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Political thought and behaviour of Muslims under colonialism

The Qur'an describes the *Seerah* of Muhammad, the Last Prophet of Allah, upon whom be peace, as the *uswah hasanah*.[1] That this is the position of the Prophet in Islam has been a commonly and uniformly held view of all Muslims throughout history. In the *Ummah* there is no dispute today, there has never been any dispute in the past, and there can never be any dispute in the future on this central position of the Prophet in Islam.[2] The *Seerah* is, like the Qur'an, an inseparable part of the 'Grand Paradigm' for mankind that is Islam. That being so, as Hamid Enayat points out, 'since Muhammad's principal achievement was to lay the foundations of a State based on Islamic teachings, the Muslims have a duty to follow his example in this respect as well'.[3]

The 'principal achievement' cannot be anything other than what the Prophet himself set out to achieve, or the ultimate goal to which he was, step by step, guided by Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala*. It follows, therefore, that every step of the Prophet and the small Muslim community in Makkah was a step towards the establishment of the Islamic State. Once in Madinah, every act of

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1. Al-Qur'an 33:21. *Uswah hasanah* is translated by Abdullah Yousuf Ali as 'beautiful pattern (of conduct)'.

2. See my paper *Integration and disintegration in the politics of Islam and kufr*, London: The Muslim Institute, 1983.

3. Hamid Enayat, *Modern Islamic Political Thought*, London: Macmillan, 1982, p.2.

the Prophet and the *Ummah* was towards the consolidation and defence of the Islamic State. In a late Makkan *ayah* the Qur'an emphasizes the importance of political power on the side of Islam. The Prophet was told to pray that Allah may grant him the assistance, support and protection of political power.[4] Allah grants political power for a specific purpose which he states in the most general terms: that His *Ummah* must 'enjoin the good and forbid the evil.'[5] The Qur'an lays down numerous other collective duties[6] that cannot be discharged unless Muslims have first established a State with mobilized power[7] and centralized leadership that itself derives authority from obedience to Allah and the Prophet.[8] That all (good) deeds outside this framework are rendered useless is pointed out in an early Madinan *surah*.[9]

At this point we must define secularism as it affects the Muslim *Ummah,* as opposed to modern secularism with its origin in European history. A State is secular to the extent that it does not discharge the duty of enjoining good and forbidding evil and all the other collective duties that are clearly laid down in the Qur'an. This yardstick of secularism must apply even if the ruler(s) and the majority of the population of the State are Muslim. It follows, therefore, that once a Muslim community passes under the rulership of *kufr,* or the direct or indirect control or domination of unbelievers and *mushrikeen,* it is rendered incapable of discharging its duties to Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala.* If and when this should happen it becomes the first duty of the community, as well as the first and foremost duty of every individual Muslim in the community, to divert all attention and commit all resources to the urgent and immediate task of re-establishing the power and domination of Islam. What happens to those who do not fight to end the rule and domination of *kufr* is clearly spelled out in the Qur'an.[10] In the very next *ayah* Allah *subhanahu wa ta'ala* promises to be the protector and helper of those who defy, confront and oppose the power of *kufr.*[11]

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4.   Al-Qur'an 17:80.

5.   Al-Qur'an 3:104; 3:110.

6.   Al-Qur'an 24:2; 5:38.

7.   Al-Qur'an 8:60.

8.   Al-Qur'an 4:59.

9.   Al-Qur'an 47:33.

10.   Al-Qur'an 3:149.

11.   Al-Qur'an 3:150.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to analyse the causes of the decline of the Muslims' own control over their dominions. All that we need to note is that the colonial period was the inevitable outcome of *malukiyyah* (hereditary monarchy). Once *malukiyyah,* disguised as *khilafah,* became the established and accepted form of political leadership and organization, the eventual decline, defeat and dismemberment of the *Ummah* also became inevitable. Muslims were themselves responsible for giving the direction to their history that could lead only to defeat and humiliation. In the early phase of our history the power of Islam over *kufr* was so great that little attention was paid to the corruption and distortion that had set in at the very core of the Islamic State. In time this corruption and distortion at the core led to the general erosion of moral conviction in the established order. As a consequence, more than 1,200 years later, the European powers met little more than nominal resistance to their rule. It was as if the erosion of moral conviction had also sapped the Muslims' once indomitable zeal for political power and domination. The great zest and energy for world power and exploitation displayed by the European colonizers was too great for the depleted political, material, spiritual and intellectual resources of the Muslims in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The extent of political *jahiliyyah* that had taken root among Muslims persuaded Arab leaders to accept 'freedom' from the Uthmaniyyah State as a fair reward for subservience to the west.

