

ISSN 0971-9318

HIMALAYAN AND CENTRAL ASIAN STUDIES

(JOURNAL OF HIMALAYAN RESEARCH AND CULTURAL FOUNDATION)

NGO in Consultative Status-Category II with ECOSOC, United Nations

Vol. 4 No. 3-4

July - December 2000

Islamic Fundamentalism in Central Asia

Devendra Kaushik

Islamic Fundamentalism in Central and South Asia

Vijay Kapoor

Muslim Separatism in Xinjiang

K. Warikoo

Islam in the Foreign Policy of Pakistan

Kalim Bahadur

The Jamaat-e-Islami and Pakistan's Foreign Policy

Frederic Grare

Taliban View of Jihad and the Islamic Precepts

Sultan Shahin

Fundamentalism in Bangladesh (1972-1999)

Abanti Adhikari

Jamaat-e-Islami of Kashmir

S. Shah

HIMALAYAN AND CENTRAL ASIAN STUDIES

Editor : K. WARIKOO

Assistant Editor : SHARAD K. SONI

Copyright©Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation, New Delhi.

- * All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted by any means, electrical, mechanical or otherwise without first seeking the written permission of the publisher or due acknowledgement.
- * The views expressed in this Journal are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the opinions or policies of the Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation.

SUBSCRIPTION

IN INDIA

Single Copy	:	Rs. 150.00
Annual (Individual)	:	Rs. 300.00
Institutions & Libraries (Annual)	:	Rs. 500.00

OVERSEAS (AIRMAIL)

Single Copy	:	US \$ 15.00	UK £ 10.00
Annual (Individual)	:	US \$ 30.00	UK £ 20.00
Institutions & Libraries (Annual)	:	US \$ 50.00	UK £ 35.00

Subscriptions should be sent by crossed cheque or bank draft in favour of HIMALAYAN RESEARCH AND CULTURAL FOUNDATION, Post Box : 10541, Jawaharlal Nehru University Post Office, New Delhi - 110067 (India).

Printed and published by Prof. K. Warikoo on behalf of the Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation, BA/1G, D.D.A. Flats, Munirka, New Delhi-110067. Printed at Print India, A-38/2, Mayapuri-I, New Delhi-64 and published at New Delhi.

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

Dr. T.N. Khoshoo

Distinguished Fellow
TERI, Habitat Centre
Lodhi Road
New Delhi (India)

Prof. Harish Kapur

Professor Emeritus
Graduate Institute of
International Studies
Geneva (Switzerland)

Mr. Alexander Veigl

Secretary General
IOV
Vienna (Austria)

Lt. General (Rtd.) Hridaya Kaul

New Delhi (India)

Prof. A.A. Aidaraliev

President
International University
of Kyrgyzstan,
Bishkek (Kyrgyzstan)

Prof. Devendra Kaushik

Chairman, Executive Council
Maulana Abul Kalam Azad
Institute of Asian Studies
Calcutta (India)

Prof. M.L. Sondhi

Chairman
Indian Council of Social
Science Research
New Delhi (India)

Prof. B.R. Grover

Chairman
Indian Council of
Historical Research
New Delhi (India)

Prof. Jayanta Kumar Ray

University of Calcutta
Calcutta (India)

Prof. B.K. Roy Burman

Centre for Study of
Development Studies
Delhi (India)

Prof. R.R. Sharma

Vice Chancellor
University of Jammu
Jammu (India)

Prof. Kalim Bahadur

School of International Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi (India)

Prof. K.N. Pandita

Jammu (India)

Dr. R.P. Khatana

Gurgaon (India)

CONTRIBUTORS

Prof. Devendra Kaushik is Chairman, Executive Council, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Calcutta.

Prof. Vijay Kapoor is Professor of International Relations, Division of Humanities and Social Sciences, Seattle Central Community College, Seattle, USA.

Prof. K. Warikoo is Chairperson, Centre for South Asian, Central Asian, South-East Asian and South West Pacific Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Prof. Kalim Bahadur is Professor of South Asian Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Dr. Frederic Grare is Director, Centre for Human Sciences, New Delhi

Sultan Shahin is a freelance journalist from Delhi.

Abanti Adhikari is Project Fellow, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Calcutta.

S. Shah is a freelance journalist from Kashmir

Dr. Sharad K. Soni is Project Fellow, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies, Calcutta.

Prof. Subhash Kak is a Professor in Louisiana State University, Louisiana (USA).

HIMALAYAN AND CENTRAL ASIAN STUDIES

Vol. 4 Nos. 3-4

July - December 2000

CONTENTS

Editor's Page		1-2
Islamic Fundamentalism in Central Asia: An Appraisal	<i>Devendra Kaushik</i>	3-23
The Dynamics of Aggressive Islamic Fundamentalism in Central and South Asia: Emerging Challenges	<i>Vijay Kapoor</i>	24-31
Muslim Separatism in Xinjiang	<i>K. Warikoo</i>	32-55
Islam in the Foreign Policy of Pakistan	<i>Kalim Bahadur</i>	56-65
The Jamaat-e-Islami and Pakistan's Foreign Policy	<i>Frederic Grare</i>	66-104
Taliban View of Jihad and the Islamic Precepts	<i>Sultan Shahin</i>	105-121
Fundamentalism in Bangladesh Currents and Cross-Currents 1972-1999	<i>Abanti Adhikari</i>	122-141
Jamaat-e-Islami of Kashmir: A Background	<i>S. Shah</i>	142-150
UN Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (51st Session): A Report	<i>Sharad K. Soni</i>	151-180
Book Review		
Kashmir in the Crossfire by Victoria Schofield	<i>Subhash Kak</i>	181-185

Editor's Page

The term 'fundamentalism' means adherence to principles of one's religion. Therefore, Islamic fundamentalism stands for a return to the doctrines of Islam in their original form as were practised in the medieval times. It could also mean idealising the historical past of Islam and calling for a return to 'pure and original Islam', which can be achieved through peaceful, lawful and cultural/spiritual means. In practice, the focus of Islamists has been Islamisation of the state rather than reform of the individuals. It has generated conflict as the Islamic fundamentalists seek to impose their will through coercion, violence and terror. Radical Islam has also posed a challenge to the secular and democratic polity and pluristic social order.

Emergence of radical and extremist Islamist movements in West Asia, Central Asia, South Asia and lately in South East Asia is the main source of instability and conflict in these regions. The rise of radical Islamic groups has been influenced by the leading ideologues of Islamic fundamentalist thought, Jamal-ud-Din Afghani (1839-1897), Maulana Abul Ali Mawdoodi (1903-79) the first Amir of the *Jamaat-e-Islami*, Ayatollah Khomeini (1909-89) leader of the *Islamic Revolutionary Party of Iran*, Hassan-al-Banna and Syed Qutb (1906-66) of the *Muslim Brotherhood* of Egypt. These ideologues advocated *jihad* (holy war) against non-Islamic societies and states. They emphasised that political power is indispensable to the establishment of an Islamic state. The concepts of *Dar-el-Islam* and *Dar-el-Harb* and *jihad* (holy war) as advocated by the Islamists envisages a perpetual state of confrontation between Islamic and non-Islamic states. Though Muslims like any other non-Muslim have multiple identities-religious, ethnic, tribal, linguistic or territorial, their emphasis on the Islamic communal identity puts them in collision course with the state and other groups. Islamist intellectuals, *ulemma* and activists have been seeking to blur the distinction between Islam as a religion and nationalism. They prop up the Islamic political consciousness by politicising already existing religious traditions and practices and by resisting change and modernisation. The concept of *umma* or *millat* is being invoked to abet, support and legitimise the secessionist movements of Muslims living in non-Muslim states. Syed Ali Shah Gilani of the *Jamaat-e-*

Islami of Kashmir and prominent secessionist leader was unambiguous in a recent statement when he declared that “The Muslims (of Kashmir) were part of *Millat*.... This very feeling of being part of *Millat* attracts *mujahideen* from Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Sudan etc. to Kashmir.” (See *Indian Express* 4 January 2001). Gilani’s practicing of pan-Islamism which is based on the concept of *millat/umma* transcending national boundaries, is at the root of ongoing violence and turmoil in Kashmir. Gilani and his group are invoking the suzerainty of Muslim *millat* in repudiation of lawful democratic and secular polity and liberal and composite cultural tradition of *Kashmiriyat* based on indigenous history, culture and ethnos of Kashmir.

That the Islamist ideology and terrorists are being used as tools by Pakistan to expand its strategic, ideological and even economic frontiers in South and Central Asia, is a major cause of conflict and instability in this region. Afghanistan has already been turned into the breeding ground of Islamist terrorism. The extremist Islamist groups have now begun to devour Pakistan itself. The *jihadi* groups openly defy government in Pakistan and pose serious threat to its law and order and social equilibrium. In Bangladesh the Islamic radicals recently declared two High Court judges *murtads* for their ruling against issuing of *fatwas* thus challenging the established judicial system in that country.

Central Asia too is experiencing turbulence, though the present governments have managed to control the Islamist extremist eruptions. Islam Karimov, the President of Uzbekistan in his prognosis of the situation in Central Asia, has dilated upon the ‘deceptive attraction’ of Islamic fundamentalist Wahabi ideology to a section of Muslims in Central Asia ascribing the same to its populist ideas of justice, rejection of luxury, greed and corruption. He has, in unambiguous terms, rejected the ideas of ‘politicisation of Islam and Islamisation of politics,’ drawing a clear distinction between the cultural and spiritual values of Islam and its misuse for gaining and exercising political power. Karimov has rightly concluded that Islamic fundamentalism poses a threat by seeking to disrupt stability civil and inter-ethnic harmony, by discrediting democracy and secular polity, multi-ethnic and multi-religious state.

K. Warikoo

ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM IN CENTRAL ASIA: AN APPRAISAL

Devendra Kaushik

The descent of independence (*ozodi*) on the five former Soviet Central Asian Republics as a consequence of the sudden and unexpected dissolution of the Soviet Union witnessed a prolonged debate among the policy-making and concerned academic circles in India on the likely impact of the Islamic factor on the region and the danger of fundamentalist threat. A realistic and informed assessment of the situation in these Republics was of crucial importance to India as Pakistan which had been fomenting trouble in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir in the name of religion was not likely to miss a perceived opportunity for acquiring a strategic depth in Central Asia inhabited predominantly by people professing Islam.

The author recollects how several Indian observers of the Central Asian scene dismissed out of hand the “exaggerated” fears about Islamic fundamentalists ever posing a serious threat to the new post-Soviet regimes in the region. The basic thrust of their argument was that the seven decades of modernization under the Soviet rule - urbanization, industrialization, emancipation of women, mass literacy, etc. were going to act as an insurmountable barrier for the Islamic fundamentalists’ efforts to gain ascendancy. The lack of knowledge of Arabic language even among the Central Asian clergy and the weak hold of Islam over the largely nomadic culture of the Kazakhs, Kyrgyzs and Turkmens, it was pointed out, would further deter the rise of fundamentalist Islam in Central Asia.

The author, who did not agree with the view summarily rejecting any possibility of emergence of the fundamentalist threat in the region, had taken the stand that under conditions of social tensions caused by problems of transition to a free-market economy and multi-party democracy, a danger of easy conversion of “folk Islam” into “political Islam” and through exploitation of the latter by vested interest and internal

opposition, into “fundamentalist Islam” cannot be totally ruled out. The decay and disappearance of Soviet ideology left a vacuum in the belief and value system. As belief in communism began to decay during the later Brezhnev period, search for an alternative ideology acquired a mass dimension. Thus Islam began to acquire a deeper root among the masses in Central Asia much as orthodox Christianity became widely popular in Russia. The Islamic revival in Central Asia gained a wide sweep involving millions of people. Islamic revival was of course not Islamic fundamentalism but it had far-reaching implication in terms of Islamisation of public life.

The renewal of interest in Islam after the collapse of the Soviet regime was nothing surprising. Despite the right to freedom of conscience and worship enshrined in the constitution, the Communist party in power conducted a vigorous anti-religious propaganda. Nevertheless, notwithstanding this anti-religious propaganda, Islam persisted as a key element in every day life of the Central Asian people who adapted themselves to the new circumstances. Even party members did not completely disown their Muslim identity while celebrating birth of a child, solemnizing wedding or offering prayer at burial of the dead. Rituals like *nikah* and circumcision were widely practiced and religious festivals like Id were popularly celebrated. Inability to go to Mecca for Haj pilgrimage resulted in performance of little Haj in the form of visit to graves (*mazars*) of the Muslim divines. Thus a typical Central Asian could be described as *Homo Islamicus* in as much as the lifestyle and traditions followed by him were in many cases based on Islam. Families were large and close-knit. Marriages were early and divorce rates were low. The population growth rates (201.9% for Tajiks, 177.4% for Uzbeks in comparison with the 36.8% average for the Soviet Union during the 1959-89 period) created large labour surpluses and consequently high unemployment particularly in the rural areas, cancelling out all Soviet attempts at biological or cultural assimilation. Even in the urban areas, the mahallah or community feeling continued to dominate and allegiances were shaped by native neighborhoods.¹

Islamic Fundamentalism in Central Asia

The activation of the Islamic factor in Central Asia passed through several stages. It was conditioned by a whole range of complex socio-economic and political factors. The growing ties with the developing Islamic countries and the projection of Central Asian Republics as a socialist model of development for the Third World countries also helped the Islamic renewal. It was under such conditions that Wahabism began to acquire a foothold in the Fergana valley of Uzbekistan as far back as the seventies of the last century. While some observers of the Central Asian scene tend to view the rise of Wahabism as a purely indigenous movement advocating return to “pure” Islam, others attribute its appearance to the Saudi Arabian support. The decay of communist ideology during the latter period of Brezhnev’s rule created an ideological void among the popular masses which they tried to fill up with religion.

Islamic renewal received further impetus during the *perestroika* period of Gorbachev who followed a policy of *glasnost* or openness. If previously Islam was blamed for backwardness, it was now sought to be used for fight against such social evils as bride prices, alcoholism and wasteful expenditure incurred on lavish wedding celebrations. The need to counter the spreading influence of the Iranian Islamic revolution through glorification of local Central Asian religious traditions also helped the renewal of Islam. In the relaxed atmosphere created by the *glasnost* policies, opposition to official Islam began to grow. The Central Asian Mufti who was an appointee of the Soviet regime was accused of following an un-Islamic way of life. Public agitation against Mufti Shamsuddin Bobokhan resulted in his replacement by a new Mufti, the Libyan trained Mohd. Sadiq Mohd. Yusuf. The new Mufti promised a copy of Quran for each family and larger opportunities for Haj pilgrimage.

More and more new mosques and *madrasas* which began to be constructed in the Central Asian Soviet Republics were another manifestation of renewal of Islam. These mosques and *madrasas* were built not by wholly indigenous resources. Liberal financial assistance from Saudi Arabia, Iran and Libya (these Islamic states also provided human resources to run them) made possible their large scale construction.

Turkmenistan which had just four functioning mosques before 1991 now had 181, with another 100 under construction. The number of mosques in Uzbekistan grew from 300 to 5,000 in 1993. In Kyrgyzstan there were over 1,000 mosques by 1995. In Tajikistan 2,000 mosques were opened during 1989-1991 period including 130 large Friday prayer mosques. A large number of *madrasas* for religious education including some exclusively for women also appeared in Central Asia.² Thousands of Central Asians went for Haj pilgrimage to Mecca. Most of them, the author was told during his visits to Tajikistan in 1989 and 1990, were handsomely rewarded in cash by the Saudi authorities.

As noted above, change in government policy during the late 1980s under M. Gorbachev also helped the renewal of Islam in Central Asia. From 1989 a more conciliatory policy towards Islam was followed. If previously Islam had been blamed for acting as a roadblock for social and economic progress, it was now acclaimed as having many progressive features which could be harnessed for accelerating social progress. The government acceded to the public demand for changing the old Central Asian Mufti and transferred the Quran of Caliph Usman to the custody of the Muslim Board of Central Asia. The importance of the Islamic factor also grew in conditions of an ideological vacuum which threatened social implosion in the aftermath of disintegration of the USSR. The ruling Central Asian elite took the course of promoting Islam as the basis for the new state ideology and its own legitimization. The Soviet ideology was dismissed as temporary aberration and indicted for undermining public morality. President Akayev of Kyrgyzstan and President Karimov of Uzbekistan took their oath of office on both the constitution and the Quran. The Central Asian Presidents Niyazov of Turkmenistan, Karimov of Uzbekistan and Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan made a beeline of Mecca for Haj. Signboards in Arabic script appeared on shops in the Fergana region of Uzbekistan and demands for adoption of local languages as the official language of the state and change over to the Arabic script began to gain popular momentum.

This emergence of Islamic renewal in the late eighties and early nineties also known as the “folk Islam” was a product of the complex

Islamic Fundamentalism in Central Asia

socio-economic and political conditions discussed above. To some extent it was a reaction to the anti-religious measures undertaken during the Soviet period which grew apace in the liberal atmosphere of the Gorbachev rule. Outside influence encouraged by the events of the seventies and the eighties in Iran and Afghanistan (the Khomeini Revolution and Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan), education of the future clergymen abroad, delegations to Islamic countries and increasing number of Haj pilgrimage also contributed to this new phenomenon.

Uzbek scholar Ablakul Bazarov has aptly analysed this phenomenon of sudden spurt of “folk Islam” during the late eighties and early nineties and the process of its transformation into fundamentalist Islam in the Fergana region which is now trying to expand into other parts of Central Asia through terrorist methods.³ According to him, initially it began through conversations and speeches in mosques and *chaikhanas* (teahouses) which had for their focus declining living standards, price rise, shortage of essential products, corruption of party and government elite, etc. Islam began to be projected as the only alternative to this decline in the quality of life. Criticism of the officially appointed Imams and clergy was voiced. Self-appointed religious leaders seized the functioning mosques and opened new mosques. This spontaneous movement was seized by the Wahabis who were followers of a fundamentalist movement for restoration of the “pure Islam” which appeared in Arabia in the mid-eighteenth century under the leadership of Muhammad al Wahab. The spread of Wahabi doctrine was greatly favoured by the events of the 70s and 80s in Iran and Afghanistan. Imam Khomeini was the most popular figure among the Wahabis in Uzbekistan. References to Quran were made while indicting the party leaders and the official clergymen appointed by them. Ideals of equality and justice as embedded in true Islam were lauded. The Islamic factor, writes Bazarov, thus became actively involved in the struggle for political and economic power that raged following the disappearance of the Soviet power. The Islamic parties which emerged accused the official Islamic clergy of apostasy while the latter denied the necessity for Muslims to

set up political parties and underlined that all true believers represent a single entity the charter of which is Quran and the programme is Sunna.

The appearance of extremist notes in the speeches of the leaders of the newly emerging political parties and movements alarmed the government of Uzbekistan. It also came to know about the contacts between the Afghan Mujahideen and the followers of Islamic renewal in Uzbekistan. Under these circumstances it took the decision for re-registration in Uzbekistan of parties and organizations registered earlier in Moscow. The all-union Islamic Renaissance Party (IRP) which was founded in June 1990 at a Congress of the Muslims held in Astrakhan with three regional structures including the one for Central Asia was meant to be the only political organization of the Muslims in the Soviet Union. Its objective was to enable the Muslim population of the former Soviet Union to live according to the requirements of the Quran and advance humanistic ideals and equal rights for all nations. According to the programme adopted by it, the Muslim peoples of the Soviet Union who had ceased to be real Muslims need to be educated about the Islamic way of life, about Islamic customs and traditions, the IRP aimed at forming a federation of Muslim governments within the Commonwealth of Independent States founded after the dissolution of the Soviet Union and gave a call for supporting strong Islamic movement that emerged in Pakistan, Sudan, Algeria and the Middle Eastern countries. These movements were represented as parts of one great whole since they rejected secular regimes.⁴

The Tajik branch of the IRP had close connections with the Afghan Mujahideen both before, during and after the civil war in Tajikistan and extended support to each other on several occasions.⁵ As early as February 1990 the new President of Afghanistan, Burhanuddin Rabbani lent open support to the Islamist demonstrators in Dushanbe.⁶ Both Hekmatyar and Masud trained the Islamist militants in their camps in Afghanistan. After the civil war in Tajikistan many of the IRP leaders including Davlat Usman, Mohd. Sharif Himmatzoda and Akbar Turajonzoda fled to Afghanistan and continued their opposition activities with the help of the Afghan Mujahideen.⁷ Ahmad Shah Masud is known

Islamic Fundamentalism in Central Asia

to have trained some 7,000 Tajik rebels in Kunduz province of Afghanistan. According to the KGB officials Hekmatyar armed 400 IRP militants during the spring 1992 demonstrations in Dushanbe.⁸ The Mufti of Uzbekistan, Mohammad Sodiq Muhammad Yusuf transferred 200 thousand dollars from the charity fund to the Moscow Industrial Bank for purchasing weapons for Tajik Muslim Koziyat headed by his personal friend Turajonzoda.⁹ This led to the dismissal of Mufti Sodiq by President Karimov, making the end of the latter's brief honeymoon with the new Mufti whom he had appointed to placate popular opposition to the continuation of old Soviet appointed Mufti Shamsuddin Bobokhon. Mufti Mohd. Sodiq was charged with the misappropriation of money derived through sale of copies of the Quran donated by Saudi Arabia.¹⁰ The Islamic fundamentalist movement appeared in the Fergana valley of Uzbekistan where the Wahabis had been active since the late eighties. The first manifestation of militant Islam in the Fergana valley was in the form of violent demonstrations at the time of President Karimov's visit to Namangan in early 1992. The Islamist fundamentalists' demand for setting up an Islamic state in Uzbekistan was turned down by Karimov, who, however, agreed to convert the party office building into a hospital. Close to seven million people live in the Fergana valley, about one-third of the total population of Uzbekistan. The unemployment rate is about 35% of the workforce. This provides an ideal incubator for the growth of religious extremism. Operating from mosques and *madrasas* built by Saudi largesse about 15,000 students, a potential Taliban type force of militant Islamists were trained in Fergana. The Imam of Namangan, Abdul Ahad, was reported to have declared: "First Fergana, then Uzbekistan, and then the whole of Central Asia will become an Islamic state." The militant Islamists organised vigilant groups of young volunteers to force women to wear the veil and to seek justice through the *shariat* courts. They also started collecting local taxes in the name of *zakat*, traditional Islamic payments for the welfare of the people. The Wahhabis also started spreading their influence to the nearby city of Osh in Kyrgyzstan. In December 1997 the militant religious extremists beheaded the Namangan militia deputy chief and hung his

head on a pole in a public square. They also put a packet of currency notes in his mouth to justify their killing of a corrupt official.

In early 1992 a group of militants calling itself *Adolat* or justice party appeared in the Namangan district in the Fergana valley. It projected itself as a group fighting against encroachment on property of honest working people, bribery, narcotics, prostitution etc. and initially received some public support and laudatory references in the local press. But the *Adolat* followers began to change with the passage of time and started taking the law into their own hands. Their excesses led to public resentment and demand for ban on their functioning. In Kazakhstan too xenophobic nationalist party *Alash* advocated return to Islamic precepts. Both the *Adolat* and *Alash* found few new supporters and soon disappeared from the scene. The IRP was not registered as a political party in Uzbekistan on the ground that it sought to exploit religion for political ends. It is, however, legal in Tajikistan where the Islamist opposition is a part of the national coalition ruling the country. Its influence in Tajikistan is, however, declining as is evidenced in its poor performance in the recent Presidential and Parliamentary polls.

As discussed above the influence of the Islamic factor in Central Asia has undergone several stages. During the end of the eighties it was characterized by a non-conflictual expansion of the place and role of Islam in both, the day-to-day public life as well as state ideology. It was followed by a second stage in 1991-1993 which witnessed activation of non-governmental Islamic movements in the Fergana valley and split in the spiritual administration against the backdrop of the bloody civil war in Tajikistan which forced Tashkent to take some active measures to prevent its spill-over into Uzbekistan. In the post-1993 period a degree of stabilization was achieved in the situation with regard to Islam under conditions of considerable socio-economic progress in the Republic of Uzbekistan. By 1995 the Islamic “religious boom” was over. Construction of new mosques almost came to a halt and many mosques were left incomplete. The enrolment of students in the Mir-Arab madrassa in Bukhara fell sharply.¹¹ Traditional Islam however, continued to occupy an important place in the socio-cultural life of the Republic.

Islamic Fundamentalism in Central Asia

But in 1996 the stage of de-politicization of Islam which had just begun in 1994-95 was again interrupted by the Taliban take-over of Kabul and the fall out of the first Chechen war which emboldened the religious extremists in Central Asia. As already mentioned above, religious terrorist groups became active in the Namangan district of the Fergana region in December 1997 and early 1998, killing the police chief and several members of the police force. In a statement A. Komilov, Foreign Minister of Uzbekistan accused the extremist religious organizations in Pakistan of training Uzbek youth from the Fergana valley in Wahabism and armed combat. Komilov charged these Pakistani organizations with encouragement to subversive trends in Uzbekistan by sending the trained militants through Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. But he did not blame the Pakistani government which according to him had no knowledge of these activities. Obviously, Uzbekistan does not want to spoil relations with a country through which it hopes to have access to the sea. For sometime Tashkent also tried to keep the Taliban in good humour, hoping to cope with the threat posed by them to its security by moving further closer to the United States through its active participation in the partnership for peace programme of the NATO. It also started distancing itself from Moscow in the process of bringing about national reconciliation in Tajikistan and changed its earlier hostile attitude towards the Islamist opposition in that Republic. Uzbekistan unlike Tajikistan did not show any enthusiasm for invoking the provisions of the 1992 Tashkent Collective Security Agreement concluded between the four Central Asian Republics and Russia to meet the Taliban threat. Instead it actively participated in NATO military exercises in Central Asia and served notice of its intention to withdraw from the collective security agreement with Russia in February 1999. It vocally supported the United States in the United Nations against what it called the "Cuban Terrorism."

A change in the assessment of the Islamist fundamentalist threat in Uzbekistan could, however, be noticed beginning with the year 1997 in the aftermath of the northward drive of the Taliban. Karimov's book *Uzbekistan on the Threshold of the 21st Century* published in early 1997 listed fundamentalism as a serious threat to security and stability of

the Republic. This was followed by the Law on Religious Organizations which in its amended form adopted in May 1998 governs the administration of religious affairs in Uzbekistan. This law guarantees freedom of religion subject to reasonable restrictions in the interest of public health, morality and order. A religious organization to be recognized must have at least 100 adult followers among citizens residing on the territory of the Republic. A registered religious organization can own land and other property. Registered religious organizations can have their central organs but their leaders can only be citizens of Uzbekistan and non-citizens can be leaders only with the permission of the Ministry for Religious Affairs. Article 5 of the Law on Religious Organizations prohibits proselytization just as it is the case with the law in Armenia, Lithuania and Russia. This provision is meant to protect the traditional religions. Article 14 which is opposed by the fundamentalists prohibits religious followers wearing in public of dress or sporting beard identified with a religious sect. This article prohibits imparting of military training to followers of any religious organization. Import and export of religious literature and objects is also to take place in accordance with procedures laid down by law. The stand taken by President Karimov in his book mentioned above is that the use of religious slogans for intervention in politics, economy and jurisprudence is not permissible as it poses a threat to stability. Karimov, however, supports the role of Islam in exhorting people to follow higher spiritual and moral values. He has established by a Presidential decree a scientific centre for the study of Islam in Tashkent.

The five bombs that went off in Tashkent on 16 February 1999 signalled a new upsurge of religious terrorism. Two explosions took place inside the building of the Interior Ministry, one near the Uzbekistan National Bank and one on the Independence Square where government headquarters are located. President Islam Karimov himself escaped narrowly as one of the bombs exploded just 150 meters away from his car which was stopped by the commander of the Presidential Guards. Addressing the diplomats in Tashkent on 23 February 1999, President Karimov stated that not only the Wahabis but members of

Islamic Fundamentalism in Central Asia

Hezbollah were also involved in planning the explosions in Tashkent. On 1 March 1999, the Uzbek Television named the President of the banned opposition party *Erk*, Mohd. Solih as a suspect in these explosions. The Interior Minister of Uzbekistan Zakir Almatov pointed the accusing finger at “Uzbek citizens with their mentors from elsewhere” and mentioned the responsibility on Wahabism, *Hezb-e-Tahrir Islamiya* and Islamic movements in Pakistan for this crime.¹² The *Kommersant* daily published from Moscow reported in its issue of 3 March 1999 that Uzbek authorities were investigating the possibility of involvement of Osama bin Laden who has reportedly spent 150 million dollars in Central Asia for subversive activities.

Islamic militants not only exploded bombs in Tashkent on 16 February 1999 killing 15 people and injuring more than 100, they also started taking hostages, by hijacking buses. Thus a bus was hijacked on the Tashkent-Urgench route on 30 March 1999. During the operation to free the hostages, three officers of the Uzbek national security service and one officer of traffic police were killed. The Uzbek television report on 31 March put the casualty figure at nine dead and several wounded. The Khorezm regional court tried a group of 16 people for this crime. They were charged with the offence of attempting to illegally overthrow the constitutional system of the Republic of Uzbekistan and turning the country into a state dependent on the banner of a single Caliphate. The evidence in the case showed that they had been active over the past several years, purchasing arms with money obtained by means of robbery and sending young people for military training in Chechnya. The court sentenced on 6 July two of the accused to death and the rest to imprisonment for 6 to 20 years and ordered confiscation of their property.¹³ On 26 July a Karakalpak court sentenced three young men to 15 years imprisonment for subversive activities. They had illegally crossed over to Tajikistan and Turkmenistan for receiving training in use of arms and also gone to Iran. They were arrested while returning from Iran with narcotics and religious propaganda material.¹⁴ Twenty two persons were tried in July 1999 for the 16 February explosions in Tashkent and six of them were sentenced to death. In August 1999 six

more people including the two brothers of the *Erk* party Chairman Mohd. Solih were also tried for the Tashkent explosions. The trial of 22 people for the bomb attack in Tashkent was described in a Meshed radio broadcast from Iran carrying statement of Mohd. Solih as a frame-up attempt to silence the opposition. Solih alleged that the accused on trial in Tashkent were arrested in Turkey ten days before the bomb blast by the Deputy Chairman of the National Security who had gone there to arrest them with the permission of the Turkish authorities. He also stated that his two brothers had been falsely implicated.¹⁵ The Uzbek opposition leader declared twrrior as an “unacceptable action for us even for motherland, nation and religion.”

In May 1999 the Islamist terrorists hijacked another bus taking 26 passengers as hostages. Two passengers and four policemen were killed while freeing the hostages. The terrorists who hijacked the bus were trained in Chechnya.¹⁶ On 15 November 1999 the Islamist terrorists attacked a police station in Yangiabad district of Tashkent killing three police officers and three local residents. It is suspected that these militants numbering 15 to 20 infiltrated from Kyrgyzstan.

The biggest armed operation launched by the militants after the Tashkent explosions was in the southern Kyrgyzstan district of Batken. Trouble started when a group of 21 armed militants mostly ethnic Uzbeks crossed over to the southern Kyrgyzstan district of Batken from northern Tajikistan and took four hostages including the head of the Batken district national security directorate sometimes towards the end of July 1999. On 31 July the Defence and Interior Ministers of Kyrgyzstan flew to Batken to conduct negotiations for the release of the hostages. A 200 strong Kyrgyz force was deployed to encircle the militants. The militants who entered Kyrgyzstan from Tajikistan were led by a field commander Abdulaziz of Uzbek origin. They asked for a large ransom payment in dollars for the release of the four hostages and permission to enter Uzbekistan.¹⁷ The Uzbek TV on 17 August reported on the basis of the statement of the Uzbek Foreign Minister A. Komilov that the Uzbek air force bombed the militants’ camp in Batken with the permission of the Kyrgyz authorities to prevent them from entering Uzbekistan.¹⁸ The Radio

Islamic Fundamentalism in Central Asia

Russia reported the release of the hostages on payment of ransom money and promise of safe passage to Jirgatol district in Tajikistan.¹⁹

But instead of going back to Tajikistan the militants took 120 people as hostages and demanded food. They seized three villages and took four Japanese geologists along with one interpreter as hostages on 22 August. They also held up the commander of the Kyrgyz interior troops Major General Anarbek Shamkeyev after killing his driver. The security ministers of Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan met on 23 August to discuss the hostage issue. The Uzbek Foreign Minister A. Komilov accused the Tajik Islamist opposition of having links with the militants trying to enter Uzbekistan through the territory of Kyrgyzstan.²⁰ The Tajik President's Press Secretary Zafar Saidov denied the collusion of the United Tajik Opposition with the militants in Southern Kyrgyzstan. He called them a bandit formation led by one Juma Nomangoni who belonged to the Islamic Rebirth Movement of Uzbekistan.

The interesting thing about this large-scale armed operation by the Islamist militants in Southern Kyrgyzstan is its timing and pattern which coincided with the incursion of armed Chechen terrorists into the territory of neighbouring Dagestan. The Russian news agency Itar-Tass reported from Dushanbe on 24 August that the Tajik secret service took a number of serious measures to prevent attempts by envoys of Shamil Basayev, a leader of Chechen terrorists, to recruit mercenaries from the ranks of the Tajik Islamist opposition. The resumed fighting with the Kyrgyz forces resulted in the further seizure of 20 Kyrgyz soldiers as hostages on 27 August 1999. This discomfiture of the Kyrgyz defence forces led to the declaration of emergency in the Osh region where 1,000 armed Islamists were engaged in fighting the Kyrgyz government troops. Kyrgyzstan requested Russia for military and technical assistance. Moscow agreed to provide Kyrgyzstan all possible military and technical help excepting the direct involvement of its troops in fighting the terrorists. The fighting resulted in the exodus of about 4,000 Kyrgyz villagers as refugees. On 28 August 1999 the four Central Asian states convened a meeting of their Defence and Foreign Ministers in Osh which resulted in

the adoption of a joint declaration signed by their Foreign Ministers. This declaration noted that terrorism and religious extremism were becoming an international phenomenon and expressed confidence that the world community would support their joint efforts to fight them. The Russian Defence Minister Igor Sergeev discussed the situation with President Islam Karimov. Russia and Uzbekistan formed an operational group of specialists to localize the conflict. On 30 August both the Kyrgyz and Uzbek planes conducted air strikes on the Islamist militants hideout in Southern Kyrgyzstan.²¹ On 2 September 1999 the Iranian Radio reported that the Japanese authorities had approached Abdullo Nuri, the leader of Islamist opposition of Tajikistan, to use his good offices for release of the four Japanese hostages.²² Seven Kyrgyz soldiers were killed and seven wounded in an encounter with the terrorists. On 17 September the Uzbek Foreign Minister Komilov again blamed the United Tajik opposition for helping the bandits in the Batken district. He termed Nuri's denial of links with the terrorists in Southern Kyrgyzstan as "deception."²³

The Russian daily *Kommersant* of 25 September 1999 reported that several groups of terrorists succeeded in crossing into the Fergana valley of Uzbekistan using the Kyrgyz peasants as human shields. They broke through in groups of three or four men and tanks proved powerless against their tactics. Having ensconced themselves in the mountains on the territory of Uzbekistan the Islamist guerrillas can now take on both the Uzbek and Kyrgyz forces from the rear. The Japanese hostages were finally released. It is believed that the Islamist opposition of Tajikistan played an important role in arranging for their release. It is alleged that some ransom money was paid to procure the release of the Japanese hostages. The Kyrgyz authorities also put no obstruction in the way of the return of Uzbek Islamist militant force led by Juma Nomangoni to its hide-out in northern Tajikistan sometime in early October 1999. Subsequently, to prevent estrangement in relations with Uzbekistan, Nomangoni with hundreds of his followers was allowed to leave for Afghanistan under a deal negotiated with the Taliban by the Islamist opposition of Tajikistan.

Islamic Fundamentalism in Central Asia

With the movement of a strong contingent of Islamist militants of Uzbekistan to Afghanistan, the threat of sponsored terrorism to the security of the centrally located Republic of Uzbekistan has increased. This republic on account of its geographical location has common border with all other Central Asian republics, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan and provides the key to the spread of terrorism across the whole region. President Akayev of Kyrgyzstan expressed the fear that up to 2,000 Islamic militants might attempt an incursion this year.²⁴ A combined onslaught of Uzbek Islamist militants and the Islamabad-backed Taliban on the republic of Uzbekistan from Kandahar in Afghanistan and the expected renewal of the Chechen rebels attacks from across the mountain gorges in Georgia has the potential of destabilizing the vast tract of the Eurasian land. The Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir is the other natural target of this fundamentalism driven cross-border terrorism self-financed by super profits of the narcotic trade.

The second Chechen war gave Russia a taste of the mischief-making capacity of the Taliban who trained mercenaries in the camps in Afghanistan to fight against the Russian army. This resulted in hardening of the Russian attitude towards the Taliban. Russia set up a CIS anti-terrorist centre in Moscow and took fresh initiative to strengthen the collective security system of the CIS states weakened by the dissociation of Tashkent from the Collective Security Treaty of May 1992. Russia started building up Bishkek as a new centre to fight the Islamist terrorists. A special task force called “Scorpions” has been raised in Bishkek. This force has earned a name for itself by successfully flushing out the terrorists who again in August 2000 tried to destabilise Southern Kyrgyzstan district of Batken.

Russia is reported to have increased the strength of its troops in Tajikistan from 12 to 21 thousand. A sort of “CIS NATO” is being created from out of the elite groups of the national armies of CIS members of the Collective Security Pact. The creation of the Eurasian Economic Union consisting of Belarus, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Armenia has also been expedited by realisation of a common threat from the South. Notwithstanding the reservations harboured by President

Islam Karimov in forging closer ties with Russia or integration within the CIS, President Putin phoned the Uzbek President to convey his solidarity in beating back the international terrorists who managed to sneak into the mountainous areas of Saryysiya and Uzun districts of Surkhandarya region in southern Uzbekistan and into the hills north of Tashkent. President Putin's visit to Tashkent earlier in May 2000 was an exercise in reassuring the Central Asian states bordering Afghanistan of Russia's determination to stem any attempt by the Taliban to create trouble in the region through the religious extremist groups.

High-ranking Russian officials including the Security Council Secretary Sergei Ivanov threatened "pre-emptive strikes" against Taliban bases in Afghanistan where Chechen rebels were being trained. Ivanov, however, diluted this threat by saying that "preventive measures" did not necessarily imply "military strikes" but could include diplomatic and economic pressures on the Taliban, as well as "increased support for the legitimate government of Afghanistan."²⁵ Russian media reports indicated that air strikes against Taliban bases could be carried out by Massoud's pilots from an airbase the Northern Alliance was reported to be setting up near Tavildara in Tajikistan.

President Putin it appears was trying to enlist US support or at least neutrality for Russia's possible military action against the Taliban. However, the Russian-American Foreign Ministry consultations in Moscow on the eve of President Clinton's visit resulted in only voicing "serious concern over the Taliban support for terrorism" and the "growing influence of extremist groups in Pakistan" in a joint statement issued at the end of these consultations. According to the Itar-Tass, Washington turned down Moscow's proposal to sign a joint statement at the summit on combating international terrorism and illegal drug trafficking.²⁶

While Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan have more or less followed the tough Russian response to the Taliban, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan have shown a definite inclination to extend *de facto* recognition to the Taliban regime. So far as Ashgabat is concerned there never was any doubt regarding its desire to have friendly relation with

Islamic Fundamentalism in Central Asia

the Taliban prompted by the prospects of building a pipeline through Afghanistan to market its natural gas in the South Asian subcontinent. But Tashkent has of late started taking contradictory positions in relations to the Taliban. At a meeting with Journalists outside the Presidential House in New Delhi during his official visit to India, President Karimov sharply denounced Afghanistan's support for international terrorists. He said: "Afghanistan has turned into the main centre for training international terrorists. We absolutely do not agree with the policy of some countries which support the Taliban movement."²⁷

But even though President Karimov in New Delhi publicly denounced the Taliban for supporting terrorism, he was secretly talking to them. The first secret contact was made with the Taliban as early as April 2000 followed by two other meetings in June and September. President Karimov's security adviser Rekhmankulov took part in these meetings with the Taliban. According to information gathered by the author in Tashkent from reliable knowledgeable sources the final deal was clinched with the Taliban at a meeting held towards the end of September 2000. A report circulated by the Afghan Islamic News Agency on 1 October confirmed that a meeting took place in Islamabad with the Afghan Ambassador Mola Abdul Salam Zaif. The Afghan Ambassador told the press that the Uzbek Ambassador briefed him about the speeches made by President Karimov in Ashgabat and Bishkek in which he (Karimov) had stated that the Afghan government's actions were directed at solving its own problems and strengthening its internal position.²⁸ The Afghan Ambassador welcomed this positive change in Uzbekistan's policy and gave assurance that the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan would never interfere in the internal affairs of others and desired to have good ties and relations with all countries, particularly its neighbours.

A change in the Uzbek attitude towards the Taliban could be noticed from the time of President Karimov's visit to Turkmenistan. The Turkmenbashi persuaded him to the viewpoint that with the implementation of projects for the economic benefit of Afghanistan the Taliban were likely to return to the international community as its normal member. At his press conference in Ashgabat President Karimov spoke

about his agreement with Niyazov on this stand. President Karimov also referred to the transformation taking place in the world regarding ways of resolving the Afghan problem and noted that things were changing a bit in the United States, Europe and France. He also talked of some shifts in China as well which should be taken into account in settling the Afghan problem.

