

Abu Taher Salahuddin Ahmed

THE EARLY-1990 KASHMIRI MUSLIMS' UPRISING'S ENDOGENOUS BASIS: EXPLORING THE ETHNO-CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS ROOTS

Abstract

There are multiple endogenous and exogenous roots of the early-1990 Kashmiri Muslims' uprising. This paper examines its endogenous basis, exploring its ethno-cultural and religious roots. In so doing, it studies whether Kashmiri identity has been contextualised, and whether in the 1980s there has been a marked ascendancy of the religious component of that identity over its ethno-cultural component. It probes into whether this marked ascendancy is a function of the politicisation of Islam in Kashmir, or Islamisation of Kashmiri politics, or both. Findings suggest that the identity question remains exceedingly contextualised, as it is determined by the given time and situation. There is no monolithic identity in Kashmir. *Kashmiriyat*, as a composite identity, has become questionable. Historically, religion has played a key identity marker in the identity formation of Kashmir, and in the early 1980s resurfaced with the emergence of Islamist forces. These forces led to the ascendancy of *Muslimness* over *Kashmiri-ness*, and eventually Islam became a powerful tool for mobilising Kashmiri Muslims against the Indian authorities. This ascendancy was a result of a fair degree of Islamisation of Kashmiri politics, which occurred after 1970.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Kashmir problem, which has several interconnected components¹, is one of the vexed questions affecting the international community. Among Kashmiris

Abu Taher Salahuddin Ahmed, Ph.D., is Senior Research Fellow (Research Director In-Charge), Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS), Dhaka. His e-mail address is: dr.salahuddin.ahmed@biiss.org

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¹ An Indian conflict-watcher asserted that the Kashmir problem has ethnic, demographic, communal, secular, federal, strategic, international, and South Asian regional dimensions. P. S. Ghosh, *From Legalism to Realism in Kashmir: Internationalising the Line of Control*, Heidelberg Papers in South Asian and Comparative Politics, University of Heidelberg, Working Paper No. 7, 2002, p. 14.

the separatist idea had been brewing for decades.² Before the outbreak of the Kargil war in 1999, two of India's and Pakistan's three wars, in 1947-48 and 1965, have been over Kashmir. In 1971 both had fought their third war on the Bangladesh question. Until the Kashmiri Muslims' uprising's outbreak in early-1990 aimed at independence, Kashmir was bogged down in bilateral Indian-Pakistani conflict. A third critical actor, the Kashmiris, emerged into the conflict dynamics following the uprising's outbreak. A set of underlying and triggering causal variables (political, economic, and ethno-cultural and religious in nature) stemming from India's domestic setting and a set of catalysts (various in nature) emanating from the external setting, and the mobilisation factors ('means' to carry out the uprising) led to the 1990 uprising in the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir (hereafter Indian-Administered Kashmir [IAK]).³ Thus, explanations of the early-1990 uprising's causes are varied and their trajectories are multidimensional and vast. Causes are open to dispute, and hence, they have become contested terrain. It will require a full length book to explain the various causalities that led to the uprising's outbreak.

As the identity is the basis of a given uprising, therefore it ought to be adequately studied to get a rounded picture of the early-1990 Kashmiri Muslims' uprising. The purpose of this article is to examine whether Kashmiri identity has been contextualised, and whether in the 1980s there has been a marked ascendancy of the religious component of that identity over its ethno-cultural component. It raises the question whether this marked ascendancy is a function of the politicisation of Islam in Kashmir, or Islamisation of Kashmiri politics, or both. To address these, the paper will study the following: i. the identity debate in India and in Kashmir; ii. ethno-cultural differences at the inter-community level (Pandits versus Muslims); iii. religious cleavages at the intra-community level (Muslim sect versus Muslim sect); iv. conflict between the competing paradigms of nationalism/identity: secularism ('*Kashmiriyat*') versus religious nationalism ('*Muslim-ness*') and the tussle between Kashmiri-ness, Muslim-ness and Indian-ness; v. the rise of Hindu religious nationalism in the 1980s; vi. the rise of

² Kashmiris do not accept the Line of Control that India and Pakistan have drawn. They call it ceasefire line following the UNSC resolution of January 1948. Kashmiri children come to know from their parents that Kashmir does not belong to India. Thus, from their childhood, the idea of separatism gets rooted in their psyche. My interview with Shah Ghulam Qadir, Secretary-General, All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference, Member, Legislative Assembly, Former Finance Minister, Pakistan-administered Kashmir (PAK), and also Chairman, Kashmir Institute of International Relations (KIIR), 7 and 8 August, 2004.

³ For a recent rounded analysis on the origin and timing dimensions of the early-1990 uprising, see, Abu Taher Salahuddin Ahmed, 'The Kashmiri Muslims' Uprising of 1990: A Causal Study', the Ph.D. dissertation, the Australian National University, Canberra, 2006.

Jammat-e-Islami of Kashmir, the rise of *Mirwaiz* (chief Clergy) of Kashmir, the resurgence of Islamic consciousness in Kashmir and their implications, if any, for the early-1990 uprising's outbreak.

In addition to the Introduction which is Section 1 of the paper, the issues, identified in the preceding paragraph, will be examined in successive 6 Sections of this paper. Conclusion is given in Section 8.

2. THE IDENTITY DEBATE IN INDIA AND IN KASHMIR

All shades of opinion about the identity question can be grouped as primordialists versus instrumentalists. E. Shills was the first to introduce the concept of primordialism⁴ in his essay on the relationship between sociological theory and research. The debate between the primordial and instrumental schools of thought regarding whether identity is given and fixed, or socially constructed and changeable, has reached a *cul-de-sac*, as no watertight compartmentalisation is possible. Both have their strengths and weaknesses.⁵

Paul R. Brass (instrumentalist) and Francis C. Robinson (primordialist) were to stimulate a heated identity debate in India.⁶ Since they belong to two different schools of thought, they differ in their approach on the issue of ethnicity and nationalism in India despite marked identical perceptions on the topic. Hence, their debate has also reached a dead-end. After India's independence in 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru insisted that India should be based on a new liberal, democratic and secular 'national philosophy'. He declared these as the 'absolute' and 'unquestionable' foundations of the Indian state from which it could deviate only

⁴ E. Shills, 'Primordial, Personal, Sacred and Civil Ties', *British Journal of Sociology* 8, 1957, pp. 130-45.

⁵ For example, J. McKay, 'An exploratory synthesis of primordial and mobilizationist approaches to ethnic phenomena', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 5(4), October 1982, pp. 395-420. McKay argued that 'the main advantage of a primordial perspective is that it focuses our attention on the great emotional strength of ethnic bonds. Primordially oriented research has demonstrated that some ethnic attachments persist for hundred or thousands of years and that in certain cases they override loyalties to other important collectivists.' But the primordialist view has several weaknesses, e. g., 'Man is seen as a leopard who cannot change his ethnic spots.' *Ibid.* p. 397.

⁶ F. C. R. Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims: The Politics of the United Provinces Muslims, 1860-1923* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974); 'Nation Formation: The Brass Thesis and Muslim Separatism', *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, 15, 1977, pp. 215-234; P. R. Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974).

at its peril.⁷ For Nehru, India's unity⁸ lay in constructing a common national identity where all sub-national identities would have to be subsumed. Academics argue that the concept of Indian nationality (*Indian-ness*), articulated by Nehru and officially dominant in post-independence India faces what may well be its most serious challenge from within the Hindu community.⁹ It emphasised constructing *Hindu-ness* as India's sole identity, threatening minority identities. An outcome of this was a marked erosion during the early 1980s of Indian secular nationalism, with a great consequent impact upon Kashmir.

In the context of India's changed socio-economic and political environment, community identity became an intensely contested subject. Bidyut Chakrabarty asserts that in India, the notion of *syncretic* nationalism was challenged, not only in the sphere of ideology but also in the domain of praxis.¹⁰ He contends that communal identity is a constructed category, because communities continually recreate/reconstruct themselves. The extent of such recreation/reconstruction is, however, limited. The fluidity of communal identities is 'not completely free-floating but relates to conceptions of time and space, and the relationships between histories, cultures and biographies'.¹¹ Conversely, he reiterates the elements of primordiality and instrumentality. It is worth reflecting that our identity has two dimensions: ontological and epistemological. The former refers to who we are, and the latter to who we think we actually are. Hence, these two dimensions mould each other and consequently our identity remains a 'constant and dialectical interplay'¹² between these two dimensions.

Kashmiri leader Sheikh Abdullah, as will be seen in the subsequent discussion, was a good strategist who underlined both elements, depending on the situation. Although he would subscribe to a composite identity, *Kashmiri-ness*, he seemed never to have accepted the official formal identity of *Indian-ness* articulated by Nehru. In his passport he always wrote his nationality as Muslim Kashmiri/Kashmiri Muslim, not Indian. In 1938 when he dropped the word 'Muslim' from his party name to gain support from Hindus and Sikhs etc, conservative Muslims found the dropping unacceptable. When in 1940 some

⁷ B. Parekh, 'Discourses on National Identity', in B. Chakrabarty (ed.), *Communal Identity in India: Its Construction and Articulation in the Twentieth Century* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 118; full text, pp. 110-127.

⁸ The concept of unity and its relevance to India have been recurring themes of Nehru's writings. See his books, *The Discovery of India* (London: Meridan, 1960), *The Glimpses of World History* (Delhi, 1967).

⁹ D. Spitz, 'Cultural Pluralism, Revivalism, and Modernity in South Asia: The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh', in Young (ed.) *The Rising Tide of Cultural Pluralism: The Nation-State at Bay?* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1993), pp. 242-243.