For this treachery to Islam the Arabs have paid, are still paying, and will go on paying, a terrible price. The same framework of nation-States that are secular, in European terms as well as in Islamic terms as defined above, has also been imposed by the colonial powers on the rest of the *Ummah.* This framework, often in the name of Islam, has been gratefully accepted by the new westernized elites in Muslim societies everywhere.[12]

In general it can be said that among Muslims there were three distinct attitudes towards colonialism:

(a)   There were those who resisted the west's political, economic and cultural encroachment;

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12.   See my paper *Nation-States as obstacles to the total transformation of the Ummah*, London: The Muslim Institute, 1985. See also my paper *Beyond the Muslim Nation-States*, Slough: The Open Press, 1977.

(b) There were those who grudgingly accepted it as inevitable in the conditions of political and moral degeneration of the time; and

(c) There were those who positively welcomed it.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that those in the third category were most favoured by the colonial powers. These were the Muslims who came to be known as 'modernists': they pledged their subservience to the colonialists; they took to European languages, culture, philosophy, sciences and worldview with great ease and with total freedom from religious inhibitions[13]; they served in the colonial States' bureaucracies; and they fought and died for the colonialists in major wars in all parts of the world. The colonialists rewarded loyalty handsomely. The followers of such men as Sayyid Ahmad Khan in India became 'leaders' of the Muslim community. These men, or their children and grandchildren to be precise, shared the British inheritance in Pakistan and India.[14] When one looks at the rest of the colonized *Ummah,* now divided into small nation-States, it is clear that similar leadership that accepted subservience to the colonial powers emerged in all parts of the world of Islam. This leadership of subservient elites that emerged under the incubating warmth of colonial patronage owes everything to the colonial period. Their history begins under the glow of colonial control; their memory of 'Islamic history' is either non-existent or the little they know they hold in total contempt. To them religious ritual is all that needs to be imbibed from before the 'modern' period; once into the modern period uninhibited modernization ─ in fact westernization ─ alone makes sense. This is the leadership that today rules over all post-colonial States and keeps them and their peoples subservient to the west. The second category ─ those who only grudgingly accepted the inevitability of colonial control ─ have also drifted into the modernist net. Others were attracted to some of the religious movements that emerged in the early part of the colonial period.[15] Those who

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13. Among them were at least some *ulama* of India; see for instance, Shibly Nomani's letter to the chief secretary of the government, quoted in Shaikh Muhammad Akram, *Mauj-e Kausar*, eighth edition: Lahore: Ferozsons, 1968, pp. 223-224. In this letter Shibly said that he had written a series of articles in *Al-Nadwah*, organ of the Nadwatul Ulama, Lucknow, during 1908 arguing that 'obedience and loyalty to the British' was a 'religious duty' of the Muslims. Similar views were expressed by many *ulama* in other parts of the world. In two pamphlets published in Cairo in 1906, Shaikh Muhammad Bakheet argued the legitimacy of non-Muslim rule and admitted the possibility of a non-Muslim *khalifah*. See Rashid Rida's review of them in *Al-Manar*, vol IX, p.153.

14. See the author's book *Conflict, Crisis and War in Pakistan*, London: Macmillan and New York: Praegar, 1972.

15. Among these religious movements were the Wahabi in Najd and the Ahl-e Hadith, Barailvi and Deobandi schools in India. In India, the British were also involved in creating the Qadiani *fitnah* in

resisted were ruthlessly eliminated.[16] Thus modern history is mostly written by the victors. The *mujahideen* who resisted the colonial period have been forgotten, even by those on whose behalf they fought and perished.[17] This is because the modern history of this period largely glorifies those who welcomed the colonialists and became their willing instruments. Their subsequent 'struggle' against the colonialists for the transfer of power to themselves is recorded in history in glowing terms. The colonial powers trained and educated them in the political ways of the west, in the politics of oppression in the name of secular democracy, and in narrow geographic and ethnic nationalism.

