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INDIAN MUSLIMS: POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND IDEOLOGY

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Islam has been a significant presence in India for longer than a millennium. According to the latest census, carried out in 2001, Muslims were the largest minority in India: 13.4 percent of the population and numbering close to 140 million. It is estimated that there are now 150 million Muslims in India. Muslim populations are significant in almost all geographical quarters, in many rural areas, and in all the principal metropolitan areas of India, including all the principal locations of rapid economic growth. However, Muslims in India wonder about their future role and security in the Indian culture and polity. Their detractors raise pointed questions about their loyalty and the authentically Indian character of Indian Islam. Secular Indians of all religious identities worry about the future of Indian secularism, multiculturalism, and tolerance.

OVERVIEW

Any roster of prominent and accomplished Indians in all walks of life since Independence would include a sizable, perhaps even disproportionate, share of distinguished Muslims. Nonetheless, Indian Muslims as a whole today enjoy less education than the average Indian and suffer economic disadvantage and social discrimination. They also suffer from growing cultural hostility and physical violence, the results of the growth of extremist Hindu chauvinist ideology known as Hindutva. The Muslim community's perception that the post-9/11 war on terror has been a cipher for anti-Muslim mobilization, the tacit empowerment of anti-Muslim attitudes in the guise of security concerns about radical ideology and militancy, and violent state-sponsored attacks on Muslims in Gujarat state, with the apparent support of the majority of non-Muslims, have created a sense of crisis in the community.

The issue that should be of greatest concern—and demand the greatest attention—is whether the community can find the coherent political will and voice to address the challenges that currently beleaguer it, which will require deepening political alliances with non-Muslim communities. Muslim political leadership has historically built alliances with non-Muslim political parties on a tactical basis, but what is required now is long-term collaboration on common concerns more directly related to the welfare of the Muslim community. These include strengthened democratic process and institutions, social justice, equal economic opportunity, and better education. The outcome is critical to the welfare and security not only of the Muslim community but of India as a whole.

Islam arrived in the Indian subcontinent during its first century of existence but became an integral part of Indian culture and history three centuries later. Muslim monarchs and elites, while at all times a minority across the subcontinent as a whole, ruled substantial portions of the territory that today constitutes India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. The separation of the contiguous Muslim-majority areas of the subcontinent at Partition and Independence in 1947 could not undo the perva-

Islam and India's Syncretic Culture: A Resource for Political Unity

Notwithstanding the fact that Muslim rulers established kingdoms in the subcontinent by force of arms, the spread of Islam was by and large a peaceful affair. Conversions to Islam were mostly the work of Sufi saints, who embraced all human beings and considered love of God to be the highest form of worship. The Sufis believed in *tawhid* (unity of being). Because they saw all humans as God's creation, the Sufi saints did not dispute other ways of worship. Nizamuddin Awliya, walking on the banks of River Yamuna with his disciple the great poet Khusro, is reputed to have pointed to a Hindu woman performing the Hindu salutation to the sun and exclaimed, "Oh Khusro! Don't look at that woman with indifference, as she is also worshipping Allah, for Allah had devised as many ways of worship as particles of sand on the bank of River Yamuna."

As a result of this legacy and interaction between various religious communities, there exist to this day various syncretic communities, with a composite Hindu-Muslim religious culture. These include the Meo Muslims, Pranam Panthis, and Rajput Muslims. The Meo Muslims, who live in the Mewati belt south of Delhi extending from Haryana to Rajasthan, are excellent reciters of the Hindu epics *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. Though Islam permits first cousins to marry, the Meo Muslims strictly observe Hindu lineal restrictions on such marriages. Integrated into the marriage ceremony of the Meo Muslims is the Hindu custom of *saptapadi* (seven rounds) around a holy fire. The holy book of the Pranam Panthis, called *Kulzum Sharif*, has both sacred songs from the Hindu *Bhagavad Gita* and verses from the *Quran*. Before touching the *Kulzum Sharif*, Pranam Panthis have to perform ablutions (as Muslims do with the *Quran*). If there are two male siblings in a family, one is buried like a Muslim and the other cremated like a Hindu.

Throughout India, the vast majority of Muslims are thoroughly rooted in the local culture. Language and culture often predominate over religion as a basis for group identification. A Mappila Muslim from Kerala will feel greater kinship with a Kerala Hindu than with a North Indian Muslim.

In rural areas and small towns, Hindus and Muslims actively take part in each other's religious festivals. Muslims contribute to, participate in, and even serve as officers in bodies that organize local festivals, such as one in Western India at which Lord Ganesha is worshipped or one in Eastern India devoted to the worship of the Goddess Durga. When images of Hindu gods and goddesses are carried in a procession, local Muslims gather to welcome the procession or offer cold drinks to the processionists. Likewise, when Muslims take images of the Karbala (*tazia*) through villages or towns, Hindus worship them in their traditional manner. Worshipping *tazia* has become part and parcel of Hindu rituals in many areas. In shrines where Sufi saints are buried, such as Haji Ali in Mumbai, Khwaja Garib Nawaz in Ajmer, Nizamuddin Awliya's dargah in Delhi, and Sai Baba in Shirdi, Maharashtra, one finds non-Muslim pilgrims alongside Muslim ones.

sive influence of Islam on Indian life, culture, and thought. Much that is understood as distinctly Indian reflects this influence, and India today, while exploring its secular or Hindu identity, remains a significant part of global Islamic history and heir to its own Muslim history.

The shared cultural and intellectual history throughout the subcontinent gives Indian Muslims a sense of shared identity with those in Pakistan and Bangladesh. This has led to questions among some non-Muslim Indians about the national loyalties of Indian Muslims. The tendency is to blame Muslims as a group for the “dismemberment” of India. There is no question that some Indians have found a sense of cultural and historical unity with their co-religionists in other countries of the region (though even here the question of identity is more complex than is commonly understood), but the majority of Indian Muslims have thought of themselves as Indians first, distinguishing themselves in combat and competition against armies and sports teams of neighboring countries.

As is often the case with beleaguered minorities, issues of identity and culture have loomed large in the Muslim community’s political mobilization. While these issues will remain important and perhaps even gain in importance if the community continues to face social discrimination and violence, the issues that are of greatest immediate concern to Indian Muslims are ones that they share with many non-Muslims and that can be addressed only as policy issues within the context of the broader Indian polity.