At Bishkek Karimov blew both hot and cold. He stated that the Taliban which is presented as a strong force by some mass media bodies was not likely to cross the CIS boundaries tomorrow as it needed time to solve “domestic problems and develop its economy which cannot be done quickly without the assistance of the Central Asian region.” At the same time Karimov agreed that there would be danger to the security and stability of Central Asia until the war in Afghanistan stops and added that “as long as that country (Afghanistan) remains the leading supplier of narcotic drugs to the world market, there will be a threat to stability in Central Asia.”²⁹ At Bishkek Karimov also made a plea for cooperation among the region’s countries on security issues and described as a “big mistake” the position of those countries that believe they are not in danger because they do not share common borders with Afghanistan. President Karimov also warned, “The aggression today is taking the form of a creeping expansion and bandit formations can pop up anywhere, especially as the matter involves drug corridors that actually run through the whole Asia.”³⁰ At his news conference in Tashkent on 12 October 2000 President Karimov unambiguously declared that the Afghan Taliban have to be “taken into account” because they are becoming the “dominating force” in the country.³¹ He also criticized the idea of Eurasian Economic Community.

Thus for the present at least a semblance of stability has been restored to the Central Asian region which had re-witnessed in August 2000 a repetition of the 1999 Taliban-supported acts of cross border terrorism perpetrated by religious extremists in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. With Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan already reconciled to the Taliban, (Kazakhstan also seems to have more or less fallen in line with them by receiving the military dictator of Pakistan General

Islamic Fundamentalism in Central Asia

Musharraf) Moscow and New Delhi too appear to be reconsidering their earlier tough stand towards the threat of international terrorism emanating from the Taliban in favour of UN approved sanctions. All this has resulted in the Taliban gaining the badly needed respite to consolidate their power in Afghanistan before making a fresh advance towards Central Asia.

Despite the recent upsurge of Islamic fundamentalism in some parts of Central Asia, it is highly unlikely that an Islamic state would be created in the near future in any of the Republics of the region. Absence of a strong and independent force of *Ulema* or religious scholars, lack of popular knowledge about the basic tenets of Islam and no historical precedent of a theocratic state in Central Asia are factors negating such a course of development. To say this is not to deny the increasing role of Islam in the process of spiritual renewal and rediscovery of the rich cultural heritage of the people of Central Asia. However, the danger of conversion of Islamic renewal into a fundamentalist threat due to exploitation of the problems caused by transition to market economy and democracy by outside forces and internal opposition can not be ignored by India and the world community.

REFERENCES

1. Alexandre Benningsen and Marie Broxup, *The Islamic Threat to the Soviet State*, New York, 1983, p.124; Donald Carlisle, "Uzbekistan and the Uzbeks," *Problems of Communism*, vol.40, no.5, 1991, p.30.
2. Shirin Akiner, "Islam, the State and Ethnicity in Central Asia in Historical Perspective", *Religion, State and Society*, Oxford, vol. 24, nos. 2/3 1996, pp.90-132.
3. "Fundamentalism and Social and Political Stability in Uzbekistan", *Ethnic and Religious Conflicts in Eurasia*, Moscow 1997, pp.112-29 (in Russian).

4. *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 31 January 1992.
5. Pinar Akcali, "Islam as a common bond in Central Asia: Islamic Renaissance Party and the Afghan Mujahideen", *Central Asian Survey*, vol. 17, no. 2, 1998, pp. 267-84.
6. *Ibid.*, p.276.
7. *Ibid.*, p.276.
8. *Ibid.*, p.280.
9. Ablakul Bazarov, *op.cit.*
10. Mufti Sodiq has since returned to Uzbekistan from his voluntary exile. Appearing on TV on the eve of Presidential election on January 9, 2000, he praised Karimov and asked for his forgiveness. *Central Asia Monitor*, no. 2, 2000, pp.17-18.
11. E. V. Abdullaev and L. F. Kolesnikov, "Islam and the Religious Factor in Uzbekistan", E. M. Kozhokin (ed.), *Uzbekistan: obretenie novogo oblika*, T.1, Moscow, 1998, p.263.
12. *Central Asia Monitor*, no.2, 1999, p.20.
13. *SWB*, SU/3582, G/2, July 1999.
14. *SWB*, SU/3598, G/2, 28 July 1999.
15. *SWB*, SU/3598, G/3, 28 July 1999.
16. *SWB*, SU/3540, G/3, 21 May 1999.
17. *SWB*, SU/3611, G/1, 12 August 1999.
18. *SWB*, SU/3612, G/3, 13 August 1999.
19. *SWB*, SU/3614, G/3, 18 August 1999.
20. *SWB*, SU/3622, G/1, 25 August 1999.
21. *SWB*, SU/3627, G/1, 31 August 1999.
22. *SWB*, SU/3631, G/2, 4 September 1999.
23. *SWB*, SU/3645, G/1, 21 September 1999.

Islamic Fundamentalism in Central Asia

24. *Vecherny*, Bishkek, 3 March, 2000.
25. Vladimir Radyuhin, "Russian Commandos to attack Taliban?", *The Hindu*, 1 June 2000.
26. Vladimir Radyuhin, "Putin and Clinton to discuss Taliban, Pak", *The Hindu*, 3 June 2000.
27. *SWB*, SU/3830 G/1, 3 May 2000.
28. *SWB*, SU/3961 G/2, 3 October 2000.
29. *BBC Mon. CAU*, 230 900.
30. *SWB*, SU/3958 G/1, 29 September 2000.
31. *SWB*, SU/3973 G/1, 17 October 2000.

THE DYNAMICS OF AGGRESSIVE ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM IN CENTRAL AND SOUTH ASIA: EMERGING CHALLENGES

Vijay Kapur

BACKGROUND

The term 'fundamentalism' is derived from Protestant tracts titled 'The Fundamentals', which were published in the USA in 1910. It was an internal effort within the Protestant denomination to identify individuals and churches who diverged from the mainstream view in their rejection of liberal theology and insistence on literal divinity. The utilization of this term to identify and marginalize conservative Muslim social and/or religious movements is erroneous and misleading since the yardsticks of comparison between non compatible variables do not apply. Moreover reformism-within the Muslim laity-is not a major priority. Instead the concerns of Muslim fundamentalists are less with matters of scripture and theology than with issues of society, laws and government. The reliance on violent change appears to be a prerequisite and it is invested with romantic pseudo-religious rhetoric to make it attractive to those who believe in the Muslim faith. The belief in 'one community of Allah on earth' continues to influence Muslim fundamentalists who believe that the non-believers (or *Kafirs*) have eroded Islamic discipline and attempted to impose a secular polity on an essentially proud and nationalist Islamic core.

Samuel Huntington maintained in his book *The Clash of Civilizations* (1993) that coming conflicts-though sometimes global in nature-will be dictated by cultural values and philosophies. According to Huntington this clash of civilizations will ultimately escalate into differing viewpoints on international geopolitics and issues of a quasi-religious

Islamic Fundamentalism in Central and South Asia

and/or cultural manner. Reconciling these viewpoints into a convenient workable philosophy is not possible. Instead we have a situation wherein a cultural divide between Western Christianity, Orthodox Christianity and Islam has re-emerged in the strongest possible manner. Moreover, Islamic fundamentalism takes a dim view of the philosophies of democracy and liberty, treating them as anachronisms in preference to the maintenance of cultural dominance and doing one's Islamic duty by marginalizing the Communist infidel and the non believer (*Kafir*). The recipe for brutal fratricidal conflict is there with the only saving grace being timing, not utility.

Within this framework Central Asia and the Indian subcontinent hold immense relevance. The post World War II Cold War was a positive stabilizing influence since the policy of 'containment' worked to impose a semblance of order in society. Moreover, orthodox Islam found more in common with Western nation states with Islamic fundamentalists-whether in Iran or in Afghanistan-being embraced as 'American proxies'. Politics is the art of the possible but the 'possible' in this case created an enraged fundamentalist core determined to wreak vengeance for its betrayal on the West. It was this era which saw the late Ayatollah Khomeini being embraced as a friend of the West before his return to Iran and in the consequent Islamic Revolution this tie was severed and the West became the main obstacle to Islamic expansion.

FACTORS BEHIND FUNDAMENTALIST UPSURGE

The images of the 'scorched earth' battles between the Russian army and the guerillas in Chechnya-in the Caucasus-are still fresh. The fall of the Chechen capital Grozny earlier this year (2000) did not halt the fighting. Only its intensity changed. Similarly the Indian security forces and the militants in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir have been locked in a bitter conflict for dominance for more than a decade. No solution appears in sight in either setting-instead the spread of relentless political Islam has spawned an obsession with martyrdom within Muslim youth through the practice of '*Jihad*'. The practice of '*Jihad*' is also surrounded with ambiguity and uncertainty. The well-known Islamic

Vijay Kapoor

scholar, Maulvi Chiragh Ali, in *A Critical Exposition of the Popular Jihad* (1884), acknowledged that Islamic scholars are divided over whether *Jihad* is a means of self defense or offensive military conquest. He, however, repudiated the view that aggression in the name of *Jihad* is a fundamental Islamic tenet prescribed by the Koran for proselytization and exacting tribute. Khadduri in his *War and Peace in the Law of Islam* (1955) also states that *Jihad* does not mean just war- instead it can imply the propagation of Islam through propaganda. The debate starts when one examines whether violence can be an instrument of religious propaganda or not. The resulting ambiguity tends to reinforce the divide over finality in this essential task and in turn reinforces the feeling of drift among the younger sections of the Islamic population- especially in the troubled regions of Central and South Asia. Besides, other factors which have exacerbated Islamic militancy in this region are outlined below:

- (i) Overt American support for Israel and tepid support for the Palestinian position- even after the completion of seven years, after the Oslo accords. The ongoing conflict between Israelis and Palestinians on the West Bank has further exacerbated distrust about American bonafides as an honest broker in this conflict.
- (ii) Perceived lack of Western evenhandedness in dealing with Iraq- both during the 1991 Gulf War and later. The continuance of ruinous sanctions against Iraq, which have decimated children and the old/infirmer, have driven a bigger wedge between the militant Islamists and the Western powers.
- (iii) Perceived double standards when it comes to democracy in Islamic countries like Turkey and Algeria. In both nations a militant Islamic candidate/party was the winner of national elections. However, instead of getting power, the militant Islamic candidates were disqualified from holding office by the military establishment and the election was cancelled.
- (iv) Western principles of free speech and expression lead to the support of individuals like Salman Rushdie (*The Satanic Verses*)

whose works are respected by the majority of western society.

- (v) Convenient short term nature of western foreign policy goals with Islamic fundamentalist allies being sidelined or reduced to insignificance. A case in point is Afghanistan which served as the bulwark against Soviet expansionism in the Cold War era. Today it is a society without a recognized functional government and devoid of international recognition. Instead it has witnessed an escalation in lawlessness and fundamentalist beliefs with Kalashnikov rifles and Stinger missiles replacing developmental initiatives and drug trafficking becoming the norm rather than the exception. The decline of the Afghan nation state and the rise of the revanchist Taliban are offshoots of the short sighted western policy in this region.

Militant political Islam-or Islamic fundamentalism-is here to stay. Its steady rise fulfills a desire for recognition among the participants. The troubling phenomena is the rise of “religious terrorism.” Juergansmeyer’s thesis articulated in *Terror in the Mind of God* (Spring 2000) shatters the myth that religion and violence cannot mingle. War, according to Juergansmeyer, gravitates inexorably towards religion. The inclusion of the principles of *Jihad* tends to give war a moral construct which invests fundamentalism with a moral and religious ethos. Warfare becomes an opportunity for demonstrating masculinity and warriorhood and displaying absolute non negotiable differences in execution. The conversion of the militant Islamist into the ‘holy warrior’ or the Mujahideen’ follows this continuum. The investing of the title of ‘Mujahideen’ (soldier of God) differentiates the fundamentalist from the terrorist-at least in his eyes. But it cannot stop him from acquiring the attributes of a religious and political fanatic who celebrates his masculinity and justifies his actions through a special relationship with religion. Within this framework *Jihad* which literally means ‘to struggle’ becomes identified as a struggle against oppression. The passing of this rubicon invests fundamentalism with the fanatical flavour making it a danger for affected nation states like India and Russia.

THE CHALLENGES FOR INDIA AND RUSSIA FROM ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM

A report datelined November 20, 2000 in the Indian newspaper *The Times of India* carried a simple headline-“India, Russia to work out strategy against Taliban.” The contents of this article validate the assertions of both nation states who perceive the Taliban-led regime in Afghanistan as the fountainhead of instability and Islamic terrorism in this region. The American obsession with the fugitive Saudi multimillionaire-Osama bin Laden-has made his swift extradition from Afghanistan for terrorist actions a crucial and emotive issue. It is expected that the United Nations Security Council will soon impose new sanctions on Afghanistan thereby isolating the nation completely. The vicious nexus of gun running and narcotics will, however, provide the wherewithal to the Taliban-led Afghan regime to continue exporting its brand of religious extremism.

It is evident that Islamic fundamentalists have found a kindred spirit in the puritanical Taliban regime with its emphasis on the primacy of the *Shariat* (Islamic law), social conformity and a small and controlled state apparatus. The intermingling of these variables has provided the fillip for efforts to destabilize Central Asia, where the Russian state has a massive economic and security interest. The war in Chechnya has exposed the Russian state to terrorist incursions within its borders by disaffected sections of the population, which also includes fanatical elements, inspired by the vision of *Jihad*. In addition the five states of Central Asia with their authoritarian systems of governance-notably Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan-face varied levels of threats from Islamic fundamentalists. Therein lies Russia's dilemma-should it aggressively marginalize the Taliban through armed confrontation like it did with the Chechen regime in Grozny or should it seek to use the Central Asian states as surrogates for this purpose? It is a difficult Hobson's choice.

On the other hand the challenge for the Indian nation state is more direct. The Kashmir insurgency enjoys the direct support of Pakistan

Islamic Fundamentalism in Central and South Asia

and the blessings of the Taliban in Afghanistan. The increased Islamisation of the Kashmir insurgency and the militants' dependence on the Pakistani and Afghan regimes reduces the chances for a negotiated resolution of the Kashmir issue in the near future. The best scenario is the rapid international isolation of the Pakistani and Afghan regimes, thereby exposing their surrogates in Kashmir to the choice of a negotiated peace with India or a continuance of the armed standoff in the Kashmir valley- which is now a battle of attrition. The initiative still lies with the Indian nation state and it is in this background that a move like a limited cessation of hostilities between the Indian Government and the militant groups in Jammu and Kashmir engenders good will and provides hope for the future.

The challenges remain in this region for both India and Russia. But these can be handled if the strategy integrates application of the following steps:

- Massive utilization and enforcement of force on militant concentrations.
- Marginalization of the Taliban-led regime through the joint efforts of both India and Russia.
- Providing continued support to the Northern Alliance forces in Afghanistan to resist the Taliban.
- Russia and India should work together to strengthen the resolve of the five Central Asian republics to resist the Taliban's efforts to Islamise the region.
- Promote alternative models to the Taliban in the Afghan setting.
- Restoration of citizen confidence in the nation state's effectiveness, especially in the affected regions.

CONCLUSION

There is no clear and immediate solution to the problems discussed in this presentation. However, it is self evident that Islamic fanaticism should be crushed by the Indian and Russian nation states since its continuance will ultimately affect their effectiveness in dealing with challenges to executive authority. A fundamentalist can be a scholar,

pacifist or reformer. But the fanatic is driven by a mixture of emotion and religion and also usually seeks satisfaction for real or perceived humiliations through fanatical actions bordering on terror. Hence the removal of fanaticism as a variable is important to restore the strength and determination of the Indian and Russian nation states.

I will close with a quote from *Representative Government* (John Stuart Mill, 1861). Mill states on Page 93 (Chapter 5) as follows:

‘A great statesman is he who knows when to depart from traditions as well as when to adhere to them.’

It is eminently clear to me-based on the evidence available-that the way India and Russia handle the challenge of ‘Islamic Fundamentalism’-both inside and outside their borders-will be indicative of the quality of statesmanship evident in both nation states. Time only will tell whether this leadership will be exercised in a proactive manner in the Indian and Russian settings leading to the progressive resolution of this matter in an expeditious manner.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Cummings, Bruce, “The American Ascendancy: Imposing a New World Order”, *The Nation*, New York, 8 May 2000.
2. Friedland, Roger, “Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religion/Shattering the Myth: Islam Beyond Violence”, *Pacific Affairs*, Vancouver WA, Spring 2000.
3. Fuller, Graham E. and Rajan Menon, “Russia’s ruinous Chechen war”, *Foreign Affairs*, New York, Mar/Apr 2000.
4. Guha, Seema, “India, Russia to work out strategy against Taliban”, *The Times of India*, New Delhi, 20 November 2000.
5. Huntington, Samuel P., *The Coming Clash of Civilizations*, New York, 1993.
6. Pryce-Jones, David, “Twilight of the Ayatollahs”, *National Review*, New York, 30 August 1999.

Islamic Fundamentalism in Central and South Asia

7. Kegley, Jr., Charles W. and Eugene R. Wittkopf, *The Global Agenda*, Fifth Edition, McGraw Hill Publishing Company, 1998.
8. Mustikhan, Ahmar, “Different Faces of Islamic Fundamentalism”, *The World and I*, Washington DC, July 1999.
9. Rashid, Ahmed, “The Taliban: Exporting Extremism”, *Foreign Affairs*, New York, November/December 1999.
10. Wyatt, Christopher M., “Ethnic challenges beyond borders: Chinese and Russian Perspectives of the Central Asian Conundrum”, *Europe-Asia Studies*, Abingdon, December 1998.
11. Yapp, M.E., “Fundamentalism Reborn? Afghanistan and the Taliban”, *Middle Eastern Studies*, London, April 1999.

MUSLIM SEPARATISM IN XINJIANG

K. Warikoo

Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region of China occupies a pivotal position in Asia with its borders touching Mongolia, Central Asian states of Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan; Afghanistan and the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, part of which is under the illegal occupation of Pakistan. Holding the distinction of being the largest province of China, Xinjiang is still the only autonomous region where Muslims are in majority.¹ Xinjiang presents a unique case of geographical and ethno-cultural diversity. Tien Shan range of mountains cuts the region into two distinct but unequal parts, the northern region being traditionally dominated by pastoral nomads and the southern region possessing numerous fertile oasis settlements with well established agricultural and trading traditions. The people of northern region generally known as Dzungaria have had close affinities with the Mongols living across the border in the east and with the Kazakhs in the west, both maintaining strong commercial and nomadic connections.² Similarly the Muslims of southern region of Xinjiang also known as the Tarim basin, maintained through history intimate relations with the adjoining areas of Central Asian Khanates of Kokand and Bukhara, Afghanistan and northern India due to their religious and kinship ties and active trade contacts.³ Such a curious interplay of geography and Xinjiang's historical role as the crossroads of Central and South Asia, resulted in its ethno-cultural diversity and cross-border movements.

HISTORICAL LEGACY

Chinese interest in Xinjiang had originated out of their need to safeguard the mainland China from foreign incursions. As such this westernmost border region, then known as Hsi Yu was regarded as a buffer zone against these attacks from beyond the Great Wall.⁴ However, the imperial government never lost sight of the importance of fostering trade relations with the outlying Central Asian states, as it enabled China

Muslim Separatism in Xinjiang

to 'civilize' the turbulent nomadic tribes and to extend the political influence over them. Central Asian chiefs and trading delegations were encouraged to visit China and were given costly presents and even subsidies in return for their 'gifts' for the Chinese Emperor. This was a deliberate move aimed at bringing the outlying border states in the ambit of 'tributary relationship' with imperial China.⁵ The Mings consistently followed this policy and they set up a separate Board of Rites to supervise the conduct of relations with the Central Asian states. The Chings perfected this system by establishing a full-fledged court of Colonial Affairs (*Li-fan Yuan*) to look after the affairs of the Central Asian dependencies of Xinjiang, Mongolia and Tibet. Chings considered the possession of Xinjiang as a pre-requisite for safeguarding their position in Central Asia. They successfully used both the military and diplomatic means to ensure the occupation of Xinjiang. Social segregation of numerous oasis-settlements and their respective populations hindered the formation of united resistance movement against the Ching authorities.⁶ Besides, Ching policy of permanent settlement of Manchus, Han Chinese civil and military personnel, convicts, traders, artisans and Chinese Muslims (Hui) along with their families in Xinjiang altered the ethnographic and demographic composition of Xinjiang and diluted the local Muslim resistance to Chinese rule.

Though Xinjiang's connection with China dates back to more than 2000 years, the area has remained under the effective control of China only intermittently for about five centuries.⁷ Even during the Ching rule (1755-1911), Chinese authority was subverted for brief periods by successful rebellions led by Khoja Muslim leaders like Jahangir, Yousuf Katta Tora and Walli Khan Tora (in early nineteenth century) and Yakub Beg (1865-77),⁸ all having come from Kokand. During their shortlived successes, these Khoja leaders set in motion a process of religious frenzy and a number of Chinese soldiers, civilians, artisans and traders were killed. It was only in 1884 that Xinjiang was brought within the regular administrative structure of Chinese empire and made a full-fledged province. After the Chinese revolution of 1911 and the consequent extermination of Ching rule, Xinjiang entered into an era of

K. Warikoo

warlordism which lasted till mid-1940s. All the successive provincial leaders were Han Chinese - Yang Tseng-hsin (1911-28), Sheng Shih-tsai (1933-44), whose authoritarian and exploitative policies acted as a catalyst for a series of Muslim uprisings, that rocked Xinjiang from 1931 to 1949. By 1932 the Chinese authority in Xinjiang was successfully subverted by the Muslim rebellion of Tungans and Uighurs. The Tungans besieged Urumchi, the headquarters of provincial administration. Khoja Niaz and Sabit Damulla set up a Muslim administration in Kashgar under the name of "Turkish-Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan". Three Khotanlik brothers, Abdullah Boghra, Noor Ahmadjan Boghra and Mohammad Amin Boghra, calling themselves Amirs, held power from Yangi Hissar to Khotan in southern Xinjiang under the title of "Committee for National Revolution" later renamed as the "Khotan Islamic Government". In the wake of this serious political disorder in Xinjiang, Chinese and other non-Muslims particularly the Hindu traders⁹ were massacred by the Muslim separatists. It was only in late 1934 that the Chinese provincial administration could crush these Muslim rebellions with the Soviet military support. However, new centres of Muslim resistance emerged soon after. In 1937, General Mahmud leading the pan-Turkic Islamic forces and General Ma Hu-shan, leader of the Tungans, realigned themselves in combined endeavour to oust the "infidel" Chinese from the Xinjiang region. But they suffered crushing defeat at the hands of Chinese troops who received active military and aerial support from the Soviets. The establishment of Turkic Islamic Republic of Eastern Turkestan between 1933-34, which was based on principles of Islamic *Sharia*, was an abortive attempt to establish an independent Islamic government in Xinjiang.¹⁰ Efforts to set up the Independent Republic of East Turkestan in 1933 and 1944 ended in failure and Xinjiang was completely brought under control by the Chinese Communist forces in 1949.

Communist China views Xinjiang as continental bridge which "extends China's reach to Central Asia and simultaneously serves as a security buffer to China proper".¹¹ Besides being used as the site for

Muslim Separatism in Xinjiang

nuclear testing, Xinjiang is a region of vast unexploited petroleum and mineral reserves and immense agricultural potential. Following the disintegration of USSR, China's position in Central Asia and the Middle East has been enhanced by its possession of Xinjiang. China has been following the time tested policy of large scale Han settlement in Xinjiang and the adjoining Central Asian states "as a means to work towards regional stability and bring the new Central Asian republics and peoples of Xinjiang closer to China's world view."¹² However, the main hurdle in achieving China's economic, political and strategic objectives in this region is the ethno-religious resurgence which feeds the Pan-Turkic/ Islamic secessionist movement in Xinjiang.

Whereas Muslim Uighurs are predominant in the southern part of Xinjiang particularly in Kashgar and Khotan Autonomous Prefectures the Muslim Kazakh nomads are concentrated in Ili Kazakh Autonomous Prefecture, (adjoining Kazakhstan), Mori Kazakh Autonomous county/town of the Changji Hui Autonomous Prefecture, and Barkol Kazakh Autonomous County/Town of the Hami Prefecture.¹³ Similarly the Muslim Kyrgyz nomads inhabit the Kizilsu Kyrgyz Autonomous Prefecture (adjoining Kyrgyzstan) and the Muslim Tajiks have been provided an Autonomous County of Tashkurghan (adjoining Tajikistan) within the Kashgar Prefecture.¹⁴ Mongols reside mainly in Bayangol and Bortala Mongol Autonomous Prefectures. The regional concentration of various ethnic-religious groups has been consolidated by the Chinese policy of creating separate administrative divisions-Autonomous Prefectures, Autonomous Counties and towns within Prefectures, where a particular ethnic or religious group is in majority. In fact these divisions were created during 1954, that is more than a year before Xinjiang was declared as the Uighur Autonomous Region.¹⁵ Uighurs are in majority in the southern parts of Xinjiang (Kashgar, Khotan, Kyzylsu Kyrgyz District, Aksu) as well as in Turfan, which has turned this region into a centre of separatist forces. Hans are in majority in northern and eastern parts of Xinjiang, mainly concentrated in urban areas. Notwithstanding their intra-ethnic differences, most of the non-Han population of Xinjiang are of Turkic stock and are Muslims by faith sharing their religion, Turkic

K. Warikoo

language and culture with their counterparts in the neighbouring Central Asian countries. Given China's tenuous historical position in this region, any cross-border fraternisation on ethnic-religious grounds between the Muslims of Xinjiang with their Central Asian, Afghan and Pakistani neighbours is a potential source of instability for China in its strategic frontier.

ADVERSARIAL RACE RELATIONS

Notwithstanding the massive Han settlement in Xinjiang region of China which has increased their ratio of population from 5% in 1949 to about 38% in 1990, the ethnic-religious sentiments in Xinjiang are still deep-rooted. The problem gets accentuated by the large concentration of Muslim Uighurs in southern part of Xinjiang and Muslim Kazakhs in Yili region (to the extent of about 90%), (See Table II) whereas they constitute only about 55% of the total population in the entire province.

Table I
POPULATION OF MAIN ETHNIC GROUPS IN XINJIANG
(July 1990 Census)

Ethnic Group	%age	Population
Uighurs	47.47%	7,194,675
Hans	37.58%	5,695,626
Kazakhs	7.30%	1,106,989
Huis	4.49%	6,81,527
Mongols	0.91%	1,37,740
Kyrgyzs	0.92%	1,39,781
Tajiks	0.22%	33,512

Total Population of Xinjiang = 15,155,778 (1990 Census)

Table II

**NATIONALITY STRUCTURE OF THE DISTRICTS IN
XINJIANG IN 1994 (IN %)¹⁶**

District	Uighur	Han	Kazakh	Dunghan	Kyrgyz	Mongolian
Ili Kazakh	16.01	44.33	26.32	8.09	0.47	1.92
Ili County	26.90	32.70	23.13	10.81	0.76	1.42
Tarbagatay	4.63	57.83	25.13	6.54	0.23	3.73
Altay County	1.82	42.38	50.53	3.43	0.01	0.97
Boratola Mongolian Dist.	13.34	65.30	10.32	3.25	0.02	7.03
Sandji-Huai District	4.13	74.76	8.35	11.51	0	0.36
Khamit County	20.27	66.26	9.45	3.04	0	0.44
Bayangol Mongolian Dist.	34.90	54.63	0.12	8.54	0.02	4.65
Turfan County	73.0	20.20	0.04	6.61	0	0
Aksu County	77.04	21.66	0	0.84	0.48	0.02
Kyzylsu Kyrgyz Dist.	64.63	4.56	0.01	0.08	29.56	0
Kashgar County	89.76	8.75	0	0.15	0.17	0
Khotan County	97.13	2.67	0	0.06	0	0

Race relations between the Hans and the Turkic peoples in Xinjiang have been marked by mutual distrust and hatred. This is clearly reflected in the isolation of Hans and the Uighurs, Kazakhs, Kyrgyzs and Tajiks from each other, as they live in separate settlements in their

K. Warikoo

respective areas of concentration. Uighurs in Xinjiang continue to nourish aspirations of ethno-political independence and have not come closer to the Chinese national mainstream, notwithstanding some economic upliftment due to increased Chinese / foreign investments and border trade. All Uighur, Kazakh, Kyrgyz Muslims in Xinjiang observe local Xinjiang time which is two hours behind the Beijing time. This is in marked contrast to various offices and institutions and the Han Chinese people settled in Xinjiang who observe Beijing time.

There exist separate hostels for Han and Muslim students in Universities and Institutes as well. Similarly, there are exclusive restaurants for Muslims and Hans. Few Uighurs can speak Chinese and very few Chinese know the local language. Dru Gladney found during his visit to Kashgar Teachers College that “young Uighurs would rather learn Urdu than Chinese”, as it would facilitate their trading with Pakistan.¹⁷ Hans find it inconvenient when passing through the localities dominated by the Turkic peoples.¹⁸ The Kazakhs in Yili region of northern Xinjiang still retain their bitter memories of 1960s when about a lakh Muslim Kazakhs and Uighurs migrated to the neighbouring region of Kazakhstan, then part of former USSR. There are more than one million Kazakhs in Xinjiang and about two lakh Uighurs in Kazakhstan, maintaining family and ethnic ties across the border. Besides, several hundred Uighurs have settled in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, where they use the Karakoram Highway to keep their family ties and trading connections alive with Xinjiang.

RISE OF MUSLIM SEPARATISM

Even after the Chinese liberalised policy towards religion and culture after 1978, reports about violent demonstrations against Chinese authorities and the local Han population have been pouring intermittently. Riots occurred in Aksu in April 1980 when Han settlers were beaten up, their homes looted and a factory run by them damaged.¹⁹ Aksu riots in which several hundred civilians and soldiers were reported to have been killed or wounded,²⁰ terrified the local Chinese settlers forcing thousands

Muslim Separatism in Xinjiang

of them to demonstrate and demand permission to return to their homes.²¹ And by early 1981 more than 30,000 Hans were reported to have left Xinjiang for Shanghai.²²

In October 1980 an accident in which an Uighur pedestrian was killed by a Chinese truck driver, provoked local unrest particularly after the Chinese police refused to execute the driver even though the local court had sentenced him to death.²³ Further trouble was averted when the sentence was commuted. In June 1981 Uighur demonstrators attacked the Han settlers and even a PLA army base in Kashgar.²⁴ The inter-ethnic discord between Uighurs and Han Chinese did not leave the Provincial Communist Party unaffected. The situation worsened in August 1981 when the Uighur Provincial Committee members virtually revolted against the Chinese ruling majority which forced the then Vice Chairman, Deng Xioping to visit Xinjiang for 9 days to resolve the political crisis. Deng ordered a reorganization of the Provincial Committee and Xinjiang's First Party Secretary, Wang Feng (1978-81) was replaced by Wang Enmao who had worked in Xinjiang from 1949-69.²⁵ Wang Enmao's task was cut out to re-establish political stability and strengthen security. In 1985 and 1986, Uighur students organised public demonstrations in Urumchi demanding ban on nuclear testing in Lop Nor and settlement of Hans in Xinjiang.²⁶ It was in May 1989 that Muslim students in Xinjiang University at Urumchi protested against the application of Chinese policy of birth control to non-Han peoples also. Slogans like "Han people leave Xinjiang" were also raised then. Despite such incidents, Xinjiang remained quiet and peaceful and China continued with its liberalised policy of allowing freedom of religion, restoration of old mosques and construction of new mosques. The number of new mosques being built with the help of voluntary donations in various settlements has increased manifold. In 1988, their number was reported to have reached 24,000.²⁷ Uighur and Arabic editions of Koran, besides other Islamic scriptures have been circulated in lakhs after 1980, when the Regional Islamic Association resumed its activity.²⁸ Haj pilgrimage to Mecca is also allowed and thousands of Xinjiang Muslims have undertaken the Haj pilgrimage. Most of the mosques in Muslim dominated

K. Warikoo

areas have *madrasas* attached for teaching the Koran, Arabic and also for training of young ones in Islamic doctrine. This has had a considerable impact on the society and politics in the region.

Uighur academics, intellectuals and literary figures now began to voice their dissenting views on historical, cultural and socio-economic aspects of Xinjiang. Three books namely *The Uighurs*, *A Short History of Xiongnu (Turk)* and *The Literature of the Uighurs* written and published between 1986 and 1989 by Turghun Almass, an Uighur expert on local history and culture, created ripples in Xinjiang. Almass describes the Uighurs as “indigenous nation” which was “Independent of China” in the past.²⁹ Referring to the Great Wall being the national boundary of China, he described the area highlighting the inter-ethnic/racial conflict between Turkic peoples and the Hans. Almass espouses the case for an “independent state” of all “Turkic people”.³⁰ By eulogising the conversion of Uighurs from Buddhism to Islam, which in his opinion turned them into a “powerful and unified nation”, Almass sought to link Pan-Islam to Pan-Turkism.³¹ As expected, Almass’ books evoked sharp reaction from Chinese party and government circles and Han academics. He was accused of twisting and fabricating Xinjiang’s history and threatening national unity.³² Almass’ works were dubbed as a “vain attempt to incite racial conflict and fan flames of Xinjiang’s independence”. He has been accused of manipulating history to incite “secession of Xinjiang from China”.³³ Even though Turghun Almass’s three books were banned by the Chinese government, his books were sold at premium due to large demand among the Uighurs, particularly after the ban. This author was informed by an Uighur teacher in Urumchi (during a visit in 1998) that almost every Uighur household possesses his books. This indicates the sustenance of popular Uighur dissent and opposition to Chinese control in Xinjiang.

To meet this ideological threat, Xinjiang Academy of Sciences published the *Educational Textbook of Atheism* for use by the young masses in Xinjiang. This book which highlights the negative role of religion in the long history of Xinjiang, nevertheless foresees a “long struggle to

Muslim Separatism in Xinjiang

eliminate religion”.³⁴ However, Chinese books on history, culture and traditions of Xinjiang, have provoked strong reaction from the Muslims in Xinjiang. In April 1987 several Kazakh students in Ili went on strike to protest the publication of novel *White House in the Distance* (in Chinese) describing it as a distortion of Kazakh customs and an insult to the national pride of Turkic people.³⁵ Similarly in December 1988, Uighur students staged protest march in Beijing against the exhibition of two historical films which they found “disrespectful to their race”.³⁶ The publication of *Sex Habits* by the Shanghai Cultural House caused resentment among the Muslims throughout China and protest marches were organised in Beijing, Lanzhou and several cities in Xinjiang.³⁷ Taking advantage of the freedom of religion and culture allowed after 1978, there has been rise in ethno-nationalist tendencies in Xinjiang often using Islam as a means of common identity and a rallying point to forge unity among diverse Muslim ethnic groups. A report from Turfan which is predominantly Muslim, suggested that more than 25 percent of local party members were taking active part in religious activities since 1990. And 40 percent of such members were of rural background. Chinese efforts to reduce the number of such Islamic party members were not bearing any fruit.³⁸

Increased trans-border trade and traffic between Xinjiang and adjoining region of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan (via Karakoram Highway passing through Pak-occupied Kashmir) has resulted in greater interaction between the Turkic peoples of Xinjiang and their ethnic counterparts and co-religionists in Central Asia, Pakistan, Turkey and Saudi Arabia. Uighur and Kazakh exiles from Xinjiang settled in Turkey have also been keeping close touch with their counterparts in Xinjiang. They are running at least 7 organisations which are working to achieve the goal of separation of Xinjiang from China. Prominent among them are Eastern Turkestan National Revolutionary Front, Eastern Turkestan Charity Fund, Kazakh Turk Peoples Charity Fund and the Islamic Party of Eastern Turkestan.³⁹ A publication, *Voice of Eastern Turkestan* is being regularly published from Istanbul, the headquarters of the East Turkestan Liberation Front which had been led by the old Uighur politician

K. Warikoo

in exile, Isa Yusuf Alptekin. Undaunted by his old age and bad health, Isa Alptekin mobilised diplomatic support in Turkey for the independence of Eastern Turkestan. Alptekin met the Organization of Islamic Conference leaders during the Islamic Foreign Ministers' meeting at Istanbul in August 1991, and asked for an Observer status for Eastern Turkestan in the OIC. Subsequently, he met Turkey's leaders including former President, Turgut Ozal and Prime Minister, S. Demirel seeking their support.

Uighurs settled in Turkey, western countries, Central Asian states of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan revitalised their activities soon after the independence of these former Soviet Republics. An International Uighur Union of CIS was set up in early 1992 in Alma Aty with the objective of protecting human rights and seeking self determination for Uighurs in Xinjiang. The Nevada Semipalatinsk Movement in Kazakhstan has a separate department to mobilise opinion against the Lop Nor nuclear tests. In Kyrgyzstan new Uighur party "For a Free Uighuristan" was set up in June 1992 aimed at the creation of Independent State of Eastern Turkestan. Besides, several newspapers in Uighur language such as *Uighur Awazi* (Voice of Uighur) are being published in Alma Aty. A number of Uighurs are reported to be migrating to Turkey, Middle East and Central Asian states from Xinjiang. This is in addition to the defection of more than 100 prominent Xinjiang Muslims to Turkey during the decade of 1980-90.⁴⁰ Following the dismantling of USSR, China's borderlands have attracted renewed western interest. In Munich (Germany) Eastern Turkestan Cultural and Social Association was established in January 1991 by Erkin Alptekin, son of late Isa Alptekin. It publishes a periodical *Eastern Turkestan Information*. Earlier in February 1990, Erkin Alptekin became the founding Vice Chairman of Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO) which seeks self-determination for Eastern Turkestan and Tibet, among others.

Piqued at the ethno-religious resurgence in Xinjiang and taking an alarmist view of ethnic conflict and Islamic resurgence in the newly independent Central Asian states across the border, the Chinese authorities, party functionaries and officially controlled educational and

Muslim Separatism in Xinjiang

media establishment in Xinjiang have openly denounced the “infiltration, subversion and sabotage by hostile foreign Islamic elements” for fanning the separatist movement in Xinjiang.⁴¹ A local newspaper, *Xinjiang Ribao* in its editorial dated February 9, 1990 called for an end to religious interference in matters pertaining to education, judiciary and administration and stressed the need to prevent all “unfriendly foreign organizations and individuals and their local supporters from using religion for their dangerous designs”.⁴² A local Chinese commentator, Shi Jian writing in the same paper on 18 March 1990 ascribed the rise of ethno-religious separatism in Xinjiang to lax control on religious activities of mosques and *madrasas*.⁴³ The Dy. Secretary of Xinjiang Region CPC Committee, A. Niyaz, who led a fact finding visit to various areas in Xinjiang, also emphasised the need to follow strictly the ‘Policy of Freedom of Religious Beliefs’. Elucidating the policy, he warned that religion was not to be allowed to interfere in State affairs, administration of justice, education and culture, marriage, public health and family welfare and the system of privileges or discrimination.⁴⁴ Niyaz also held the foreign hostile Islamic groups responsible for infiltration and internal subversion.⁴⁵ The 7th Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Regional People’s Congress held in March 1990 at Urumchi identified the ethno-religious separatist movement as the greatest danger facing Xinjiang.⁴⁶ Earlier in August 1989, the Chinese Minister of Public Security, Wang Feng had held the “conspiratorial separatist elements” responsible for instability in Xinjiang.⁴⁷ Gorbachev’s policy of perestroika and glasnost were also seen as a contributory factor for ethno-religious resurgence in Central Asia. Tomur Dawamat, the head of Xinjiang government cited “global changes in pursuit of bourgeois liberalisation” alluding to Gorbachev’s reforms in the ex-USSR, as one of the factors behind unrest in Xinjiang.⁴⁸ Speaking at a new conference in Beijing on March 24, 1990, Tomur Dawamat confirmed the arrest of some separatist activists belonging to East Turkestan Liberation Front for “distributing reactionary leaflets and raising slogans”.⁴⁹

However, it was after the violent riots that rocked the Baren township in Kashgar district of south Xinjiang in early April 1990, that

K. Warikoo

the Chinese authorities made a thorough reappraisal of situation. The anti-Chinese riots which were reportedly sparked off after the local authorities banned construction of a mosque near Kashgar airport, coincided with Ramazan - the month of fasting for the Muslims.⁵⁰ The riots which soon fanned to other towns were described as “armed counter revolutionary rebellion” by local television broadcasts. Activists and supporters of the Islamic Party of Eastern Turkestan, which has a declared object of establishing an independent Islamic Republic in Xinjiang, proclaimed *Jihad* to “eliminate infidels” from Xinjiang.⁵¹ The activities of stockpiling weapons and arming young recruits had increased in March 1990.⁵² The Chinese language channel of Xinjiang Television showed on 22 April 1990 a video film of Uighur language documents which it claimed gave instructions for a *jihad* combined with an armed Turkic nationalist uprising for an East Turkestan Republic. General Wang Enmao, who headed the region for three decades, later confirmed that seven separatist groups, some having foreign links had been uncovered.⁵³ Banners of “Revive Islam”, “Independent East Turkestan Islamic Republic” were raised during these disturbances. It was believed that the arms for the uprising came from the Afghan *Mujahideen* routed through Pakistan via Karakoram Highway. In fact two Pakistani nationals alleged to be operatives of Pakistan’s Inter-Services Intelligence were reported to have been arrested for fanning unrest in Xinjiang.⁵⁴ Karakoram Highway was also closed by the Chinese for some time, so as to curb the influx of Islamic militants from the Pakistani side.