It must be noted here that the resistance to the colonialists came almost exclusively from the *ulama.* There was not a single *jihad* movement anywhere led by anyone outside the religious establishments. Another feature of the *jihad* movements was that they were all local. These movements and their leaders do not appear to have developed a worldview that takes into account the reasons for the decline of Muslim power everywhere and the rise to power of the infidels from Europe. The *mujahideen* groups were scattered, small and poorly equipped. They fought under local leaders they themselves elected, whereas the enemy was highly organized on a large scale under centralized leadership stretching back to the colonial powers in Europe. The colonial powers also supplied their armies with resources originating in Europe.

The colonial powers had a highly developed worldview of their own which integrated their political, economic and religious ambitions into a single movement for world domination.[18] They pursued these goals with a single-minded purpose. The *mujahideen,* on the other hand, were no longer part of a global movement; they were simply paying yet another instalment of

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which its founder, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, claimed to be a 'prophet'. The Qadianis are now regarded by all Muslims as apostates and *kuffar*.

16. There were a number of *jihad* movements in all parts of the world. Many *ulama* took part in the 'Indian Mutiny' of 1857 and were executed; the *mujahideen* harassed the British in the North West Frontier Province in the nineteenth century; Imam Shamil fought the Russians in Muslim Central Asia; the Mahdi of Sudan held up the British in Africa; and there were important pockets of resistance in North and West Africa and the Far East. The Uthmaniyyah State still controlled most of the Middle East until after the First World War.

17. The role of the *ulama* in India is well chronicled in I. H. Qureshi, *Ulama in Politics*, Karachi: Ma'aref Ltd, 1972.

18. Although the colonial drive for political power and economic gain was secular and capitalistic, the colonial powers had a 'crusader' mentality towards Islam and Muslims. See, for instance, Edward Said, *Orientalism*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980.

the price that had become due with the conversion of *khilafah* into *malukiyyah* early in the history of Islam. The cruel irony was that the inheritors of the global and universal view of Islam were now fighting for Islam in small, isolated and un-coordinated bands in remote parts of the world; whereas the power of *kufr* was carried forward as part of a global movement for Europe's domination.[19] During the whole of the colonial period there emerged only one man with a global view of Islam as a movement. He was Sayyid Jamal al-Din al-Afghani. Afghani's influence stretched right across Afghanistan, India, Iran, the Uthmaniyyah State, Egypt, North Africa and Europe. He travelled through these areas, including Russia. In Afghani's days the Uthmaniyyah State still ruled over a large part of the *Ummah* and direct colonial control over other parts was still less than total. He believed that the western powers could still be frustrated in their drive to destroy the political power of Islam. Even at that time Afghani and his disciple, Muhammad Abduh, walked a tight rope between Islam and nationalism in Egypt.[20] Afghani was also a visionary who believed that the *Ummah* could still be united under the *khalifah* in Istanbul as a first step towards the expulsion of the European powers from Muslim lands.[21]

The most serious development of the colonial period was that for the first time in their history, Muslims were persuaded to think of political issues outside the framework of Islam. Political issues had always been at the very root of all social, economic, legal, philosophical and theological debate in Islam. The dispute over succession to the political authority of the Prophet that emerged at the Saqifah ensured that this would always be so. The echoes of that first political dispute among Muslims can be felt even today in the semantics of the Islamic Revolution in Iran and the contrived and insincere reactions to it from some quarters outside Iran. The colonial period not only introduced new issues in politics, such as obedience to non-Muslim rulers, it also changed the language of politics. The more the Muslim intellectuals looked at Europe, the more they became convinced that they would have to create European-style institutions to fill the political vacuum caused by the defeat and disintegration of political authority in Muslim areas of the world.

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19. This is not to deny that the colonial powers often fought each other for the control of certain parts of the world. But they also cooperated with each other in their campaigns against Islam.