Where are Indian Muslims today, and what should be their future direction?

- Education is key if Muslims are to have a better future in India and take advantage of the growth and development in the country. First, Muslims must avail themselves of secular education. Second, they must ensure that the curriculum and the textbooks are objective about the role of Muslims in history and society. There is serious concern among secular as well as Muslim Indians about education taking a tendentiously Hindu-centric turn.
- Greater democratization of the Indian state is needed, and robust institutions for monitoring and protecting democracy and human rights must be promoted, particularly in the weaker sections of society. Discrimination on the basis of religion, caste, gender, or language needs to be addressed. There is a constitutional bar against any discrimination, but there is no effective remedy for violations. The courts are overburdened, and marshaling evidence to prove discrimination is too arduous a task to be undertaken by citizens of limited education and means.
- Muslims need to look within. *Sharia* as practiced now is discriminatory against women, particularly in allowing the practice of polygamy and in permitting the husband to obtain a divorce unilaterally by pronouncing the triple *talaq*. Such policies marginalize women and are not in the Quranic spirit of gender equality. Muslims will have to reform their society from within and adopt the best practices from the various Muslim sects and caste-based com-

munities. The rich cultural diversity within the Muslim community should be recognized.

- The small violence-prone groups that are attracted to fundamentalism and political Islam must be restrained. Muslims should work for peace, harmony, and reconciliation and justice for all sections of the society. Any instances of discrimination and hate crimes directed against the community should be fought through democratic and nonviolent means, and in unity with Indians of other religions devoted to equality and the rule of law.

HISTORICAL OBSTACLES TO UNITY IN THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY

Divisions in social status, theology, and sect are obstacles to unity within the Muslim community. *Ajlaf* Muslims are descended from low-caste converts, whereas *Ashraf* Muslims are descendants of feudal nobles and notables from royal courts. Besides the sectarian divisions within the Muslim community between Shias and Sunnis, there are sectarian divisions within each—for example, between schools of Sunni theology such as Deobandi, Barelvi, and Ahl-e Hadith.

There has been a history of violent conflict between the Shias and the Sunnis, particularly around the Shia holy festival of Moharram, in the city of Lucknow, where Shias form the majority of the Muslim population. Conflict is also found between, on one hand, revivalist, puritan, and fundamentalist Deobandis and Wahhabis and, on the other, the Barelvis, who are devoted to the defense of the syncretic South Asian Muslim culture. The Wahhabis and the Deobandis denounce religious practices such as the reverence of dargahs (tombs of Sufi saints), a practice popular among Muslims and non-Muslims alike. When Muslims of a particular locality or village come under the influence of revivalist and puritan sects and give up the local religiocultural practices, their non-Muslim neighbors feel betrayed by their abandonment of *tazia* worship.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY

During the ascendancy of Europe and the decline of Muslim power in India, Muslim elites almost uniformly resisted Western education and intellectual currents. Theological schools such as the Wahhabi, Farazi, and Deobandi argued against it. Following the final abolition of the Mughal Empire and the establishment of formal rule by the British Crown in 1857, a group of reformers sought to encourage Muslims to embrace modern education. These modernizers, centered around the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh, laid the foundations for a Muslim middle class based on the professions. They argued that, with the end of the old order, unless Muslims embraced modern education, their status would continue to decline relative to that of the Hindus. Some Muslims prospered in the emerging modern economy.

The clash between modernism and traditionalism cut across religious lines. An anti-colonial commitment to resisting Western influence united militant revivalist movements among Muslims with similar movements among Hindus. Hindus joined enthusiastically in the movement to restore the *Khilafat* (the Turkish Caliphate) after World War I, even as modernizing Muslims puzzled at it.

Three major political traditions may be identified in Muslim leadership before Independence. First, nationalist Indian Muslims in the Indian National Congress believed that the common national struggle was in Muslim interests, and more important than religious distinctions. Second, the Muslim League represented the interests of Muslim elites—specifically, feudal elites from North and Eastern India in Uttar Pradesh and Bengal, modernist Muslim elites who had acquired an education in the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College and aspired to high positions in bureaucracy, and entrepreneurs from the Northwest. Finally, in Bengal, the Muslim peasantry, in a province economically dominated by Hindu landlords, supported the secular populist Krishak Praja Party, led by Fazlul Huq. Premier of Bengal from 1937 to 1943, Huq annoyed the British authorities, who found him unhelpful to the war effort owing to his persistent demands that the central government send grain to mitigate the impact of famine in Bengal.

With the separation of the greater parts of Punjab and Bengal from India under the Muslim League's leadership, Indian Muslims lost the latter two political traditions—the educated modernists and the radical populist pro-peasant organization—to the areas that became Pakistan. Most of the emergent Muslim middle class, educated and mercantile, migrated to Pakistan in the wake of Partition, expecting to find better economic, professional, and political opportunities there. Although some of the Muslim elites remained in India and prospered, the community left behind was by and large backward socially, educationally, and economically, consisting of landless laborers, peasants, urban hawkers, self-employed artisans, and petty traders.

However, over a period of time a small middle class emerged in independent India from among the artisans. With the growing demand from foreign markets, some of the Muslim brassware artisans in Moradabad became traders and financiers in the brassware business, and some of the Muslim weavers of Varanasi graduated to positions as traders and financiers in the sari trade. Likewise, workers in the scissor industry in Meerut, the lock industry in Aligarh, and the *beedi* (traditional Indian-style cigarette) industry in Jabalpur catered to a national market and emerged as a new middle class.

The new middle class in the Muslim community emerged from among the *Ajlaf* (low-caste) Muslims. The rise of this middle class brought new aspirations and new dynamics into play. This new middle class at first supported secular education and emphasized ethnic identity based on language and shared with non-Muslim neighbors. However, when communal conflicts and riots arose—in part fueled by competition between this emerging Muslim middle class and established Hindu

traders—and the property and businesses of Muslims were the prime targets, the situation changed.

