, and argued that the term was used in the Quran only as a synonym for the *qawm*.[161] He sought to substantiate this by pointing to the Covenant of Medina, in which the term *umma* is used to refer to the political community established by both Muslims and non-Muslims.[162]

Iqbal accepted Madani's equation of the term *qawmiyyat* with the western conception of nationhood. In a letter to Maulana Abdul Rasheed Naseem (1909–1963),[163] Iqbal stated that he did not contest Madani's stance on *qawmiyyat* if he was merely stating that nationhood in the West was constituted by territory.[164] He stressed, however, that he vehemently opposed Madani if the Maulana meant to advise the Muslims of India that they should fashion their political community along the lines of a territorially defined *qawmiyyat*.[165] Such political counsel was, he argued, opposed to the religious spirit and political principles of Islam.[166] In a letter to the editor of *Ehsaan*, Iqbal wrote that he had spent a large part of his life studying *qawmiyyat* and *millat* in the Muslim perspective, and that he felt that western political thought posed a serious danger to both Asia and Islam.[167]

The central point which Iqbal sought to stress was that nationhood for Muslims could not transcend membership of the religious community. He chastised Madani for his 'mere quibbling' with the terms *millat* and *qawm* and accused him of misleading Muslims into thinking that they could as a nation be other than what they were as a *millat*.[168] Iqbal's

[159] Ibid., p. 94.
[160] Ibid., p. 113.
[161] Ibid., pp. 85–87.
[162] Ibid., pp. 113–114.
[163] Maulana Abdul Rasheed Naseem, popularly known by his nom de plume, Talut, was a student of Deoband. In the course of this debate, both Iqbal and Madani corresponded with Talut, who was himself interested in writing on Islam and politics, regarding their views on *qawm*, *millat* and *watan*.
[164] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal* iv, 645.
[165] Ibid., p. 645–646.
[166] Ibid., p. 645.
[167] Ibid., p. 646.
[168] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, edited by A. R. Tariq (Lahore, 1973), p. 234.

attack on Madani's views was two-fold. First, he argued that Madani had deliberately misrepresented the meanings of *millat* and *qawm* with a view to winning the Muslims of India to the nationalist cause. Second, he suggested that the Maulana's reliance on dictionaries and his excessive concern with philological study of the terms had distracted from a true understanding of the 'spirit' in which the terms are used in the Quran.[169]

To undo the 'mischief latent in Maulana Hussain Ahmad's statement',[170] Iqbal attempted to establish a hierarchy of identities based on *qawm* and *millat*. Iqbal argued that the term *qawm* is used in the Quran simply as a collective noun indicating a 'party of men' and did not signify any political principle. This party of men could refer to a linguistic group, tribe, race or a party of men who shared a territory.[171] It was in this sense that Iqbal employed the term to refer to a number of social groupings in his own writings. *Qawm* was used by Iqbal to refer to territorial groupings such as the French, racial and linguistic groups such as the Persians, and even doctrinal sub-divisions within the fold of Islam such as the Sunnis and Shia.[172] The *millat*, on the other hand, was used to signify a religion, a law and a programme. It carved out a 'new common party' from the different *qawm*s.[173]

Iqbal sought to establish the supremacy of the *millat* by arguing that it is clear from the Quran that the *millat* is a more fundamentally important social and political grouping for the development of man than the *qawm*. He argued that it is evident from the Quran that it is facile to organise one's community around the *qawm*, as it is not a religion, law or programme. He claimed furthermore, that whenever the Quran seeks to call upon a people to obey, it calls upon the *millat*, not the *qawm*.[174] Iqbal's chief assertion was that according to Islam, the *millat* could not be divided into *qawm*s. Madani, on the other hand, argued that his study of the Quranic verses and the *hadith* provided no indication that the *millat* could not be divided into *qawm*s; people who had embraced Abraham's *millat* continued to be part of their *qawm*s.[175] There was no justification from the Quran for the view that the *millat-i-wahida* (single *millat*) or the *millat-i-Ibrahim* could not be divided into different

[169] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 208–212.
[170] Ibid., p. 208.
[171] Ibid., pp. 212 and 214.
[172] See, for instance, Iqbal, *Iqbal Nama*, pp. 336–337.
[173] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 214.
[174] Ibid., pp. 212–213.
[175] Madani, *Composite Nationalism*, p. 83.

*qawm*s like the *qawm-i-Aud*, *qawm-i-Quraish* and others[176] mentioned in the Quran.[177] It was a fact that within the wider Muslim community there are numerous *qawm*s, many of which they form together with non-Muslims.[178]

The exchange also sheds light on Iqbal's attempts to differentiate between patriotism and nationalism,[179] an issue which has no doubt led to a considerable amount of controversy over his views.[180] Iqbal did not seem to dismiss outright the development of a community consciousness on the basis of country; land is after all one of the bases of *qawmiyyat*. He accepted that love for one's native land is a natural instinct and that all men remain prepared to make sacrifices for it.[181] In fact, in his Presidential Address to the Muslim League in 1930, Iqbal had argued that a redistribution of India to allow for a Muslim majority state in the northwest would actually deepen the sense of patriotism amongst the Muslims of north India.[182] The *qawm* was, however, clearly lower than the *millat* in Iqbal's hierarchical scheme of identities. Iqbal's contention with Maulana Madani's views stemmed from the fact that nationalism essentially stressed *qawmiyyat* over the *millat*. Furthermore, for the nationalists, 'country' was no longer simply a geographical term; Iqbal warned that the ideology of nationalism had transformed it into a 'principle of human society and as such it is a political concept' which came into conflict with Islam:

> Love of one's native land is a natural instinct. … In the present-day political literature, however, the idea of nation is not merely geographical: it is rather a principle of human society and as such it is a political concept. Since Islam also is a law of human society, the word 'country', when used as a political concept, comes into conflict with Islam. No one else knows it better than Maulana Husain Ahmad that in its principles of human association Islam admits of no *modus vivendi* and is not prepared to compromise with any other law regulating

[176] Aud and Quraish are kinship and tribal groups mentioned in the Quran.
[177] Madani, *Composite Nationalism*, p. 84.
[178] Madani, *Maktubat-i-Sheikh-ul-Islam*, ii, 376.
[179] Iqbal had, for instance, stated that 'Patriotism is a perfectly natural virtue and has a place in the moral life of man'. Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 38–39.
[180] Iqbal's continued reference to India in his poetry has led some scholars to argue that Iqbal was an Indian patriot throughout his life. M. Hasan has drawn on Iqbal's references to India in his later poetry to argue that he remained a patriotic Indian. Hasan, *A New Approach to Iqbal*. On the other hand, others have attempted to appropriate Iqbal's acceptance of patriotism as a means of reconciling nationalist pride and patriotism for Pakistan with Islamic universalism.
[181] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 205.
[182] Ibid., p. 13.

human society. Indeed it declares that every code of law other than that of Islam is inadequate and unacceptable.[183]

Rather than characterising the exchange between Iqbal and Madani as one between a 'Muslim separatist' and a 'Muslim nationalist', this debate should be seen as an intra-Islamic debate over the acceptability of the ideology of nationalism and the institution of the nation-state, and as a discussion about the proper location of political community. Whereas Madani interpreted Islam as a religious system that allowed for reforms and innovations in the political sphere and ascribed to the view that the ideal political community was to be founded upon the basis of *qawmiyyat*, Iqbal asserted that nationhood for Muslims could only be based upon the *millat*. In the course of this debate, Iqbal and Madani defined and contested each other's employment of terms such as *qawm*, *millat*, nation and *umma*.

It is perhaps unsurprising that, in this debate, both Iqbal and Madani accused each other of serving to perpetuate colonial domination. In line with his concern over the ideological domination implicit in the blind imitation of western political thought and institutions, Iqbal lamented that the ulama who called for the adoption of *mutahida qawmiyyat* had been lured by the 'spell of Europe', which had already entrapped the 'half-Westernized educated Muslims'.[184] Madani, on the other hand, chastised Iqbal and others who were opposed to the idea of a united nationalism in India for having been entrapped and enchanted by the 'spell' cast by the 'magicians of Britain'.[185] *Mutahida qawmiyyat* was promoted by Madani as the best and the only effective weapon which could be employed to fight the British.[186] Nationalism, he asserted, had been used as a weapon by the West to orchestrate the decline of the Muslim empire itself. The western powers had fed the view that the Muslims and non-Muslims of the Ottoman Empire could not be part of the same political community, and this had led to the dissipation of the empire along racial, cultural, linguistic and religious lines. Madani argued that the break-up of the empire was a result of the fact that no one came to the fore to teach the meaning of *mutahida qawmiyyat*.[187] Madani felt that those who prevented Muslims from participating in composite nationalism were doing a great service to

[183] Ibid., pp. 205–206.
[184] Ibid., pp. 204–205.
[185] Madani, *Composite Nationalism*, pp. 145,147 and 149.
[186] Madani, *Maktubat-i-Sheikh-ul-Islam*, iii, 127–128.
[187] Madani, *Composite Nationalism*, pp. 97–98.

the British government that even their armies and arsenals could not do. He responded to Iqbal's satirical poetry with a verse of his own:

> *tarasam narabi be Kaaba tu aye Eraabi*
> *kein rah ke tu mirawi be Englistan ast*
>
> I am afraid, you may not reach the Kaaba O Bedouins of Arabia
> The path you tread leads to England.[188]

This couplet was a clever play on a verse of the thirteenth-century Persian poet Sa'di, with Madani replacing the original term 'Turkistan' with 'Englistan'.

CONCLUSION

Commenting on modern Muslim political thought, Iqbal lamented in his 1930 Presidential Address to the Muslim League that the 'ideas set free by European political thinking … are now rapidly changing the outlook of the present generation of Muslims both in India and outside India."[189] Iqbal's rebuke is not simply targeted, as often assumed, at Muslims who advocated a united Indian nationality, but more generally at all the Muslims who had been 'lured' by the 'western lords'[190] and enticed into accepting modern political ideals, specifically the bifurcation of the spirit and matter or the church and state.[191]

The Allama's views on the link between the individual and society, his interpretation of Islam as a complete ideology and his concern that the East would only serve to perpetuate its domination through the blind acceptance of western political ideas and institutions culminated in his rejection of the idea of the mono-cultural and territorially defined nation-state. He objected to the undue importance paid to territory as a marker of community and to the atheist nature of the nation-state. The nation, as envisaged by Iqbal, was not congruent with the borders of the state.

This chapter began by stating that Muhammad Iqbal's call for the political redistribution of India in his 1930 Presidential Address has led to attempts to reconcile Iqbal's assertion of the non-territorial nature of the Muslim nation with territorial nationalism. The Allama's call for the redistribution of Indian states was not tantamount to a demand for a

[188] Ibid., p. 152.
[189] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 4.
[190] He used this expression in the *Javid Nama*. Iqbal, *Javid Nama*, pp. 50–51.
[191] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 5.

separate sovereign nation-state for Muslims; rather, it was essentially a call for the creation of a political framework which would allow for the development of the various nations – not only Muslims – along their own cultural lines. The controversy that continues to shroud his views stems largely from a failure to grapple with his separation of the nation from the state, and the lack of a full exploration of his views on the development of the nation. The next chapter will focus on Iqbal's views on the development of the nation, which culminated in his visualisation of an area in the north of India where the Muslim *millat* would be able to develop according to its 'national character'. It will be shown that Iqbal refused to accept the state structure as the ultimate form of social organisation. The true development of mankind could not be determined by the state, but rather by the development of the nation or *millat*.

5

Development of the Nation

> To reveal an ideal freed from its temporal limitations is one function: to show the way how ideals can be transformed into living actualities is quite another. If a man is temperamentally fit for the former function his task is comparatively easy, for it involves a clean jump over temporal limitations which waylay the practical politician at every step. The man who has got the courage to migrate from the former to the latter function has constantly to take stock of, and often yield, to the force of those very limitations which he has been in the habit of ignoring. Such a man has the misfortune of living in the midst of perpetual mental conflict and can easily be accused of self-contradiction.
>
> Iqbal[1]

Allama Iqbal refused to accept the state as an essential factor in national life. In his view, the true development of humanity was determined not by the state but by the development of the national community. Commenting on the work of nationalists in Turkey who called for the adoption of the modern state structure in the wake of the collapse of the caliphate, Iqbal stated that they had erred in believing that the state was the institution that determined the character and function of all forces.[2] He dismissed the division of humanity into territorial judicial units as a purely temporary phase in the development of man. Rejecting the ideal of the nation-state, Iqbal spoke of the need to ensure the true development of the nation, free from the centralising and homogenising tendencies of the modern state.

[1] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 37–38.
[2] Iqbal, *Reconstruction*, pp. 153–154.

This chapter seeks to explore Iqbal's attempts at transforming his ideals on the development of the nation into living actualities within the temporal limitations of 1930s India. Although his immediate concern lay in articulating ideas which would secure the fullest development of the Muslim nation in India, he was of the view that a resolution to the question of national development in India was of relevance to the world. As 'India is Asia in miniature', a solution to the problem of the development of the diverse nations in India would 'solve the entire political problem of Asia".[3]

Critiquing the tendency of intellectuals and statesmen in the colonised world to mimic development patterns of the West, Iqbal stressed that nations ensured their development only by remaining true to their specific characters. Both the individual and the nation secured their development through the process of self-discovery. Iqbal's aim was to articulate a 'partly political, partly cultural' programme which would ensure that nations developed in accordance with their own national character. The demand for an autonomous Muslim state in the northwest of India was a part of this wider 'partly political, partly cultural' programme.

As noted in the Introduction, the imposition of post-Partition realities upon Iqbal's thought and the attempts to appropriate his legacy have detracted from a critical examination of his call for the political re-organisation of India. Iqbal's political vision continues to be shrouded by controversies over the demand for the creation of the nation-state of Pakistan. This is symptomatic of the fact that historiography continues to focus primarily on the 'high politics' or constitutional wrangling between the Muslim League and the Congress, to the neglect of the schemes proposed by intellectuals and statesmen as well as Muslim reactions to these schemes.[4] Instead of miring him in controversies which occurred almost a decade after his death, this chapter will situate Iqbal's demand for the creation of a Muslim state in the northwest of India firmly within its context. His demand will be considered in the light of the constitutional developments of the period, namely the release of the Nehru Report and the Statutory Commission Report, as well as the numerous schemes proposed by intellectuals and statesmen in the wake of these reports. Instead of defining Iqbal's call for the political reorganisation of India

[3] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 10.