20. Zaki Badawi, *The Reformers of Egypt—a Critique of Al-Afghani, Abduh and Rashid Ridha*, Slough: The Open Press, 1976, p.15.

21. Mohit Tabatabai, *The Role of Sayyid Jamal al-Din Assadabadi in Awakening the East*, Qum: Dar al-Tabligh-e Islami, 1971, pp.77-111.

The truth is probably that, for a long time before the colonialists arrived on the scheme, those who exercised political authority in the *Ummah* had already become too remote from the people and had lost their legitimacy and identity in terms of Islam. Once they also failed to defend their domains they were doomed to oblivion. In this sense the colonial period was bound to be an interlude between the passing of old-style traditional rulers and the emergence of new Islamic States. The crisis over the Uthmaniyyah *khilafah* has been well described by Hamid Enayat.[22] The emotional turmoil over the *khilafah,* including the Khilafat Movement in British India, was little more than the final expression of frustration felt by Muslims everywhere. But, as Imam Khomeini has pointed out, while the Uthmaniyyah State existed 'it was always possible that righteous individuals might rise up among the people and, with their assistance, seize control of the State, thus putting an end to imperialism by mobilizing the unified resources of the nation'.[23] The power of 'righteous individuals' rising up from among the people has since been demonstrated in Iran and the leadership vacuum at the political heart of the *Ummah* has been filled by none other than Iman Khomeini himself. The fact, however, is that at the beginning of the colonial period the moral foundations of the Uthmaniyyah State, and of all other Muslim States, had eroded to such an extent that it was difficult to relate them to their origin in the Madinah of the Prophet, upon whom be peace, and the *khulafa al-rashidoon.* Political systems in some respects are like biological systems; they must perform certain minimal systemic functions for survival, or perish. One of these functions is defence. In the case of political systems created by Muslims, physical defence is closely related to the moral parameters of Islam. There is no doubt that, for all practical purposes, the moral parameters of Muslim States in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had reached an irreducible minimum. It is perhaps no exaggeration to say that the Uthmaniyyah State, and all other Muslim States of this period, had in effect become secular States.

It is when we understand and accept this fact, that all Muslim States of this period had, all but in name, become secular States, that we also begin to understand the causes of their defeat and of the disintegration of the residual Muslim societies.

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22. Hamid Enayat, *Modern Islamic Political Thought*, *op. cit*. pp. 52-68.

23. Imam Khomeini, *Hukumat-e Islami*, speech given in Najaf in 1970 and published in Persian in 1971. Published in English in Ruhullah Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution: Writings and Declarations of Imam Khomeini*, translated and annotated by Hamid Algar, Berkeley: Mizan Press, 1980.

We are told repeatedly by western historians, and by Muslim historians who have uncritically accepted the western view, that the colonial powers had defeated the political power of Islam. They had done nothing of the kind. What had in fact happened was that the secular States of Europe had defeated the secular States of Asia and Africa whose rulers happened to be Muslim. Europe had been secularized through a succession of religious, cultural, philosophical and intellectual movements such as the Renaissance, Reformation and Enlightenment. The cornerstone of the secularization of Europe was the doctrine of separation of the Church and the State. The teachings of the Christian Church were full of logical contradictions and anomalies. The power of the Church was exercised by a highly centralized, structured and corrupt priesthood claiming infallibility. Little in Christian theology, doctrine or scripture could be traced back to Jesus, upon whom be peace. In sharp contrast to this, everything in Islam and its political doctrine and practice was directly from the Prophet Muhammad, upon whom be peace, and from the Qur'an. For this reason, among others, there was no priesthood in Islam and no need for such movements as Reformation, Renaissance and Enlightenment. There could be no separation of 'church' and State because there was no 'church'. The State in Islam is 'church'.[24] In Europe the Church went into decline and the State went on to become more and more powerful. Muslim rulers, on the other hand, in practice abandoned the moral parameters of Islam while at the same time claiming the right to obedience on religious grounds. It is not possible in Islam for the State to become stronger at the expense of 'religion'. This strategy of statecraft was first attempted by the Umaiyyads. Other rulers since then have attempted to subject Islam to their dynastic interests. As time went on such dynastic rulers resorted more and more to secular forms of political behaviour and less to Islam in the conduct of State affairs. The end result has always been the defeat of such dynastic rulers and the disintegration of their States.