¹⁰ On this point see, Chakrabarty, 'Introduction', in Chakrabarty (ed.) *Communal Identity in India*, pp. 1-50.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹² Quoted in *ibid.*, p. 2.

hardliners threatened to split, Sheikh Abdullah was quick to reassure them that he was a *'Muslim first and a Muslim last'* (emphasis added).¹³ The point being, perhaps, that he was a political pragmatist. It needs mentioning here that the existence of syncretic nationalism in Kashmir has recently been contested. Subscribers to religious identity, Muslim-ness would begin reasserting themselves following the resurgence of Islam in Kashmir and the Muslim world. Consequently, the tussle between Indian-ness, Kashmiri-ness and Muslim-ness, which would mark the politics of identity in Kashmir, would become acute with the resurgence of Hindu nationalism (*'Hindutva'*) under the BJP in the early 1980s.¹⁴ Discussion that follows in this article will further amplify this. According to Maya Chadda, Kashmiri Pandits 'frequently resorted to communal rhetoric and their ideologies were rooted in the negative definition of the self: *'we are Hindus first and Kashmiris next'* (emphasis added).¹⁵

Notwithstanding the politics of identity, religion would appear as historically the most salient basis for ethnic solidarity in Kashmir, and the most effective tool to mobilise Kashmiris to rise against Kashmir's Maharaja Hari Singh in 1931.¹⁶ The trend would re-emerge in post-Independence Kashmir. Hence, who defines identity and how it is defined remains critical factors in the identity formation of a nation.

3. ETHNO-CULTURAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN COMMUNITIES: PANDITS VERSUS MUSLIMS

Kashmir is an ethnic montage. People living there call themselves, and are called by others, Kashmiri Pandits, Kashmiri Muslims (e.g., *Gujar* [cowherd], *Bakerwal* [goatherd], *Hanji* [boatman] etc). Others such as *Puj* (butcher), *Navid* (barber) *Kral* (potter) and *Vatul* (cobbler) are low-status occupational groups.¹⁷

¹³ Proc's of the Working Committee of the J & KNC, June 1940, Jawaharlal Nehru Papers, Subject File 102/2 as quoted in Copland, 'Islam and Political Mobilisation in Kashmir', p. 257.

¹⁴ One may argue that none of this presupposes that there was not a *Kashmiriyat* and that religious identity was not subsequently learnt.

¹⁵ Chadda, *Ethnicity*, p. 213.

¹⁶ I. Copland, 'Islam and Political Mobilization in Kashmir, 1931-34', *Pacific Affairs*, 54(2) Summer, 1981, p. 256.

¹⁷ For details, T. N. Madan 'Religious Ideology in a Plural Society: The Muslims and Hindus of Kashmir', in T. N. Madan (ed.) *Muslim Communities of South Asia* (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1976). Also, Madan's, *Family and Kinship: A Study of the Pandits of Rural Kashmir* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, Second edition, 1988); K. S. Singh, General Editor, *People of India: Jammu & Kashmir*, Anthropological Survey of India, (New Delhi: Manohar, 2003).

Religion and occupation¹⁸ have become the bedrock for stratifying people into groups. Small-holding Islamic peasants constitute the vast majority of Kashmir's population.¹⁹ A widely-held view is that a composite identity, popularly known as '*Kashmiriyat*', binds all groups together. By religion, the two major ethnic groups are Muslims and Pandits. Both contemporary and non-contemporary Muslim and Pandit writers and nationalists have crafted a history that demonstrates that for centuries these two communities have lived in harmony, and '*Kashmiriyat*' has remained the key cementing force between them. For example, to Balraj Puri, a Kashmiri Pandit nationalist and writer, Kashmir represents a broad cultural homogeneity and geographical compactness, that drew settlers from ancient times, and they blended 'their individual identities into one whole.'²⁰ Others, as will be seen, hotly contest these views.

It is indisputable that Pandits and Muslims had much in common. For example, both wear loose, baggy-sleeved clothes (although of different kinds);²¹ both use an earthenware bowl filled with charcoal, called a *kanghri*, to keep them warm during winter; most important, both speak Kashmiri. However, Muslims employ Persian and Arabic words freely, and use the Persian/Arabic alphabet to write Kashmiri; by contrast, most educated Kashmiris are Hindu, favour words derived from Sanskrit, and write Kashmiri in the *Sarada* alphabet, a script of Indian origin. Likewise, there is no denying that they had lived in harmony. That does not necessarily mean that was only owing to '*Kashmiriyat*'. A principal reason for inter-community harmony was that there was *only* one Hindu caste in the Valley. Elsewhere in India, this is certainly not the case. In the Valley there were no lower-caste Hindus, as they had converted to Islam long before. Sheikh Abdullah himself was converted to Islam from a Hindu lower caste.

¹⁸ Madan has identified as many as 31 traditional occupational categories among Hindus and Muslims in rural Kashmir. These in turn define their sociocultural identity. Madan, 'Religious ideology', pp. 111-112.

¹⁹ J. A. Vincent, 'Differentiation and resistance: Ethnicity in Valle d'Aosta and Kashmir', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 5(3) (July 1982), p. 318. Full text, pp. 311-325.

²⁰ B. Puri, *Kashmir: Towards Insurgency* (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1993), p. 9. Also see his 'Kashmiriyat: the Vitality of Kashmiri Identity', *Contemporary South Asia*, 4(1), 1995, pp. 55-63. Others who strongly subscribe to *Kashmiriyat*, are, for example, P. N. K. Bamzai, *Kashmir and Power Politics* (New Delhi: Metropolitan Books, 1966); G. M. D. Sufi, *Kashmir: Being a History of Kashmir: From the Earliest Times to Our Own*, 2 vols. (New Delhi: Light and Light Publishers, 1974); P. N. Bazaz, *The History of Struggle for Freedom in Kashmir* (New Delhi: Kashmir Publishing Company, 1954); Contemporary writers included, for example, M. J. Akbar, *Kashmir: Behind the Vale* (New Delhi: Viking, Penguin Books India (P) Ltd., 1991).

²¹ Sender claims that Kashmiri Muslims' and Hindus' clothes differed since the late thirteenth century when Syed Hamadani berated the Muslim king for wearing Hindu clothes. H. Sender, *The Kashmir Pandits: A Study of Cultural Choice in North India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 12-13. Also, Madan, *Family and Kinship*.

However, Pandits and Muslims have sharp ethno-cultural differences that characterise their day-to-day interaction, and consequently they would live separate lives. T. N. Madan, a leading Indian sociologist, looked at these issues critically in the early 1970s, carrying out extensive ethnographic studies. While votaries of '*Kashmiriyat*' asserted that Pandits and Muslims generally visited each others' houses, ate together, attended weddings etc., Madan's study revealed that these are exaggerations.²² He showed that at the ideological level there was 'complete mutual exclusion'²³ between rural Pandits and Muslims, and that Kashmiri rural society, in fact, constituted of a *dual* social order.²⁴ He contended:

Thus, though the Muslims and the Pandits are mutually dependent, there is no reciprocity of perspective. In the words of Levi-Strauss (used, of course, in another context), "it is not the resemblances, but the differences, which resemble each other."²⁵

Thus, for Madan, Pandits and Muslims, particularly in the rural areas, have long lived *separately* together. To him, '*Kashmiriyat* is not, then, an indigenous concept of any antiquity.'²⁶ Contesting Kashmir's past, two recent PhD theses have corroborated Madan's arguments, and dubbed *Kashmiriyat* as a myth.²⁷ Madan, however, concluded:

²² Madan's, *Family and Kinship*, p. 192, pp. 235-236.

²³ Madan, 'Religious ideology', pp. 137-139. He wrote: 'In the Pandits' conception of them, Kashmiri villages are characterized by the simple but sharp distinction between themselves and the Muslims. The latter are regarded in principle as being ritually impure. They are referred to as *mlechchha* (of lowly birth, outsiders); theirs is the world of *ta:mas* (darkness, ignorance). Muslims are outside the pale of values by which a Pandit is expected as a Hindu to order his life. In practice, however, Pandits consider some Muslims as less polluting than others.' *Ibid.*, p. 124.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 137-139.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p.138. Collective identity takes many forms. It depends on the kind of allegiance, ascription and affiliation it draws upon—religion, language, gender and class. See A. Rao, 'The many sources of identity: an example of changing affiliations in rural Jammu and Kashmir', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 22(1), January 1999, pp. 56-91; J. R. Seul, "'Ours is the Way of God': Religion, Identity, and Intergroup Conflict', *Journal of Peace Research*, 36(5), 1999, pp. 553-569; T. N. Madan, 'Coping with ethnicity in South Asia: Bangladesh, Punjab and Kashmir compared', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 21(5), September 1998, pp. 969-989.

²⁶ T. N. Madan, 'Meaning of Kashmiriyat: Cultural Means and Political Ends', in G. M. Wani (compiled), *Kashmir: Need for Sub-Continental Political Initiative*, (New Delhi: Ashish Publishing House, 1995), p. 64.

²⁷ C. Zutshi, *Community, State, and the Nation: Regional Patriotism and Religious Identities in the Kashmir Valley, c. 1880-1953* (Ph.D Thesis, Tufts University, 2000); M. Rai, *The Question of Religion in Kashmir: Sovereignty, Legitimacy and Rights, c. 1846-1947* (Ph.D Thesis, Columbia University, 2000). In 2004 both theses were published as books. See my review of Rai's and Zutshi's books in *Contemporary South Asia*, 15(3), 2006, pp. 358-359.

In short, how Kashmiriyat is defined depends upon who is doing the defining. While an average Kashmiri, of whichever community, would be baffled by the term, the intellectuals will offer various and even conflicting definitions. One thing is certain, however: Kashmiriyat is not an artefact in the boutique for someone, native or visitor, to pick up and display as a sure basis for solving the Kashmir problem. Unfortunately (or perhaps fortunately) life is always more complex than any neat little images of it.²⁸

In sum, Pandits and Muslims had substantial ethno-cultural differences—perhaps more differences than resemblances. They aspired to their own distinctive identity based on their respective religions, to which their shared past was secondary. Conversely, religion would remain the primary identifier of their ethnicity. Thus, despite their harmonious relations, they failed to evolve a common identity. This perhaps acted as a factor in the latent tensions between the two communities.