The issue of ethno-religious separatism in Xinjiang predominated the 15th session of the Regional Party Central Committee on 19th July 1990. In their speeches, both Tomur Dawamat, the head of the Xinjiang government and Janabil, the Dy. Secretary of Xinjiang Regional Communist Party, exhorted the delegates to “take clear-cut stand against separatism and defend country’s integrity”.⁵⁵ While referring to misuse of religious slogans for anti-Chinese and secessionist activities, Tomur condemned the Islamists’ opposition to tapping Xinjiang’s resources for its development and also to family planning practices. Janabil was more forthright in admitting that the separatist campaign inside and outside

Muslim Separatism in Xinjiang

Xinjiang was “rampant”. He stated that some foreign organisations would use visits to China to see relatives, or to do business, as opportunities for sending subversive agents into Xinjiang and to incite local people against Hans. Also that some local scholars, educationists, artists and literateurs have been using their lectures, articles, discussions and works of art and literature to “distort history” and propagate about independence of Xinjiang.⁵⁶ Janabil was particularly distressed about increasing influence of Pan-Islamic and Pan-Turkic elements over young generations. He condemned the slogans - “Exclusion of Hans”, “eradicate infidels,” “East Turkestan Islamic Republic”, that were witnessed in April riots. The common features of May 1989 and April 1990 disturbances in Xinjiang have been the unfurling of Islamic banner, war cry of *jihad* (holy war), demands to expel the Hans and open call for establishing the Independent Eastern Turkestan Islamic Republic.

Incidents of bomb blasts were reported to have occurred in Urumchi (February 1992), Yining, Khotan, Kashgar, Kucha, Korla and Bortala (5 to 8 March 1992), wounding a number of people and causing substantial damage to property. Tomur Dawamat, the Uighur Chairman of Xinjiang Regional Government in a statement in March 1992, accused the Muslim separatists of sabotage and subversion. That 1993 also witnessed bomb blasts in Kashgar and some other towns indicated the persistence of organised movement of Islamic militants against the Chinese authority in Xinjiang. In 1996, there were several reports of bomb blasts and clashes between the Muslim separatists and security forces in Xinjiang. Chinese authorities responded firmly by arresting about 3000 Uighurs and seizing arms and ammunition. The biggest ever riot in Xinjiang since 1949 took place in Yining town near the Kazakhstan border on 5-6 February 1997 that is during the Muslim festival of Ramazan when more than 1000 youth demanding independence and shouting anti-China and Islamic slogans took to streets and indulged in arson and beating / killing of Hans. Over 100 persons (all Hans) were injured and 10 Hans were beaten to death.⁵⁷ Subsequently there were a number of bomb blasts in Urumchi on 25 February 1997, that is on the day of funeral of Deng Xioping, killing nine and injuring 70 persons. This was followed

K. Warikoo

by a bomb blast in Beijing on 7 March 1997 injuring 30 persons. Uighurs in exile pressing for independence of Eastern Turkestan claimed the responsibility for these attacks.⁵⁸ Chinese authorities took a quick action by arresting thousands of Uighur Muslim activists. Summary trials were organised to award punishments to those found guilty of terrorist activities. Qio Shi, head of China's Parliament and top political leader made an unscheduled visit to Urumchi in mid-April 1997. Expressing concern over the worsening situation in Xinjiang he declared China's firm resolve to "oppose national separatism and religious extremist forces".⁵⁹ Chinese official sources reported in May 1997 about the execution of 8 members of Muslim Uighur separatist group, for being involved in terrorist activities, bomb blasts and other criminal acts.

This surging wave of ethnic - religious separatism in Xinjiang is linked to the part played by Uighur ranks alongwith the Afghan *Mujahideen* in the *jihad* against Soviet forces in Afghanistan. According to a Pakistani analyst, many Uighur Muslims were trained by Afghan and Pakistani fundamentalists during the Afghan war in 1980s.⁶⁰ One of the Uighur youths who received training in one of the *madrasas* in Pakistan, vowed that after his return to his hometown in Khotan he would cleanse it of Communism. "We want to make a new Islamic state for Uighurs and leave China", he declared.⁶¹ Hundreds of Uighur Muslims from Xinjiang were reportedly sponsored by Pakistan's *Jamat-i-Islami* and *Tablighi Jamat* for educating and training them in *jihad* (holy war against un-Islamic systems) at the Islamic University, Islamabad, Syed Mawdudi International Institute, Lahore and other *madrasas* and training centres. China took up the issue with Pakistan protesting against the Pakistani Islamic parties' involvement in infiltration of Islamic militants into Xinjiang.⁶² China's tough stand on this issue paid its dividends, when the Pakistani authorities arrested 12 Chinese Muslims when they had sought asylum in Pakistan after sneaking through Gilgit. These Uighurs were handed over to the Chinese authorities.⁶³ That a ringleader of Pakistani Islamic group operating in Xinjiang was executed in mid - 1999⁶⁴ further establishes the Pakistani connection of the Islamic militancy in Xinjiang.

CONCLUSION

The demise of former USSR and establishment of independent Central Asian States which share their history, religion, culture and above all the Silk Route connection with Xinjiang has created a new awakening among the indigenous Muslims of Xinjiang (both Uighurs, Kazakhs, Kyrgyzs etc.) about their Islamic and Pan-Turkic identity. Being conscious of the strategic position of Xinjiang as the hub of trans-Asian trade and traffic and also about its huge economic resources, the Muslims of Xinjiang are poised to assert their socio-economic and political position. Liberalised Chinese policy towards religion, new initiatives for modernisation and economic development, better communication, linkages with Pakistan, Turkey and Central Asian states, and developing cross-border trade of Xinjiang with its neighbouring Muslim countries, have resulted in greater mobilisation and assertion by the Muslims of Xinjiang on ethno-religious basis.

That the Uighurs in Xinjiang, particularly Kashgar, Yarkand, Khotan, Bachu, Kucha, Turfan and even Urumchi, give the credit for Chinese liberalised policy towards Islam to Pakistan's former President, Zia-ul Haq was explained to this author during his visit to these areas in June 1994. Local Muslim perception is based on the fact that Zia-ul-Haq who timed his visit to Kashgar in July 1984 to coincide with Friday, persuaded the local Chinese authorities to unlock the big Friday Mosque in Kashgar to enable him offer prayers. The lock was duly opened and he offered prayers along with local Muslims in the Kashgar mosque, which had remained locked since long. Besides, Pakistani traders, travellers and Islamic activists who have been thronging the towns of Xinjiang, have been contributing by financing the construction of mosques and distributing Islamic literature. In fact, this author witnessed a sort of co-relation between the extent of Pakistani influence particularly in Kashgar, Yarkand, Khotan, Turfan etc. to the degree of Islamic resurgence in these areas. Pakistani presence in Xinjiang is quite visible in the form of businessmen, traders and visitors who fly to Urumchi from Islamabad or come from Gilgit via the Karakoram Highway. Pakistan's *Jamaat-i-Islami*, *Tablighi Jamaat* and other fundamentalist groups have

easy access to and influence over the anti-Chinese Muslim separatists in Xinjiang.

The emergence of independent Central Asian states, ethnic-religious resurgence particularly in Tajikistan and Ferghana valley of Uzbekistan and mobilisation of Uighurs in these states, caused discomfitures in China. The fear of rise of Islamic fundamentalism and Pan-Turkic consciousness in Xinjiang is compounded by the recurrent clashes between Han Chinese and local Uighur/Kazakh/Kyrgyz Muslims in Xinjiang since 1980s. Han settlers are being browbeaten in southern Xinjiang where Uighurs are in majority. New Chinese policy of giving preferential treatment to local Muslims in admissions, employment etc. is yet another source of anxiety for the Han settlers. Finding themselves in an uneasy situation these Hans are keen to leave the area and go back to their original homes or migrate to these areas where Muslims are not dominant. At the same time, Hans have consolidated their position in northern Xinjiang and Han traders/businessmen are making most of the profits in that region due to Chinese 'open door policy' and encouragement of cross-border trade with the CIS countries.

Though there prevails an aura of general peace and stability in the region, the Chinese are concerned over the issues of Islamic fundamentalism, Pan-Turkic revivalism, cross-border infiltration of drugs, arms and subversives, external initiatives to resurrect the movement for 'Independence for Eastern turkestan', which question China's sovereignty over Xinjiang. Use of arms and ammunition and involvement of foreign subversives from Turkey, Afghan *Mujahideen* and Pakistan's *Jamaat-e-Islami* and other Uighur groups in Central Asian states, whose activists have been working in Xinjiang to propagate Pan-Turkic and Pan-Islamic views, has lent extraneous dimension to the domestic Muslim resentment against Han Chinese. That China was incensed over the activities of the Pakistani Islamic parties in Xinjiang and expressed its concern to Pakistan describing these as interference in its internal affairs, has been revealed by Pakistani press itself.⁶⁵

Muslim Separatism in Xinjiang

Many Uighurs are counting on the negative impact of the Soviet break-up on the domestic politics of China, Western, Turkic and Islamic support to their independence movement, growing indiscipline in PLA, emerging peoples' disaffection against the Communist system particularly among the younger generation of China, desire of the Han settlers in Xinjiang to go back to their original place of birth as key factors which could assist the process of secession of Xinjiang from China. Uighur separatists hope that growing economic disparity between the coastal and economically rich provinces of China which tend to looking inwards, and the backward inner/central provinces will also contribute to the weakening of central authority in China.

China on its part is quite conscious of the new threat to its territorial integrity as a result of the changed geopolitical situation in Central Asia. China has been following an elaborate set of policies in Xinjiang to ensure its political stability. Main elements of this policy are:

- a) A policy of intensive exploitation of Xinjiang has been followed, keeping in view its huge oil resources (18 billion tonnes) and its potential for economic growth. Agreements have been concluded with Britain, Japan and other countries for joint exploration of oil and setting up of ethylene and other petro-chemical projects. Funds from the Middle East countries are also being attracted for investment in Xinjiang and for this purpose local pro-government Muslim specialists are encouraged to develop linkages abroad.
- b) Special economic zones have been created to facilitate cross-border trade of Xinjiang with adjoining Central Asian States and the CIS, in a manner that most of the business and trade remain in the hands of Chinese. This has also provided economic incentive to sustain the increasing influx of Hans into Xinjiang. Not only that, Xinjiang is used as a spring-board to penetrate and influence Central Asian economy, polity and society. In fact China's 'Open Door Policy' for promoting Xinjiang's foreign trade is designed to carve out a definite Chinese influence in the Central

K. Warikoo

Asian States. Chinese consumer and other goods are flooded into Central Asia. About 3 lakh Chinese Hans are reported to have migrated to the Central Asian States of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan for trade and business purposes. They are reported to have married local girls, purchased properties, shops and business and mixed with the local population. This has made the newly independent Central Asian states apprehensive of big Chinese influx, which they see as a repetition of 'Russian colonialism' in the past and extension of Chinese 'colonialism' in Xinjiang at present.

- c) China is trying to influence the Muslim countries like Iran, Pakistan and the Middle East by sale of arms and other incentives in return for their dollars and also to secure their political support to China's presence in Xinjiang. Several Muslim leaders and high power delegations from Iran and Central Asian states have visited Xinjiang during the past few years. During Iranian President Rafsanjani's visit to Xinjiang it was decided to create a direct trans-Asian railway between Beijing and Iran through Central Asia. China has not only warded off any Islamic criticism of its policies in Xinjiang but has even succeeded in having its position in Xinjiang legitimised and endorsed by Muslim countries like Iran, Pakistan and the adjoining Central Asian Republics. Moreover, China and Central Asian Republics have taken a common stand against trans-border terrorism, Islamic extremism, ethnic-religious separatism, drugs and arms trafficking.
- d) China seeks to neutralise threat to political stability in Xinjiang by consolidating its military presence and by encouraging more Hans to settle there. The Chinese plans to move about five lakh Hans displaced by a massive dam in central China to Kashgar region (Southern Xinjiang) are obviously meant to meet the growing secessionist challenge in this region on a lasting basis.⁶⁶ This is in addition to the average annual influx of two and a half to three lakh Han immigrants to Xinjiang in search of better fortunes.⁶⁷

REFERENCES

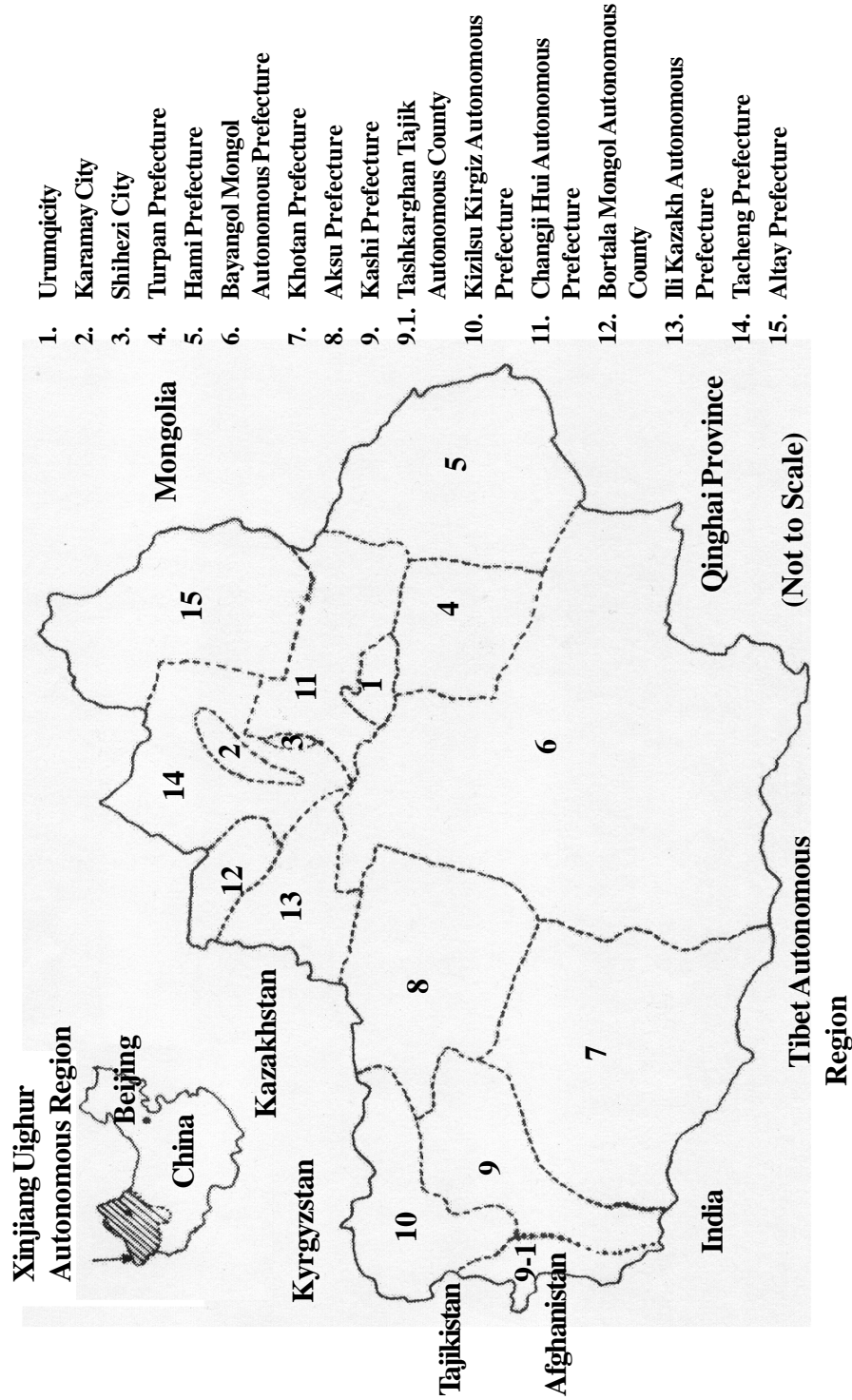
1. Yuan Aing Li, "Population Change in the Xinjiang Autonomous Region (1949-1989)", *Central Asian Survey*, vol, 9, no. 1, 1990, p. 49.
2. K. Warikoo, "China and Central Asia: A Review of Ching Policy in Xinjiang, 1755-1884", *Strategic Analysis*, vol. 13, no. 3, June 1990, p. 309.
3. *Ibid.*
4. K. Warikoo, China and Central Asia, *op cit.*
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*
7. Owen Lattimore, "Chinese Turkestan", In his *Studies in Frontier History, Collected Papers, 1928-58*. London, 1962, p. 184.
8. K. Warikoo, "Chinese Turkestan during the Nineteenth Century: A Socio-economic study", *Central Asian Survey*, vol. 4, no. 3, 1985, pp. 74-75.
9. K. Warikoo, "Muslim Migrations from Xinjiang to Kashmir", *Strategic Analysis*. vol. 14, no. 1, April 1991, p. 18.
10. *Ibid*, p. 29.
11. Lillian Craig Harris, "Xinjiang, Central Asia and the Implications for China's Policy in the Islamic World", *China Quarterly*, March 1993, p. 115.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 116.
13. Yuan Qing Li, *op cit.* p. 59.
14. Xinjiang Government, *Xinjiang: A General Survey*, Beijing, 1989, pp. 28-43.
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Xinjiang Annual*, Urumchi, 1995.
17. Dru Gladney, "The Muslim Face of China" *Current History*, September 1993, p. 280.
18. "The Other China", *Newsweek* 23 April 1990. The reporter found Han cabbies reluctant to pass through the Uighur dominated areas.
19. *Washington Post*, 12 September 1981.

K. Warikoo

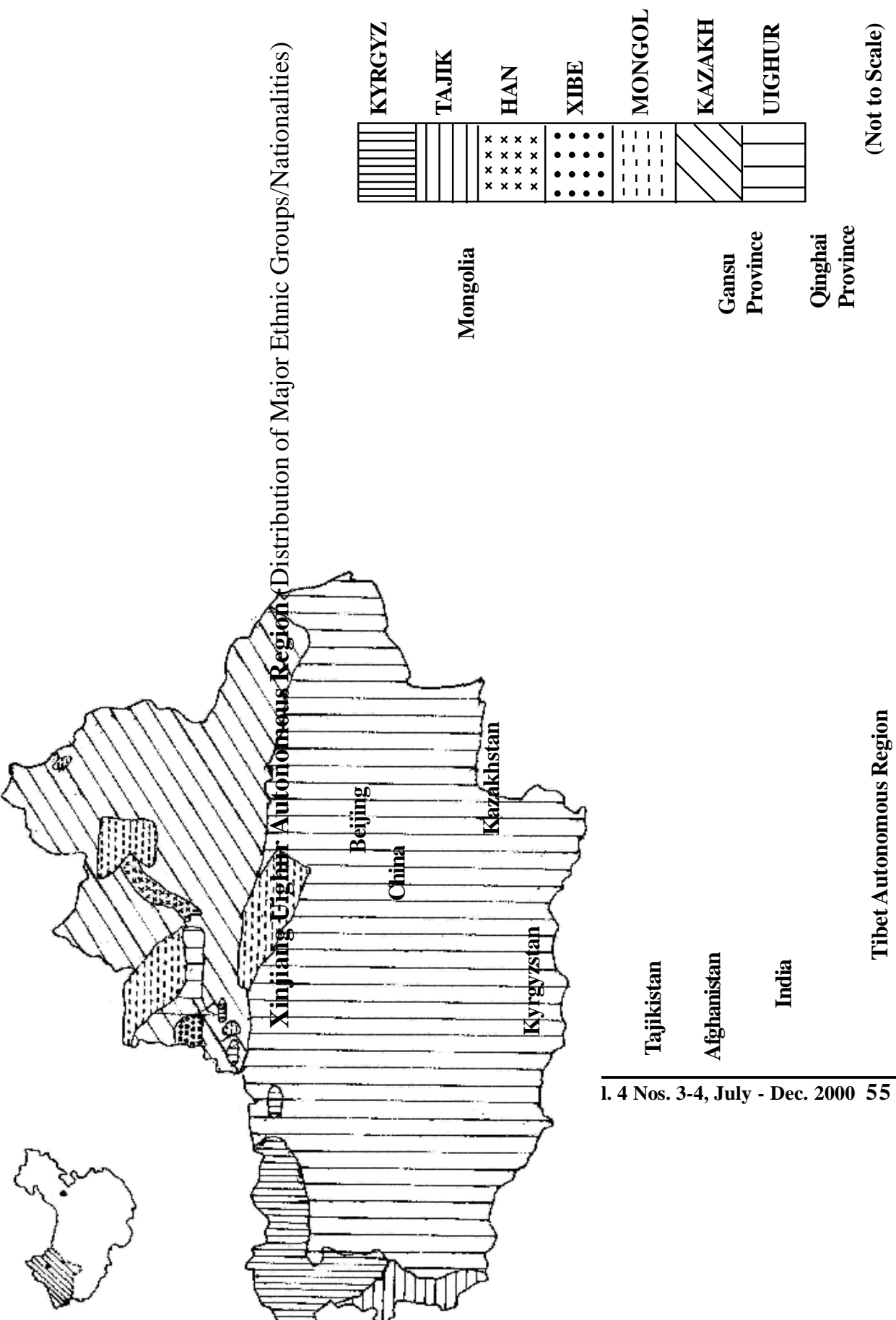
20. Donald H. Mc. Millian, "Xinjiang and Wang Enmao", *China Quarterly*, Septemebr 1984, pp. 575-76, 581.
21. *Los Angeles Times*, 4 November 1981.
22. *Ibid.*
23. *Washington Post*, 12 September 1981.
24. *Ibid.*
25. *Ibid.*
26. Yan Dig, "Nuclear Pollution and Violation of Human Rights in Xinjiang", *Minzhu Zhongguo*, Paris (In Chinese). February 1992, pp. 19-21.
27. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 25 August, 1988.
28. *Ibid.*
29. *JPRS-CZR-91-009*, February 25, 1991.
30. *Ibid.*
31. *Ibid.*
32. *Ibid.*
33. *Ibid.*
34. *Eastern Turkestan Information*, Munich, January 1992, p. 5.
35. *Ibid.*, October 1992, p. 1.
36. *Ibid.*
37. *Ibid.*
38. *Xinjiang Ribao*, Urumchi, 27 September 1996.
39. "The Other China", *Newsweek*, 23 April 1990.
40. *Ibid.*
41. *JPRS-CAR-90-035* dated 7 May 1990.
42. *Ibid.*
43. *Ibid.*
44. *Ibid.*
45. *Ibid.*
46. *Xinjiang Ribao*, 18 March 1990.
47. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 19 April 1990.
48. *Ibid.*

49. *Ibid.*
50. *FBIS-CHI-90-070* dated 11 April 1990.
51. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 3 May 1990.
52. *Ibid.*
53. *FBIS-CHI-90-070* dated 11 April 1990.
54. *Ibid.*
55. *Xinjiang Ribao*, 20 July 1990.
56. *Xinjiang Ribao*, 2 August 1990, See also *JPRS-CAR*, 90-073 dated 28 September 1990.
57. *Ming Pao*, Hong Kong 10 February 1997.
58. *International Herald Tribune*, 10 March 1997, p.4.
59. Cited in *Hindu* 15 April 1997.
60. Ahmed Rashid, "The Chinese Connection," *The Herald*, Karachi, December 1995.
61. *Ibid.*
62. *Hindustan Times*, 13 August 1997.
63. *Pioneer*, 6 May 1997
64. *China Daily* 28 June 1999.
65. *Dawn*, Karachi cited in *Times of India*, New Delhi, 7 March 1992.
66. *Hindustan Times*, 7 December 1992.
67. Linda Benson, Justin Rudelson and Stenely W. Toops, "Xinjiang in the Twentieth Century" *Woodrow Wilson Centre Occasional Paper*, 65, p. 17.

Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region (Administrative Divisions)



Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region & Distribution of Major Ethnic Groups/Nationalities)



ISLAM IN THE FOREIGN POLICY OF PAKISTAN

Kalim Bahadur

The leaders of Pakistan on the eve of its independence believed that the creation of Pakistan was in itself a tremendous contribution towards the consolidation of an important segment of the Islamic world. This was because there has always been a sense of disappointment among the Pakistani leaders that the Muslim world has not appreciated the significance of the emergence of a Muslim State in the Indian subcontinent. In the early years Pakistan's relations with the Islamic world particularly with the Arab countries were not very good. This puzzled Pakistanis and they sought explanation for this indifference. One Pakistani analyst claimed that this achievement was ignored because of the traditional Arab prejudice against the non-Arabs. This was also partly because Islam in West Asia had little influence on the evolution of Islam in India. The issues facing West Asian countries were different from those facing Indian Muslims. "Islam was not an issue in the politics of other Muslim lands", however, the situation in India was different. Muslims in the Indian subcontinent did not comprise the majority of the population although they were a substantial minority. The majority of the population was Hindu but Muslims shared with them common social, economic and political problems. There emerged broadly two trends among the Muslim elite as far back as the last decade of the nineteenth century. One group joined the nationalist movement led by the Indian National Congress. Some prominent Muslims had played a very significant role in the nationalist movement. In the early decades of the twentieth century, one among them was Mohammad Ali Jinnah, who later became the leader of the Pakistan movement and was a distinguished leader of the Congress. The other Muslim group stressed the separate interests and identity of Muslims and kept out of the mainstream. They later joined the Pakistan movement.

Islam in the Foreign Policy of Pakistan

Whereas the Muslim world was involved in its own concerns, the Indian Muslims had always been emotionally and psychologically involved with the fortunes of the world of Islam. Pan-Islamic movement, the Balkan wars and the fate of Khilafat moved the common Muslims in India as nowhere else. It is to be noted here that the newly emerging Muslim middle class in India and also Mohammad Ali Jinnah kept out of the Khilafat movement as it was looked at by them as a dead institution. However, Khilafat issue in India stirred the Indian Muslims in the far corners of the land and brought the most politically inert members of the community into the vortex of the movement.

The movement for Pakistan had not interested the Muslim world and once the new country came into existence in 1947 it was ignored and India continued to be the focus of attention. Pakistan's immediate neighbour Afghanistan even opposed Pakistan's request for membership of the United Nations and demanded the scrapping of the Durand Line which it claimed had been forced upon Kabul by the British rulers in Delhi. Pakistan was perceived in Afghanistan as the creation of British colonial rulers. What aroused Afghans against it was that the new State had recognized the Durand Line as the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The Durand Line had been forced on the weak Afghan rulers, which separated a large Afghan population across the other side.

When the Muslim League leaders took over office in Pakistan, the new leaders of Pakistan had no framework of the foreign policy. Little homework had been done by the Muslim League leaders about Pakistan's concerns in world affairs. They faced awesome problems at home and a complex situation in foreign policy. Jinnah had only perfunctory experience of foreign affairs. Some Pakistani scholars claim that Pakistan was drawn to the Western camp because of the natural hostility of Muslims to atheistic Communists of the Soviet Union. It is said that Pakistan was more anti-Communist than even the United States. True the social and political ideology of Pakistani rulers was close to that of the Western leaders and that was because they largely belonged to the feudal class. Some scholars have categorized the Pakistan's

Kalim Bahadur

dominant class as *salariat* or “service bourgeoisie”. The episode of Pakistan’s first Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan wangling an invitation to visit the Soviet Union in 1950 shows that Islam was not a very significant factor in Pakistan’s foreign policy decision making.

A country’s foreign policy is determined by the perception of its leaders of its vital interests. These interests are first and foremost - the security of its territorial boundaries and secondly the promotion of its economic objectives. The circumstances of the birth of Pakistan greatly influenced its policy makers’ perceptions of the threats to the security and sovereignty of the country. The bitter controversies between the Indian National Congress and the All India Muslim League preceding the independence of the country and way the partition plan was implemented left a formidable baggage of complaints, grievances and rancour both in India and Pakistan against the British and against each other. The large disparity in the size of two States of India and Pakistan, in their natural resources, economic development and military strength kept Pakistan in permanent state of insecurity against its close neighbour. This combined with the awesome problems of economic revival, rehabilitation of refugees and creation of administrative infrastructure left an indelible scar on the psyche of the people of Pakistan.

The Muslim League, which had assumed power in the new country, had not formulated an agreed framework of the political system for Pakistan except generalisations and Islamic slogans. The early years in Pakistan were wasted in endless debates about Islamic provisions of the new Constitution and Centre-State relations. The rulers had only anti-India rhetoric to fall back upon for mobilizing the people for national reconstruction and nation building. The perceived threat from India was used to stifle democratic institutions and subvert democratic processes.

Pakistani leaders had approached the U.S. for military aid a few weeks after assuming office. Initially the United States had not paid much attention to Pakistan’s requests. The new country was seen by the

Islam in the Foreign Policy of Pakistan

U.S. State Department as under British sphere of influence and hence its security was deemed the responsibility of the former colonial power. However, by the early fifties Pakistan's importance had dawned in Washington and it was included as the key in the chain of the U.S. military alliances around the Soviet Union and the Chinese Peoples' Republic. Pakistan was an active member of the CENTO and SEATO, both pacts had been sponsored by the United States. Pakistani leaders always treated these military alliances as its defence against the perceived threat from India. This policy did benefit it in the form of large-scale weapons supplies to it at no or little cost.

Thus, there emerged two pillars of Pakistan's foreign policy. They were mainly directed to meet the perceived threat from India. They were in alliance with the United States and attempted to build an Islamic bloc as a bulwark against the larger neighbour. However, the Muslim world, particularly the Arab world was on the eve of the resurgence of Arab nationalism against Western imperialism. In the early years Pakistan had carried on a clamour for Islamic solidarity. There was a flurry of activities in the Muslim countries in the name of unity of Islamic world. All kinds of international Islamic conferences were held in Pakistan. The late Chaudhary Khaliqzaman went on a tour of Middle Eastern countries in a campaign to set up a Commonwealth of Muslim nations. These attempts were not successful. Most Muslim countries were still under direct or indirect imperialist rule. All of them were economically backward. This situation of the Muslim countries was capsuled in a statement by a former Pakistani Prime Minister as 'Zero plus Zero is equal to Zero'. Moreover, since in most countries in West Asia Muslims were in overwhelming majority, Islam was not perceived as in any danger. For them their ethnic identity was more important than their religious identity. It was the oppression and exploitation of Arabs by foreigners that gave strength to Arab nationalism and which mattered to them.

The creation of Israel and the nationalisation of the Suez Canal in 1956 by President Nasser of Egypt was a milestone in the rise of anti-imperialist Arab nationalism. The U.S. sponsored Baghdad Pact

Kalim Bahadur

was widely seen in the Arab world as the western attempt to protect their interests and stem the tide of Arab freedom movement. Pakistan was seen by Arab nationalists in the opposite camp. It was a leading member of the Baghdad Pact. Whereas the people of Pakistan were fully behind President Nasser in 1956 during Anglo-French-Israeli attack on Egypt, Pakistan government supported the aggressors.

Pakistan did not join the non-aligned movement though most Muslim countries had adhered to it. President Nasser of Egypt along with Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and President Tito were the leading lights of the movement. It was only late in the seventies that Pakistan decided to join the movement. By that time the U.S. sponsored military alliances CENTO and SEATO had become defunct. In fact the successive regimes in Pakistan had always been out of step with the aspirations and outlook of the newly independent countries. This framework of foreign policy could be changed only during the tenure of Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto after 1971, though the basic anti-India premise of the policy was kept intact.

Pakistani attitude to Islamic solidarity was clearly projected at Rabat (Morocco) in 1969. The International Islamic Conference had been convened to discuss the Israeli provocation of burning the Al Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem. An Indian delegation led by Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, the then Minister of Industries had also arrived to attend the Conference. The Pakistani delegation headed by the then military ruler General Yahya Khan demanded that the Indian delegation not be allowed to participate in the Conference. The Conference which had to take up an important issue of concern to the world of Islam was bogged down in a controversy about the Indian delegation. The fact that India had more Muslims than Pakistan and who were equally agitated about the Israeli provocation at the Al Aqsa mosque was forgotten in the fracas.

The Rabat Conference paved the way for the establishment of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) in 1971. The member countries of OIC although all of them have Muslim rulers do not share the same world-view. Some of them are ruled by rightist monarchies or

Islam in the Foreign Policy of Pakistan

autocratic rulers and some others have radical regimes. Democracy exists only in a handful of countries. The Organisation is dominated by the Saudis because of their huge financial strength and also because holy cities of Mecca and Madina are located in their territory. The Saudis enjoy influence among many Muslim States apart from being deemed as the guardians of the holy places of Mecca and Madina and also because of their generous financial aid, loans and grants to them. However, the Saudis represent the most conservative regime in the Islamic world. Pakistan under U.S. influence has developed close security relations with Saudi kingdom. It has been because of Pakistan-Saudi relationship that the former has been able to manipulate the OIC in its favour against India.

Pakistan launched its first major effort to use the OIC in the Kashmir dispute at the Cairo session of OIC Foreign Ministers in August 1990. The next session of OIC Foreign Ministers in Istanbul, Turkey in August 1991 was manoeuvred by Pakistan to adopt a ten-point programme for Kashmir, which provided the Organisation's active intervention in the dispute on behalf of Pakistan. The ten points incorporated the Pakistani stand on Kashmir. Ever since these developments OIC has become a platform for denunciation of India on the Kashmir issue. OIC throughout has been one sided and partisan, repeating Pakistani propaganda on the issue. Most members of the OIC, however, continued to have good political and economic relations with India.

Pakistan's manipulation of OIC in its conflict with India exposes how it has used Islam in its foreign policy for purely self-serving national interests. In the early years of Pakistan the clamour about Islamic unity was looked at as its attempt to acquire the leadership of the Islamic world.. This ambition eluded fruition for the successive leaders of Pakistan particularly after large-scale exploitation of oil resources in the Gulf made Arab emirates enormously powerful and Pakistan could not hope to achieve its objective. However, Pakistan has been able to get large financial assistance and political support from some of these countries.

Pakistan's conflict with India in Kashmir is also portrayed by it as an issue of Muslims versus the Hindus. They claim that the conflict stands at par with Palestine, Bosnia, etc. Many Muslim countries do not see the Kashmir dispute as an Islamic issue. The insurgent groups in Kashmir which are sponsored and supported by Pakistan carry Islamic names as if they are fighting for the cause of Islam. The true face of this policy is exposed by the way ethnic communities have been treated in Pakistan ever since independence. The treatment meted out to Bengalis, Muhajirs and Baluchis, who are all Muslims, have suffered harsh repression at the hands of Pakistani state whenever they have demanded their political rights. The larger part of original Pakistan comprising Bengalis had separated and formed an independent state of Bangladesh because they could not get their due share in the power structure of Pakistan.

The early nineties brought a drastic change in the international situation. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the disappearance of the socialist bloc of countries made it imperative for the third world countries to revise their foreign policy premises. A large number of new Muslim countries appeared on the world scene. They are the Central Asian States belonging to the former Soviet Union and all of them have a majority of Muslim population. The emergence of new Muslim states in the region has encouraged Pakistan to look forward to their diplomatic support in its confrontation with India. Pakistani governments have been eager to develop close relations with them. Pakistan has also been keen to develop economic relations with the Central Asian neighbours. However, there are several hurdles in this. Almost all Central Asian States are in need of capital which Pakistan also lacks. Their economies have evolved in such a way that Central Asian States have been dependent for their trade on Moscow. During the Soviet era their raw material resources used to be processed in the developed western republics of the Soviet Union. Pakistan believes that the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO) founded in 1985 which was the refurbished form of the defunct Regional Cooperation and Development (RCD) holds the promise for expansion of economic

Islam in the Foreign Policy of Pakistan

cooperation with the Muslim States of Central Asia. The RCD comprised only three countries, i.e., Pakistan, Iran and Turkey. The ECO has been expanded to include the Central Asian Republics and Azerbaijan. The ECO in its Summit meetings in 1992 had taken a decision to construct a railroad linking all the ECO member countries. However, the divergent economic and political objectives and interests of the member countries have not promoted cooperation among them. The member countries in the ECO have even different perceptions of the importance of the Islamic link. The ECO Summit in 1992 had passed a resolution on Kashmir, which was not fully supportive of Pakistani position. Most of the ECO countries apart from Iran and Pakistan would like to avoid a hard line Islamic posture which is likely to antagonise the West.

General Ziaul Haq's regime (1977-1988) had given the Islamic factor in Pakistan's foreign policy more importance than was given in any other regime since the inception of Pakistan. The military regime of General Ziaul Haq had no legitimacy whatsoever. Islamisation at home and Islamic foreign policy abroad were aimed at garnering legitimacy. The Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and General Zia regime's active opposition to it served twin objectives of the country. Pakistan became a frontline state for the West opposing Soviet Communism. It was followed by massive supplies of weapons for Afghan opposition from the Western countries, while Pakistan was given both arms and economic aid. On the other hand, Pakistan was seen as coming to help Afghanistan, an Islamic country, facing threat from Godless Communists. General Ziaul Haq became the spokesman for the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) at the United Nations and other world fora. Through the course of Soviet intervention Pakistan became an important party to Afghanistan issue. The country was hosting hundreds of thousands of Afghan refugees. The various *Mujahideen* groups fighting the Kabul regime and the Soviet army were supplicating for Islamabad's support, for the Pakistani agencies were the conduits for the distribution of United States weapons to opposition groups fighting in Afghanistan. It was clear that Islamabad's basic

objective in Afghanistan war was to see that whatever regime comes in power after the Soviet withdrawal should be under Pakistan's influence. It was even surmised that Pakistan wanted Afghanistan to provide it with the much-needed strategic depth in times of its conflict with India.

These were the objectives which motivated Pakistan first to attempt to unite the *Mujahideen* groups to form a united government and failing which Islamabad organized and launched the Taliban force recruited from among the Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan. During the Soviet intervention and after the Afghan Accord, Pakistan was also receiving substantial economic aid from the Saudi regime and other Gulf's oil rich Sheikhs. Thus India factor was barely concealed in Pakistan's Islamic solidarity with Afghanistan.

In the recent period Pakistan's Islamic foreign policy has assumed another dimension. The Islamic character of the resistance in Afghanistan had been called *jihad* in Pakistan. This *jihad* had the support of the U.S. agencies also. Because the Afghan militants were fighting against the Soviet army, the United States was very supportive of all kinds of groups, irrespective of their ideology. It is ironic that some of those fighters who were glorified in the Western media, Osama bin Laden is one of them, are now being condemned as the most wanted terrorists. The *jihad* in Afghanistan attracted hundreds of militant young men from all around the world to fight the Soviet forces in the name of Islam. Pakistan became the centre of all such elements. All of them were not equally inspired by the spirit of *jihad*. Many of these militants were mercenaries ready to fight anyone for a price, arms smugglers, drug peddlers and some only criminals. Once the war in Afghanistan was over, these militants stayed put in Pakistan. The successive Pakistani governments directed these multi-national militants to fight Pakistan's war in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir. The present military regime of General Pervez Musharraf which has long been involved with militants in Kashmir has endorsed the terrorist movement in Kashmir as *jihad* and has gone on supporting it.

Islam in the Foreign Policy of Pakistan

Pakistan had to pay a very heavy price for the *jihadi* policies of Islamabad. Most fundamentalist parties in Pakistan are linked to one or the other terrorist outfits active in Kashmir. All these militant groups are also associated with the sectarian groups in Pakistan, which are carrying a sectarian war in the country. It is well known that some of the sectarian killers in Pakistan had the support of the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Islamic solidarity and brotherhood has been used by rulers in each Muslim country for their own or what they perceive to be their country's national interest. In the late nineteenth century the Ottoman emperors began a clamour about their position of being leaders of the Islamic world by virtue of their status as Caliphs. The Ottoman empire at the time was in dire straits as the oppressed nations in North Africa, Balkans and Arabian peninsula were on the offensive for freedom. British imperialism and Russian Czarism were also pressing the decadent Ottomans from two sides. In the recent period rulers in the Muslim countries have sponsored International Islamic Conferences. President Saddam Hussain had also convened an Islamic Conference a few weeks before the U.S. attack during the Gulf war. There have been numerous Islamic solidarity organisations. The Organisation of Islamic Conference advances the Saudi interests. The Islamic context of Pakistan's foreign policy also serves the interests of neither Indian Muslims nor of the Muslims of other countries. It serves only the interests of Pakistan and its rulers.

THE JAMAAT-E-ISLAMI AND PAKISTAN'S FOREIGN POLICY

Frederic Grare

The recent Kargil crisis has questioned, once again the role of the militant Islamic organisations, not only in the conduct of the operations themselves but also on their influence on Pakistan's foreign policy. As a matter of fact, although, it constantly denied any involvement in the crisis, Pakistan kept supporting them. Hence the need for an indepth study of the relations between the Pakistani state and the religious organisations.