[4] The neglect of Muslim reactions to the Pakistan scheme due to the focus on high politics has been noted by Gilmartin in his review of the historiography on the Partition. David Gilmartin, 'Partition, Pakistan, and South Asian History: In Search of a Narrative' in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 57, 4 (Nov. 1998), pp. 1068–1095.

as the promulgation of his views on the ideal Islamic state[5] or, for that matter, his own ideas on the ideal political arrangement, his demand is approached as one amongst a number of attempts to formulate a political framework that allowed for the national development of various nations and that countervailed the centralising and homogenising tendencies of the unitary state.

NATIONAL CHARACTER AND SELF-DISCOVERY

In Iqbal's views on the development of the nation we find a resonance of Gottfried von Herder's ideas on the importance of being 'true to oneself'.[6] Like the latter, Iqbal believed that humanity was composed of nations whose essence and value lay precisely in their specificity. The true development of the nation thus lay in its search for fulfilment according to its own way, and not in the imitation of the development patterns of others. He called upon the nations of the East to shape their development and socio-political systems in accordance with their own character and cultural heritage. This emphasis on national character and self-discovery in Iqbal's work prefigures third-worldist concerns over the alienating impact of the twin forces of colonial constructions and blind adoption of western models by the elite in the developing world.

The need to secure a continuous national life was perceived as the most pertinent problem confronting society. All the activities of the community – social, intellectual or political – were to be determined with reference to this ultimate purpose. The development of a 'national character' which held fast to its own at all costs, 'assimilat[ing] all that is good and noble in our times and reject[ing] all that is injurious to the body politic of Islam',[7] was the chief means through which a continuous national life could be secured.[8] Iqbal stressed that the inculcation of national

[5] Such an approach has characterised a number of works, such as A. K. Brohi, 'Iqbal's Concept of an Islamic State' in Khwaja Abdur Rahim (ed.) *Iqbal the Poet of Tomorrow* (Lahore, 1968); Javid Iqbal, 'The Image of Turkey and Turkish Democracy in Iqbal's Thought and His Concept of a Modern Islamic State' in *Iqbal Review*, 28, 3 (1987), pp. 6–31; and J. L. Esposito, 'Muhammad Iqbal and the Islamic State' in J. L. Esposito (ed.), *Voices of Resurgent Islam* (New York, 1983), pp. 175–190.

[6] For a discussion of Herder's views on the community and development see Brian Whitton, 'Herder's Critique of the Enlightenment: Cultural Community versus Cosmopolitan Rationalism' in *History and Theory*, 27, 2 (May, 1988), pp. 146–168 and Charles Taylor, *Ethics of Authenticity* (Cambridge: Harvard, 1991).

[7] *File on Iqbal*, IAP, vol. 12, fo. 188.

[8] Iqbal in *Census of India* 1911, vol. XIV, Punjab, pp. 163–164.

character ensured that the individual not only ascribed to the externals of the religious community, but also developed an inwardness that was wholly identical to the spirit and aspirations of the community.[9]

Drawing from the work of post-Darwinian thinkers, Iqbal stressed that the individual's thoughts, aspirations and actions were determined by the community of whose collective life he was a part.[10] Although society was more than the sum of its individuals, having a consciousness and a will of its own, this consciousness had no other channel through which to flow than the individual mind.[11] Individual consciousness was thus dependent upon the consciousness of the society. As discussed earlier, Iqbal believed that the individual was intrinsically linked to society and his development was dependent on the social body, yet the individual was never completely merged into the social body. The *khudi* maintained its selfhood even as it was tied to society; in fact, it was strengthened by its link with society. Expressing views which echoed Hegelian notions on the link between the individual and society, Iqbal argued that the individual was only truly free when he surrendered to the social and was bounded by the laws of society. Society 'binds his [the self's] hands and feet, to make him free'.[12] It was as a part of society alone that the individual found security and preservation and achieved fulfilment.[13]

The Allama argued that the development of the Muslim *millat* hinged upon the cultivation of a 'Muslim type' of character by each individual. Assimilation into the culture of Islam and a belief in the tenets of the religion, defined by him as *tauhid* and *risalat*, constituted the principal features of the 'Muslim type' of character. In a lecture on the evolution of the 'Muslim character' in India, Iqbal pointed to Timur, Babur, Jahangir and Aurangzeb as the key figures who had embodied the 'Muslim character' at different historical stages. Significantly, he did not include Akbar, who was widely championed by Indian nationalists as a 'secular' and model ruler, in this list. On the other hand, Aurangzeb, the most controversial of Mughal rulers, was hailed for personifying the ideal 'Muslim type' of character.[14]

[9] Iqbal, *The Muslim Community*, p. 3.
[10] Ibid., p. 14.
[11] Ibid., p. 15.
[12] Iqbal, *Mysteries of Selflessness*, p. 12.
[13] Iqbal wrote that all of man's 'nature is entranced with individuality, yet only in Society he finds security and preservation'. Ibid., p. 8.
[14] Iqbal, *The Muslim Community*, pp. 22–23.

Apart from Akbar's apparent dereliction of the sharia, Iqbal also felt that the emperor had tried to shape a new territorially demarcated and 'emperor-centric' national consciousness with his *Din-i-Ilahi* – a socio-religious system propounded by Akbar with himself at the centre – at the expense of the diverse national groupings.[15] Akbar had thus been striving for the same aim as the proponents of nationalism: the negation of the diversity of national groupings within the territorial state. Through his re-establishment of the authority of the sharia and the place of Islam in the polity, Aurangzeb more correctly represented the Muslim character.[16] In fact, Iqbal considered that the life and activities of Aurangzeb constituted the starting point of Muslim nationality in India.[17] His views on Aurangzeb should be situated in the context of growing calls from modern Muslim intellectuals like Shibli for a re-evaluation of the historical role of the emperor. They argued that Aurangzeb had been misrepresented as a religious bigot by western scholars who had failed to understand the nature of social and political forces of the period.[18] This vilification of the figure of Aurangzeb was also linked by some to the wider misrepresentation of Muslims as religious extremists and fanatics in western historiography.

Iqbal argued that the decline in the political and economic fortunes of Muslims had been a direct result of a degeneration in 'Muslim character'. The Muslim was chastised for being a 'Characterless Host' who lacked the sufficient strength of character to oppose forces which worked to disintegrate the social organism to which he belonged.[19] This degeneration had been caused by a decay in religious spirit and the lack of unity amongst the Muslims of India. He held both the British and the custodians of contemporary Muslim culture accountable for this state of decline in the life-force of the Indian Muslim. Whereas the ulama and Sufis were chastised for causing factional rifts resulting from their lack of vision and of knowledge of the tenets of Islam,[20] British economic and administrative imperatives were blamed for creating new economic

[15] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 9.
[16] Iqbal, *The Muslim Community*, p. 23.
[17] Iqbal, *Stray Reflections*, p. 46.
[18] See, for instance, Shibli's writings on the misrepresentations of Aurangzeb compiled in Shibli Numani and Om Prakash Prasad, *Aurangzeb Alamgir*, edited by Mubarak Ali (Lahore, 2000), pp. 23–138. In his work Shibli seeks particularly to correct the portrayal of Aurangzeb in Elphinstone's writings.
[19] Iqbal, *Islam as an Ethical and Political Ideal*, p. 75.
[20] See, for instance, his scathing critique of the ulama in his *Jawab-i-Shikwa*. Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, 199–207.

and political divides amongst the Muslim community. Iqbal argued, for instance, that the urban-rural divide, which characterised political affiliations in Punjab, had arisen as a result of British economic and political policies.[21]

Because of their 'liberal' policy of 'non-interference' and their sole concern with collecting taxes and maintaining their domination, Iqbal argued that the British had allowed for, and even encouraged, religious adventurism which threatened Islam. The British were accused of encouraging the development of religious rifts within the fold of Islam by doling out support and even patronage to 'religious adventurers' such as the Ahmadiyya.[22] At this time, the Ahmadiyya were widely perceived to be beneficiaries of political and financial aid from the British. Iqbal stated in one of his letters that there were credible rumours that the British were supplying the Ahmadiyya with substantial sums of money to carry on their activities.[23] In 1934, a group of 'orthodox Muslims' even alleged that the Ahmadiyya were attempting to establish a 'position of temporal and religious independence' at Qadian under the protection of the British government.[24] With specific reference to British tacit support for the Ahmadiyya and the latter's open proclamations of loyalty to the British, Iqbal wrote:

> [T]he solidarity of the Muslim community in India under the British is far less safe than the solidarity of the Jewish community was in the days of Jesus under the Romans. Any religious adventurer in India can set up any claim and carve out a new community for his own exploitation. The liberal State of ours does not care a fig for the integrity of a parent community, provided the adventurer assures it of his loyalty and his followers are regular in the payment of taxes due to the State.[25]

The Allama stressed that the British, who spoke of tolerance for differing interpretations of religion, had failed to realise that in a country of multiple religious communities like India, the future of each community rested on its solidarity. Dismissing those who argued that such views amounted to intolerance, Iqbal stated that true tolerance, or the 'tolerance of the spiritually powerful man', lay in the jealous guarding of the boundaries of one's own faith while appreciating all forms of faith other than his

[21] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 99–100.
[22] Ibid., p. 31.
[23] Iqbal, *Iqbal Nama*, pp. 410–411.
[24] This was alleged at an Ahrar Conference held in Qadian in 1934. Home Department (Political), 128/34-Political.
[25] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 97.

own.[26] Those who did not comprehend the importance of guarding the boundaries of their own faith were accused of manifesting a westernised mentality.[27]

Solidarity was the key to the survival of a nation and the strength of its character.[28] If 'the individuals constituting a nation do not unite together', Iqbal warned, 'the inexorable law of nature would obliterate such a nation from the face of the earth'.[29] The solidarity and homogeneity of the nation was far more crucial in ensuring its survival and development than its numerical strength. Despite contemporary appropriations of Iqbal as a democrat, the Allama was, in his own admission, 'no believer in democracy'.[30] Iqbal lamented that quantity, not quality, was of prime importance in elections and that individual differences were not taken into account. Emphasising the importance of personalities over the counting of bodies, he rejected political conceptions of majority and minority, preferring instead to speak in terms of nations, national character and socio-political structures which facilitated national development.[31] In the great struggle for life, it was not the numerical strength of the nation that ensured the survival of the social organism; it was national character which was the ultimate equipment.[32] The pertinence of character over numerical strength was further highlighted when he wrote that

> the fate of the world has been principally decided by minorities. The history of Europe bears ample testimony to the truth of this proposition. It seems to me that there are psychological reasons why minorities should have been a powerful factor in the history of mankind. Character is the invisible force which determines the destinies of nations, and an intense character is not possible in a majority. It is a force, the more it is distributed the weaker it becomes.[33]

Scholars who continue to view Iqbal's work through the prism of majority-minority relations in a democratic state and who neglect his discourse on national character perpetuate misconceptions about Iqbal's political

[26] Ibid., p. 115.
[27] Ibid., pp. 96–97.
[28] Iqbal, *Speeches, Writings and Statements*, pp. 197–198.
[29] Iqbal, *The Muslim Community*, p. 11.
[30] See, for instance, letter to Edward Thompson, in which he writes that the step towards democracy which has been taken in India is fatal and will bring in its wake financial ruin, political chaos and the dissolution of Hinduism. Iqbal, *Unpublished Letters to Professor Thompson*, pp.81–82.
[31] Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, p. 611.
[32] Iqbal, *Islam as an Ethical and Political Ideal*, p. 76.
[33] Iqbal, *Stray Reflections*, p. 79.

discourse.[34] In contrast, this chapter argues that Iqbal's principal aim was to formulate a programme which would allow for Muslims to develop according to their national character, not merely one where they were the majority.

The Allama compared the attempts by the Muslims in India to maintain their unity to the reaction of the Jews of Amsterdam to the work of the Dutch philosopher, Spinoza (1632–1677). Spinoza's critique of conventionally held approaches towards law, interpretation of scripture and conceptions of God attracted protests from the Jewish community and resulted in his excommunication. Because both communities lacked state institutions that could compel internal cohesion through the imposition of their own civil law, they were forced to be less tolerant towards incursions into the boundaries of their faith.[35] It is worth emphasising that Iqbal appreciated the efforts of other religious communities to maintain their religious unity or solidarity of character. He supported, for instance, the demands by 'orthodox Hindus' for constitutional protection against religious reformers.[36]

Iqbal's call for the Ahmadiyya to be excluded from the fold of Islam must be seen in the light of his belief that the survival and development of the Muslim community in a religiously diverse country like India was dependent on its solidarity. The Ahmadiyya were, in his view, 'a serious danger to the solidarity of Islam'.[37] It should be noted that Iqbal did not call for the proscription or persecution of the Ahmadiyya; he called for them to be recognised as a separate religious community beyond the fold of Islam.[38] As he felt that the Ahmadiyya would never voluntarily declare themselves to be a separate religious community, he looked to the government to classify them officially as such. He pointed to the example of the Sikhs, who were classified as a separate religious community from the Hindus in the early twentieth century, as a precedent that should be applied to the Ahmadiyya. The case of the Sikhs provided an important precedent, as he felt that the community itself had made no representation to the government asking for such action, and that the government

[34] It is conventionally held that the fear of a Muslim minority being dominated by a Hindu majority drove Iqbal to demand a separate nation-state where the Muslims would be a majority. See, for instance, Malik, 'The Man of Thought and the Man of Action'.

[35] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 52–53.

[36] Ibid., p. 98.

[37] Iqbal, *Qadianism*, 2nd edn. (Colombo, 1957), p. 94.