4. RELIGIOUS CLEAVAGE WITHIN COMMUNITY: MUSLIM SECT VERSUS MUSLIM SECT

According to Manzoor Fazili, a Kashmiri writer, the sociology of politics reveals a critical dilemma of Kashmiris in terms of their religious values and attitudes. Arguing that Kashmir's power structure lies in the *Hanifite* Muslims of the Valley and Jammu Province, Fazili underscores that these *Hanifites* are *divided*. One goes on the path of cultural orientation, searching for their religious orientation/inspiration in shrines at Hazaratbal, Khanqah-i-Muallah and Khanyar and Mukhdoom Sahib, whereas, the other group, conservative in religious attitudes and known as *Ahl-i-hadiths* ('the People of the *Hadith*') do not, as they consider it un-Islamic.²⁹

Kashmir's *Mirwaiz* (chief Clergy, a title in use since 1901, is hereditary, and retained by the same family to this day) was labelled a *Wahhabi*,³⁰ i. e., one who

²⁸ T. N. Madan, 'Meaning of Kashmiriyat', pp. 65-66.

²⁹ M. Fazili, *Kashmir: Government and Politics* (Srinagar: Gulshan Publishers, 1982), pp. 29-30.

³⁰ According to Qeyamuddin Ahmad, a noted author of the *Wahhabi* Movement, the Movement, which was founded by an Arab, namely, Mohammad-ibn-Abdul Wahab (1703-92), was one of the earliest, most 'consistent and protracted' anti-British movements in India in the second half of the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. One of its notable preachers was Syed Ahmad who preached it not as a 'separate religion' as 'insinuated by some English writers, specially Hunter.' The *Wahhabis* are not essentially different from other Muslims. But they greatly emphasise certain points, among which are: 1. **monotheism** (Spiritual eminence and salvation consist in strict adherence to the commands of God as given in the Quran and laid down in the *Sharia*, not in developing mystical feelings of communion and mingling in His being), 2. **ijtehad** (the *Wahhabis* admit the right of 'interpretation' and stress the desirability of exercising it; they hold that followers of the four great Imams have, in effect, given it up), 3. **intercession** (*Wahhabis*

does not approve saint worship. The *Mirwaiz* in turn would call his opponents *mushriks*, or heretical saint-worshippers. During the nineteenth century a petition against Kashmir's *Mirwaiz*, Yahya Shah, from the *Khadims* (administrators) of the Khanqah-i-Muallah shrine, stated quite clearly that Yahya Shah went about preaching *Wahhabi* doctrines under the guise of being *Hanafi*.³¹ Maharaja Ranbir Singh (1856-1885) actively repressed any signs of *Wahhabism* in the Kashmir Valley and his successor, Maharaja Pratap Singh (1885-1925) was determined to do the same.³² In the Kashmir Valley, the significance of *Wahhabism* lies in what the term '*Wahhabi*' implies, namely a person against saint worship, and hence shrines, as well as a potential threat to the state. *Wahhabism* is also central to the practice of Islam in Kashmir.³³

Zutshi claims that in most writing from Kashmir, including government documents, the terms *Wahhabi* and *Ahl-i-Hadith* ('the People of the *Hadith*') were used interchangeably. She concludes that historically this was wrong, because the two sects differed considerably on theological issues. Although both sects opposed saint worship and sought to 'purify Islam', *Wahhabis* followed the *Hanabali* School of Islamic law, whereas *Ahl-i-Hadith* relied instead on the authority of the Quran and *Hadith*. Basing her arguments on Ayesha Jalal, Zutshi asserts that the organisers of the '*Wahhabi*' movement in India, Shah Abdul Aziz

do not believe in intercession by intermediaries such as persons of saintly eminence and hence supposed nearer to God), 4. **innovation** (*Wahhabis* condemn many religious and social practices as lacking precedent or justification in the *Shariat*. Notable among these are tomb worship, veneration of *Pirs* (religious figures), excessive dowries, shows of pomp on festive occasions such as circumcision and *milad* (celebration of the Prophet's birthday), prohibition of widow-remarriages, etc). Q. Ahmad, *The Wahabi Movement in India* (Calcutta: Firma K. L. Mukhopadhyay, 1966), p. xi, and pp. 16-17. For expansion of the Movement in Kashmir, pp. 46, 50, 53-54, 65, 69, 71, 107-108, 113, 116, 131.

³¹ C. Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity, and the Making of Kashmir* (London: Hurst and Company 2004), p. 132. *Hanafi* is the school of Islamic jurisprudence that follows the legalist interpretations of Imam Abu Hanifa (699-766), considered a champion of leniency and mercy. Syed Abdur Rahman, who is said to have introduced Islam to Kashmir, belonged to the *Hanafi* order, and Syed Ali Hamadani, although himself a *Hanabali*, urged the continuance of the *Hanafi* School of law in Kashmir. Most Kashmiri Sunni Muslims are, therefore, *Hanafi*. Although the schism between '*Hanafi*' and '*Wahhabi*' appeared first in the 1880s, adherence to the *Hanafi* school would become the primary form of identification for Kashmiri Sunnis in the first three decades of the twentieth century, when the ideas of *Ahl-i-Hadith* influenced the tone of disputes within the community. Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging*, p. 132.

³² W. R. Lawrence, *The Valley of Kashmir* (London: H. Frowde, 1895, Reprint, Jammu: Kashmir Kitab Ghar, 1996), p. 285. On hearing of Syed Ahmad's advance towards Kashmir, Ranjit Singh sent Sher Singh with 8000 men to stop him. Ahmad, *The Wahabi Movement*, p. 66.

³³ Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging*, pp. 132-133.

and Sayed Ahmed, made a submission to the colonial government after *Wahhabi* trials, pleading to be referred to as *Ahl-i-Hadith*.³⁴

The influence of *Ahl-i-Hadith* in conflicts over Kashmir Muslim identities cannot be overstressed.³⁵ Strongly against the concept of saints and shrine worship, it made tactical alliances with local Kashmir *ulema* of similar ideological leanings, thereby inserting itself into local disputes over community and identity. It was widely believed that the family of *Mirwaiz* Kashmir of *Jama Masjid* had *Ahl-i-Hadith* connections.³⁶ In the 1920s, another movement that redefined Islam as a means to a greater political end for the Kashmiri Muslim community was the *Ahmadiyya* movement.³⁷ *Ahmadiyyas* posed a threat to the authority of the *Mirwaiz* of Kashmir, which he was reluctant to tolerate.³⁸

Madan wrote that Kashmir University's historians were engaged in a debate about the character of *Sufism* and the *Rishi* (hermit) tradition among the Muslims of the Valley. Some of them assert that *Sufism* in the Valley became domesticated and distanced from its sources, and the *Rishis* had scant interest in the propagation of pure Islam; others, on the contrary, seek to establish the basic oneness of Sunni Islam everywhere. When they recognise distinctiveness, they call it distortion, and stress the importance of correction and purification. However, this is not a recent development as the *Ahl-e-Hadith* movement of the late nineteenth century had already impacted upon the Kashmiri Muslim. The purists are also cynical about the notion of a syncretic cultural heritage.³⁹

The adherents of *Kashmiriyat* and Kashmiri nationalist histories claim that shrine worship was an accepted and integral part of Kashmiri Islam, and therefore the Kashmir Muslim community has been an identifiable and unchangeable entity over centuries. For example, to Puri, Islam in Kashmir is

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ B. A. Khan, 'Ahl-i-Hadith Movement in Kashmir 1901-1981', M. Phil thesis, Kashmir University, 1984. This movement has its roots in exclusive preoccupation with the traditional corpus of *hadith* by a group of nineteenth century *ulema* in British India, main among whom were Saddiq Hasan Khan and Nazir Husayn who regarded it as the key source of law and the ideal guide to social behaviour and individual piety. The creed of this movement, as stated by Saddiq Hasan Khan, is that it does not follow any of the four juristic schools of Islam, instead binding itself to the Quran and tradition (*sunna* and *hadith*) of the Prophet. A. Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan 1857-1964* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 114-115. Also, Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging*, p. 161.

³⁶ Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging*, p. 150.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 165. Also see, Copland, 'Islam and Political Mobilisation in Kashmir', pp. 228-258; S. Lavan, *The Ahmadiya Movement: A History and Perspective* (Delhi, 1974). Copland noted that contemporary observers were divided about the causes of the 1931 uprising's outbreak. For details, pp. 228-259.

³⁹ Madan, 'Meaning of Kashmiriyat', p. 66.

rooted in the Kashmiri tradition, and the Kashmiri tradition is permeated with Islam.⁴⁰ But Zutshi concludes the opposite, arguing that even a regional community of Muslims in the Indian subcontinent, 'although purporting to be a unified and cohesive entity, was in fact deeply divided along ideological, social, and economic lines.'⁴¹

Summarily, at the intra-community level, religious cleavages existed among different Muslim sects: those that favoured and those that opposed saint-worship, shrine-visits and *Sufism*. In the 1980s these would sharpen when conservative groups such as *Ahl-i-Hadith* and *Mirwaiz* (following the holy relic crisis in 1963) invoked a renewed religion-based identity in a drive to restore Islam's pristine form, which they believed had become diluted by *Sufism*. Furthermore, following the incremental rise of the *Jamaat-e-Islami* of Kashmir in the 1970s, the conservative forces became significant rivals to the secular nationalism advocated by the National Conference. Neither the *Kashmiri Jamaat* nor the *Mirwaiz* and his followers accepted Kashmir's accession to India.

5. CONFLICT BETWEEN COMPETING PARADIGMS OF NATIONALISM AND IDENTITY

Two competing paradigms of Kashmiri nationalism, religious nationalism (Muslim-ness) versus secular nationalism '*Kashmiriyat*' (Kashmiri-ness) have dominated the identity landscape of Kashmir. Discussions will now highlight how the identity issue became contextualised, giving rise to a political cleavage rooted in a religious cleavage.

Religious nationalism: Muslim-ness versus Secular nationalism: '*Kashmiriyat*' (Kashmiri-ness)

As known the Dogra rule (1846-1947) proved unjust to the Kashmiri Muslim community. A significant expression of this was the July 1931 uprising. To mobilise Kashmiris effectively against Dogra rule, in October 1932 Sheikh Abdullah, the *Mirwaiz* of Kashmir Yusuf Shah and their followers founded the All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference (AJKMC). During this period Sheikh Abdullah demonstrated his communal orientation. For example, during 1932-33 he suggested that '*the Kashmiri Pandit [wa]s by nature an enemy of the Muslims*' and there were '*as many kinds of Pandits as snakes*' with the difference that a snake's bite would not prove fatal' (emphasis added).⁴²

⁴⁰ B. Puri, 'Kashmiri Muslims, Islam and Kashmiri Tradition', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 25(6), 10 February 1990, p. 307.