The present paper examines the role of one specific Islamist political party, the *Jamaat-e-Islami*. Created in 1940 by Abul Ala Mawdudi, the *Jamaat-e-Islami* is one of the best organised and most influential Islamic political party in the sub-continent, especially in Pakistan and has played an important role in conflicts such as in Afghanistan and Kashmir. The paper will simultaneously study the issue of the Islamic nature of Pakistan's foreign policy, the suitability of the ideology of the *Jamaat* to the pursuit of national interest of the Pakistani nation state and also the question of means available to the *Jamaat* to pursue its objectives. It will analyse both its ability to influence the process of decision-making in the matter of foreign policy and its capacity to act independently in such a way as to ensure that the course of events complies with the direction indicated by the ideology of the party. To bring out the eventuality of the influence of the *Jamaat*, responses will have to be made to the first two questions, their partial or total convergence or opposition examined, while the third aspect will determine the eventual extent of the influence.

ISLAMIC NATURE OF PAKISTAN'S FOREIGN POLICY

To assert that Pakistan's foreign policy is Islamic in nature pre-supposes not only that the eventual influence of Islam on one or the other decision be determined but also that it be systematically

Jamaat-e-Islami and Pakistan's Foreign Policy

confronted, through an analysis of a certain number of concrete cases, with reference to an Islamic theory of international relations, which theory exists only in the embryonic state. The central concept is that of *Umma*, the community of believers, the sole criterion of its definition being that of religious affiliation. On account of the existence of Muslim communities living outside the “territory of Islam”, the *Umma* spills over and transcends the *Dar al-Islam*. It is basically a territorial. In a political perspective, its necessary consequence is the “unitary, Messianic and universalising”¹ Islamic State. But this ideal, however unavoidable it may appear to the eyes of the believer, remains no less a distant one, or at least out of step with contemporary reality. It begets moreover a classification of States as belonging either to the *Dar al-Islam* (home of Islam) where the law of God prevails, or the *Dar al-Harb* (home of war) where divine precepts do not prevail and which needs to be subjugated, by war if necessary.²

Moreover, just as with any other foreign policy, that of Pakistan is conditioned by geostrategic constraints, the evolution of internal political situation, the international climate and the declared ideology of those in power. In these conditions, to rule on the Islamic nature of Pakistan's foreign policy would be like asserting the primacy of the ideological factor over all others, that is to say, asserting that the sole objective of the formulation of external policy is to strengthen the expansion of the faith over the land “Islam being considered as the means and the aim, the starting point and the final end of every policy.”³ Now, as against in Iran, in Pakistan Islam is not seen as a militant ideology, inspiring a combative foreign policy, but it simply constitutes, to borrow Mohammed-Reza Djalili's expression, an “ideology of assertion and of management.”⁴ If, as Leonard Binder asserts “official Islam is ... closely identified with the state, its function, as of old, remains the maintenance and enhancement of social control.”⁵

The “two nation theory” on the basis of which Pakistan was created and according to which undivided India consisted of “two antagonistic nations, that of the Hindus and that of the Muslims, impelled by diametrically opposed conceptions”⁶, could in no way be

Frederic Grare

assimilated to any kind of pan-Islamism. Contrary to the ideology prevalent in Iran, there is no refusal in Pakistan of the nation state nor of nationalism. "The idea of 'nation' within the framework of a territorially demarcated State"⁷ is not considered as foreign to Islam. Conversely the state reinforces and legitimizes the nation state as opposed to the ethno-national ideology and by so doing gives it its coherence. All along the fifties and sixties indeed, the very existence of the State, dominated, it is true by Punjabis and Mohajirs, was endangered by demands for autonomy from the Sindhis, the Pakhtoons and the Bengalis. This culminated in the secession of East Pakistan and a civil war in Baluchistan. The government hence made use of the element of religion to deny any legitimacy to ethnicity by laying stress on the transcendent unity of the community of believers. The ethnic factor has lost its relevance today and the lines along which cracks have developed in Pakistani society correspond less and less to the regional administrative units fashioned in a precise manner under Yahya Khan, along divisive ethnic lines; Islam conserves nonetheless a cementing role in national unity.

This distinction brings us back to the conception held by the founders of the nation of the very idea of Pakistan, closer undoubtedly to that of a national homeland for the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent than that of an Islamic State. This debate which was the main line of dissension between Jinnah and Mawdudi, remains a key issue even today and divides the "secular" parties from the Islamic parties. Till now however, despite concessions made to religious parties by the near totality of Pakistani leaders, the concept that has prevailed has been closer to that of a secular State than that of a theocracy; this was so even during the period of Zia-ul-Haq.

Consecutively, the influence of Islam on Pakistan's foreign policy does not lead to any conflict with international norms, nor to a hierarchisation of States. In the field of international relations, Jinnah never drew from his "two nation theory" any concept other than the most classic one of foreign policy, asserting notably that "we wish to

Jamaat-e-Islami and Pakistan's Foreign Policy

live in peace and harmony with our neighbours as a free and independent people. We wish our people to develop to the fullest of our spiritual, cultural, economic, social and political life in a way that we think best and in consonance with our own ideal and according to the genius of our people”⁸. This did not in any way preclude a more marked sympathy towards a certain number of Muslim countries, the foremost among these being Saudi Arabia. There is, true, a certain important current in Pakistani foreign policy, sometimes called the “Muslim school” which would like to see an increased consideration being given to the ideological factor and which leans as a result towards the establishment of a strategic consensus between Muslim States, in order to act as a counterbalance to American imperialism and to the Judeo-Christian “threat”, Pakistan being expected to play a major role in the establishment of this consensus on account of its importance as a Muslim State.⁹ Those who support this current, among these being the *Jamaat-e-Islami*, are however in disagreement over a certain number of problems. While some see in the establishment of the “above-mentioned strategic consensus” a basically political alliance, others give it a military meaning. They also have divergent views on whether the main partners should be Iran or Saudi Arabia. It needs, however, to be noted that this school represents just one current among others, none of these different trends being moreover specific to any institution, personality or regime. One can very often detect the (partially) contradictory influences of each of these currents in the manner in which any one problem is dealt with, their sole common denominator being that they are all anti-Indian. Pakistan’s foreign policy is so highly personalised and centralised that the preponderance of one or another school oscillates a great deal in the course of time. It would, therefore, be improper to designate Pakistan’s foreign policy as being Islamic.¹¹

Does this mean that the Islamic factor is devoid of any relevance? This obviously is not so. Islam was brought to the forefront in a certain number of causes defended by the Pakistani State. The way Pakistan handled the Afghan conflict is symptomatic of this fact. Zia-ul-Haq was

Frederic Grare

criticized a great deal in his time for having given special patronage to Islamist groups in the Afghan resistance. This policy was however less in response to ideological preoccupations than to the desire to strengthen durably the security of the “land of the pure.”¹² In the face of the active atheism of the Soviets, it was important to give the resistance a religious colour. Islam appeared immediately as a powerful element for mobilising the sense of identity and it was made use of for the purpose. Once the Soviet invaders left, Pakistan utilised the Islamic element once again to overcome the Afghan ethnic divisions and thus open the routes leading towards Central Asia. A similar phenomenon can be observed even in Kashmir where the presence of a Muslim majority population within the former princely State was, in accordance with the logic of partition, at the basis of the Pakistani claim demanding its merger in the “land of the pure.” Whichever be the government in power, Islamabad, over a period of time, has supported those Kashmiri militants and political groups that have been in the forefront against India, irrespective of their ideology. It is only since recently that it is more specially supporting certain Islamic groups such as the *Jamaat-e-Islami* for the sole reason that it is the only one today which advocates the merger of Kashmir with Pakistan. It is, moreover, striking to note that Pakistan has made a claim against India alone, even though China controls more than 19% of Kashmiri territory. This fact is due to the relations between Beijing and Islamabad as well as the realistic standpoint of some Pakistani decision-makers, but it shows once again that the logic of national interest prevails over ideological considerations.

Generally, whether it be the question of Kashmir, Afghanistan or Central Asia, the Islamic factor intervenes more as an element for managing a conflict and for rationalising Pakistani choices, than as a determinant of Islamabad’s objectives. The Islam that enters into the definition of the Pakistani nation state is a non-exclusive constituent of its foreign policy. Its importance varies according to the nature of the specific situation that the country faces at a given moment of its history.

**THE NATIONAL ISSUE IN THE IDEOLOGY OF
THE JAMAAT-E-ISLAMI**

The *Jamaat-e-Islami* not being a part of those in power, one can consecutively speculate on its influence on Pakistan's foreign policy only within this specific framework, that is to say, that of the partial or total case-by-case concurrence between the geo-political interests of the Pakistani nation state and the ideological factor. It is necessary, however, in order to truly evaluate its extent, to first of all decide on its identity and to analyze notably the evolution of views held by the *Jamaat-e-Islami* on the question of the nation. Does it see itself as a Pakistani nationalist party or as a pan-Islamist movement? A study of the theoretical and practical positions of the *Jamaat* brings out a clear difference between a universalist discourse and a practice which has as its aim basically (but not exclusively) the national interest of Pakistan. This difference arises, it is true, partly out of the difficulty in unequivocally formulating the national interest. It reflects in a way, the range of possible interpretations to the latter and takes us back to the central question of Pakistani identity.

As Marc Gaborieau writes, the "two nation theory" was above all the expression of a political strategy. "The Muslims, who constituted only 24% of the population of British India could not but be a minority devoid of power in a unitary independent India. The only way in which they could be masters of their own destiny was by creating an independent Muslim State."¹³ But for Mawdudi, whose initial objective was to reconstruct the religious thought of Islam, there is no historical basis according to which "once you create a national Muslim State, ..., you can convert it into an Islamic State through education, training and reform."¹⁴ Hence he invited the Muslims to turn away from nationalism in all its forms and to accept the sole guidance of Islam which prohibits all sectarian interest, thus remaining loyal to a much more traditional notion of the Muslim community, a unitary one devoid of distinctions of country, language, nation or race.

Frederic Grare

For Mawdudi, the conceptual system of nationalism is indeed an irrational approach which destroys the deeper bonds between individuals, dividing humanity into racial groups, establishing the barrier of languages and demarcating artificial geographical borders.¹⁵ Mawdudi spells out his thoughts thus in *Unity of the Muslim World*: “One could scarcely conceive of the collective life of a nation except in terms of its being free and independent, its members being virtual worshippers of their nation, exerting themselves to the utmost to going for its glory and supremacy over all other nations even if that implied suppressing others and bringing other nations low.”¹⁶ As he perceives it, nationalism has not ceased, with the passage of time, to lead to catastrophes and notably to world wars.¹⁷ It is, therefore, basically incompatible with Islam. Mawdudi notes moreover that nationalism is a Western concept which divides the Muslim world and thus fosters the supremacy of the Western imperialist powers. A few months before partition Mawdudi was to declare once again, “why should we foolishly waste our time expecting the so-called Muslim nation state and fritter away our energies in setting it up, when we know that it will not only be useless for our purpose but will rather prove an obstacle in our path.”¹⁸

This attitude was not the result however of ideological arguments alone. It can be explained also as being the outcome of the conditions in which a party emerged which had to straightaway differentiate itself from the Muslim League, the main Muslim party which was then spearheading the idea of Pakistani nationalism. The *Jamaat-e-Islami* could distinguish itself from the latter only by attacking both its scheme of things and their Islamic content. From the point of view of the subsequent evolution of the party and of its founder, one may consider, in spite of Mawdudi’s writings, that this opposition stemmed less from a negation in principle of the idea of nationalism than from the secular character of the new State. If he reproached the latter by highlighting the secular concept of the nation, it was basically because it was being used to replace the religious notion of law.¹⁹ Now, “being devoid of the attributes of justice and of infallibility, the secular State can neither

Jamaat-e-Islami and Pakistan's Foreign Policy

establish the rule of justice within its own borders with relation to the different classes of its subjects, nor act justly with people outside its realm”²⁰, hence war, tyranny and injustice. For Mawdudi, the remedy lies entirely in the acceptance of the doctrine of the sovereignty of God and the supremacy of the divine law in all, spheres of life. He also reproaches the leaders of the Muslim League for having neither the religious knowledge nor the uprightness required, and with being too westernised to guide the Muslim community.

With partition having taken place, the *Jamaat* proceeded to turn towards conducting all its action within the framework of the nation state of Pakistan and had no respite till it saw it Islamised. Taking a stand, in spite of their initial reticence, along legalistic lines, Mawdudi and the *Jamaat* launched a campaign in favour of the establishment of an Islamic State of Pakistan. This was the starting point of its acceptance of the national principle. By approving a legalistic action within the framework of Pakistan, it accepted to restrict itself to a single country whose national specifics it ended up by conceding. Pan-Islamist aspirations yielded ground, giving in little by little, not without some misgivings, to political realities. Mawdudi thereafter established a subtle distinction between a secular nationalism leading inevitably to a merciless struggle between States, and an Islamic nationalism necessarily exempt from this type of behaviour since it established divine power on earth. Not without some ambiguity, however, since this Islamic nationalism, which purported to be the vector of the establishment of the universal Muslim community was, by this very fact, the bearer of its own negation. He thus declared in 1968, “since by God’s will, I was born in this particular nation and belong to it, it is but natural for me to wish and pray that nation should have the proud privilege of leading the Islamic revolution in the present age, of being the first of the nations to adopt Islam in its totality, and to set up a model Islamic society which should serve as an example and a beacon for the rest of mankind.”²¹

Thereafter the nationalistic character of the movement was to forcefully manifest itself during the secession of East Pakistan in 1971.

Frederic Grare

The *Jamaat-e-Islami* was the only party in what was to become Bangladesh which collaborated with the government of Islamabad, even while it was strongly opposed to the rule of Yahya Khan whom it accused then of having betrayed the Islamic ideology and brought about the disappearance of Muslim nationalism. The leaders of the *Jamaat*, however, considered that the ethno-cultural Bangladeshi nationalism that it had led to, represented only the other side of the same problem. Desiring to maintain the territorial integrity of Pakistan which could only be done through the reconquest by the latter of its Islamic identity, the *Jamaat* took an active part in the struggle against the secessionist guerrilla warfare of the *Mukti Bahini*. It organised notably the *Al Badr* militia, of evil memory, made up mostly of members of the student branch of the *Jamaat*, the *Islami Chatro Shango*, and equipped by the Pakistani army. This episode was to durably modify the position of the *Jamaat* on the national debate and consecutively its relationship to the Pakistani State, while it defined the limits of its potential intervention in the matter of foreign policy. The Pakistani nation state became, by its resistance to Bangladeshi secession, a vector of the Islamic unity which it thereafter though fit to aid each time its action coincided with or seemed to coincide with the cause of the *Umma*.

THE JAMAAT-E-ISLAMI WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIST SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

This involves talking mainly (but not exclusively) of the *Jamaat-e-Islami* Pakistan. The simple reason for this is that Pakistan finds itself, in a way, at the epicentre of three conflicts: the Afghan, the Kashmir and the Tajikistan conflicts. Afghanistan formed the starting point from which the *Jamaat-e-Islami* acquired most of its capacity for action during the 1980s, with relation notably to the Pakistani State and more generally the totality of the powers engaged in a struggle against the Soviet Union. The logistic capabilities accumulated during this period then enabled it to intervene significantly from 1989 onwards in Kashmir, then during the first half of the 1990s in Tajikistan. The same capabilities enabled it for some time to put training facilities at the disposal of the entire international Islamist universe.²² It legitimizes the

Jamaat-e-Islami and Pakistan's Foreign Policy

questions that are raised over the ominous nature of the *Jamaat-e-Islami* (alone or in association with other ideologically like minded movements) for “international security.”

To formulate the question of the terrorist nature of the *Jamaat-e-Islami* does not allow, however, for prejudging the response. Nor does it mean that the one may infer thereby the existence of a specifically Islamist “threat.” While they fight for their cause, sometimes with weapons, the *Jamaat-e-Islami* and its “kindred parties” are not the only ones whose interests are involved. The interests of the States of the region (Pakistan naturally but also India, Russia, Iran, United States) also enter, directly or indirectly within the definition and the orientation of the “threat.” To assert that the developments taking place in South and Central Asia are to a large extent the result of the interplay of intelligence services would not be equivalent to indulging in fantasies on the “conspiracy theory.” But this does not enable us to conclude that Islamists in general and the *Jamaat-e-Islami* in particular, are the docile instruments of one or another party. On the contrary it is their independence which is, to a certain extent, at the basis of their importance and enables their eventual manipulation.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE ISLAMIST SPHERE OF INFLUENCE IN PAKISTAN

The emergence of an international Islamist sphere of influence in Pakistan was a gradual phenomenon. Islamism was in fact not an element that had been imported into the country but arose out of a progress characteristic to Islam in the subcontinent (or to some of its elements) connected with the latter's political evolution.²³ Very quickly however, bonds were established between the representatives of these currents of thought bringing ferment in the Muslim world.

In the case of the *Jamaat-e-Islami*, intellectual influence and personal relations preceded by a great length of time the institutional links.²⁴ Historically, the writings of Mawdudi had apparently been a source of inspiration to Hassan El Banna, founder of the *Muslim Brothers*, and Sayyed Qotb. Later, the *Brothers* participated in turn in

Frederic Grare

the institutionalisation of the *Jamaat*. Between 1952 and 1955, Said Ramazan, a *Brother* settled in Karachi, notably, helped the *Jamaat-e-Talaba*, the main student branch of the *Jamaat*, to formalise its administrative structure. The bonds between the Egyptian movement and the Pakistani party were subsequently maintained and extended to the totality of the Islamist parties as and when these appeared.

Saudi Arabia played in this process an important role by supplying to the *Jamaat* the financial means to meet its objectives and even more by bringing gradually under the banner of the *Jamaat* the Islamist parties all over the world. It was at the start of the 1960s that the *Jamaat* began to tie up with Saudi Arabia, when Mawdudi and Ahmed Khurshid both received the “King Faiysal” prize. The Saudi monarch, King Faiysal, soon became the main financier of the *Jamaat*, justifying his support to what he then perceived as the start of an Islamic International, as constituting, turn by turn, a struggle against socialism, then against Shia fundamentalism. At the start of the 1970s, the rulers of the Gulf countries, worried at the leftist trend in Pakistan and taking full advantage of the oil boom, joined the Saudi monarch in his efforts to forestall the progress of socialism and to attempt to destabilise Bhutto. Iran’s Islamic revolution, then the Iran-Iraq war marked a turning point, both countries trying to mobilise the Islamic parties all over the world under their respective banners. In this struggle which marked the start of the polarisation of the Muslim world, the *Jamaat* sided with Saudi Arabia. It thereby acquired a privileged position within Sunni Islamist organisations.²⁵

It was however the Afghan conflict which was to make the *Jamaat* into a dominant organisation in the Islamic universe. Well before the Soviet invasion, Afghanistan had been a choice field of action for the *Jamaat-e-Islami* Pakistan. Coming of Pathan stock and maintaining excellent relations with the chief of the Afghan *Hezb-e-Islami*, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, himself a Pakhtoon, the present Amir of the Pakistani *Jamaat* maintained since 1965 a connection between his movement and Afghan Islamists.²⁶ This initial relationship converted the *Jamaat* into a key player in Pakistan’s handling of the Afghan

Jamaat-e-Islami and Pakistan's Foreign Policy

conflict. A division of work did indeed take place between the *Jamaat* and the Pakistani army. While the latter dealt directly with moderate Afghan parties, the *Jamaat* for its part was entrusted with relations with the Islamic parties, considering this single alliance as being representative of the resistance.²⁷ With material support from the Western powers and from Saudi Arabia, these refugees were soon trained, organised and channelled towards the resistance groups. The Pakistanis soon set up the infrastructure required for ensuring their training.²⁸

This initial influx of Afghan refugees into Pakistan was to become the origin of a series of developments of considerable importance to the entire region. In the normal course of events, the Afghan Mujahideen should have returned to Kabul and the organisations of activists created on account of the war should have been dismantled: nothing of the sort happened. The existing infrastructure, that is to say the training camps,²⁹ remained functional and were even expanded in certain regions. "Afghans" then began to appear in most of the "hot spots" of the Muslim world.

INVOLVEMENT OF THE JAMAAT-E-ISLAMI IN THE "HOT SPOTS" OF THE MUSLIM WORLD

The involvement of *Jamaat-e-Islami* in the conflicts in the Muslim world varies naturally in accordance with their proximity and, consecutively, their degree of relevance to the foreign policy of Pakistan. This involvement ranges from active military confrontation to simple political support. These different levels of involvement can be classified in the form of as many concentric circles which, from the subcontinent to the perimeter of the Mediterranean, while crossing through the CIS, mark the various degrees of meagre availability of material support extended to the party, partially compensated for by utterances that are inversely proportional to the means actually deployed. Simultaneously, the specific action of the *Jamaat-e-Islami* is more and more difficult to identify as one recedes away from its "natural" zone of influence. Its object being often more to testify to

Frederic Grare

Islamic solidarity than to attest to a truly military strength, it often gets engulfed in the action of the “sister party” directly concerned in the zone of operation.

CONFLICTS IN THE SUBCONTINENT

Afghanistan

It has already been shown earlier that the *Jamaat-e-Islami* and the ISI had very close links with each other during the war in Afghanistan. However, relations with the Pakistani government deteriorated in 1992 when General Hamid Gul had to leave the top position in the ISI. Indeed, after the fall of Najibullah, Islamabad decided to accept a settlement of the conflict to the detriment of the Mujahideen who were favoured by the *Jamaat*, namely the groups under Sayyaf and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

Differences between the Mujahideen, more specifically between Massood and Hekmatyar, were nothing new. Dating back to the period prior to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan,³⁰ the antagonism between the two men had continued during the conflict, their personal differences being compounded then by a disagreement over strategy. While Massood was in favour of the military option, Hekmatyar wanted to use his forces sparingly in order to keep them ready for a take over of Kabul when the moment was ripe. Once the Soviets left, the rivalry between the two Commanders intensified. Massood captured the Afghan capital in 1992, while Gulbuddin Hekmatyar was forced to settle down at its threshold, at Tcharasyab. The *Jamaat* then tried to bring about a reconciliation between the Afghan enemy brothers before asserting once again its support for Hekmatyar when the antagonism between the two parties proved to be indomitable.

A (relatively) new phenomenon arose, however, in the autumn of 1994 with the emergence of the Taliban. Products of the traditionalist *madrasas*, without any political plan, they were nevertheless able to restore order in the regions they controlled by putting an end to the exactions of the local petty warlords. Gaining in this manner the

Jamaat-e-Islami and Pakistan's Foreign Policy

sympathy of the people and not having in fact to fight much, they advanced without difficulty upto the very doors of Kabul. Hekmatyar himself was soon marginalised and had no choice but to abandon his base at Tcharasyab, soon occupied by the Taliban. The latter proved, however, as incapable as the Islamic leader, of capturing Kabul which fell once again a prey to the cross-fire of the warring factions. Massood then succeeded in finding an ally in the Uzbek troops of General Dostom as well as the *Hezb-e-Wahdat*, a pro-Iranian Shia party. The situation then remained to stay as it was at this point between the alliance thus obtained and the Taliban, the latter occupying thereafter 60% of Afghan territory.

It was then that a surprise alliance was forged by which the Afghan *Jamaat-e-Islami* and the *Hezb-e-Islami* entered into a power sharing agreement. On 26 June 1996, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar again became Prime Minister of the government in Kabul and entered the Afghan capital after being received with all due honour, and in his own base, by his sworn enemy, Ahmed Shah Massood. The *Jamaat-e-Islami* Pakistan, and notably its Chief, Qazi Hussain Ahmad played, it would seem, an important role in bringing about this agreement. It was indeed on the invitation of the Afghan President Rabbani that it undertook this mediatory mission which was to lead to reconciliation between the former enemies.

The *Jamaat's* action in this negotiation was in line with some specific interests: considering Afghanistan as a battlefield for Western interests,³¹ Qazi Husssein Ahmad disagreed with the attempt at establishing a secular power in Afghanistan "which would be a negation of all that for which so many people had been killed since years" and whose profile he saw silhouetted behind the Taliban. Concerning the latter, the Chief of the *Jamaat* felt that they were manipulated by foreign agencies and refused to accept that Afghanistan fall entirely between their hands, but he did not exclude their eventual participation in a future government of the country. With this in mind, he considered the renewal of the alliance between Rabbani and Hekmatyar as a first step towards a general reconciliation in Afghanistan. The alliance did

Frederic Grare

not constitute in his eyes a major change on the military level but he felt it could prove to be important psychologically. The agreement of 26 May, which materialised in end June with the entry of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar in Kabul, brought about, however, at first, an extreme polarisation of the situation in Afghanistan, followed by the fall of Jalalabad which preceded just a little that of Kabul on 27 September 1996.

To understand the full import of this initial agreement, then of the action of the *Jamaat-e-Islami*, and consecutively of the victory of the Taliban for the *Jamaat-e-Islami*, it is necessary to situate the Afghan conflict in its regional and global context. Like every conflict, the war in Afghanistan has a dual import, the intrinsic and the extrinsic one. The struggle for power in Kabul constitutes a wager in itself for the Afghan parties, but the conflict is also the point of crystallisation of the wagers external to it but of greater importance to a certain number of regional and even extra-regional States. The continuation of the war in Afghanistan is thus, apart from local factors, the outcome of the unresolved problem of Pakhtoonistan, of the Pakistani ambitions in Central Asia and of the persistence of Indo-Pakistani rivalry, as also of the Russian preoccupations with regard to Central Asia and the issue of the Caspian Sea. The American policy with regard to Iran also affects the progress of events in the area.

For Pakistan, the events in Afghanistan took an ambiguous turn and went for some time against its overall objectives in the region:

First of all Pakistan needed and still needs to put an end to the Afghan irredentism over Pakhtoonistan. From 1947 till the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the Afghan government had constantly demanded the return of the Pakhtoon areas situated on the Pakistani side of the "Mortimer Durand" line,³² poisoning the relations between the two countries and serving above all as a justification for a reverse alliance between Kabul and Delhi to which the Pakistan government was trying to put an end. The Afghan "threat" is probably in itself politically and militarily manageable for Islamabad but it could take on

Jamaat-e-Islami and Pakistan's Foreign Policy

a totally different dimension in the event of a new conflict with India as Pakistan would then have to fight on two fronts.

But Islamabad wants above all to make Pakistan the preferential route leading from Central Asia to the Indian ocean, which would enable it to profit from the foreign exchange generated by the passage of Central Asian goods and to obtain new markets for its own products, as also to reassert the worth of a strategic position that had been considerably reduced since the end of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan (while benefitting incidentally from the American embargo against Iran).

These objectives were at the root of the policies followed by Pakistan, during and after the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan. By banking basically (but not exclusively) on Hekmatyar, the ISI, and with it the entire Pakistan government, hoped till the autumn of 1994, to be able to reconcile the exigencies of Pakhtoon nationalism and of a Pan-Islamism which would enable it to transcend the Afghan ethnic divisions, in order to ensure (directly or indirectly) its control over Afghanistan and to reach out towards Central Asia.

Under these conditions, the obstructive situation arising out of the ousting of the Islamabad alliance in favour of the Taliban constituted a temporary setback for the Pakistani authorities (at least until they switched their policy in favour of the Taliban). Having worked for the unification of the rival alliance, the *Jamaat* was to a certain extent going against the national interests of Pakistan.³³ While the Pakhtoon question was no longer, at that precise moment, an issue, Islamabad saw its Central Asian objectives if not obliterated, at least singularly restricted by the perpetuation of the conflict. At the same time, this conflict was like an appendage whose presence was the cause for the image of Pakistan receiving a beating day by day in the international arena. Even more serious was the fact that the reverse alliance between the government of Kabul and New Delhi had taken on a new dimension on account of the support given to President Rabbani by India which saw in this opportunity a way to avenge itself on Islamabad for its support to Kashmiri separatists.

Frederic Grare

For Russia, the continuation of the Afghan conflict legitimized and reinforced its Central Asian policy. The latter fell within the framework of Russia's general objectives with regard to the CIS, such as defined by Boris Yeltsin,³⁴ but it pursued also some more specific objectives.³⁵ Fearing or pretending to fear³⁶ an Islamist threat, the Russians perceived Central Asia as a first line of defence against a possible penetration by Iran, Pakistan and to a smaller extent by Saudi Arabia.³⁷ Hence the perpetuation of the civil war in Afghanistan justified their policy of support to the creation of indigenous military forces, the deployment of Russian border troops in the most vulnerable countries³⁸ and the maintenance of their political influence in the region. At the same time it forestalled any attempt at an autonomous opening up of Central Asia from the south. Turkmenistan notably, but also Uzbekistan, neither of which has any access to the open sea and which are trying to export their raw material³⁹ towards the Indian ocean, saw their prospects of development obstructed by the continuation of hostilities.

Under these conditions, the perpetuation of the conflict constituted a blessing for Moscow which could at little cost conserve its influence over the entire region. As this policy was not devoid of risk on account of the attempts at penetration by certain Islamist networks, Moscow did not remain content with drawing some passive benefit out of the situation created by its withdrawal from Afghanistan. The Russian leaders had been able notably to take advantage of the differences between the two main Mujahideen leaders, Massood and Hekmatyar, to regain a foothold in Afghanistan and give to the former the logistic support that he lacked.⁴⁰

The reconciliation that took place on 26 May between Rabbani/Massood and Hekmatyar hence created at the same time a *de facto* alliance between the Russians and the entire Islamist camp which thereafter brought together the *Hezb-e-Islami* of Hekmatyar,⁴¹ the *Jamaat-e-Islami* of Rabbani/Massood, the *Ittihad-e-Islami* of Sayyaf and the pro-Iranian *Hezb-e-Wahdat* to which should be added the Uzbeks of General Dostam. This alliance which, leaving out

Jamaat-e-Islami and Pakistan's Foreign Policy

Dostam, had formerly fought the Soviets in the name of its faith, found itself fighting side by side with its previous enemy to combat other Muslim groups, the Taliban in this case.

Pakistan, considered till then as one of the main patrons of Islamists in the region on account of the privileged bonds linking, or having linked, the *Jamaat-e-Islami* with the ISI, found itself, for its part, caught in the trap of a Delhi-Moscow-Tehran triangle. Having decided to support the Taliban⁴² to the detriment of the Islamist parties, it continued to be accused of being the main ally of the latter, partially on account of the (carefully nurtured) confusion which reigned in the media, among political circles and more generally in public opinion, on the very nature of Islamism⁴³ and on a singularly selective and fluctuating concept of the proper use of human rights. These contributed in no small manner towards its marginalisation on the international scene even while Benazir Bhutto was attempting to present Pakistan as a “front line country” in the struggle against terrorism and extremism⁴⁴ in an effort to renew economic ties with the United States as well as the strategic alliance which governed the relations between the two countries during the 1980s. In fact, the alliance of the Islamist parties, to which should be added the relative reconciliation between India, China and Iran,⁴⁵ served impartially the interests of the secular states of the region.

This situation could not however remain permanently. If the configuration of the Afghan conflict before the fall of Kabul was partially in consonance with the American objectives in the region (the opposition of the Taliban to the pro-Iranian Shia *Hezb-e-Wahdat* constitutes a serious obstacle to Tehran's ambitions in Central Asia and fortifies the United States strategy of isolation of Iran, without Washington having to conduct a really active policy in the area), it was not devoid of consequences for the safety of Western interests, notably those in the Persian Gulf. The same Islamists⁴⁶ who had greatly served the Western camp in its struggle against the Soviet Union during the Afghanistan war, turned against it and offered shelter to those elements which were attacking its interests.⁴⁷ Now any attempt to undermine

Frederic Grare

the Western interests in the Gulf served the objectives both of Iran and of Russia⁴⁸ (as well as of Iraq).

The aim here is simply to note a convergence of interests between these States and the Islamist circles of influence present in Afghanistan, among whom notably was the *Jamaat*. Its manifestation was to be seen in the progressive emergence of a strong anti-West and even more, anti-American, coalition. The nebulous nature of this Islamist sphere of influence, the contradictions between the Western interests in Iran on the one hand and in Russia on the other hand, the divergent positions of the members of the Western camp⁴⁹ with relation to each of the two States mentioned earlier, as well as the ambiguous relationship of cooperation/opposition between Russia and Iran complicated singularly the identification of the offender parties and thereby absolved all of them of any responsibility. In this perspective, the effect of an eventual alignment of the Islamist camp with the Taliban, as desired by the *Jamaat*, would only have made an already complex situation still more enigmatic and would have further weakened the American position in the region by accentuating the ambiguousness of Pakistani policy.⁵⁰

In fact, within a few days the *Jamaat* lost its influence in Afghanistan and consecutively, most of its attraction for the ISI and affected dramatically its capacity for action as a player in Pakistan's foreign policy in Afghanistan.

Kashmir

The Kashmir conflict, main impediment to the normalisation of relations between India and Pakistan, once again entered an active phase in 1989. It became for the *Jamaat-e-Islami* Pakistan a national cause.⁵¹ The revolt was launched initially, not by the *Jamaat* itself, but by the Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF),⁵² an organisation fighting for the independence of a Kashmir reunified within its pre-1947 borders.⁵³ In early 1990, the JKLF launched mass protest against India. However, from ending 1990, it became evident that the leadership of the revolt was slipping progressively away from it towards

Jamaat-e-Islami and Pakistan's Foreign Policy

the *Hizbul Mujahideen*, the armed branch of the *Jamaat-e-Islami* Jammu and Kashmir, closely connected to the *Jamaat-e-Islami* of Pakistan and the Pak-controlled Kashmir.⁵⁴

Pakistan, in tandem, thereafter lent most of its support to the *Jamaat* and the organisations controlled by the latter, to the detriment of the JKLF which it considered as being too independent and also because it supported independence and not merger with Pakistan. By the end 1991, the *Hizbul Mujahideen* had become the main military force among the Kashmiri insurgents.⁵⁵

The strategy followed by Pakistan in Kashmir can be characterised in the following manner:

- a) propagation of religious fundamentalism to promote separatism;
- b) training and indoctrination of leaders chosen in the valley to train groups of activists;
- c) training of young people in actions of sabotage and attacks against the security forces, in the use of automatic weapons and in the handling of explosives;
- d) training of special teams of instigators who trigger incidents and contribute towards tarnishing the image of a democratic and secular India.⁵⁶ These troublemakers then carry on their action within the different organisations. By increasing strife within the region they incite the Indian government to respond with force. They thus attempt to convince international public opinion that Delhi is consistently violating human rights on a large scale.

The *Jamaat-e-Islami* plays a central role at several levels in this strategy:

It works towards the recruitment and training of foreign combatants for the cause of Kashmir. The influx of foreign volunteers into the valley started in 1991. It was made possible by the Afghan connections of the *Jamaat* and the mobilisation of its international networks. It remained, to start with, limited. Only a few members of

the Afghan *Hezb-e-Islami* joined the ranks of the *Hizbul Mujahideen* in which they played mostly an advisory role.⁵⁷ Their number became really significant only in 1992 after the fall of Najibullah's government. They were soon joined by some Sudanese, Egyptians, Arabs from the Gulf countries, Pakistanis and Palestinians.⁵⁸ In 1993, their number was apparently between 600 to 1,000 and is today in the neighbourhood of 1,200 men (out of the 10,000 or so activists who make up the strength of the overall organisations operating in the valley).⁵⁹

It contributes also towards the mobilisation of international public opinion and the collection of funds. The foreign organisations associated with the *Jamaat* in the subcontinent, as also in Europe and the United States, contribute through their printed matter⁶⁰ towards popularising the cause of Kashmir which recurs in their columns as a sort of leitmotif. The same networks participate also in the collection of funds meant in all probability for financing the Kashmiri guerilla warfare.

Apart from deploying military operations themselves, which have increased in number and intensity since Kargil, the *Jamaat-e-Islami* is the main vector of the "Islamisation" of the opposition to Indian presence in Kashmir. The youngsters recruited through it, often straight from school by the teachers who themselves belong to the party, or later in University, are systematically indoctrinated through the methods described earlier in this work.⁶¹

But the Islamisation of the resistance is done also on another level which needs to be stated. While the Kashmiri population is indeed of Muslim majority, it is not "Islamist." Only a few rural pockets, controlled by the *Jamaat*, and whose real importance is difficult to assess,⁶² claim to espouse this ideology. This fact is reflected in the political representation of the resistance. Among the seven parties making up the All Party Hurriyat Conference (APHC), only the *Jamaat-e-Islami* claims to adhere to Islamism. It enjoys a greater visibility than the other components of the APHC on account of its

Jamaat-e-Islami and Pakistan's Foreign Policy

armed activity. It thus contributes towards the projection abroad of the picture of an Islamist resistance.

The *Jamaat-e-Islami* is also the only Kashmiri party which advocates merger with Pakistan. Hence on this point its views are opposed to those of the majority of the population which aspires to independence,⁶³ and to those of all other parties of the APHC which support the same demand. Its importance, and the probable fact that it is through the *Jamaat* that the members of the anti-Indian coalition obtain from Pakistan the funds they require for their action, explain the fact that the *Jamaat* is still tolerated within the coalition.⁶⁴ This also explains that the only demand the *Jamaat* makes openly is that of holding a referendum to decide on self-determination, as no leader of the party wishes to publicly express his real aspirations.

By giving the resistance a hazy image, the *Jamaat* serves impartially the interests of India as well as those of Pakistan. As regards Kashmir, the two countries are indeed in agreement over one single point; their refusal to grant independence to the region. The *Jamaat-e-Islami* forms in this perspective their best agent. The Indian forces are aware of this and have made the *Jamaat* and its various "affiliates" the special target of their operations.⁶⁵ The *Jamaat* appears thereby the hero of the struggle against the Indian "occupier" but whose action is conducted for the benefit of Pakistan and not for the independence of Kashmir. The *Jamaat* serves in a way as a kind of foil to the political opposition which it keeps divided, weakened and alienated from the majority of the population. The latter wary of being caught in the cross-fire between the army and the activists, is progressively losing all interest in the armed struggle and is getting resigned to the idea of the continuation of status quo (in the hope that Delhi might even make some concessions on the question of autonomy to the valley).

THE JAMAAT-E-ISLAMI AND THE FORMER USSR

The CIS naturally constitutes for the *Jamaat* yet another zone for its chosen activity. Its action there is attuned, in many respects, to the

Frederic Grare

prolongation of the Afghan conflict. Besides, many - and not only in the ranks of the *Jamaat* and the religious parties - had insisted on seeing in the Soviet withdrawal a victory for Islam over atheistic communism.⁶⁶

The *Jamaat* considers today that the totality of the governments of the region still owe their allegiance to Moscow and they should, therefore, be replaced by Islamic regimes in accordance with what it assumes to be the aspirations of the Muslim majority populations. At the same time, its leaders are aware of the fact that sixty years of communism have deeply affected the religious culture of these populations which need first of all to be reintroduced to Islam. The *Jamaat* is, therefore, trying with the financial help of Saudi Arabia to bring to the Muslims of Central Asia the religious education that they lack, by exporting religious works (the Quran and other scriptural texts as also the writings of Mawdudi), by setting up schools entrusted with teaching basic religious practices such as prayer and, indirectly, by concluding a certain number of agreements with the authorities of the concerned countries so that the brightest or the most motivated among the students can go and pursue further studies in the most reputed universities of the Muslim world.

Tajikistan

The action of the *Jamaat* is not, however, restricted to this proselytizing activity. The party is trying to give, directly or indirectly, active support to “sister parties” when these are faced with armed opposition from the authorities in position. This is notably the case in Tajikistan where the persistent disagreement between the “Islamic-democratic” coalition and the neo-communist regime supported by Moscow⁶⁷ can be likened in some ways to that which prevailed in Afghanistan at the time of Najibullah. However, the specific action of the *Jamaat* is already less clearly identifiable.

Till it was eliminated from the Afghan scene, the support to the Tajik guerilla fighting was conducted basically through the *Hezb-e-Islami* of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar which enjoyed the political,

Jamaat-e-Islami and Pakistan's Foreign Policy

military and financial backing of the party set up by Mawdudi and the ISI.⁶⁸ The Pakhtoon Chief is reported to have supplied notably some instructors for the Tajik rebellion.⁶⁹ The action of the *Jamaat*, however, gets submerged in the more general one of the Pakistani government, and more specifically of the ISI, which apparently recruited some 25,000 Afghan Mujahideens to fight in Central Asia.⁷⁰ While this figure is in all likelihood exaggerated, it does give an indication of the degree of connivance between the Islamic parties and the ISI, as well as of the intentions of the latter. Some elements in this organisation had counted for a time that Central Asia would get detached from the CIS, leading to a disintegration of the Russian Federation itself and the restructuring of a new territorial configuration dominated by conservative Islamic regimes. However, having lost most of its influence in Afghanistan, the *Jamaat-e-Islami* is no more in a position to play a significant role in the conflict. As a matter of fact, the Tajik and Uzbek governments have been complaining recently about the activities of *Jamaat-Ulema Islami*, not the *Jamaat-e-Islami*.