[38] See Iqbal's response to the misconception that he called for the suppression of the Qadianis. Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 100–101.

had taken this step despite the fact that the Lahore High Court had ruled that the Sikhs were Hindus.[39]

The foregoing discussion has highlighted the centrality of national character and solidarity to Iqbal's discourse on the development of the nation. In his 1932 Address to the All-India Muslim Conference, Iqbal described himself as a 'visionary idealist'[40] who welcomed the challenge of transforming his ideals on national development into living actualities.[41] In order to secure the development of the nation according to its national character, he attempted to formulate a 'relatively permanent programme' which was 'partly political, partly cultural.' [42] The following sections will explore Iqbal's views on the necessary educational, cultural, legal and political institutions.

NURTURING A TRULY NATIONAL CHARACTER: EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL PROGRAMME

Iqbal believed that the ethical training of humanity was essentially the work of great personalities who appear at different stages in the course of history. In the absence of such personalities, humanity must fall back on education.[43] Although Iqbal felt that Liebnitz's theory of the monads, immaterial soul-like entities created by God, was closer to the ultimate truth of the nature of the individual than Nietzschian or Kantian conceptions, he rejected Liebnitz's description of the monad as closed and windowless for failing to realise that the self grows and develops through education and experience.[44]

The development of a 'truly national character' was dependent upon the implementation of a 'truly national education'.[45] According to Iqbal, the system of education had to be determined by the needs of the learner. An education system that had no direct bearing on the particular type of character which one wanted to develop or secure was absolutely worthless.[46] During a visit with Ross Masud and Suleiman Nadwi to Afghanistan to discuss the proposal to build a university in Kabul, Iqbal

[39] Ibid., p. 107.
[40] Ibid., p. 30.
[41] Ibid., pp. 37–38.
[42] Ibid., p. 56.
[43] Iqbal, *Islam as an Ethical and Political Ideal*, pp. 79–80.
[44] Iqbal's letter to Saiyidain dated 21st June 1936. *File on Iqbal*, IAP, vol. 9, fo. 161a.
[45] Iqbal, *Islam as an Ethical and Political Ideal*, p. 81.
[46] See Ibid., p. 83 and Iqbal, *Thoughts and Reflections*, p. 44.

warned against the secularisation of education and the blind acceptance of an absolute system of education. As each country had its own needs; educational problems had to be discussed and solved in the light of these specific needs.[47] He linked the decline in India to the fact that its education system was not true to the national character or genius of both Hindus and Muslims.[48]

The establishment of the colonial state had led to the decline of the *dars-i-nizami*. This system of education had largely focused on the study of *maqulat* for the purposes of training prospective lawyers, judges and administrators. In the late nineteenth century, however, the emphasis of the ulama shifted away from rational sciences towards training in *manqulat* subjects – *tafsir*, *hadith* and *fiqh*. With the establishment of the colonial state, an English education became a requirement for many jobs. Partly in reaction to this, the ulama turned towards *manqulat* to bolster Islamic religious education and culture, which they feared had been displaced by modern education.[49] This movement towards the provision of an education in *manqulat*, as well as the emergence of a divide between institutions that sought to provide a 'secular'/'rational' education and those that sought to provide a 'religious' education, is perhaps reflected best in the development of the educational centres of Aligarh and Deoband. Although the latter did not object to the acquisition of western education, it strove to provide an 'Islamic' syllabus which centred upon the study of *hadith* and *fiqh*.[50] The Aligarh group, on the other hand, sought to provide a more 'practical', 'modern' and 'scientific' education.

Sayyid Ahmad Khan's chief aims had been to provide an education which would enable Muslims to gain employment in the government service, thus stemming Muslim political and economic decline, and to shape the development of the character and morals of the children of 'respected Muslim families'. The Sayyid stressed that an English education was a practical necessity for Muslims, as the development of their businesses necessitated a knowledge of the language.[51] He further argued that the acquisition of English was more essential for Muslims than

[47] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 189.

[48] Iqbal, *Thought and Reflections of Iqbal*, p. 45.

[49] For an informed study of the impact of the colonial state on the dominant Islamic education system and the consequent attempts by members of the Farangi Mahal to respond to modern developments, refer to Francis Robinson, *The 'Ulama of the Farangi Mahal and Islamic Culture*.

[50] See Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India*.

[51] Khan, *Writings and Speeches*, pp. 88–89.

Hindus because the 'greater portion of the Hindu population consists of agriculturalists and of persons employed in low occupations of life', whereas Muslims, being descendants of former rulers, had 'inherited learning as the principal means of livelihood'.[52]

In a speech delivered in Meerut in 1888, the Sayyid stated that one of the objects of Aligarh was to shape the character of its students. In the past, he noted, boys of 'good families' had received training in character and manners from private tutors, but this system had collapsed with the decline in the fortunes of Muslim families. Nor was the system suited to the needs of the present day.[53] Aligarh was thus to play the dual role of imparting a 'modern' and 'practical' education as well as training its students in moral and character development. In fact, Aligarh was modelled on the British public school precisely because of the importance of its role in character cultivation.[54]

The Sayyid was dissatisfied with the education imparted by both the *madrasas* and government- or mission-run institutions which focused on teaching oriental subjects. Unlike these institutions, Aligarh was to shape the moral and character development of its students by instilling in them values through an education in English literature, which had spurred civilisational progress in the West.[55] Gauri Viswanathan has shown that the study of English literature established itself as a discipline in India prior to its inclusion in the curriculum in England primarily because of the belief that literature brought with it certain humanistic principles, such as the development of ethics and character.[56] Such views reflected Utilitarian notions on the emancipatory role of English education. As noted in Chapter 2, the Utilitarians argued that only western literary education provided the means for the exercise of reason and the development of moral will. For Sayyid Ahmad Khan and a number of other proponents of western education, it was a matter not only of acquiring 'useful and practical knowledge' essential for scientific, political and economic progress, but also one of inculcating morality, virtue and 'civilisation' from western history and literature.

The call for the establishment of an independent university in Punjab brought to the fore differences between proponents of an orientalist

[52] Ibid., p. 91.
[53] Ibid., p. 200.
[54] See David Lelyveld, 'Disenchantment at Aligarh: Islam and the Realm of the Secular in Late Nineteenth Century India' in *Die Welt Des Islams*, new series, 22, ¼ (1982), pp. 85–102.
[55] See discussion in Chapter 2.
[56] Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest*.

curriculum and those who, like Sayyid Ahmad Khan, called for education in western subjects through the English medium. It is important to explore this debate because it influenced the education that Iqbal received. The Anjuman-i-Punjab had pushed for the establishment of an oriental university which could facilitate their aim of shaping a revival of ancient oriental learning and the 'diffusion of useful knowledge … through the medium of the vernacular'.[57] The efforts of the Anjuman led to the proposal of incorporating the Punjab University College as an independent university that would provide an education in European sciences through the vernacular. This was strenuously rejected by groups such as the Indian Association, Lahore, which felt that this was a 'retrograde and reactionary measure' that would do 'incalculable harm to higher education in the Punjab'.[58] Reacting to calls for an orientalist education and for instruction through the medium of the vernacular, Sayyid Ahmad Khan, in a speech in Jalandhar in 1884, stated:

> Now the Punjab university is like a tree which bears two kinds of fruits: one sweet and the other sour; or upon which two types of flowers bloom: one beautiful and fragrant and the other without it [sic]. Now the thing worth considering is as to which of the fruits and flowers would result in the progress of the country. Now it is for the people of the Punjab to think over it and adopt whatever they like.[59]

Like many of the intellectuals discussed in this monograph, Iqbal was himself the product of a western system of education. Iqbal also pursued the conventional career track for the alumni of such institutions by trying to get selected for the civil service, and upon his failure to do so, he sought training as a lawyer.[60] Later in his life, Iqbal was to lament that in his zeal to equip himself with western knowledge, he failed to utilise his mental capacity for the service of Islam.[61] This, he argued, was characteristic of the kind of education provided by institutions such as Aligarh.

Instead of providing a system of education which served the 'true development' of the individual and the community, such institutions only facilitated the rise of a generation of Muslims and Hindus who had no other concerns or abilities other than seeking government service. In his *Pas*

[57] *Report of the Unjuman-i-Punjab or the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge For the Year 1865 With Papers Connected with the Proposal for the Establishment of an Oriental University* (Lahore: 30/06/1866).

[58] *Papers Connected with the Punjab University Question, Collected and Published by The Executive Committee of the Indian Association, Lahore, For Submission to the Right Honourable The Secretary of State for India* (Lahore, 1881).

[59] Khan, *Writings and Speeches*, p. 175.

[60] Singh, *Ardent Pilgrim*, p. 150.

[61] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, iii. 157–158.

Cheh Bayad Kard Ai Aqwam-i-Sharq, published in 1936, Iqbal lamented to the Prophet Muhammad that Aligarh and other modern institutions had produced nothing but slaves for the English and for bread, and that the teachers in these institutions did not teach the students about themselves.[62] It was feared that the system of education implemented in India served only to produce westernised individuals who were well-versed in western ideas and trained for economic employment but bereft of any national character, thus strengthening western cultural and political hegemony. Iqbal's views were not unique: Sheikh-ul-Hind Mehmood Hasan's statement lambasting the contemporary college system for producing nothing but 'cheap slaves' has already been noted. The Sheikh clarified that he did not oppose the acquisition of new or 'foreign' knowledge. He had reservations over the acquisition of a system of knowledge which lured the Muslim away from his own culture and character, and which ingrained in him a 'foreign' character.[63]

Post-modern critics have argued that ideas on education which emerged from the Enlightenment neglected the plurality and diversity of individuals, propounding a system of education which was founded upon abstract individualism and which failed to recognise that the individual was embedded in cultures and communities.[64] Anticipating such critiques, Iqbal argued that the form of education provided in the modern institutions had failed to conceive of the individual as part of a distinct community, and had thus not realised that his development was intrinsically linked to the development of the nation. There were, according to Iqbal, two criteria for judging the utility of a system of education – the kind of men it turned out and the 'quality of the output calculated to secure a continuous life of such a peculiarly constructed community as our own'.[65]

Education had to be geared towards meeting the distinct needs of the individual nations. In his poem 'Hindi Maktab' ('Indian School'), Iqbal warned the student not to search for *ilm-i-khudi* (knowledge of the self) in the institutions of India; such *maqalat* or texts were not valued in these schools.[66] The stress on western literature and civilisation resulted in the

[62] Iqbal, *What Should Then Be Done*, p. 136.
[63] *Sheikh-ul-Hind Hazrat Maulana Mehmood Hussein Sahib ka Khutbat Sardarat*, p. 7.
[64] For an overview of the Enlightenment view on education and post-modernist critiques see G. Parry, 'Education Can Do All' in N. Geras and R. Wokler (eds.), *The Enlightenment and Modernity* (London, 2000), pp. 25–49.
[65] Iqbal, *Muslim Community*, p. 26.
[66] Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, p. 539.

modern-educated Muslim having assimilated western habits of thought and character to the total neglect of the collective experience of his own community.[67]

The focus on the provision of *ilm* and the advancement of the realm of *aql* to the neglect of the realm of the heart, or *ishq*, further detracted from the knowledge of the self. As highlighted in Chapter 2, Iqbal feared that the emphasis on reason served to entrap the students in the 'prisonhouse of reason' and to shape a generation who were unaware of themselves, their own nature and their community. Although the acquisition of *ilm* was important, it was not the final aim or stage of education. *Aql*, he wrote, was not the final destination, but the lamp which lit the path that had to be traversed; students had to move beyond the stage of *aql*.[68] The aim of the education system should be to awaken the heart, the repository of national character, and spur self-awareness.

Iqbal's views on the education of the individual reflected both the traditional Muslim concept of *adab* and the German idea of *bildung*. The word *adab* is a broad term that essentially refers to discipline and training, which signifies good breeding and refinement.[69] It can be defined as correct knowledge and behaviour in the total process by which a person is educated, guided and formed into a good Muslim.[70] The concept of *bildung* (self-formation or self-cultivation), although largely associated with Romantics such as Herder and Goethe, was a mainstay in the German philosophical tradition. The concept described the educational ideal of the cultivation of all human powers into an integrated whole.[71] Both of these concepts are comprehensive and holistic, signifying an educational ideal which encapsulates culture, intellect, sensibilities and action.[72] Iqbal seems to have looked to these two traditions in developing his views on education.

Iqbal felt that the failings of the education system stemmed primarily from the fact that both the ulama and Sayyid Ahmad Khan had founded

[67] Iqbal, *Muslim Community*, pp. 26–27.
[68] Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, p. 376.
[69] Barbara Metcalf (ed.), *Moral Conduct and Authority: The Place of Adab in South Asian Islam* (Berkeley, 1984), pp. 2–4.
[70] Ira M. Lapidus, 'Knowledge, Virtue and Action: The Classical Muslim Conception of Adab and the Nature of Religious Fulfilment in Islam' in Ibid., p. 39.
[71] For a discussion of the educational implications of the concept, see David Sorkin, 'Wilhelm von Humboldt: The Theory and Practice of Self-Formation (*Bildung*) 1791–1810' in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 44, 1 (Jan., 1983), pp. 55–73.
[72] See, for instance, Khalid Masud, 'Adab al-Mufti: The Muslim Understanding of Values, Characteristics, and Role of a Mufti' in Metcalf (ed.), *Moral Conduct and Authority*, pp. 124–151.

their educational institutions upon the theological and philosophical thought of a bygone age.[73] Because of their outdated and traditional *kalam*, the ulama of the Deoband, Farangi Mahal and Nadwatul Ulama were incapable of facilitating the emergence of a modern Muslim intellectual who would be able to re-interpret Islam in the light of the modern conditions. He stressed that

> the older theology is, generally speaking a set of worn out ideas; educationally it has no value in view of the rise and the re-statement of the old problems. What is needed today is intellectual activity in fresh channels and the building of a new theology and Kalam. This can obviously be done by men who are properly equipped for such a task. But how to produce such men?[74]

Institutions such as Aligarh, on the other hand, were chastised for having succumbed to Enlightenment conceptions of the relationship between science and religion. Instead, Muslim educational institutions needed to strive to produce well-trained theologians and scholars who were able, through their research in the various branches of Muslim literature and thought, to trace the continuity between Muslim culture and modern knowledge. The production of such theologians and scholars was essential for the assimilation of modern knowledge.[75] Iqbal suggested that a system be devised by which students from Deoband and the Farangi Mahal who had displayed a special aptitude for theological thinking could be given a thorough grounding in modern thought and science and then be sent to modern institutions to be instructed in a specific course designed by Thomas Arnold.[76]

The Allama also called for the establishment of institutions which could serve as centres of Islamic studies and produce scholars 'fitted to carry on researches in the legal literature of Islam'.[77] He envisaged the founding of a Muslim University to meet the needs of the community. As he believed that individual institutions such as the Nadwatul Ulama, Deoband, Aligarh and the Farangi Mahal were incapable of meeting the demand of shaping a 'national education', he called for all these 'scattered educational forces' to be re-organised into a central institution which could afford opportunities for the development of special abilities and also create the necessary type of culture for the modern

[73] Iqbal to Aftab Ahmad Khan, dated 03rd April 1925. *File on Iqbal*, IAP, vol. 3, p. 3.
[74] Ibid, p. 3.
[75] Ibid, pp. 1–2.
[76] Ibid., pp. 3–4.
[77] Ibid., p. 2.

