

CHAPTER 5

MUSLIMS IN INDIA

1 - Introduction

Islam was introduced to India for the first time when Muhammad Ibn Al-Qāsim, the Arab general of the Umayyad period, opened up Sind with a Muslim army. Since then, and for more than one thousand years most of India was ruled by Muslims who were organized in Muslim states of various sizes and areas depending on the century considered. The last of these states was the Moghul Empire which at one stage established its control over almost the entire subcontinent.

When the British embarked upon their colonial enterprise, they were confronted with the Muslims as their opponents. Thus, from the beginning, British colonization of India has meant to Muslims the obliteration of Islamic political, economic, cultural and religious influence. This policy was pursued in a most systematic way after the failure of the 1857 Revolution which led to the fall of the Moghul Empire. Since then, the Muslims of India (including today's Pakistan and Bangladesh) have found themselves more and more pushed aside by the new British colonial establishment at the periphery of the social life of the subcontinent. The British preferred Hindus in their administration to such an extent that by the turn of the present century, Muslims had lost most of the influence they had wielded for more than one thousand years.

Nevertheless, a modern Muslim renaissance coincided with the British striving to destroy all Muslim influence. This attempt, however, could not receive enough guarantees from the Hindu majority to safeguard the identity, the culture and the religion of the Muslims. Many Muslims, therefore, opted for independence, for separation in the areas where Muslims were in majority. This led to the creation of Pakistan which eventually split into two states (Pakistan and Bangladesh). The Muslims found their lot greatly improved in the two independent states by gaining sovereignty and the freedom to live out their lives as Muslims. On the other hand, the Muslims of the areas under Hindu majority which constituted the Republic of India, witnessed a worsening of their situation since the achievement of independence.

The case of Kashmir is particularly appalling. Here, a state which had an overwhelming Muslim majority, would have normally joined Pakistan was illegally invaded by Indian armies. Two-third of the state is now under Indian domination. It has been included in this study since its Muslim population is de facto under non-Muslim rule and thus suffers from the same handicap that the Muslims of India suffer from. Their inclusion does not in any way represent a recognition of this unjust de facto situation. The status of Kashmir would be finalized when the wish of the people about their future is allowed to prevail as was

resolved again and again by the United Nations, in the beginning even with the agreement of India.

At present, the Islamic culture of India, notwithstanding its overall homogeneity in comparison with the Hindu culture of the subcontinent, seems to have two somewhat distinct flavors in the northern and southern zones of India. In the North, the Muslims mostly follow the Hanafī school and their cultural languages are Urdu or Bengali. In the South, the Muslims follow the Shāfi'ī school and their language generally is Tamil. Indeed, the Muslims of the South grew out of the early Muslim immigration from South Arabia and their center of influence is the Kerala State.

Despite their minor cultural differences - linguistic, cultural, etc. Indian Muslims have a strong sense of common identity as Muslims. In addition to their strong attachment to Islam, they impress us with their large numbers and with the fact that despite heavy odds, their population percentage has been rising. In 1971, there were 61,400,000 Muslims or 11.21% of the total Indian population. This percentage was only 9.9% in 1951. In 1981, there were about 82,200,000 Muslims on a total Indian population of 685,200,000 people, or a percentage of 12%. Thus in 1982, the Muslims in India are estimated to be about 84,700,000 Muslims. However, ever since independence, they have lived under persecution which, if it continues, would endanger the survival of the entire community. Indeed, Muslims are continuously eliminated from administration where their percentage

has dropped in most ministries to a mere 1%. Concerted efforts are made to destroy their languages, to hinduize or secularize their schools, and their lives and their properties are endangered by a continuous string of violent riots by Hindu fanatics often encouraged by local or even central government authorities. The persecution reached its peak in the last years of the rule of the Congress Party (before it came back again to power) when the Ulemas were imprisoned, a major Islamic organization banned, many Muslims expelled from their homes (e.g. in Delhi) and specially subjected in the Northern states to forced sterilization.

The percentage of Muslims in the different states of the Indian Union varies greatly. In 1971, Muslims were in majority in two territories: Lakshadweep Islands (94.4%) and Jammu-Kashmir (65.9%). They formed more than 10% of the population in seven other territories: Assam (24.0%); West Bengal (20.5%); Kerala (19.5%); Uttar Pradesh (15.5%); Bihar (13.5%); Karnataka (10.6%); and Andaman-Nicobar (10.1%). Their numbers exceeded the 10 million point in Uttar Pradesh and the million point in twelve other territories.

In 1971, only five cities in India of more than 100,000 people in population, had a Muslim majority. These are Srinagar (Jammu & Kashmir), Malegaon (Maharashtra), Garden Reach (West Bengal), Rampur (U.P.), and Moradabad (U.P.).

2 - Historical Background

The first part of the Indian subcontinent which was incorporated in the Muslim State was Sind (now in Pakistan) during the Umayyad times by Muhammed Ib Qāsim in 711 C.E. (92 A.H.). Muslim communities were also formed in these early centuries around trading centers along the entire western shores of India from Kerala in the South to Gujarat.

It was, however, the Ghaznavids, under Mahmud of Ghazna (999 - 1030 C.E., 388 - 421 A.H.) who brought parts of the present day India within the fold of the Ghaznavid Muslim State. During his reign, this State came to include most of Gujarat, the Indus Valley as well as the Valley of the Ganges, including Benares. Eventually, Punjab became the core of the Ghaznavid State with Lahore as the capital until the end of the dynasty in 1186 C.E. (582 A.H.).

The power of the Ghaznavids was inherited by the Muslim Ghūrids. Indeed Mu'izz-Dīn Muḥammad took Ajmer and Delhi in 1192 C.E. (588 A.H.). He then put one of his Turkish commanders, Aybak, in charge of the Indian provinces of the Ghūrid Empire. These included Punjab, Uttar Pardesh and later Bihar, Bengal and Assam.