NATURE OF THE BONDS BETWEEN ISLAMIC MOVEMENTS

It would nevertheless not be possible to deduce from the preceding factors, nor even from the bonds existing between the movements (which meet regularly at the time of large international conferences) the world over, the existence of a veritable "Islamist Internationale."⁷¹ The fact that the *Jamaat* puts at the disposal of Islamic activists from all over the world, the facilities for military training that it possesses in Pakistan,⁷² even that some of its members are occasionally directly involved in the conflicts affecting the Muslim world, does not enable one either to arrive at the conclusion that there exists any kind of Islamic equivalent of the Comintern. There is indeed no authority which has taken on the veritable leadership of the totality of this sphere of influence.⁷³

All those incharge of the different *Jamaat-e-Islamis* of the sub-continent insist that each *Jamaat* enjoys complete independence.

Frederic Grare

True, their Chiefs meet each other at international conferences organised by the different components of the Islamic universe, or, from time to time, in Saudi Arabia, but each of these is a party by itself and not a branch of the Pakistani *Jamaat*.⁷⁴ Apart from the differences already indicated, the most prominent fact in this respect is undoubtedly the total absence of relations between the *Jamaat-e-Islami Hind* and the *Jamaat-e-Islami* of Jammu-Kashmir, which hold different views over the question of Kashmir. The Gulf war constituted another example of this independence. The *Jamaat-e-Islami* Pakistan was the only one to take sides against the allied intervention in Saudi Arabia and in Kuwait.⁷⁵ The other *Jamaats* felt that the threat that Saddam was bringing to bear on the unity of the Muslim world was a factor that prevailed over every other consideration. The most extreme case remains however that of the *Jamaat-e-Islami Hind* which even contests the validity of politicisation.

This total autonomy extends to the overall Islamic movements which act alone in their respective national frameworks. Over and above the same desire to see Islam re-established, they have no common objectives nor strategy. The solidarity between Islamic movements revolving around the *Jamaat* is a functional solidarity and does not illustrate the unity of a political movement. The *Jamaat* finds itself, in Pakistan, in the situation of being a national Islamic movement supporting other national Islamic movements but makes them “pay” in a way for the training offered by getting their militants to participate in its own combats.

CONCLUSION

The Jamaat-e-Islami and the Pakistani State: an ambiguous relationship

In the light of the preceding factors, one may well wonder what is the nature of the relationship that the *Jamaat* maintains with the Pakistani State. The *Jamaat* would not indeed be able to maintain, either alone or in association with other movements, training camps for activists, without enjoying at least the indulgence of Islamabad.

Jamaat-e-Islami and Pakistan's Foreign Policy

Their relationship seems to be turn by turn reciprocally those of each using the other as its instrument, and of opposition. The *Jamaat* supports government policy whenever the interests of Islamabad force it to support some Islamic movement or the other somewhere in the world (this was for a while the case in Afghanistan and in Tajikistan, for instance). In such circumstances it is as much the Pakistani State which becomes a vector of the policy of the *Jamaat* as the other way round. By supporting any action aimed at strengthening Pakistan on the international scene, the party of Qazi Hussein Ahmed increases its own margin of internal manoeuvrability. It is in this spirit that the *Jamaat* supports Pakistan's nuclear programme (which nurtures in return its anti-American posture each time the State Department exerts pressure on Islamabad to put an end to this programme).

Conversely, the intensity or the half-heartedness of the government support to the most ideologically striking causes, in the matter of foreign policy, constitutes the criterion for the support or the opposition of the *Jamaat* to the policy of those in power. Thus the alleged inadequacy of the support given by Benazir Bhutto, during her tenure, to the cause of Kashmir was a subject of constant criticism by the *Jamaat*. Nawaz Sharif, head of the Pakistan Muslim league (PML), though closer to the *Jamaat*, had sometimes during his first term to bear the brunt of its wrath for identical reasons.

This political opposition does not mean, however, that the attitudes of the *Jamaat* are necessarily incompatible with the policy followed by Islamabad on the very issues which the *Jamaat* criticises. Kashmir is once again the best example of this. To preserve her image on international scene, Benazir Bhutto, and along with her, the entire Pakistani State machinery, do not wish to appear as instigators of trouble in the region, nor can she allow herself the luxury of giving up once and for all the cause of Kashmir. Under these conditions, the *Jamaat* becomes the ideal instrument of Pakistan's policy. Availing of limited means, it nonetheless enables a low intensity conflict to be kept alive and hence keeps the Kashmir issue open without Islamabad appearing officially to be fomenting unrest.⁷⁶

The question of the relations of the *Jamaat* with the Pakistani State machinery does not, however, get reduced to that of a binary relationship and to a greater or smaller degree of proximity to the party in power. It is correlated also to the power struggles within the State machinery itself, notably between the Home Minister and the ISI, as is testified by Pakistan's Afghan policy. Benazir Bhutto, during her first term as Prime Minister saw herself completely precluded by the ISI from interfering in Afghan affairs which were the sole prerogative of the intelligence services. The ISI had indeed been able to instrumentalize to a remarkable extent the preferential relations maintained by the *Jamaat* with the Afghan Islamists since the mid-1960s. Without remaining in any way the docile instrument of those in power, the *Jamaat* had proved to be a useful and cooperative ally. From the autumn of 1994 on the other hand, the Home Minister favoured the emergence of the Taliban, preferring thereafter the conservative options to the Islamist one. The *Jamaat* then found itself out of tune with government policy if not opposed to it but it continued nonetheless to cooperate with the ISI with which it shared an obvious conjunction of interests. But while the latter progressively took over control of the Pakistani action towards the Taliban⁷⁷ while remaining by the side of its former allies, the *Jamaat* remained, for ideological reasons, close only to the Afghan Islamists and hence found itself marginalised.⁷⁸ However, in Kashmir, where it does enjoy the support of the ISI, it remains a major player.

Overall, although it is certainly the best organised and most powerful Islamist party of the sub-continent, the *Jamaat-e-Islami* can act effectively only in conjunction with the army. It is at best instrumental in Pakistan's foreign policy. The fact that its objectives correspond sometimes to those of the Pakistani state, witnesses as much of the "nationalisation" of the *Jamaat-e-Islami* goals than of the so called Islamisation of Pakistan's foreign policy. In this perspective it is not exaggeration to state that regional conflicts are classical conflicts of interests and not ideological ones.

REFERENCES

1. Mohammed-Reza Djalili, *Diplomatie Islamique: Strategie Internationale du Khomeynisme*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1988, p.17.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*, p. 56
4. *Ibid.*, p. 55
5. Leonard Binder, "Islam, Ethnicity and the State in Pakistan: An Overview", in Banuazizi Ali and Weiner Myron (Ed.), *The State, Religion and Ethnic Politics: Iran and Afghanistan*, Lahore, Vanguard Books, 1987, pp. 259-266, p. 264.
6. J.A. Bernard & M. Pochoy, *L'ambition de l'Inde*, Paris, Foundation for the Study of National Defence, 1988, p. 67. On 23 March 1940, during a session of the Muslim League, Jinnah declared "it is a dream that Hindu and Muslim can ever evolve a common nationality... The Hindus and Muslims belong to two religious philosophies, social customs, and literature. They neither intermarry nor interdine together and indeed they belong to two different civilisations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions: Their aspects on life and of life are different... They have different epics, different heroes and different episodes, very often the hero of one is foe of the other and like wise." Mohammed Ali Jinnah, quoted in Syed Salahuddin Ahmad, *Foreign Policy of Pakistan: A Critical Study*, Karachi, Comprehensive Book Service, 1996, p.4.
7. Djalali, *op. cit.*, p.58.
8. Mohammed Ali Jinnah, quoted in Syed Salahuddin Ahmed, *op. cit.*, p.5.
9. Samina Yasmeen, "Pakistan's Cautious Foreign Policy", *Survival*, vol. 36, Summer 1994, pp.115-133, p.122.
10. In addition to the "Muslim school", Samina Yasmeen also identifies two other important currents of thought. The first "school", called the "surrender group" by its adversaries asserts

that in the unipolar structure dominated by the United States which succeeded the bipolarity inherent to the cold war, Pakistan has no choice but to lean almost exclusively on Washington on account of the dependence of its armed forces on the American superpower and the close economic links that bind the two States. The second “school” based on a multipolar view of the post cold war world, argues in favour of the maintenance of close relations with the United States on account of their mutual interests but recommends that other important players on the international scene be taken note of to counterbalance the American influence and thus enable Islamabad to develop relations with Washington, of partnership and no longer of dependence alone. Samina Yasmeen, *op. cit.*, p.121.

11. This term, employed mostly by Indian authors, and too often borrowed with a lack of discernment by the West, is actually misconstrued. It underlines the universalist nature of Islam and takes the Hindus back to the 550 years during which the Mughals, who were Muslims, reigned absolutely over the Hindu majority of the Indian sub-continent.
12. The Pakistani dictator was quick to understand that the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan gave him an unanticipated occasion to put an end to the Afghan claim over Pakhtoonistan and to come out of the grip of the vice that a politically and militarily manageable Afghan threat constituted, but which, in the event of a confrontation with India, could take on a totally different dimension as Pakistan would then run the risk of finding itself in a situation where it had to fight on two fronts. Furthermore, its status as a “frontline State” enabled it to obtain from the United States an economic, and what is more important, a military aid that was disproportionate or even ridiculous in the fact of the Afghan and Soviet armies respectively but which contributed towards bridging partially the gap existing between the Indian and Pakistani levels of armament. Finally and above all, America’s indulgence enabled it to acquire and to advance considerably its nuclear arms programme. See on this subject,

Jamaat-e-Islami and Pakistan's Foreign Policy

- Frederic Grare, *Le Pakistan face au conflit Afghan, 1979-1985: au tournant de la guerre froide*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1997.
13. Marc Gaborieau, "Le neo-fondamentalisme au Pakistan: Maudidi et la Jamaat-e-Islami", in Olivier Carre and Paul Dumont, *Radicalismes islamiques*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1986, pp.33-76, p.39.
 14. M.S. Agwani, *Islamic Fundamentalism in India*, Chandigarh, Twenty-first Century India Society, 1986, p.60.
 15. See on this subject, Syed Abbas Araghchi, "Islamic Theocracy: The Political Ideas of Abul A'La Mawdudi", *The Iranian Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. VIII, No.4, Winter 1996-97, p.790.
 16. Abul A'La Mawdudi, *Unity of the Muslim World*, Lahore, Islamic Publication Ltd, 1st edition, July 1967, p.1.
 17. *Ibid.*,
 18. Quoted in Elisa Giunchi, "The Political Thought of Abul A'La Mawdudi", *Il Politico*, 1994, Anno LIX, No.2, pp.347-375, p.358.
 19. Gaborieau, *op. cit.*, p.52.
 20. Agwani, *op. cit.*, P.67.
 21. Cited in Araghchi, *op. cit.*, p.791.
 22. The author is laying stress here on the term space, that is to say a more or less structured nebulous entity within which various networks get established and come undone, but lacking a unity of leadership and of organisation.
 23. In this sense, the Indian sub-continent can be considered veritably as one of the cultural poles of Islamism.
 24. While, for instance, the movement of the Muslim Brothers was set up in 1927, the *Jamaat-e-Islami* appeared as a party only in 1940.
 25. Without for all that breaking its links with Iran.
 26. Oliver Roy, *L'Afghanistan: Islam et modernite politique*, Paris, Le Seuil, 1985, p.279.

27. This connivance between the *Jamaat* and the army was nothing new (it had evolved at the time of the 1970 elections, the army seeking at that time the support of the *Jamaat* against the *Awami League*. The *Jamaat* was defeated during these elections but it set up the *Al Badr* militia which became a viable ally of the army personnel and cracked down with particular violence on East Pakistan, the future Bangladesh). It grew considerably during this period, along with the rise in power of General Hamid Gul within the Inter Service Intelligence (ISI), the Pakistani secret service.
28. Sreedhar and Kapil Kaul, "Politics of Islamic Terrorism in West Asia: Internal and External Dimensions", *Strategic Analysis*, June 1996, Vol. XIX, No.3, pp.435-466, p.445.
29. The training camps of the Mujahideens were essentially spread over the zones: Pak-controlled Kashmir, the tribal areas of Baluchistan and the NWFP, and Afghanistan. The militants, coming from all over the Muslim world, moved from one camp to another. They generally received a preliminary, relatively short, training, which could extend up to three months in one zone before being sent, for a longer period, to another camp where they completed their training which consisted essentially of learning how to handle light arms and explosives. They were then sent to fight in one of the zones of conflict of direct interest to Pakistan (Afghanistan or Kashmir), after which they returned to their country of origin where they participated in the struggle against the authorities in power and in training in turn their militant colleagues.
30. It went back to the failed coup attempt against Daoud, in 1975.
31. Notably American and British (the latter being accused of wanting to divide Afghanistan into tiny States along ethnic lines) as also French, Massood being considered as their "instrument."
32. The extent of the territories covered by the term Pakhtoonistan varies considerably depending on who is making the claim. For the Pakhtoons living in Pakistan it covers no more than the present

- North West Frontier Province (NWFP). For the Afghan governments prior to the Soviet invasion, it included this same province as well as Baluchistan. For some Pakhtoons living outside Pakistan, Pakhtoonistan extends from the Indian ocean to Gilgit and from the Durand line till Kashmir. Kulwant Kaur, *Pak-Afghanistan Relations*, New Delhi, Deep & Deep Publications, 1985, p.45.
33. This state of the matter reflects probably more the struggle between different Pakistani pressure groups for wielding an influence, than a truly anti-national resolve.
 34. In a decree signed on 14 September 1995, he asserted that Russia's aim was "the creation of an integrated political and economic community of States which can aspire to a respected position in the world." The Russian President also asserted that the CIS was henceforth a priority zone for Russia on account of "interests of vital importance" in the fields of "security, economy and defence of the Russian living abroad." The decree also called for closer economic ties and underlined the importance of the formation of a military alliance in order to set up an effective system of collective defence. *OMRI Daily Digest* vol.1, no.181, September 1995, p.1.
 35. On the Russian objectives in Central Asia, see Irina Zvigeskaia, *The Russian Policy Debate on Central Asia*, the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Pinter Publishers, 1995, p.8.
 36. No politico-religious group in Central Asia possesses the personnel, the social base, the institutional and financial strength, nor even the strategy to truly influence the political processes in the region.
 37. As well as by Turkey and China which are not directly concerned in the present problems.
 38. Tajikistan essentially.
 39. Gas as regards Turkmenistan, oil and cotton as regards Uzbekistan.

40. Around ten Russian technicians were thus reportedly based at the Bagram airport where four planes carrying arms, petrol or currency printed in Moscow landed every day, coming from Russia, Tajikistan or the Ukraine. Ahmed Rashid, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 1 February 1995. By lending support to the Tajik commander, the Russians were doing no more than replying to his call repeated with utmost urgency ever since the failure of the Peshawar agreement of March 1993. The desire to obtain Moscow's support to regain power in Kabul contributed greatly to the pressure exerted by Massood's men on the Tajik border by the side of the "Islamо-democratic" forces. Mohammed Reza Djalili and Frederic Grare, "Le Tadjikistan: convoitises et enjeux regionaux, le role de l' Afghanistan, du Pakistan et de l' Iran" in Mohammad Reza Djalili and Frederic Grare, *Le Tadjikistan a l'epreuve de l' independance*, Geneva, IUHEI, 1995, pp.121, 134.
41. Which apparently had already worked for the Russians by lending its men for the toppling of Elchibey in Azerbaijan. Michael Barry, "Kaboul: la mise a mort", *Politique Internationale*, no.64, Summer 1994, pp.65-96, p.86.
42. The question of deciding whether this defection was the result of a calculated choice made by the Pakistani government or that of a power struggle within it between the ISI and the Home Ministry under General Nasrullah Babar, is not relevant to the matter being examined here.
43. Islamism cannot indeed be reduced to the religiosity and the extreme moral rigidity of the Taliban and cannot any more be characterised by the recourse to violence. It is defined essentially by its relationship to politics and hence by its point of imputation, the State. For the Islamist, it is the establishment of the Islamic State and that alone which will herald the arrival of the truly Muslim State. Its emergence cannot be the outcome of a simple accumulation of believers, whatever be the degree of their personal religious practice. The confusion arises partly from the fact that for Islamism the conquest of political power is

justified by the desire to impose the *Sharia*, the only legal basis for social relationships, and by the side of which no other non-Islamic law could exist; this would give to Islamism a totalitarian nature. For the traditionalists on the other hand, while it is also the *Sharia* which should govern society, this does not in any way prejudice the nature of the political system which, while expected to respect the value system of Islam, does nevertheless conserve a real autonomy.

44. Since July 1994, Islamabad has an extradition treaty with Cairo for the expulsion of "Afghans" that the Egyptian authorities are looking for. Moreover, almost 200 Islamist activists were arrested in Pakistan after the attempt on the Egyptian Embassy in Islamabad, on 19 November 1995. Astrid Von Borcke, *op. cit.*, pp.29-30.
45. Astrid Von Borcke, *Unforeseen Consequences of a Soviet Intervention: The Movement of the Afghans in Militant Islamism*, Koln, Bundesinstitut fur ostwissenschaftliche und internationale Studien, June 1996, p.38.
46. And their logistics (weapons, training camps,...)
47. The author of the threats uttered against the British and French forces based in Saudi Arabia, Osama Bin Laden, had thus taken refuge in Afghanistan, in the Kunar province, controlled by Sayyaf till the arrival of the Taliban. A rich Saudi (he owns a very large construction enterprise), he is in fact the founder of Sayyaf's party and he financed during the war all the Islamist parties. A member of the Saudi royal family, he was banished from it under pressure from the Americans during the Gulf war in which he had participated on the side of Iraq and settled down in Yemen, before he came last July to settle down in Afghanistan, a few days after the attempt against the American forces in Darhan.
48. Russia's Minister for External Affairs, Yvgeni Primakov, had declared at the time of his appointment that he intended to put the Middle East back at the centre of Russia's foreign policy priorities.

49. Basically between Europeans and Americans
50. Qazi Hussein Ahmad reportedly urged the Afghan media to tone down their anti-Pakistani propaganda, Etienne Gille, “Freres enemies”, *Les nouvelles d’Afghanistan*, no.72, 2nd quarter 1996, pp.3-5, p.5. According to other unverified reports, it was Hamid Gul, former Director of the ISI, who had operated behind the scenes to achieve this reconciliation.
51. Even though Mawdudi had declared about Kashmir that it was a “non-jihad.” See Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *Mawdudi and the Making of Islamic Revivalism*, New York/Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996.
52. Anthony Davis, “The Conflict in Kashmir”, *Janes Intelligence Review*, Vol.7, No.1, 1996, pp.40-46, p.44. Set up in 1977, the JKLF (its current President is Yasin Malik) got a filip in 1988 when ties were established between its exiled leader, Amanullah Khan, and the Islamic Student League (ISL), a student movement based in Srinagar. It thus became possible to recruit several hundreds of armed men for the revolt. In 1990 the JKLF led the campaign of mass protest in the valley. It was destined however to be rapidly overtaken by the Hizbul Mujahideen. Its military action is a very limited one at present.
53. The territory of Kashmir is divided today between three countries: 45.6% is in Indian territory, 35.1% under Pakistani-control and 19.2% under China’s possession.
54. The *Hizbul Mujahideen* has close links with the ISI. It is also among its ranks that the largest number of foreign combatants are found.
55. The JKLF and the *Jamaat-e-Islami/Hizbul Mujahideen* were not however, by far, the only organisations operating in the Jammu & Kashmir State. In an attempt to replicate the strategy used in Afghanistan, the Pakistanis (in this case the ISI) tried to promote the setting up of a multiplicity of groups (some authors take the number up to 181) dividing the operations between groups of insurgents working under various names and identities and

Jamaat-e-Islami and Pakistan's Foreign Policy

favouring, by means of supplies of arms, the emergence of some of these groups in the forefront of the political scene. One may notably put down among the most important groups:

- * The Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front and the *Hizbul Mujahideen*, already mentioned;
- * The *Harkat-ul-Ansar* (companions of the prophet movement). A product of the reunification of two active organisations (*Harakat-ul-Jehad Islami* and *Harkat-ul-Mujahideen*), this is a radical group based in Islamabad. Consisting of some 8,000 members, its operations extended, apart from Kashmir, to Tajikistan, Bosnia and the Philippines. One of its branches, *Al Faran*, was responsible for the kidnapping of five Europeans in July 1995;
- * *Harkat-ul-Jihad*: made up of veterans of the Afghanistan war, it is reportedly a creation of ISI;
- * Pakistan Special Force: this group is apparently in fact a unit of the ISI whose members operate wearing the Indian uniform, to help Kashmiri combatants during major crises.

Mention should be made also of the *Jamaat-Isla* whose leader Abdul Majid Dar is based in Khartoom and Tehran, and other less important groups (*Janbaz Mujahideen*, *Ikhwan-ul-Muslimeen*, *Al-Jihad*, *Al Barq*, *Jihad Force*, *Al-Omar-Mujahideen*, *Hizbullah*, *Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen*, *Tehriq-ul-Mujahideen*, *Allah Tigers*, *Al-Umar Commandos*, *Nassir-ul-Islam*, *Hizb-e-Islami*). P. Stobdan, "Kashmir: the Key issues", *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. XIX, No.1, pp.111-139, pp.119-120.

- 56. "Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Export of terrorism", *Strategic Digest*, May 1994, pp.692-702, p.694.
- 57. Stobdan, *op. cit.*, p.113.
- 58. One should not, however, exaggerate the number of "Arabs" who have infiltrated into the valley. By way of example, out of some 561 activists killed, wounded, arrested or simply identified between 1988 and 1994, only 18 were "Arabs." *Involvement of Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir*, IDSA, New Delhi, 1994.

- Some governments find it convenient to use the argument of “Arab mercenaries” to free themselves of their responsibility.
59. Stobdan, *op. cit.*, p.113.
60. *Impact International, The Universal Message,...*
61. The criteria for recruitment followed by the *Hizbul Mujahideen* is different. It spots out its future members during anti-Indian demonstrations which occur regularly throughout the valley. The most active and the most physically robust elements are then enrolled into the ranks of the party. They are sent after that to Pak-controlled Kashmir to undergo a preliminary training there in the handling of arms and explosives, supplemented by a period in an Afghan camp and often a period of actual fighting in Afghanistan, or at the Tajik border.
62. Estimates vary, depending on the sources, from 5 to 20%, the latter figure given out naturally by the *Jamaat* itself. The true number would however be closer to 10%.
63. Some militants even of the *Jamaat-e-Islami* (mostly the youth), have declared to the author that they desire independence of Kashmir and not its merger with Pakistan.
64. Despite some settling of scores and other assassinations within it.
65. Almost all the present victims of the Indian forces, or the “renegades” are members or sympathizers of the *Jamaat*. (The “renegades” are former rebels who, having been “brought back” by the Indian forces have set up an independent militia which fights against Kashmiri insurgents. Having fought within the different resistance groups whose bases and strategy are known to them, they constitute a particularly valuable supplementary fighting force for the Indian army which is thus exonerated of the responsibility for a certain number of killings and atrocities).
66. See notably Ali Mazrui, “The Resurgence of Islam and the Decline of Communism: What is the Connection?”, *Futures*, vol.23, no.3, April 1991, pp.273-288.

67. After the collapse of the USSR, a coalition of Islamists, democrats and nationalists began to threaten those at the top in the communist hierarchy while a severe economic crisis exacerbated the regional disparities, intensifying popular discontent. In 1992, the opposition obtained the support of the poorest and the most politically marginalised regions (Garm, Kurgan, Teppe, Karategin and Gorno-Badakshan). In May 1992, some mass demonstrations enabled this opposition to obtain a representation in the government. A little later, in August 1992, President Nabiev, a native of the region of Leningrad, was overthrown. To regain power, the Leninabadis, who had always been in the forefront of the Tajik political scene, allied themselves with the Kouliabis who then became their weapon-wielding arm while Emamoli Rakhmonov was appointed head of the State. The alliance between the Kouliabis and the Leninabadis succeeded in returning to power and launched a ferocious repression against the opposition whose leaders fled to Afghanistan. From there they organised the resistance with the support of the Afghan Islamist parties. Frederic Grare, "Entre neo-imperialisme et laisser-faire: la politique de la Russie en Asie centrale", in Frederic Grare (sub-editor), *La Russie dans tous ses Etats*, Brussels, Bruylant, 1996. See also Raja Menon "In the Shadow of the Bear: Security in Post Soviet Central Asia", *International Security*, vol. 20, no.1, pp.149-181.
68. While the aid given by these two parties is less in evidence since some time, Tajik students are, on the other hand, to be found in the Islamic University of Islamabad. This latter element is not, however, a decisive proof of the *Jamaat's* support to the Tajik cause.
69. Von Borcke, *op. cit.*, p.7.
70. *Ibid.*, p.29.
71. Contrary to a currently widespread opinion held by a number of observers. See the article by Jean-Jacques Lavenue, "Sur la formation d'une internationale islamiste: la Conference

populaire islamique de Khartoum et la pensee d'Hassan El-Tourabi" *Revue de la recherche juridique*, Droit prospectif, Aix Marseille, Presses Universitaires d'Aix-Marseille, no.1, 1996, pp.39-64.

72. Which are not under its sole control.
73. This is with regards obviously to the Sunni movements alone.
74. With the exception of the Jamaat of Pak-controlled Kashmir which receives its instructions from Lahore.
75. And not for Saddam Hussein as has sometimes been written.
76. It appears also that the Nawaz Sharif government had sometimes financed the activities of the *Jamaat* in Kashmir in order to keep its attention diverted away from the national political scene.
77. And not of the Taliban themselves.
78. It continues nonetheless to try to play a role on the Afghan scene by attempting to bring the parties closer to each other. The Taliban are, however, extremely mistrustful of it and till now Qazi Hussein Ahmed has only met with a refusal.

THE TALIBAN VIEW OF JIHAD AND THE ISLAMIC PRECEPTS

Sultan Shahin

Afghanistan under the Taliban appears determined to change the very character of Islam, turning it into the pre-Islamic religion of the *Jahiliya* (Arabia in the Dark Ages). The world got the first indication of the shape of things to come and the nature of Taliban's obscurantist ideology when it woke up on the very first day of the Taliban take-over of Kabul (26-27 September 1996) to see the battered body of former communist President Dr. Najibullah in the UN compound. Since then horrors have piled upon horrors. Nothing that happens in Afghanistan surprises us any more. But since the Taliban claim to be Muslims and call their ideology Islam, indeed they call it true Islam, it is imperative for scholars of Islam as well as Muslims the world over to look at their ideology closely and study it in the light of Islamic teachings.

The centrepiece of the Taliban ideology that is also called Talibanism is their concept of *Jihad*. The Taliban use the word *Jihad* exclusively as a synonym for *Qital*, fighting and killing in a war. The Taliban leader Mullah Omar and their spiritual mentors in Pakistan as well as Afghanistan, people like Osama bin Laden, Maulana Fazlur Rahman, Prof. Hafiz Mohammad Saeed and Maulana Azhar Masood, etc. claim that *Jihad*, that is *Qital*, is one of the fundamental duties of Muslims, along with *Nimaz*, *Roza*, *Zakat*, and *Haj*.

One of the reasons why the Taliban and their mentors in Pakistan have been able to spread the message of what can be called *Jihadism* to such a large number of people is that down the ages a variety of people who felt threatened by Islam for one reason or the other have spread similar misconceptions about Islam. One of their favourite quotes is the following anecdote:

Umair ibn al-Humam was quietly eating a handful of dates. A war was raging around him at the battlefield

of Badr. He heard the Prophet making this promise: “By him who holds Muhammad’s soul in his hands, not one who fights this day, if he has borne himself with steadfast courage, if he has gone forward and not back, shall meet his death without Allah’s bringing him into paradise.”¹

”Fine! Fine!” shouted out al-Humam, “Have I only to get myself killed by these men to enter into paradise?” He threw away his dates and, grasping his sword, plunged into the thick of the battle and was very soon killed.²

Many Muslims who have heard or read this anecdote think that any war characterised as *Jihad* by some of the ulema is a potential passport to heaven. If you fight with enough fury and get yourself killed, you will be instantaneously in heaven. And what could be more alluring than paradise, with its rivers of milk and honey and wine and unlimited supply of beautiful houris?

This misunderstanding is so widespread that *Jihadi* propaganda emanating from Pakistan and now Afghanistan has been able to convince some people from as far afield as Sudan and Bosnia, not to speak of Afghanistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir that even the massacre of innocent civilians including women and children taking place in the state of Jammu & Kashmir is an Islamic *Jihad* comparable to the battle of Badr.

Pakistan killed a million or more Bengalis in 1970-71. It didn’t call it *Jihad*. Bangladeshis, too, killed Pakistanis in their struggle for independence. They too did not characterise it as *Jihad*. What makes the killing of innocent people in Kashmir *Jihad* is a question we just have to face. It is imperative that Muslims the world over look at the issue from a purely religious point of view, study their scriptures, and take a clear stand either for or against the mindless massacres that do not have even the remotest connection with the Islamic concept of *Jihad*.

For all we know, the anecdote related above may very well be apocryphal. In any case, the Prophet had used the words, 'one who fights this day'. God too had permitted Muslims for the first time to fight in self-defence, fourteen years after the beginning of Islam. Why?

Having faced relentless persecution for thirteen years at Mecca, the handful of people the Prophet had been able to convert had migrated to neighbouring Madina. The Meccans had attacked them there with a formidable army. The first Quranic verse that permits war is very significant. It specifically mentions the word 'permission' and then uses passive voice permitting to fight only those people against whom war is made. It talks about the special circumstances of Meccan Muslims. It reads: "To those against whom war is made, permission is given (to fight), because they are wronged... They are those who have been expelled from their homes in defiance of right, for no cause except that they say, 'Our Lord is Allah'." ³

Thus fighting is permitted in this particular situation, that too only in self-defence and at a time when not only the life of those handful of Muslims in Madina but the existence of Islam itself was truly in danger of extinction. For, those few hundred Muslims represented the fruit of all of the Prophet's exertion in the cause of Islam since he had become the Prophet fourteen years ago. That such a religion that is so reluctant to allow its followers to fight even in self-defence would permit senseless killings of innocent civilians in the name of *Jihad* is nothing short of blasphemy. It is imperative, therefore, that we try to understand the true meaning of the word *Jihad* that is being so misused today.

According to Maulana Mohammad Ali, *Jihad*, in Islamic terminology, means to strive to one's utmost for what to one is the noblest object on earth. There can be nothing nobler for a Muslim than the earning of God's pleasure through making a complete submission to His will. The Maulana explains: A very great misconception prevails with regard to the duty of *Jihad* in Islam, and that is, that the word *Jihad* is supposed to be synonymous with war; and even the greatest research scholars of Europe have not taken the pains to consult any dictionary of the Arabic

Sultan Shahin

language or to refer to the Holy Quran, to find out the true meaning of the word. The word *Jihad* is derived from ‘*jahd*’ or ‘*juhd*’ meaning ability, exertion or power, and ‘*Jihad*’ and ‘*mujahida*’ mean the exerting of one’s power in repelling the enemy. The same authority then goes on to say: “*Jihad* is of three kinds; viz., the carrying on of a struggle: (a). against a visible enemy, (b). against the devil, and (c). against one’s lower self (*nafs*).” According to another authority, *Jihad* means fighting with unbelievers, and that is an intensive form (*mubalagha*) and exerting one’s self to the extent of one’s ability and power whether it is by word (*qaul*) or deed (*fi’l*). A third authority gives the following significance: “*Jihad* from *jahada*, properly signifies the using or exerting of one’s utmost power, efforts, endeavours or ability, in contending with an object of disapprobation; and this is of three kinds, namely, a visible enemy, the devil, and one’s self; all of which are included in the term as used in the Holy Quran.⁴

Jihad is therefore far from being synonymous with war, while the popular meaning of “war undertaken for the propagation of Islam,” which is supposed by European writers to be the real significance of *Jihad*, is unknown equally to the Arabic language and the teachings of the Holy Quran.

Equally, or even more important is the consideration of the sense in which the word is used in the Holy Quran. Permission to fight was given to the Muslims when they had moved to Madina. But the injunction relating to Mujahideen is contained in the earlier as well as in the later Mecca revelations. Thus the ‘Ankabut’, the 29th chapter of the Holy Quran, is one of a group which was undoubtedly revealed in the fifth and sixth years of the Call of the Prophet, yet there the word *Jihad* is freely used in the sense of exerting one’s power and ability, without implying any war or *qital*. In one place, it is said in the Holy Quran, “And those who strive hard (*jahadu*) for Us, We will certainly guide them in our ways, and Allah is surely with the doers of good.”⁵

The Arabic word *jahadu* is derived from *Jihad* or *mujahida*, and the addition of *fina* (for Us) shows, if anything further is needed to

show it, that the *Jihad*, in this case is the spiritual striving to attain nearness to God, and the result of this *Jihad* is stated to be God's guiding those striving in His ways. The word is used precisely in the same sense twice in a previous verse in the same chapter: "And whoever strives hard (*jahadu*), he strives (*yujahidu*) only for his own soul," that is, for his own benefit, "for Allah is self-sufficient, above need of the worlds" (29:6). In the same chapter the word is used in the sense of a contention carried on in words: "And we have enjoined on man goodness to his parents, and if they contend (*jahada*) with thee that thou shouldst associate others with Me, of which thou hast no knowledge, do not obey them."⁶

According to Maulana Sadruddin Islahi, a revered ideologue of the *Jamaat-e-Islami* itself which is in the forefront of the so-called *Jihad* in Kashmir, *Jihad fi Sabilillah* (Striving in the way of Allah) literally means to strive every nerve for the achievement of an object, to exhaust all of one's energies for the attainment of an ideal. Therefore, to strive in the way of Allah for obedience of the Divine injunctions and for bearing witness of the Truth is *Jihad*. Islam, according to Maulana Islahi, has laid down the following three principal forms of *Jihad* which can be adopted according to the exigencies of the circumstances: internal *Jihad*; *Jihad* through knowledge and invitation; *Jihad* through war.

Internal *Jihad*, according to him, enjoins war against such evils as may crop up within the Muslim society. Such evils should be nipped in the bud because they pose a big threat to Islam. In fact they are a serious danger for Islam and the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) has warned against them. To strive for the Truth, therefore, is nothing but *Jihad fi Sabilillah*, in the view of the *Jamaat* leader.

The second form of *Jihad* in the view of Maulana Islahi is "*Jihad* through Intelligence and Invitation." This form of *Jihad* enjoins that the doubts expressed about Islam are so completely answered that no doubt, objection or argument leaves any ambiguity about any aspect of Islam. The Meccan period of the Holy Prophet's life was entirely one of *Jihad*, though, of course, Muslims had not yet been allowed to fight even in self-defence. Allah ordained the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him): "So obey not the disbelievers, but strive against them here with the Quran" *Himalayan and Central Asian Studies* Vol. 4 Nos. 3-4, July - Dec. 2000 109

with a great endeavour.”⁸ In a *Jihad* of this type one is armed with the weapon of reason and intelligence provided to us by the Holy Quran. The Quran has laid down a basic principle for fighting this type of war. It enjoins: “And reason with them in a better way.”⁹

The quality of a method can be determined by the success it attains. The right course and the Quranic way of discussion for disseminating Islam can only be such as would bring the listener close to the preacher, convince him of the veracity of his contention and open his heart for accepting the Truth. This can only happen when the words spoken are fully of rational appeal and have full regard for the level of understanding of the audience. Equally important is the spirit of the language he uses. It must be infused with true passion and sincerity. According to the Maulana, another requisite of this *Jihad* is patience and perseverance. Though apparently, supplementary in character, it has great importance and is indispensable for the success of this endeavour.

Maulana Islahi explains *Qital* in the following words: The third form of *Jihad*, i.e. *Jihad* with physical force is enjoined against those who obstruct the way of Islam. This has to continue until the way is cleared. It is the final aspect of *Jihad* and its other name is *qital* (fighting). Practically this is the most difficult and crucial form of *Jihad* but it has great importance for the perpetuation of the religion... The order for fighting has been given to bring the state of mischief to an end and to clear the way for a life that is governed by Divine injunctions and steeped in the remembrance of Allah.

Fitna is a technical term of the Quran and signifies a situation wherein people are denied the right to follow Islam and stopped for worshipping their real Master. It is a crime that has no parallel. So much so that even the crime of murdering an innocent person pales into insignificance before it. The reason being that if a person is murdered, he is deprived of the short course of worldly life, whereas if a person is stopped from the worship of Allah and he is prevented from becoming a true slave of his Lord, his life is brought to ruin and he is deprived of the eternal blessings in the after-life.¹⁰

The obstructions, which the believers have been ordained to remove by means of force, are not always similar in nature. Naturally the measures to tackle them cannot be similar either. A survey of these obstructions have shown that in principle they are of two kinds:

i. Obstructions concerning those who have already embraced Islam. Those who have come to the fold of Islam are teased and tortured for their “offence” of accepting the religion. They are compelled to abandon their new faith and physical force is used against them for this purpose.

ii. Obstructions concerning the non-Muslims. Muslims are not permitted to present Islam to the non-Muslims or such a system is imposed on them wherein the non-Muslims do not get an opportunity to see Islam closely.

As these obstructions are of two kinds, the *Jihad* to tackle them is also of two types. As far as the first kind of obstruction is concerned, it is not only very hard and unpleasant but extremely aggressive also. The step taken for fighting it would be, therefore, appropriate to call it a defensive war. At first Allah ordained the Muslims for the defensive war because the obstructions, for the removal of which they were ordered to wage a war, had already manifested themselves. The Divine order stated: “Sanction is given unto those who fight because they have been wronged; and Allah is indeed able to give them victory; those who have been driven from their homes unjustly because they said: “Our Lord is Allah.”¹¹

This verse was revealed to the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) during the Madinan period. It contains the justification of the Divine order as well. The Muslims were permitted to raise arms against the Quraish of Mecca because they were subjected to aggression by them. They were permitted to wage a war as they were attacked. This contention was persistently repeated as long as the state of war with Quraish continued. All the battles which were fought during that period were of defensive nature. In respect of the second type of *Jihad*, two things should be borne clearly in mind.

Firstly, It is not the intention of this *Jihad* to compel people to

accept Islam. Acceptance of Islam is something, which relates to the heart, and the heart of a man cannot be forced upon by anyone. It has been frequently repeated in the Quran that had Allah desired, He would have created all Mankind as Muslims or would have compulsorily made them Muslims after their creation. "Had Allah willed, He could have guided all mankind."¹² He would not have left it to His Prophet or his followers to make them Muslims perforce. Allah has openly declared that in the matter of religion man has been created free. He is not to be forced for it: "There is no compulsion in religion:" (2:56) In such a situation how could He regard it fair that in the case of Islam the compulsion, not exercised by Him, was permitted to His Prophets and His worthy slaves? This Divine injunction makes it abundantly clear that no person will ever be compelled to accept Islam. Everyone enjoys complete freedom in this respect. He may accept Islam if he likes or reject if he so desires.

Secondly, *Jihad* is by no means a campaign to elevate a community to the position of the ruling class and to reduce the other to slavery. It has not even the remotest concern with what is now called imperialism or capitalism.

Of utmost importance in this discussion are the pre-conditions for what Maulana Islahi calls physical *Jihad* or *Qital*. *Jihad*, he says, cannot be made at whim. It is permissible under certain specific conditions. It will not be valid unless the conditions laid down for it are present. Such a war, which is waged regardless of the prescribed pre-conditions, will have no value. It will not be a *Jihad* at all. Nor would it be entitled to any reward. It will be instead a cause for the displeasure of Allah.

The pre-conditions for the physical *Jihad* are as follows:

1. Those who go for *Jihad* should be free and independent Muslims and must have a collective social system of their own and must be led by a Caliph or *Amir* (chief). In the absence of such a system any act of war (*Jihad*) is forbidden. An act of war, even of a defensive nature, can only be taken in a free atmosphere under the leadership of an authorised leader.

This is the reason why the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) was not permitted to raise arms in self-defence during the period of his stay in Mecca, when he was not free to carry out his missionary activities, although the aggression of the Quraish had reached a climax. Permission for *Jihad* was granted after his migration to Madina when he was living in a free atmosphere and where, under his leadership, an organised Islamic State had emerged. Similar was the case of other Prophets (peace be upon them) whose invitation to Divine religion had entered the phase of physical *Jihad*. As long as this condition is not fulfilled, to undergo trials and tribulations for the sake of religion, without raising arms, constitute real *Jihad*.

2. Sufficient force to combat with the enemy is available because the Divine Injunction repeatedly emphasises: “No one should be charged beyond his capacity.”¹³ On the basis of this principle it has been ordained in the Quran: “So keep your duty to Allah as best as you can.”¹⁴
3. *Jihad* should be exclusively for the sake of Allah and the sole aim of those engaged in *Jihad* should be no other than the service of the religion and the glorification of Allah. The singular aim of those who participate in *Jihad* should be eradication of evil and advancement of goodness and justice. All these efforts should be made with the one and only objective of winning the pleasure of Allah. They should have absolutely no other motive in that noble war. The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) had once been asked: “Different people fight for different motives: one fights for the booty, another for fame and the third one for the honour of his country, nation or tribe or some similar cause, out of them whose fighting is for the sake of Allah?” He replied: “He who fights for the glorification of Allah’s name, his fighting alone is for the sake of Allah.”¹⁵

A struggle for national existence was forced on the Muslims when they reached Madina, and they had to take up the sword in self-defence.