The communal riots pushed the emerging middle class to seek refuge in a homogeneous communal identity, and they turned to supporting an identity-based political agenda proffered by the new “moderate communal” leadership that emerged in the post-Independence generation. The new middle class became the social base of the moderate communal leadership for another reason also. With their newly acquired economic status, members of the emerging middle class were not happy with their backward *Ajlaf* identity, which continued to stick to them. They were struggling for a more dignified identity with higher social status. Within the syncretic Indian traditions, national or linguistic, there was no identity that offered the emerging middle class a social status commensurate with their new economic status. The emerging middle class imitated *Ashraf* Muslims while not completely breaking with their former caste-based *Ajlaf* identities: on the one hand they contributed generously to mosques and community religious institutions, while on the other they still relied on caste networks for marital relations and socialization. The more fundamentalist ideologies also appealed to some in this emerging middle class.

Today, the middle class within the Indian Muslim community is very small. Only about 5 percent of Muslims can be called middle class; this includes those in government jobs, other respectable employment, and small or medium business enterprises. There are few big businesses. While this middle class may be finding its own way to a working ideological construct, the rural and urban poor continue to suffer discrimination and to find no distinct ideology that answers their needs, other than those devoted to poor Indians in general. They find themselves increasingly isolated, on one hand from Muslim elites and on the other from society in general as a result of escalating Hindu hostility and violence.

IDEOLOGY AND LEADERSHIP OF MUSLIMS DURING NATIONAL CONSOLIDATION

The impact of Partition on Indian Muslims was profound. Separated from the large Muslim populations of Bengal and Punjab provinces, they saw their demographic significance decline from approximately one-third of pre-Partition India to one-sixth of post-Partition India. The animosities unleashed by the violence that accompanied Partition took some time to settle, posing a special challenge to Indian Muslims. This was ironic, as those who chose to remain in India as a minority rather than migrate to Pakistan were implicitly opting for the national identity they shared with other Indians over one based on religion.

The first generation of Muslim leaders after Independence consisted of nationalist members of the Congress such as Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (who, as Indian National Congress president in 1946, negotiated the Cabinet Mission Plan with the British government and the Muslim League), Dr. Zakir Hussain (founder of Jamia Millia University and the third president of India), Chief Justice Chagla of the

Bombay High Court, and Syed Hamid, the educator. Their common commitment was to communal harmony, composite nationalism, and secularism, with a strong emphasis on education.

During this period, Kashmiri Muslims wholeheartedly supported the accession of Kashmir to India and helped the Indian Army in their efforts to push the Pakistani Army back out of Kashmir. Sheikh Abdullah, leader of Kashmir's Muslims, supported the integration of Kashmir into India, though he bargained for autonomy within the Indian Constitution. This lasted until the early 1960s. Sheikh Abdullah was arrested and detained until 1964.

One important reason the religious divide did not threaten this phase of communal integration, in spite of Partition-inspired violence, was that the main focus of mass political mobilization (other than economic development) was the reorganization of provincial/state boundaries on a linguistic basis. Muslims wholeheartedly supported the linguistic reorganization of states, thus making common cause with their non-Muslim co-linguals. The Muslim poet Amar Sheikh wrote Marathi folk songs that inspired the struggle for reorganization of Bombay province into Maharashtra and Gujarat. This affirmed and strengthened regional and linguistic identity across religious lines. People were not interested in communal mobilization. By 1966, all the states had been reorganized along linguistic lines.

An economic crisis occurred in the mid-1960s. The value of the rupee had dipped to an all-time low by 1966, and there was unprecedented inflation. The country was dependent on the United States for its supply of wheat. Agricultural production also declined. The consequent unrest led to unprecedented gains for opposition political parties. In many states in North India, the Congress Party lost power at the state level for the first time. Opposition parties formed united fronts and coalition governments in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan. The Hindu chauvinist Jana Sangh Party, precursor of today's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), enjoyed power for the first time as part of these coalitions. Opportunistic politicians used anti-Muslim sentiment and official machinery to spread Hindu chauvinist or "Hindutva" ideology. Communal riots became a tool for consolidating Hindu mobilization across castes and regions.

The followers of the Jana Sangh Party questioned the ideology of inclusive nationalism in which minorities were accommodated and given their space, albeit under-represented and within the dominant ethos of Hinduism. The Jana Sangh considered this policy to be an appeasement of Muslims. The Hindutva agenda was to exclude the minorities altogether and treat them as second-class citizens. Religious identity was but one basis for mobilization, and a minor one at first. The Praja Socialist Party organized around the issues of price increases and the economic crisis and was particularly successful in mobilizing the backward classes with a program of opposing caste-based oppression and domination by upper castes.

In 1961, more than 400 people were killed in a major riot in Jabalpur. The riot shook the secular foundation of the country. The Congress leadership particularly

was disturbed by this riot, the first major riot since the violence of Partition. The media and the state administration were partial to Hindus, and the message they sent about the place and status of Muslims in the country was not lost on the Muslims. No doubt the main factors behind the riot were economic, social, and political rather than religious. There was tough competition between a Hindu magnate and an emerging Muslim magnate in the *beedi* industry, and the media had been engaged in highly provocative reporting of the marriage of a Hindu scion and a Muslim scion. The official response to the riot in Jabalpur widened the divide between the two religious communities along social and communal fault lines.

In 1967, there were communal riots in Jamshedpur and Ranchi-Hatia in Eastern India, and in 1969, Ahmedabad, a textile city in Western India, witnessed riots that took the lives of more than 2,000 people. In 1970, over 600 people were killed in major riots in Bhiwandi, Jalgaon, and Mahad in Maharashtra state. These riots shook Muslims' confidence in Indian democracy. Throughout the 1980s, riots continued in North India and in Western India.

In the mid-1970s, opposition to the dictatorship of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi coalesced in the Janata Party, which united socialists, secular economic conservatives, and adherents of Hindutva such as the Jana Sangh, significantly confusing the ideological picture in terms of Muslim interests. The resulting Janata Party victory brought the Jana Sangh to the center of power at the central and state levels. Helping the Janata Party to win these elections was the fact that the Muslim vote had shifted away from the Congress Party because of the disproportionate impact of Mrs. Gandhi's policies—which included forced sterilization and bulldozing of slums without notice—on Muslim communities.

The unraveling of the Janata Party soon after its formation, principally though not exclusively over the issue of the continuing loyalty of its former Jana Sangh members to Hindu revivalist political movements, led to a struggle for dominance within the Hindutva camp. Having tasted power, the Bharatiya Janata Party also intensified the militancy of its competition with secular political parties. There was competition between upwardly mobile lower castes and Muslims for land and for other resources. Religious identity was a ready tool for political leaders on both sides. As a result of the mobilization and countermobilization of the backward classes and the Muslims, a series of communal riots occurred in the 1980s, particularly in Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, and Rajasthan.