At the death of Mu'izz-Dīn in 1206 C.E. (602 A.H.), Aybak became independent. Thus Muslim India became an independent Muslim State with the capital at Lahore (now Pakistan). The capital of the State was moved to Delhi during the reign of

Iletmish(1211 - 1236 C.E., 607 - 633 A.H.). Thus Delhi became the capital of a Muslim state known as the Delhi Sultanate, a state which lasted for about three centuries after which it was conquered by the Moghul Emperor Humayun in 1555 C.E. (962 A.H.). In course of time the Moghul Empire united most of Northern India under the banner of Islam until it was conquered by the British in 1858 C.E. (1274 A.H.).

Other Muslim states were established elsewhere in the Indian subcontinent. Bengal, for instance, was part of the Delhi Sultanate. It became an independent Muslim State with a capital at Lakhnawati, in 1336 C.E. (737 A.H.). It was reunited to the Delhi State by the Moghuls in 1576 C.E. (984 A.H.). The throne of Kashmir was seized in 1335 C.E. (735 A.H.) by Shah Mirza Swātī who established a Kashmiri Muslim State which lasted until 1589 C.E. (997 A.H.) when it was incorporated in the Moghul Empire. Gujarat was part of the Delhi Sultanate, but became independent in 1391 C.E. (793 A.H.) and remained so until 1583 C.E. (991 A.H.) when it was incorporated in the Moghul Empire. Other Muslim states were established in Jawnpūr (1394 - 1479 C.E., 796 - 883 A.H.); Malwā (1401 - 1531 C.E., 804 - 937 A.H.); Deccan (1347 - 1948 C.E., 748 - 1367 A.H.); etc.

The British who came initially as traders, began to subjugate the subcontinent in the eighteenth century starting with the coastal regions. They subsequently extended their power through Bengal to Oudh, Central India, and Rajputana. The Moghul Emperor, Bahadur Shah (1837 - 1858 C.E., 1253 - 1274 A.H.) became a British pensioner. He was deposed by the British in 1858 after the Indian Army revolt, which completed the British occupation of India, and the country was formally declared a part of the British Crown.

To counter the British invasion, the Muslim masses took their own responsibilities with the failure of their established states to defend their territories. In the 1820's, the Mujahidin Movement was established by Syed Ahmad Shahīd with the aim of ousting the British militarily. The years between 1858 (the year of the failure of the Muslim Revolt) and 1906 (when the Muslim League was established) were years of withdrawal for the Muslims of India, along with a thorough soul searching effort.

In 1906, the Muslim League was formed to seek the political rights of the Muslims and to protect the Muslim community from Hindu domination and British persecution. The Muslim League cooperated with the Hindu-dominated Indian Congress to seek the independence of India. The idea of a separate Muslim state was put forth in 1930 by the great Muslim poet Muḥammad Iqbāl, but

was resisted by the Muslims. However, in view of the fanaticism of the Indian Congress and its complete disregard for Muslim fears of subjugation, the League was forced in 1940 to adopt the achievement of a separate Muslim state in India as the major political objective of the Muslims of the subcontinent.

In 1946, the Hindu extremists started a chain of violence against Muslims, leading to huge losses of life and property and the mass movement of more than ten million people. On August 14, 1947, Louis Mountbatten the last British Viceroy of India transferred the power to the President of the Muslim League Muhammad 'Alī Jinnah, as the first President of the newly established Muslim State of Pakistan. At the time of concluding the agreement for the partition of India into a Muslim state and a non-Muslim state, the British Government declared that princely states could choose to join any of the two states, but they should take into account the religious composition of their states, their geographical situation, and the wish of the people. However, in the actual implementation of those conditions the Muslim state was reduced to the smallest possible dimension. The states of Punjab and Bengal were partitioned in spite of an overall Muslim majority in both. The State of Hyderabad in Deccan encompassed a large area where lived 20 million people choose to be independent as a Muslim State. It was invaded by India and incorporated forcibly in 1948. The State of Junagadh which

is located in the Gujarat, opted for Pakistan in 1947. That state too was annexed by India by force of arms. Finally, Jammu and Kashmir, which had a preponderant Muslim majority and was contiguous to Pakistan, could not join Pakistan in spite of the wish of its populations because its Hindu prince wanted to join India. The population revolted against the Maharajah who massacred thousands of Muslims and forced emigration on hundreds of thousands of others. Pakistan then entered to free the territory but clashed with the Indian army. The war lasted until January 1949 when a ceasefire came to force, leaving about two-third of Kashmir (the most populated) in Indian hands, and one-third formed Azad Kashmir which is administered by Pakistan. At the time of the conclusion of the ceasefire agreement under the aegis of the United Nations, it was agreed by all the parties concerned that the future of Kashmir would be decided by a plebiscite under the supervision of the U.N. The U.N. has passed dozens of resolutions since then urging India to honor its commitment. All these resolutions have proved of no avail and the Indian occupation of Kashmir continues.

In 1911, the Muslims formed 21% of the population of India. This percentage increased to 24% in 1941. After partition, Muslim percentage in India fell to 9.9% in 1951. Muslims in the newly established Muslim State of Pakistan found their lot greatly improved by winning the right to lead their Muslim lives without

interference. Those of the Indian Union found that their lot had become more precarious, their leadership thinned out by emigration and their influence was greatly reduced. The effects were most harmful in Northern India, whereas the South was not much affected by these events.

3 - Demographic Considerations

According to the 1981 census, there were 82,200,000 Muslims in India (12% of the total population). This percentage has been increasing steadily because of a higher rate of natural growth of the Muslim population. Indeed, in 1961, the Muslim percentage was 10.70% whereas in 1951 it was only 9.9%. Thus, Muslims increased from 1951 to 1971 by 64.3% (there was in 1951 about 37,393,000 Muslims) while the Hindu population increased by 48.8% in the same period. In 1951, Hindus formed 84.2% of the population, whereas all other religious denominations besides Muslims and Hindus formed an overall 6.07%. In 1971, these percentages became 82.72% and 6.07% (as in 1951) respectively. In 1982, the Muslim population can be estimated at about 84.7 million people with a percentage of 12.0% of the total population.