⁴¹ Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging*, p. 150.

⁴² Political Department, 1933, File No 249/PP-10, JKA) in M. Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects: Islam, Rights, and the History of Kashmir* (London: Hurst & Company, 2004), p. 273.

Also, in 1933, in a speech Abdullah delivered in the small Kashmiri town of Tragapura, he suggested that the task of the Muslim Conference and Muslims of the Valley was to 'turn out [the] Hindus, who from times past [had] been giving trouble' and exhorted the crowd to '*take revenge*' (emphasis added).⁴³ His purpose was to gain a position for the powerless Muslims in a Hindu state. Asking his audience to disregard his record as a 'past master in the game of exciting feelings', he suggested they think of the more important question of whether they could 'live in the state as Muslims or [would have to] eschew Islam.' The Muslim community, he argued, though visible in terms of its large numbers had otherwise disappeared before the 'sister community' of the *Hindus who assumed 'that [since] the ruler was a Hindu and the state was Hindu, the 'Hindu Dharam (religion) would naturally prevail'* (emphasis added).⁴⁴

Significantly, history would repeat itself when with the rise of Hindu religious nationalism under the *Bharatiya Janata Party* (BJP) in the 1980s, one would note that the BJP wanted India to be a Hindu state, with all other religions subsumed into Hinduism. This would become, as will be seen later, an important contributing factor for the resurgence of Muslim nationalism in Kashmir.

Following ideological differences (evidently under the influence of Nehru's secularism) with the *Mirwaiz*, in 1938 Sheikh Abdullah formed the All Jammu and Kashmir National Conference (AJKNC), dropping the word 'Muslim'. The aim was to give the party a secular colouring, to garner support from society's different strata. Despite much conceptual fuzziness about what really constitutes '*Kashmiriyat*', it has generally meant, as discussed earlier, to imply Kashmiris' composite identity. On its basis, Sheikh Abdullah's National Conference in 1944 demanded the abolition of the Dogra Dynasty to establish Kashmir's 'self-rule'. The Pandit community readily supported him.

The *Mirwaiz* group contested the Sheikh's secular nationalism, and to contain AJKNC's influence revived the AJKMC in 1944, propagating *Muslim-ness* as the core of Kashmiri identity, versus the AJKNC's advocacy of *Kashmiri-ness*. And in the pre-partition period, AJKMC demanded Kashmir's accession to Pakistan on the basis of *Muslim-ness*, while AJKNC, under Abdullah's leadership, demanded accession to India. The Kashmiri identity question then began revolving between these two competing nationalisms, determining political issues.

After India's independence in 1947, the *Jamaat-i-Islami* of Kashmir [hereafter *Kashmiri Jamaat (KJ)*] advocated Kashmiri nationalism based on the 'two-nation' theory and became a key proponent of Muslim separatism. Its Chief ideologue and former *Amir* (Chief) and currently the most hardcore key separatist

⁴³ Delivery of a seditious speech by Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, Political Department, 1933, File no. 31, Jammu Kashmir Archives in *ibid.*, p. 273.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 279.

leader, Syed Ali Shah Geelani, in his prison diaries *Rudad-i-Qafas (Records of the Jail)*, written during his imprisonment in 1990-2, reaffirmed the 'two-nation' theory as the ideological basis of the Kashmiri secessionist movement.⁴⁵ As Geelani contends, Kashmiris' right to self-determination rests on two pillars. First, the 'two-nation' theory on which the pre-partition Muslim League based its claim for a separate Muslim state—Pakistan⁴⁶, second, various United Nations resolutions that envisage for Kashmiris exercise of the right to choose to join either India or Pakistan.⁴⁷ For him it is an 'undeniable truth' that Muslims and Hindus, despite living in the same territory, form two completely different nations. For Muslims to stay among Hindus, or in a general environment so different in all respects from their own, is as difficult as for 'a fish to stay alive in the desert.' Hinduism, with its capacity to absorb all external elements, poses a constant threat to all other communities, including Muslims. Hence, Geelani concludes, Muslims cannot live with a Hindu majority without their own traditions and religion coming under grave threat.⁴⁸ He traced contemporary sources of threat to the rise of extremist Hindu religious nationalism in the 1980s.

At this stage, it needs mentioning that in the post-Independence period yet another element of identity, Indian-ness as the Indian state-led nationalism, became one of the competing paradigms, threatening to subsume Kashmiri nationalism. Hence, Kashmiri identity would become three-in-one: a. Kashmiri-ness, b. Muslim-ness, and c. Indian-ness. But Kashmiri loyalty would revolve around Kashmiri-ness and Muslim-ness depending on the situation as propagated by the rival groups. By contrast, the co-opted ruling parties, which the Indian authorities would install to rule Kashmir, and whose only objective would be to remain in power, would have to parade loyalty to Indian-ness. The outcome would be a constant tussle among the three elements.

The tussle among Kashmir-ness, Muslim-ness, and Indian-ness

Federal India, which has a unitary political system with a strong Centre, represents a classic case of social pluralism. Consequently, there is persistent

⁴⁵ Y. S. Sikand, 'For Islam and Kashmir: The Prison Diaries of Sayyed Ali Gilani of the *Jama'at-I-Islami* of Jammu and Kashmir', *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 18(2), October 1998. pp. 241-249.

⁴⁶ Note, however, that Geelani's understanding of the 'two nation' theory coincides with that of Mawdudi who differed with the Muslim League's version that sought to legitimise Indian Muslim nationalism as the basis for a Muslim state. Mawdudi, while also arguing that all Muslims form a single nation, emphasised, instead, Islam as the ideology of the Muslim/Islamic state. S. V. R. Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution: The Jama'at-I-Islami of Pakistan* (London and New York: I. B. Tauris, 1994), p. 21, pp. 109-110.

⁴⁷ S. A. S. Geelani, *Rudad*, vol. 1, p. 29 in Y. S. Sikand, 'For Islam and Kashmir: The Prison Diaries of Sayyed Ali', p. 243.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

contention between the dominant identity [Indian-ness], represented by the Centre, and regional identity, represented by the various sub-national groups. As N. C. Behera contends, the Indian State always seeks loyalty of these sub-national identities to the Indian nation.⁴⁹ The problem that ethnonationalism poses centres on this point of loyalty. As Walker Connor cogently puts it:

Questions of accommodating ethnonational heterogeneity within a single state revolve around two loyalties—loyalty to the nation and loyalty to the state—and the relative strength of the two. The great number of bloody separatist movements that have occurred in the past two decades within the first, second, and third world bear ample testimony that when the *two loyalties are seen as being in irreconcilable conflict, loyalty to the state loses out* (emphasis added).⁵⁰

The preceding discussion has argued that historically Kashmiris' identity formation has revolved around Kashmiri-ness and Muslim-ness. This has already divided Kashmiri society. To invoke a sense of Indian-ness among Kashmiris presupposes switching their loyalty. This has proved difficult, as Kashmiris always claimed that they possessed a distinctive identity—one that Sheikh Abdullah's National Conference thought would be safer in India than in Pakistan. This consideration led him to allow Kashmir to accede to India after Nehru publicly pledged that following accession Kashmiris themselves would finally determine their status. In Kashmir's case, after independence, loyalty to the state (Indian) lost out in Connor's sense, because Nehru's pledge was not fulfilled.

In a drive to integrate Kashmir with the Indian Union, the central authorities intervened excessively in Kashmir affairs, always installing hand-picked regimes. According to Tremblay, for about four decades New Delhi's nominated regimes kept following two specific strategies for their survival. One was creation of 'patronage politics', the other 'repression of a legitimate democratic opposition.'⁵¹ Thus, Kashmiris became hostages to a vested coterie who, in league with the Central authorities, kept repressing any opposition. These, Tremblay argued, led to failure by the Indian state to 'accommodate the state-sponsored nationalism [Indian-ness] with the informal Kashmiri nationalism.'⁵² However, for Tremblay, the cumulative outcome was the rise of 'antistate structures' resulting in the Kashmiri secessionist movement.⁵³ A noted Kashmiri Pandit historian, Prem Nath Bazaz, also argued in the early 1970s that the 'biggest problem in present-day Kashmir . . . is the reconciliation of local

⁴⁹ N. C. Behera, *State, Identity and Violence: Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2000), p. 13. Also, pp. 22-43.

⁵⁰ W. Connor, 'The Politics of Ethnonationalism,' *Journal of International Affairs*, 27, 1973, p. 17.

⁵¹ R. T. Tremblay, 'Nation, Identity and the Intervening Role of the State: A Study of the Secessionist Movement in Kashmir', *Pacific Affairs*, 69(4), Winter 1996-1997, p. 493 and p. 497.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 497.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

nationalism with Indian nationalism'.⁵⁴ Clearly, the problem continued, and became acute when Indian nationalism became too dominant following the rise of Hindu religious nationalism in the 1980s—a time when a sharp decline of Indian secularism became tangible.

6. THE RESURGENCE OF HINDU RELIGIOUS NATIONALISM IN INDIA

Milton J. Yinger, a leading authority on ethnicity, encapsulates the problem of India as follows: 'The threat to India as a multi-ethnic, multi-religious state is most easily seen in the Muslim-Hindu conflicts, especially the rise of Hindu nationalism in several settings and *Muslim nationalism in Kashmir*' (emphasis added).⁵⁵ The resurgence of Hindu nationalism in the 1980s was a significant phenomenon which Indian and non-Indian scholars have copiously researched, highlighting its implications for the Indian polities.⁵⁶ Its reassertion of 'Hindu nationalism' took a jingoistic form in the early 1980s with the rise of BJP, a religiously extremist party. Evidently, since the mid-1980s, organisations such as the *Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP)* gained greater access to the BJP, to raise public awareness of the links between Indian-ness and Hinduism.⁵⁷ The Hindu hardcore nationalist view that India is for Hindus *only*, and that could be maintained through the application of "*Hindutva*" (Hindu-ness)—a condition where the slogan: '*Hindi! Hindu! Hindustan!*', which could be transposed as 'One language! One People! One country!'⁵⁸ This view provoked a sense of cultural marginalisation amongst Indian Muslims, including Kashmiri Muslims.

