

THE FRAGRANCE OF EAST

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**Academy of Journalism and Publicity
Post Box No. 93
Lucknow-226007**

Ph. No. : 0522-2740406
Fax : (0522) 2741231

e-mail: nadwa@sancharnet.in
Rs. 10/-

The Fragrance of East

Founder : **Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi (RAH)**
Patron : **S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi**

Advisory Board :

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Editor :
Shariq Alavi

Asstt. Editor :
Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

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Our Representatives Abroad

- Britain** : **Mr. Akram Nadwi**
O.C.I.S.St. Cross College
Oxford Ox 1 3TU (UK)
- Dubai** : **Qari Abdul Hameed Nadwi**
P.O. Box No. 12525
Dubai U.A.E.
- Pakistan** : **Mr. Ataullah**
Sector A-50, Near SAU Qrs.
109, Township Kaurangi,
Karachi 31 (Pakistan)
- Qatar** : **Dr. Aftab Alam Nadwi**
P.O. Box No. 1513
Doha, Qatar
- Saudi Arabia** : **Mr. Tariq Hassan Askari**
P.O. Box No. 842
Madina-Munawwara
(K.S.A.)
- South Africa** : **Mr. M. Yahaya Sallo Nadwi**
P.O. Box No. 388
Vereniging, (South Africa)
- U.S.A.** : **Dr. A.M. Siddiqui**
98-Conklin Ave. Woodmere,
New York 11598

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Editor's Note:

UNITED WE STAND DIVIDED WE FALL

As part of our policy of infusing confidence in the community and cautioning it against the demoralising influences in society, the Fragrance in its editorial of August 2007 entitled "Islam at the Crossroads" re-emphasized and called upon the readers to help build a strong and sober society. A society that will enable all to meet the challenges of the times. A recent report from Gujarat widely circulated in national newspapers hinted at the sectarian conflicts that divide the Muslims. This has prompted us to take up the subject of communitarian peace and stability issue again.

Gujarat, one may recall, is that Indian state which is being used presently as a crucible of Hindutva propagation. The carnage of 2002 is still fresh in our mind in which thousands of Muslims were massacred and their property worth crores was looted. Arson and mayhem throughout the state remained unabated for a long time, as it was state sponsored. After the riots in Gujarat, Muslims of all sects and ideologies united to build their lives, their homes, and their mosques. But of late, differences between followers of Barelvi and Deobandi schools have come to such a head that Barelvi mosques in the Saurashtra-Kutch region have put up boards asking non-Barelvis not to enter. Those who turn up nevertheless are asked to leave. A Special Police Commandant, a Police Sub Inspector and a Muslim Judge had to suffer this indignity recently. Though in the past in certain regions of Gujarat this sectarian unrest had been a permanent feature but entry in the mosques was never *denied to Muslim* of any sect.

Though both groups are Sunnis, they differ in their points of emphasis regarding certain Islamic prescriptions. Their essential points of difference are that the austere Deobandi School considers the Barelvi attribution of omnipresence to the Prophet and its belief in the power of Sufi Saints to intercede with Allah on behalf of human beings a corruption of strict Islamic tenets

After the 2002 riots the two groups had buried the hatchet and sincerely helped each other in their efforts to rehabilitate themselves irrespective of any consideration. Deobandis helped in reconstruction and repairs of those mosques on

which other sects had their hold. It is very unfortunate that now in a relatively peaceful atmosphere differences have erupted again. Mufti Abdul Qayyum, heading the Darul Qaza of Gujarat has rightly said that "Let us be large hearted and allow members of every Muslim sect to pray in each and every mosque, because all of us believe in the oneness of God. We welcome everyone in the mosque irrespective of his attachment to any sect. (maslak)."

Disturbed by such events we come back to the notion of a 'Muslim World' which follows the idea of a single community united in a religious creed, the umma al wahida, which is derived from the Quranic verse 23:52: "And verily this community of yours is a united community, and I am your Lord. Fear me and no other!" Above that, this notion is supported by the sound Prophetic Hadith: "And even though my umma will split into seventy three groups every thing of it will be in the fire except one: It is the community" (Ibne Maja Sunan, 3982)

After the demise of the Prophet, Muslims have suffered from a leadership crisis. The text of revelations has undergone a vast number of varying interpretations, none of which can claim infallibility. There are a wide variety of interpretations of the revelation, each one claiming absolute validity and commitment. Attempts to setup representative councils contesting the legitimacy of the other over the question of religious authority for the respective sects were made in many parts of the world. In India too the formation of All India Muslim Majlise Mushawarat and the All India Muslim Personal Law Board are some serious attempts in this direction. After the death of the Prophet a number of academic disciplines emerged, all of which aimed at properly understanding God's final revelation, now that the direct communication between 'sender' and 'receiver' of the revelation had ceased. With the development of the science of Islamic Jurisprudence and its methodology, fiqh and usul alfiqh emerged around the 9th century AD. This led to the emergence of a number of schools of law- five of which became canonical a short time later. The time has come that a sincere effort should be directed to bring all the sects at one platform and face the challenge, which is threatening the community. Late Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi (Rah) till the last days of his life remained very much concerned on this issue. His Presidential addresses at the various sessions of the All India Muslim Personal Law Board reflect his immense pain on this issue and his earnest appeal for unity. ■ S.A.

THE COUNTRY AT A DANGEROUS CROSSING NEED FOR URGENT ATTENTION*

S.Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi

Need for a Dialogue

Friends. I welcome all of you who have taken the trouble of coming here on my behalf as well as on behalf of the organisers of this gathering. We have a number of conferences, seminars, conventions and social and political meetings almost every day and press conferences are held from time to time for specific purposes. All such gatherings are convened either to let others know or to explain a certain point of view, but you have been invited here today for a frank, heart to heart talk on matters of mutual interest in order to understand each other and to create conditions of mutual trust and respect. My intention is that it should be a dialogue as if between the members of a family where the commitment to "togetherness" is always persistent. If the purpose of this dialogue is kept in view by all of us, I am sure it would lead us towards fruitful results. It is with this intention that you have been invited here.

A Dangerous Situation

Gentlemen: Disease is natural to human beings. It is natural for human beings to fall sick. In a way this is a sign of life. Similarly, it is human to err. Stones do not make mistakes, nor do the trees. Only humans make mistakes and anxiety or dejection over them is needless. It is not so distressing for history and destiny of mankind if a large section of the people goes astray and starts seeking material goods and gets involved in a desperate pursuit of the lowliest ambitions. What is distressing is the sheer lack of people who would be willing to stem the rot, to fight against the forces of disintegration and anarchy, at the cost of their comforts and, often power.

History is full of instances when the society, faced with the threat from such evil forces, was almost on the point of extinction, when suddenly some people ap-

* Dialogue with the intellectuals and journalists at Nagpur on October 5, 1986

peared who faced the situation with courage and conviction staking everything they had. The continuity of not only the human race but also of the human values owes a great deal to such people. Human sensitivities and sentiments, moral values and sublime goals, feelings of courage and sacrifice for preservation of these values, all owe their survival to such people who took up the challenge and faced the degenerate situation with a courage that changed the course of history.

Guarantee for Humanity's Survival

Human conversation is alive thanks to these people only. The real guarantee of the survival of humanity lies in the existence of those few courageous and conscientious people who have hearts, which bleed, eyes which shed tears and minds which are sensitive people who would bear the hardships and would stake their lives to change the course of history. Whenever this class becomes scarce, the entire society faces extinction even though superficially it may appear to be healthy.

Cruelty and Injustice: Greatest Danger

The biggest threat to society (old or modern) arises when it gets prone to oppression and worse still, when the critics of oppression become too microscopic even to be counted on one's fingers-though there might be some who disapprove of the cruelty and oppression to the weaker sections but only in private. When those people become rare who would pronounce their disapproval of oppression publicly and oppose it tooth and nail irrespective of the risk involved, no power on earth can save a society. When oppression becomes the order of the day in a given society, when the yardsticks to identify the aggressor is his nationality, his community, his language, his caste, a real danger looms large over humanity. When society gets divided into such compartments, and even in dealing with the aggressor, his religion, his community, becomes more relevant; when people reading about a riot in a newspaper first want to know the community of the aggressor of the victim, no power, intelligence, resources and planning can save such a society.

Verdict of History and Religion

Now, as a student of religion, history and morals want to invite your attention to a few urgent problems faced by the county (which may be avoided by the

politicians). These are extremely perilous and need our prior attention. One of these is the increasing proclivity to violence and disregard for human life, property and dignity in all sections of our society. We see it erupting time and again in the shape of communal disturbances and caste turmoils when entire families or even localities are made the target of most inhuman destruction. The same tendency to take recourse to violence is evident in the burning and killing of women for the sake of dowry.