IDENTITY POLITICS IN SECOND GENERATION LEADERSHIP

The “moderate communal” Muslim leadership consisted of second-generation leaders who had developed under these adverse circumstances. They were bolder and more assertive than the first-generation leaders, who had been cautious in their use of Muslim identity in the aftermath of Partition. The new leaders emerged in the late 1960s but consolidated their hold on political discourse in the 1980s. This phase of

political mobilization of Muslims in India revolved around three emotional issues: preservation of a distinct jurisdiction to govern family and inheritance law for the Muslim community, preservation of the Muslim character of institutions such as the Aligarh Muslim University, and preservation of the Urdu language.

Muslim Family Law

The new moderate political leadership and the leaders of religious institutions cooperated most closely on the issue of Muslim family law. Article 44 of the Constitution of India (in the chapter on Directive Principles of the State) provides that the state shall strive to enact a Uniform Civil Code. Muslims fear that family laws based on the Hindu majority's traditions and customary practices will be imposed on them in the name of a Uniform Civil Code. The religious leadership and the political leadership have very aggressively taken the stand that *sharia* is divine and there should be no secular interference in it. Religious leaders, as the sole arbiters of what *sharia* is, naturally have a vested interest in holding that it is divine. For political leaders, the issue is one of self-determination in the context of a beleaguered cultural identity.

Muslim political and religious leaders belonging to all schools of Muslim jurisprudence have come together in the All India Muslim Personal Law Board. The Muslim Personal Law Board has acquired much financial and political clout and deliberates on all the issues affecting the community. It strongly resists any effort to reform *sharia* or even reinterpret *sharia* according to contemporary conditions and needs. The Muslim religious leadership in India has gone to the ridiculous extent of validating divorces men obtained either by sending a text message consisting of three repetitions of the word *talaq* or by pronouncing the word three times over the phone, even while in an inebriated condition, while in a fit of a rage, or while sleep-talking. The Quranic requirement for divorce is of course more exacting: pronouncement of the word *talaq* must be followed by arbitration by representatives appointed by the wife and the husband. Reforms enacted in Muslim-majority countries have been resisted in India, not only by traditional religious thinkers but also by this second-generation moderate leadership. It must be said, though, that there have been Indian Muslim voices from the margins demanding the framing of a model *Nikahnama* (Muslim marriage contract) wherein a woman could stipulate conditions for marriage, such as that the husband could not take a second wife without her permission and that she would also have the right of divorce. However, the voices are extremely weak because of the feeling of cultural insecurity in the community.

Aligarh Muslim University

Aligarh Muslim University is another emotional issue that can bring the community into the streets, though recently it has lost much of its relevance. Aligarh Muslim University was initially established during colonial rule as Mohammedan

Anglo-Oriental College (MAO), to encourage modern education among Muslims. Interestingly, when Sir Sayyid Ahmed established MAO, the religious leadership opposed any attempt to equip Muslims with modern education. Slowly, the community came to see the importance of the college and modern English education. The graduates of MAO later provided leadership to the Muslim League, which demanded partition of the country. After Independence, by act of Parliament MAO was converted into Central University. The Muslim community demanded that the university remain a Muslim institution, administered by Muslims. The controversy was settled by a directive that the vice chancellor of the university should always be a Muslim and that the majority of the members of the court that runs the university should be Muslims.

Urdu

The importance of the issue of the Urdu language reflects the fact that the moderate Muslim leadership is drawn largely from North India. Except for those in Hyderabad, who speak a variant known as Dakhani Urdu, Muslims from South India, West Bengal, and Assam do not speak Urdu. Although Urdu was originally a *lingua franca*, transcending religious identities, during colonial rule Hindu revivalists rejected Urdu, which is written in Persian script, and persuaded Hindus to accept Hindi, which shares a vocabulary and grammar with Urdu but is written in Devnagri script.

With the Pakistan Movement, Urdu came to be popularly perceived as a language of Muslims. Because it is now the national language of Pakistan, this perception persists in the minds of many non-Muslim Indians, despite the historical fact that many stalwarts of Urdu literature have been Hindus. Munshi Premchand, the celebrated Hindi short story writer, initially wrote in Urdu. Other popular Hindu Urdu writers include Krishan Chander and Jagannath Azad.

Urdu has been neglected by government educational and cultural policy. The government has stifled Urdu schools with a lack of funds, resulting in a shortage of teachers and poor school buildings. Urdu newspapers are discriminated against by the government, which does not place tender notices and other public advertisements in them. However, the language's decline is also a reflection of larger cultural developments. Graduates of Urdu schools have little prospect of higher education or employment. Readers of Urdu language newspapers are on the decline, as Urdu schools produce fewer graduates. And because the Muslim middle class of entrepreneurs and professionals forms a very small section of the community, the Urdu press has difficulty obtaining revenues from private advertisements. The Bollywood film industry, which showcases Urdu songs and Urdu poetry, is Urdu's lifeline.

As the neglect of Urdu stems from the public perception that it is a language of Muslims, many Muslims have become committed to its survival as a symbol, whether they speak Urdu or not. The decline of Urdu and the onslaught against it

are seen as evidence of the beleaguered state of the community. While the national moderate leadership has demanded policies for the encouragement and survival of Urdu, Islamists and religious fundamentalists have promoted Urdu as a common language for all Muslims in India.

The Babar Mosque

In the 1980s, the moderate Muslim leadership took up the defense of the Babri Masjid (Mosque of Babar). The mosque had been demolished in 1992 by Hindu zealots, who argued that the mosque stood on the birthplace of the Hindu god Rama. Although moderate communal Muslim leaders made emotional speeches to the effect that they would not allow the Babri Masjid to be touched, they had no coherent political strategy for working through democratic institutions to achieve their goal. Popular mobilization on the streets was futile, as the Hindu zealots could command greater numbers and enjoyed the tacit sympathy of the law enforcement agencies. Two organizations were formed, the All India Babri Masjid Action Committee and the Babri Masjid Coordination Committee, but they worked at cross purposes. Instead of focusing on saving the mosque, they competed politically with each other to pose as champions of Muslims. Although the issue of the Babri Masjid was as much a symbolic one of identity as the other issues discussed above, its significance was far more serious because it was both a reflection and a trigger of militant and often violent mass mobilization by the Hindu extremist movement, particularly the organization of a *Rath Yatra* (procession) through India by the BJP and its allies, to demand restoration of the site to a Hindu temple. This mobilized zealotry nationwide. The failure of Muslim leaders to offer an effective response on the community's behalf has left the community with a leadership vacuum.