⁵⁴ P. N. Bazaz, *Kashmir in the Crucible* (New Delhi: Pamposh Publishers, 1967), pp. 233-234. Bazaz articulated this to former Kashmir Chief Minister G. M. Saddiq.

⁵⁵ J. M. Yinger, *Ethnicity: Source of Strength? Source of Conflict?* (N.Y: State University of New York Press, 1993), p. 284.

⁵⁶ For example, Y. K. Malik and U. B. Singh, *Hindu Nationalists in India: The Rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994); C. Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics 1925 to the 1990s* (London: Hurst & Company, 1996); S. Kakar, *The Colors of Violence: Cultural Identities, Religion and Conflict* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

⁵⁷ V. Hewitt, *Reclaiming the Past: The Search for Political and Cultural Unity in Contemporary Jammu and Kashmir* (London: Portland Books, 1995), p. 135.

⁵⁸ J. Assayag, 'Ritual Action or Political Reaction? The Invention of Hindu Nationalist Processions in India During the 1980s', *South Asia Research*, 18 (Autumn 1998), pp. 125-148. It has already been mentioned at the beginning of Chapter 3 that it was Savarkar who first advocated the two-nation theory. Savarkar also invented the concept 'Hindutva' in the 1920s. As he wrote: 'the concept of . . . 'Hidutva' . . . is more comprehensive than . . . 'Hinduism.' It is to draw pointed attention to this distinction that I coined the word . . . Hinduism concerns the religious system of the Hindus, their theology and dogma. But this is precisely a matter that . . . [Hindu nationalist] leave entirely to individual or group conscience and faith . . . 'Hindutva' . . . refers not only to the religious aspect [of the Hindu nation] . . . but comprehends . . . their cultural, linguistic, social and political

Scholars have argued that Hindu-ness has both cultural and religious components. Hindu nationalists view it from both angles.⁵⁹ For Savarkar, a Hindu is one who accepts *Bharat* (India) as his/her *punaybhumi* ('holy land') and *pitrubhumi* ('father land'). This definition involuntarily eliminates Muslims and Christians who 'might have shared a common pitrubhumi with the Hindus,' but 'their punaybhumi lay elsewhere.'⁶⁰ The BJP (especially the hardliners), which reinvented and reconstructed Savarkar's 'Hindutva', sought to subsume different layers of community identity in terms of culture, language and caste under a solo overarching category of religion, and by making Hinduism central to Indian identity denied political space to sub-national identities woven around linguistic, caste, regional and cultural affinities.⁶¹ In short, *Hindutva* intends to achieve a pan-Indian identity in which there cannot be any place of Urdu or English but the 'wholehearted acceptance of Sanskrit and other Indian languages.'⁶² However, it should not be forgotten that there are views within the Hindu political frame that allow for continuation of other religious traditions provided the cultural dominance of a Hindu India is acknowledged. For example, the prominent moderate BJP leader, Vajpayee, represents this political frame. Significantly, Kashmir has always been central to the Hindu notion of *rashtra-rajya* (state-kingdom) and secessionist demands reinforce its belief in 'Muslim disloyalty to India.'⁶³

The BJP's political manifesto bears serious implications for Muslims living in India. It advocates, among others, (i) termination of the special status of

aspects as well . . . ' See, *Hindu-Rashtra Darshan* [Hindu State Philosophy] (Bombay: Veer Savarkar Prakashan, 1984), pp. 10, 78 quoted in S. Bose, 'Hindu Nationalism' and the Crisis of the Indian State: A Theoretical Perspective', in S. Bose and A. Jalal (eds.) *Nationalism, Democracy and Development: State and Politics in India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, Oxford Indian Paperbacks, Third Impression, 1999 [1998], p. 154.

⁵⁹ Assayag, 'Ritual Action or Political Reaction?', pp. 125-148.

⁶⁰ Singh, *The End of India*, pp. 44-45. Gold also points out that this definition purposely eliminates Muslims and Christians for whom India is not a holy land. In M. Ruthven, *Fundamentalism: The Search for Meaning* (London: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 176.

⁶¹ Behera, *State, Identity and Violence*, p. 174.

⁶² Singh, *The End of India*, p. 45. Under the Hindutva, whereas 'Jains, Buddhists and Sikhs were accepted because their religions were of Indian origin, Muslims, Christians and Parsis were excluded on the basis that they were 'communities of numerical minorities''. *Ibid.*, pp. 45-46.

⁶³ G. Navlakha, 'Invoking Union: Kashmir and Official Nationalism of *Bharat*', in T. V. Sathyamurthy (ed.) *Region, Religion, Caste, Gender and Culture in Contemporary India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 102-103; Scholars also regard official nationalism as formal nationalism and sub-nationalism as informal nationalism, and between the two there are contradictions. See for example, T. H. Eriksen, 'Formal and Informal Nationalism', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 16(1) (January 1993), pp. 1-25.

Jammu and Kashmir; (ii) adoption of a common civil code to supersede all the personal laws of religious minorities; (iii) liquidation of the National Minorities Commissions. These demands are all anathema to Muslims of India in general and Kashmiri Muslims in particular. Furthermore, the BJP's demand to reverse the 'state-subject' definition, consciously settling Hindus in the Valley to change the population balance,⁶⁴ was viewed as a direct threat to Kashmiri Muslims' identity. As Gautam Navlakha put it: 'The roots of the crisis in Kashmir lie in the Kashmiri people's fears for their national-cultural identity in the face of aggressive advance of the Hindu/Hindi notion of nationalism in the country.'⁶⁵ For example, a circular of 12 January 1990 from the News Service Division of All-India Radio reminded:

the news readers-translators in the respective languages including Hindi, Urdu, Kashmiri, that 'rastrapati' will be used for President, 'up-rastrapati' for Vice-President and 'pradhan mantri' for the Prime Minister. For India the language version will be Bharat.⁶⁶

Pointing to events unfolding outside Kashmir, Geelani, *KJ's* Chief ideologue, claimed that the growing power of staunchly anti-Muslim Hindu chauvinist groups all over India, especially from the mid-1980s onwards, resulted in large-scale violence directed principally against Muslims, in which thousands of Muslims lost their lives. Consistent efforts were being made, he contended, to efface every trace of Muslim identity in India. His examples, ranging from the 'martyrdom' (*shahadat*) of the beards of some of his Kashmiri Muslim fellow-prisoners and the prison authorities refusal to allow them to pray, to the Hinduisation of names of cities and towns, all point, he says, to a rapidly escalating and increasingly menacing Hindu cultural imperialism. One should not accept Geelani's claims unquestioningly, for he offers no more convincing examples of Indian ill-treatment than those cited above.

Both in theory and practice, the Kashmiri and Pakistani *Jamaats* have much in common. Both reject 'Indian Colonialism' and 'Brahminical Imperialism' and wish to establish an Islamic state. Nasr writes that in 1948, following the armed conflict between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, Mawdudi raised a great controversy by declaring that it was not a *jihad*. Later, however, he altered his stance, and since then *Jl* of Pakistan has been the most vocal group demanding declaration of *jihad* against India over Kashmir.⁶⁷ For Geelani, 'Cultural

⁶⁴ S. Gupta, 'Gathering Storm', in M. M. Bouton and P. Oldenburg (eds.) *India Briefing 1990* (Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1991), p. 42 in Behera, *State, Identity and Violence*, p. 174.

⁶⁵ GN, 'Defending National-Cultural Identity', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 25(9), 3 March 1990, p. 422.

⁶⁶ *The Statesman*, 19 January 1990.

⁶⁷ Nasr, *The Vanguard*, pp. 120-121, pp. 156-157. According to the Kashmiri *Jamaat*, *jihad* can take various forms—physical as well as through the 'pen' and 'tongue'. Not

hegemony is a logical culmination of political supremacy,⁶⁸ and therefore, he urges Kashmiris to rise against Hindu extremist forces. From Geelani's viewpoint, use of the Hindu 'cultural hegemony' thesis to arouse Muslim consciousness is not surprising. BJP's *Hinduisation* scheme gave him a strong rationale to capitalise on his thesis to mobilise Muslims against Hindus.

However, one event needs emphasising here because it had a direct impact on Kashmiri Muslim thinking. This was the Nellie massacre of 18 February 1983, in which officially over 1,800 Indian Assamese Muslims, including children, were brutally killed by Hindus in the Nagaon district of Assam.⁶⁹ According to the unofficial estimate, the death-toll was over 3,300.⁷⁰

Many of the survivors migrated to Kashmir, in the hope that in a Muslim-majority state they would be safe from Hindu persecution. Their arrival, and the tales of killings they brought with them, would have made Kashmiri Muslims more wary of India, in particular of their prospects of receiving a fair deal from it. Sumit Ganguly asserted that because many of the Bengali migrants were religious scholars/teachers (Moulvis), who found employment in mosques and *madrastas*, 'they helped promote Islam in the Valley.'⁷¹ As Rajesh Kadian put it

Senior Indian officials began to notice the increasing number of Maulavis from U.P. and Bihar in the local mosques and madrasas. They...did not share the gentle Sufism of their indigenous Kashmiri brethren, for most of them were young and educated in the Deoband region of western U. P. They taught of pride in militant Islam and branded Muslim children going to secular schools as Kafirs. Their teachings struck a ready chord in a population already stimulated by Islamic revolution in neighboring Iran.⁷²

only armed fighters (*mujahideen*), but also writers and journalists have important roles in *jihad*. Geelani, *Rudad*, vol. 1, pp. 75-76, pp. 156-157 in Y. S. Sikand, 'For Islam and Kashmir: The Prison Diaries of Sayyed Ali', p. 243.

⁶⁸ Geelani, *Rudad*, vol. 1, p. 100, in Y. S. Sikand, 'For Islam and Kashmir: The Prison Diaries of Sayyed Ali Gilani,' p. 244.