Indian Muslim.[78] These institutions were to be modelled upon modern universities rather than the traditional centres of Islamic studies and legal training. In a sub-committee meeting of the World Muslim Congress convened in December 1932 to discuss the founding of a university in Jerusalem, Iqbal opposed the idea of establishing a university on the lines of al-Azhar. Established in 988, the al-Azhar of Cairo is one of the oldest Islamic educational institutions and has long been seen by many as the premier Sunni educational institution in the world. He argued that al-Azhar provided an antiquated model and called instead for a 'thoroughly modern type' of university.[79]

In the last two years of his life, Iqbal tried to lay the foundations of an institute which would produce much needed scholarship on the Islamic approach towards social, economic and political matters. The aim was to gather a group of individuals who were well-versed in modern knowledge, firmly grounded in *dini ilm* (religious knowledge) and willing to devote their time to the service of Islam; these individuals were to be given thorough training in Muslim politics, philosophy, law and Islamic sources.[80] It was hoped that the individuals at the institute would give shape to a new *kalam* which could facilitate the acquisition of modern knowledge. Interestingly, despite his criticisms of al-Azhar, after acquiring a plot of land in Pathankot, Iqbal wrote to the rector of al-Azhar, Sheikh Mustafa al-Maraghi, explaining the nature of the proposed institute and requesting him to send a scholar at al-Azhar's expense.[81]

The Allama stressed that the life and continuity of the social mind is dependent on the orderly transmission of its collective experience from generation to generation. The role of education was to secure this orderly transmission and to impart a unity of self-consciousness or personal identity to the social mind.[82] It was thus important that educational institutions provided a curriculum which introduced the student to the Arabic language and to Muslim approaches and contributions to physics, mathematics, chemistry and jurisprudence.[83] A study of the history of the nation was especially pertinent for the development of a healthy pride in the soul of the individual, which in turn was the very lifeblood of a 'truly national character'.[84] On the importance of history, he wrote:

[78] Iqbal, *Muslim Community*, p. 29.
[79] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 154.
[80] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, iii, 98–99.
[81] Ibid., iv, 534–536.
[82] Iqbal, *Muslim Community*, p. 26.
[83] Iqbal, *Letters of Iqbal*, pp. 207–208.
[84] Iqbal, *Islam as an Ethical and Political Ideal*, pp. 81–82.

> What thing is history, O self-unaware?
> A fable? Or a legendary tale?
> Nay, it is the thing that maketh thee aware
> Of thy true self, alert until the task,
> A seasoned traveler; this is the source
> Of the soul's ardour, this the nerves that knit
> The body of the whole community[85]

Iqbal also called for the establishment of male and female 'cultural institutions' in all major towns. These institutions would serve to instil in the youth a clear grasp of the cultural and religious achievements of Islam and would mobilise the dormant energy of the younger generation.[86]

As the proposal for the establishment of separate cultural institutions for men and women suggests, Iqbal spoke of different educational needs for men and women; many of the institutions previously discussed were chiefly intended for the education of men. This reflected the role he envisaged for women as nurturers of society and national character. Although a detailed discussion of Iqbal's views on gender relations is beyond the scope of the present work, it is important to take note of his views on female education, as women were both the subjects of and the sites for contemporary debates over national character. According to Iqbal, the principal role accorded to women by Islam was that of motherhood, and the nature of her education had to be determined by this role.[87] The solidarity and strength of the Muslim community rested upon the woman's hold on the religion and culture of Islam. As the 'woman is the principal depository of the religious idea', it was in the 'interests of a continuous national life' that she be given 'in the first place, a sound religious education.'[88] This religious education was to be supplemented by a general knowledge of Muslim history, domestic economy and hygiene.[89] He warned that any 'subjects which have a tendency to de-womanise and to de-muslamise her must be carefully excluded from her education'.[90]

Unimpressed by calls for women to partake in higher education, Iqbal argued that such a step would lead to undesirable social consequences. In much of his poetry, particularly a section of his *Zarb-i-Kalim* entitled *aurat* (woman), Iqbal used the imagery of a woman who has been lured

[85] Iqbal, *Mysteries of Selflessness*, p. 61.
[86] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 59–61.
[87] Iqbal, *The Muslim Community*, pp. 30–31.
[88] Ibid., p. 31.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Ibid., p. 31.

away from her culture by western *tehzib* and *ilm* to symbolise the decline in Muslim national character.[91] The adoption of western notions of female education and role of the woman were to be resisted for two reasons – they severely weakened national character and solidarity; and they were an extension of western civilisational hegemony. The disdain with which he looked upon the feminists who distracted the Muslim woman from fulfilling her role as a mother was rather humorously displayed in a response to a friend who had sent Iqbal, an avid pigeon breeder, a set of pigeons who failed to breed. Iqbal lamented that just like the women of India, these pigeons had been attracted by the ideas of the feminists and forsaken the role of motherhood.

'PARTLY POLITICAL PROGRAMME': REJECTING THE UNITARY DEMOCRATIC STATE

The foregoing discussion has shown that Iqbal attacked the modern educational institutions in India for churning out individuals who were no more than intellectual 'slaves to the west'. He blamed these institutions for the development of 'political idealists' who were trained only in western political concepts and who sought to transplant structures such as the modern nation-state in India.[92] As a result, such individuals were incapable of devising a political solution for India which would allow for the fullest development of its diverse communities. This section seeks to explore the 'political programme' proposed by Iqbal for the development of the Muslim nation and India; a political programme which would allow the community 'to mobilize its law, its education, its culture, and to bring them into closer contact with its own original spirit and with the spirit of modern times'.[93]

Iqbal envisaged the need for a single political body to articulate and represent Muslim political interests.[94] He feared that the existence of various political parties and organisations such as the Muslim League, Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind, All-India Muslim Conference (which primarily sought to protect the interests of Punjabi Muslims) and the All-India Nationalist Muslim Party (formed by Muslims including Azad and Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari [1880–1936] who supported the Congress

[91] See especially poems such as 'Aurat ki Hifazat' ('The Protection of Women') and 'Aurat aur Talim' ('Women and Education'). Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, pp. 557 and 558 respectively.
[92] Iqbal, *Islam as an Ethical and Political Ideal*, p. 83.
[93] *All India Muslim League Documents*, ii, 160.
[94] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, iv, 450.

position), each of which claimed to represent Muslims, detracted from the formulation of a single Muslim political programme. The Unionist Party of Punjab, a Muslim-dominated cross-communal alliance of the landed castes, was particularly attacked for spreading class, caste and tribal fissures within the Muslim community through their pro-landlord economic policies and cultivation of tribal networks.[95] The Allama called for the formation of a single body with provincial and district bodies throughout India, which would ensure a unity of political aims and aspirations of the *millat* through the formation of a fixed political programme. Its constitution was to be such that it made it possible for any school of political thought to come to power and guide the community.[96] His efforts to build a united political body were essentially an attempt to give shape to a single Muslim constituency.

The All-India Muslim League was promoted as the political platform that could unite the disparate Muslim parties. His letters to various Muslim figures reveal that he was trying to formulate a scheme that could bring diverse groups such as Zafar Ali Khan's Ittihad-i-Millat Party (Unity of the Millat Party), the Unionist Party and the Krishak Praja Party (Farmers Peoples Party) of Bengal together under the leadership of the Muslim League. The Allama did not necessarily call for the dissolution of all Muslim parties; the Muslim League should act as an umbrella organisation which formulated a Muslim programme to which all parties had to adhere.[97] In line with his aim of defining a single Muslim political programme, Iqbal pushed Jinnah to call for an All-India Muslim Conference in Delhi in late 1937 with the aim of formulating a single Muslim programme, which would bind all Muslim representatives to the Provincial Assemblies irrespective of party affiliations.[98] This would ensure that they returned to the Central Assembly only those candidates who would pledge to support specific Muslim questions connected with the central subjects.

Apart from a clearly defined political programme, Iqbal called for the creation of a political framework which would allow for the fullest development of the Muslim nation. In his Presidential Address to the Muslim League in 1930, Iqbal called for the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan to be amalgamated into a single autonomous state.[99] This was not a demand for the creation of a separate nation-state. Instead,

[95] For an interesting reference to this in his poetry see Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, p. 444.
[96] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 57.
[97] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, iv, 358–359 and 450.
[98] Iqbal, *Letters of Iqbal to Jinnah*, pp. 13–14.
[99] Ibid., pp. 12–13.

it was an attempt to formulate a political framework which would counteract the homogenising and centralising tendencies of the modern state structure and allow for each nation to develop according to its own national character. A centralised unitary political structure, he felt, would not allow for the free cultural development of the various communities, because it would ensure that minority groups were permanently culturally dominated. Iqbal's call for the political re-organisation of India needs to be studied in the light of modern critiques of the unitary democratic state by figures such as Lord Acton and Alexis de Tocqueville, as well as the political model provided by the Ottoman *millat* system.

Whereas Marx elevated the role of the state over society, critics like Acton looked to diverse loci of power within society to check the centralising tendencies of the state.[100] Acton feared that the modern unitary state would result in the cultural and political domination of the minorities within its territorial boundaries.[101] Such fears of the state were intrinsically linked to concerns over the adoption of democracy. Tocqueville's writings, for instance, reveal the concerns many modern intellectuals held over the cultural and political domination of the majority in centralised democratic states.[102] To overcome these fears, Acton called for the establishment of diverse and autonomous centres of power to counteract the centralising tendencies of the state. He called for the granting of self-government to as many national groups within the state as possible.[103] Similarly, Tocqueville argued that the confederal state structure, in which ultimate power rested in the hands of the individual units rather than the centre, provided the means for overcoming the oppressiveness of the unitary federal state.[104]

[100] Nurser and Lang have discussed Lord Acton's promotion of the church as an alternative centre of power to the state. See John Nurser, 'The Reign of Conscience: Individual, Church, and State in Lord Acton's History of Liberty' in *The English Historical Review*, 105, 416 (Jul., 1990), pp. 753–754; and Timothy Lang, 'Lord Acton and "the Insanity of Nationality"', pp. 129–149.

[101] G. E. Fasnacht, *Lord Acton on Nationality and Socialism: Two Lectures Given in August 1949 at the Oxford University Tutorial Classes Committee Summer School at Lady Margaret Hall with an Appendix on Burke Based on the Acton Manuscripts* (London, 1949), pp. 11–12.

[102] See discussion on the 'tyranny of the majority' in democratic states in Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (The Henry Reeve Text as Revised by Francis Bowen Now Further Corrected and Edited with Introduction, Editorial Notes, and Bibliographies by Philips Bradley) (2 vols. New York, 1989), i, 254–270.

[103] John Emerich Edward Dalberg Acton, *Essays on Freedom and Power*, selected and with a new introduction by Gertrude Himmelfarb (Ohio, 1964), pp. 159–161.

[104] See Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*.

Reflecting such views, Iqbal argued that the European system of democracy could not be applied in India without the recognition that national or communal groups in India were not constituted on the basis of territory.[105] He thus called for the redistribution of India into provinces with effective majorities of one community. The Allama was quick to point out that the need for provinces with effective majorities of one community was recognised by the Congress itself when it supported the demand for the carving out of Sind as a Muslim-majority state. He quoted the following lines from the Nehru Report:

> To say from the larger view-point of nationalism that no communal provinces should be created, is, in a way, equivalent to saying from the still wider international view-point that there should be no separate nations. Both these statements have a measure of truth in them. But the staunchest internationalist recognizes that without the fullest national autonomy it is extraordinarily difficult to create the international state. So also without the fullest cultural autonomy, and communalism in its better aspect is culture, it will be difficult to create a harmonious nation.[106]

The details of his scheme are discussed more fully later, but it is important to note here that the Allama's scheme rested upon the recognition of the rights of the majority community in the province to enjoy majority rights and the immediate introduction of complete autonomy and responsible government in the provinces. No communal settlement could satisfy the Muslim community if it did not recognise as its basic principle the right of the community to enjoy majority rights in the provinces where it happened to be in an actual majority.[107] He lambasted previous attempts at an agreement, including the Lucknow Pact of 1916, for their failure to recognise the importance of these two key principles.[108] Under the terms of the Lucknow Pact, the Congress accepted the provision of separate electorates for Muslims in the provincial and central legislatures, and a fixed proportion of seats for Muslims in the provincial legislatures was agreed upon by the Congress and the Muslim League. Although strengthening the political position of Muslims in Muslim-minority areas such as the United Provinces, which were allocated more seats than their proportionate numerical strength, the Pact effectively served to weaken the position of Muslim majorities in Punjab and Bengal. For instance, in Punjab and Bengal, Muslims were allocated 50 percent and 40 percent of

[105] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 12.
[106] Ibid., pp. 11–12.
[107] Ibid., p. 44.
[108] Ibid., p. 26.

the seats in the provincial legislatures despite constituting 54.8 percent and 52.6 percent of the respective populations.[109] Provincial autonomy was central to Iqbal's political visions, as law and order were to be vested in the provinces instead of the centre. The primacy accorded to provincial autonomy by Iqbal was such that he resigned from the secretaryship of the Muslim League when it failed to make a demand for provincial autonomy in its memorandum to the Statutory Commission of 1928 and called instead for a unitary form of government.[110] It is interesting to note that on both of these points Iqbal was closer to the political stance of the Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind than figures such as Jinnah. Like Iqbal, the ulama believed that the Lucknow Pact was a disaster, as it sacrificed the position of the Muslim majorities in Punjab and Bengal.[111] Provincial autonomy, as will be shown, was also a central plank of the Jamiyyat's political programme.