All those who believe in any religion will not find it difficult to understand that the Compassionate and Merciful God, who is even more kind and loving to every man than his own mother, would not be pleased with these acts of wanton destruction. He will not allow this state of affairs to continue for long. He will not allow a society and the country to be prosperous no matter what efforts are made in other fields of life, if such things are allowed to continue unabated. The greatest reality upheld by all religions and creeds, next only to the existence of God, is that cruelty is the greatest sin and most destructive of all evils. Barbarity never goes unpunished even if there may be some delay in the divine retribution visiting the oppressor. No country or nation, whatever be its military strength, economic power of howsoever shining its literature and past accomplishments, can prosper with the heartlessness of its people.

Faith in Goodness of Man

Humanity's present and future, its cultural, economic, political and ethical advancement as well as all its thoughts and philosophies are dependent on the condition that man lives in peace; that he is not bothered about his safety, is aware of the worth of human life and attaches weight to man's dignity. The faith in man as the goal and objective of the world, as its most valuable existence, capable of advancing man to still higher levels of perfection, has moved the most virtuous and noblest sons of humanity to devote their lives to the service of mankind. These great souls have stirred up the mind and heart of man to develop all those creative and intellectual, moral and social and spiritual and literary pursuits of which man has justly been proud. That the torch of humanitarianism has never been extinguished since the dawn of civilization is because the noble and the good have never lost faith in man; they have never taken him to be an irredeemable brute; they have never hated him; nor have they ever denied the right of his existence. This torch of humanity has

remained a glow and can still be kept burning in the most adverse circumstances. History of human race tells us that many a noble soul has served it through self-sacrifice, by undergoing pangs of hunger and thirst in the shivering cold of hills and forests and under the scorching sun of the deserts. Nothing ever stood in their way, nor were they ever disheartened. The secret of their perseverance and unbounded enthusiasm was that they took man as the masterpiece of creation. They had faith in the goodness of man and believed that his vice was transitory while his virtue was real, everabiding. They were convinced that their labour on man would at long last be rewarded. They had no misgivings about the fact that every bud in the garden of humanity had a right to blossom. Of a fact, there is nothing more dangerous and hateful than man getting despaired of his fellow beings. And it is still more horrible that his gloominess should drive him to dye his hands in the blood of innocent children and helpless women. That a man should not allow others to live and prosper is the vilest of all thoughts that can cross his mind. Peaceful condition providing protection to human life is the pivot on which revolve all human endeavours whether they be teaching and learning, reform and progress or political and economic stability. Maintenance of peace and order is thus the ultimate guarantee for making any progress or implementing plans and projects for it.

Truthful men: The True Source of Strength

The real sources of power and progress for any country are those honest and truehearted men who do not beat about the bush in condemning the evils like injustice and oppression even in times of greatest emotional stress. If you want to estimate the inner strength of any nation and its potentiality to safeguard its heritage and culture, you would have to find out the number of men who waste no words in criticising the mistakes committed by their own people and government with the least care for the numbers or power or administration. These are the men who come forward as protectors of the weak and the oppressed and are willing to undergo any hardship for their holy cause. They do not have an axe to grind nor they desire to derive any benefit by being shrewd and artful. They prefer to be truthful even at the cost of losing their popularity. These are the men who put their lives at stake for upholding the values of humanitarianism, brotherly love and charity even when the whole nation is overflowing with the venom of malice, hatred and intolerance. They make no distinction of colour, class or creed in protecting life, honour and dignity.

If you find adequate number of such persons in any nation, then there is no cause of concern about its future. It will overcome every difficulty and make up every short-coming. Its enemies will become its friends and it will be able to make its mark of moral superiority in the comity of nations. It will, without the least doubt, prosper as a strong and self-reliant nation whose voice will be heard with due regard and whose aid will be sought in solving international problems.

Two Uncorruptible Classes

Whenever human race passes through a phase of moral degradation or comes under the cloud of the forces of disintegration, two classes come to the fore, one the intellectuals, and the other, the religious people. These two classes are the last to succumb to corruption. This is what the history tells us. And this in what appeals to common sense also. And once corruption afflicts these two classes, then God save the society.

India has reached a stage where the educated, the intellectuals and the scholars of our universities and seats of learning need to come out in the arena. The field now belongs to the intellectuals, the religious people and those selfless workers who have nothing to do with political parties and political ambitions. They do not bother which particular political party would come to power and would get hold of the reins of government. There are instances in history when the time for reward came and the government was being offered on a platter to the people who had worked for a change, but they flatly refused to accept it saying that they had worked only with sympathy, sincerity and concern and only for pleasing God, and, therefore, they do not want any reward.

A Dangerous Turn

I can tell you without being apologetic that I have studied history. I do not think Indian society has ever been under a threat of this magnitude as it is experiencing today. I would not hesitate to say that Indian body-politic has faced mutilation many a time, has suffered defeats, and has been subjugated by the foreign rule of the British but the soul of India, and her conscience had never been weakened so much as to stop working altogether.

There was never a phase in Indian history when evil and oppression was

tolerated so meekly as it is being done today, to the point of rationalising it, and using it as a tool to strengthen cadres, parties and as a *raison d'être* for the different political parties in India. India has faced hundreds of calamities but its conscience has always remained alive and has never stopped its function.

I am afraid that the heart that beats may not stop functioning.

Since beating alone is the reason for its existence.

The living Conscience

I shudder to think if the Indian conscience is dead. What can be a bigger danger than not finding a single compassionate man who would hear the cries of the oppressed and come out into the field.

Leaders, political parties, seats of learning and libraries, speakers and orators, intelligentsia, nay, geniuses may all be there but where is the conscience which would shed tears on this degeneration of society and humanity? Humanity has survived because of this conscience and not by swords and arrows, armies and militia men, royal treasures and abundant wealth, nor by the advancement of education, science and technology. It was always the human conscience, which prevailed over all these, and created resources where there were none. Imagine what a poor man can do when his heart aches and he is restless. On the other hand, there is one who has all the resources but has no anguish and has no will to do anything. Time passes and he does nothing.

My apprehension is that the conscience of Indian society is presently faced with that inertia. It has stopped doing its work. This is a cause for alarm, since the future of humanity is dependent on it: whatever good or advancement is expected is dependent on it. Whenever this conscience wakes up, it receives a divine light, which is kindled by the prophets. It does not succumb to power or wealth, and it achieves what big empires and huge armies fail to achieve. You must see how conscience of some which were alive and virtuous, have done their job in their times. After all what did the holy man have? What were their resources? But they created a new society, a new social order.

The Lowest Ebb

Today the moral degeneration has reached its lowest ebb. When a man meets

an accident it is an occasion, which stirs the whole neighborhood into concern and action. People gather around him. Mothers come out of their homes leaving their children behind. Someone brings water, another brings medicine saying that this brother of ours was somewhere and has met with an accident. Today the moral degradation has reached a level where people remove the watches from the hands of the crushed, mutilated corpses and search their purses. Today instead of putting drops of water on parched, thirsty lips, people start helping themselves with their valuables. If you had read about these incidents in history books you would not believe them. People in other countries would not believe them. But we see many such train accidents. People in a nearby village see a man lying buried under the debris, his body caught between two logs. He begs them to take everything and free him. But they snatch the watch from his wrist and the money from his pocket and leave him dying. What can we expect from a society, which has become so cold-blooded. Can anything about such a society be pleasing? Can it be expected to survive and play a leader's role in the world?

I have often mentioned that a traveller is returning from Bombay with little savings and fond hopes. He has heard that his mother is sick and as soon as he reaches home he will bring medicine for her. She would be happy to see him and would feel rejuvenated. He has hardly left the station when he is stabbed. There his mother lies groaning in pain, here he lies dead. In a society where such things happen, can any progress whether economic, political or educational, be a matter of pride? Even if the number of universities becomes ten times of the present number even then the society has no reason for happiness, contentment or pride. Even if the educated are fewer but they are the types who hate oppression, sin and corruption, that society is alive, and strong and may possibly lead other nations.

Clarion call by an Intellectual

I would seek your permission to cite here a portion of the Presidential Address delivered by Dr. Zakir Husain Khan, the then vice-chancellor of the Jamia Millia, Delhi, and who later rose to the President of India, on the 17th November, 1946, on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the Jamia. The meeting was graced by the then Prime Minister Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, the President of Indian National Congress, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, members of the Interim Cabinet and eminent leaders like Sardar Patel, Raja Gopal Acharya, Mohammad Ali Jinah as well as

the cream of India's scholars, educationists and social workers. It was the time when communal riots had broken out in Delhi and cases of stabbing were being frequently reported in the press. As the dates of the Jubilee celebrations had already been fixed and could not be postponed elaborate security arrangements had to be made for the invitees. This extract is still relevant today.

"You are all like the stars in the sky of Indian politics.