The victory of the western colonial powers over Muslim States was in fact a victory of more powerful secular States over less powerful secular States. The colonial powers had not defeated the political power of Islam. The political power of Islam had effectively been abandoned by monarchical dynastic Muslim rulers long before the colonialists burst on the scene.

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24.   See papers presented at the Muslim Institute's World Seminar on 'State and Politics in Islam' (1983).

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This being the situation, the colonial powers found social conditions in Muslim societies much to their liking. Every Muslim society had developed a political elite or ruling class with a secular outlook. This political elite, largely feudal, served the Muslim dynastic rulers. When the colonialists became rulers, this elite quickly switched its loyalty to them. Those in Muslim societies who welcomed colonial rule invariably belonged to this political elite. Among them are such famous names as Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan in India. The role of the *ulama,* too, has to be seen in this sociological context. Most of the *ulama* and their seats of learning were also part of the political elite that accepted subservience. Though resistance to colonial encroachment came from individual *ulama* and their followers, the vast majority of *ulama,* too, accepted colonial rule with little more than a mild sense of loss over the passing of the established order. In some areas such as Iraq the *ulama,* including the Shi'i *ulama* of Najaf, gave *fatwas* in favour of the *khalifah* in Istanbul and backed the resistance against the British.[25] When all the instances of resistance have been taken into account, the conclusion is inescapable that, considering the threat to Islam and Muslim society that colonialism represented, resistance to it was mild and sporadic. The reason, once again, is the same: the established political order had become too secular to retain the loyalty and allegiance of many Muslims, and the ruling classes had lost the will to fight. The political elite in the Muslim world was all too willing to accept the colonial period as inevitable in the context of the relative stagnation of their societies compared with the dynamism emanating from Europe. In Iran and the Uthmaniyyah State there had emerged major movements calling for the 'modernization' of the political, judicial, military and educational systems.[26] Colonialism, therefore, was pushing at an open door.

The desire to create European-style institutions had become firmly established among the Muslim political elites long before the colonial powers took control. But political institutions in Europe had been created in the wake of a historical experience quite unlike the historical experience of the Muslim world. What the Muslim elites did not realize is that political institutions can only give stability and continuity to a powerful political system; they do not in themselves generate power. A powerful ruler of State can draw power, prestige, mobilization of resources, coherence, direction and other benefits

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25. Enayat, *Modern Islamic Political Thought, op. cit.,* p.43.

26. *Ibid.* p.166.

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from political institutions. If the powerful State and its powerful ruler create new institutions, these institutions serve the ruler and the State. If the State's power has declined and rulers are weak, incompetent or both, then the political elite on its own cannot create institutions to halt the decline or to take the place of the powerful State and its ruler. In Europe the power of the Church had been broken and replaced by powerful rulers who went on to create the new institutions. The new institutions were not required in Europe to create the State or the ruler; the new institutions were required to replace the Church as the mediator between the ruler and the ruled and to give the established States and their rulers support and acceptance among the masses. In the much-celebrated French Revolution the political elite eliminated the king but threw up a new dictator (Napoleon) who went on to create a new 'Republic' with new institutions. The political elite in France did not first set up a new 'Republic' and other institutions and then ask them to appoint a government. The new dictator undertook foreign wars as a means of establishing the power of the new 'Republic' and its institutions at home.

In our own experience in the last few years we have seen what has happened in Iran. The Shah of Iran was not short of western-style institutions. In fact he had created very powerful western-style institutions to support and maintain the Pahlavi dynasty. All these institutions, including the armed forces, were loyal to him. But the State, the dynasty and all their institutions were subservient to the United States. Subservient rulers—whether monarchs, military dictators or democratically elected Presidents—can only create institutions that are also subservient. If we bear this rule in mind we will understand, a little later, why the post-colonial nation-States are as they are today.