Provincial autonomy and majority rights were important to Iqbal because he felt that these were the only means by which nations could secure their right to develop in line with their specific character. Particularly important was that the Muslim community should be governed by the sharia. The importance of law to the development of the individual and society has already been discussed. In addition to ensuring the development of the community in accordance with its socio-religious precepts, the Allama argued that sharia would also serve to resolve the economic problems of Muslims. In a letter to Jinnah, Iqbal stated that he had 'come to the conclusion that if this system of Law is properly understood and applied, at least the right to subsistence is secured to everybody'.[112]

In this sense, Iqbal seems to have looked back to the *millat* system, in which provision was made for religious communities to be governed by their own legal and jurisdictional law. He also called for the recognition and provision of sharia at the centre as well as at the provincial level. An assembly of ulama and Muslim lawyers trained in modern jurisprudence was to be formed and no bill affecting the personal law of Muslims was to be put on the legislative anvil before it was passed through this assembly.[113] Here, again, Iqbal's views were more in consonance with

[109] See Mushirul Hasan, *Nationalism and Communal Politics in India, 1885–1930* (New Delhi, 1994), pp. 81–103.
[110] Ibid., p. 147.
[111] Madani, *Maktubat-i-Sheikh-ul-Islam*, ii, 134 and 160, and Madani, *Farmodaat* (Deoband, 1966), pp. 230–232.
[112] Iqbal, *Letters to Jinnah*, p.18.
[113] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 60–61.

those expressed by the ulama of the Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind, who called for a political framework that allowed for Muslims to develop in accordance with the sharia. They argued that sharia had been displaced by the British, who promulgated customary and man-made laws to alienate the Muslims from their own ways.[114] Rejecting calls for a uniform civil code, the ulama envisaged the establishment of a legal system which would allow for the Muslims of India to be governed by the sharia and guided by an *amir* (leader) who was in charge of administering the sharia.[115] The advocacy of such views led to a public debate between the ulama and members of the Muslim League over Muslim development and law. The ulama attacked the Muslim League for being ignorant of the importance of sharia for the development of Muslims.[116]

It must be emphasised that Muhammad Iqbal's call for the various nations to be allowed to develop in accordance with their own culture did not imply that nations were necessarily opposed to each other or that various nations could not co-exist within a state. It has been erroneously concluded that the Allama's demand indicated that he had forsaken the view that Hindus and Muslims could live in amity with each other.[117] In fact, Iqbal bemoaned the prevalence of western political concepts for leading the people of India to believe that nations were necessarily opposed to each other. Even in the last years of his life Iqbal remained optimistic that a political framework acceptable to both communities could be shaped if only the intellectuals and statesmen could look beyond the unitary state structure.

In the wake of the convening of the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform 1933–1934 in London to examine the proposals of the Indian Statutory Commission and 'consider the future government of India',[118] Iqbal wrote to Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari, the president of the

[114] Madani, *Shariat Bill aur League* (Delhi, 1940), pp. 4–5.

[115] 'Hindustan Mein Musalmanon Ke Liye Nizam Shairi ki Zaroorat: Ainda Constitution aur Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind'['The Need for a Shari *Nizam* for the Muslims of India: The Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind and the Future Constitution of India], 18/05/31, al-*Jamiyyat*.

[116] They argued that the Muslim League's, particularly Jinnah's, stance on the Qazi Bill, Nikah Bill and its stance during the legislative debates leading up to the Sharia Act of 1937 reflected its total ignorance of the position of the sharia in Islam. See, for instance, Madani, *Shariat Bill aur League*, pp. 6–9.

[117] See, for instance, Shereen Aslam, 'Pan-Islamism and Iqbal' in *Iqbal Review*, 35, 3 (1994), p. 37.

[118] *Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform [Session 1933–1934], Volume I (Part I), Report* (London, 1934), p. v.

Congress, expressing his concern that the Report of the Joint Committee might exacerbate the problem. Iqbal stressed that he was keen to try to shape a National Pact and pushed Ansari to convince the Congress to take a more affirmative attitude towards the political problems of the country by realising the dangers associated with the unitary state structure to which they looked.[119] The Allama called for a National Pact that recognised communal entities such as 'Hindu' and 'Muslim' as the basis for future political cooperation.[120] Failing to secure such an agreement with the Congress, Iqbal looked to reach a settlement with 'Hindu' political bodies such as the Hindu Mahasabha. His correspondence with its leaders, such as S. V. Lalit and Madan Mohan Malaviya, bears testimony to his attempts to shape such a National Pact with figures who claimed to represent the communal group over idealistic secularists.[121]

The problem of unity and diversity was a recurring theme in Iqbal's writings on Indian nationalism and his assertion of a distinct Muslim nationhood. The Allama distinguished between 'communalism in its lower aspect' and 'communalism in its higher aspect'. The former was denounced for inspiring ill will towards other communities.[122] On the other hand, 'communalism in its higher aspect', defined as adherence to national culture, was heralded not only as the true path for the development of the *millat*, but also as a means of uniting the various nations in India. Iqbal wrote that Nehru

> thinks, wrongly in my opinion, that the only way to Indian nationalism lies in a total suppression of the cultural entities of the country through the interaction of which alone India can evolve a rich and enduring culture. A nationalism achieved by such methods can mean nothing but mutual bitterness and even oppression.[123]

The Allama was convinced that the retention of culture and the individuality of every community would not detract from the unity amongst them. He envisaged a unity not through assimilation into a single 'Indian national culture', but through the assertion of the diversity of

[119] Ansari Papers, NML, 9/1/35, (Microfilm).
[120] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, iv, 37–38.
[121] Interestingly, letters between Iqbal and S. V. Lalit indicate that the Mahasabha was amiable to Iqbal's proposals for the political re-organisation of India and the amalgamation of the four provinces. Letter from S. V. Lalit to Iqbal dated 28/5/1932. *File on Iqbal*, IAP, vol. 4.
[122] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, edited by A. R. Tariq (Lahore, 1973), pp. 9–11.
[123] Ibid., 110.

the various nations that were a part of the geographically bounded state of India. Calling for the rejection of the political model of the nation-state in his Presidential Address of 1932 to the Muslim Conference, Iqbal stated:

> I do believe in the possibility of constructing a harmonious whole whose unity cannot be disturbed by the rich diversity which it must carry within its bosom. The problem of ancient Indian thought was how the one became many without sacrificing its oneness. To-day this problem has come down from its ethical heights to the grosser plane of our political life, and we have to solve the problem in the reversed form, i.e., how the many can become one without sacrificing its plural character.[124]

The unity of India was to 'be sought, not in the negation but in the mutual harmony and the co-operation of the many'.[125] It was on the discovery of this unity that the future of Asia and the relations of the East and West were dependent.

SITUATING IQBAL'S DEMAND FOR THE POLITICAL REORGANISATION OF INDIA

Not only is Iqbal's 1930 Presidential Address widely described as the first official demand for the creation of a separate nation-state for the Muslims of India, but it is also portrayed as a proposal that captured the imagination of the Muslim masses, intellectuals and statesmen. In reality, Iqbal's proposal did not generate much interest during his lifetime. Iqbal's vision went largely neglected by the intellectuals and the political elite alike.[126] Indeed, the 1930 Muslim League session which Iqbal presided over was so poorly attended that it lacked a quorum; nor was any resolution moved by those present to approve the scheme.[127] Iqbal had himself left the session shortly after giving his address.[128] Iqbal's was one amongst a myriad of schemes proposed by Muslim intellectuals and statesmen in the wake of the Nehru and Statutory Commission Reports.

[124] Ibid., p. 35.
[125] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 9.
[126] The official newspaper of the Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind, the *al-Jamiyyat*, devoted far more space to attacking Iqbal for his use of the term 'Hindu raj' than discussing the contents or merits of the scheme. *al-Jamiyyat*, January 1939.
[127] Chaudhary Khaliquzzaman recounted that 'the Muslim League had not considered it worth while even to take notice of it in its proceedings by drafting any appropriate resolution'. Khaliquzzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan*, p. 196.
[128] *All-India Muslim League Documents*, ii, p. 171.

One of the chief aims of the Muslim League session which met in 1930 had been to discuss the constitutional arrangements recommended in the Statutory Commission Report.[129] The Commission was established in 1927 to inquire into the workings of the system of government ushered in by the 1919 Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. The all-British commission provoked widespread protests in India because of its failure to include any Indians; the involvement of Indians was limited to that of giving evidence. Many leaders from across the political spectrum boycotted the Commission. An All-Parties Conference was convened in February 1928 to provide a common platform for the diverse group of individuals and parties which had boycotted the Commission. The aim of this conference was to draft an alternative constitution for India, one drafted by Indians themselves. These efforts culminated in the publication of the Nehru Report on 21 August 1928. The Nehru Report essentially called for India to be granted the same status as the white dominions in the British Commonwealth and for the princely states and British India to be joined in a federation. Although the definite form of the federation was not stipulated, the Report called for a federation with a strong centre with residual powers vested in it rather than the provinces. The Report further called for a check on the devolution of power to the provinces. It also did not provide for separate electorates for the minorities.[130]

The publication of the Nehru Report and the subsequent release of the Statutory Commission's report in 1930 spurred a considerable amount of debate over the issue of separate electorates and the shape of the constitutional and political framework to be adopted in India. Muslim statesmen and intellectuals were divided over the Nehru Report. Although the report was attacked by figures such as the Ali brothers in a number of vernacular papers, Moinuddin Harris, an alumni of the Jamia Millia Islamia[131] and former employee of the *Bombay Chronicle*, established an

[129] For instance, in a letter dated 28 June, 1930, A. H. Ghuznavi called for the League to be convened as soon as possible to consider the recommendations of the Statutory Commission. A. H. Ghuznavi to Secretary, All-India Muslim League. *Iqbal in All-India Muslim League Paper Project, 1st and 2nd Instalment*, IAP, fo. 8.

[130] All Parties Conference, *Report on the Committee Appointed by the Conference to Determine the Principles of the Constitution for India: Together with a Summary of the Proceedings of the Conference held at Lucknow*, 3rd edn. (Allahabad, 1928).

[131] The Jamia Millia Islamia was established in 1920 by students from Aligarh, like Muhammad Ali, who were involved in the Khilafat movement and Gandhi's non-cooperation movement, and were opposed to what they saw as Aligarh's pro-British stance.

Urdu daily newspaper called *Ajmal* (*Synopsis*) to galvanise support for the Nehru Report and the Congress.[132]

A significant number of Muslim leaders condemned the report for failing to provide for separate electorates, which were seen as the chief means of securing the political interests of the community. The Congress was accused of retreating from an agreement with the Muslim League, which had sealed the Lucknow Pact, as well as from the Congress Resolution of 1921, to which the Muslim League, the Khilafat Committee and the Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind had all agreed.

The other controversial aspect of the Nehru Report was its call for a strong unitary centre with residual powers and its failure to define clearly the shape of the future federation. The call for a strong centre amounted to a reversal of the process of diffusion of power to the provinces, which had been occurring since the 1919 reforms.[133] The Report thus brought the issue of centre-state relations and state autonomy to a head. A public exchange between the Aga Khan and Lajpat Rai (1865–1928), a leading figure of the Congress and the Arya Samaj, provides a good overview of the issues involved in these debates. In an article published in the *Tribune*, the Aga Khan argued that India

> cannot have a unitary, non-federal, Government. The country must accept in all its consequences its own inevitable diversities, not only religious and historic, but also national and linguistic. It must base its Constitution on an association of free states, such as the German Empire was before the crash ten years ago. Each Indian province must enjoy to the full freedom and independence of, say, Bavaria in the years before the Great War.[134]

In his Presidential Address to the Provincial Muslim Conference held at Etawah in October 1928, Lajpat Rai opposed the Aga Khan's views. Rai rejected the view that a centripetal form of federal constitution with a centralised form of government and residual powers vested in the centre would be detrimental to the development of the minorities or the country.[135]

[132] Letter to Chagla, dated 17/10/1928 in *Papers of M. C. Chagla, Bombay Presidency and the All-India Muslim League*, NML, File no: 2, fo. 17.

[133] British encouragement of provincial development over the national as a means of offsetting the nationalist challenge at the centre and the impact of this on constitutional development have been discussed by David Page in *Prelude to Partition: The Indian Muslims and the Imperial System of Control* (Oxford, 1982).

[134] Sultan Muhammad Shah, *Aga Khan III: Selected Speeches and Writings of Sir Sultan Muhammad Shah*, edited by K. K. Aziz (2 vols., London, 1988), ii, 819.

[135] 'Extracts from the Presidential Address of Lala Lajpat Rai Delivered at the Provincial Muslim Conference held at Etawah on 27–28 October 1928 Relating to the Nehru Committee Report' in *M. A. Ansari Papers, Press Clippings*, NML (Microfilm).