Millions of our countrymen revere and adore you. I would like to take the benefit of your presence here to say a few words on behalf of men like me who have dedicated their lives to the cause of education. The way our country is going in flames it seems a mad venture to keep on doing our work. How can we grow new flower plants in land, which is scorched by a fire destroying all noble traditions of humanitarianism? How will the new flowers of goodness and moderation blossom here? How can we inculcate human values amidst this beastly behaviour? How will the servants of humanity come forward in these conditions and how will they be able to carry on their noble work among the beasts and savages? My words would perhaps sound a bit harsh to you but in the conditions overtaking us, even these hard-hitting. We, whose profession makes us give due regard to the sentiments of young people, do not have words to express our feelings when we hear that even small children are not safe in the spreading wickedness. The Poet of India had said that every child born on this earth brings the message that God has still not despaired of man. But, has the despondency of man in our country reached the stage where he wants to decimate the budding flowers? For God's sake sit down and decide how to extinguish this fire. This is not the time to find out who fed the fire or how it came about. The fact is that the country is on fire any you have to put it out. This is not a question of keeping only our nation safe and alive, it is a question of choice between the civilized way of life and the devilish disorder: for God's sake do not allow the foundation of civilised behaviour to be destroyed in this country."

Need for self-criticism

It is really unfortunate that generally those who come forward to do anything in this connection fell shy of doing anything to reform or to set their own commu-

nity straight, which is undoubtedly a difficult task. Instead, they take the easier course of tendering advice to other communities or putting the blame on others.

Reconstruction of character and intellectual attitudes of any people, integration of different sections comprising the nation in a genuine and equitable manner and making the country safe from the sword of Damocles hanging over its head needs much more courage and probity. But, it is regrettable that today we find very few persons who have the courage to speak out the truth without any fear or favour and it is perhaps our greatest shortcoming as well as a sign of danger also. The situation at present is so extraordinary and dangerous that we cannot rely on usual appeals in the name of morality or on the government machinery. What is required now is to arouse the conscience of the nation for the sake of God and higher values of humanitarianism, which, I believe, still have a place in the heart of God-fearing and softhearted people of this ancient land. But this would need those dedicated souls who are willing to stake their lives and to postpone all their pursuits for it.

Criminal Negligence

We have to do a bit of heart-searching and find out what we have done to educate the people about the ultimate goodness of human nature, over of fellow-beings and the value and worth of human life. Have we launched any country-wide movement for these? We had certainly made sacrifices for the attainment of independence, struggled long against the British Imperialism which had, on the one hand, created a longing for freedom in every heart and, on the other, made the foreign rulers leave this country. This made our dreams come true and the country became independent. But we should not feel shy of admitting the fact that we have not put in the same amount of effort for arousing the conscience of the people against communalism as we had for stirring up the masses for winning independence. We made the people hate the injustice of the British rule but not to take aversion to every form of injustice. Even today we are not devoting even a half or one-fourth of our energy for the reconstruction of the nation that we are spending to reconstruct the country. And the result is that there is a country, but not a nation. We are today not prepared to allow anyone to grab an inch of our land, and this we must do, but we are ever willing to inflict an injury to our own body, ampute our own limbs, destroy our own houses and indulge in fratricide.

Need of the Hour

Nothing can be achieved without a hard struggle and making sacrifices for it. The reconstruction of the nation by inculcating the dignity of mankind and creating mutual trust and confidence among the people needs toil and trouble. Today India is standing on a crossroad of history. It is a crucial moment for it. One of the ways before it leads to destruction, disorder and decay. Another path leads to peace and amity and unity and co-operation. There are always people, who at the crucial moments of history change the course of events and shape the history of nations. Their courage and trueheartedness saves the country and the nation from ultimate destruction and thus they are the builders of their country in a true sense of the word. But these are the people who are normally found outside the governments and political parties, in the ranks of selfless servants of the country. They are men of spiritual perfection whose intentions are above every doubt, whose truthfulness is not disputed and whose past has no black spots. But, if these classes, too become self-seeking, then there remains nothing to be salvaged and the ship of that nation becomes fated to go down the sea for ever. The intellectuals and the truly religious men know the dangers of hatred and animosity, malice and unkindness among brothers. They know how God deals with such a people, and the ultimate fate of such a nation. It is, therefore, natural that they are more worried than others when they see the symptoms of wickedness in their society and come forward to its rescue. I need no apology to cite here a verse from the holy Quran, which depicts the picture of such a corrupt society and urges upon the enlightened and deep-hearted persons to reform it.

“If only there had been among the generations before you (deep-hearted) men possessing a remnant (of good sense) to warn (their people) from corruption in the earth, as did a few of those whom we saved (from destruction)! The wrongdoers followed that by which they were made sapless, and were guilty”.

(Q. XI : 116)

Four-fold Programme

Now, the current situation in the country is definitely disastrous and likely to portray us as an uncultured and uncivilized people to the outside world. It needs the best of qualities possessed by the intelligent, well-disposed and benevolent persons

who love their fellowmen to launch a comprehensive and long-term programme of reform and regeneration in the country. I suggest here a four-fold programme which needs to be given attention by all the altruistic persons and leaders of our public opinion.

- (1) A mass contact movement based purely on humanitarian, moral and religious values for making an appeal to the people is utmost necessary. The people have to be personally contacted in every village and ward. Meetings should be held at all these levels to educate the people about the ultimate goodness of human nature and the value and worth of human life, honour and property in order to urge upon them to understand their responsibility in this regard. It is necessary to make a moral and religious appeal to the people since the people of our country are inherently peace-loving and religious in temperament, and it would be easier to reach their minds and hearts in this manner. This course is suggested, first, because the effect of such an appeal would be more enduring and, secondly, because the people are losing faith in political policies and programmes oft repeated on the occasion of elections only to be abandoned thereafter.
- (2) Revision of curriculum particularly that relating to history, from the primary to the university stage, and exclusion of such material, which sows the seeds of discord in the minds of students is essential. Since the things taught at an early age get imbibed in the minds of children (especially when the teachers become its protagonists) the entire course of their lives gets changed. The poison of communalism thus spread in the society takes the form of emotional hysteria and results in communal riots from time to time. Unless this curriculum, which was devised by the Britishers to further their own ends of divide and rule is reformed, there can be no hope of peace and mutual trust between different sections of our society.
- (3) Indian press should also make a sincere effort to realise its responsibilities. What these papers normally do is to publish sensational news and one-sided versions so as to hold one community responsible for the riots. Thus, they try to create misunderstanding and hatred against one section of the people. As I had advised the Editors of Urdu News-papers sometimes back on the occasion of an Editors' Conference, held at Lucknow, that one slip of pen by

them can cause thousands lives to be lost and many villages and towns to be ravaged.

- (4) The police organisation was a British creation primarily for maintaining its hold over India and to coerce the people into submission. It was only natural that this organisation was trained to disregard all human and moral values and traditions with the result that high-handedness and imperious behaviour became its chief characteristic. But now, in free India, its objective should be service to the people rather than domineering over them. This important organisation whose members are drawn from our society should now be trained to serve the people. It should take a compassionate view of those who are in distress and perform its functions with a greater moral sense. This is the role allotted to the police in all other free countries including even Great Britain.

I have not at all exaggerated the horrible situation obtaining today, although I would request you to excuse me for presenting the facts squarely in a straight way. But I feel so disconsolate about the situation that I would have been perhaps more outspoken in presenting these facts if it had been possible for me to do so. ■

On receiving usury

The Prophet said : "A time is certainly coming to mankind when only the receiver of usury will remain, and if he does not receive it, some of its vapour will reach him."

**Sunan 6 Abu-Dawood
Hadith 3325 Narrated by Abu Hurayrah**

FUNDAMENTALISM AND MUSLIMS

S.M. Rabey Hasani Nadwi

Fundamentalism means belief in the literal truth of the holy scripture that is adoption of basic knowledge of one's faith. But this term in respect of Muslims is now used by opponents to denounce and underplay the renaissance of Islam.

Through this terminology, western emphasis is to isolate Muslims from their own civilization, culture and religious activities. Its main plank is to present the Islamic ideology and thought in a distorted form thus to weaken their faith and solidarity. They may not be able to establish their identity and get diverted to other directions causing split in their ranks.

So it is Europe and other western countries who have concocted the term "Fundamentalism" as a perilous and virulent tool against Islam. They are in the state of acute anxiety and bewilderment looking at the religious impetus amongst Muslims. Europe is afraid of Muslims that they may come up to challenge their monopolist supremacy prevailing for the last two centuries. As such they consider it imperative to check the advancement of Islam well in time.

Awakening in a community is an internal urge which can not be crushed down by the state power or other means. Hence recourse is taken of false publicity to contain it.