The Muslim population of India is more urban than the non-Muslim population, although it is by itself mostly rural. Indeed, the 1971 census reports that 19.87% of Indians are urban, whereas the Muslim percentage rises to 28.8%. Thus, although

Muslims formed only 11.21% of the total population of India in 1971, they formed 16.21% of the total population of Indian cities. Actually, more Muslims live in rural areas in districts where they are in majority or form an important minority and more of them live in cities in districts where their percentage is small. Indeed in such states as Tamil Nadu, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat where Muslim percentages are below 10%, more than 50% of the Muslims are city dwellers. On the other hand, more Muslims live in rural areas in Jammu-Kashmir, West Bengal, Assam and Uttar Pradesh where their percentages are above 10%. Also, Muslims are more urban in South India than in North India.

The effect of emigration on the Muslim population is negligible. Indeed, the flow of migration out of India to Pakistan which was significant in the late 1940's and the 1950's has practically stopped and Muslim emigration to America or to the Arab countries is extremely small compared to the total number of Muslims in India. On the other hand, cases of apostasy from Islam to Hinduism or other religions are extremely rare. The few marginal and isolated cases which occurred in Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh after the partition, returned to Islam when things settled down. Those areas illustrative of this phenomenon are Dinpuri and Mewat in the vicinity of Delhi. Anyway, the numbers involved are counted by the thousands only all over India. On the other hand, many Harijans in South India are choosing Islam, but their numbers are still very small compared to the overall Muslim population.

The sex ratio in the Muslim population is 921 Muslim females for every 1000 Muslim males. This ratio is smaller than that of non-Muslims. There are indeed 935 non-Muslim Indian females for every 1000 non-Muslim Indian males. However, the female/male ratio of the Muslim population varies from one district to another. There are more Muslim females than males in 33 out of a total of 356 districts in India. In one district, there are 1356 females for each 1000 males in the Muslim population.

Since 71.2% of the Muslims live in rural areas, farming constitutes the largest activity of the Muslim population. Next to farming comes handicrafts which occupy a good number of Muslims in the cities. Muslims are in this case artisans, craftsmen and menials. At a higher level come trade and commerce, but these are on a small or medium scale. There is an extremely small number, if any, of Muslim industrialists and businessmen with leading positions in any sector of the economy of the country.

Since the achievement of independence (and the partition of the subcontinent) the Muslim Community has been systematically pushed out of the public sector. They are woefully under-represented in all government departments, at all administrative levels: federal, state, and district. Muslims represent at best only 2 percent of the middle and higher ranks of the country's administrative services. Often they are not represented at all. True, some Muslim

individuals have reached the positions of the President of the Republic (mostly ceremonial), Chief Justices, or even Chief of the Air Staff, etc. But these seem to be isolated cases that cannot detract from the fact that the masses of Muslims are segregated against in all walks of public life. There are also fewer Muslims in the professions. But it seems that Muslims have been able to keep their lead in sports and cultural activities.

There is obviously a great number of completely destitute Muslims. However, it is not possible to assess the percentage of such people in the Muslim population as compared with the percentage of destitutes in the other religious groups of India.

4 - Geographical Distribution

Muslims live in all the states and territories of India. However, their percentage in the total population varies widely from one entity to another. Table 5.1 gives the distribution of Muslims by state and territory, as well as their percentages for 1971. It also reports the number of Muslims grouped by districts where their percentages are above 50%, between 25 and 50%, between 10 and 25% and below 10% respectively. Muslims are in majority in one State (Jammu and Kashmir) in the North and in one territory (Lakshadweep Islands) in the South. Outside these two areas,

they are in majority only in two districts in the other states: the district of Murshidabad in West Bengal (area 5,341 km², total population 2,940,204 of whom 1,656,406 or 56.3% are Muslims); and the district of Malappuram in Kerala (area 3,638 km², total population 1,856,362 of whom 1,186,675 or 63.9% are Muslim). The results of Table 5.1 are shown in Figure 5.1.

Muslims form more than a tenth of the population in seven other states and territories: Assam (24.03%); West Bengal (20.46%); Kerala (19.50%); Uttar Pradesh (15.48%); Bihar (13.48%); Karnataka (10.63%); and Andoman-Nicobar Islands (10.12%). Out of a total of 356 districts in India, Muslims form the majority in 9 districts. They form more than the quarter of the population in 19 other districts, and more than the tenth of the population but less than 25% in 94 districts. In 102 districts, Muslims have percentages between 5 and 10; and in 51 districts between 2.5 and 5%. Their percentages in the remaining 81 districts are small, being below 2.5% of the total population of the district.

The areas where Muslims form more than one quarter of the population can be grouped into eight regions:

1) Kashmir, with the exclusion of the districts of Jammu and Kathua (2,952,135 Muslims area 97,000 km², overall Muslim percentage 81.2%); 2) North-West Uttar Pradesh (3,563,903 Muslims, area 27,000 km², overall Muslim percentage 34.1%); 3) North West Bengal and North East Bihar (5,099,635 Muslims; area 25,810 km², percentage 42.0%); 4) Central Uttar Pradesh (466,022 Muslims, 6,900 km², percentage 27.0%); 5) West Assam (2,427,928 Muslims, 25,779 km², percentage 35.9%); 6) Central Assam (683,387 Muslims, 6,962 km², percentage 39.9%); 7) Hyderabad (738,484 Muslims, 7,707 km², percentage 26.5%); and 8) Central Kerala (1,861,735 Muslims, 7,399 km², percentage 46.6%).