⁶⁹ M. H. Rahman, 'Remembering Nellie', *The Milli Gazette*, 2(8),15 April 2001, <http://www.milligazette.com/Archives/15042001/inter.htm> accessed on 21/10/2005. 'Assam has learnt no lesson', 'Why the seminar on the Nellie massacre was banned?' *Ibid*.

⁷⁰ S. U. Rahman, 'Nellie Massacre survivors get Rs 2000 as Compensation!', *ibid*, 1-15 February, print edition, accessed on 19/11/2005. The Tewari Commission, constituted to probe the riots, submitted its 600-page report to Assam government in May 1984, the then Congress government, headed by Hiteswar Saikia, decided against making it public. The *Asom Gana Parishad (AGP)* that came to power in December 1985 too kept it under wraps. *Ibid*.

⁷¹ S. Ganguly, *The crisis in Kashmir: Portents of war, hopes of peace* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press and Woodrow Wilson Centre Press, 1997), p. 32, and p. 76.

⁷² R. Kadian, *The Kashmir Tangle: Issues and Options* (New Delhi: Vision Books, 1992), p. 13. Another factor that led to the religious transformation of Kashmiri culture was that, true to the spirit of Shimla, both India and Pakistan allowed greater access and movement

Anyway, successful integration of the Indian state presupposes practice of a uniform policy towards all faiths—a goal that the Congress leaders thought could be met by secularism. However, although not openly siding with any religion, the Indian state has not always functioned secularly. Alam, for example, contended that the impact of Nehruvian secularism was always extremely weak and the idea that a 'secular hegemony was created during Nehru's dominance is a myth.' He argued that all the Nehruvian model did was strengthen the 'majoritarian religious community' in ways that led to the 'marginalisation and alienation of the religious minorities.'⁷³ One of the main problems of the Nehruvian State—and of Gandhi's alternative as well—was that it promoted Brahminical Hinduism, especially in 'cultural policy'. It was this weakness (which includes its Hindu bias and accommodation to Brahminical influences) not the Westernness of Nehruvian state secularism that helped create the dilemmas confronting India.⁷⁴ Because of these dilemmas and Congress policy, Indian secularism began dwindling towards the 1980s, and hence its erosion became a factor for the 1990 uprising's outbreak.⁷⁵

7. THE RISE OF THE KJ, OF KASHMIR'S MIRWAIZ, THE RESURGENCE OF ISLAMIC CONSCIOUSNESS IN KASHMIR, AND EROSION OF KASHMIRI-NESS

In 1942 Ghulam Ahmad Ahar and his colleagues established the KJ⁷⁶. Since its inception, it has followed a policy of recruiting educated young men, and sought high quality members instead of large numbers. Because of *Sufism* to which some of the Valley's population subscribes, it was difficult for the KJ to recruit large numbers there. Hence, both at public and private levels, it emphasised the need to penetrate educational institutions, and devoted its resources to establishing its own schools and institutions to indoctrinate youths with religious teachings, with the longer-term aim of recruiting its cadres from them.

across the LoC. In 1982, despite some wrangling with New Delhi over Kashmir's own immigration laws, the state passed a controversial Resettlement Bill that opened its borders to about twenty thousand immigrants, many of them returning after almost forty years in Pakistan Kashmir. They brought with them a distinct culture. Hewitt, *Reclaiming the Past*, p. 135.

⁷³ P. Brass and A. Vanaik, 'Introduction', in P. Brass and A. Vanaik (eds.) *Competing Nationalism in South Asia* (New Delhi: Orient Longman Private Limited, 2002), p. 9. A. Alam, 'Secularism in India: A Critique of the Current Discourse', *ibid.*, pp. 85-117.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 85-117.

⁷⁵ For example, A. Varshney, 'Three Compromised Nationalisms: Why Kashmir Has Been a Problem', in R. G. C. Thomas (ed.) *Perspectives on Kashmir: The Roots of Conflict in South Asia* (Boulder: Westview Press 1992), pp. 191-234.

⁷⁶ At present the KJ is a banned organisation, having been declared illegal by the Indian government in April 1990.

The other cadre-based party, both most influential and largest of all Kashmiri political parties, was Sheikh Abdullah's National Conference. As already mentioned, the Sheikh was tactically aware enough to seek support from all social strata by dropping the word 'Muslim' from his National Conference's title in 1938. In 1944 the leaders of the pro-Pakistan forces (the *Mirwaiz* of Kashmir and his followers) countered this move by resurrecting the Muslim Conference, which thereafter, along with *KJ*, remained prominent political rivals of Abdullah's National Conference. They differ in that the Muslim Conference is moderate, and *KJ* is not, but both opposed Sheikh Abdullah because he, like Nehru, championed secularism, and both denied the legality of Kashmir's accession to India. Furthermore, the Sheikh was the embodiment of *Sufism*, from which both the *Mirwaiz* and *KJ* preferred to remain aloof. It will be seen that with the incremental rise of *KJ* and resurgence of Kashmir's *Mirwaiz* after almost three decades, the re-assertion of Muslim-ness as the identity-maker gained supremacy with the rise of the Muslim United Front in 1984.

Arguably, until the early 1960s the communal forces in Kashmir remained subdued. However, the occasion when they resurfaced was related to a religious event, i. e. the disappearance of a holy relic of Prophet Mohammad (SM) in December 1963. The event aroused religious nationalism among Muslims, resuscitating the importance of the institution of the *Mirwaiz* after almost three decades. This episode is important for an analysis of the political psyche of Kashmir, as it represents the first major manifestation of a deep-rooted mass discontent that had been accumulating for want of expression since the early fifties.⁷⁷ During this period the *Mirwaiz*, that had played a political role in earlier political mobilisation in Kashmir,⁷⁸ came to reclaim that role.

The holy relic crisis witnessed the rise of Moulvi Mohammad Farooq, Kashmir's *Mirwaiz*. He became Head of the Action Committee established by various political organisations to coordinate mass protests during the crisis, demonstrating his popularity and importance in the Valley's politics. Later he launched his own political organisation, the Awami Action Committee (AAC). It was 'the first genuine pro-Pakistani group of importance and it attracted militant sections of population, among the youth in particular, especially in parts of Srinagar.'⁷⁹ After its formation, his leadership gained credibility as the politics of Muslim nationalism became assertive in Kashmir in the 1980s.

⁷⁷ R. Chowdhury, 'The Muslim Identity and the Politics of Fundamentalism in Kashmir', Queen Elizabeth House Working Paper Series (QEHP), Working Paper No. 19, October 1988, p. 21.

⁷⁸ For the early period see, Copland, 'Islam and Political Mobilization in Kashmir', pp. 228-259.

⁷⁹ B. Puri, 'Jammu and Kashmir', in M. Weiner (ed.) *State Politics in India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 235.

In contrast to the *Mirwaiz*, *KJ* has consistently demanded that Kashmir's future be decided through a plebiscite, as stipulated by UN in 1949, 1951 and 1957. During its first three decades, *KJ* operated mainly as a religious revivalist movement and did not actively participate in state politics. Although it publicly rejected the *status quo*, and demanded the right of self-determination for Kashmir's Muslims,⁸⁰ it did not join other organisations that advocated accession to Pakistan. An authoritative interpretation suggests that during this period, the *Jamaat* leadership in Kashmir believed that the Islamically-inspired mobilisation of Kashmiri Muslims would culminate in establishment of an Islamic state, either independent or federated with Pakistan.⁸¹

Increasingly, however, in the 1970s and 1980s, the role of Islam became more important in marking a distinctive Kashmiri identity. For example, politicians and those seeking advancement through politicians' favour have moved away from a secular to a pious Muslim image, in dress, beard and religious observance.⁸² During this time Islamism came to be regarded as primarily a movement for establishing and preserving the religio-cultural identity of Muslims wherever they live as minorities.⁸³ It is generally held that those who came easily under Islamic nationalist/fundamentalist influence were students and youth frustrated by Kashmir's economic and political realities. Their frustration basically stemmed from the gap between the newly-emerging middle class' aspirations and Kashmir's infrastructural facilities for fulfilling them. Kashmir saw a relative mobilisation after 1947, especially in agrarian reform and expansion of educational opportunities.⁸⁴ As Rekha Chowdhury maintains, the

⁸⁰ *Ayeena (Mirror)*, 15 Aug 1984; *Aftab (Sunshine)*, 4 Dec 1984, in M. Ahmad, 'Islamic Fundamentalism in South Asia', in M. E. Marty and R. S. Appleby (eds.) *Fundamentalisms Observed*, vol. 1, Paperback edition, (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1994), p. 506.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² Vincent, 'Differentiation and resistance', p. 320.

⁸³ A. Ali, 'Islamism: Emancipation, Protest and Identity', *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 20, 1 (April 2000), p. 21. M. Ataman, 'Islamic Perspective on Ethnicity and Nationalism: Diversity or Uniformity?' *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, 23, 1 (April 2003), p. 90. Full text, pp. 89-102.

⁸⁴ As Fazili a veteran Kashmiri writer, contended, 'Many cultural changes occurred during the period 1953-75. A new class arose among Muslims. The growth of this class started with the introduction of compulsory primary education in the cities by Maharaja Hari Singh and was stimulated by the provision of free education by Bakhshi Ghulam Mohammad, liberal politics of Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq and Syed Mir Qasim, resulting in an army of job-seekers and material goals. Every Muslim graduate expected a gazetted cadre in civil services, owing to the fact that earlier ordinary educated man had been promoted to definitely very higher cadres.' Fazili, *Kashmir*, p. 31.

influence of fundamentalist organisations, especially in rural areas, can be directly linked to the failure of ideology in Kashmir's politics.⁸⁵

It is known that the politics of land reform, which proved successful in inhibiting communalism in Kashmiri politics in the 1950s, failed to sustain its pace. Also known is that the reform, which abolished big landed estates, denied compensation to expropriated landowners and redistributed land to the tillers, was not only flawed but also remained incomplete in both legislation and implementation. The flaws in the land reforms further economically stratified Kashmiri society, widening the gap between the new-rich classes in urban and rural areas and the common peasant class. This led to *erosion* of the National Conference's *peasant base*, changing Kashmiri politics. This in turn consolidated the position and organisational base of the *KJ* in that by the mid 1980s, a substantial segment of peasantry came within the orbit of *KJ*'s ideological influences.⁸⁶ Consequently, *KJ* could make inroads into the countryside, and mobilise the people there by indoctrination. As previously mentioned, rural Kashmir is a dual structure, where ideologically Pandits and Muslims live in 'complete mutual exclusion', emphasising each other's religious identity; it was therefore not surprising that *KJ* would make an impact.