Sultan Shahin

This struggle went also, and rightly, under the name of *Jihad*; but even in the Madina *suras* the word is used in the wider sense of a struggle carried on by words or deeds of any kind.¹⁶ In any case the Muslims were being attacked in Madina by those Meccans who wanted to stop Islam from being propagated.

It is in the light of these Islamic precepts regarding the third form of *Jihad*, that is Qital, that the founder-ideologue of *Jamaat-e-Islami*, Maulana Abul A'la Mawdoodi, had opposed the so-called *Jihad* in Kashmir in 1948 and called it un-Islamic. He had faced a storm of protest and opposition from the *Jihadi* forces but had stood his ground. His son and leader of a *Jamaat* faction called *Jamaat-e-Islami* (Mawdoodi) Maulana Haider Farooq Mawdoodi told this author in an interview in Lahore in January 1999: "*Jihad* can only be declared by an established state. Neither the civil war in Afghanistan nor the militancy in Kashmir can be termed *Jihad*, as Islamic theology requires that *Jihad* be performed by an organised state. This condition is so binding that when eminent theologian Shah Ismail Shaheed decided to wage a *Jihad* against the British, he went to Balakot in the tribal areas of NWFP and tried to establish a government so that he could declare *Jihad* in the framework of Islam. I do not think that even this fulfilled the condition, but it shows that he too realised that only an established state could declare *Jihad*. "*Jihad* is not the right or duty of an individual or group. If Pakistan thinks it can win a war against India, it should abrogate all treaties, break diplomatic relations and then declare and fight a war. The problem with a proxy war is that you cannot declare it and Muslims are not supposed to lie and cheat. So a Muslim state, particularly one with pretensions of being Islamic, simply cannot wage a proxy war."

When I pointed out to Maulana Haider Mawdoodi that some theologians have tried to justify militancy as coming under the Islamic provision of *Khurooj*, i.e. a kind of revolt against established authority, he said: "Rebellion or *Khurooj* can only be justified in a situation where the established government is committing what is known in the theological terminology as *kufir-e-bawa*. This means a situation in which the government stops people from doing things prescribed by God and asks

them to do things proscribed by Him, i.e. ‘*halal*’ is converted into ‘*haram*’ and ‘*haram*’ into ‘*halal*’. Such a situation does not exist in Kashmir. People are free to live according to their faith. If they have political or other problems, they can try to sort them out democratically and peacefully. Islam does not allow them taking up arms against the state.”¹⁷

Jihadism is based on the belief that all *non-Jihadists* are kafir and deserve to be killed. As a result, they have so far killed about half a million Muslims in Afghanistan and at least 30,000 Muslims in the Kashmir valley. They have been killing non-Muslims in Jammu and Kashmir and have forced the entire Hindu minority community out of Kashmir at the point of gun. Besides, they have made several attempts to provoke anti-Muslim violence in other parts of India by triggering Bombay blasts in 1993 and other terrorist acts.

Muslims must remember that they have to consult the Holy Quran for guidance in their day-to-day affairs. The model they are supposed to follow is that of Prophet Mohammad (peace be upon him) and not destroyers of mosques like Mast Gul. As we have noted earlier, Islam did not allow its followers to pick up a weapon even in their defence for the first thirteen years even though they were facing the worst possible persecution in Mecca. They were “permitted” to defend themselves for the first time in Madina when they were facing aggression from Meccans. Had they not defended themselves even then they would have been surely wiped out from the face of the earth, thus sounding the death-knell for the religion of Islam as well. But only a few years later, when the Prophet had become powerful enough to wage a war with Meccans, he chose peace even on terms that were considered humiliating by most of his followers. He signed a peace agreement known as the Treaty of Hudaibiya. And then when he entered Mecca victorious a year later, facing no resistance, he chose to grant a general amnesty for all, even for those who had mutilated the dead bodies of his close relatives like his beloved maternal uncle Hazrat Hamza.

The revelation of Divinity in Islam is specifically described as compassion: Allah is *Rahmanir Rahim* -- the very acme of kindness and compassion. Although Allah has 99 names, depicting all his varied

attributes, He is known in the Holy Quran mostly as Rahman and Rahim.

Some Quranic statistics would probably help at this point. The words Merciful, Most Merciful, Most Gracious (*Rahmanir Rahim*) have been used 124 times in the Quran. The word 'Mercy' has been used 173 times. Contrast this with the usage of the word 'Wrath' (anger) and 'Wrathful' (Angry). The word Wrath or anger appears thrice in the entire Quran.¹⁸ Then the word wrathful or angry occurs four times in the entire Quran.¹⁹

It is clear that God is conceived in Islam as the personification of compassion, though in the course of His work, helping the spiritual growth of humanity, He may need to present Himself as wrathful. Any parent or teacher who has tried to help his children or students would testify to the occasional need for doing this. But that doesn't make Allah as an embodiment of wrath, an entity to be feared, as some Islamic theologians, particularly the ones who are promoting this new religion of *Jihadism* are prone to do.

The *Jihadists* are killing people and oppressing humanity under the garb of preaching Islam and enforcing Islamic *Sharia* for which they really have no authority. If they were to look at the conduct of Prophet Mohammad (p.b.u.h.) in this regard, they would have got a completely different picture. According to Maulana Mohammad Ali, when the Prophet grew worried that people did not pay attention to his words and did not try to understand them, he was admonished in this way: "If Allah willed, all who are on the earth would have believed (in Him). Would thou (Mohammed) compel men until they are believers?"²⁰

Prophet Muhammad often came across people who were completely unresponsive to his words, while others were stirred, who believed and were prepared to listen. In dealing with the former, he occasionally grew impatient and felt frustrated. The Quran counsels him to be patient, forgiving and tolerant. It warns him against the temptation to impose his views on them: "Haply you will kill yourself with grief - if they believe not in this message"²¹

The Prophet is assured that if he has placed the true view, in simple terms, before the people, he has fulfilled his mission. More than this is not expected of him. It is not his duty to see that this view is accepted by the people. His duty is only to tell them which is the right path and which is the wrong one and to acquaint them with the consequences of following the one or the other. They are free to choose for themselves. God does not want to force people to accept His guidance. He has endowed man with the powers of understanding, judgement and free choice. If man makes use of these powers he can understand the Revelation and can profit by the guidance offered therein. He must bear the consequences of his choice, whether they are pleasant or unpleasant.

So if the Prophet did not have the power to compel people to accept Islam, even after he had acquired temporal power over most of Arabia, who are the Taliban or the *Jihadis* in Kashmir to try to impose their view of Islam on a Muslim population. Obviously they have no business behaving the way they are doing and need to be condemned by all, particularly Muslims, because they are giving such a bad name to Islam, apart from oppressing humanity in the name of a religion that came to the world as a blessing of Allah. Let us try and keep Islam as a blessing and not allow it to be turned into a tool for oppression.

Later Quranic verses set down rules and regulations of war with a view to preserving human rights of the civilian populations as well as prisoners of war. If Islam spread like wild fire in its initial years, it was largely because it had truly civilised the *bedouin* population of Arabia converting them into fine specimens of humanity. Muslims of today are, of course, not comparable to the Prophet's companions. But we too owe it to ourselves and to our Faith that we do not allow the Taliban and their mentors in Pakistan to denigrate the concept of *Jihad* in Kashmir. Characterising the mindless massacres of innocent people as *Jihad* is nothing short of blasphemy.

The main feature of the Taliban view of Islam can thus be summarised in one word: intolerance. They are practising and preaching Islam as an intolerant religion. This is a total negation of all that Islam

Sultan Shahin

stands for. Indeed the Taliban view of Islam vindicates the claim of of the Christian crusaders that Islam had spread by the sword. This view was best refuted in the early 20th century by Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall, an Englishman, and an orientalist, who had converted to Islam and is best known by his translation of the Holy Quran.²²

Pickthall makes an interesting point that Taliban would do well to ponder, if they really have any regard for Islam. He says: "It was not until the Western nations broke away from their religious law that they became more tolerant; and it was only when the Muslims fell away from their religious law that they declined in tolerance and other evidences of the highest culture... Of old, tolerance had existed here and there in the world, among enlightened individuals; but those individuals had always been against the prevalent religion. Tolerance was regarded of un-religious, if not irreligious. Before the coming of Islam it had never been preached as an essential part of religion."²³

Speaking from a Christian perspective and comparing Islam with Judaism and Christianity, Pickthall declares: "In Islam only is manifest the real nature of the Kingdom of God. The two verses of the Quran (2:255-256) are supplementary.²⁴ Where there is that realization of the majesty and dominion of Allah, there is no compulsion in religion. Men choose their path - allegiance or opposition - and it is sufficient punishment for those who oppose that they draw further and further away from the light of truth."

The Quran repeatedly claims to be the confirmation of the truth of all religions. The former Scriptures had become obscure, the former Prophets appeared mythical, so extravagant were the legends which were told concerning them, so that people doubted whether there was any truth in the old Scriptures, whether such people as the Prophets had ever really existed. Here - says the Quran - is a Scripture whereof there is no doubt: here is a Prophet actually living among you and preaching to you. If it were not for this Book and this Prophet, men might be excused for saying that Allah's guidance to mankind was all a fable. This book and this Prophet, therefore, confirm the truth of all that was revealed

before them, and those who disbelieve in them to the point of opposing the existence of a Prophet and a revelation are really opposed to the idea of Allah's guidance - which is the truth of all revealed religions. The *Kafirs*, in the terms of the Quran, are the conscious evil doers of any race or creed or community.²⁵

Thus the Taliban view of Islam does not correspond with the teachings of Islam as understood by the overwhelming majority of Muslims through the ages. It appears to be closer to the view of Islam propagated by its enemies down the ages. Talibanism, therefore, may be considered a completely different religion. Unfortunately it seems to be catching the imagination of many Muslims in neighbouring Pakistan. Indeed, it originated in Pakistani *madrasas* run by the *Jamiat-ul Ulema*. The Taliban are the products of these *madrasas*.

The Taliban or other followers of this view in Afghanistan and Pakistan do not consider their creed a different religion. Indeed this religion insists that it is Islam; it calls itself true Islam or real Islam. But it can best be described as *Jihadism*, as its central belief system is based on a wilful misinterpretation of the Islamic concept of *Jihad*. While *Jihadi* leaders like Maulana Masood Azhar and Prof. Hafiz Mohammad Saeed consider *Jihad* as one of the basic pillars of Islam along with *Namaz*, *Roza*, *Zakat* and *Haj*, the chief protagonist of this view, Osama bin Laden, considers *Jihad* as the primary duty of all Muslims. In his view the moment one says the *kalima*, *la ilaha illallah mohammadur rasulullah*,²⁶ it becomes imperative that this person wages *Jihad*. And of course, as we have said before, *Jihadiusts* use the term *Jihad* exclusively in the sense of *Qital*.

By and large, the western-educated liberal Pakistani intelligentsia, hates this religion and is frightened of it. But as one by one all institutions of governance are succumbing to its growing power and its capacity for evil, they are getting scared to death. They had expected the government of General Pervez Musharraf to contain these forces, but his retreat on whatever measures he tried to take in this regard has frustrated them to such an extent that some of them are simply planning to migrate to some

non-Muslim majority country. Indeed, according to recent reports in the media the exodus has already started. No one is really fighting this malignant force, though some journalists and human rights activists still have the courage at least to express their horror and outrage at grave personal risk.

It is Islamists, however, all those who claim to be genuine Muslims, who should have been fighting this malignant growth. Some of them indeed are. One prominent name in Pakistan is that of Maulana Haider Farooq Maudoodi. But the genuine Islamists do not have the wherewithal to counter the powerful *Jihadist* rhetoric backed by vast financial resources. Muslim masses in the sub-continent are by and large ignorant and poor. It is not difficult to either sway them emotionally using *Jihadist* rhetoric couched in Islamic terminology or even to buy them with promises of goodies on earth and in Heaven. Therein lies the danger to Islam.

The spread of *Jihadism* among the Muslims living in the West is a result of powerful anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist rhetoric employed by the *Jihadists* in those countries. This is even more worrisome. For, the well-educated and wealthy Muslims in those countries could provide intelligent leadership to the *Jihadists* in furthering their designs. It is time Muslims the world over wake up to the threat posed by *Jihadism* to their own existence as peace-loving followers of a religion, which literally means peace. It is our duty to see that Islam remains a *rahmat* (blessing) to the world and does not become a *zahmat* (nuisance) calling for the world powers to start thinking of containment strategies. Let us fight this cancerous growth within the body politic of Islam itself.

REFERENCES

1. *Sahih Muslim Hadees*, No. 4680, narrator Anas ibn Malik
2. *Tabaqat Ibn Sa'd*, Chapter 209, page 6, Ghazwah of Badr (The Battle of Badr)
3. *The Holy Quran*, 22: 39- 40
4. *The Religion of Islam* by Maulana Mohammad Ali
5. *The Holy Quran*, - 29:69
6. *The Holy Quran*, 29: 8

7. *Islam at a Glance* by Maulana Sadruddin Islahi, New Delhi, Markazi Maktaba-e Islami.
8. *The Holy Quran*, 25:22
9. *The Holy Quran*, 16:25
10. *Islam at a Glance*, by Maulana Sadruddin Islahi.
11. *The Holy Quran*, 22:39-40
12. *The Holy Quran*, 13: 31
13. *The Holy Quran*, 2:235
14. *The Holy Quran*, 4:16
15. Sahih Muslim and Sahih Bukhari
16. *Ibid.*
17. *The Times of India*, 25 January 1999
18. *The Holy Quran* - Sura Al-Fatiha 1.07, Al-Baqra 2.90, and Al Imran 3.11
19. *The Holy Quran* - Al-Mada, Al-Fath, Al-Mujadila and Al- Mumtahina.
20. *The Holy Quran*, 10:99
21. *The Holy Quran*, 18:6
22. *The Meaning of Quran* by Mohammad Marmaduke Pickthall (first published in 1930)
23. *Tolerance in Islam*, An Abridged Version of the 1927 Lecture by Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall. ©1990 by Dr. Z. Haq (This lecture is available at: <http://salam.muslimsonline.com/~azahoor/index.html>. All of Pickthall's lectures were published under the title *The Cultural Side of Islam* in 1961 by Sh. Muhammad Ashraf Publishers, Lahore from a manuscript provided by M.I. Jamal Moinuddin. The book has gone through several reprints since then.
24. *The Holy Quran* says in Sura 2, verse 256: "There shall be no compulsion in religion"
25. *Tolerance in Islam* by Mohammad Marmaduke Pickthall
26. It can be translated ©1990 by Dr. Z. Haq as "There is no god but the One God and Mohammad is His Prophet."

FUNDAMENTALISM IN BANGLADESH: CURRENTS AND CROSS-CURRENTS (1972-1999)

Abanti Adhikari

This paper seeks to study the growth of religious-cum superstitious tendencies in the country during the period 1972 to 1999, and as to how far this phenomenon has gained a place in the country that achieved her freedom through a struggle against an extremely conservative, communal and theocracy of Pakistan. In our discussion, fundamentalism would imply Islamic fundamentalism only as the Hindus, Christians and Buddhists form the religious minorities in Bangladesh.

WHAT IS ISLAMIC FUNDAMENTALISM?

The term 'fundamentalism' came to be commonly used when certain thinkers revived it as a notion with the publication of a series of pamphlets called "The Fundamentals", appearing between 1910 and 1915, through a set of conferences of the World's Christian Fundamentals Association in 1919.

The writings of Prof. Asim Roy highlight the nature and history of Islam in Bengal and are relevant for understanding fundamentalism. Roy argues that, the most important form of external challenge to Islam emanates from the twin pressures of westernisation spreading through globalisation, as also a related process of an effective elimination of Communist threat to western capitalism in the wake of the Soviet debacle. According to Roy, one seminal component of such profound changes is the resurrection of the perceived old Islamic threat in the form of Islamic "fundamentalism".

Syed Anwar Hosain feels that though the concept of Islamic resurgence had its origins long ago, it became more prominent during the 1970s. According to him, 'militant Islam' has been a kind of response to 'militant colonialism', 'militant Christianity', and 'militant

Fundamentalism in Bangladesh

secularism,' imposed on Muslim countries through western expansionism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries . He says that in the context of Bangladesh, the western intrusions elicited three grades of responses: acculturationist, normative and neo-normative . According to him, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-98) and Syed Amir Ali represented the acculturationist trend in British India. Its impact, however, on present-day Bangladesh is only marginal.

The term neo-normativist usually refers to those Muslim traditionalists who never waver in the theory of rejection of the western ideals as alien and ungodly to Islam. The Wahabi movement and the Farazis stood for this type of Islam in British India and carried militant movements against western rule. In present-day Bangladesh, the *Jamaat-e-Islami*, the *Nezam-e-Islami* and the *Khilafat Andolon* - are all champions of what has been described as normative Islam .

The neo-normatives seek to modernise Islam but refuse to revitalise it. They strive to develop an Islamic identity that is considered at once Muslim and equally relevant to the modern world. The neo-normatives are consistent in affirming that Islam is the norm by which all reality should be measured and everyone judged. The most notable advocate of neo-normative Islam was Hasan al-Banna of Egypt who founded the Islamic brotherhood movement, and preached that Islam to be Islam must impinge on public policy and must be intimately concerned with all aspects of the idealized past and also the vanguard of a future yet to be revealed.

Khomenian Iran, Palestinian Al-Hamas and Hezbollah, National Islamic Front of Sudan, Islamic Brotherhood of Egypt, Islamic revolutionaries in Algeria, Taliban and other *Mujahideen* in Afganistan, Moros of the Philippines, radical Muslims in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, India and Malaysia, and spiritually affected and sensitive Muslims in the western countries like the USA, UK and similar groups in other European and Asian countries, are objects of fierce curiosity and controversies of journalists and politicians.

Western researchers have dubbed the Iranian revolution led by

Ayatollah Khomeini a fundamentalist one, because he had implemented Islamic (*Sharia*) laws in all spheres of Iranian life, thus creating a great hindrance to the socio-political development of Iran on a western line. Since then the word fundamentalism became current in political vocabulary. There is an extraordinary degree of vagueness and confusion about what constitutes Islamic fundamentalism. Asim Roy admits that serious problem with the form and meaning of “Islamic fundamentalism” does exist, as various Muslim social groups take advantage of flexibility of the word in order to serve their own interests. Hence, the real challenge in studying religion is to be aware of the extra-religious percepts mingled with the tenets.

Roy points out that many people described as “fundamentalists” are very far from the fundamentals of religion they claim to espouse. In the political context, these groups are using Islam as a political tool rather than espousing a return to the fundamentals of Islam. A reason for widespread unrest in the Muslim world is, in Edward Said’s words, a tragic betrayal of the Muslim masses by their elites. The continuing tragedy of vagueness of destination, the confusion about the goal to be achieved and the path to be followed, remain drowned under the ocean of arguments of the so-called resurgent Islam. The debates and discussions on the so-called fundamentalist Islam, both at popular and scholarly levels, have fostered diverse ideas about concepts of Islam at the popular level. For example, the Sunni fundamentalist Muslim society in Saudi Arabia supports monarchy and Shia fundamentalist society in Iran supports republicanism, while Gaddafi in Syria sees himself as an Islamic socialist. All these persons are not fundamentalists of one type. But an inevitable common feature of all fundamentalisms is the absence of the right to give independent opinions and the existence of a despotic state-power ruling over everything. Needless to say, these are the characteristics of all fundamentalist societies, irrespective of religion.

According to Asim Roy, there is a tendency to regard the real world of Islam as identical with the “Middle East” and almost synonymous with the Arab world . But the fact remains that out of the

Fundamentalism in Bangladesh

four countries with the highest Muslim population today, namely Indonesia, Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, the last three are located in South Asia.

Political instability is a persistent feature in many parts of the Muslim world including Bangladesh since the political elites in most Muslim countries have failed to establish legitimate and viable political institutions. Consequently, Islam has become politically important for the elite, to keep themselves in power. The military-bureaucratic regimes, and the authoritarian kings and Sheikhs who are mostly at the helm of affairs in these countries, have often found it convenient to utilise Islam as a means of self-legitimization. There has been a persistent tendency to project Islam as militant, puritan and of violent inspiration.

The doctrinaire of Islamic fundamentalism project a polity where social justice prevails, as prescribed by the Islamic *Shariah*, which entails both political and economic justice. According to Syed Anwar Hosain, the familiar slogans often heard of in Bangladesh in support of the Islamic system have great resemblance to the socialistic system of the same kind. One notable example of this type is: *Anno, Bastro, Basasthan : Islam Debe Samadhan*. The Muslim countries, like Bangladesh, where gross maldistribution of wealth exists side by side with a growing class-consciousness among certain sections of their population, the ordinary people are particularly vulnerable to militant Islamic propaganda. The Revolution in Iran is an example of Islamic proleterianism that is likely to be repeated elsewhere.

THE PROBLEM OF FUNDAMENTALISM IN EAST PAKISTAN (1947- 1971)

To understand the presence of Islamic fundamentalism in Bangladesh, the situation in the pre-partition period has to be looked into. Scholars agree that fundamentalism in Bangladesh is largely the result of the activities of one party - *Jamaat-e-Islami*, which was founded by Sayyid Abul-Ala-Mawdoodi (1903-1979) on 26 August 1941, at Lahore. After the foundation of Pakistan state Mawdoodi left

Abanti Adhikari

Pathankot for Lahore, and here he led the *Jamaat-e-Islami*, with a view to introduce Islamic administrative system in his country. Since 1949 Mawdoodi began to serially publish his six-volume work, *Tahfimal-i-Quran* and completed it in 1972.

After the formation of Pakistan, the Bengali Muslims in East Pakistan, with their varied literature and culture, view of life and nationalist feeling based on their distinct ethnicity and language, tended to tilt towards secularism. They realised the significance and importance of factors other than religion for the formation of society, community, nation and state. But the rulers of West Pakistan and a part of Bengali Muslims in East Pakistan ignored this trend, so that cultural communalism and Islamic fundamentalism came to be nurtured by and large. The large scale Hindu-Muslim riots in the 1950s, conspiracy to change the Bengali script and the introduction of military rule in the year 1958 by demolishing democracy were directly linked to the fundamentalist thought and philosophy, with cultural and political dimensions.

In both the wings of Pakistan state, the *Jamaat-e-Islami* organised a movement in support of its Eight Point Demand, which raised the slogan of an Islamic constitution. As in the Pakistan period, so in the period following the successful liberation struggle and the birth of independent Bangladesh, the ruling circles were trying to misuse religion and the Islamic sentiments in order to preserve their authority. In 1968, Ayub Khan argued in a speech that all regional languages had to be integrated to innovate a great Pakistani language . To illustrate this point, in 1968, the Academic Council of Dhaka University recommended that the Bengali language should be reformed. But in the same period (1947-1971), a strong nationalist and secular sentiment was influencing the Bengali mind which was moving against the fundamentalist dogmas. Consequently there started a struggle against Islamisation, and resistance by the civil society led to a retreat by the state. As a part of this resistance campaign, in July 1968, the Writers' Union organised a five-day function in honour of Rabindranath, Mirza Ghalib, Iqbal, Michael Madhusudhan and Qazi Nazrul. Abul Hashim

Fundamentalism in Bangladesh

delivered an important speech on this occasion pleading that those who advocated a boycott of Rabindranath's songs on the pretext of following Islam and the ideology of Pakistan were not only foolish but also mischievous, who understood neither Islam nor Rabindranath, and who wanted to serve a special interest by denouncing Rabindranath.

However, during the lengthy months of struggle for freedom, the Pakistan army had settled themselves in Bangladesh and their continuous presence gave a strong fillip to fundamentalist politics in Bangladesh. The soldiers performed the worst kind of genocide on the Bengalis, both Hindus and Muslims, the main targets of attack being the religious minorities and Hindus. They even considered the Muslims of Bangladesh as *Kafirs*. During that crisis in 1971, the members of the religious political parties like *Jamaat-e-Islami*, *Muslim League*, *Nizam-e-Islami* and others, in the name of preserving Islam and maintaining the integrity of Pakistan, pressed the Pakistani army to indulge in genocide, violence on women and dacoities and they themselves actively participated in the process.

Immediately after the crackdown by the Pakistan armed forces, on 26 March 1971, the Islamic parties and supporters of Pakistan tried to establish cooperation with the Pakistan authorities. As part of this plan, Peace Committees were formed on 9th of April. *Jamaat-e-Islami* and some Ulemas formed the core of the committees, with the *Muslim League*, *Nizam-e-Islami* and *Krishak Srimak Party* joining them. Soon after the committee opened liaison offices in various parts of Dhaka city in the offices of *Jamaat-e-Islami*. In association with this move at the centre, local branches and students organisations under their influence formed action groups to counter the guerilla attacks and execute the supporters of the liberation struggle. The main groups were: *Razakars* (Abbas Ali Khan started organising this group in Bogra), *Al Badr* (Islami Chhatra Sangha, the student wing of *Jamaat-e-Islami* formed the nucleus of this group and Madrasa students were the members) and *Al Shams* (the student wing of the Muslim League, responsible for massacre of students in Chittagong). The three groups

Abanti Adhikari

having organised the executive wing of the Peace Committee co-operated with the Pakistani army and led terrorist actions against the supporters of the liberation, both in urban and rural areas. No less than 5,000 execution yards were their creation for butchering the sympathizers of the liberation struggle.

In November 1971, Golam Azam went from Lahore to East Pakistan to join a meeting of the central committee of the *Jamaat-e-Islami*. He appealed to all Pakistanis to forget their political affiliations and to unite against the Bangladesh freedom movement. After Bangladesh gained freedom on 16 December 1971, Golam Azam was deprived of citizenship in Bangladesh and came over to settle in Pakistan. Many other fundamentalists also took shelter in Pakistan, waiting for a chance to revive fundamentalism in Bangladesh. The fundamentalist Muslims took shelter in Pakistan or went into hiding inside the state, waiting for their chance of revival.

**THE NATURE OF FUNDAMENTALISM IN BANGLADESH
(1972-1975)**

The first government of the new state of Bangladesh was made up of an apparent dichotomy. On the one hand, Bangladesh was the second largest Muslim state in the world after Indonesia. On the other, and paradoxically for many Muslims, it proclaimed a secular polity.

There were indications that certain ultra-conservative religious parties, notably the fundamentalist *Jamaat-e-Islami*, were forming working relations with certain left-wing organisations, who had their own reasons for opposing Mujib. The rapidly growing popularity of Maulana Bhasani, who had managed to combine a traditional respect for Islam with a vaguely defined pro-Chinese socialism, was an indicator of such trend in politics. In Mujib's time, there was a strong tilt towards Islam because Mujib had to make room for the petro-dollar rich Gulf states and Saudi Arabia (due to the extreme financial difficulties of a new-born state). Certain policy adjustments were made in domestic affairs also, thus giving Islam a more prominent place than before. The Islamic foundation, which had been abolished after independence, was

Fundamentalism in Bangladesh

revived by a Presidential proclamation in March 1975 and Mujib himself began attending Islamic gatherings in a routine manner. Bangladesh needed financial assistance and during the initial years in 1973-74, it received about \$200 million Saudi aid; this went upto one billion dollar in 1978. During the Second Five Year Plan period (1980-85) this aid was much higher. The participants in the aid programme to Bangladesh included other oil-rich countries in the region.

Bangladesh was also dependent on the Middle East for the supply of her total need of crude oil. During 1974-75, Iran and Abu Dhabi, in particular, were approached by Bangladesh for supply of crude oil on a long-term basis. Annual import bill with regard to crude oil alone stood at taka 200 crore in 1974-75 . In 1975, Bangladesh was required to pay about taka 40 crore in excess of this amount, for oil imports as a result of the decision of the OPEC, in favour of a 10% rise in oil prices . During the same period almost two-third of Bangladesh's foreign exchange earnings were spent on import of oil estimated at 14 lakh tonnes per annum . The help coming from Arab countries made them look like Islamic benefactors of Bangladesh. Bangladesh was certainly coming close to Islamic brotherhood on economic grounds and this had its impact on Bangladesh, pulling her towards fundamentalism.

The civil society of Bangladesh fought the state of Pakistan resolutely during 1947-1971 in order to replace theocracy by democracy and following the long struggle since 1947-48, the foundations for a strong civil society were laid during 1971-75. Some new administrative arrangements were to come into effect on 1 September 1975, but, on 15 August, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and many of his family members were cruelly assassinated. The basic character of the Constitution of 1972 was disfigured by anti-secular forces after the assassination of Sheikh Mujib. With General Ziaur Rahman as the Army Chief and Justice A.M. Sayem as the President of the country, politics in Bangladesh acquired similar characteristics to that of Pakistan politics during 1958-1968.

**THE PROBLEMS RELATED TO FUNDAMENTALISM IN
BANGLADESH (1976-1990)**

Sukumar Biswas and Hiroshi Sato studied how religion has frequently acted as a core of consolidation of quasi-national mobilisation of a community, and in the process widened the schism among the contending communities . Their joint work was an outcome of the collaboration of two separate studies, one on the period before the liberation of Bangladesh, and the other after it. The second part of the study analyses the political backdrop of the much-debated policy of Islamisation in the post-liberation phase of Bangladesh .

According to Hiroshi Sato, an apparent lack of ideological coherence in the ‘Islamisation’ of Bangladesh was prominent as compared to the same process observed in Pakistan where an official body of the Council of Islamic Ideology had formulated the policies to be observed by the secular administration. Furthermore, in East Pakistan, the strong nationalist tradition which got as far back as the language movement in the early 1950s, and autonomy movement right upto 1971 when the country was liberated after a bloody struggle, has stood in the way of an unfettered ‘Islamisation’ of the state.

The Mujib government was replaced in 1975 by an army which staged a coup’etat and seized control of the government. Since then, Bangladesh had passed through fitful political changes; and governments installed in power often lacked the required legitimacy. Islam proved handy to such rulers in appealing to the sentiments of the people and assure themselves of a certain degree of legitimacy. Though Sheikh Mujib had himself initiated the process whereby Islam was making its influence felt in state affairs, it was given speed and dynamism by the subsequent military-bureaucratic regimes of Ziaur Rehman and Hosain Mohammed Ershad.

The dependence on the Middle Eastern countries for a vital supply (oil) produced a number of results favouring the rise of Islamic symbols in national life. There was a steady growth of what may be termed as institutional Islam, backed by a huge injection of petro-dollars . Also,

Fundamentalism in Bangladesh

there was a growing tendency in the past two decades to display Arabic bill-boards at public places, posting of citations from the Quran on office walls, private and public transport and buildings, use of the media, radio and the television, in particular, to propagate Islamic materials and the beautification of mosques . These steps had often been taken to please the visiting Arab dignitaries and create an Islamic sentiment among the ordinary people.

One of the major aims of Bangladesh was to win over moral and diplomatic support from Islamic countries, necessary to consolidate her position in the comity of nations and this aim was largely fulfilled since she received support from her brethren countries during its membership of the World Health Organisation and the United Nations. Syed Anwar Hosain points out that, “Courting of diplomatic favours of the Muslim Middle East remains a major goal of Bangladesh foreign policy”. Hence she constantly endeavours to show her willingness to work as a full-fledged member of the Islamic Ummah and there is a growing Islamic orientation of the ruling elite in Bangladesh with frequent references to Islam as the desired basis of state ideology.

To Pakistan, as also to the pro-Pakistani forces in Bangladesh - secularism was untouchable. Thus, within a few hours following the assassination of Sheikh Mujib, Radio Pakistan announced that Bangladesh banished secularism with the establishment of an independent Republic. As early as December 1975, when Justice A.M. Sayem was the country’s President, and General Zia was defacto power behind him, a martial law proclamation repealed a sub-clause of Article 66 as also Article 122, thus removing the legal provisions which prevented opponents of the 1971 freedom struggle from registering themselves in the voters’ list, as also from contesting elections in the Bangladesh Jatiye Sangsad. A large majority of these persons opposed to the independence of Bangladesh, were members of Islamic parties and Article 38 of the 1972 Constitution had imposed a ban upon such religious political parties. However, a martial law proclamation of 1976 removed this ban. It paved the way for the resurgence of pro-Pakistani Islamic parties in Bangladesh. Zia at heart

never believed in resurgence of Bengalis as a nation, and during his rule fundamentalism, fanaticism and communalism gained foothold in the country. He introduced Bangladeshi nationalism in place of secularism and Bengali nationalism, that was secular in essence. Zia amply demonstrated his loyalty to Pakistan when he took steps to rehabilitate persons and organisations opposed to the liberation of Bangladesh. He only aimed at procuring the support of pro-Pakistani forces in order to win the referendum in May 1977 and consolidate his autocracy. The replacement of Bengali nationalism by Bangladeshi nationalism was another step in moulding an anti-secular state and in order to demonstrate the Islamic orientation of the Constitution, the martial law proclamation of April 1977 inserted the following words on top of the Preamble to the constitution: 'In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful'. After the abandonment of the law that made the political parties based on religion illegal, the fundamentalist politics in Bangladesh received new impetus and the fundamentalists started organising themselves in different political parties.

In five years General Ziaur Rahman amended the Constitution of Bangladesh in order to espouse the doctrine of Bangladeshi nationalism. Khondkar Abdul Hamid noted for his loyalty to Pakistan was the exponent of this doctrine. In February 1976, in the course of a speech at a seminar in the Bangla Academy of Dhaka, Hamid said that it was appropriate to characterise the nationalism of his countrymen as Bangladeshi nationalism. This nationalism represented a glorious identity born of history, tradition, art, literature, sculpture and a unique philosophy of life, collective psychology and aspirations. All these traits separated Bangladeshis from all other Muslim entities of the world - even from the Bengali speaking Muslims in other countries and regions. Hamid explained that he talked of Islam as a culture because 85% of the Bangladeshis were Muslims . Hamid concluded that the above noted elements underlined by him formed the essence, foundation and strength of Bangladeshi nationalism. Religion was an essential component of this concept of Bangladeshi nationalism, whereas Bengali nationalism accepted secularism as one of its foundations. This became

Fundamentalism in Bangladesh

quite evident when at the biennial council session of the Awami League held in 1981, General Secretary Abdur Razzaq accused Zia of distorting the meaning of Bengali nationalism nurtured through a thousand years because Zia propounded the concept of Bangladeshi nationalism and replaced democracy by autocracy and eliminated secularism to spread communalism .

This growth of fundamentalism in Bangladesh did not go unchallenged. The police fired upon Rajshahi University students on 20 March 1978 and there was a procession in Dhaka protesting against police atrocities in Rajshahi. The Dhaka police too opened fire and at that time four student organisations - the Bangladesh Chhatra League, Bangladesh Chhatra Union, Bangladesh Chhatra Samiti and Bangladesh Biplabi Chhatra Union - came together to form a Kendriya Sangram Parishad. At Bangladesh Agricultural University too, similar incidents took place, and three students died.

On 30 May 1981, Ziaur Rahman was murdered by a few officers of the army in the seaport Chattagram, 200 miles from the capital Dhaka. Following Zia's assassination, Ershad ruled Bangladesh for about nine years from 1982 to 1990. General Husain Mohammed Ershad like his predecessor Ziaur Rehman, was keen on establishing conservative Islamic traditions and keep away from democracy. He began early to interfere in civil administration and he definitely took a dip in fundamentalism to consolidate his power and influence. In his time, the fundamentalist tenets came back within a constitutional outfit. His device to moot fundamentalism in Bangladesh was by means of constitutional amendments.

On 15 January 1985, General Ershad dismissed his Council of Ministers and abolished special martial courts to give Bangladesh a religious structure through constitutional measures. The Eighth Amendment to the Constitution (7 June 1986) was the most harmful attack by Ershad on the civil society and it declared Islam as the state religion. Sheikh Hasina announced that the declaration of Islam as a state-religion was a treachery against the three million martyrs of the

struggle for independence. At the constitutional level, Islam was conceived of as an essential component of national identity and declaring Islam as state religion in place of an outright declaration that Bangladesh was an Islamic republic was (unlike Zia) a cautious approach, so as not to be trapped in a 'fundamentalist' path.

Selective patronage was given to a small section of religious leadership, and the more 'fundamentalist' section became increasingly active politically. Government initiative triggered politicization of religious professionals as a whole. In spite of the apparent distance from the 'fundamentalists, the government became vulnerable to their pressure. The net result of the government initiative for 'Islamisation' - increased social and political pressure against the minorities: the Hindus, the Christians, the Buddhists and the tribals who together constitute nearly 12% of the national population. These minorities had to bear the brunt of 'fundamentalist' pressure. Kabir Chowdhury in his book, *Maulabad Tar Itihash o Praktiti Anushandhan* gives excerpts from the speeches of Ershad on different occasions. He has been quoted in *Daily Ittefaq* as commenting that Islam should be at the topmost level of all religions. He further announced that Bangladesh was a country of Muslims and that their present struggle was to convert the country into an Islamic country. Moreover, he stressed on his fundamentalist stand by expressing the view that drawing the 'alpana' in Shahid Minar was anti-Islamic activity. In another speech delivered at the army camp on 13 November 1985, it becomes clear that Ershad was using religion to gain advantage in politics. He accused the Awami League government of eliminating the word 'Muslim' from the Salimullah Muslim Hall and claimed that he had restored Islam in the country by declaring Friday as the weekly holiday.

When Islam was declared as the state religion on 6 June 1998, Bangladesh reached the level of a theocratic state, and the large population of Bangladeshis belonging to other religions like Hindus, Christians and Buddhists, were relegated into second class citizens in their own homeland. In order to demonstrate his love for Islam, Ershad government granted some privileges to *madrassa* teachers, so

Fundamentalism in Bangladesh

that, in rural areas, madrasas began to eulogise Ershad. Anti-liberal ideas were preached inside mosques as well as at religious gatherings, such as, a *Waz* or *Mehfil*.

This journey of Bangladesh towards fundamentalism was conducted in a well-planned manner. Ziaur Rehman, Ershad and Khaleda Zia belonged to this category, and were joined by Golam Azam, Matiur Rehman Nizami and others who had formed and organised the fundamentalist, anti-liberal political party *Jamaat-e-Islami* and many other militant organisations. General Ershad had reasons to use religion in statecraft. In the first place, he wanted to convince the Muslims forming a homogenous majority in Bangladesh that he was dedicated to Islam. By appeasing the die-hard Muslims, he could cover up his licentious conduct in daily life. Secondly, and what is more important, Ershad intended to receive massive donations from the oil-rich Muslim countries for which an attitude of commitment to Islam might help.

Further, it was declared on many occasions that the assertion of political leadership by women was un-Islamic. The significance of such declarations became obvious when one noted that two ladies - Khaleda Zia and Sheikh Hasina - led the agitation against Ershad. In Pakistan, too, Benazir Bhutto sometimes faced a similar attack from religious fundamentalists. In this context, it may be mentioned that Ashgar Ali Engineer in his book, *The Rights of Women in Islam* (C. Hurst and Company, London, 1992) critically examines the Islamic tenet, "that nation can never prosper which has assigned its reign to a woman". He points out that many more such instances of tradition in Islam can be quoted which are derogatory to women. Engineer offers a critique of the tradition: in the first place, the implications of the *hadith* (tradition) in this case seem to be weak; secondly, one has to examine the context against which this doctrine had been used and how it was understood; and thirdly, the tradition clashed with the precepts of the Quran, which speaks highly of a woman ruler, the Queen of Sheba.

The Ershad government was prepared to take steps calculated to appease the religious fundamentalists. During the eight and a half years

Abanti Adhikari

of the rule of General Ershad, the influence of a religious leader from Atarshir increased so much that he interfered in many important matters of the state. The *Dargah* of this *Pir* was the place for economic transaction between the generals of the armies, well-placed bureaucrats and businessmen. Many other *Pirs* who arrived at this time, propagated about their supernatural powers by giving advertisement in the papers. The educated and well off persons also started visiting the *Dargah* of these *Pirs*. Although the treachery of these *Pirs* was reported in some newspapers, the hopelessness and economic deterioration in social life forced people to believe in luck. With a high rate of population growth, maldistribution of resources, hunger and natural disasters, Bangladesh became one of the poorest countries of the world. According to the United Nations statistics, Bangladesh was one of the 36 Least Developed Countries. Predominantly rural, the average farm size in Bangladesh was 1.6 acres per household . Poverty and political string pulling was slowly pushing the country into the grip of conservatism.

In April 1990, at a public meeting in Bangabandhu Avenue, the Awami League announced that the establishment of a representative government, accountable to the people, was the only way out of the current crisis in the country, hoping that this would also be a measure against the spread of fundamentalism in the country. Ershad soon found that he was losing control over the civil administration. Government employees marched out of the Secretariat on 3 December, 1990. At last, on 4 December, General Ershad tendered his resignation, and began to reside in the cantonment.

Ziaur Rehman had initiated the process of granting a high political status to forces opposed to the struggle for independence, and Ershad consolidated them. That was why the military leaders, who ought to have been hanged as war criminals because of their role in the freedom movement of 1971, occupied important state offices between 1975 and 1990. Military rulers were shrewd enough to remember that a large number of ordinary people had taken active part in the freedom struggle of 1971 and they used to swear by the freedom struggle in

public. They repeatedly said that but for the participation of the armed forces, the freedom struggle would have failed. The military element tried to impress upon the civil society that the armed forces were the superior elements in the society. Shrewdly enough they strengthened reactionary political parties who opposed the independence struggle of 1971, e.g., *Jamaat-e-Islami*.