It may be recalled that about half a century ago Russians and other communist states adopted the strategy of spreading their ideology, pregnant of falsehood, and succeeded in gaining power. Projecting as friends of farmer, labourer, poor and advocates of socialism they won the masses. But after some time it became obvious that their promises were false and arguments empty of reasons. Thus they were exposed. Hosts of Russian leaders turned out to be capitalists and wealthy and said to have lived a luxurious life. Nevertheless some of them were considered messiah of poor and downtrodden.

No doubt, such kind of their misleading slogans helped diverting innocent

Muslims from the straight path and accept their faith of false socialism. Today Europe accusing Muslims alone as fundamentalists. But in fact they themselves are intoxicated with it.

In Indonesia Muslims are not free to spread their religion but Christian missionaries enjoy lot of facilities to attract people towards Christianity. They have number of institutions and organizations. Their Bishops have aeroplanes and helicopters. They reach their destination easily. They spend money recklessly to draw people to their faith but Europe will never call them fundamentalist.

It is unfortunate that Muslims are restrained to propagate their faith in their own countries. If they are involved in Dawah activities, they are called fundamentalists by Europe. Jews occupied Palestine on the basis of their religious identity and carved out a separate country Israil. Jews have driven out Muslims form Israil, though they were its legitimate inhabitants. Europe instead of stopping them helped them in every possible way to do so. Why Europe did not use the term fundamentalism for Israil. But when Islamic groups won the election in Algeria, the election was called to a halt stating that Islamic fundamentalism is on the rise and it must be thwarted. The oppressions and atrocities of Jews on Palestinians are not evil acts in the eyes of Europe.

Today situation is that if the oppressed ones raise their voice against atrocities of opperssors, they are accused of fundamentalism and extremism.

It is an important thing which must be taken note of that who created this religious convulsion in Muslims. It was not infused by Ulema, Jurists, and Islamic movements. On the contrary it was the result of those oppressions, atrocities and usurpations to which Muslims are subjected throughout the globe. Who does not know that when Iraq invaded Kuwait, United Nations sent their Army under the supervision of America and helped Kuwait in restoring its possession. But the oppressions and cruelties of Sarbians on Bosania are not seen by the U.N.O. because oppressors are Christians so they enjoy their protectors.

It goes without saying that Muslim wish to lead their lives according to Islamic Shariah wherever they live. Then why their efforts to spread their faith are being questioned and termed an act of fundamentalism. Democratic and religious rights of Muslims are being usurped in Bosnia, Chechnia, Kosovo, Somalia and in

other countries.

Under these circumstances if they come out in defence and strive to gain their ends, it is not a surprising step. This is natural and psychological fact that when one is oppressed and is stopped from one's faith, the passion of revenge emerge itself. The passion of faith is further increased. Europe describes it fundamentalism. If anyone takes offence at oppression, Europe calls it terrorism.

Europe should comprehend that anger does not subside by using power and force. Hence religious passion of Muslims cannot be suppressed at any cost. For they live with their vibrant faith. Fundamentalism is nothing but an illusive term. Its propaganda is mere a political gimmick. For Muslims religious awakening is not against any religion. It is such an act which creates an impetus and alertness amongst Muslims. If democratic attitude is adopted with them, they will create an atmosphere of peace and brotherhood. There is no place of coercion or suppression in dealing with oppressed Muslims. ■

(Translated by : O.R. Nadwi)

On getting angry

The Prophet Muhammad said: "When one of you becomes angry while standing he should sit down. If the anger leaves him, well and good; otherwise he should lie down."

Quoted from Al-Tirmidhi Hadith
5114 Narrated by Abu Dhar

THE LOOMING DEMENTIA THREAT

The first skin patch delivering a drug to treat dementia has just got U.S. Government approval. This, and recent signs of a potential breakthrough in diagnosing Alzheimer's disease- the most common form of dementia among older people - by means of a blood test even before its symptoms become discernible, mark significant steps in the quest for managing better the cruel, brain-de-destroying disorder causing progressive deterioration in memory and in thinking and everyday abilities. It is indeed a development that governments and health policy planners need to take note of. Dementia is a general term for more than 70 conditions. Worldwide, 24 million people have dementia. The figure could rise to 42 million by 2020 and 81 million by 2040, with China and South Asian countries witnessing a tripling of cases by 2040. A report commissioned by Alzheimer's Disease International says the Asia-Pacific region is facing an epidemic, with the number expected to reach 65 million in 50 years, marking a five-fold increase. It seems plausible that the most striking increases may occur in China and India. In India, the numbers are projected to grow from 3.2 million to 16 million. Given the pattern of demographic transition, the proportion of people in the 60-plus age group will rise from under 10 per cent of the regional population today to 25 per cent by 2050.

Since the disease primarily shows up in the 60s, as more people live longer the absolute numbers affected by it will increase. Governments should make dementia and the development of care facilities a policy priority. They need to create a widespread awareness about it and develop care services that are equipped to be responsive. Compared with some of the killer diseases, Alzheimer's is far behind in terms of numbers and receives relatively little research funding. But the current economic costs of the disease in the 15 Asiapacific countries are an \$60 billion. The costs will rise both in terms of the financial burden to health systems and the toll on families. It has been estimated that if the onset of dementia could be delayed by five years through preventive measures and pharmacological interventions, the number of sufferers would fall by half. Lifestyle changes may be important: smoking, obesity, diabetes, and high blood pressure could be pre-disposing factors. Mental activity and a diet rich in fruit and vegetables appear to have a protective effect. Some people appear to be genetically more susceptible than others. Detailed plans need to be drawn up to tackle the crisis and the health-care systems geared to face up to the challenges. (The Hindu)

THE MEANING OF RAMADHAN

Khalid Baig

Fasting during Ramadan was ordained during the second year of Hijrah. Why not earlier? In Makkah the economic conditions of the Muslims were bad. They were being persecuted. Often days would go by before they had anything to eat. It is easy to skip meals if you don't have any. Obviously fasting would have been easier under the circumstances. So why not then ?

The answer may be that Ramadan is not only about skipping meals. While fasting is an integral and paramount part of it, Ramadan offers a comprehensive program for our spiritual overhaul. The entire program required the peace and security that was offered by Madinah.

Yes, Ramadan is the most important month of the year. It is the month that the believers await with eagerness. At the beginning of Rajab- two full months before Ramadan – Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) used to supplicate thus: "O Allah ! Bless us during Rajab and Sha`ban, and let us reach Ramadan (in good health).

During Ramadan the believers get busy seeking Allah's mercy, forgiveness, and protection from Hellfire. This is the month for renewing our relationship with our Creator. It is the spring season for goodness and virtues when righteousness blossom throughout the Muslim communities. "If we combine all the blessings of the other eleven months, they would not add up to the blessings of Ramadan," said the great scholar and reformer Shaikh Ahmed Farooqi (Mujaddad Alif Thani). It offers every Muslim an opportunity to strengthen his Iman, purify his heart and soul, and remove the evil effects of the sins committed by him.

"Any who fasts during this month with purity of belief and with expectation of a good reward (from his Creator), will have his previous sins forgiven," said Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), "Anyone who stands in prayers during its nights with purity of belief and expectation of a reward, will have his previous sins forgiven." As other Ahadith tell us, the rewards for good deeds are multiplied manifold during Ramadan.

Along with the possibility of a great reward, there is the risk of a terrible loss. If we let any other month pass by carelessly, we just lost a month. If we do the same

during Ramadan, we have lost everything. One, who misses just one day's fast without a legitimate reason, cannot really make up for it even if he were to fast everyday for the rest of his life. And of the three persons that the Prophet (PBUH) cursed, one is the unfortunate Muslim who finds Ramadan in good health but does not use the opportunity to seek Allah's mercy. One who does not fast is obviously in this category, but so also is the person who fasts and prays but makes no effort to stay away from sins or attain purity of the heart through the numerous opportunities offered by Ramadah. The Prophet (PBUH) warned us : "There are those who get nothing from their fast but hunger and thirst. There are those who get nothing from their nightly prayers but loss of sleep."

Those who understood this, for them Ramadah was indeed a very special month. In addition to fasting, mandatory Salah, and extra Travith Salah, They spent the whole month in acts of worship like voluntary Salah, Tilawa (recitation of Qur'an), Dhikr etc. After mentioning that this has been the tradition of the pious people of this Ummah throughout the centuries, Late Syed Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi notes: "I have seen with my own eyes such ulema and mashaikh who used to finish recitation of the entire Qur'an everyday during Ramadan. They spent almost the entire night in prayers. They used to eat so little that one wondered how they could endure all this. These (people) valued every moment of Ramadan other pursuit ... Watching them made one believe the astounding stories of Ibada and devotion of our elders recorded by history."