Along with its ideological expansion, *KJ*'s electoral expansion was also tangible in the 1970s. In the 1972 Assembly elections it secured five seats. Following this success, it fielded candidates for the civic elections in 1976, but they were not held. *KJ* also threw out a strong challenge against the Sheikh following his 1975 Kashmir Accord with Indira Gandhi, dubbing it a sell-out and strongly opposing it. Earlier in 1977, the *Mahaz-e-Azadi* (Independent Front) came into being and challenged Sheikh Abdullah's leadership because of the lopsided 1975 Kashmir Accord between him and Indira Gandhi. However, in 1977, *KJ* launched a student wing, the *Islami Jamiat-e-Tulba (IJT)*, and began to increase its influence among the students. In the 1977 Kashmir Assembly elections, it entered into an understanding on a minimum programme with the *Janata* Party, and fielded 19 candidates, but obtained only one seat. In his inaugural address to *IJT*'s first annual session, held in Srinagar in July 1978, its founder-President, Ashraf Sahrai referred to the 'Kashmir question' and compared the struggle of some Kashmiris for independence to the ongoing liberation struggle in the world.

⁸⁵ Chowdhury, 'The Muslim Identity', p. 125. Fazili asserted that the unfortunate aspect in Kashmir politics is that the forces of secularism, socialism and democracy have nothing to do with the common man. They did not educate him, nor attempt to operationalise these concepts during the last three decades. They were only used as instruments by the leadership for paving the way to accession to India during the freedom struggle and in the post-1947 period as means to seek power. Fazili, *Kashmir*, pp. 124-125.

⁸⁶ P. Giyas-Ud-Din, *Understanding the Kashmir Insurgency* (Delhi: Anmol, 1992), p. 96.

Only after the 1979 Iranian Revolution did *KJ* come into the forefront of the political struggle for 'liberation of Kashmir' and 'Islamic revolution'. In August 1980, a few days before a proposed international conference arranged to discuss the Iranian revolutionary experience's relevance for Kashmiri Muslims *IJT*'s leader publicly called upon Kashmiri youth to work for 'an Iranian-type Islamic revolution in Kashmir in order to achieve independence'.⁸⁷ The Indian government reacted swiftly, banning the conference and sending the foreign participants, including an official Iranian delegation, back from Srinagar airport. The public protests that followed resulted in the arrest of hundreds of *Jamaat* workers and youth leaders.⁸⁸ In the words of a leading Indian sociologist, T. N. Madan, the Kashmiri Muslims' separatist movement was 'more inspired by religious and ethnic (Muslim-Kashmiri) considerations than by pure Islamic fundamentalism, but the influence of the latter (particularly after the Iranian Revolution) is not absent.'⁸⁹

KJ's participation in the last four Assembly elections clearly demonstrated that it no longer confined itself to the social and religious fields; it gradually emerged as a political force to be reckoned with in the early 1980s, and demanded a stiff stance against the Indian government on the accession question. This led to differences between moderates and hardliners, the hardliners, led by Mawlana Saad-ud-Din and Ghulam Mohammad Butt, and supported by *IJT*, demanding a clear-cut policy on the accession question. Syed Ali Shah Geelani accommodated the hardline view in the resolutions and the programmes adopted at the party's annual conference in 1982.

The *KJ* selected a 'model of Islamic *bastis*' (Islamic Community in villages) to indoctrinate the youths. It also established some Islamic (*Sharia*) courts and asked the people to bring their cases to them rather than the official courts, and accept their verdicts. In October 1982, *KJ* started an indoctrination programme. At the start, it took up seven to eight villages in each district to establish Islamic *Darsghahs* (Councils) to indoctrinate the youths.

To widen and deepen its influence, *KJ* advised its cadres to develop contacts with non-Muslims. It also tried to organise women in Muslim areas under the name of *Shoba-e-Khowateen* (Section for Women). Its central aim was to

⁸⁷ *Arabia: The Islamic World Review* (January 1985), p. 13 in Ahmad, 'Islamic Fundamentalism', p. 506.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ T. N. Madan, *Modern Myths, Locked Minds: Secularism and Fundamentalism in India*, Oxford India Paperbacks (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 258. He concluded: 'Whatever is judged to be the character of Kashmiri separatism, it is perfectly clear that it is against pan-Indian secular nationalism.' *Ibid.* Note, for him, 'fundamentalism (a rather vaguely defined omnibus word) everywhere is explicitly soteriological.' *Ibid.*, p. 25, p. 101.

promote Islamic education and social behaviour in conformity with Islamic principles.

Again in 1982, Indira Gandhi's government sent the army to curb the *Jamaat*-sponsored popular movement. More than three hundred *Jamaat* workers, including all its leaders, were arrested under the National Security Act.⁹⁰ In 1984, Geelani was charged with "conspiracy to annul Kashmir's accession to India through using Islamic religious institutions for this purpose."⁹¹ In October that year, Srinagar police arrested seventy-one *Jamaat* youth workers on charges of distributing pamphlets asking people 'to follow the glorious example of Imam Khomeini and bring about an Iranian-type Islamic revolution.'⁹² In 1985, in addition to its working committee, *Majlis-e-Shoora* (Consultative Assembly), *KJ* established another body, *Majlis-e-Numayendigan* (Assembly of Representative) to help the *Majlis-e-Shoora* implement its policies.

The *KJ*'s membership had four categories: *Rukuns* (die-hards), *Hamdards* (ordinary members), *Muqtarsarin* (influenced) and *Muqtafaqin* (those nearer to the ideology). In 1986, *Rukuns* were estimated at about 10,000, *Hamdards* around 25,000 and the last two categories combined at over 50,000.⁹³ In addition, during 1986 *KJ* and its student wing were fairly assertive in government-run schools and colleges and in Kashmir University.⁹⁴ All categories of *KJ* members are required to pay 10% of their earnings to it, while *Rukuns* and *Hamdards* are also required to contribute the skins of sacrificed animals. Since the early 1980s the *KJ*'s strength has been increasing. According to one source, in the Valley

⁹⁰ *Arabia: The Islamic World Review* (August 1984), in Ahmad, 'Islamic Fundamentalism', p. 506.

⁹¹ *Srinagar Times*, 14 August 1984, *Aftab*, 1 February 1984 in *ibid.*

⁹² *Roshni*, 20 October 1984 in *ibid.*, p. 507.

⁹³ A. Maheshwari, *Crescent over Kashmir: Politics of Mullaism* (New Delhi/Calcutta, 1993), p. 104.

⁹⁴ According to a Kashmiri Pandit website source, to lift up the *Jamaat*'s appeal, *KJ*, at its Pakistan's patrons' instance resorted to a campaign of witch-hunt against secular-minded Muslims and nationalists. As a part of the campaign, *KJ* workers virtually ransacked libraries in the educational institutions, and ordered ban on books which did not 'correspond to their brand of knowledge about man and his world. In Kashmir University, the library was pruned and more than 2,000 books, all the books on Hindu philosophy, Milton's *Paradise Lost* and George Bernard Shaw's plays and books by many other noted writers were thrown out. As a part of Islamisation campaign, *KJ* forcibly converted Kashmir University's Canteen Hall into a mosque. Similar things happened in the prestigious Institute of Medical Science, the Medical College and Teachers Training Colleges in the Valley, where *Jamaat* affiliated teachers forced closures of classes where Darwin's theory of evolution was taught to the students on the plea that it did not conform to Islamic tenets. O. N. Trisal, 'Islamic Fundamentalism in Kashmir', <http://ikashmir.org/Miscellaneous/trisal.html> accessed on 22/10/2005.

alone *KJ* ran about 300 schools, with around 40,000 pupils.⁹⁵ But according to the former Deputy *Amir* of Pakistan's *Ji* and Zia's Planning Minister, Khurshid Ahmad, *Ji* of Kashmir ran over 1,000 schools in the Valley.⁹⁶ An example of what was taught was this part of a poem prescribed for Class-III: 'Little children, be very calm/I will tell you what is Islam. /You may be few and without an army. /But you must fight for Islam.' Another passage from a book for primary classes reads: 'We are Kashmiris and our country is Kashmir. /It is surrounded by India, China and Iran.'⁹⁷ Whether these should be construed as examples of politicisation of Islam or Islamisation of Kashmiri politics is debatable.

However, Sheikh Abdullah was mindful of the imminent danger that this Islamisation trend might cause an Indian backlash. He wanted to curb it by banning *madrasas* (religious seminaries). The Sheikh's traditional rival *Mirwaiz* Moulavi Farooq of the Awami Action Party opposed this move to weaken the National Conference and its leaders. Following Sheikh Abdullah's death, his son, Farooq Abdullah, seemed to have not fared well in curbing all the forces of religious extremism, Hindu or Muslim. For example, a 1982 report noted that Farooq declared his intention of banning communal and secessionist parties such as the *Rashtriya Swyamsewak Sangh* (RSS), the *Mahaz-e-Azadi*, the Liberation Front and the Muslim League, but did not mention *KJ* and BJP.⁹⁸ Farooq's announcement angered leaders of *Mahazi-e-Azadi* and Muslim League. For example, a 90-year old leader of *Mahaz-e-Azadi* and one-time staunch supporter of Sheikh Abdullah, Sufi Mohammad Akbar, burst out: 'Ban or no ban, we'll continue our activities, and propound a total independence of the state.'⁹⁹ Azam Inqilabi, the Muslim League's leader, who would become a radical separatist leader in 1989, said: 'The freedom fighters of Kashmir will continue their struggle.'¹⁰⁰

Thus, during the 1980s the Indian authorities faced stiffened opposition from the newly emergent right-wing Islamist parties in Kashmir. *KJ*, an offshoot of the Pakistani party of the same name, became an alternative opposition political

⁹⁵ *Ibid.* Based on sources of *KJ* Gull Mohd. Wani claimed *KJ* had set up 125 Islamic schools with 17,000 students. G. M. Wani, *Kashmir Politics: Problems and Prospects* (New Delhi: Ashish Publishing House, 1993), p. 114. Jagmohan, Kashmir's Governor (1984-1989), informs about the existence of 150 schools, but gave no figure for enrolments. Jagmohan, *My Frozen Turbulence*, p. 180.