THE SAME PROBLEM OF FUNDAMENTALISM IN BANGLADESH (1991-1999)

After Ershad's downfall, the three alliances built up by the political groups, formed a caretaker government by placing the Chief Justice of High Court Sahabuddin Ahmed as President. When the government came to power, for the first time in the history of Bangladesh, an election was held that did not have government influence or interference. The main fundamentalist organisation, the *Jamaat-e-Islami*, secured 18 seats amongst the 300 seats in the National Assembly.

Communal tension increased following the broadcast by the American Cable News Network through the state run Bangladesh Television of the demolition of the Babri Structure in India's Ayodhya town, on 6 December 1992. The *Jamaat* and the *Islami Shashantantric Andolon* (Islamic Constitutional Movement) activists while protesting against the incident attacked Hindu temples and property. Between December 7 and 11 such atrocities were reported from different parts of Bangladesh where 80 percent of the 10 million people were Muslims.

The communal activity of the Mullas was prevalent always in the rural areas of Bangladesh. One such instance is that in January 1993, the fundamentalists lodged a false complaint against a young woman named Nur Jahan in the Sylhet district and gave her punishment - half of her body would be buried inside the earth and 101 stones would be thrown at her. This cruel punishment was implemented in front of all the rural people. When the news came to be known through the media, the progressive writers and the socialists vehemently in protested. On the other hand, the *Jamaat-e-Islami* and such other organisations

supported the fundamentalists, the government remained silent, and the local government in certain areas took minimum steps against the fundamentalists. Strangely enough, the main opposition party Awami League also remained silent like the BNP for the fear of losing the votes of the fundamentalists.

The rise of fundamentalism in Bangladesh was intertwined with the rise of *Jamaat-e-Islami*. A group of fundamentalists was not satisfied with the *Jamaat*, considering it too soft and non-militant. But the truth was that the *Jamaat* and the anti-*Jamaat* fundamentalists stood in one platform often when fundamentalism was really at trial. In the freedom struggle of 1971, all the fundamentalists and the communal organisations including the *Jamaat-e-Islami* stood behind the army rule of Pakistan to protect 'Islam in distress' and in the communal unrest of 1992, the *Jamaat* and the anti-*Jamaat* forces worked together. Adopting the styles of the Nazi and the fascist parties, the armed workers of the *Jamaat-e-Islami* did not hesitate to murder the workers of the competitive political parties. They killed more than one hundred students and freedom fighters in different areas and crippled them.

Taking the advantage of extreme poverty of the people of Bangladesh, the *Jamaatis* organised their workers. Golam Azam had come to Bangladesh several times with a Pakistani passport during the rule of Zia and Ershad, but his appeal for citizenship was refused by the home ministry since he was one of the main war criminals of 1971. Golam Azam had not been able to participate in political activities of Bangladesh. The appeasement of fundamentalists by the political parties gave moral courage to the *Jamaat* and on December 29, 1991, they announced Azam's appointment as the *Amir*, sparking off immediate protests across Bangladesh. On January 19, 1992, as a repercussion to this move, Bangladesh's 101 well-known personalities including retired Supreme Court judges, university teachers, veterans of the independence war, artists and journalists formed the "Committee to Uproot the Killers and Collaborators of the 1971 independence war." Thousands of people from all walks of life supported the move and to incorporate their representatives in the framework of the

Fundamentalism in Bangladesh

campaign, the “National Coordinating Committee for Realization of Bangladesh Liberation Ideals and Trial of Bangladesh War Criminals of 1971” was formed. The coordinating Committee set-up the “National Peoples Enquiry Commission” for the purpose of mass investigation of the actions of collaborators on 26 March 1993. Its report that came one year later, announced the names of eight people, of which five belonged to the *Jamaat*. Its campaign, the largest and most powerful in the history of Bangladesh, also found support from expatriate Bangladeshis. A people’s court chaired by Jahanara Imam announced death punishment for Golam Azam on the occasion of twenty fifth independence day of Bangladesh.

The *Jamaat* was joined by rightwing Freedom Party and other fundamentalist groups to form the “Committee to resist Indian collaborators.” Its objective was to create obstacles in the public functions of the National Coordinating Committee and its members. The government at the same time issued warrants and arrested some leading members of the Nirmul Committee and Coordinating Committee across Bangladesh.

It had been assumed that the Awami League would receive the majority vote and come to power in the elections of 1991, but in reality BNP came to govern. After the defeat in this election, the leadership of the Awami League understood the importance of the use of religion in politics and observed that religion as a political tool formed the *raison d’etre* for the victory of Awami League in the elections of 1996. Therefore, during the elections of 1996, the Awami League attached importance to the criticism of opposition denouncing the Awami League as ‘Indian agent.’ As a reply to such ideas, the Awami League had to make anti-Indian speeches favouring Islam, which disappointed many supporters of the Awami League.

“The Committee to Uproot the Killers and Collaborators of the Independence War” formed by Jahanara Imam started with a demand for the trial of war criminal Golam Azam. It accelerated the movement against communalism and fundamentalism, towards the realisation of the

spirit of the freedom movement. However, the political parties which supported the movement were more interested in the trial of war criminals, particularly Golam Azam. Even when the movement reached its climax, the political parties disliked the use of the word, 'fundamentalism'. However, the Nirmul Committee took a strong stand in this regard and the word "fundamentalism" was incorporated in all its slogans and posters.

Now the Awami League has come to office and is also propagating against communalism and fundamentalism. To remove the Awami League from power, most of the communal parties have combined with the BNP. The *Jamaat* which had previously considered BNP to be an evil party and considered woman leadership as *haram* (sin), is now the main supporter of BNP. They are spreading the sentiments of communalism by campaigning against *Shikha Chirantan* or the Parbatya Chattagram Peace Treaty and consequently the Awami League has to speak against communalism and fundamentalism. Simultaneously, the government has to implement other kinds of work schedules like the spread of *madrassa* education and to make religious education compulsory.

In the future if BNP comes to power, then Blasphemy Law and Sharia Law may be implemented in Bangladesh as it has been done in Pakistan, the minority communities and the religious minorities would be forced to leave the country and the whole nation may slip into the darkness of the Middle Ages .

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Nirmal Committee, *Resist Fundamentalism: Focus on Bangladesh*, Dhaka, Dana Printers, 1999.
2. Biswas, Sukumar and Hiroshi Sato, *Religion and Politics in Bangladesh and West Bengal: A Study of Communal Relations*, Institute of Developing Economies, Joint Research Programme, Series No. 99.

Fundamentalism in Bangladesh

3. Hosain, Syed Anwar, "Religion, Nationalism and Politics in Bangladesh", In Rafiuddin Ahmad (Ed.), *Religion, Politics and Nationalism in Bangladesh*, New Delhi, South Asian Publishers, 1990.
4. Mamoon, Muntasir and Jayanta Kumar Ray, *Civil Society in Bangladesh: Resilience and Retreat*, Calcutta, Firma KLM Private Limited, 1996.
5. Chowdhury, Kabir, *Maulabad Tar Itihash o Prakriti Anushandhan*, Dhaka, Basundhara Press, 2000.
6. Engineer, Asghar Ali, *The Rights of Women in Islam*, London, Hurst & Company, 1992.

JAMAAT-E-ISLAMI OF KASHMIR

A Background

S. Shah

Jamaat-e-Islami was launched in 1942 at Shopian village of Kashmir, when its leaders Qari Saif-ud-Din, Saad-ud-Din and Moulvi Ghulam Ahmed returned to the valley after attending the *Jamaat-e-Islami Hind* Convention organised by Maulana Mawdoodi in 1941 at Pathanhot having been influenced by his ideology and objectives. *Jamaat* in Kashmir did not get any response in the beginning due to its pan-Islamic ideology which was not in tune with the Kashmiri way of Islam. Besides, the mass movement led by late Sheikh Abdullah against the feudal autocracy of Maharaja had a sway over the people of Kashmir. During the post-partition period of 1947 till 1953, the *Jamaat-e-Islami* leaders remained inactive as they were indecisive about their future guidelines to be followed in the aftermath of the partition of the sub-continent. *Jamaat-e-Islami, J & K*, delinked itself from the *Jamaat-e-Islami Hind*, to maintain its independent political posture at the same time establishing fraternal and ideological links with both the *Jamaat-e-Islami Hind* and *Jamaat-e-Islami* of Pakistan.

The State witnessed political upheaval in 1953, when late Sheikh Abdullah was arrested and late Bakshi Ghulam Mohd. assumed power in Jammu and Kashmir. To quell the political turmoil in the valley, late Bakshi used all political and religious groups to gain popularity in the State and to overcome people's displeasure over late Sheikh's arrest. This provided an opportunity to the *Jamaat-e-Islami, J & K* to gain some sort of political sympathy under late Bakshi and to start building its cadres in villages and towns through *madrasas* and *Jamaat-e-Islami* schools. In the subsequent years, *Jamaat-e-Islami* network of *madrasas* increased alongwith the number of students and followers. Apparently *Jamaat-e-Islami, J & K* gave the impression that their schools and *madrasas* were imparting religious teaching based on Quran and *Hadis*. These *madrasas* acted as the centre of propagating

Jamaat-e-Islami ideology in the valley among the Muslim population particularly the youth. Successive State governments under the leadership of late Bakshi Ghulam Mohd., late G.M. Sadiq and Syed Mir Qasim were not alarmed at the growth of *Jamaat-e-Islami* in the State. Nor did any of these leaders restrain the spread of *Jamaat-e-Islami* ideology among the youth even though all the three heads of government claimed themselves to be more secular and progressive persons. Thus the *Jamaat-e-Islami* elements made steady inroads in the State administration particularly the departments of education, revenue, public works and almost in all departments.

For the expansion of its cadre and ideology in the valley, *Jamaat-e-Islami* leaders used mosques as the basic units in villages and towns. Since it is obligatory for every Muslim to take part in the collective prayers on Friday, *Jamaat-e-Islami* asked some of its vocal leaders well versed in Islamic jurisprudence to visit townships and villages to address the Friday congregations to propagate Islam and Islamic duties according to Quran and *Hadis*.

Till the year 1970-71, *Jamaat-e-Islami*, J & K did not have any share in the political spectrum of the State. It used the medium of spreading their ideology to grass roots in the farthest villages of the valley and Muslim pockets in other regions to create political vote bank in their areas of influence. Soon after Syed Mir Qasim became the Chief Minister, *Jamaat-e-Islami*, J & K was recognised as a political party enabling it to fight State Assembly elections in 1972. Many of the then Congress leaders of the State had opposed the idea of giving recognition to an organisation like *Jamaat-e-Islami* in the State as the organization was communal. In 1972 Assembly elections, *Jamaat-e-Islami* contested 20 seats in Kashmir and two seats in Jammu, but won 5 in the valley and none in Jammu. In 1977 Lok Sabha election it fielded two candidates, one each from Baramulla and Anantnag and one candidate in Jammu region from Udhampur, but failed to win any seat. However, the *Jamaat-e-Islami* candidates secured 38% and 27% of the valid votes in Baramulla and Anantnag respectively, whereas in Udhampur it obtained 6.1% votes. In the subsequent State Assembly election of 1977, *Jamaat-e-Islami*

S. Shah

contested 19 seats, 17 in the valley and 2 from Jammu. It could secure only 1 seat from Sopore. In 1983, it fielded 26 candidates without any success though it secured 7% of total votes. However, its party candidates did well in Sopore, Kupwara, Langet, Shopian, Rafiabad, Budgam and Doru securing 35%, 19%, 16%, 27%, 11%, 8.5%, and 12% of votes respectively. Death of late Sheikh Abdullah in September 1982 had created a sympathetic wave for Dr. Farooq Abdullah who led the National Conference to victory by a thumping majority in the State Assembly.

Earlier *Jamaat-e-Islami* had protested against the Sheikh-Centre Accord of 1975 on the ground that Pakistan and the people of Jammu and Kashmir were not parties to it. The *Jamaat* raised the Kashmir issue asking for its solution through a plebiscite under the UN charter. Even during the 1977 elections, *Jamaat-e-Islami* was critical of Sheikh Abdullah and advocated merger of the State with Pakistan. It was in April 1979 that the *Jamaat-e-Islami* received great set-back in the aftermath of hanging of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in Pakistan. Bhutto's supporters damaged and destroyed the properties of *Jamaat* and its workers in the valley. The *Jamaat-e-Islami* strongholds in Aarvan (Bijbehara), Tral, Bichur, Kulgam, Shopian, Sri Gophwara (falling in Anantnag district) and Bummai, Zalura villages in Baramulla district and in Pandan, Nawhatta of Srinagar district, were the main targets of such mob attacks, assault of the *Jamaat* workers, axing of orchards, burning houses and even some *Jamaat madrasas*.

The party remained in a state of shock for quite some time. The *Jamaat* revived its activities after the Imam of Kaba, Sheikh Al Salaya of Saudi Arabia visited Kashmir in May 1980 and persuaded late Sheikh Abdullah not to obstruct *Jamaat-e-Islami*'s propagation of Wahabi Islam in the State. The *Jamaat-e-Islami* was now more vigorous in its communal propaganda through their units at various levels in mosques, *madrasas*, educational institutions and other front organizations. It questioned the accession of J & K with India and exhorted Kashmiri Muslims to launch *Jihad* against India. They denounced the cardinal principles of Indian polity like secularism, democracy and socialism as

Jamaat-e-Islami of Kashmir

un-Islamic concepts. They stood for establishment of Islamic order as the only means to achieve final solution of Kashmir. Every social, economic or political issue was interpreted by these leaders in communal and pan-Islamic colours even though the State government was in the hands of Muslim leaders ever since 1947. *Jamaat-e-Islami* now developed organizational links with Muslim organizations in Islamic countries of West Asia. *Jamaat* and *Tuleba* leaders attended conferences and seminars which were convened by international Islamic organizations in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and other Islamic countries. *Jamaat-e-Islami* also received lot of funds from Islamic organizations for spread of Islam, upliftment of Muslim students, construction of mosques, Islamic libraries and Islamic educational centres.

In August 1980 *Jamaat-e-Tulba* planned to organise an international Islamic Conference in Gol Bag in Srinagar where it wanted to pass a resolution calling upon Kashmiri Muslims to wage *Jehad* against India. All Islamic youth leaders of the world were invited to participate in it. However, before this conference could be actually held, the State government anticipating disruption of peace harmony disallowed it and arrested several youth leaders who were associated with it. Some of them fled and migrated to Europe and USA, where they have been carrying out their activities. Another large Islamic *ijtemah* of *Jamaat-e-Islami* took place at Idgah in Srinagar in September 1980. This was the triannual *ijtemah* attended by all *Jamaat-e-Islami* workers, members and sympathizers. Now *Jamaat-e-Islami* presence started becoming conspicuous in schools, colleges, university, state services such as police, revenue and other forms of administration. By 1989 *Jamaat-e-Islami* had gained significant success in wooing the youth of impressionable age through its network of schools. In 1985 the number of students enrolled in *Jamaat-e-Islami* schools was about 13,000, whereas this number was estimated to be around 33,000 in 1989. By early 1990 total number of such schools was found to be 250 with 1,300 teaching staff and about 40,000 students.

Jamaat-e-Islami also reacted against the notification of the Election Commission asking all political parties to get registered.

S. Shah

Jamaat-e-Islami held that it was based on Islamic principles and was striving for establishment of Islamic system of governance. So it would not deviate from this line to include clauses of secularism and socialism. Thus it did not register as a party.

In 1987 *Jamaat-e-Islami*, J & K changed its strategy and formed the Muslim United Front (MUF) alongwith those Muslim political groups which harped on anti-India propaganda, Islamisation and even challenged the finality of accession of the State to India. The MUF which contested 41 seats against the NC (F) - Cong-I alliance, won only 4 seats. MUF campaign was carried along strong communal, anti-secular and secessionist lines to sway the Muslim votes in its favour. The Front, however, did not function as a cohesive unit and was dogged by internal dissensions. *Jamaat-e-Islami* made strong efforts to utilise the MUF platform to consolidate its grip in different parts of the valley. This attitude of *Jamaat-e-Islami* leaders in the MUF was disliked by other constituent groups which led to the expulsion of *Jamaat-e-Islami* from the Front in 1988.

At the organizational level, *Jamaat-e-Islami* has a well knit organization of central, provincial, district, tehsil and halqa committees to run the party. The Central Committee comprises (a) *Majlis-e-Numayandagan* (Representative body of the elected members, *rukun*, *Amir-e-Jamaat*, *Qayam-i-Jamaat*) (b) *Majlis-e-Shoora* and (c) *Qayam-i-Jamaat* (General Secretary). Members are taken first on non-regional basis and then on regional basis. There are similar bodies at district, tehsil and halqa levels.

Jamaat-e-Islami, J & K maintains separate wings to look after different issues:

- i. *Shoba-e-Parliamani* (Parliamentary wing to monitor developments in Sate Assembly, Indian Parliament etc.)
- ii. *Shoba-e-Maktab* (to publish and distribute books on Islamiyat)
- iii. *Kashmir Medical Trust* (to look after medical treatment and assistance)

- iv. *Shoba-e-Tableeg* (to propagate Islam)
- v. *Shoba-e-Qanoon* (to provide legal assistance)
- vi. *Shoba-e-Taleem* (to promote education)
- vii. *Shoba-e-Maaliyat* (to mobilise and look after finances)
- viii. *Shoba-e-Siyasat* (Political wing)

Main Frontal organizations of *Jamaat-e-Islami*, J & K are:

1. **Islamic Study Circle** was founded in July 1968 by Prof. Yusuf Khan alias Dr. Yusuf-ul-Umar of Srinagar. It has functioned as the intellectual wing of *Jamaat-e-Islami*, seeking to educate the Muslims about Islamic teachings and philosophy through literature, speeches and spread of library network.
2. **Muslim Education Trust** which was founded in 1969, runs B.Ed College at Sopore, besides two educational institutions at Barzulla (Srinagar) and Thanamandi (Rajouri). It also grants scholarships and interest free loans to Muslim students.
3. **Falah-e-Aam Trust** was set up in 1977. It run 250 schools with about 25,000 students taught by 800 to 1,000 teachers who are mostly *Jamaat-e-Islami* activists and sympathizers.
4. **Jamaat-e-Tulba** (students wing of *Jamaat-e-Islami* actively persuing the cause of *Jehad*)
5. **Iqbal Memorial Trust** was established in 1981 by Islamic Study Circle leaders to impart regular Islamic education and make available Islamic books to the Muslim students.
6. **Hilal-e-Ahmar** is the public relief trust set up by Dr. Yusuf-ul-Umar in March 1990. It is a welfare front of the Hurriyat providing financial assistance to Muslim detenues and those involved in/ victims of militancy.
7. **Muslim Welfare Society**, was set up in 1982. It published an English magazine *Green Dome*. It seeks to unite Muslims of different sects, work for their welfare and arrange jobs for Kashmiri youth in Saudi Arabia and other Islamic countries.

S. Shah

8. **Institute of Kashmir Studies** was founded by G.M. Butt, Amir-e-Jamaat-e-Islami J & K. It publishes literature on human rights violations, anti-India and pro-Pak propaganda.
9. **Hizb-ul-Mujahideen**, which was set up in September 1989 by Mohd Yusuf Shah alias Syed Salahuddin, is the military arm of *Jamaat-e-Islami*.
10. **Dukhtaran-e-Millat** (women's militant wing)

Besides, the *Jamaat-e-Islami*, J & K has links with *Jamaat-e-Islami* of Pakistan and pan-Islamic organisations like *Rabita Alam-e-Islamia*, World Association of Muslim Youth, Kuwait (WAMY), *Ikhwan-ul-Musalmeen* (Egypt), Muslim Students Associations of Uganda and America, International Muslim Association (New Zealand) etc.

Among the fire brand *Jamaat-e-Islami* leaders, Syed Ali Shah Gilani, G.M. Safi now in Pakistan and Ashraf Sahrai the noted orators. Their public campaign through mosques, *madrasas* and Friday congregations gained momentum from 1974-75 onwards and this process continued unhindered and unabated throughout the valley and also in the Muslim dominated areas of Jammu province. The *Jamaat-e-Islami* propaganda became more vociferous since 1980 leading to phenomenal rise in the attendance of Muslims in mosques. Every township had one mosque which was particularly used by the *Jamaat-e-Islami* workers, followers and sympathizers for Friday prayers. In Sopore an exclusive Muslim Peer mosque for *Jamaat-e-Islami* people was built in Peer mohallah for Friday congregations and to listen to fiery speeches of S.A.S. Gilani and G.M. Safi, the then *Amir-e-Jamaat*, District Baramulla. Gilani usually took a round of the valley and Doda area for addressing Friday congregations even after he was elected Member of the State Assembly. Syed Ali Shah Gilani, former Chairman, All Party Hurriyat Conference is the most vocal and diehard *Jamaat-e-Islami* leader, who got elected to Jammu and Kashmir Assembly thrice from Sopore Assembly Constituency in 1972, 1977 and 1987.

In the years 1983-85, this writer had several opportunities to listen to Gilani's Friday congregational addresses at Muslim Peer mosque in Sopore. His religious address was so much reverberating and electrifying that even the blood of modest person would boil. He started claiming that "Islam is the only true religion in the universe, meant for the welfare of humankind and salvation of all human miseries. Prophet was the only last Prophet and after him there would be no prophethood. Islam admits only Islamic system of government (*Nizam-i-Mustafa*) where every system of governance would be according to the holy Quran and *Hadis*. Islam has to extend invitation (*Dawat*) to non-Muslims to embrace Islam which is a perfect religion, having belief in one God and his prophet. Islam does not allow idol worship and does not believe in number of gods and dieties. Islam's constitution is Quran and *Hadis* is the manifesto which every true Muslim should follow."

According to Syed Ali Gilani "democracy, secularism, socialism and all such isms are un-Islamic. Islam recognises all earlier Prophets right from Adam till Prophet Mohammad. In Islam religion and politics are inseparable. In the past, during *Jihad* religion had been the basis of all Islamic religious wars whether it was *Jung-e-Badar* or any other *Jung*. Enemies of Islam had been at war with Islam at every step of history." Gilani has been spearheading the movement for the establishment of *Nizam-i-Mustafa*, with a puritan Islamic mode of governance including Islamic banking and Islamic judicial system headed by a *Qazi*.

Jamat-e-Islami's world view is articulated by Gilani who advocates that Islam being a universal religion, it does not believe in geographical boundaries. So Muslims of world are brothers. Gilani views America as a supporter of Israel against Muslim Palestine and other Arab-Muslim countries ever since the formation of Jewish state. To Gilani, Islam is a well organised social, political, economic and religious system for governance so that religion and politics are complimentary to each other. He believes that America and all western countries have been working against Islam and that all their systems are un-Islamic. "Their naked civilization, pornography, addiction to drugs, liquor consumption, free society are all un-Islamic. Western countries have

S. Shah

been spreading this culture in Islamic world also. Therefore, followers of true Islam should oppose such behavioural culture tooth and nail. America is *Satan*.” He condemns Russian communism as a society without belief in God. He also denounced the Russians “for trampling the freedom of Afghanistan by sending its troops into that country and killing number of Afghans, destroying their cities etc.” He calls both these countries as destroyers of mankind in Vietnam, Palestine and Afghanistan. Gilani argues that there are nearly 52 Muslim countries in the world, which if united, would emerge strong enough to challenge both the super powers. But he laments that these Islamic countries have been divided due to infighting which is encouraged by the imperialistic America. As regards India, Syed Ali Gilani ridicules Indian democracy and secularism as breeding corruption and anarchy, thus being redundant. He is critical of the central and state governments for adopting un-Islamic means of development such as family planning, pig farming, banking etc.

Similar type of Islamic advocacy was going on in *Jamaat-e-Islami* based Friday congregations in all districts of the valley in mosques, *madradas* or in open parks. This resulted in the silent erosion of liberal and traditional Islam in the valley and its replacement by a fundamentalist and militarised form of Islam as propounded by the *Jamaat-e-Islami* and its front organisations, thereby subverting the unique indigenous socio-cultural ethos of Kashmir.

UN SUB-COMMISSION ON THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS (51ST SESSION) : A REPORT

Sharad K. Soni

The UN Sub-Commission on Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, renamed after 51 years as the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities convened on August 2, 1999 at Palais des Nations in Geneva for a period of about four weeks ending on August 27, 1999. Following the trends of past years, this year also the aim of this meeting was to discuss the human rights situation all over the world. The Sub-Commission which was created in 1947 by the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) consists of 26 independent experts representing countries from the five regional groups. Being the Commission's principal subsidiary organ, the Sub-Commission undertakes studies as per its mandate and subsequently makes recommendations to the UNCHR for taking necessary actions on the concerned issues. It also keeps abreast of trends in the field of human rights and explores such important issues that have not received sufficient attention. Ribot Hatano of Japan was elected as the Chairperson of this session. Marc Bossuyt of Belgium, Mustapha Mehedi of Algeria, and Teimuraz O. Ramishvili of the Russian Federation were chosen as the new Vice Chairpersons. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro of Brazil was elected to perform the job of Rapporteur.

Addressing the opening meeting, the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson said that she regarded the Sub-Commission as having had an important role in expanding the human rights activities of the United Nations. She stressed that the new title reinforced the relevance of the role and that the panel should continue in its role as catalyst and originator of some of the more imaginative initiatives undertaken on behalf of fundamental rights and freedoms around the

world. “The intellectual output of the Sub-Commission could contribute in a real way to the work of the office and to the championing of human rights generally”, she said and added, “The input of NGOs at the Sub-Commission was [also] valued, and was seen as an indispensable part of the task of promoting and protecting human rights.” The outgoing Chairman, El-Hadji Guisse said that the Sub-Commission was an open and flexible body, a forum where new ideas could be expressed, debated and crystallised in proposals which would eventually have an impact on other United Nations bodies practicing in the field of human rights. “The Sub-Commission should be more than an intellectual think tank and that it should be a forum for the protection of human rights”, he added. The Chairman of the 51st session Ribot Hatano in his address pointed to three problems that required urgent attention, i.e. the implementation of Human Rights conventions by States that were party to them; the impact of “non-State” actors on human rights; and the fair resolution of conflicts. He said that the contribution made by NGOs, notably those having consultative status with ECOSOC, was enormous. “They were the main source of information about human rights violations in various countries and regions”, added. “Not only the Sub-Commission but the United Nations as a whole would have to depend even more upon NGOs in the future.”

Various issues deliberated at the 51st session of the Sub-Commission on Promotion and Protection of Human Rights included the Realisation of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and Right to Development; Rights of the Indigenous Peoples; Prevention of Discrimination against and Protection of Minorities; Freedom of Movement including Population Displacement and the Right to seek asylum from Persecution; Elimination of all forms of Intolerance and Discrimination based on Religion or Belief; Promotion, Protection and Restoration of Human Rights at national, regional and international levels; Encouragement of Universal Acceptance of Human Rights Instruments; Elimination of Racial Discrimination including the situation of migrant workers and their families; Rights of Women; Rights of Children and Youth; Contemporary forms of Slavery; Adverse consequences of the

transfer of arms on the enjoyment of human rights; Arbitrary deprivation of nationality; Implications of humanitarian activities for the enjoyment of human rights; Terrorism and Human rights; Administration of Justice, Human rights and disability etc. Besides, the Sub-Commission considered communications from governments, non-governmental organisations and other sources dealing with allegations of human rights violations.

Question of the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including policies of racial discrimination and segregation, in all countries, with particular reference to colonial and other dependent countries and territories

As in previous sessions, this agenda item was again among the Sub-Commission's most contentious issues debated at the 51st session. Not only the Sub-Commission experts as well as representatives and observers from national delegations but also several NGOs made their remarks dealing with the violations of fundamental rights and freedoms in various countries. Among the violations alleged were religious and ethnic discrimination, discrimination against indigenous peoples, armed conflict, genocide, rape both during peace and conflict, discriminatory provisions within legislation, limitations on freedoms of movement and expression, torture and forced disappearances. Besides, Sub-Commission Experts cautioned against the dangers of "humanitarian interventions", saying they could be a pretext under which powerful nations could expand their influence and interfere in the affairs of other countries and of the United Nations. They also debated whether or not it was proper or effective for the United Nations or other international bodies, such as the NATO, to intervene in the affairs of sovereign states when massive and flagrant violations of human rights were occurring.

Sub-Commission Expert, Fan Gouxiang said that ethnic conflicts represented the most outrageous violations of human rights and that every effort, including the use of force should be employed in order to counter inhuman violence by bigger, humanitarian intervention. He stated that perpetrators of power politics did not hesitate to engage in aggressive

Sharad K. Soni

activities under a humanitarian guise. “The settlement of issues related to human rights, including rights of minorities, fell essentially within the jurisdiction of individual states”, he said. “The concern of the international community should be expressed through international cooperation.” He stressed that confrontational measures should be discouraged and avoided. “The threat or use of force could by no means resolve any human rights problems, and only served to help the big powers bully smaller nations”, he added.

Another Sub-Commission Expert, El-Hadji Guisse stated that the United Nations today had been rendered more fragile and it was dominated by certain powers that used and abused its powers. He stressed that the UN must promote universal respect for human rights and its recommendations to States ought to be looked at more closely. “Concern had been expressed about the already discriminatory practice of the application of standards”, he added. Sub-Commission Expert, Rajenda Kalidas Wimala Goonesekere pointed out that the concept of an international human rights law did not mean that national sovereignty should be displaced. What was important was that the moralities of international intervention be laid out. “Experience had shown that promises and assurances that only military targets would be attacked were no guarantee that civilians and civilian institutions would not be damaged”, he said. Sub-Commission Expert, Francoise Jane Hampson opined that international supervision of the implementation of human rights commitments was secondary or residual. The primary obligation was that of the State, which was the body that should carry out effective investigations into alleged human rights violations. The State should provide an effective national remedy.

Several NGOs also spoke before the Sub-Commission alleging violations of human rights in various countries. David Litman of the Association for World Education appealed to the Sub-Commission to adopt a firm resolution recalling its 1985 Resolution; and also to the Government of Pakistan to repeal blasphemy legislation and to restore the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons in its jurisdiction.

“A mandatory death sentence for blasphemy as prescribed by Pakistani law was in total contradiction with international human rights instruments and should not exist in any State legislation”, he said.

Arif Mahmood Qureshi of the Afro-Asian People’s Solidarity Organization said that Pakistan called itself a democracy, but it was really a military State in a civilian disguise. According to the Pakistani media, the ruler was playing with statistics to downplay the number of minorities. He appealed to the international community to pressure Pakistan to grant the minorities their full rights.

Karen Talbot of the World Federation of Trade Unions said that the evolving situation in South Asia, notably the fighting between India and Pakistan, was grounds for concern. She emphasised that Pakistan today was facing a crisis of identity and it was unable to decide whether it was to belong to the club of democratic nations or whether it would be an Islamic theocracy. “Pakistan should be encouraged to shed its current ethos and establish its identity as a responsible State”, she said. “Then alone could it be deemed a worthy interlocutor with which to interact on issues relating to the welfare of its own peoples and of the world community.”

Laura Bachman of International Institute for Peace said that on the eve of the next century, there appeared to be a trend in some countries to move away from domestic norms in the pursuit of power. She said that in Pakistan sectarian violence was rife, perpetrated by the graduates of the *madrasas*, with the minority Shia sect at the receiving end. “Religious minorities were persecuted under legal and institutional structures set in place to perpetuate discrimination”, she added. “The women of Pakistan remained in dread of the Talibanization of Pakistan, a distinct possibility when one remembered that the Taliban had emerged from the same breed of *madrasas* and had been fashioned by the same ideology articulated by the *Harkat-ul-Mujahideen*.”

Emphasising that there were serious human rights implications to the situation in Bhutan, Priscilla Singh of Lutheran World Federation

Sharad K. Soni

said that Bhutanese refugees living in Nepal and India could not return home. “No technical assistance had been requested by Bhutan in relation to the specific issue of establishing an impartial verification exercise for the refugees based upon accepted principles of international human rights law”, she added.

Thematic Issues Relating to the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

While considering this agenda item the Sub-Commission had before it a note by the Secretariat (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1999/5) on a comprehensive examination of thematic issues relating to the elimination of racial discrimination. It affirmed that the Sub-Commission had agreed to request the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to send out a questionnaire to governments, international organisations and NGOs, inviting them to submit relevant national documentation on the subject of affirmative action. Besides, there was a working paper (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1999/8) submitted by the Sub-Commission Expert Joseph Oloka-Onyango on globalisation in the context of increased incidents of racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia. The document not only addressed the nexus between globalisation and racism but also discussed the human rights context of globalisation and offered recommendations for action.

During discussions on this item, several Sub-Commission Experts made their remarks on the spread of racist and xenophobic practices across the globe despite the efforts of the United Nations and the international community to combat them. They called for particular attention to be given to the rights of migrant workers. While Sub-Commission Expert El-Hadji Guisse stressed that acts of racism or discrimination should be illegal and punished, Experts Rajendra Kalides Wimala Gooneskere and Asbjorn Eide highlighted the role of affirmative action as one of the attempted methods to rectify the effects of discrimination. Another Sub-Commission Expert Louis Joinet said that globalisation had rhymed with Balkanization, and this was linked to racism, which brought on ethnic cleansing.

UN Sub-Commission (51st Session): A Report

Numerous country representatives also spoke in opposition to various forms of racial discrimination. NGOs too made specific allegations of racism, xenophobia and discrimination against migrant workers and their families. While lamenting discrimination against migrant workers, Giora Morino Fonter of International Labour Office (ILO) welcomed the appointment of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants. He said that this would be a valuable opportunity for the UN to draw international attention to the problems of marginalization, discrimination, exploitation and abuse which migrants faced across the globe, and to work towards one of the common goals of the UN system - upholding the basic human rights of all individuals, including migrant workers and their families.

Juanita Oliver of European Union of Public Relations said that overt racial discrimination posed a serious threat to the promotion of human rights. A new breed of discrimination existed, as displayed in religious and ethnic discrimination in countries such as Rwanda, Yugoslavia and Afghanistan. Oliver stressed that the main victims of the policies of racial discrimination were multi-ethnic and multi-religious societies and the blame rested with those who encouraged fissures in society for their own selfish political and other reasons. "Human rights activists should investigate the legal structures and educational environments of countries which sanctioned discrimination and created darkness instead of enlightenment."

V.K. Gupta of Interfaith International said that the best way to fight racism was to fund the World Conference on Racism. The next step in ridding the world of the scourge of racism was for all countries to ratify the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and all other related conventions and resolutions. "Nations should pass legislation to implement those conventions", he stressed. "Ratification should be a goal for ending this millennium; such shameful behaviour as racism should not be dragged into the new millennium."

David Oliver of International Institute for Peace said that it was distressing that even today, issues belonging to the Middle Ages still

Himalayan and Central Asian Studies Vol. 4 Nos. 3-4, July - Dec. 2000 157

Sharad K. Soni

existed. “Oppression was a hallmark of all dictatorships perpetuated by the creation of a culture of discrimination”, he said. “Pakistan had been no exception. Religion, the basis of the creation of Pakistan, had become the tool of oppression.”

Karen Talbot of World Federation of Trade Unions highlighted that on the threshold of a new millennium when humankind should be looking to a bright future marked by great advancement in eradicating the reprehensible social ills of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance, there was an unprecedented number of conflicts, including acts of genocide, ignited on the basis of these very scourges. Talbot stated that such conflicts had been raging in the Balkans, Africa and South Asia, among other places.

The **Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation (HRCF)** too presented its view before the Sub-Commission on this issue. Its representative Firdous Syed Baba stated that the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination reflected the great concern of the UN in eliminating the menace of xenophobia. It revealed the resolve of the international community through the UN to end discriminations based on colour, race or religion. However, he said that in spite of this, xenophobia was assuming menacing proportions in the world today. “Xenophobic practices were leading to grave human rights violations, notably in the case of the so-called *Jehad*, in whose name horrors had been committed in different parts of the world,” he said. “An investigation had pointed to the Pakistani connection in these events.” He urged the Sub-Commission and the international community to apply pressure on Pakistan to stop this dangerous trend of promoting xenophobia.

The Realization of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

As the Sub-Commission began its annual consideration of economic, social and cultural rights it had before it a working paper (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1999/10) submitted by Expert Mustapha Mehedi on the content of the right to education. Introducing his paper he said that education must be considered a civil right and a political right, as well as

UN Sub-Commission (51st Session): A Report

an economic, social and cultural right. He detailed four main aims of education - development of the human personality, the strengthening of human rights, the capacity for everyone to become a member of civilized society, and the development of an understanding of racial and religious intolerance. The Sub-Commission also considered a working paper (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1999/11) submitted by Sub-Commission Expert Joseph Oloka-Onyango and Alternate Expert Deepika Udagama on human rights as the primary objective of international trade, investment and finance policy and practice. The working paper provided an overview of the relationship between human rights and international trade, showcased some relevant human rights instruments, discussed critical multilateral and regional institutions, and offered conclusions and recommendations.

Before the Sub-Commission there was also a report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1999/30) on promoting the right to development in the context of the United Nations Decade for the Elimination of Poverty (1997-2006). The report contained descriptions of the actions of relevant United Nations bodies and agencies to help promote the right to development. It reviewed among others, the development efforts of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), the International Trade Centre (ITC), the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS/Habitat). Besides, a report of the sessional Working Group on the working methods and activities of transnational corporations (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1999/9), was also put before the Sub-Commission. The report elaborated the activities of transnational corporations; present standards and standard-setting activities; and offered conclusions and recommendations on the subject as well as recommendations for future work of the Working Group.

During discussion on this agenda item several speakers stressed the indivisibility of all human rights and pointed to the increasing recognition given to economic, social and cultural rights over the last decade. Many of those addressing the meeting emphasised the importance of the rights

Sharad K. Soni

to education and development, especially for the world's poorer nations. They stated that the right to education was vital since it led to the ability to achieve all other rights. Several NGOs pointed out that transnational corporations (TNCs) often profited from natural resources in developing countries while sharing little of their profits with the inhabitants of the host countries. The Sub-Commission Expert Jose Bengoa pointed out that the distribution of knowledge around the world was less equal than the distribution of income. He said that this inequality was having grave consequences on development. Another Expert Ahmad Khalifa said that the right to development presupposed that all people in a society were provided equal opportunity to participate in political, social, economic and cultural fields, a condition that often was lacking. "Successful development needed to be carried out in an honest and forthright manner", he added.

While Eleazar Ruiz Yavila of Mexico described the bilingual and bicultural education as successful efforts which helped to reduce illiteracy, Sharat Sabharwal of India stressed that democracy alone could not guarantee that people enjoyed the right to participate in and benefit from the development process. He said that it was necessary, among other things, to arrest and reverse the declining trend in official development aid, to cancel foreign debt, and to provide for the transfer of technology to developing countries on reasonable terms. Annar Cassan of UNESCO stressed that human rights education should be a part of the curriculum at all levels of learning. He said that Human rights education was essential for fighting ignorance, selfishness and violence.

Meanwhile, a number of NGOs spoke before the Sub-Commission. Gul Nawaz Khan of Interfaith International charged Pakistan stating that the right to development could not be realized in Kashmir, since Pakistani rulers through an organized move had been keeping the people illiterate. Nazima Munshi of European Union of Public Relations highlighted Nepal's smooth transition to a democratic system and India's efforts of providing former's youth the democratic environment for their education. At the same time, she also pointed to the type of education being imparted in Pakistan. "Children were kept shackled

UN Sub-Commission (51st Session): A Report

and only religious dogma was fed to them”, she said. “The Taliban were the most visible manifestation of what such an education could do to a country.” She said that the authorities in Pakistan and the Pakistani media had established the nexus between these religious schools and terrorist groups such as *Harkat-ul-Ansar* and others, and the burgeoning sectarian killings in Pakistan. She feared that similar developments could soon take place in Nepal because names such as *Harkat-ul-Jehad* and Taliban had already begun to make the rounds in Bangladesh. “It would only be a matter of time before the newly established religious schools in Nepal became a breeding ground for cadres of such groups”, she added.

John Quigly of Franciscans International charged that development in poorer nations was being stymied by such problems as heavy foreign debt burdens and the unsupervised activities of transnational corporations (TNCs). He said that TNCs should be regulated by an international code of conduct. On the other side, highlighting that security always took precedence over development, Prof. Kashinath Pandita of African Commission of Health and Human Right Promoters stressed that there should be a moratorium on the import, export and manufacture of light weapons. “These weapons were proliferating enormously all over the world”, he said. “In the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, development was stagnant because normal life had been destabilized by terrorist activities.” He added that the international community needed to understand the consequences of the traffic in light weapons. “A moratorium on these weapons was necessary, along with a comprehensive plan of action for its implementation.”

While commenting on the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) report which had formulated the doctrine of “security and development” as an important element for realizing the right to development, Prof. Riyaz Punjabi of the **Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation** (HRCF) stated that the doctrine, although developed on the basis of a specific case study of West African States, had nonetheless relevance and application to other conflict zones in different parts of the world. “A peaceful environment was a prerequisite for realization of the right to development”, he argued. “How could any

Sharad K. Soni

kind of development - education, economic or social - take place in the face of pervading violence and turmoil?" He expressed his irony saying that many developing countries were faced with the problem of violence in their societies. "On the one hand they were faced with situations of hunger, poverty and illiteracy, and on the other hand, their societies were embroiled in perpetual conflicts", he added.