POLITICAL LEADERSHIP ON IDENTITY ISSUES

A small group of Muslim liberals has opposed both the moderates' reactionary emphasis on identity and political Islamist ideology. These people have felt undercut by the secular establishment. When the Supreme Court, in the case of Shah Bano, granted maintenance to a divorced Muslim woman in accordance with secular law, the judgment was vociferously opposed by the moderate Muslim political leadership and political Islamists. Arif Mohammed Khan, a senior Congress Party figure and Minister of Sports, defended the judgment in Parliament, only to be sidelined when Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi yielded to pressure from the moderate leadership and political Islamists and took parliamentary action to overrule the judgment.

In its attempts to ensure the unity of the Muslim community, the moderate leadership has found itself tacitly promoting policies and strategies that bear similarities to the Islamist goals of homogenizing the culture of the Muslim community around Urdu on one hand and religion on the other. It has mobilized around communal

demands to maintain Muslim identity and other cultural issues, such as declaring the Prophet Mohammed's birthday a public holiday.

This strategy of unification has had serious liabilities. It is Muslim women who suffer most from rigid approaches to Muslim family law and the refusal to reform it even within a Quranic framework. The moderate Muslim leadership has not addressed the socioeconomic issues of the community, even though the community is educationally and economically backward. The moderate leadership has also utterly failed in securing justice for the victims of recent communal riots. None of the instigators, abettors, or conspirators were punished, and most were not even brought to trial. No law enforcement agents were prosecuted or punished for overt or covert collaboration with the rioters.

Successive governments have been happy to concede on symbolic religiocultural and identity-related issues that do not carry budgetary or political costs. In some cases, this has helped mobilize Muslim votes for secular political parties. Advancing these symbolic issues has allowed the moderate leaders to demonstrate their prowess and clout with the political establishment and thus continue to enjoy the support of the community. The leaders with visions and ideologies more responsive to the pressing economic and social needs of the community have been marginalized as a result of the resistance of successive governments to meeting their demands, which makes them appear weak to the Muslim community. Thus, notwithstanding government responsiveness on issues of identity, Muslims have continued to be discriminated against socially, educationally, and in government jobs. They have also been victimized by law enforcement agencies.

ISLAMIST POLITICAL IDEOLOGY

Traditional religious leaders organize around issues of public policy in their own forums in various towns, whether through *Ulema* Councils, sectarian institutions, or schools of *fiqh* (Islamic schools of jurisprudence). In speeches that promote the superiority of one sect over the other or one *fiqh* over the other, these leaders often brand their opponents as *kafirs* (nonbelievers) and their opponents' practices as *shirk* (polytheism). There have been occasional violent conflicts between the Deobandi and Barelvi factions.

In contrast, political Islamists aim to establish an Islamic state and enforce Islam as understood by their particular sect. Unlike the moderates described above, who are content with using symbols to mobilize Muslims, Islamists would use the state to enforce compliance with Islamic cultural norms. What the two groups share is a lack of appreciation of the multiplicity of cultures within Muslim society and a desire to see Muslim society homogenized. The Islamists would reshape society to conform to a traditional, orthodox, and conservative understanding of religion, based on historical experience in the region. The Islamist goal of creating an Islamic state faces a tremendous obstacle, because Muslims constitute a minority in

India. Islamists not only encourage Muslims to learn Urdu but also, without much success, discourage their use of other languages. The idea is that Muslims should have not only a common religious identity, but also a common culture. In their emphasis on a common and homogenous culture and the blunting of linguistic and cultural diversity, the Islamists demonstrate similarities to the right-wing Hindu parties. The idea is that a culturally unified and homogenized Muslim community will be stronger and better equipped to fight Hindu extremism.

Maulana Abu Ala Maududi founded the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) in 1941. Maududi argued that it was the duty of every Muslim to fight to establish an Islamic state in India. Initially, JI opposed the demand for the establishment of Pakistan, which was led by secular figures like Jinnah. JI's objective was to establish an Islamic state in the entire country. However, as soon as Pakistan was created, Maulana Maududi moved to Pakistan and established the Jamaat-e-Islami in Pakistan. The Indian branch of the Jamaat-e-Islami lay low for some time after Independence, concentrating on building its cadre by training students. The Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) was the front organization through which it reached out to students, emphasizing character building of young Muslims and providing ideological training to a select few.

During the 1980s, with communal riots occurring throughout India and militancy rising in Jammu and Kashmir, the stance of some of the leaders of SIMI hardened, and they adopted violence as a means to achieve the objective of establishing an Islamic state. Those opposing violence as a short-term means left SIMI and formed the Students Islamic Organization of India. A rise in the level of violence against ordinary Muslims was a catalyst for the radicalization of some Muslim youth.

After the demolition of the Babri Masjid, the Jamaat-e-Islami mellowed its stance and adopted a platform calling for peace, reconciliation, and communal harmony. JI now has formed an alliance with prominent secular intellectuals from the Hindu community. Reaching out to its cadres in all the districts, *tehsils*, villages, and cities where it has a following, JI organizes programs for communal harmony. It has also formed an organization called Movement for Peace and Justice. Jamaat-e-Islami cadres working in this organization have taken up the cause of social justice for all castes and communities.

RECENT TRENDS IN MUSLIM MOBILIZATION

The demolition of the Babri Masjid had a profound effect on the Muslim political leadership and on the ideological emphasis of Muslim political discourse. The moderate leaders' failure to stop the demolition of the mosque exposed the emptiness of their rhetoric, causing them to lose standing. In recent years, Muslims have been far less responsive to emotional issues related to identity. There is a growing feeling within the community that education is the way forward. Many organizations focusing on secular education became more popular after the demolition of

the Babri Masjid. This trend has been accompanied by greater resistance to repressive traditions. Muslim girls have topped the Secondary School Certificate examinations in Maharashtra and other states. Recently, in Mumbai, two girls defied the edict of a few conservative elements within the community in order to attend college, and they sought police protection for that purpose.