Thus, one can see that the Muslim population of India is fairly diluted in the mass of non-Muslims. Indeed, only 9.22% of the Muslim population live in districts where they form the majority; 28.96% live in districts where they form more than 25% of the population; 45.56% live in districts where they form more than 10% but less than 25% of the population; and the remaining 25.48% live in districts where they form less than the tenth of the population. Thus, schematically one can say that one fourth of the Muslim population lives in districts where it forms more than a quarter of the population; half of the Muslim population lives in districts

where it forms more than one tenth but less than one fourth of the population; and another fourth lives in districts where it forms less than one tenth of the population. Of these, 3,633,000 Muslims (5.92% of all Muslims) are scattered in districts where their percentages are below 5%. The few states and territories where Muslims form less than 5% of the population are: 1) Punjab, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh in the North-West, whose Muslim populations suffered greatly after partition and a great majority of it had to emigrate to Pakistan; 2) Orissa which came only briefly under Muslim rule; and 3) Arunachal Pradesh and the neighboring tribal states carved out of Assam.

Since 1951, the Muslim percentages have continued to increase in most states as they did increase all over India. If one compares only the censuses of 1961 and 1971, one finds that Muslim percentages increased from 14.7% to 15.5% in Uttar Pradesh; from 10.3% to 13.5% in Bihar; from 7.7% to 8.5% in Maharashtra, etc.

Finally, about half (49.39%) of the Muslim population of India lives in three states: Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and Bihar; and almost one fourth (22.27%) of the Muslim population lives in Uttar Pradesh. Another fourth (25.25%) lives in Maharashtra, Kerala, Assam and Andhra Pradesh. The remaining fourth lives all over the rest of India.

Table 5.1. - Muslims in India by State and District
(1971 Census)

State or Territory	Number of Muslims in districts where they form > 50%	25 - 50%	10 - 25%	< 10%	Total	Muslim % in total population
Uttar Pradesh	-	4,029,925	8,224,778	1,420,483	13,675,186	15.48
West Bengal	1,656,406	1,881,432	4,746,623	781,774	9,066,235	20.46
Bihar	-	1,561,747	4,838,071	1,196,516	7,596,384	13.48
Maharashtra	-	-	2,368,421	1,901,475	4,269,896	8.47
Kerala	1,186,675	645,041	2,093,061	238,223	4,163,000	19.50
Andhra Pradesh	-	738,484	1,399,138	1,372,629	3,510,251	8.09
Assam	-	3,111,315	281,095	114,970	3,508,380	24.03
Karnataka	-	-	2,183,807	926,850	3,110,657	10.63
Jammu & Kashmir	2,791,460	160,675	29,812	58,182	3,040,129	65.85
Gujarat	-	-	791,892	1,455,995	2,247,887	8.42
Tamil Nadu	-	-	-	2,100,363	2,100,363	5.11
Madhya Pradesh	-	-	501,451	1,316,729	1,818,180	4.39
Rajasthan	-	-	194,017	1,580,939	1,774,956	6.90
Lakshadweep	30,019	-	-	-	30,019	94.37
Andaman & Nikobar	-	-	11,655	-	11,655	10.12
Haryana	-	-	298,499	103,501	402,000	4.00
Pondicherry	-	-	19,218	9,902	29,170	6.18
	-	-	4,353	25,677	30,030	3.50
Orissa	-	-	-	337,475	337,475	1.54
Delhi	-	-	-	263,019	263,019	6.47
Punjab	-	-	-	113,828	113,828	0.84
Tripura	-	-	-	104,008	104,008	6.68
Himachal Pradesh	-	-	-	103,800	103,800	3.00
Other	-	-	-	118,502	118,502	-
Total	5,664,560	12,128,669	27,985,891	15,645,880	61,425,000	11.21
%	9.22	19.74	45.56	25.48	100.00	

5 - Religious Organization

About ninety percent of the Muslims of India are Sunni and generally follow the Hanafī school. Among the Sunnis, there are about four million Muslims of the Shāfi'ī school, mostly in the southern states. The remainder are mostly Shī'ah of the Ja'farī school in the North-Western states, mostly in the Lucknow area of Uttar Pradesh, and Ismā'ilīs of the Bohra branch (mostly in Bombay) or even Agha Khanis. There is no friction whatsoever between the two existing schools of Sunnism in India. As for the Shia-Sunni feud, it is now by far and large a story of the past. This mood of reconciliation is not astonishing for there are no basic differences between the Ja'farī school and the schools of Sunnism. The feuds of the past had generally remained localized to the districts of Lucknow for more than a century. Today, the Muslims form one single community and the fact that they belong to one school or to another is no more a barrier to friendly relations and marriages. Even Ismā'ilīs are coming closer to the main body of the Muslim community and vice-versa, under the pressure of the non-Muslim community and the non-Muslim establishment. A threat to any section of the Muslim community is considered a threat to the entire community.

Religiously, the Sunni majority is divided into two schools: the Deobandi and the Bareilvi. Deoband and Bareilly, located in the area of Muslim concentration of North-West Uttar Pradesh, are the seats of famous Islamic Universities. The subjects of division are of such

a secondary nature today that they became a matter of theological discussions rather than a concern of the community.

Two contemporary Muslim religious movements are affecting the lives of Muslims in India: the Jamāat-e-Islami and the Tablighi Jamā'at. The Jamāat-e-Islami is centered in Delhi and its range of interest extends to almost all the problems that face the Muslim community. The Tablighi Jama'at, which is also centered in Delhi, however, has more of an inward looking attitude to life, a tendency of withdrawal from all concerns except 'ibādah (worship), and concentrates mainly on the spiritual welfare of Muslims.

The greatest concern of the Muslim community is to impart Islamic education to the rising generations of Muslims. Already, efforts were made in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries to build up Urdu as the Muslim language of the sub-continent. Indeed Urdu was closer to the spoken language of the masses, whereas Persian the then official language was understood only by the few. The family of Shah Waliullah of Delhi rendered the greatest services in this regard and it is a member of this family who first translated the meaning of the Holy Qur'an in Urdu for the first time.