When dealing with secular States it is necessary to distinguish between oppressive organs of the State and 'institutions'. The oppressive organs are usually three: bureaucracy, armed forces, and police. These are 'oppressive' because they only accept and execute orders from above. They do not carry messages from the people back to the rulers; they have no 'feedback' functions. Political, economic and social institutions, on the other hand, participate in decision-making, or in the review of decisions, and also provide feedback channels from the society at large to the decision-makers. But in the ultimate analysis all these institutions, however democratic, uphold the total 'system' or the 'establishment'. Their wider role is to give the people a feeling of 'participation' without greatly affecting the freedom of the executive. It is

these institutions that give rulers the illusion of 'democracy' and 'representative government'. Democracy in secular States provides little more than cosmetic feedback. Democratic institutions are also arenas of competition between individuals and parties from the same elite to fill positions of 'power' and 'influence' in the State hierarchy.

In the case of the Islamic Revolution in Iran a new political elite emerged separate from the Shah's elite. This elite launched an all-out struggle against the subservient State, its king and its oppressive organs of State. The new elite emerged from the very root of Islam in Iran and was, therefore, spiritually and intellectually independent of any influence outside the country. This new elite conceived a new order, including its institutions. The elite then set about challenging, fighting and defeating the established order. Because the new elite was *muttaqi,* and not pursuing power for the sake of power or the interests of a class, it attracted the following of the masses as well as the following of important sections of the society that had not previously taken part in the political system. Once the old order had been defeated and dismantled, the new elite established a new State—an 'Islamic Republic'—with a new leadership and government. The new State and leadership drew their power from the Revolution. After the Revolution the leadership went on to set up the new institutions to consolidate and make permanent the gains of the Islamic Revolution. The lesson is clear: those who want to create new institutions must first acquire the power and the authority to do so. The power of the new State, new leadership and new institutions is best consolidated through sustained and prolonged engagement in conflict with the hostile environment. In the immediate environment of the Prophet's State in Madinah, the power of *kufr* was represented by the Quraish of Makkah. The Quraish of Makkah and their allies repeatedly invaded Madinah. These conflicts were an essential input for the development, growth and maturity of the nascent Islamic State of Madinah and its power. Without conflict there is no power. The conflicts and wars of the Islamic State in Madinah are part of the *uswah hasanah* of the Prophet, upon whom be peace. The invasion of the Islamic State of Iran from Ba'athist Iraq was of course arranged by the two superpowers of *kufr;* but this war was perhaps also arranged by Allah s*ubhanahu wa ta'ala* to help develop, test and consolidate the new Islamic State, its leadership, the new institutions and their collective power. As Muslims we are duty-bound to regard all hardships and vicissitudes as from Allah and search for His blessings in them.

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When power and authority in the Muslim world passed to colonial powers, it was inevitable that the new rulers would create oppressive organs of State and institutions to consolidate the colonial system. The Muslim political elite hoped that the emergence of European-style institutions would give them the opportunity to develop the creative energy that was so evident in the European aristocracy. What Muslim rulers, aristocrats and elites had failed to defend on the battlefield they hoped to recapture under the patronage of the colonial rulers. The colonialists encouraged such hopes on condition that the elites learned European languages, learned to dress like Europeans, and cultivated European manners, etiquettes and life-styles. Muslim political elites and upper classes were experienced in sycophancy and subservience. They took to their European rulers' ways with great enthusiasm. Thus emerged in Muslim societies a new class of people who may be called the Muslim colonial elites.

For the Muslim colonial elites everything changed; they had new rulers, new languages, new dresses, new books, new history, new philosophy, new political institutions, and new personal, social, cultural and economic goals to pursue with new zest and vigour. Indeed, for them colonialism was a revolution!