In response to the new challenge, the moderate leadership is reconfiguring itself and re-working political alignments. The demolition of the mosque by a mob in defiance of court rulings engendered in the community a sense that the only solution lay in united action with all secular Indians for the survival of secularism, the rule of law, and democracy. Those Indians who were most concerned about the defense of secularism and the rule of law are also the most socially and culturally liberal elements—those least likely to sympathize with a reactionary defense of a hidebound Muslim identity.

This acknowledgment of the need for secular alliances was reinforced by the Muslim recognition that immediate security was at stake, as the demolition was followed by communal riots throughout the country.

Muslims drifted away from the Congress in even greater numbers after the party failed to prevent demolition of the Babri Masjid. The moderate leadership started actively seeking alliances with regional parties, most of them anti-Congress alliances and some merely non-Congress alliances. Before the demolition of Babri Masjid, the social base of Congress was an alliance of upper castes (mostly Brahmins), *Dalits* (untouchables), and Muslims. The alliance was dominated by the upper castes, but was accommodating to the Muslims. When the Muslims walked out of this alliance, the social base of Congress shrank, and the party lost power. By associating themselves with the regional parties in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal, Muslims aligned with upwardly mobile lower classes. In Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh, which saw a straight contest between the Congress and the BJP because there was no strong regional party, Muslims continued to support the Congress Party.

The prevailing trend of moving away from emotional issues of identity has had its exceptions, as highly sensitive issues attracting global attention have arisen, such as the publication of literature or images considered offensive to Islam. In Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Bangalore, and other cities and towns all over India, hundreds of thousands gathered on the streets to protest against Danish cartoons. Muslim commercial establishments closed down for the day and asked employees to join the rally. Imams in most mosques asked people to join the rally. The mobilization coincided with US President George W. Bush's arrival in India, and the rally also featured anti-American and anti-Bush slogans, opposing the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Given that several issues were combined in this protest, what may have been the largest mass gathering of Muslims ever was likely a general re-

sponse to feelings of being victimized by US policies and being treated as second-class citizens by India's law-and-order machinery.

The influence of Pakistani intelligence agencies seems to have increased considerably after the demolition of the Babri Masjid and the ensuing communal riots, in which Muslims were victimized. Underworld kingpin Dawood Ibrahim and gold smuggler Tiger Memon conspired with Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) to carry out serial bombings in Mumbai on March 12, 1993. Muslim youth were trained in Pakistan by the ISI to carry out the bombings, in which over 287 people died. A small group of Muslim youth were attracted to the idea of getting revenge for the communal riots. They were psychologically prepared by watching videos of the demolition and the riots. A plethora of communal organizations like Al Umma also sprang up in the South for the first time after 1992. Muslims in the South had historically identified themselves with the Dravidian movement, anti-upper caste in its orientation and working across religious lines. However, after 1992, there was a rise of militant Islamic thought. As revenge for the demolition of Babri Masjid, the Tamil Nadu headquarters of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a radical Hindu extremist organization closely allied to the BJP, was bombed.

In Kerala, Maulana Madani started the militant organization Islamic Service Society (ISS), a group that often resorted to violence to counter Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. ISS attracted hundreds of youth. Madani was ultimately jailed and spent several years in prison for his alleged role in the Coimbatore bomb blasts. There were also bomb blasts in the Jammu region of Jammu and Kashmir, at Akshardham Temple in Gujarat, and at a Shiv temple in Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. Bombs exploded in a public transport bus in Mumbai, and a series of bombings in local trains in Mumbai killed 147 people. Most of these bombings were motivated by a desire for revenge for attacks on Muslims in Gujarat in 2002 and in other communal riots. ISI seems to have provided training, weapons, and financial resources for these attacks.

Some fundamentalist and political Islamist organizations have rethought their ideology and are now working for communal harmony, secularism, and justice for all. As pointed out earlier, Jamaat-e-Islami is one such organization that has reviewed its stand on the issue of the establishment of an Islamic state. JI extended wholehearted support to Marathi Muslim writers organizing a conference of Marathi Muslims, and indeed even participated in the organization. This shows a significant change in the JI's attitude toward local identity and regionalism. Such support would have been unthinkable when the organization was dedicated to Islamic identity and would accept no other sociocultural identity as valid.

The backward classes among the Muslims are currently working to obtain the benefits of affirmative action in government employment, hitherto restricted to disadvantaged Hindu castes. In doing so, they emphasize their regional identity and the

caste from which their forefathers were converted to Islam. The organization Pasmanda Muslim Mahaz (Forum of Backward Muslims) in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar reflects a variegation of Muslim identity and suggests the existence of a plural culture within the Muslim community. By emphasizing common interests with disadvantaged Hindu groups and demanding more equitable social and economic policies from the state, these efforts also act to build interreligious unity.

Historically, no exclusively Muslim party has been a significant factor in elections anywhere except in Kerala. In Kerala, the Muslim League routinely wins one or two seats in Parliament and some seats in the State Assembly. It aligns itself tactically with the Left Democratic Front or with the Congress-led United Democratic Front. In other states, Muslims align themselves with other political parties and often are divided on the issue of which political party to support. In general, they vote for secular parties to defeat the BJP.

If Muslim political leaders could establish a long-term collaboration with non-Muslim political parties, they could tackle common concerns that are actually more directly related to the welfare of the Muslim community, such as strengthened democratic process and institutions, social justice, equal economic opportunity, and better education. Such collaboration would act as a disincentive to opportunistic leaders who choose to emphasize divisive issues of exclusive religious identity.

RIISING VIOLENCE AGAINST MUSLIMS

It is important to understand the ideological currents in the larger Hindu community that shape Indian Muslim fears, anxieties, and political calculations, and magnify their long-standing concerns.

The demolition of the Babri Masjid by the Ram Janmabhoomi movement was a watershed moment in the development of Muslim leadership and political opinion, as well as in the fortunes of the Hindu extremist movement that has come to pose such a threat to Muslims. The former experienced a decline in confidence and security, and the latter a huge rise in popularity and political power.