This emphasis on these acts of worship may should strange – even misplaced – to some. It requires some explanation. We know that the term Ibada (Worship and obedience) in Islam applies not only to the formal acts of worship and devotion like Salah, Tilawa, and Dhikr, but it also applies to worldly acts when performed in obedience to Shar'iah and with the intention of pleasing Allah. Thus a believer going to work is performing Ibada when he seeks Halal income to discharge his responsibility as breadwinner for the family. However a distinction must be made between the two. The first category consists of direct Ibada, acts that are required for their own sake. The second category consists of indirect Ibada worldly acts that become Ibada through proper intention and observation of Shar'iah. While the second category is important for it extends the idea of Ibada to our entire life, there is also a danger because by their very nature, these acts can camouflage other motives.

(Is my going to work really Ibada or am I actually in the rat race?). Here the direct Ibada comes to the rescue. Through them we can purify our motives, and re-establish our relationship with Allah.

Islam does not approve of monasticism. It does not ask us to permanently isolate ourselves from this world, since our test is in living here according to the Commands of our Creator. But it does ask us to take periodic breaks from it. The mandatory Salah (five daily prayers) is one example. For a few minutes, every so many hours throughout the day, we leave the affairs of this world and appear before Allah to remind ourselves that none but He is worthy of worship and of our unfathoming obedience. Ramadan takes this to the next higher plane, providing intense training for a whole month.

This spirit is captured in I'tikaf, a unique Ibada associated with Ramadan, in which a person gives up all his normal activities and enters a mosque for a specific period. There is great merit in it and every Muslim community is encouraged to provide at least one person who will perform I'tikaf for the last ten days of Ramadan. But even those who cannot spare ten days are encouraged to spend as much time in the mosque as possible.

Through direct Ibada we "charge our Batteries", the indirect ones allow us to use the power so accumulated in driving the vehicle of our life. Ramadan is the month for rebuilding our spiritual strength. How much we benefit from it is up to us. ■

The holy month

The Prophet said, "Ramadan, a blessed month, has come to you during which Allah has made it obligatory for you to fast, in the gates of Heaven are opened, the gates of al-Jahim are locked, and the rebellious devils are chained. In it Allah has a night which is better than a thousand months. He who is deprived of its good has indeed suffered deprivation."

Al-Tirmidhi Hadith 1962 Narrated by Abu Hurayrah

HOW TO TREAT A DAUGHTER

Adil Saahi

No one in the history of mankind did for the improvement of the status of women more than Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). Islam has laid down the principle of total equality of men and women. The Qur'an makes its address to both in the same way, assigning to them the same religious tasks, and promising the same reward when there is something special, it makes its address to women only.

This represented a great leap in the Arabian society which was the first to receive the Islamic message. Like all human societies at the time, the Arabs treated women as inferior to men, and allowed them few rights and no privileges. It was in that society that young girls were buried alive by their fathers for fear of poverty. By contrast, Islam considered the birth of a daughter a joyous occasion to be celebrated by the whole family and also by neighbours.

But the transformation needed a practical example to show those who were hardened in their old ways how the change could be implemented. The best role model was the Prophet, because following his example is a religious duty which earns reward from Allah. Hence, Muslims look up to the Prophet for guidance on how to treat their women. The following Hadith describes how the Prophet treated his young daughter Fatimah.

Aishah, the Prophet's wife, reports: "I have never seen anyone who was closer to the Prophet in conversation, speech or the way they sat than Fatimah. When the Prophet saw her coming, he welcomed her and stood up to greet her and kissed her. He would then take her hand in his hand and seat her where he was sitting.

"If the Prophet went to visit her, she would welcome him and stand to greet him and kiss him." (Related by al-Bukhari in Al-Adab Al-Mufrad, Al Tirmidhi, Abu Dawood and Al-Nassaie.)

We tend to think of a Hadith as giving instructions or pointing out practices to follow. Here we had a hadith which simply tells us of the Prophet's behaviour and his treatment of his daughter. It provides a practical example which we will do well to follow. When we follow the Prophet's example we ensure that our action is right and we earn reward from God. Nothing can be better than that.

And the example here is one that ensures family happiness. It is one of pure love between father and daughter. You read how the Prophet treated his daughter in front of other people and you wonder: could there be a more loving father? Who of us would stand up to greet his daughter, kiss her and sit her in his own position? And when was this? Shortly before his death, when the whole of Arabia had accepted the Islamic faith and he was recognized as Allah's messenger and the undisputed ruler of the Islamic state.

This example, which Muslims would do well to follow, reflects the Prophet's personality in two: full of pure love to his daughter and Muhammad, Allah's messenger, who gave women their rightful place as equal to men. ■

ISLAMIC BRANDS, BUT WITH UNIVERSAL APPEAL

Amrita Nair-Ghaswalla

Islamic branding is taking centrestage on the global stage. It is no longer confined to a country's demographic, identified by the narrow lines of nationality or ethnicity. The community has become a huge market segment and corporations are scrambling to satisfy brand new needs they never knew existed. Advertisers are also having to find socially acceptable ways to communicate those products," says Miles Young, Chairman of advertising giant Ogilvy and Mather Asia-Pacific, who recently visited India.

Young, who represents WPP's corporate interests in Asia in addition to his O & M responsibilities, is clearly enamoured by the new market segment which has given rise to what is known as the Islamic brand. The world Muslim population today is at 1.4 billion, or 22% of the total population, and has earned a niche for itself as a whole new market to be reckoned with.

"By 2014, a quarter of the world's consumers will be Islamic. There is a growing influence of Islam on brands. There is the rise of Shariat finance, there is halal compliance in food and cosmetics; there is a whole culture of branding that corporations are unaware of or are struggling with. It is also quite a controversial topic mainly because there has been so little talk about it in the past and never at all in public places," says he.

For Young, there are things within Islam "that are common- the ummah (the community of believers) has common characteristics and beliefs and behavioural systems. But it is also a composite of a lot of different cultures and beliefs". And it is a segment that is frequently described by the US as the 'new Hispanics', which needs to be treated with kid gloves.

Halal Branding: "Take foods and the labeling of consumables that are halal. The halal branding being done by the Malaysian government is of great interest in the international arena, as there exists no global common standard for it at the moment. Establishing a global standard will make marketing of such products simpler and open up new possibilities for the creative and innovative strategies in Islamic branding. But it also offers a big opportunity for Westerners to consume halal prod-

ucts, as halal taps into concerns about purity, health and wellness which are universal and it says something about the quality of things that are produced," says Young.

The growing population of Muslim consumers has created a new market segment that just cannot be ignored. Young draws a distinction between brands that emanate from countries with large Muslim populations and those that specifically address the needs of practicing Muslims.

Regarding the first category, "There's nothing religious or theological about most of these brands. They serve any of the regular consumer needs with regular products or services. They're just brands that are recognized domestically that may be sold by domestic or international companies, and have nothing to do with religious affiliation," says he.

"But then there's this other aspect A smaller segment," he continues. "Just as you have various ethnic products and services that target specific ethnicities or affinities, there's a basket of products and services that cater to the Muslim's unique needs."

"Some 60% of the world's Islamic financial products are consumed by non Islamic customers. They have a much broader appeal," says Young, maintaining that as far as Islamic nations go, the most successful brand could possible be the Grameem Bank, "but one has to remember that it was the Nobel Prize that its founder won to give it the stature to compete globally."

Conversely, Malaysian Airline, Petronas and Proton are companies that Young quotes as examples of seemingly Islamic brands, which have gone global on the world stage. ■

(Times of India)

The Human belly

The Prophet (pbuh) said : "A human being has not filled any vessel which is worse than a belly. Enough for the son of Adam are some mouthfuls which can keep his back straight : but if there is no escape he should fill it a third with food, a third with drink, and leave a third empty."

Al Tirmidhi Hadith No. 1355 Narrated Al-Miqdam ibn Ma' dikarib

CHARITY IN TRUE SENSE

Obaidur Rahman Nadwi

Charity is generally known to provide aids to the poor and down trodden people. In Islam its ramifications are quite broad. Besides helping the poor, all humanitarian works are considered acts of charity in Islam. Which is why Islam lays great stress on this noble cause. Prophet Muhammad says: "Your doing justice between two persons is charity; your helping a man to mount a horse (or carriage) is charity; your lifting up his baggage and putting it (on the mount or vehicle) is charity; your saying a good thing is charity; your taking a step towards prayer is charity; and your clearing an obstacle on the road is charity." In another tradition it is related that the Prophet (SAW) once said: "The distressed should help the needy." On being asked what should one do if he is not in a position to help the needy, the prophet said, "Enjoin what is good". The companions again asked, "And if it, too, may not be possible? The Prophet remarked, "Abstain from evil. That, too, is charity. In yet another tradition the Prophet is reported to have said, "Your lending a helping hand to anyone engaged in a work or enabling a clumsy worker to do his job properly is also charity: On being enquired what should a person do if he was too weak to render such a service, the prophet replied, 'let people remain safe from your mischief. That will be a charity on your ownself. Yet another tradition of the Prophet reads: "Your smiling in your brother's face is charity; your bidding what is good is charity; your forbidding what is wrong is charity; your putting a man who has lost his way on the right path is charity; your assisting a man who has a defect in the eye is charity for you; your removing a stone, thorn or bone from the road is charity for you; and your emptying the bucket in the bucket of your brother is charity for you."