The famous Islamic University of Deoband, Dar-ul-^Ulūm, was established after the fall of the Moghuls by Maulānā Qāsim Nanavtvi. Other Universities of the same caliber followed all over India; the

most known and effective being the Nadvatul-Ulema at Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh); the Mażāhirul 'Ulūm of Saharanpur (in the same district as Deoband in Uttar Pradesh); the Madrasat-ul-Islāh at Sarai Mir; and several others in other parts of India. These universities kept Islamic knowledge alive in India. They are in full contact with similar ones in the rest of the Muslim Ummah, thus ensuring that Islamic religious life in India remains in tune with that in the rest of the World. They are also powerful seats of propagation of the Arabic language among the educated members of the Muslim Community.

Basic religious education is imparted to Muslim children in Islamic primary schools called Makātib or Madāris (Arabic for School). Jamāat-e-Islami has prepared about sixty textbooks in various subjects for use in these schools. There are thousands of such schools, but their number is still insufficient since they seem to cover the needs of only about 25 percent of the Muslim children of India. The Jam'iyat-ul-'Ulama' (seat Delhi), or Upper Religious Council makes a great effort to remedy this situation for all of India. At the state level, local Councils are carrying out the burden, such as the Dīni Ta'limī Council (Council of Religious Education) in Uttar Pradesh, the Muslim Education Standing Committee of Tamil Nadu, the All-India Muslim Educational Society; etc.

There are tens of thousands of Mosques in towns and villages all across India. These include such outstanding pieces of Islamic architecture as the Masjid Jami of Delhi built in the sixteenth century

and the Mecca Masjid of Hyderabad built in the seventeenth century as well as a multitude of more discreet buildings. All the mosques are also seats of education in Islamic knowledge to children as well as to adults.

The meaning of the Holy Qur'ān has been translated not only in Urdu, the Muslim language par excellence, but also into Hindi and the other national languages, namely: Marathi, Kashmiri, Bengali, Kanari, Tamil, Malayalam and Telugu. Religious books on Islam are available in many languages, but the greatest numbers are in Urdu and Hindi.

Indian Muslims are free to perform Hajj. About 20,000 of them do perform it yearly. Furthermore, Muslim personal laws are in force. But, as will be seen later there is recurrent threat from the non-Muslim Government to tamper with such laws.

Finally, the effect of all-India Muslim organizations in bringing the Muslim Community of India into one single united community should be mentioned. Besides those in Uttar Pradesh and Delhi mentioned above, one should add The All-India Muslim Council at Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh), the Majlis Ittiḥād-ul-Muslimīn, at Hyderabad also, and the All-India Muslim League of Madras (Tamil Nadu). The latter is the survivor of the pre-partition Muslim League, but its effect remained important only in the Southern States.

6- Cultural Persecution

Since Muslims live in all the states of India, each one of the sixteen constitutionally recognized languages is spoken by one group of Muslims or the other. In fact, each one of these languages has a Muslim variety which is more influenced by Arabic and Persian and is often written in the Arabic script. Urdu is the first Muslim tongue of India. It is the mother tongue of the Muslims of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and some of the Muslims of West Bengal, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka and Jammu and Kashmir; i.e. it is the mother tongue of about 28,500,000 Muslims in India, or about 46% of the total Muslim population. But it is spoken as a second language by almost as many other Muslims, making it understood by about 90% of the Muslims of India. The other important Muslim languages are Bengali, Gujarati, Kashmiri, Tamil, and Malayalam. Urdu has become an international Muslim language, being the official language of Pakistan as well as the language of the Muslim communities of Fiji, Mauritius, Trinidad, Guyana and South Africa. It has the richest Islamic literature among Indian languages in all fields of learning. The importance of this language in the survival of the Muslim Community is the basis of the great concern among Muslims in the World about the efforts of undermining it. Indeed, both the Indian federal government and the governments of the states seem to do all that is possible to strangle Urdu and to deny it all opportunities of existence and growth. This situation is considered

by the Muslims of India as one of the greatest tragedies that has befallen them after 1947. The wisest among the Muslims, such as the Jamāat-e-Islāmī, while defending the rights of Urdu are already making available basic Islamic literature in all official languages, including Hindi.

Muslims have greatly contributed to all the civilized facets of Indian life: the music, the architecture, the cuisine, the dress fashions, in short, the cultural life of the country. Modern Indian nationalism, although declaring itself secular, has a tendency to rewrite the history of India by de-Islamizing and Hinduizing it instead. This chauvinist attitude can sometimes go to the ridiculous extreme of claiming that the prestigious Muslim architectural monuments, including the Taj Mahal of Agra (Uttar Pradesh) were built by Hindu kings and Hindu architects. This anti-Islamic attitude often reaches the textbooks in use in schools and colleges.

Ever since they were put under the colonizing degradations of the British Empire, the Muslims made a great effort in education. Muslims established hundreds of schools and many colleges. The leading university established by Muslims is the Muslim University of Aligarh (Uttar Pradesh), established in 1920. Another Muslim university in the North is the Jamia Millia in Delhi. In Tamil Nadu, the New College was established in 1951 at Madras and the Islamiah College in 1903 at Vaniyambadi. The State of Hyderabad established universities of the first quality, the most famous being the Osmania College (now University) established in 1916 at Hyderabad (now Andhra Pradesh).

Since the independence of India, the governments, both federal and state, have taken all actions possible to deny the Islamic character to the institutions established by Muslims. These eventually become like any other Indian universities with minority Muslim enrollment minority Muslim faculty and no specifically Islamic oriented curriculum. The biggest victims of this policy are those most famous universities such as Aligarh University, Osmania University and Jamia Millia, among many others. The present government presented an amending bill on Aligarh Muslim University restoring some of the autonomy of the previous bill (under Gandhi's rule). But the bill fell short of accepting the Muslim demand to give the University a minority institution status within Article 30 of the Indian Constitution. When the Minister of Education who presented the bill was asked why that was so, he answered that "although Muslims had originated the concept of the University and the University came into being through their efforts, but having been aided by the Government of India, it cannot be described as a minority institution in strictly legal terms". This so-called government aid is always taken as an excuse to take over Muslim institutions.