In 1984, the Bharatiya Janata Party, the parliamentary face of the Hindutva movement, had been reduced to 2 seats in Parliament. Few expected a recovery. Yet it has seen its fortunes rise dramatically. It won 89 seats in Parliament in 1989, 119 seats in 1991, and 179 in 1996. Although its strength in the current Parliament is down to 129 seats, it is now the strongest and best-organized political party in India, and the Congress government survives only by dint of support from the Communist parties.

At the heart of Hindutva lies the myth of a continuous thousand-year struggle of Hindus against Muslims as the structuring principle of Indian history. Both communities are assumed to have been homogenous blocks—Hindu patriots heroically resist invariably tyrannical “foreign” Muslim rulers. More recently, a policy

of appeasing minorities (that is, of special treatment for Muslims and other religious minorities) is alleged to have perpetuated the oppression of Hindus. The contemporary social, economic, and political malaise that is ostensibly gripping Hindu society is seen to lie in this policy of appeasement.¹

The Hindutva organizations do not limit themselves to using propaganda to spread hatred and stereotypes of minorities. In their over 40,000 *shakhas* (branches), they have also trained men in wielding *lathis* (long bamboo sticks). Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) regularly organizes distribution of tridents, justifying these as a religious symbol, though they are in fact lethal weapons. Some of the Hindutva groups have provided illegal arms training to their cadres.

There is no disagreement that a state-sanctioned pogrom took place against Muslims in Gujarat following the torching of the Sabarmati Express train in Godhra on February 27, 2002. More than 2,500 Muslims were brutally massacred and many Muslim women raped. Two aspects of these events are particularly troubling. First, the state machinery of police, along with voter rolls and other records, was used in a deliberate plan to identify and target Muslim neighborhoods and homes. The BJP state government, the Chief Minister, and lower level thugs have been open and unrepentant about their roles. Second, the BJP government and its Chief Minister Narendra Modi have recently been returned to power in elections, suggesting at least a degree of popular acquiescence or tolerance among Hindus. The lack of accountability has been a source of concern for Muslims throughout India, and fear about the future looms large.

These developments reflect a long-term trend in Gujarat. In 1998, Hindutva organizations organized several *bandhs* (general strikes involving closure of all shops and establishments) and persecuted a couple who eloped in Bardoli, in Surat district. Hanif, a Muslim boy, and Varsha, a Hindu girl, married on June 22, 1998; for this act of defiance, the entire Muslim community in Bardoli was singled out to be punished. Members of the Muslim community were violently attacked and their shops and businesses were burnt down, with police doing little to stop the violence. A social and economic boycott of the entire Muslim community was enforced by Hindutva activists. Gujarat police eventually arrested Hanif and detained him under the Prevention of Anti-Social Activities Act, legislation authorizing preventive detention, thus ending months of violence. When two Muslim boys married two tribal girls, 60 Muslim families in Randhikpur and Sanjheli (Godhra district) were similarly attacked and socially boycotted; they were forced to migrate out of Randhikpur and seek refuge in Godhara and Devgarh Baria.

POLITICIZATION OF RELIGIOUS IDENTITY

Over the millennium of Islam's presence in India, though there were many conflicts to which Hindus and Muslims were parties, rarely were the conflicts about religion or religious identity. In fact, the dominant trends are peaceful coexistence,

composite culture, and syncretic religious practices. The use of religion and religious symbols as tools to mobilize the community started during the colonial period. Colonial rule was shaken by the First War of Independence in 1857, sparked by a mutiny of Indian soldiers. People from various regions and both religions united against British rule. The rebel soldiers, including the Hindu soldiers, wanted the throne to be restored to the Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar, whose power the British colonialists had usurped. The rebellion failed. The British thereafter introduced policies and measures that strengthened and deepened Muslim and Hindu identities. They encouraged the elites of each community to petition them for concessions and privileges along communal lines. During the independence movement that followed, secular and plural nationalism was joined by two communal ideologies: Hindutva and Muslim separatism. They both represented the political interests of the elites of their respective communities. The Muslim separatist ideology represented the interests of feudal landlords and the emerging educated and salaried middle class. The Muslim elites believed that their future was not secure in a united and independent India, and that they would be discriminated against and marginalized. The Muslim League, representing the Muslim elites and their demand for the establishment of Pakistan, bargained for their share of political power.

Hindu revivalism in general dates back to the nineteenth century, when attempts to revitalize Hindu culture and pull the Hindu community out of its stupor were used as a strategy for resisting colonialism.² The modern Hindutva has a narrower agenda. The Hindu Mahasabha and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) were two Hindu communal organizations that adopted Hindutva as their guiding ideology and competed with Muslim elites to collude with the British colonial power and bargain for a greater share of political power under British patronage. The Hindu Mahasabha represented the interests of the feudal landlords during the freedom struggle. The broad-based secular nationalist Indian National Congress, comprising members of all religions, had already declared its support for land reforms, and this had broadened its base among tenant farmers and small landholders. After Independence, Hindutva extended its appeal to a section of the Hindu middle class.

The Indian Constitution is democratic and secular. It does not permit the state to promote identity or culture, nor does it permit the state to discriminate between citizens on the basis of caste, creed, religion, gender, or culture. It gives each person the freedom to practice, profess, and propagate the religion of his or her choice or refrain from doing so. The minorities in India have a right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice. The state cannot interfere in the administration of institutions run by the minorities, nor can the state discriminate against educational institutions administered by minorities in giving aid. Hindutva implicitly stands against the spirit of the Constitution, its secularism as well as its assurance of equal rights for all the citizens. Hindutva continues to be inimical to and intolerant of the existence of any identity other than that of Hindutva. As the

practical consequences of Hindutva have become apparent, the importance of alliances between Muslim interests and those of secular and democratic Indians has become progressively clearer.

Muslims are routinely attacked as “antinationalists” and “terrorists,” as “criminals” and “antisocial elements,” and as “traitors who partitioned the country.” Time and again, Muslims are alleged to be loyal only to Pakistan and, thus, a threat to India’s national security. The common slogan of Hindutva militants is “*Musalman ke do hi sthan—Pakistan ya Kabristan*” (“There are only two places for Muslims—either Pakistan or the cemetery”). The argument used by these militants may be summarized as follows: “The Muslims got their Pakistan. Even in a mutilated India, they have special rights. They have no use for family planning. They have their own religious schools. Restrictions are placed on our festivals, where processions are always in danger of attack, where expression of our opinion is prohibited, where our religious beliefs are cruelly derided.” This kind of statement is often followed by an appeal to Hindus to fight back against these Muslim oppressors, expressly calling for violent confrontation.