Needless to add that Islam is not only a metaphysical religion but it offers a system and scheme of life, which has logical unity. In this context, it would be worthwhile to quote Maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadwi, he says: "If man loses the ability of sharing other's sufferings, he will become bankrupt. Even if a nation is blessed with the wealth of America, administration of Rasia, and petrol wells of Saudi Arabia, even if rivers of gold and silver flow in it, and even if wealth showers over its land like rain, it will still be truly pauper if its stream of love is dried. He

further says: "The eye which does not become wet is not a human eye; it is the eye of a daffodil. The heart which does not feel pain of others is not a human heart; it is the heart of a lion. The forehead which does not become wet with the perspiration of penitence is not a human forehead; it is a piece of rock. The hand which does not move forward to serve humanity is virtually paralysed and lifeless. The claw of a lion is better than that hand of a person which cuts the throat of another human being."

According to Islam all people are from the same origin and source and they were made into nations and tribes just to know each other, as confirmed by the following quranic words: "O mankind we created you from a pair of single male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (Not that ye may despise each other) Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you."

The need of hour is that we may learn as how to live with peace and amity and share other's sufferings and woes regardless of caste, creed, colour, region and religion. The holy Quran says, "we have honoured the sons of Adam; Provided them with transport on land and sea; given them for sustenance things good and pure; and conferred on them special favours, above a great part of our creation." ■

Be brothers

Prophet (pbuh) said : "Beware of suspicion, for suspicion is vicious like spreading false stories. Do not look for others' faults, and do not practice Najsh (deceit). Be not jealous of one another or hate one another. Do not desert (by stopping to communicate) one another. And O, Allah's worshipers! Be brothers !"

Shaikh Al-Bukhari Volume 008
Book No. 073 Hadith No. 092
Narrated by Abu Huraira

RE-WRITING THE 1857 NARRATIVE

Seema Alavi*

The mutiny-rebellion of 1857 against British rule in India is regarded as one of the biggest anti-colonial uprising in world history. Not surprisingly, the historiography on 1857 is vast even if impacted heavily with the Nationalist and Marxist interpretations of the event. Such writings on 1857 fitted its history in the meta-narrative of the 'secular' nation state. Thus what got included as worthwhile stories were those of mass scale agrarian and urban unrest, accounts of Hindu-Muslim unity, and details of an anti-colonial struggle that derived from a unified vision of a territorially defined nation. What got excluded were people and histories which did not quite fit into this straight jacket of the nation state.

The omissions in such history writings were many. But the most pronounced was the missing Muslim. Specially, those Muslims who were scholars of Islam and whose political activism in the years leading to 1857 borrowed from their religious imaginary. The Muslims who belonged to this category found no space in the narratives of the Nationalist and Marxist accounts of the mutiny-rebellion of 1857. Such ideologically motivated histories separated ulama political activists from their 'liberal' co-religionists- scholars, poets and political custodians of the Indo-Muslim *adaab* -who lamented the passing away of the old order, pitched in for the restoration of the cosmopolitan Mughal regime, or else pleaded for coming to terms with the new colonial order. Such *alims* (scholars of Islam) were segregated also from other Islamic scholars, like Rashid Ahmad Gangohi of Deoband, who were concerned more with marking differences on individual practice and custom within Muslim society rather than taking a position on the Hindus or the British. Pushed to the backwaters of history as bigots who deserved no mention in the meta narrative of the nation their stories of anti-colonial activism remained untold. At long last when such politically agile Muslim men of religion did find a space in the 1857

*[Professor, Department of History and Culture, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi. Author of *Sepoys & the Company*. OUP, 1995; *Islam & Healing*, Permanent Black & MacMillan, London, forthcoming, Oct. 2007; and is writing a book, *Muslim Jihadis and Hindu Sepoys: Retelling the 1857 tale*.]

story, it was in works like those of William Dalrymple [*The Last Mughal. The fall of a dynasty. Delhi 1857*]. Here, sadly their *jihad-I-azadi* (anti-colonialism) in the city of Delhi is seen as disconnected from the ideological and political underpinnings of their scholarly spiritual mentors. More importantly, their fight against the British is seen less 'patriotic' than that of the high caste Sepoys or Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar. All the *jihadis* of 1857 are clubbed along with modern day fundamentalists. Indeed, many of them are seen as ancestors of the modern day *jihadi* and terrorist outfits.

The Hindus in the 1857 meta narrative fared better. Hindu rebel leaders like the Rani of Jhansi or Tantia Tope who used religion as much as the Muslims *jihadis* did in mobilizing anti-British support became the nationalist icons of both Nationalist and Marxist interpretations of 1857. And this of course raises questions about how 'liberal' our Marxist and Nationalist history writing traditions can be regarded?

This essay attempts to offer some corrective to this historiographical imbalance on 1857. It highlights histories of politically active Muslim scholars- the maulvis and alims- that either lived through or anticipated the turbulence of 1857. It discusses Urdu translations of literature generated by such scholars that looks at 1857 in particularistic ways. This material includes the early 19th century writings of 2 Sunni Muslim scholars of Islam: Syed Ahmed Shahid (d.1831) and Maulana Fazl-I-Haq Khairabadi (1798-1861). The former's letters were translated into Urdu and compiled in a comprehensive history of the scholar-activist by maulana Abul Hasan Ali Nadawi as *The Siraat Syed Ahmed Shahid*. And Maulana Fazl-I-Haq's memoir on 1857 *Al-Saurah-tul- Hindiah wa Qasaaidu Fitnatil Hind* is translated into Urdu as *Baaghi Hindustan* by Abdul Shahid Khan Sherwani. Through an analysis of such Urdu material on 1857 generated by Sunni Muslim maulvis and alims the essay wishes to bring center stage for discussion the in-house thinking over the desired political activism during the turbulence of 1857. The activism of the learned men of Islam reveals the critical significance of religion in mapping the nation state. And yet dissonances existed within the tradition throughout 1857 on the extent of anti-British activism and the play of religious symbolism for mobilization. Nonetheless, the forays into the imagined world of Islam notwithstanding, the process of being a Muslim alim and maulvi political activist in the mid-19th century did not necessarily run contrary to the 'secular' 'territorial' contours of the nation in the making. Deeply entrenched in Islamic theology and learning such scholars too exemplified a deep political commitment to the anti-colonial struggle, even if their political vocabulary and national imaginings balanced the territorial with the extra-

territorial Islamic imaginary. And even if in some cases this extra-territorial ambit made them feel closer to the other novo global power-the British Empire. Nor was the activism of such learned men of Islam very different from Hindu rebel leaders like the Rani of Jhansi and Tantia Tope who were equally comfortable in using Hindu symbolism for mobilizing support. And yet, while the former are absent from our meta-narrative the latter are the nationalist icons of 1857. This essay offers a corrective to such an imbalance in our historiography.

I

In the years leading to 1857 no one challenged more assiduously the assumed disconnect in our history between men of religion and the 'cosmopolitan' men of Indo-Persian literary finesse than the famous mujahid Maulana Fazl-I-Haq Khairabadi (1798-1861). And none other epitomized the balance of the Islamic imaginary with the territorially defined nation state more beautifully than the learned maulvi from Khairabad in Awadh. Fazl-I-Haq was the son of the famous Sadr-I-Sudur of Delhi maulvi Fazl-I-Imam. His father was a close associate and disciple of the Delhi Sufi, Shah Abd-al Aziz; and it was in his madrasa Rahimiya that Fazl-I-Haq had his initial training in both *maqulat* (rational sciences) and *manqulat* (traditional knowledge).

In 1815 maulana Fazl-I-Haq on the goading of his father very reluctantly joined the English East India Company employment. He became the Serishtedar with the Delhi Resident. This was in contravention of the dictat of his alma mater the madrasa Rahimiya whose spiritual leader after the 1806 British conquest had declared Delhi *Dar-al harb*. He had asked Muslims to stay away from British service. However, 1815 for maulana Fazl-I-Haq marked the beginning of his long innings in the service of the Company administration. A professional journey which continued until 1831 when he left Company service and took up a series of appointments in the regional states of Jhajjar, Alwar, Saharanpur, Tonk, and Rampur. However, throughout his career in Delhi from 1809-1832 he remained active as a religious scholar also who gave *tadrees* (lectures) to students on prescriptive Islam, its philosophical underpinnings and its political responsibilities. It is followers and students of people like the Maulana from Khairabad who are referred to in contemporary literature as the *jihadis* and *mujahids* of 1857.