Muslims are instead encouraged or forced to enroll into secular Indian institutions. These schools are actually Hinduized institutions where the religious beliefs and the mythology of the Hindus are freely introduced in textbooks with an aim to indoctrinate young Muslims into the religious beliefs of the majority. No wonder, then, that Muslims are putting huge efforts to establish new schools and new colleges.

Nevertheless, the discriminating efforts of the Indian Governments after Independence and of the British Colonial Establishment before Independence led to the present dismal situation of the Muslim Community. The literacy ratio of the Muslims is half the national average which is itself very low. Out of 2716 colleges in the country, only 54 colleges are under Muslim control or slightly more than 2 per cent of the total, in spite of a percentage of the Muslim population of 12%.

To give a clearer picture of this situation, consider the State of Tamil Nadu in Southern India where the formation of the Muslim Educational Association of Southern India at Madras in 1902 constitutes an important achievement of the Muslim Community. In 1972-1973, out of 172 colleges in the State, 11 colleges were founded and administered by Muslims. However, out of 30,000 students attending the Muslim colleges, only 6,500 students were actually Muslim (22% of the total!). With about 2,000 Muslim students in non-Muslim colleges, the total figure for college education among Muslims compares well with their percentage in the population. Indeed, there were 193,779 students in colleges in Tamil Nadu in 1972-1973. There were about 30 high schools under Muslim management with about 8,000 Muslim students out of a total enrollment of about 20,000 students. About 24,000 Muslims studied in non-Muslim high schools. Thus, the total number of Muslims in high schools in the State was 32,000 students, instead of about 80,000 if they were to equal the Muslim percentage in the State. In primary

education, the situation was even worse. There were 75 recognized Muslim primary schools and 300 unrecognized religious schools. The total Muslim enrollment in these schools was about 25,000. Assuming 75,000 student enrollment of Muslims in non-Muslim schools, the total Muslim primary enrollment was 100,000, instead of about 300,000 if they were to equal the overall Muslim percentage in the population. About 20% of all Muslim children of school age attend school whereas the average in the State was 40%. This situation did not improve since 1972-1973, and the same story could be told in the other states of the Union.

7- Social Persecution

In a majority community based on the caste system, the egalitarianism of the Muslim Community in all aspects of communal life or social intercourse marks them out clearly from the majority. Traditionally, the Muslim women had more rights than Hindu women, even in the context of Indian practice. Muslim girls are quite numerous in schools and colleges and often outnumber boys in higher education. Muslim personal law, with some changes, has been in force since the days of the British rule and contributes to the strengthening of the homogeneity of the Muslim Community.

There was intermittent attacks on all aspects of Muslim Community characteristics by different sectors of the majority as well as by the mass of Hindus. Muslims are often considered as a caste worse

than that of untouchables. There was even talk of a uniform law for all Indian citizens. It was a clumsy attempt of trying to abolish Muslim personal law. A flow of propaganda is often produced claiming the lower status given to women by Islamic laws and thereby paving the ground for destroying the legal aspect of the Muslim entity in India.

This assault had the effect of bringing the different sections of the Muslim community closer together. Indeed, the Bohra community (sub-sect of Ismaili Shia Muslims) would be considered by both the Shia and the Sunni as sectarian, almost at the fringe of the Muslim community (the Qadianis/Ahmadis are considered by all to be non-Muslims). This community has a small following of traders, mainly located in Bombay, Gujarat and other parts of Western and Central India. The community is headed by a Da'i Mutlaq who enjoys absolute temporal and spiritual authority over the members (here lies one of the basic infringements on Muslim law as understood by most Muslims). But, when the community faced a crisis due to the rebellion of a section of its members against its un-Islamic practices, the entire Muslim Ummah of India stood by the Bohra community against any interference of the non-Muslim State. The latter was just too eager to take advantage of the split, by nominating the Bombay-based "Citizens for Democracy" to enquire into the state of the human rights in the Bohra community in 1978. The Muslims were wise enough to react as one body against this infringement by the secular state and their unwillingness to let it take advantage of its diversity. Indeed, the matter is a religious one and it is the business of the Muslim community alone to settle it. Any interference by the

secular state of India is in contradiction with its supposed religious "neutrality" which could dangerously extend to all the affairs of the Muslim community. After all, the Bohra Muslims who feel that the behavior of their sect is against their genuine personal Islamic beliefs are free to join another school of Islam without any outside interference.

One of the greatest tragedies of the Muslim community after Indian Independence is in the economic field. In agriculture, Muslims are mostly medium and small peasants. Their concentration is important only in the rice growing areas. These areas have been bypassed by the green revolution which, in India, concerned only wheat, thus creating a continually widening gap between the situation of the Muslim community and that of the Hindus.

The second largest occupation of the Muslims is handicraft. They have been the best craftsmen and artisans of India and still are. However, with the industrialization of the country in the hand of the Government, i.e. the Hindu establishment, the handicraft industry became relegated to the most exploited, and less paid sections of the economy. These artisans did not respond yet by organizing trade unions of their own to defend their rights.

The third occupation is trade and commerce. However, there are no Muslim business houses catering for all India. Nevertheless, in spite of all the handicaps, Muslims seem to be holding their ground in this

area. Muslim merchants are prosperous in the field of mines in Tamil Nadu; in ship-building in Kerala, and in several other sectors of the economy in Maharashtra and Gujarat. This relative success occurs in spite of the fact that in general, Muslims are not proportionately benefiting from the credit facilities from the banks (all nationalized). This sector of the Muslim community was also particularly hit by the continuous flow of its talented elite emigrating to Pakistan from 1947 to 1965.