⁹⁶ S. V. Reza Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution: The Jam`at-i-Islami of Pakistan* (Berkeley. Los Angels, 1994), p. 238 n56. The figure, based on Nasr's interview with Ahmad on 19 November 1989 in Islamabad is useful as it gives the pre-1990 uprising picture.

⁹⁷ Jagmohan, *My Frozen Turbulence*, p. 180.

⁹⁸ G. N. Khayal, 'Cracking Down', *India Today*, 31 December 1982, p. 24.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

party¹⁰¹ to challenge the ruling National Conference, that had begun to fall from grace because of its authoritarian rule. In addition, the mid-1980s saw the emergence of a number of political and social *tanzeems* (organisations) that were Islamist in nature, strongly in favour of introducing Islamic governance to Kashmir. For example, the Islamic Student Organisation emerged in 1985 as a leader of the Islamic Students' League (ISL). ISL was the forerunner of JKLF, and several ISL activists such as Yasin Malik and Naeem Khan would become significant political/militant leaders in the 1990s.

The proliferation of Islamist parties showed that political Islam was making inroads into Kashmiri politics. In September 1985 twelve such parties would come together to form the Muslim United Front (MUF).¹⁰² Its emergence was a critical factor as within one year it became the alternative to the National Conference, because of the latter's perceived sell-out of the Kashmiris' interests in the Accord it made in 1986 with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi. MUF's popularity with the young was expressed by its Secretary-General (April 1987-April 1988) as follows: 'Sons were involved with the MUF. Father was the supporter of NC [National Conference]. But since sons were the supporters of MUF, all other members of the family became supporters of MUF.'¹⁰³ In brief, the MUF was for Islam, *Shariat* and Islamic governance that attracted supporters.

Quite significantly, according to the *Hizbul* source, *KJ*, which had done systematic groundwork by promoting Sunni culture and literature through *madrasas* and about 2500 to 3000 mosques, teaching the Quran and *Hadith* (interpretation of Islam) since the 1970s, and preparing young Kashmiri Muslims for an Islamic revolution,¹⁰⁴ would later recruit *Hizbul* cadres from these mosques and *madrasas*. These Islamisation drives led to the erosion of *Sufism*, because of the impact of modernisation on the younger generation of Kashmiris. The cumulative impact would be the erosion of Kashmiri-ness.¹⁰⁵ For Punjabi, 'There was no compulsion, either historical or geographical, for Kashmir to join India. . . . Kashmiri identity which was secular was slowly *Islamised* due to what was happening *outside* Kashmir and *within*' (emphasis added).¹⁰⁶

¹⁰¹ My interviews with Moulana Abdur Rashid Turabi, Former *Amir* of *Jamaat-e-Islami*, Pakistan-administered Kashmir, 18 August 2004, and Muhammad Yahya Mujahid, Secretary of Information, *Jamat-ud-dawha*, Pakistan, 29 September 2004.

¹⁰² These are: 1. *Jamaat-e-Islami*, 2. the *Ummat-e-Islam*, 3. *Anjumane Ittehad-ul Musalmeen*, 4. the *Islamic Study Circle*, 5. the Muslim Education Trust, 6. the Muslim Welfare Society, 7. *Islamic Jamaat-e-Tulba*, 8. *Masjlis Tahafazul*, 9. *Mahaz-e-Azadi*, 10. *Jamiat-ul Hadis*, 11. *Shia Rabita* Committee, and 12. *Idara Tahqiqat Islami*.

¹⁰³ My interview with Professor Mohammad Ashraf Saraf, 6 September 2004.

¹⁰⁴ A. Tarabi, *Hizbul Mujahideen : The Principles and Struggle* (n. d.), in Behera, *State, Identity and Violence*, p. 179.

¹⁰⁵ R. Punjabi, 'Kashmir: The Bruised Identity', in R. G. C. Thomas (ed.) *Perspectives on Kashmir*, pp. 131-152.

¹⁰⁶ *India Today*, 31 August, 1991.

Y. Sikand, who researched extensively on the impact of modernisation on *Sufism* and youth in Kashmir, concluded that for many young Kashmiris *Sufism* had 'declining appeal' because they considered it had 'un-Islamic beliefs and practices.'¹⁰⁷ In early 1989, an Islamist party, the *Allah Tigers* (followers of the *Ahl-i-Hadith*), had shut down bars, video parlours and movie theatres on the grounds that they were "un-Islamic".¹⁰⁸ According to one estimate, 10,000 members of the *Dukhtaran-e-Millat*'s (*Daughters of Islam*), a women's separatist organisation established in March 1987, indoctrinated women through Islamic discourse.¹⁰⁹ The *Tablighi* (propagators) *Jamaat* movement that came to the limelight in India in the 1980s had its impact on Kashmiri youths to seek solution to their problems in a return to the pristine past of Islam as inscribed in the Quran and *Hadith*.¹¹⁰ The noted Indian journalists such as T. Singh and A. Joshi toured several times in the Valley and wrote about the Pandits' fear because of resurgence of 'Islamic fundamentalism' there.¹¹¹ It is therefore not surprising when a Western watcher noted: 'All the stereotypical hatreds between Muslims and Hindus common to the plains of India became inflated to *twice* life size in the rarefied mountain atmosphere of Kashmir, and eventually they exploded into violence'(emphasis added).¹¹²

Several leading members of MUF have confirmed that their main reason for entering politics was that they regard the accession of Kashmir to India as illegal; they aim to protect Islamic identity, and to prepare for an Islamic state. Following the 1987 rigged elections, they concluded that it is time for the citizens of Kashmir to commit themselves to a new type of struggle:

We have to awaken the entire community and declare *Islam the ultimate goal*. Because freedom without Islam is like changing hands only. And Islam without freedom is static. We have to arouse the sense of *Jihad* and general sense of

¹⁰⁷ See his, 'Civil Society Initiatives and Peace: Religion and Religious Activists', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 24 January 2004, p. 316.

¹⁰⁸ Ganguly, *The crisis in Kashmir*, p. 106.

¹⁰⁹ K. Santhanam *et al*, *Jihadis in Jammu and Kashmir: A Portrait Gallery* (New Delhi: Sage Publication and Inst. for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi, 2003), pp. 92-93. In 1982, Ashiya Andrabi of *Dukhtaran-e-Millat*, organised demonstrations against the sale of liquor/narcotics and display of obscene posters. *Ibid*.

¹¹⁰ S. Zainuddin, 'Tablighi Movement in India: Organisation and Functional Style', *Islam and the Modern Age*, 27(4), November 1996, pp. 264-283; also, Y. Sikand, 'The Emergence of Tablighi Jam'at Among the Meos of Mewat', *ibid*, 22(3), August 1996, pp. 203-218.

¹¹¹ T. Singh, *Kashmir: A Tragedy of Errors* (New Delhi: Viking, Penguin Books India (P) Ltd., 1995), p. 127. A. Joshi, *Eyewitness Kashmir: Teetering On Nuclear Way*, Asian Commentary Series (Singapore: Marshal Cavendish Academic, 2004), pp. 77-86.

¹¹² E. S. Margolis, *War at the Top of the World: The Struggle for Afghanistan, Kashmir and Tibet* (New York: Routledge, Revised and Updated, 2002 [1999], pp. 131-132.

martyrdom amongst youths. We will have to inculcate a sense of character building, integrity and piety (emphasis added).¹¹³

In summary, what were consequences finally became causes, and hence the pent up political frustrations were channelled into ethno-cultural religious realms.

8. CONCLUSION

This paper has demonstrated that identity constitutes the *basis* of the Kashmiri independence movement. But the identity question remains highly contextualised, as it is determined by the given time and situation. The contending parties and groups, according to their ideological values, moulded and propagated it, resulting in competing versions of identity description. Hence, there is no monolithic identity in Kashmir. *Kashmiriyat*, as a composite identity, has become questionable. Kashmir, an ethnic montage, is a divided society. Historically, religion has played an important identity marker in the identity formation of Kashmir, and in the early 1980s resurfaced with the emergence of Islamist forces, especially following the *KJ*'s marked qualitative and quantitative expansions in organisation and resources. The Islamist forces perceived a threat to their identity in the rise of Hindu religious nationalism that wanted to *Hinduise* all other faiths. The rise of Kashmir's *Mirwaiz* and the rise of the MUF were other significant factors. These forces led to the ascendancy of Muslim-ness over Kashmiri-ness, and eventually Islam became a powerful tool for mobilising Kashmiri Muslims against the Indian authorities.

Given that rural Kashmir comprises a dual social order, where Pandits and Muslims live in 'complete mutual exclusion', and that the vast majority of Kashmir's population is small-holding Muslim peasants, it was relatively easier for *KJ* to make an impact in the villages. Thus, a fair degree of Islamisation of Kashmiri politics occurred after 1970. An outstanding example of this was *KJ*'s systematic promotion of Sunni Islamic culture and literature through *madrasas* and about 2500-3000 mosques, teaching the Quran and *Hadith* in a drive to prepare young Kashmiri Muslims for an Islamic revolution. In that drive the 1979 Iranian Revolution had its demonstration effects on *KJ* and its student wing *IJT*. The *IJT*, for example, publicly called upon Kashmiri youth to work for 'an Iranian-type Islamic revolution in Kashmir to achieve independence.'

¹¹³ M. Syed Shah, 'Statement Submitted to the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly', 25 October 1989 cited in S. Widmalm, *Kashmir in Comparative Perspective: Democracy and Violent Separatism in India* (Richmond: Curzon, 2002), pp. 83-84.