One myth about the Muslim minority propagated by Hindutva organizations relates to Muslims’ insistence on retaining a distinct Muslim family law. Hindutva organizations have seized on this as evidence that the state is appeasing the minorities by giving them special rights (not available to Hindus, whose family law was amended by Parliament) to marry up to four wives at a time. The Hindutva organizations also claim that Muslims are propagating more rapidly than Hindus, with a view to tipping the demographic balance in India. Loose talk to the same effect in countries such as Pakistan and Saudi Arabia does not help Indian Muslims. People in responsible positions, such as Gujarat’s BJP Chief Minister Narendra Modi, have helped propagate this myth. Typical are posters that show a Muslim man with four burkha-clad women and several children, accompanied by the caption “*hum paanch hamare pachchees*” (“we 5 and our 25 children”), or that depict a Muslim saying “*Ladke liya Pakistan, hanske lenge Hindustan*” (“We fought and created Pakistan, now we will with ease be able to control Hindustan”).

The figures do not support these assertions.³ In 1971, Hindus constituted 82.7 percent and Muslims 11.2 percent of the population. The corresponding figures for the 1991 census are 82.6 percent Hindus and 11.4 percent Muslims. The marginal change in the percentages has more to do with socioeconomic determinants of birth rates than with religious ones. Even if the current differential rate of population growth continues, it would take centuries before the Muslim population outnumbered the non-Muslim population.⁴ According to a survey carried out by the National Sample Survey Organisation in 1961, polygamy is practiced by 15.25 percent of *adivasis* (tribal peoples), 7.9 percent of Buddhists, 6.7 percent of Jains, 5.8 percent of Hindus, and only 5.7 percent of Muslims.⁵ Though the facts are ample to counter the stereotypes about the minorities, the resources and reach of liberal and secular opinion are limited.

CONCLUSION

By advancing stereotypes about Muslims, Hindutva strives to create the perception that all Muslims are politically united and share a political vision and that their religion is fundamentalist in nature. Hindutva insinuates that, since Islam originated in a foreign land, Muslims are alienated from the Hindu nation and cannot be in harmony with the Hindu nation; that all Muslims, guided as they are by the tenets of religion, internalize the concept of *jihad* against *kafirs* (nonbelievers) and cannot live in peace with Hindus. After scaring Hindus with the idea that Muslims, by claiming special rights like polygamy and by multiplying faster than the Hindus, will claim the country, Hindutva concludes that only the awakening of the spirit of *Hindu Rashtra* (Hindu Realm) and the creation of a strong authoritarian Hindu state can ensure the security of Hindus in their country.

Caste-based divisions within the Hindu community are obstacles to bringing about the awakening of the *Hindu Rashtra* spirit. To overcome these obstacles, there is a need to create a perception among Hindus of a Muslim threat. Rumors about impending attack and the storage of arms by Muslims are used to create a sense of insecurity among the majority community. Hindutva organizations offer themselves as more reliable guardians of Hindu security than the state. Muslim neighbors become “they,” somebody to fear rather than trust. Hate propaganda and stereotypes go hand in hand and are internalized. Feelings of hatred and fear of Muslims help justify the worst forms of brutality against them. Suppression of the democratic rights of minorities—their right not to be discriminated against (Articles 14, 15, and 16 of the Constitution of India), to freely practice, propagate, and profess their religion (Articles 25 and 26), and to run institutions of their choice without interference from the state (Article 30)—then becomes a crying need of the majority community. The concept of *Hindu Rashtra* negates the constitutional scheme of democracy, the rule of law, and secularism.

What is worthy of note here is the extent to which this Hindutva strategy replicates the ideological and political strategies of extremist Muslim groups in almost every respect, with only the particular cultural, religious, and group content changed.

Since the late 1980s, terrorism has been on the increase in India—first in Punjab, next in the states of Jammu and Kashmir, and then elsewhere. Images of bomb attacks and armed actions against unarmed and innocent civilians have heightened the feeling of insecurity among Hindus, as has the media climate since the 9/11 attacks on the United States. An attack by terrorists on the Indian Parliament on December 13, 2001 shocked the nation. TV channels gave live coverage to the attack and subsequent security operations to clear the Parliament of the terrorists. Similar coverage was given to the attacks on Akshardham Temple in Gujarat and temples in Jammu and Kashmir. The Indian state then used draconian laws to arrest those suspected of having lent support to the terrorists. Often these laws were highly controversial, such as the Prevention of Terrorism Act, which was opposed

tooth and nail by the opposition and defeated in the Rajya Sabha (upper house of Parliament) but then pushed through in a joint session of Parliament.

Such terrorist attacks on innocent citizens and revered institutions of democracy and faith have bolstered the appeal of Hindutva's call to build a strong Hindu state. Talk of human rights, democracy, and secularism has been relegated to the background. If the Hindutva organizations are to be put in their proper place in the margins of history, where they were prior to 1990, the secular and democratic forces will have to address popular concerns and resolve to contain terrorism rather than allow the Hindutva organizations to exploit it.

For the sake of their common welfare and the greatness of their shared homeland, Hindus and Muslims in India might be best advised to follow the words of a Muslim emperor of the Mughal dynasty, which ruled much of the subcontinent, endured for more than three centuries, and presided over a period of prosperity and cultural accomplishment:

Written for the strengthening of the Empire of Hindustan, consisting of various religions. Domination and sovereignty whereof has been bestowed on you by the grace of the Almighty. It is incumbent that religious bigotries should be wiped off the table of the heart, and justice meted out to each religion according to its own tenets. Specially, abstain from sacrifice of cows as this would tend to win the hearts of the people of Hindustan and the populace of the country would be loyal to the Royal favours. The temples and places of worship of whatever religion under the Royal authority may not be desecrated. Such justice may be adopted that the King may be pleased with the Rayyat [subjects] and the Rayyat with the King. The advancement of Islam is better achieved with the weapon of obligation rather than with the sword of tyranny. Overlook the disputes between Sunnis and Shias since such weakness still persists in Islam.⁶

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Chapter 5

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Chapter 7

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