The new political reality of colonialism did not correspond to the vocabulary of politics in the Qur'an and in the *Sunnah* of the Prophet, upon whom be peace. Under *malukiyyah* the vocabulary of politics had not changed a great deal. Political issues were still discussed within the framework of theology and Islamic jurisprudence. Everyone felt bound by the *shari'ah*. The respective positions of the State, the rulers and the ruled were still debated and understood within the framework of Islam. Under colonialism political issues, for the first time in history, moved entirely outside the fold of Islam. The Muslim colonial elites, under the patronage of the colonial powers, had to learn and absorb not only new political facts but also new political concepts. A new language of politics was created for them, partly by themselves but

largely by the colonial powers. A new bag of conceptual tools, complete with its own language, history and worldview, was signed, sealed and delivered to the new Muslim colonial elites. The uncritical acceptance of this bag of conceptual tools was a condition for the grant of patronage at every level in the colonial system. Those who accepted the worldview of the colonial powers also began to see reality as it was not: to them, for instance, subservience to and imitation of colonial masters became hallmarks of 'progress' and defeat was seen as victory. The early pioneers in the colonial elites also included men of considerable religious learning. A good example of this is Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan.[27] There was also some disagreement among *ulama* as to how they should regard the colonial period. Some in India believed that despite the advent of British rule the country could still be treated as *dar al-Islam*.[28] In the new language of politics the Muslim colonial elite could not even determine the true nature of the reality that surrounded them. Islam insists on its own definition of all reality, especially political reality. Under the long spell of *malukiyyah* the line between reality and delusion had been greatly blurred. Under colonialism, illusion and delusion changed places with fact and reality. The fact was that the colonial powers sought to create institutions that would make their dominance permanent; but the Muslim colonial elites deluded themselves into thinking that their new masters would help them back to their feet. The reality was that *kufr* had emerged from Europe in the guise of a new and powerful civilization to try to destroy the civilization of Islam for good; but the Muslim colonial elites preferred to live under the illusion that the Europeans were Christians, that their civilization was also Christian and that, therefore, as *ahl al-kitab*, they were their long lost half-brothers in faith. The reality was that the Europeans had developed democracy to give their preference for secularism a moral face; but the Muslim colonial elites, in their unfailing optimism, regarded democracy as the very core of the Islamic political ideal of *shura*. In their enthusiasm for everything European, the new Muslim colonial elites went overboard and admitted into their version of Islam virtually the whole of the political philosophy of the west. The political ideas current in Europe in the early part of the nineteenth century had such attractive names as liberty, equality, fraternity, representative government, justice, free speech, and equality of opportunity. The Muslim colonial elites, among them many

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27.   Sayyid Ahmad Khan wrote many books, among them a *tafseer* of the Qur'an.

28.   Akram, *op. cit.*, pp. 83-84. This also shows that the mere presence of Muslim monarchical rule was regarded as sufficient reason to treat India as *dar al-Islam*.

ulama, quickly found *ayahs* in the Qur'an and many *ahadith* that, in their view, endorsed the false idealism that was coming from Europe. What they did not know, and did not want to know, was that in the context of European history these concepts might have been original or with some substance for the long-suffering European masses; in the context of European colonial rule these concepts would mean nothing for the colonized peoples.

The sad fact is that the Muslim political thought in this period was concerned with one objective alone─to appease the Europeans and to cultivate the favour of their new masters. The new political vocabulary acquired by the Muslims did not even correspond to the reality of the colonial period. Every political goal the new Muslim political elites set out to achieve was dependent on the grace and favour of the colonial rulers. This was hardly surprising. Those who describe a situation in terms that defy objective reality are also bound to act in ways that do not meet the demands of reality.

The reality that the colonial period represented was open, stark, objective and simple. It was there for everyone to see without a great deal of strenuous research or philosophical inquiry. The reality was that, for the first time in all history, all parts of the *Ummah* had passed under the physical and political control of *kufr.* This simple reality that was there to see was not seen, or was totally ignored, by the Muslim colonial elites. Henceforth the language, diction, context, content and direction of Muslim political thought was determined by the colonial powers. Every idea the Muslim colonial elites came up with was, directly or indirectly, planted in their minds by their new masters. At the root of all political thought in the colonial period was the notion that religion was responsible for the backwardness of Muslim societies; that Statehood must now be defined in terms of the democratic sovereignty of the people and in terms of nationality. The colonial powers made it clear that they were the new sovereignty and that sovereign authority would only be passed to new States, institutions and leaders on condition that they were 'civilized'; that is, they were secular, nationalist and democratic. To the Europeans equality among unequals made no sense. The new Muslim colonial elites, to claim equality, would have to be measured by the European yardstick of culture and civilization. The European rulers offered participation in government to those who accepted these terms and cultivated excellence in western education. Those Muslims who had welcomed the colonial period found these conditions more than acceptable and were rewarded with positions of influence, limited power, patronage, and economic gain.