In summary, Kuldip Nayar (a Hindu), Editor of the "Statesman" reported on November 14, 1974: "In jobs or vocations, Muslims believe that they are discriminated against and that the Government has little to ensure them equality of opportunity. It is claimed that the private sector is in particular reluctant to employ them because of old prejudices". C. A. Abdussalam wrote in February 1975 in "Problems of Indian Muslims and their Solutions" the following: "A study based on 831 public limited companies having a paid-up capital of Rs.1,427.59 crores reveals that out of 6,465 directors there are only 119 Muslim directors, the percentage of which works out to be 1.8 only. Of the companies we find Muslim Managing Directors only in 8 companies (i.e. 1% of the total number of companies). The paid-up capital of these eight companies is only 6.41 crores, i.e. 0.4% of the total paid-up capital of the companies. Only in 4 companies (i.e. 0.5%) there is a majority of Muslims on the directors board. The paid-up capital of these four companies is only Rs. 3.31 crores (i.e. 0.2%)". Another study by K.L. Gauba points out that the Hindus of Greater Bombay (2,870,000 persons)

had 66,000 telephone connections, the Parsees (82,000 people) had 4,200 telephones and the Muslims (540,000 people) had 2,500 telephones. Thus, the percentages of telephone subscribers are 2.3% among Hindus, 5.5% among Parsees and 0.5% among Muslims. The same could presumably be said about other parts of India.

In 1979, out of a total of 405 licences approved, only 5 were given to Muslims, whereas in 1980, the proportion did not rise much since 6 licences were approved for Muslims out of a total of 386 licences. Examples of this type could be given ad finitum.

8- Political Persecution

Ever since the partition, the Muslim ratio in the services followed a continuous slide down, to the point that their representation in every Government department is today much lower than their percentage in the population. At the middle and higher scales of the Government hierarchy, their percentage is no more than 2%. Bias in employment against Muslims started actually since the partition. Since 1947, there were secret circulars, executive policy decisions and "understandings" barring recruitment of Muslims from the ranks of ordinary peons to the position of chief secretaries in the ministries.

Inder Malhotra reported in a leading Indian weekly in April 1973 "When all is said and done, there can be no escape from the stark reality that the share of the Muslims in public employment is abysmally low. Incredible though it may seem, according to the latest available statistics (1965), there were only six Muslim Officers in the top two

grades of the CSS out of 681. In the next grade, there were only 4 Muslims out of 2,000. As if this is not shocking enough, there were only 21 Muslims out of 9,900 clerks". He goes on summarizing as follows: "Twenty-five years after Independence our sixty million Muslims still feel alienated from the nation mainstream. They feel discriminated against, neglected and spurned. They do not get jobs easily, either in government or in private firms. Their share of seats in Parliament and State Assemblies is less than half of what is warranted by their population. They complain that their language, Urdu, is being throttled. They live in fear of communal riots and the Police". In 1982, the number of Muslim members of Parliament was 73 out of a total of 788 members.

In the Illustrated Weekly of India, Rasheeduddin Khan reported in an article of the May 14, 1978 issue, the following: "In the States, there were 28 Muslim Ministers out of a total of 345. The percentage today is probably a little less. From available data the position of Muslims in the all-India services is as follows: in the Central Secretariat: 1 secretary, 1 additional secretary, 3 joint secretaries, 2 deputy secretaries and 3 under-secretaries. In 1974, Muslims of the rank of secretary in the Government of India were 6, by 1976 it got reduced to 2, and now to none. The Statewise distribution of Muslims and Christians in the IAS and the IPS show that Muslims are 3.09% and 3.19% in the two services, while Christians account for 2.44% and 2.04% respectively. This is even less than what it was in 1965, when the percentages for the IAS and the IPS respectively were: Muslims 5.3% and 3.6% and Christians 3.5% and 4.6%. The picture that one gets is equally dismal in education. It is stated that out of a total of 3,604 degree colleges in the country, only 54 are managed by Muslims, and that there are just 3.5% Muslims in all the technical institutions in the country."

What is, then, the political participation of the Muslim community? One line of action of the Muslim response is turning inward and trying to build itself outside the Indian State. Such an attitude has been taken by the influential Jamāat-e-Islami which reaffirmed in its May 1978 meeting that its members should not exercise their vote because the "Indian State is a *Ṭāghūt*" (i.e. despotic, anti-Muslim). The Muslim League which became practically defunct in the North, survived almost unscathed in the South. It is still an important political force in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra. A Muslim Majlis has however been established in Uttar Pradesh to further the political rights of the Muslim community.

9- The Communal Riots

The most dramatic single phenomenon that endangers the very life and property of the Muslims of India is the widespread occurrence of communal riots. These anti-Muslim riots, peculiar to India, are the work of Hindu mobs encouraged and organized by Hindu extremist parties such as the RSS. The police and the army made up overwhelmingly of Hindu elements join the mobs in killing Muslims and destroying their properties instead of protecting them. These riots have been reality with which the Muslims of India had to live to this day since Independence in 1947. They keep the Muslims in a continuous pogrom, in a terrible state of fear for their lives and their property. These communal riots can occur anywhere in India, but are more concentrated in the North.

The Indian Home Ministry reports frightening statistics on anti-Muslim riots in its annual reports. In the two decades from 1964 to 1983, there occurred 7,287 anti-Muslim riots in India, i.e. an average of one riot a day. In the decade from 1974 to 1983 alone, there occurred 2,822 riots during which 2,398 persons were killed and 19,713 persons were maimed and injured, in their greatest majority being Muslim.

After the bloodbath of the partition in which a huge number of Muslims were killed and almost 10 million were forced to emigrate, there was a brief interlude. This was followed by a string of communal riots that climaxed at Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh in 1961, and then the holocaust of Ahmadabad in Gujarat in 1969. The large Qamar Hostel, built in the city with Muslim voluntary donations of Rs.700,000 housing 200 students of which 47 were Hindus, was reduced to shambles. On its desolate walls were written the words: "For Hindus Only". The riots spread to neighboring Baroda which was blastered with wall posters requesting the Muslims to "Quit India".

During the years of emergency before the end of the long period of the rule of the Congress Party, communal riots were stopped temporarily. But they were replaced by the persecution of the family planning zealots who ran wild against the Muslims in Delhi (Turkman Gate) and in the District of Muzaffarnagar (Uttar Pradesh) as well as elsewhere.