The British arrested Maulana Fazl-I-Haq, along with thousands of other ulama and mujahids, in the months following the May outburst of 1857. He was locked up in a tiny cell in the Andaman island jail for his anti-British activities during the mutiny-rebellion. The huge numbers of Muslim scholars locked in Andaman itself

indicates the sheer extent of their political activism that has gone completely unnoticed in our accounts of the anti-colonial freedom struggle. Indeed in the years that followed 1857 the Andaman jail became of the intellectual labour of its scholarly inmates became the *Dar-ul-uloom* of Eastern learning.

Fazl-I-Haq penned his memoir on the mutiny-rebellion while locked in the Andaman jail. This 50 page memoir was written in Arabic and titled *Al-Saurah-tul-Hindiah wa Qasaaidu Fitnatil Hind*. This text has two poetic verses appended to it. These are titled *Qasidah-I-Hamziyyah* and *Qasidah-I-Daaliyah*. Both are a passionate plea for freedom from British rule. In 1946 Maulana Abdul Shahid Khan Sherwani translated this Arabic compendium into Urdu as *Baaghi Hindustan* (Rebellious Hindustan).

Maulana Fazl-I-Haq's *Baaghi Hindustan* highlights both his deep knowledge of Islam as well as his fine literary *adaab* and finesse. At the same time it reveals also his political activism that balanced beautifully his extra-territorial Islamic imaginary with his rootedness in Hindustan. His text gives us some insight into the meaning of *jihad* in 1857 and what it meant to be a *jihadi* in that tumultuous year. His position on *jihad* borrows from an understanding of the word in its global Islamic context—a holy war of Islam. But in 1857 he is very clear that it is a political tool only against the British. He signs on the *fatwa* of *jihad* in 1857 in the Jama Masjid after many deliberations with the *alims* of Delhi like maulvi Ismael Dehalvi and Nasir ud-Din Dehalvi closely associated with Syed Ahmed Shahid of Rae Bareilly.

But while in Delhi he signs on the call for *jihad* against the British, just 2 years before in 1855 he had opposed such a call to mobilize Muslims against the bairagi Hindus of Hanumangarhi. In this incident a bunch of bairagi mahants had stopped *azaan* in a mosque and had vandalized the building and defiled the Koran. Two Calcutta maulvis Shah Ghulam Husain and Muhammad Saleh reached Hanumangarhi with a *jamaat* (contingent of *jihadis*) and declared *jihad* on the Hindus. Maulana Fazl-I-Haq was sent by the Awadh government to settle a compromise between the warring groups and request the maulvis to withdraw the call for *jihad*. He along with his colleagues tried in vain to persuade the Calcutta maulvis to withdraw and promised to re-construct the mosque as well. However, maulana Fazl-I-Haq failed to negotiate a truce. The warring *jihadis* were soon confronted by the *gori paltan* and the Awadh army and more than 400 of them were killed in the military confrontation near Rudauli. In the Hanumangarhi incident Fazl-I-Haq's commitment to the maintenance of the social equilibrium between Hindus and Muslims within the contours of what he saw as his nation was supreme. And thus

despite his pan Islamic urge to fight for the restoration of the Islamic symbol of authority- the mosque- he opposed the call for *jihad*. He firmly believed that this particularistic call for *jihad* against the Hindus would disturb the social balance in the area.

The Hanumangarhi incident showed that Fazl-I-Haq's political activism articulated through a particularistic view on *jihad* remained deeply entrenched in the circumstantial context of a territorially defined nation. And this idea of a territorial nation remains very strong in his memoir as well. Writing about his arrest without a fair trial after 1857 he says, 'This man [Fazl-I-Haq] has been taken far off from his wife and children (*ahal aur ahiyaal*) and from his land, locality and town (*zameen aur watan aur shaher*).' Of course the usage of the word *zameen* and *watan* in this case meant his immediate locality. Yet, that locality and the dislocation were a microcosm that reflected his sadness for the larger uprooting from his fight for the nation that was territorially defined. And significantly, racially envisaged as well. At several places in his memoir Fazl-I-Haq distinguishes his nation from that of the British in racial categories. As he says, 'he is under shock at his arrest in the hands of cruel and inhuman (*zaalim aur jaabir*), bad character (*badkhalak aur badkirdaar*), white skin (*safed roo*) and black hearted (*siyaah dil*), blue eyed (*kanji aankhein*) and wheatish hair (*gandumgoon baal*) people.

Again, it is noteworthy, that in the case of the defense of Delhi in 1857 his support and glorification of the *jihadi* warriors of Islam derives more from their particularistic task of defending the city rather than fighting for Islam. Indeed, for him the fall of Delhi symbolizes the collapse of the territorial nation. And he is critical of both Hindus and Muslims who provide support to the British army rather than feeding and sheltering the mujahids who are fighting not for Islam but in this instance for Delhi-the microcosm of the nation. Again, it is no less noteworthy that throughout his memoir Fazl-I-Haq is critical of the political aristocracy in north India that failed to provide adequate succor to the rebel army, or even put up a brave defense to the rampaging *gori paltan* (British army), or offer any semblance of administration even when moments of stability were possible. The elites he targets for such attack include the Mughal Emperor, the Mughal Queen Zinat Mahal and Nawab Wajid Ali Shah and his inept son Bijris Qadir in Lucknow.

And yet, his anger for the inept political class and the pain on his own territorial dislocation on being packed off to the island of Andaman notwithstanding, he never loses track of the larger Islamic imaginary of which he sees himself an integral part. Indeed, he attributes his physical territorial dislocation to the island of

Andaman as being solely because of his commitment to that Islamic imaginary. As he says, ' His [Fazl-I-Haq's] fault was only that he held steadfastly to his religious belief (*imaan*) and Islam. And that he was included within the august circles of the ulama of the world of Islam (*ulama -I-alam*). ' According to him his arrest was motivated solely with the desire to target the spread of knowledge and scholarship on Islam (*darrs aur tadrees ko mitaana*) and to erase it forever. And also stifle the generation of Islamic knowledge (*ilm ko neechei giraana*).

At the same time the larger Islamic imaginary umbrella does not make him loose track of the differences that he maintains with his colleagues at the madrasa Rahimiya over individual philosophical beliefs and the prescriptive religion of individual practice and custom. In his books *Imtina-un-Nazir* and *Tahqeequl Fatwa fi Ibtaalit Taqhwā*, he carries on an impressive debate on these issues with Syed Ahmed Shahid's followers-in particular with maulvi Ismael Shahid over his book *Taqviyat ul-Imaan*. And both the in-house philosophical debates with co-religionists in India as well as the differences of opinion on the use of *jihad* against the Hindus notwithstanding, such politically active Sunni Islamic scholars were sure of the political *jihad* they were committed to fight against the British. This made them different from their relatively less politically active colleagues like the Deobandis, who were more interested in within the tradition issues of custom and practice. In contrast, maulana Fazl-I-Haq and Syed Ahmed Shahid, notwithstanding their differences over the Islamic prescriptive norms, were on a similar political platform in their anti-colonial activism.

Syed Ahmed Shahid (1831 d), the spiritual leader and political activist from Rae Bareilly, anticipated the revolt against British rule and actively mobilized both Mislms and Hindus against the conquerors. His correspondence with Indian rulers suggests that his call for *jihad* was as narrowly anti-colonial as that of Maulana Fazl-I-Haq. And like the latter it did not target all non-Muslims so as to capture political power for Islam. Syed Ahmed's anti-colonial agenda, that did not hesitate to connect with Hindu allies, ran parallel to his intellectual training in Islamic law, philosophy and spiritualism obtained at the same madrasa Rahimiya where years later Fazl-I-Haq trained. This background made him aware of his larger responsibility of helping in the establishment of Islamic rule all over the world. However, the historical moment of the early 19th century facilitated in him a balance between the territorial and the extra-territorial Islamic derived agendas. This was most evident when in 1810, on the advice of his spiritual mentor Shah abd al Aziz, he trained as a trooper in the army of the ruler of Tonk- Amir Khan. His mentor had familiar-

ized him to the larger trans-national character of service to Islam as well. Yet, in 1810, both his master and he himself gave priority to service in Amir Khan's army because it was preparing to fight the British. The capture of political power for the purpose of Islamic dictum to prevail was certainly not on the agenda at this stage. In Tonk, thousands of revolutionary young men joined him and launched their anti-British tirade that he termed *jihad*. That Syed Ahmed Shahid's *jihad* was a political fight specifically against the British and not with the professed agenda to capture power for Islam was clear when he did not target Hindus at any point of time. Indeed he invited both Muslims and Hindu rulers, like Shinde, the maharaja of Gwalior and Hindu Rao etc. to join his *jihad* against the British.