The Implementation of Human Rights with Regard to Women

Before taking up this agenda item for discussions, the Sub-Commission considered a report (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1999/13) submitted by the Secretary General on the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan, submitted in accordance with Sub-Commission resolution 1998/17. It highlighted the principal areas of concern (in health, education and employment), reviewed United Nations programmes and strategies, and offered a number of conclusions and recommendations. Besides, there was also a report (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1999/14) submitted by Halima Embarek Warzazi on the situation regarding the elimination of traditional practices affecting the health of women and the girl child. The report provided a historical background and examined national, regional and international initiatives related to the topic. It also reviewed information communicated to the Special Rapporteur and offered summaries and conclusions. Introducing her report Ms. Warzazi stressed that though action should be taken to end such traditional practices, the manner chosen for doing so was more important. "The approach had to be careful, respectful and cooperative", she added.

During discussion on the topic, the Sub-Commission Expert El-Hadji Guisse said that the traditional practices affecting the health of women and girl child unfortunately had not disappeared. "Time was necessary, as was information, to eradicate such practices", he said. "Citizens must be informed about dangers to their own health, both physical and mental." Another Sub-Commission Expert Paulo Sergio Pinheiro while praising the work of NGOs and others who were taking an imaginative approach to ending harmful traditional practices against women, stated that in terms of eradicating these practices, there was a

UN Sub-Commission (51st Session): A Report

delicate balance to be struck between culture and human rights. He said that the cultural implications of the issue should be considered, and the input of NGOs and other groups was useful. Sub-Commission Alternate Expert Gay J. McDougall stated that the prevention of all forms of discrimination was required, and special attention should be paid to the human rights of women throughout the international human rights system. She stressed that study should be undertaken and the gender dimension was important in defining the substantive nature of human rights. "If the realization of human rights for all was to be achieved, then the systematic and systemic nature of discrimination against women should be taken into account", she added.

Meanwhile, several NGOs made their remarks calling, among other things, for greater efforts to end abuses of women's rights by the Taliban regime in Afghanistan; for further progress in ending female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to the health of women and girls; and for greater protection of women in times of armed conflict. Olga Cechurova of Transnational and Transdivisional Radical Party said that the situation of human rights for all persons in Afghanistan, especially women, was constantly degenerating. Physical violence had likely passed unnoticed and unreported in Afghanistan due to the absence of United Nations agencies. Cechurova urged that with the exception of humanitarian aid, all other assistance and co-operation with the government in Afghanistan should be suspended until the government showed respect for the human rights of both men and women. Melanie Le Verger of France Libertes - Fondation Danielle Mitterrand pointed out that women in Afghanistan were also subject to aggression. She stated that they were barred from obtaining education, and some had not been able to receive medical assistance. "Their basic human rights should be upheld", she urged. Margaret Bowden of Liberation remarked that following the Beijing Conference, scrupulous monitoring had been urged for those countries which had signed the Beijing Declaration but had not implemented it. The Declaration maintained that education had a vital role to play in fostering respect for human rights, understanding of different cultures and the establishment of a fair and just society. She

Sharad K. Soni

pointed out that a fair and just society did not exist in Pakistan, where violations of women's rights were widespread and inherent. Juanita Olivier of European Union of Public Relations said that women were further disadvantaged when States sanctioned discrimination. Citing the example of Afghanistan, where women were restricted to their homes and denied the right to education and the right to work, she stressed that close monitoring of that country was required by the Sub-Commission.

Ilmas Futehally of **Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation** (HRCF) stated that there were vast areas in which women suffered human rights abuses which included education, health and nutrition, employment and participation. She pointed out that in spite of awareness and assertions by human rights groups and organizations, gender discrimination continued to persist, particularly in developing countries. Women suffered human rights abuses at the familial, social, cultural and political levels. She stressed that a concerted effort needed to be made to fight these abuses and to allow the women an honourable existence based on equitable terms with their male counterparts. She also pointed to the plight of women and the violation of their rights in Afghanistan which had posed a new challenge for Muslim women. She said that Afghani women had been abducted and raped by members of various warring factions in the country and under the Taliban regime had been denied access to health care, education, employment and humanitarian aid, as well as freedom of movement.

Contemporary Forms of Slavery

Under this agenda item the Sub-Commission heard an updated report on systematic rape, sexual slavery and slavery like practices during armed conflict prepared by Gay J. McDougall, Alternate Expert and Special Rapporteur. Introducing her report Ms. McDougall stated that while advances had been made at the national and international levels, such atrocities still occurred and as such, there was a need for more concerted action. "It remained imperative that criminal prosecutions take place at the national level and that all acts of sexual violence be effectively investigated and redressed", she added. Another

UN Sub-Commission (51st Session): A Report

Sub-Commission's Alternate Expert Oleg Shamshur stressed that there was a need for Government participation in eliminating contemporary forms of slavery. The issue was also addressed by the Sub-Commission Expert Yeung Kain Yeung Sik Yuen who stated that sexual violence was one of the most object forms of violence, since it defiled and debased the victim, the victim's family and the community. "In Afghanistan, rape was considered a mode of war by the warring factions", he said. "Every effort must be made to ensure some measurable improvement there." The role of NGOs as a think tank for the Working Group on Contemporary forms of Slavery was highlighted by Sub-Commission Expert Erica-Irene A. Daes. She said that a new form of slavery was related to illegal asylum seekers and illegal traffic in migrant workers, who were frequently exploited by unscrupulous middlemen or boat-owners. In this regard, she mentioned that concrete information and data should be provided at the next session of the Working Group, so that it could investigate this traffic.

The Sub-Commission also registered comments by a number of other experts as well as speakers from various countries and NGOs, who deplored the use of rape and sexual slavery as a weapon of war and condemned trafficking in children, both as a form of exploitative labour and for sexual purposes. While Tatiana Shaumian of International Institute for Peace said that exploitation of children took place across the globe, and not just, as commonly believed, in developing countries, Deanna Morrow Patty of Interfaith International spoke of young African children whom she claimed had been enslaved in Sudan as a result of the civil war in the country.

Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples

As the Sub-Commission began considering this agenda item, it had before it the final report (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1999/20) prepared by Migual Alfonso Martinez, the Special Rapporteur on treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements between States and indigenous populations. The report included a summary of findings, including treaties and agreements between indigenous peoples and states, other constructive

Sharad K. Soni

arrangements, and situations lacking specific bilateral legal instruments to govern relations between indigenous peoples and states. It also contained a look at present, including the origin, development and consequences of the domestication process, besides having conclusions and recommendations for the future. The report led to a discussion among some other members of the Sub-Commission over whether or not there were indigenous peoples in Asia and Africa. There was also a final working paper (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1999/18) on indigenous peoples and their relationship to lands submitted by Sub-Commission Expert and Special Rapporteur Erica-Irene A. Daes. The document among other things, reviewed endeavours made to resolve indigenous land issues and problems and offered conclusions and future recommendations. Introducing her report Ms. Daes called for legislations to protect indigenous territories and to ensure the full participation of indigenous groups in decision-making related to their lands.

During the discussion on this agenda item several Sub-Commission Experts, NGOs and countries voiced their concerns over the treatment of indigenous populations in various parts of the world. They made their comments on the rights of indigenous peoples to their traditional lands and debated whether the right to self-determination, if applied to such groups, interfered with the sovereignty of states. While the Sub-Commission Expert El-Hadji Guise stressed that the Sub-Commission should also expand the land issue to include the consideration of peoples displaced from their lands by colonialism, another Sub-Commission Expert Mustapha Mehedi called for educational projects to support the rights and cultures of indigenous groups.

Willie Littlechild of International Organization of Indigenous Resource Development wanted the indigenous peoples to participate fully in United Nations operations. He said that the recent celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights had highlighted the exclusion of indigenous peoples from the UN family except on subject of human rights. "Indigenous peoples had lot to offer", he said. "Their involvement could help build a better world, but they must be able to participate as equal partners." Deanna Morrow Patty of

UN Sub-Commission (51st Session): A Report

Interfaith International opined that to start a dialogue with indigenous peoples, one could begin by exploring the idea of land as a holy place. Nur Amalia of Netherlands Organization for International Development Corporation said that the relationship between indigenous peoples and land was a sacred one and that the indigenous communities and their territories formed one identity, while Ronad Barnes of Indigenous World Association stressed that the topic should be a permanent item on the agenda of the Sub-Commission's Working Group on Indigenous Populations, since the relationship of indigenous peoples to land was vitally important for their survival.

**Prevention of Discrimination against and Protection of
Minorities**

As the Sub-Commission began considering this agenda item, it had before it a report of the Working Group on Minorities (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1999/21) prepared by the Sub-Commission Expert and Chairman-Rapporteur Asbjorn Eide. The report contained a review of the promotion and practical realisation of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic; an examination of possible solutions to problems involving minorities, including the promotion of mutual understanding between and among minorities and governments, and recommendations to be taken for the promotion and protection of the rights of persons belonging to minorities.

During the debate on the topic, the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Minorities heard from a host of Experts, member countries and NGOs who made their comments on such matters as the definition of "minority," whether or not minorities had the right to self-determination; what "self-determination" amounted to; and whether democratic systems in themselves were enough to ensure protection of the rights of minority groups. Several NGOs alleged maltreatment of minority groups around the world especially, specific discriminatory practices in various countries, including persecution based on religious belief, forced displacement, and suppression of inter-cultural education.

Sharad K. Soni

They called for greater respect by states for all their ethnic and religious populations.

Sub-Commission Expert Erica-Irene A. Daes, while conceding that it was exceptionally difficult to produce a single definition of a “minority, nonetheless proposed that the Chairman or a member of the Working Group draft criteria to determine if a person belonged to a minority group or not. At the same time, Alternate Expert Deepika Udagama stressed that a worldwide database on minorities currently under development should be expanded. Another Sub-Commission Expert El-Hadji Guisse said that a definition of “minority” was neither useful nor possible. He highlighted that some minorities did not always understand what was meant by autonomy and sovereignty, and went past the concept of a national identity. “Autonomy and separatism should not be confused”, he said and added that “the Working Group should examine this matter and inform minorities that their rights to participate in the overall development of a country did not open the door to independence or separatism.”

Sub-Commission Expert and Chairman of the Working Group on Minorities, Asbjorn Eide pointed out that minority rights did not serve as a basis for claims of secession. He said that claims of groups for self-determination could not be made on the basis of minority rights. “Issues of secession were not part of the discussion within the working group”, he added. Eide also made his remarks at the end of the debate saying, among other things, that minority rights should not be used as a basis for independence which was a different thing; that defining the term “minority” required settling on certain criteria, but the word might be defined as a group of people who felt they belonged together and felt they were threatened with regard to the preservation of their culture, practice of their religion, or similar matters; and that democracy alone, especially in its early stages, was not a very good way of protecting minority rights-that a country needed to be stable first.

Sub-Commission Expert Soli J. Sarabjee said that minorities had a vote but they did not have a veto. “They need not invoke secession as

UN Sub-Commission (51st Session): A Report

long as their rights were available to them”, he observed. “Minorities needed easy access to judicial institutions or to national human-rights commission.” As regards the issue of Roma, Sub-Commission Expert David Weissbrodt suggested that the Sub-Commission undertake a study of the problems Roma faced and explore ways to improve their situation. Sub-Commission Expert Fan Guoxiang stressed that minorities were part of a country, but they should respect the judicial authority of the State. “It was not proper to resort to violence and when there were problems, minorities should negotiate or seek legal redress”, he suggested.

Several NGOs spoke before the Sub-Commission on this item. Ludovica Verzegnazzi of European Union of Public Relations stated that equality of all before the law, irrespective of faith, creed, colour or gender, was the essential principle of democracy. “But what happened when a nation called itself a democracy, yet sought a structure designed to perpetuate discrimination and oppression?”, she argued. “That was Pakistan of today.” She pointed to the discrimination being targeted against Ahmediyas, Zikris, Hindus and Christian minorities in Pakistan against the wishes of the founding father of Pakistan who declared that people were free to go to their temples, their mosques or any other places of worship. Paul Beersmans of International Movement for Fraternal Union among Races and Peoples expressed deep concern over ethnic cleansing taking place in the Kashmir valley. He said that the Hindus living there were the target of atrocities committed by Muslim fundamentalists. “The situation remained far from normal there and in other areas of Jammu and Kashmir, where foreign mercenaries continued a systematic campaign of annihilation of Hindus, moderate Muslims and political leaders”, he said. “This religious cleansing was discrimination against minorities.” He stressed that the Kashmiris and other minorities had the basic human rights to live in peace without being oppressed by racist or religious attacks.

Tatiana Shaumian of International Institute for Peace stressed that constitutional framework that accorded a predominant position to a particular religion or group ensured that the rights of minorities would not be preserved. She said that in a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and

multi-cultural world, the absence of tolerance created the danger of violence and infringed upon human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as threatened democratic pluralism, and endangered peace and stability both domestically and internationally.

Ashok Bhan of Indian Council of Education while speaking on the issue of minorities said that in South Asia, the minorities were treated as second-class citizens and they did not have the benefits of equality and protection under law. He said that due to terrorism particularly in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir, not only thousands of members of Hindu minority had fled their homes but also the Shia minority community had been subjected to massive displacements. "This terrorist violence perpetuated the cult of intolerance and violence in Asia", Bhan added. He urged that nations which sanctioned legal and constitutional structures serving to encourage discrimination based on religion, race, caste or creed should be censured by the United Nations. Genei Shinoji of World Federation of Trade Unions said that Kashmiri Pandits today were the most helpless and most ignored minority to be persecuted by fundamentalist mercenary gangs marauding across their land from Pakistan. "In such an environment, inculcating respect for human rights appeared to be a hopeless task", he stressed. "If Pakistan could not be reformed, it was incumbent upon human rights activists to ensure the protection of rights of the persecuted Kashmiri Pandits."

While Gianfranco Rossi of International Association for Religious Freedom touched upon the issue of Ahmadi religious minority being constantly persecuted in Pakistan, Mohammad Anwar of World Federation of Democratic Youth raised the issue of Mohajirs of Sindh province in Pakistan. Anwar said that the Mohajirs had been suffering the worst atrocities that an ethnic and linguistic minority could imagine. He urged the Sub-Commission to take action within the frame of its mandate to persuade Pakistan to put an end to its repressive and anti-human repression of the Mohajirs, who had died by the thousands in the genocide and pogroms unleashed against them. Keith Bennet of Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation made a point stating that the inherent nobility of democracies was being exploited by terrorist

groups using religion and ethnicity to destabilize established societies. Similarly, expressing concern over discrimination and persecution on the basis of religion, Philippe Leblance of Franciscans International said that religious minorities were increasingly the target of bigotry which was often instigated by extremist forces.

Prof Riyaz Punjabi of the **Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation** (HRCF) highlighted that although minority rights in pluralistic societies had been the subject of perennial debate, at some levels, an apprehension still existed that an over-emphasis on minority rights in a pluralistic society could pose a danger to the territorial cohesion, challenging stability within a State. “The situation became complex when rival States interfered by promoting jingoism and militancy among minority groups in order to further their strategic objectives,” he said. “There was a great urgency to strike and emphasize a balance between the two realms.” He stressed that the rights of minorities could be protected and promoted in a big way once States were convinced that the processes of protection and promotion of minority rights were not directed at bringing about instability.

The Administrative of Justice and Human Rights

Under the agenda item on the administration of Justice, Sub-Commission members paid their attention particularly to the question of emergency and the application of international standards for detained juveniles. Before a general debate began, the Sub-Commission had before it a report of the Secretary General (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1999/31) listing States which have proclaimed or have continued states of emergency, both before and after June 1997. Besides, the Sub-Commission also focussed on other issues, such as the application of international norms on the independence and impartiality of the judiciary and the independence of lawyers, the privatisation of prisons, and the individualisation of prosecution and penalties.

A number of Sub-Commission Experts and NGOs urged action to eliminate impunity for human rights abuses and an end to such offenses as disappearances and arbitrary detention. Several member countries

Sharad K. Soni

also said that an independent judiciary was indispensable for the effective functioning of democratic, pluralistic societies. Sub-Commission Expert El-Hadji Guisse pointed out that in many countries, there was a system of impunity that ensured that human rights violators would not be punished and the result was constant instability. Another Expert Rajenda Kalidas Wimala Gooneskere contended that without an independent judiciary, true justice could not be ensured, while Sub-Commission Expert Francoise Jane Hampson said that the Sub-Commission's responsibility did not end with the simple drafting of a text, and that it was necessary to ensure that the rules were applied in practice.

Meanwhile, Douglas Herbek of Human Rights Advocates focussed on the state of women in Afghanistan and said that the war there had resulted in the indiscriminate killing of women. He said that Afghanistan was a collapsed state and the UN should intervene in Afghanistan as it did to protect Rwandans. He urged that the Sub-Commission should recommend the direct humanitarian action to be taken; the UN should establish monitoring posts to prevent an illicit arms flow; specific countries that supply arms to Afghanistan should be condemned; a commission of experts should assist the Taliban in determining how it might respect both the human rights and its Islamic obligations; and ultimately, peacekeepers might be needed to prevent further gross and massive violations of human rights. Charles Graves of Interfaith International while highlighting the problems faced by Mohajirs in Pakistan stated that there were secret agencies working in Pakistan to eliminate a movement of the Mohajir people of Sindh for genuine political, civil and economic rights. Samina Ibrahim of International Institute for Peace said that people had the right not to be deprived of life or liberty without due process of law, but there were many States whose constitutional, judicial and legal systems remained discriminatory. "In Pakistan, a new religion seemed to be catching on," she said. "Fundamentalism around the world was responsible for wholesale human rights abuses, and the administration of justice was also being governed by these considerations", she added.

Freedom of Movement

While considering this agenda item, the Sub-Commission heard a number of speakers who levelled allegations concerning violations of the freedom of movement in a number of countries. They highlighted human rights difficulties as leading to population displacement. Ngozi Maduakoh of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees said that many countries today were increasingly reluctant to accept and support refugees and other victims of forced displacement. Maduakoh called for further study by the Sub-Commission into the applicable rights and treatment of non-citizens. While Olga Cechurova of Transnational Radical Party suggested that the population displacement in the autonomous regions of China - Tibet, Eastern Turkestan and Inner Mongolia - needed the attention of the Sub-Commission, Rafaquat Ali Khan of World Federation of Trade Unions said that the problem of internally displaced persons and family reunification remained unattended to at the international level, notably in the case of the Kashmiri Pandits, who had suffered under a planned operation of ethnic cleansing aided and abetted from across foreign borders.

Addressing the topic was also the **Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation** (HRCF). In his intervention, the Secretary General of the HRCF Prof. K. Warikoo described the problems of population displacements as very serious. He said that there were many displaced people in the world mainly due to armed conflict, terrorist violence and xenophobia. Prof. Warikoo brought to the notice of the Sub-Commission that the issue of religious persecution and terrorist violence which caused population displacements in parts of South and Central Asia had not been adequately studied. He drew attention of the Sub-Commission to the immense sufferings of about 400,000 displaced Kashmiri Hindus who were forced out by Islamist extremists, terrorists and mercenaries from their ancient habitat in Kashmir. He said that “this displaced community is a victim of sinister design unleashed by Pakistan and its bands of Islamist terrorists and mercenaries to deprive the ancient and indigenous Kashmiri Hindus of their right to the territorial locus in the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir, so that the social and political order of this State is altered

Sharad K. Soni

to a mono-ethnic Islamist extremist agenda.” He further said that they have been displaced for ten years and deprived of their rights to life, property, education and employment, and their social fabric had been destroyed; the breakdown of their families had begun. “Having cleansed the Kashmir valley of its Hindu minority, Pakistan has now trained its guns and terrorists on the innocent Gujjar and Hindu population of the border areas of Kupwara, Bandipora, Poonch, Rajouri, Doda, R. S. Pura, Akhnoor, Hiranagar, Pargwal, Samba and Nowshera”, he said and added that “similar has been the fate of the Shia population of Kargil, who having refused to toe the pro-Pakistani line, were made the target of Pak artillery shelling during the last two years.” He cited another case of Islamist extremist persecution of ethnic-religious minorities in the recent Taliban offensive in Shomali valley and Gulbahar, north of Kabul where ethnic Tajiks had been subjected to all types of atrocities including murder and imprisonment. “These violent attempts to re-draw territorial boundaries based on exclusive mono-ethnic religious extremist identities and the resultant ethnic cleansing and brutal eviction of people belonging to ethnic-religious minorities, have become the major cause of forced human displacement in parts of South and Central Asia”, he stressed. “Restoration of homeland with dignity, security, freedom of faith and religion of these displaced indigenous ethnic-religious minorities, duly safeguarded by appropriate legal, administrative and institutional arrangements and structures, is the sine qua non for peace and security in the region”, Prof. Warikoo added.

Situation Regarding the Promotion, full Realisation and Protection of the Rights of Children and Youth

The Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights heard the Sub-Commission Expert Sang Yong Park who said that some guerrilla forces were rounding up children as young as eight to fight in wars and armed conflicts. He highlighted that small arms and light weapons were a grave threat to children since they increased the likelihood that children would be recruited or abducted for use as soldiers.

UN Sub-Commission (51st Session): A Report

During discussions on this agenda item, various NGOs, international agencies and observer nations took the floor and told the Sub-Commission about the effects of armed conflicts and other dangerous situations on children. Ricardo Hernandez Puudo of International Labour Office (ILO) reviewed a new ILO Convention designed to prevent the worst forms of child labour, which were defined as slavery or recruitment into prostitution or pornography, drug dealing or service with armed forces. He said that the Convention which defined a child as anyone under the age of 18, also provided that member States should adopt immediate and effective measures to prevent the worst forms of child labour and should ensure the social rehabilitation of children involved in such labour. While John Sautter of Pax Roman insisted that there was a special need for new impetus to be given to the design and implementation of youth policies and programmes at all levels, Bineta Diop of African Commission of Health and Human Rights Promoters stressed that child soldiers needed extensive assistance to ensure psychological healing and the learning of skills necessary for success in civil society.

Meanwhile, noting that the ILO had unanimously adopted a landmark Convention banning Worst Forms of Child Labour in June 1999 Prof. K. Warikoo, the Secretary General of the **Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation** (HRCF) stressed that children were the most vulnerable members of society. He brought it to the notice of the Sub-Commission that nearly 250 million children between 5 and 14 years of age work in developing countries and about 50 to 60 million children between the ages of 5 and 11 are working in hazardous circumstances. "Given the enormous magnitude of the problem of child labour, there is need to promote public awareness of the evils of child labour, to facilitate access of children to formal and non-formal education, to curb poverty and to adopt the population planning policy", he said. Prof. Warikoo described education as an important vehicle of growth and development and a means of social and economic advancement and, therefore, there was a need to provide working children with an education that is consistent with their well being and development. Highlighting the role of NGOs in providing the Non Formal Education to the affected

Sharad K. Soni

children, he brought it to the Sub-Commission's notice that the **Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation** with the support of ILO, Delhi office had organized a National Seminar cum Workshop on CHILD LABOUR AND THEIR REHABILITATION at Delhi on 30-31 July 1999. He said that the seminar made an indepth assessment of the rehabilitation programmes for the released child labour, discussed the results of Non-Formal Education programmes and explored ways and means of coordination between various agencies to provide Non-Formal Education and to alleviate the economic problems of child labour. He hoped that with the cooperation of ILO, UNICEF, UNESCO and concerned voluntary agencies, the Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation will be able to pursue the matter further to achieve the desired results. He stressed that there should be coordination between Governments and the voluntary sector to bring this about.

**Review of Further Developments in Fields with which the
Sub-Commission has been or may be concerned**

Under this agenda item a number of sub-items were discussed such as terrorism, illicit trafficking in arms, and the acceptability of reservations to international human rights treaties. Among the documents before the Sub-Commission was a note by the Secretary General (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1999/23) which contained a review of further developments in fields with which Sub-Commission has been or may be concerned. The document included matters related to the International Covenants on Human Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; and the effective implementation of international instruments on human rights, including reporting obligations of States parties. There was also a note by the Secretariat (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1999/26) on the adverse consequences of the transfer of arms and illicit trafficking in arms on the enjoyment of human rights. Besides, a preliminary report (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1999/27) on terrorism and human rights prepared by Kalliopi Koufa, the Special Rapporteur and Alternate Expert was also put before the Sub-Commission. Introducing

UN Sub-Commission (51st Session): A Report

her report Ms. Koufa remarked that the constant struggle between member States to reach consensus as to what types of acts constituted terrorism and what persons were terrorists had not only reflected their deep ideological disagreement on the permissible uses of violence, but had also turned international efforts into a piecemeal approach to the problem of controlling terrorism, resulting in the adoption of a number of conventions - 12 until now - that addressed crimes associated with terrorism.

Also before the Sub-Commission were a working paper (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1999/28) on reservations to human rights treaties; a working paper (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1999/29) on observance of human rights by States which were not parties to UN human rights Conventions; and a memorandum submitted by the International Labour Office (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1999/24) entitled "Comprehensive examination of thematic issues relating to the elimination of racial discrimination; the Implementation of human rights with regard to women; Human rights of indigenous peoples; the Administration of Justice and Human Rights; Review of further developments in fields with which the Sub-Commission has been or may be concerned."

During the debate the main focus was on terrorist activities and how terrorism could best be defined. Sub-Commission Expert Francoise Jane Hampson said that the terms "terrorism" and "human rights violation" were too often used interchangeably, and were defined too broadly. She said that "criminal law and international judicial co-operation were the keys to combating terrorism." Another Sub-Commission Expert Sang Yong Park stressed that terrorism must be seen from the perspective of grave violations of fundamental human rights, especially the right to live free from fear and the right to life, liberty and security. While Sub-Commission Expert Rajenda Kalidas Wimala Gooneskere stated that any attempt at defining terrorism should be postponed, and instead, instances of terrorism should be studied with the aim of finding common factors, Sub-Commission Expert Soli J. Sorabjee said that there should be some broad agreement on the acts defining a terrorist. Sorabjee insisted that two concepts should be kept in mind: however noble the

Sharad K. Soni

purpose, the killing of the innocent was utterly indefensible, and the purpose could not justify such acts, since they were blatant violations of the human rights of those killed, as well as being threats to order and stability, and any State that did not combat them could be accused of being a terrorist State. The Sub-Commission Expert Marc Bossuyt stated that terrorist attacks were not just attacks on human rights but these were frequently acts of extremists who were seeking to disrupt a peace process and moreover, they generally refused compromise. Sub-Commission Alternate Expert Ahmed Khalil said that terrorism as a world phenomenon required a consolidated response. He said that there was a close link between the organized trafficking of arms, of drugs and money laundering; this relationship deserved further study.

Several NGOs too put their views on the topic before the Sub-Commission. Prof. Kashi Nath Pandita of African Commission of Health and Human Rights Promoters opined that the State-sponsored terrorism was a phenomenon which the Special Rapporteur on terrorism should make more in-depth study. He described this type of terrorism as usually aimed at destabilising a neighbouring State for a variety of reasons, such as political rivalry, economic competition, or others. "There were wide-scale violations of human rights of people in large numbers perpetrated by States," he added. Arif Mahmood of Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Organisation highlighted that the trend towards the use of weapons to pursue political objectives was glorified during the Afghan war, when Pakistan hosted the Mujahideen. He said that there was also a connection with the narcotics trade which created powerful narco lords who operated with private armies. "Parts of Pakistan were a perpetual battlefield; and the spread of small weapons and the organised trade in them had also fuelled terrorism," he said. "A major casualty of the proliferation of small weapons was civilians." While bringing into Sub-Commission's notice Pakistan's emergence as the fountainhead of transnational terrorism Liaura Bachman of International Institute for Peace stressed that the entire international community should send teams to Pakistan to study the various terrorist groups and their affiliations there. "Violations of human rights would only end when Pakistan was helped to put itself in order", Bachman added.

It was under the sub-item “Terrorism and Human Rights” that Prof. K. Warikoo, Secretary General of the **Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation** (HRCF) made his third intervention. He said that the scourge of terrorism continues unabated and has assumed even more violent and barbaric manifestations of mine and bomb blasts, targeted killings, train blasts, kidnappings, gunning down and beheading of innocent victims and ethnic cleansing of religious minorities. He expressed grave concern over terror and mayhem unleashed by the religious extremist terrorist groups trained and sponsored by Pakistan which not only continues unabated but has increased in intensity and scope in various parts of South and Central Asia in recent months. Prof. Warikoo stated that involvement of the hostile neighbouring country, which is desperately seeking to advance its self-defined objectives of territorial expansionism and strategic depth, by stoking the fire of religious extremism and by resorting to narcotics and arms smuggling and trans-border terrorism, is a common phenomenon being experienced in Afghanistan, Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. “These Islamist terrorists belonging to terrorist organisations like *Jamiat ul Mujahideen*, *Harkat ul Ansar* now renamed as *Harkat-ul-Mujahideen*, *Lashkar-e-Toiba*, *Markaz Dawa-al-Irshad* and *Al Badr*, (all based in Pakistan and associated with the dreaded Osama Bin Laden) have resorted to most brutal means of killing by hanging, strangulation, beheading, skinning alive, blowing the bodies, slitting of throats, nailing and gunning down more than 20,000 innocent victims in my home State of Jammu and Kashmir during the past few years”, he said. “They have indulged in ethnic-cleansing of not only Kashmiri Hindus-the indigenous minority from their ancient habitat in Kashmir but even gone to the extent of destroying the ancient and historic holy Muslim shrines of Sheikh Noor-ud-Din Rishi and scores of Hindu shrines in Kashmir.” He pointed out that though the international community is fully aware about the atrocities by the Taliban on women, children, ethnic-religious minorities and political opponents in Afghanistan, it had failed to address the larger issue of growing process of Talibanisation in other parts of South and Central Asia. “Uzbekistan too witnessed killings of innocent victims in Namangan area by such

Sharad K. Soni

Islamist terrorists and the Uzbek government is on record having named Hizbe *Harkat-e-Jehad*, *Dawa-al-Irshad* and *Islamic Ulemma Society* all based in Pakistan, as responsible for these killings,” he said. “The Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation which has done some case studies on terrorism and religious extremism as experienced in parts of South and Central Asia, offered its services to the Special Rapporteur so that certain guiding principles are evolved and adopted to ensure that the menace of cross-border terrorism is dealt with effectively by imposing punitive sanctions against its perpetrators,” he added.

BOOK REVIEW

KASHMIR IN THE CROSSFIRE

By **Victoria Schofield**

I.B. Tauris Publishers, London, 1996. xiii + 35 pp. \$29.29.

Kashmir has been on the front-pages of newspapers around the world during the last seven years. All kinds of ghastly reports have originated from this beautiful but unfortunate valley: stories of kidnappings and murders, police shootout and arson, bombings and terror. To make sense of this, we have now a new book by Victoria Schofield.

The author, who admits to being an old friend of Benazir Bhutto, is a fairly objective reporter. But her writing is marred by her over-reliance on the views of the communist Prem Nath Bazaz and the Islamist Muhammad Saraf. The result is that she has been unable to find the high ground from which she could survey the events with command. But it is to her credit that she recognizes the ethnic and regional complexities of the Jammu and Kashmir State; if the Muslims are pre-dominant in the valley, the Hindus are the majority in Jammu, and the Buddhists in Ladakh. The Kashmir valley, which has about half the State's population, is only about 15 percent of the area. What do you do if one region wants a change in the political arrangement, while insisting that the rest of the State must go along?

The book under review is divided into three nearly equal parts: ancient history and the Dogra kings, Sheikh Abdullah and the partitioning of the State, events since the early 1960s. While it is balanced in its recounting of events, it is short on analysis. It is clear that Schofield is often paraphrasing material from sources that she is barely familiar with. How else would you explain her mentioning that the Mauryan rulers Chandragupta and Ashoka, were brothers (page 7) or spell Jayasimha as Jayashima? These errors are most egregious for the ancient period, but for the later periods also she uses her sources uncritically. She is unaware of important new scholarship related to the transfer of power by the British which demonstrates that the old

Subhash Kak

Pakistani complaints regarding a conspiracy between the British and the Indians—which she repeats at length—are wrong. The result is that the book presents at best a shadow history which is unable to bring to life the forces that have shaped events in Kashmir.

Schofield neither understands Kashmiri Islam, nor sees how the revolt in Kashmir is related to larger currents in contemporary Islam. Like Javanese Islam, Kashmiri Islam has its three categories of the orthodox, the traditionalists whose religion includes many older Hindu beliefs, and the professional and business aristocracy. The traditionalists form the overwhelming majority and they follow what has been termed Rishi Islam but they are under constant pressure from the orthodoxy. During his times, Sheikh Abdullah exploited the dynamics between these groups to cement his leadership, but he remained at heart the leader of the traditionalists. He did this by meeting the challenges of the orthodox Mullahs through his own sermons in the mosques.

By the time Farooq, his son, succeeded him in 1982, the gentrification of the family had created a wall between it and the peasants and other traditionalists. While Farooq was chasing skirts and sarees in Srinagar and Delhi, a new breed of Islamists, inspired by the success of Ayatollah Khomeini—whose own father had emigrated to Iran from Kashmir—was dreaming of a revolutionary Islamic state. The revolt of 1990 was for that purpose, but being led by a coalition of the orthodoxy and the aristocracy, it is riven by its own contradictions. The traditionalists would rather have an independent state, while the small minority of the Islamists wish for a union with Pakistan.

Schofield provides no background to geopolitical issues either. Pakistan and China, have both spoken against the notion of an independent Kashmir. The reason behind such a stand is clear. The independence of a sovereign Kashmir would have to be guaranteed by the United States and other major powers. Being located in a strategically important region, Kashmir would become a pawn in the great power rivalries. We have already witnessed the impact on this region of the power games of the great powers in Afghanistan in the

eighties. An unstable Kashmir, as a neighbour to Tibet and the newly independent Central Asian countries, will have the potential of destabilizing the entire region.

If the independence option is foreclosed by Pakistan, the prime backer of the Kashmir insurgency, what can the militants hope for? Kashmir as a part of Pakistan will become a cultural colony of Pakistani Punjab and most Kashmiri Muslims will not like that. Such an analysis was a factor in the politics of many leaders in the Jammu and Kashmir State in 1947. The leader of the Punjabi speaking Jammu Muslims was Ghulam Abbas who headed the Muslim Conference. It is believed that Abdullah, in his meetings with Jinnah's emissaries who were trying to get his agreement to an accession to Pakistan, did not receive guarantees of free rein. It is likely that Abdullah was more concerned with the immediate challenge to his position by Ghulam Abbas and the reality that within the undivided State the Kashmiri Muslims formed only about one third of the population. Nevertheless, it would not have escaped his notice that in a Punjabi dominated Pakistan, J & K State with a majority of Punjabi-Dogri speakers would have become a defacto Punjabi province.

As a, self-professed leader of Kashmiri Muslims, Sheikh Abdullah must have considered political decisions that affected the identity of the Kashmiri Muslims. As the longstanding war between the Kurds and the Turks or the Kurds and the Arabs or the one amongst the Somalis establishes, amongst believers Islam ceases to be the glue that binds people.

How do we explain Pakistani obsession with Kashmir? It is a nation in search of an identity. Predominantly a Punjabi state, it has failed to develop a federal structure where the Sindhi, Baloch, and the Pathan minorities would feel equal partners. No wonder, since its creation, its politics has been driven by urges of self-definition in relation to its neighbours. United primarily by its enmity for India, it has also attempted definition as a member of the Islamic world and more recently as an aspiring leader of the newly independent Turkic states

Subhash Kak

of Central Asia,. Pakistani preoccupation with Kashmir might serve internal political ends but it only postpones and makes more difficult the resolution of its own basic problems. Pakistani declaration that it will not accept an independent Kashmir, and given the impossibility that Kashmir will join Pakistan, makes it clear that its primary objective is to encourage disorder in the valley. This is useful for domestic politics and can also be exploited to further its strategic agenda internationally.

For their part, Kashmiri politicians themselves have exploited the ethnic and religious differences in the State in cynical and dangerous ways. I argued recently in my book *India at Century's End*, one way to break the impasse is to divide the State into three different administrative provinces of Kashmir, Jammu, and Ladakh. Each of these provinces would be linguistically and ethnically quite homogeneous. Kashmir valley could be turned into a centrally administered territory. In this province Kashmiri should be made the official language. If the militants articulate alienation from an administrative arrangement where the official language, Urdu, is known only in the towns and where the Kashmiri sees himself as different from the residents of Jammu and Ladakh and thus not quite in control of his destiny, then the Valley as a separate State would answer such aspirations.

As a separate small State, it would become easier to safeguard legitimate interests of the Valley minorities. The Kashmiri politician is also likely to snap out of the current emotive rejection of an open economic policy in the region, and see the benefits of such changes in the law that encourage outside investment. In the long run one could hope that the politics in the State will be based on the concept of circumscribed power, a system of checks and balances. It is then that the resolution of the Kashmir problem will become possible.

We must also see the events in Kashmir foreshadowing revolts elsewhere in India,. There has developed a, great divide between the bureaucracy and the people. Deep frustrations find expression in terms of religious, linguistic or ethnic vocabulary.

Book Review

I remember vividly a very sad incident in Srinagar in 1986 that illustrates the collapse of civic order long before the revolt. I was riding a bus from Hazratbal to Lal Chowk. It happened to be a government bus with an old driver. We were followed by a private bus on the same route trying to pass us but the road was very narrow. Eventually, the private bus did overtake us as the street widened and it suddenly screeched to a halt. The driver, a young fellow, jumped out rushed to our bus and began to pummel and beat up the old driver accusing him of deliberately not having let him pass depriving him of passengers! It was a false charge, and even if it had been true our driver would have been within his rights. But no one came to his rescue. I am sure he did not seek justice from the police either.

Victoria Schofield does not tell us anything about all these fascinating questions. Nevertheless, her book is a well-intentioned effort at understanding the complexities of the Kashmir situation. But since she does not understand the forces that have shaped history in that region she does not provide any real insights. Even as a second-hand account the book fails because she has not chosen her sources wisely.

Subhash Kak

HIMALAYAN AND CENTRAL ASIAN STUDIES is a quarterly Journal published by the Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation, which is a non-governmental, non-profit research, cultural and development facilitative organisation. The Journal is devoted to the study of various issues pertaining to the Himalayan and trans-Himalayan region in South and Central Asia or parts thereof, connected with its environment, resources, history, art and culture, language and literature, demography, social structures, communication, tourism, regional development, governance, human rights, geopolitics etc.

While the principal concern of the Journal will be on its focal area, i.e. from Afghanistan to Myanmar including the Central Asian states of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, China, Mongolia, Nepal, Bhutan and the Indian Himalayan states of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Utrakhand and North East states; papers with a broad sweep addressing environmental, social, cultural, economic, geopolitical and human rights issues are also welcomed.

The objective is to make a scientific appraisal of the issues confronting the Himalayan and adjoining region in South and Central Asia or parts thereof, and to make specific policy oriented studies and need based recommendations as the means to promote the human, educational and economic advancement of the peoples of the region besides preserving and enriching their ethno-cultural, literary and historical heritage. Promotion of human rights, social justice, peace, harmony and national integration are the other key areas in which the Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation has been active.

**CONTRIBUTIONS FOR PUBLICATION AND ANY ENQUIRIES
SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO :**

Prof. K. WARIKOO

Editor and Secretary General,

Himalayan Research and Cultural Foundation,

Post Box- 10541,

Jawaharlal Nehru University Post Office,

New Delhi - 110067

Tele : 0091-11-616 2763, 0091-11-617 9408

Fax : 0091-11-610 6643

Books for review should be sent to the same address.

Registered with the Registrar of Newspapers R.No. 67256/97

HRCF PUBLICATIONS

AFGHANISTAN FACTOR IN CENTRAL AND SOUTH ASIAN POLITICS

Edited by K. Warikoo

New Delhi, Trans-Asia Informatics, 1994. 73 pp.

SOCIETY AND CULTURE IN THE HIMALAYAS

Edited by K. Warikoo

New Delhi, Har-Anand Publications, 1995. 316 pp.

CENTRAL ASIA : EMERGING NEW ORDER

Edited by K. Warikoo

New Delhi, Har-Anand Publications, 1995. 352 pp.

JAMMU, KASHMIR AND LADAKH : LINGUISTIC PREDICAMENT

Edited by P. N. Pushp and K. Warikoo

New Delhi, Har-Anand Publications, 1996. 224 pp.

ARTISAN OF THE PARADISE : A STUDY OF ART AND ARTISANS OF KASHMIR

By D.N. Dhar

New Delhi, Bhavana Books & Prints, 1999. 230pp.



HIMALAYAN RESEARCH AND CULTURAL FOUNDATION

Post Box-10541, Jawaharlal Nehru University Post Office,
New Delhi-110067 (India). BA/1G, D.D.A. Flats, Munirka, New Delhi-110067.

Tele : 0091-11-616 2763, 0091-11-617 9408

Fax : 0091-11-610 6643