As soon as the old regime fell with a great relief to the Muslims, the communal riots started their ugly presence during the Janata Party rule. Uttar Pradesh witnessed communal riots in Banares, Sambhal, and as late as October 1978 in Aligarh. Riots also broke out in Bihar Sharif, near Patna (in Bihar), as well as in such peaceful areas as Tamil Nadu in the South, and later in Hyderabad. Just before this book went to print, a holocaust fell upon the Muslims of Bombay and Bhivandi in May 1984. The onslaught of Assam, however, in 1983, with about 10,000 Muslims - children and women - butchered in cold blood has all the characteristics of a new trend in mass extermination reminiscent of Hitlerian method, under the watchful eyes of complascent authorities.

To give an idea of how these riots come about and how much misery they bring to the Muslim community, let us describe two of the latest ones. In the Patna District (Bihar) a Muslim religious endowment (Waqf) property was usurped by Hindus to establish a Hindu temple. First, they placed an idol under a peepal tree within the Waqf's precincts, then they took over the entire property with official blessings. Thus, when on January 28, 1979, Hindus tried to place another idol adjacent to a Mosque in Mohalla Moghal Kunwan in Bihar Sharif, Muslims obtained court orders against building a Hindu temple on Muslim property, and tried to prevent the planting of the idol. The police arrived and opened fire on the Muslims, killing one Muslim and injuring 15 others. Later, the police broke in Muslim homes and shops, and went about burning and destroying before arresting 60 more Muslims.

At Aligarh, in a wrestling match, a Muslim wrestler happened to defeat his Hindu counterpart. Scuffle then broke out among the supporters of the two antagonists. Hindu extremists started to incite the Hindu population and a chain of stabbings followed between Hindus and Muslims. On October 5, a Hindu died in the hospital of stab wounds. A group of RSS fanatics then snatched the body and organized a funeral procession. The processionists, escorted by the official police called Provincial Armed Constabulary (PAC), were allowed to proceed towards the Muslim quarters of Chawraha Abdul-Karim and Upper Court shouting for revenge. They then began looting and burning shops, houses and mosques. When the Muslims tried to organize a resistance in the nearby Muhammed Ali Road, they were cut down by a barrage of gunfire from the P.A.C. Then, the processionists marched over the Muslim quarters of Bani Israelian and Manek Chowk where for four hours they killed, burned and looted: the result four Muslims were killed in Bani Israelian and the whole of Manek Chowk was destroyed. Later a Muslim woman was stabbed, tied to a cot and then burnt to death. The same fate was meted out to a Muslim rickshaw puller, and a newly married young man. At the same time the P.A.C. were firing at the courtyard of the Moti Mosque while the mob was setting fire on the Mosque's gate. Other Muslims were killed in Halwaiyan Mosque and Chatari Mosque. On November 6, the P.A.C. started gunning down peaceful Muslim shoppers killing more Muslims. On November 7, the P.A.C. started searching Muslim houses taking 75 young men into custody. In the evening Sultani Serai Muslim quarter was attacked. On November 8, the P.A.C. killed six more Muslims in Serai Mian and another near Turkman Gate. By the evening

of November 8, eleven Muslims were killed. On November 10, Hindus attacked Serai Rahman, Serai Hakeem and Rasulganj. By then, the Muslims were organized enough to repulse the attackers without loss. But on November 12, Muslims prayed in local Mosques the 'Īd-Al-Adhā' and there was no sacrifice or celebration.

10- Conclusions

This report might have depicted a dismal picture of the situation of the Muslims in India. However, if one is to take a static picture, one sees that the situation of the Muslim community is certainly far better than that of their brethern in Popular China or even the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, the basic cause of concern is the continuously deteriorating situation of the community. This deterioration lies in the great hypocrisy of the modern democratic, secular system. A democracy that does not protect the right of the minorities is certainly of no advantage to such minority. And a secular system that is a cover for fusion of religious minorities within the standard point of view of the majority is certainly abhorrent to any justice-conscious mind. It would have been much better for India to have declared a state religion and then make sure to protect the religious minority, just as Islam always sought and just as the modern Muslim States are doing as well as some European countries such as Sweden and Belgium.

The effects of such persecution are not all negative. They help give a challenge to the Muslim community which went a long way to increase its own cohesion, overcome its contradictions and seek

the solution to its problems within a movement of self-help. One thing is certain, however, the Muslim community is in India to stay, not because of any weakness in its Islamic conviction, but on the contrary because of the strength of this conviction. Muslims of India are Muslims and they are Indians, and they will not bow to the persecutions and the riots and move out of a land that has seen Muslim presence for more than one thousand years.

One aspect of Muslim response is to try to unite all efforts of the community in all-India, all-parties Muslim Council, known as "Majlis-e-Mushawarat" (i.e. Consultative Council). The first all-India Muslim Convention was held in Aligarh in 1953. More efforts of cohesion and self-help were made after the Jabalpur riots in 1961. The Consultative Council came into existence with the efforts of the Islamic organizations, especially the Jamaat-e-Islami, with the understanding that it would be non-political. The Council was entrusted in the all-India meeting of 1974 with the task of social, economic and educational reconstruction of the Muslim community. Another and much wider meeting was held in Delhi in October 1977, the Delhi Milli Convention.

Finally, it must be said, that in spite of all the problems it is facing, the Muslim community of India did overcome the traumatizing effects related to the division of the Sub-Continent into a Muslim majority and a Muslim minority State. It has now all the elements necessary for the survival of the community. It is dynamic, and although its economic, political and to some extent cultural position

vis-a-vis the majority has been worsening due to bias and outright persecution, the Muslim community strengthened itself in cohesiveness and organization. It also started to solve its own problems, especially in education and welfare. After this slide down, the future will certainly see a bigger role of the Muslim community in the affairs of India in one way or another.

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