The debates which ensued in the wake of the release of the Nehru Report focussed primarily on three issues: the framework of the proposed federation; the issue of separate electorates; and the vagueness of the report on the issue of the future arrangements for the defence of India.[136] Although the Statutory Commission Report, published in 1930, called for the provision of separate electorates and affirmed that India should have a federal structure, it again did not specify a fixed framework for this federation, stating that constitutional development was an evolutionary and natural process that could not be determined by deadlines or rigid plans.[137] The commission called for a federal union which included the princely states and recommended that more powers be devolved to the provinces without calling for substantial changes at the centre.[138]

Although a significant number of prominent Muslim figures had boycotted the commission, a number of Muslim leaders from the Muslim majority provinces cooperated with it. In fact, the desire of sections of the Muslim intelligentsia of the Punjab to cooperate with the commission caused a rift within the ranks of the Muslim League itself. Iqbal had himself recommended cooperation with the commission in the hope that it would resolve the disputes over separate electorates and centre-state relations. He was, however, disappointed by its recommendations, and his 1930 Presidential Address was essentially a response to the failings of both the Nehru and the Statutory Commission Reports.

A number of federal and confederal schemes were proposed and contested in the public arena in the wake of these two reports. In their formulations, intellectuals and statesmen drew from both contemporary examples in the West, like America and Canada, and from Europe's political experience. Syed Abdul Latif (1891–1971), for instance, called for the formation of a federation of culturally homogeneous states on the basis of the Canadian example. This, he argued, would ensure the freedom of each community to live according to their own cultural lines. The central constitution would ensure federal autonomy and the formation of zonal or regional boards that would prevent the need for further subfederations. States within each zonal or regional board would be able to draft their policies together. The executive would be a 'composite government' rather than a 'coalition government'. He stated that he wanted

[136] Aga Khan, *Selected Speeches and Writings*, pp. 813–816.

[137] *Report of the Indian Statutory Commission: Volume II – Recommendations. Presented by the Secretary of State for the Home Department to Parliament by Command of His Majesty. May,* 1930, p. 5.

[138] *The Simon Report on India, an Abridgement with a Foreword by Viscount Burnhem* (London, 1930), pp. 83–109.

to model the executive and the federation on the 'American system' – the federal list was to be reduced with most issues being vested in provincial hands.[139]

The example of the German states prior to their unification, notably Bavaria, was frequently referred to by those who advocated a confederal system. The Aga Khan called for the creation of free states, not mere provinces with legislatures and executives liable to be overruled by a central government in which the Hindus would dominate. It would be necessary for the states to be free from all kinds of interference, except in matters in which they freely associated with other states, and – if the Bavarian example were taken instead of the American and Swiss models – these would be few and far between.[140] There was by no means a consensus on the shape or number of federations to be constructed. Muhammad Shah Nawaz's scheme, known as the 'Confederacy of India', envisaged the carving out of the sub-continent of India into separate regions and its reorganisation into a confederacy which consisted of three federations – the Indus Regions Federation, to be known as Indusstan; the Hindu India Federation; and the Bengal Federation. Nawaz argued that the

> idea of a binational, trilingual and quinquepartite confederation may be novel, and unprecedented in history, but it is not impracticable. … It simply means internal partition effected between the various members of a joint family without breaking their mutual bond of relationship. Consequently, separation means assigning different parts of the sub-continent to different communities on a cultural basis and their reunion in a confederacy.[141]

[139] Latif's scheme was founded upon the need to create new cultural zones or blocs. Amongst the blocs which could be converted into autonomous cultural zones were the 'North-West bloc' and the 'North-East bloc'. Note that Latif had proposed this scheme to the Muslim League. Latif, *The Muslim Problem in India: Together with an Alternative Constitution for India* (Bombay, 1939).

[140] The Aga Khan argued that these free states were to be based not on considerations of size 'but on those of religion, nationality, race and language – plus history'. Aga Khan, *Selected Speeches and Writings*, ii, 817–824.

[141] According to this scheme, the sub-continent of India could be carved out into separate regions and re-assembled into a confederacy of India under the following lines – the Indus Regions Federation to be renamed 'Indusstan', with the Punjab – minus the eastern Hindu tracts comprising Ambala, Kangra and the Una and Garhshankar *tehsils* of Hoshiarpur, Sind, the North-West Frontier Province, Baluchistan, Kashmir, Bhawalpur, Amb, Dir Swat, Chitral, Khanpur, Kalat, Las Bela, Kaparthala and Malerkotla; the Hindu India Federation with the United Provinces, the Central Provinces, Bihar with some portions of Bengal, Orrisa, Assam, Madras, Bombay and the Indian states other than the Rajasthan and Deccan states which were to be included in the States' Federation as its federal units; the Bengal Federation which encompassed the Muslim tracts of eastern Bengal, Goalpara and Sylhet districts of Assam and Tripura and other states lying

Reacting to the controversy over the Nehru Report's rejection of separate electorates, Iqbal argued that a proper redistribution of India into communal provinces would lead to the automatic disappearance of the contentious issue of joint and separate electorates. It was the prevailing political structure that had given rise to the controversy.[142] On the important issue of defence, Iqbal rubbished the view suggested in the Statutory Commission's report that defence had to remain in the hands of the imperial government because the British were defending India both from external threats and internal communal clashes. The provision of a proper federal framework, the Allama asserted, would not only alleviate any internal tensions between communities but also strengthen their patriotism. He stressed that the British were seeking to perpetuate the image of themselves as the defenders of India in order to continue to hold on to their empire. The Allama suggested that defence be transferred to a united and neutral Indian federal army.[143]

Iqbal pointed out in his 1930 Address to the Muslim League that the British and the Muslims had diametrically opposite reasons for calling for such a loose federation of India. Whereas Muslims were working to secure such a federation to safeguard both their own cultural development and a solution to the challenges confronting India, the British aimed to shift the locus of democracy and politics from the centre to the provinces in order to continue to hold power.[144] He thus argued that although the principles upon which the Statutory Commission Report was based were sound, by failing to provide for responsible government in the federal states it negated the entire spirit and need of the federation.[145] Commenting on the failings of the federal schemes proposed by the Nehru and Statutory reports, he stated:

> [I]t is clear that, in so far as real federation is concerned, the Simon Report [Statutory Commission Report] virtually negatives [sic] the principle of federation in its true significance. The Nehru Report realising [a] Hindu majority in the Central Assembly reaches a unitary form of government because such an institution secures Hindu dominance throughout India; the Simon Report retains the

within the provincial units. Each federal unit joining the Confederation was to have a governor-general with the governor of its provincial units under him responsible to the Central Confederate authority. The central authority could be vested in the hands of a Viceroy assisted by a confederate assembly consisting of members drawn from the various Indian federations. Muhammad Shah Nawaz, *Confederacy of India* (1933).

[142] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 16.

[143] Ibid., pp. 22–23.

[144] Ibid., p. 17.

[145] Iqbal, *Speeches, Writings and Statements*, pp.12–14.

present British dominance behind the thin veneer of an unreal federation, partly because the British are naturally unwilling to part with the power they have so long wielded and partly because it is possible for them, in the absence of an inter-communal understanding in India, to make out a plausible case for the retention of that power in their own hands. To my mind a unitary form of government is simply unthinkable in a self-governing India. What is called 'residuary powers' must be left entirely to self-governing states, the Central Federal State exercising only those powers which are expressly vested in it by the free consent of federal states. I would never advise the Muslims of India to agree to a system, whether of British or of Indian origin, which virtually negatives [sic] the principle of true federation or fails to recognize them as a distinct political entity.[146]

At the centre, Iqbal called for the creation of an All-India Federal Assembly, which was to be made up of representatives of the federal states rather than being a popularly elected assembly. This arrangement was, however, contingent upon the re-organisation of the states according to his recommendations.[147] Adequate representation for Muslims at the centre of the federation was crucial for their survival as a 'political entity'.[148] Iqbal feared that the amalgamation of the princely states into a single federation with British India, as recommended by the Statutory Commission Report, served both to maintain British control over the federation and to strengthen the Hindu proportion at the centre.[149] It was thus better to start with a British India federation only, excluding the princely states for the time being. In view of the formation of a federation which included both British India and princely India, Iqbal recommended that Muslims call for 33 percent representation in the Federal Assembly, exclusive of the share allotted to the Muslim princely states entering the federation.[150]

To ensure that his demand for the consolidation of a Muslim state would not be rejected on the grounds that it would lead to the creation of an unwieldy and impractical state, and to make the state more Muslim in nature, Iqbal proposed the exclusion of Ambala and some other districts where non-Muslims predominated.[151] This would make it less extensive and 'more Muslim in population'.[152] Iqbal noted that his proposal was in

[146] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 17–18.
[147] Ibid., p. 15.
[148] Iqbal, *Speeches, Writings and Statements*, p. 14.
[149] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, pp. 19–21.
[150] Ibid., pp. 20–21.
[151] In his 1930 Address, Iqbal noted that a previous proposal for the formation of a similar state had been rejected by the authors of the Nehru Report on the grounds of the proposed state being impractical and unwieldy.
[152] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 13.

line with the views expressed by Sir Geoffrey Corbett in his scheme for joint electorates in Punjab with the exclusion of Ambala.[153]

Iqbal's proposal was not the only one which looked to provincial autonomy and the provision of a separate legal structure as the means of assuring the fullest development of the Muslim community. Another such scheme was proposed by the ulama of the Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind. The ulama stressed that a federal structure with powers vested in the provinces was the only means of ensuring that the Muslims could maintain their *mazhabi* and *tehzibi azadi* (religious and cultural freedom).[154] Looking towards a confederal structure, the ulama called for the provinces to be vested with full autonomy and for the centre only to have those powers to which the states had themselves acceded.[155] Although the centre would not implement sharia, the province's powers to determine its own legal system together with provisions at the centre for Muslims to be governed by the sharia would determine that Muslims developed according to their own cultural and religious heritage.[156]

The ulama of the Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind also proposed a system to ensure Muslim representation at the centre and that no bill against the interests of Muslims could be passed in the central legislature. The central assembly was to have forty-five Hindu and forty-five Muslim members, and any bill which was opposed by two-thirds of the Muslim members was not to be passed.[157] They further called for the establishment of a 'special supreme court' to oversee the work of the provinces. With equal numbers of Hindus and Muslims, its chief task would be to ensure that the provinces were not compromising the development of the different communities within them. This court would be the last point of judgement on issues of community development and would even have powers to overrule the centre as well.[158]

In contrast to these schemes, Chaudhari Rahmat Ali's Pak Plan, launched in 1933, attacked Muslim intellectuals and statesmen for attempting to shape a federation of India. Ali and the members of his Pak National Movement felt that only the creation of a separate nation-state

[153] Iqbal, *Speeches, Writings and Statements*, p. 33.
[154] Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind, *Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind ki Sha-ari Ahmiyyat aur is ke Agraz-o-Maqasud-o-Faharsat Khidmat*, compiled and published by Maulana Muhammad Mian (Delhi, 1927), p. 15.
[155] Madani, *Shariat Bill*, p. 15.
[156] Madani, *Maktubat-i-Sheikh-ul-Islam*, ii, 117–119.
[157] Madani, *Mr. Jinnah Ka Pur Assar Muamma Aur Uska Haal* (Delhi, undated), pp. 40–42.
[158] Madani, *Shariat Bill*, p. 16.

could ensure that Muslims did not disappear as a moral and national force.[159] The basis of Chaudhari Rahmat Ali's political vision was that the concept of the 'country or state of India' and the attendant cultural domination of 'Indianess' had served to de-nationalise the various nations that resided within the territories defined as India.[160] Refusing to refer to India as a state, he referred to it as the Continent of Dinia. He felt that the term *dinia*, drawn from the Arabic term *din*, meaning religion, represented the religious diversity of India better. The term 'India', it was stressed, was a British imposition which neglected the presence of various religious, sub-religious or national groups within the continent.[161] Each of the 'nations' within the Continent of Dinia could only secure their development through the formation of their own nation-states. He thus envisioned the formation of a number of Muslim nation-states such as Pakistan, Munistan, Safistan, Haideristan, Siddiqistan, the Alam and Ammen Islands, and the Asan and Balus Islands.[162] He envisaged that these separate nation-states could at a later stage be brought together to form one Muslim nation-state, Pakistan.[163]

Chaudhari Rahmat Ali's Pakistan scheme, which was clearly different from the federal and confederal schemes previously discussed, because of its demand for the creation of separate nation-states, was largely rejected by the intellectuals and statesmen of the period studied here. Whereas individuals such as K. M. Ashraf attacked it as a manifestation of a 'medieval mindset' which clung to the 'pre-modern' belief that every separate group needed its own separate state,[164] others like Syed Abdul Latif rejected it for failing to realise that such a proposal would necessarily involve the movement of people, and for failing to cater to the needs of minorities left outside of these new nation-states.[165] There were also those such as Abdul

[159] Khan A. Ahmad, *The Founder of Pakistan: Through Trial to Triumph* (1942), p. 2.

[160] C. R. Ali, 'Menace of Indianism' in K. M. Ashraf (ed.), *Pakistan* (Delhi, 1940), pp. 28–36

[161] See Ali, *India: The Continent of Dinia or the Country of Doom* (Cambridge, 1946).

[162] See, for instance, Ali, T*he Millat and Her Minorities: Foundation of Haideristan for Muslims of Hindoostan* (Cambridge, 1943).

[163] See Ali, *What Does the Pakistan National Movement Stand For*, 3rd edn. (Cambridge, 1942) and *The Millat and Her Ten Nations* (Cambridge, 1944).

[164] Other manifestations of this 'medieval mind' included the call for Khalistan for the Sikhs and Maharashtra for the Mahratas. Ashraf, *Pakistan*, pp. ii–iii.

[165] Latif argued that his scheme was drastically different from the Pakistan scheme as it was 'entirely Indian in outlook'. His was a federal scheme with a central government and constitution which would protect the rights of people who chose to live outside their cultural zones and the rights of small minorities such as the Christians and other groups such as the Harijans who would not have their own cultural zones. He argued that his scheme was superior to the Pakistan scheme, which was 'at best a patchwork'.