After Syed Ahmed was killed in one of his anti-British tirades in 1831 the leadership of the anti-British *jihad* was taken by Syed Ishaq-the son of Shah abd al Aziz. Later, in 1835 the movement was in the hands of his son-in-law Syed Nasir ud din. Such ulama travelled around Rajasthan and central India and gave the '*dawat-I-jihad*' (invitation to *jihad*) to Hindus and Muslims alike. For instance, Nasir ud-Din Dehalvi raised a *jamaat* regiment of people, left all worldly matters and prepared for *jihad-I-azadi* (*jihad* for freedom) in which all were welcome. He toured large parts of north and east India. He and his men went to Tonk, Ajmer, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, and Sindh. At all these places Muslim warrior bands many unemployed due to the slow decimation of Muslim polities of Tonk, Rohilkhand, and Farukhabad etc joined the ulama. They were imbued with their *ghazi* (Muslim warrior) and *shaheedi* (willing to die for Islam) spirit. At Sindh he exhorted the Sindhi ulama to rise against the British—a political act that he termed *jihad*. After this he reached Baluch and camped there. It was at Sathana that he finally breathed his last. In all these places of north India that also included Meerut, Amroha, and Rampur, he collected money, spread anti-British sentiment and created awareness among people of the atrocities of British rule. Throughout his travels he engaged other disciples of Syed Ahmed Shahid, like Maulana Vilayat Ali Azimabadi in eastern India, maulana Inayet Ali in eastern Bengal, Syed Muhammad Ali in Madras, maulana Syed Aulad Husain Kannauji in Kanouj area to spread the movement and give the call for the *dawat-I-jihad* (invitation of *jihad*) to people.

The political activism of alims like Syed Ahmed Shahid and his successors in the years leading to 1857 pushed the ideas of universalistic Islam to the back burner. But it was never given up entirely. Indeed their activism in 1857 triggered a vibrant debate within the tradition. Later alims, like Mehr Ghulam Rasul, reflected on the dissonances within the tradition in their nuanced understandings of the word

jihad. Rasul in his 2 volumes history of Syed Ahmed Shahid saw his life as the exemplifier of a balance between two kinds of *jihads*. According to him the renowned alim oscillated between *jihad -fi-sabi-lillah* i.e. *jihad* for establishing the rule of Allah or Islamic rule, and *jihad-I-Azadi*-or the more modest goal of freedom from British rule. Thus for instance when the Syed was told by the Muslims of Rampur that he should declare *jihad* against the Sikhs as they were their oppressors, he declined the request. At that stage in the first few decades of the 19th century it was the *jihad-I-azadi* or the fight for freedom from British rule that was the Syed's priority. All other *jihads* could wait. Thus he replied to the Rampur Muslims, 'his *jihad* was first and foremost against the British who had taken over most of Hindustan'. And yet, his commitment to *jihad -I- fi sabi-lililah* was never entirely ignored either. As Ghulam Rasul Meher says, 'he always wanted to keep alive in the Muslims the fever of *jihad-I-fi-sabi-lillah*'. However, 1857 was not the occasion to make that his priority.

II

This essay argues that the story of 1857 is incomplete without integrating into it the play of religion not just by Islamic scholar activists and their *jihadi* followers but also by Hindu rebel leaders and high caste Sepoys. The latter too mobilized people using Hindu symbols and vocabulary. After all the caste Sepoys constituted the bulk of the rampaging mobs that disrupted the peace of the city of Delhi. And here also it was not the simple denominational Hinduism that was at stake. Just like the *jihadi* scholars and their clientele were fighting not for the establishment of the rule of Islam, the Hindu rebels and Sepoys too did not want to put up a Hindu Raj. Both the Sepoys and their rebel leaders wanted the restoration of an administrative order where their hitherto protected rights and privileges including those of caste could be once again restored. The anger of both the *jihadis* and the Hindu Sepoys and rebel leaders with the British was that the status quo in which they hitherto enjoyed status had been disturbed by the 1830-1840 reforms introduced by the English Company. These reforms had brought in missionaries, cut down pay, allowances and pensions of Sepoys, and of course tightened the noose around regional powers where both *jihadis* and peasant soldiers had looked for sustenance and alternate opportunities. And if the Muslims, like the *jihadis*, looked for Islamic rhetoric to articulate and organize their anti-British anger, the Sepoys too harnessed

their rebellious energy to that of leaders who used the caste Hindu terminology and rhetoric to legitimize their leadership. This was true for Rani of Jhansi, Tantia Topce, Kunwar Singh and others.

The *jihadis* in 1857 were as much committed to free the country from foreign rule as the Sepoys were. True, that their organizational modes were different, and that ideologically they were conditioned in very different notions of honour and status. The former with roots in the Islamic notion of *ghazi* (warrior) and *shaheed* (martyr) to the cause of Islam. And the latter to the Hindu derived high caste way of life that the Company had crafted in its regiments. And yet the historical moment of 1857 brought them together in their political commitments to freedom (*azadi*)-a historic moment in which they thought their lost status and privileges would be restored. And thus through the mayhem of 1857 except for a single case of Hindu-Muslim rioting over baqrid cow slaughter incident, the period was free of such riots.

Indeed, both *jihadis* and Hindu rebel leaders and Sepoys unproblematically used religious idioms and symbols to whip up anti-British support. Thus for instance, the ulama used Islamic idioms to both debate the issue of accepting the leadership of the Emperor and mobilize anti-British protests. Thus the issue of joining the anti-British rallies under the Emperor was discussed in the following way. The *fatwa* that was under discussion here was whether *jihad* is *farz* (binding responsibility) on the city people because the lives and property of *ahl-I-Islam* (believers of Islam) are in danger. And 33 ulama that signed it said it was binding on people of Delhi (*farz-I-ain*) and *farz-I- kafayah* (binding on some) on people outside Delhi. But if people of Delhi show slackness then it is *farz-I-ain* on outside Delhi people as well. And if people of Delhi weak or slack then it would be *farz-I-ain* on entire *ahl-I-zameen* (people of the world).

Such religiously derived methodologies were not very different from those adopted by the Hindu rebel leaders to mobilize support. Nana Sahib, the adopted son of the last Peshwa Baji Rao II, and his military commandant Tantia Tope, emphasized the Hindu overtones of their polity to attract the maximum support from rebel Sepoys and thereby stabilize their rule. Nana Sahib, ofcourse, exploited to the utmost the charisma of his adopted father-the last Hindu Peshwa. He further highlighted the Hindu credentials of his polity through

acts of Hindu devotion. Vishnu Bhatt Godse, a Brahmin *bhikshu* from Pune who got caught in the 1857 mutiny while on his way to participate in the *sarvuttomukh yash*, was much impressed by this public display of Hinduism in the Nana's territory despite the ruler's preoccupation with war. He wrote in his travelogue, 'the British regiments were massacring every one they could find. Even in these dangerous times Nana sahib was feeding Brahmins and asking them to determine his fate and actions from his horoscope'. Godse was also appreciative of the elaborate Hindu religious ceremonies he witnessed in Jhansi. Here, the Rani of Jhansi emphasized the Hindu nature of her polity by her patronage of purohits, Brahmins and by protecting cattle to attract the Company's disaffected regiments'. Godse himself was appointed the state priest and presided over many of these ceremonies.

Such Hindu leaders of caste conscious Hindu Sepoys flocked to the Mughal Emperor, just as much as did the Muslim rebel leaders. The latter had in their contingents both Muslim Sepoys and bands of *jihadi* warriors. Many of the latter had been trained in the armies of Muslim polities and imbued with the *jihad-I-azaadi* rhetoric of ulama like Syed Ahmed Shahid and Fazl-I-Haq who themselves had held positions in the administration and the military of Tonk, Rampur and other regional states. Indeed, Emperor Bahadurshah's appointment of *jihadis* like maulana Sarfaraz Ali, Bakht Khan and Fazl-I-Haq in his close council of administration, along with the patronage to caste Sepoys showed how there was no contradiction at all in 1857 between the Sepoys, *jihadis* and the Emperor as far as their political commitments were concerned. Indeed each invoked different intellectual arsenals to mobilize and galvanise support but these seemed to co-exist without creating internal frictions.

How can we then project the Hindu leaders as 'secular' 'nationalist' icons, the caste Sepoys as 'patriots' and the Islamic ulama leaders and their *jihadi* clientele as fundamentalists and disrupters of the Hindu-Muslim balance? The histories of both Hindu and Islamic derived anti-British struggles need to be integrated to the larger narrative of both 1857, and anti-colonial nationalism, if at all 1857 is to be regarded as the starting point for that. Anything, other than that has serious implications for understanding the later Muslim politics and the contemporary predicament of the Muslims of India. ■