Majid Khan who argued that the demand for Pakistan was against the tenets of the Quran and harmful to Islam. Khan argued in his *Pakistan is Negation of Islam* that 'Islam in its pristine purity and rugged simplicity is the greatest bulwark of world peace, but the underlying idea behind the Pakistan movement is mutual suspicion, estrangement of feelings calculated to foment strife and thus keep Hindus and Muslims eternally at loggerheads'. The Pakistan movement, he argued, went against the principles of the Quran as it was founded upon the idea that Hindus and Muslims were fundamentally different and, even worse, that Hindus were inferior to Muslims and as such had to be treated as 'political untouchables'.[166]

A comparison of Iqbal's political vision with those of the ulama of the Jamiyyat-i-Ulama-i-Hind and Chaudhari Rahmat Ali reveals that, despite conventional portrayals, his views were in some respects closer to those espoused by the 'nationalist' ulama than the 'Muslim separatists'. It should be noted that Iqbal himself dismissed the Pak Plan and distanced himself from such a demand.[167] In stark contrast to contemporary celebrations of Iqbal as the poet-philosopher of Pakistan, the promoters of the Pak Plan accused Iqbal of having 'fundamentally renounced the Muslim right to distinct nationhood' because he looked to a federal solution instead of calling for a separate nation-state.[168]

CONCLUSION

This chapter has explored Iqbal's discourse on national development and the 'partly political, partly cultural' programme he advocated to ensure the development of the nation in accordance with its national character. The Allama's belief that the development of the nation was dependent upon the cultivation of its specificity culminated in his rejection of the modern state structure because of its centralising and homogenising tendencies. Yet his emphasis on the development of the individual nation according to its own character did not detract from the Allama's deeply imbedded ideals of humanism. In fact, much like Fanon, Iqbal

He argued that because his scheme proposed that people move to their own cultural blocs, it solved the minorities problem overlooked in the Pakistan scheme, as it does not envisage the movement of people. The Pakistan scheme fails to deal with the minorities who would be left outside of their own nation-state and to address the cultural needs of the people. Latif, *The Muslim Problem in India*.

[166] Khan's article is included as an appendix in Rezaul Karim's, *Pakistan Examined* (Calcutta, 1941), pp. 155–158.

[167] Iqbal, *Kulliyat Makatib-i-Iqbal*, iii, 473–474.

[168] Ahmad, *The Founder of Pakistan*, p. 3.

championed 'national consciousness without nationalism' as a means of achieving what Fanon calls an international dimension.[169]

As paradoxical as it may seem, Iqbal constructed his views on the unity of humanity around the principle of *tauhid*. It has already been noted that the principle of *tauhid* did not simply signify the unity of God. For Iqbal, it provided a basis for the development of man and society. *Tauhid* provided the basis for the unity of the Muslim *millat* but also its unity with other nations. Iqbal repeatedly stressed that to know oneself was to know God, and, conversely, to know God was to know oneself. The self-discovery of the nation, therefore, implied a movement towards the realisation of God. Because the *millat* and national character were based upon religious affinity, each nation in its attempt to achieve self-fulfilment was essentially striving towards realising God. The concept of *tauhid* thus carried a promise of unity that could be realised with the attempt of each nation to develop itself according to its national character.

[169] Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, 199.

Conclusion

> [T]he tyranny of imperialism struts abroad, covering its face in the masks of Democracy, Nationalism, Communism, Fascism and heaven knows what else besides. Under these masks, in every corner of the earth, the spirit of freedom and the dignity of man are being trampled underfoot in a way of which not even the darkest period of human history presents a parallel. The so-called statesmen to whom government and leadership of men was entrusted have proved demons of bloodshed, tyranny and oppression. … After subjugating and establishing their dominion over weaker peoples, they have robbed them of their possessions, of their religions, their morals, of their cultural traditions and their literatures.
>
> Muhammad Iqbal, New Year's message broadcast on All-India Radio, 1938.[1]

In Iqbal's poem, 'Shua-i-Umeed' ('Ray of Hope'), the sun laments that despite its rays continually showering light onto the earth, the earth remains enveloped in darkness. Whereas the West is engulfed in the smog produced by its machines, the East, though still possessing an inner light, lies in a deadly slumber. Declaring that there is no pleasure in shinning upon barren sands, the sun calls on its rays to forsake the earth. A solitary rebellious ray, however, implores the sun to allow it to continue to shine on the land of India until its people were not stirred from their sleep. The hopes for the revival of the East, the ray pleads, were centred upon the awakening of this land. This is, after all, the land that has been irrigated by the tears of Iqbal.[2]

[1] Iqbal, *Speeches and Statements*, p. 201.
[2] Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, p. 571.

By critiquing prevailing socio-political ideologies and mentalities and re-examining Islam in light of the modern context, Iqbal sought to provide a message of physical and intellectual empowerment not only for Muslims but for the colonised East in general. Reflecting the view of a number of his contemporaries, Iqbal felt that as India had the largest Muslim population in the world and had engaged more directly with western thought – primarily in the form of western education – Indian Muslim intellectuals were uniquely placed to shape an Islamic response to the modern age.

Unlike the modernists who called for the adoption of modern or western political ideals and institutions, Iqbal conceived of colonialism as a totalitarian exercise of power that extended into the realms of ideology and culture. He thus warned that calls for the inculcation of western civilisation, thought and institutions would only serve to perpetuate ideological domination. Iqbal strove to shape an empowering interpretation of Islam, one that challenged both the 'traditional' interpretations of the ulama and the socio-political thought of the modernists. Whereas he dismissed sections of the former as unable to respond to the challenges of modernity, he accused the latter of being captivated by western or modern thought. This culminated in his reconstruction of Islam as a complete system that could be contrasted with western or modern ideologies such as nationalism and socialism. Implicit in such an interpretation of Islam was a rejection of the public-private dichotomy and the separation of power and religion which characterised post-Enlightenment conceptions of religion.

The emphasis on action and power in Iqbal's writings and his call upon Muslims to shape a modern interpretation of Islam inspired a number of intellectuals across the Muslim world. Contrasting the revolutionary message of Iqbal's poetry with the work of other Muslim poets of modern India, the prominent Indian Muslim leader and journalist Muhammad Ali called for Iqbal to be hailed by Muslims as the 'singer of our rising'.[3] Iqbal's attack on artistic, philosophical and religious trends of self-pity spurred a number of intellectuals who sought to shape a dynamic Islamic revival. Indeed, Muslim figures from across the religious and political spectrum have claimed to be inspired by Iqbal's action-oriented message.

Amongst those who have drawn from Iqbal's work are figures commonly called 'Islamists'. Key archetypes of Islamism like Ghulam

[3] Muhammad Ali, *Selections from Maulana Mohammed Ali's Comrade*, p. 307.

Ahmad Parwez, Maududi and Shariati have acknowledged Iqbal's influence in the development of their thought. Islamism and Islamist are, of course, highly contested categories.[4] Piscatori's definition of the Islamists as 'Muslims who are committed to political action to implement what they regard as an Islamic agenda' is adhered to here as it allows for differences in opinion over what constitutes the 'Islamic agenda' as well as diverging forms of political action.[5] It should be noted that many of the Islamist figures who claim to be inspired by Iqbal developed strikingly different Islamic agendas from each other. Three aspects of Iqbal's work were particularly influential in the development of Islamist thought: his critique of the basis of western systems of socio-political organisation, stress on the need for a spiritual interpretation of the universe and his rejection of the demarcation between religion and politics.

Iran presents a particularly interesting case where Iqbal's work was drawn upon by intellectuals who were grappling, on the one hand, with the physical and intellectual domination of the West and, on the other, with the position of Islam in the state. This was especially the case in the years leading up to the Iranian Revolution of 1979 and since. Because much of Iqbal's poetry was in Persian, he attracted a readership in Iran, where he is popularly known as Iqbal Lahori. Iranian figures who have drawn from Iqbal in developing their own approaches towards Islam and politics include Shariati, Abdolkarim Soroush (a leading critic of conservative elements within the Shia ulama) and the current Supreme Leader of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. In fact, speaking at the opening session of the First Conference on Iqbal in Tehran in 1986, Khamenei stated that in its 'conviction that the Qur'an and Islam are to be made the basis of all the revolutions and movements' Iran was 'exactly following the path that was shown to us by Iqbal'.[6]

Ali Shariati, who has been described as the ideologue of the Iranian Revolution, characterised Iqbal as a figure who brought a message of 'rejuvenation", 'awakening' and 'power' to the Muslim world.[7] He defined

[4] For a critical engagement with the term 'Islamism' see Richard C. Martin and Abbas Barzegar (eds.), *Islamism: Contested Perspectives on Political Islam* (Stanford, 2010).

[5] James Piscatori, *Islam, Islamists, and the Electoral Principle in the Middle East* (Leiden, 2000), p. 2.

[6] Speech by Sayyid Ali Khamenei at the opening session of the First International Conference on Iqbal, Tehran, March 10–12, 1986. Translated from the Persian by Mahliqa Qara'i. http://www.islam-pure.de/imam/books/iqbal.htm [13 June 2011].

[7] See Shariati's writings on Iqbal in Ali Shariati and Ali Khamenei, *Iqbal: Manifestation of the Islamic Spirit*, *Two Contemporary Muslim Views*, *Translated from the Persian by Mahliqa Qara'i and Laleh Bakhtiar* (Albuquerque, 1991).

Iqbal's work as a '*jihad*' for the salvation, awareness, and liberation of the Muslim world.[8] Like Iqbal, Shariati attempted to shape a new interpretation of Islam, one which challenged the views of the traditional Shia authorities and provided an alternative basis for socio-political organisation. A central aim of his work was to pose a challenge to the intellectual and cultural domination of the non-western world – specifically the Muslim world – by the West.[9] In attempting to do so, he drew from the work of figures like Fanon, Sartre and Iqbal.

Emphasising the uniqueness of Iqbal's position as an intellectual, Shariati contrasted his message to those of the Sufis, the 'men of the sword', the modernists like Sayyid Ahmad Khan and socialists. Iqbal, Shariati stressed, was not oblivious to the material world, yet he did not consider the exercise of power itself sufficient to effect 'reform and revolution in the minds of the people'. Nor was Iqbal like Sayyid Ahmad Khan, who, failing to comprehend the dynamics of power and domination, believed that society could be revived merely through modern scholarly interpretations of Islamic tenets and the Quran. Iqbal was also unlike the socialist-inspired Muslim intellectuals who equated economic needs with human needs.[10] For Shariati and many others like him, Iqbal's work provided a model for the development of a this-worldly Islam, one that was not detached from material concerns and that provided a basis to resist western domination.

Moreover, through his poetry, particularly the emphasis on the realm of the heart, Iqbal challenged the legalistic and rationalist discourses of both the ulama and the modernists. Implicit in Iqbal's appeal to the realm of the heart was a call on Muslims to move beyond the rhetoric of restraint and reason advocated by the ulama, who were focused on the letter of the sharia. The appeal to the realm of the heart encapsulated a call to the Muslims to mobilise themselves for action. The elevation of the realm of the heart over reason also provided figures like Shariati a means of escaping the western hegemony which they perceived to be inherent in the reforms and rationalism advocated by the modernists.[11] Like Iqbal, Shariati wrote that it was love, not science, which will help one escape

[8] Shariati's article 'Iqbal: A Manifestation of Reconstruction and Reformation' is available online at http://www.shariati.com/english/iqbal.html [14 April 2011].

[9] See, for instance, 'Extraction and Refinement of Cultural Resources' in Shariati, *Man and Islam*, translated from the Persian by Fatollah Marjani (Houston, 1981), pp. 29–45.

[10] Shariati, 'Iqbal'.

[11] Ibid.

from the 'prison'; science served to entrap the individual and detract from a true knowledge of the self.[12]

Another aspect of Iqbal's work which Muslim intellectuals seeking to shape an Islamic approach to politics drew from was his critique of socialism. A number of intellectuals in colonised countries saw socialism as a weapon that could be used against the colonising powers. Iqbal, however, argued that socialism was itself a western ideology which emerged out of the specific socio-political and economic conditions in the West, not a universally applicable movement. Furthermore, although protesting against capitalism and monarchical structures, socialism did not provide a positive basis on which to organise society. Instead, Iqbal looked to shape an Islamic alternative to western forms of organising society. Shariati, for one, echoed Iqbal's rejection of socialism and the need to shape a more authentic response to western domination:

> [When] the intention is to deny the West, to resist it, Marxism is considered the most effective weapon against it; whereas it is seldom realised that Marxism itself is utterly a product of the history, social organisation, and cultural outlook of this same West. This is not simply because its founders and leading figures are all Western, but rather, to employ a Marxist analysis, the ideology itself must be accounted a mere superstructure resting on the social infrastructure of the bourgeois industrial system of production in the modern West.[13]

Iqbal's reconstruction of Islam as a complete system and ideology also influenced the views of Ghulam Ahmad Parwez and Maududi, who were important voices in the debate over the place of Islam in the newly created state of Pakistan. Although the likes of Jinnah envisioned Pakistan as a secular Muslim state, criticisms soon arose over its 'un-Islamic' nature. Parwez and Maududi were amongst those who called for the legal and political structures of the state to be derived from Islamic principles. Despite their differing views, both Parwez and Maududi separately claimed that their religious and political views and the activities of their respective movements – the Tolu-e-Islam and Jamaat-e-Islami – are elaborations of Iqbal's views.[14] Effectively, however, they differed both in substance and in approach from Iqbal's stance on the state structure. Whereas Iqbal had rejected the modern state structure for stifling the development of the

[12] Shariati, *Man and Islam*, pp. 46–63.
[13] Shariati, *Marxism and Other Western Fallacies*, p. 49.
[14] See, for instance, the official Web site of the Tolu-e-Islam. http://www.tolueislam.com (19 March 2011).

individual and nation, both Parwez and Maududi held that the proper development of the individual and society was contingent upon the creation of an Islamic state. Parwez, for instance, asserted that the Quran laid the basis for the organisation of the state and called for Pakistan to be governed in accordance to the 'Islamic Constitution'.[15]

Similarly, Maududi was to stress that the state was central to Islam and that the implementation of the political principles laid down in the Quran required a state structure.[16] Recognising the pervasiveness and power of the modern state structure, Maududi sought to employ the state as a means of preserving and promoting Islamic virtues. This was to culminate in what is arguably the first modern discourse on the 'Islamic state'. Maududi was to develop a discourse on the state in which he rejected 'western' liberal concepts of state sovereignty, propounding instead the ideal of the state as a vice-regent of God accepting his *de jure* sovereignty.[17] In his view, a Muslim-majority state had to be an Islamic state, and it had to be founded upon Islamic principles and implement an Islamic socio-economic programme. The implementation of sharia and the collection of *zakat*, both of which led to the development of a more just and equitable society, were in his view the central functions of the state.[18] To ensure the Islamic and just nature of the state, Maududi further argued that the constitution of the Islamic state had to be based on what he believed were the four authentic sources for the socio-political organisation of society – the Quran, *sunna*, covenants of the Rashidun caliphs and the rulings of the great jurists.[19]

In examining Iqbal's critique of nationalism and his discourse on the development of the nation, this monograph has employed Iqbal as a foil to a broader study of Muslim political discourse in modern South Asia. Implicit throughout has been a rejection of the view that there is a fixed normative Islamic political tradition. By comparing and contrasting Iqbal's views with those of his contemporaries, this monograph has sought to highlight the richness of Muslim political discourse. Differing interpretations of Islam, intra-Islamic debates over the authenticity of Islamic sources and the engagement of Muslim intellectuals with non-

[15] See, for instance, Ghulam Ahmad Parwez, *Quran's Constitution in an Islamic State: The Basis of Legislation and Outlines of the Constitution*, compiled by Manzoor-ul-Haq (Lahore, 2002).
[16] Maududi, *The Islamic Law and Constitution*, p. 158.
[17] Ibid., pp. 193–319.
[18] Maududi, *Fundamentals of Islam*, 21st edn. (Lahore, 2002), pp. 194–195.
[19] Maududi, *The Islamic Law and Constitution*, pp. 196–197.

'Islamic' traditions discussed here support this view. Whereas figures like Chiragh Ali rejected the *hadith*s as an unreliable basis for the socio-political organisation of society and disputed the authenticity of the sharia, others argued that the *hadith*s, sharia, *sunna* and Quran stipulated clear Islamic principles and methods for the social, legal, political and economic organisation of society. By demonstrating how the same Islamic texts and symbols – particularly the Quran, *sunna*, *hadith* and the example of the early Muslim community – were interpreted differently, this monograph emphasised the applicability of Islamic texts and symbols to widely divergent political programmes. This very openness of Islamic texts and symbols helped to promote the fragmentation of religious authority which occurred in the wake of the challenge posed by modern Muslim intellectuals to the position of the traditional religious authorities.[20]

Rather than elevating any specific interpretation of Islam as a 'return to an authentic Islam', this monograph sees the work of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century Muslim intellectuals as exercises in *ijtihad*. Furthermore, contesting interpretations of Islam were themselves located within the wider ambit of developments in conceptions of religion. Whereas the likes of Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Shibli sought to re-interpret Islam in view of post-Enlightenment conceptions of religion, others like Iqbal drew from the work of dissenting voices in the West itself to develop their interpretations of Islam. The influence of Nietzsche's views on Christianity and western society in the development of Iqbal's religious and political discourse has particularly been noted.

One of the broader aims of this monograph has been to problematise the overly simplistic categorisation of Muslim political discourse through labels such as modernism, 'political Islam' and 'Pan-Islamism'. Indeed, a number of Muslim intellectuals were strongly opposed to the very use of categories such as Pan-Islam. Figures across the political spectrum saw Pan-Islam as a 'western invention' which conjured up images of an Islamic world united against the West and western civilisation. It served, they believed, to dismiss valid political reactions to colonial policies as mere assertions of religious fanaticism. In a speech made in response to a lecture on Pan-Islamism by the orientalist scholar, D. S. Margoliouth, Ameer Ali argued that the idea of 'Pan-Islamism is a figment of the

[20] Eickelman and Piscatori have explained the fragmentation of religious authority in terms of the fact that the ambiguous nature of symbols opens them to widely differing interpretations, and this in turn renders them manipulable by contenders of authority. *Muslim Politics*, p. 58.

[western] brain, an invention designed to help in destroying the liberty of Mussulman [Muslim] nations'.[21] Zafar Ali Khan's comments, published in the *Comrade* in June 1913, summed up the view of his contemporaries; the term, he wrote, was

> coined by Christian diplomacy to serve as a scurvy pretext for the spoliation of the fast decaying Moslem states. … As long as a Morocco, a Tripoli, a Persia, or a Macedonia had to be grabbed, the bogey of Pan-Islamism was a most useful adjunct. It helped the stalwarts of Christiandom to constantly confront their fanatical dupes with an imaginary peril, the bare possibility of which was to be removed by depriving the Moslem of his hearth and home.[22]

By juxtaposing figures such as Iqbal, Hegel and Nietzsche, this monograph does not, however, call for Iqbal to be seen as a modernist or liberal. In trying to salvage Islamic thinkers from being portrayed as irrational and pre-modern, scholars have at times sought to identify or highlight the liberal elements of their thought, emphasising the 'dialogic process' between them and western thought or, more generally, locating their responses to modern thought within the wider ambit of a multi-cultural modernity that accommodates diverse voices.[23] Although such approaches have created a space for the analysis of Islamic thought, they have at times served to distort some voices by over-emphasising their coherence with western theorists. This actually de-radicalises the thought of some individuals who used the construction of Islam as a technology for questioning modernity itself.

This monograph has demonstrated that Iqbal's concerns over intellectual domination, his interpretation of Islam as a system and ideology and his views on the importance of society to the development of the self culminated in his critique of nationalism and the nation-state. Although he adopted the term nation in his socio-political discourse, a critical examination of Iqbal's work has shown that he attempted to relocate the nation along the lines of the religious community and rejected any conflation between the concepts of nation and state. Contrary to the conventionally held view therefore, Iqbal did not call for the creation of a nation-state. Instead, he attempted to formulate a 'cultural and political programme'

[21] Ameer Ali, *Speeches and Writings*, p. 217, also see p. 218.

[22] Zafar Ali Khan, 'Indian Mussalmans and Pan-Islamism' dated 14 June 1913 in *Selections from Maulana Mohammad Ali's Comrade*, compiled by Syed Rais Ahmad Jafri (Nadwi), (Lahore, 1965), p. 297.

[23] See, for instance, Mirsepasi, *Intellectual Discourse and the Politics of Modernization*. The propensity of viewing Iqbal as a modernist has already been noted in previous chapters.

which would minimise the centralising and homogenising potential of the modern state structure and allow for the individual nations in India to develop according to their own characters. Iqbal's own political vision differed significantly from Chaudhari Rahmat Ali's Pak Plan, despite the frequent conflation of the latter with Iqbal's 1930 Presidential Address to the Muslim League by scholars. Indeed, Iqbal's calls for provincial autonomy and provisions for the administration of sharia were in important respects closer to the views of the 'nationalist' ulama than members of the Muslim League and other Muslim 'separatists'.

Through an analysis of Iqbal's critique of nationalism, his attempts to disaggregate the term nation from the state, and the intra-Islamic debates over the compatibility of Islam and nationalism, this monograph questions the assumption that non-western thinkers uncritically accepted western political idioms. Rather than accepting modular or fixed forms of nationalism developed in the West, South Asian intellectuals did not only imagine their own 'communities', but they also contested the categories along which these communities were organised. Nor was the congruency between the boundaries of the nation and the state uncritically accepted, as Iqbal's and Tagore's work indicate. By problematising terms like nation, *millat* and *qawm*, and by examining debates over the utility of adopting the model of the nation-state, this monograph makes a contribution to the history of nationalism and its content. It contributes to scholarly approaches which examine the colonised intellectual's 'freedom of imagination'.

In so doing it has also sought to provide a clearer understanding of the debates over the position and development of the Muslim community in India that led up to the creation of the state of Pakistan. Given their position as a minority in India, Muslim intellectuals were particularly sensitive to the homogenising tendencies of the model of the mono-cultural state. The examination of the different schemes – federal, confederal and nation-states – proposed by various intellectuals signals a departure from the usual focus on high politics in studies on the debates over the creation of a political framework for India. It allows an insight into attempts by various Muslim intellectuals to grapple with the model of the modern state structure and attempts by some of them to formulate a political framework which minimised the centralising and homogenising tendencies of the modern state structure.

Despite his critique of the modern state structure, Iqbal continues to be associated with the demand for the creation of a separate nation-state for the Muslims of India. Iqbal is firmly entrenched in the narrative of

Pakistan. His position as a founding father of Pakistan is commemorated through the issuing of stamps with his image or couplets of his poetry, the naming of roads and parks in his memory and the celebration of a national holiday – Iqbal Day – on his birthday. Pakistan has regularly issued stamps commemorating Iqbal's birthday and death anniversary. These stamps serve to link Iqbal's political vision to the state of Pakistan. In 1990, for instance, Pakistan issued a stamp to commemorate the golden jubilee of the Lahore Resolution of 1940 on which Iqbal was depicted delivering a speech; presumably Iqbal is delivering his 1930 Presidential Address. The Lahore Resolution, which was passed almost two years after Iqbal's death, was a resolution issued by the Muslim League calling for the creation of Muslim-majority states in the north of India. It is often referred to as the Pakistan Resolution even though it contained no call for the creation of a separate nation-state. Iqbal's position as one of the founding fathers of Pakistan was further embodied in the renaming of Minto Park, where the Lahore Resolution was passed, as Iqbal Park.

Paradoxically, Iqbal, who rejected the model of the nation-state, is firmly entrenched in the narrative of Pakistan, whereas Chaudhari Rahmat Ali, who called for the creation of Pakistan, remains a peripheral figure. Iqbal's tomb in Lahore, built in red sandstone, lapus lazuli and marble, was constructed in a symbolically laden area surrounded by two great Mughal structures, the Lahore Fort and the Badshahi Mosque. The site of numerous official visits and celebrations, it is provided an official guard by the Pakistan Rangers. In contrast, Chaudhari Rahmat Ali, who fell afoul of the political leadership in Pakistan shortly after the formation of the new state, spent his last days in Cambridge and remains buried there.

Ironic as it may seem, a critical examination of terms like nation, *qawm* and *millat* and Iqbal's non-statist political vision may also provide an insight into the ambiguity that surrounded the demand for Pakistan itself. Although Jinnah and members of the Muslim League came to speak of Hindus and Muslims as constituting two separate nations in the 1940s and though they attempted to mobilise support for 'Pakistan', they avoided defining its boundaries. Although it was suggested that Pakistan would be located where Muslims were in a majority, the 'two-nation theory' effectively embodied a fundamentally non-territorial vision of nationality.[24] The Lahore Resolution was itself a deliberately vaguely

[24] David Gilmartin, 'Partition, Pakistan, and South Asian History' in *Journal of Asian Studies*, 57, 4, 1998, p. 1081.

phrased resolution calling for the creation of Muslim majority states in the north of India and contained no call for the creation of a separate nation-state.

Given the lack of consensus and the diversity of the Muslim community, the real struggle of the Muslim League and the demand for Pakistan was not so much the formation of a territorial homeland for the Muslims but the creation of a Muslim political community. The struggle for Jinnah and the Muslim League was to define a symbolic centre to give moral and political meaning to the concept of a united Muslim community or nation in India.[25] Here Iqbal's efforts at defining the Muslim community as a separate nation, his assertion of the need for a single political body to represent Muslims and his call on Muslims to regain their lost unity may have helped. The importance of Iqbal's poetry in shaping this Muslim political community or nation is evident from a letter written to Jinnah in 1945 by Kazi Anwarul Islam, the sub-editor of *Azad*, recommending the need for a 'national song' to 'inspire the gallant fighters of Pakistan'. Iqbal's 'Tarana-i-Milli' ('Song of the Millat') was one of the songs recommended.[26]

Evidently, the Indian Armed Forces also realised the inspirational and mobilising potential of Iqbal's poetry. Iqbal's 'Tarana-i-Hind' ('Song of India'), which was set to music by the renown sitarist Ravi Shankar, was adopted by the Indian Armed Forces as its official quick march. In fact, the 'Tarana-i-Hind', the first line of which states 'Sare jahan se achcha Hindustan hamara' ('Better than the whole world is our India') remains one of the most popular patriotic songs in India. In 1988, the Indian state issued a stamp to commemorate Iqbal's fiftieth death anniversary featuring his image and select stanzas from the 'Tarana-i-Hind'. Many of those within India who continue to claim Iqbal as an Indian nationalist do so largely on the basis of this poem.

In a *rubaiyyat* (quatrain), which Iqbal intended to be his epitaph, he wrote that when he prepared to depart from this earth everyone claimed that he was their friend, but no one really knew this traveller; no one knew what he said and to whom and where he came from.[27] Many of his poems and private letters point to the solitude of an individual who felt that his message had either been misunderstood or neglected by his people. The

[25] Ibid., p. 1071.

[26] Kazi Anwarul Islam to Jinnah dated 23/7/1945 in *Iqbal in All-India Muslim League Paper Project, 1st and 2nd Instalment*, IAP.

[27] Quoted in Chapter 1, p. 1.

'afterlife' of Iqbal and the contending appropriations of his legacy, which continue almost seventy years after his death, have so clouded Iqbal's political vision that he remains misunderstood. By critically examining his socio-political discourse and locating him firmly within the socio-political and intellectual milieu of the period, this monograph has tried to lay bare the complexities of his thought. If it has not completely succeeded in doing so, I take heart from the poet's own words:

mujh ko bhi tamanna hai ke Iqbal ko dekhoon
ki is ki judai mein bahut ashq fashani
Iqbal bhi Iqbal se agha nahin hai
kuch is mein tamaskhur nahin wallah nahin hai

Even I desire to see Iqbal
Many tears have been shed in his separation
Even Iqbal is not acquainted with Iqbal
There is no joke in this, by God there is none.[28]

[28] Iqbal, *Kulliyat-i-Iqbal*, p. 60.

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