The colonial powers knew that the broad spectrum of the Muslim masses would not accept permanent subservience to *kufr*. They realized that the moral foundations of Muslim political culture were too deeply rooted in Islam. They had to find a way of bypassing the moral foundations of Muslim society that it was impossible for them to dig up. The alternative was to allow traditional society to lie dormant and to build up a set of alternative institutions run by the subservient colonial elites. Real power was concentrated in the oppressive organs of State. New organizations were introduced. These were firms, companies, trade unions, professional associations, cooperatives and, above all, the political parties. The great advantage of these organizations was that participation in them was regulated by secular laws made by the colonial State. By and large these organizations sought to protect the narrow interests of their members and only required formal recognition from the authorities. The most important of these organizations was the political party. Most political parties that were formed during the early colonial period were, directly or indirectly, sponsored by the colonial powers.[29]

The political party trapped Muslim political thought and behaviour in a framework from which they have yet to recover. It is beyond the scope of this paper to examine, step by step, the processes by which these political parties became 'national' parties of solidarity apparently fighting against the colonial powers. In the popular mythology ('history') of this period the leaders of these parties are legendary figures known as 'fathers of the nation'. The fact, however, is that the colonial powers withdrew only when, in their judgement, their proteges were ready and willing to continue the work of 'modernization' begun under colonialism. The *Ummah* was divided into small nation-States run by colonial elites and controlled and directed by the colonial powers, or such other proxy powers as the United States and the Soviet Union. The fact is that this is all that the fathers of Muslim political thought in the colonial period set out to achieve, and they achieved it. The net result is permanent political subservience and continued social, cultural and economic bondage to the western civilization. The inevitable and inescapable conclusion must be that we are still living in the colonial period. The so-called 'independence' and the 'transfer of power' that took place in the name of 'decolonization' were in fact

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29. The Indian National Congress was founded by an Englishman, Allan Octavian Hume, on the suggestion of Lord Dufferin, the Viceroy, in 1885. The Muslim League followed in 1906, after a deputation of Muslim 'nobles' had called on the Viceroy to demand special rights for the 'national interests' of the Muslims as opposed to those of the Hindus. See Kalim Siddiqui, *Conflict, Crisis and War in Pakistan*, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-22. Similar instances of political parties sponsored by the colonial powers can be found in other Muslim countries.

only another and higher stage in the development and refinement of the colonial system.

The point we must make now is that Muslim political thought during the colonial period was not concerned with the political goals of Islam; its one and only concern was the protection and promotion of the status and economic interests of the Muslim colonial elites within the colonial system. These elites made use of Islam only to the extent necessary to gain respectability and to retain their place within the fold of Islam. For all practical purposes they abandoned such political goals of Islam as *al-amr bi'l-ma'ruf wa'n-nahy an al-munkar* (order good and forbid evil) and *inn-al hukm illalillah* (rule is only for Allah). It must be said that Muslim political thought of this period was shaped to gain the favour and acceptability of the colonial powers; *taqwa* was not part of this system of political thought or of the leaders, parties and policies that emerged from it. It is probably no exaggeration to say that the political thought of the Muslims had its roots outside Islam; it emerged and flourished at a time when Muslim political power had declined and the *Ummah* was in a state of intellectual anarchy and spiritual waywardness. Colonialism had finally broken the established mould of political organization in the *Ummah*. The monarchical foundations of the mould had lasted for far too long and were bound to be superseded. The only question was whether they would be broken by an internally generated intellectual, spiritual and political movement or by external intervention. In the event the established order was broken and defeated by the external factor of colonialism.

Once colonialism became established, it was inevitable that the European powers would do everything possible to prolong their direct or indirect control of the Muslim areas of the world and that they would try to make sure that Islam could not again re-emerge as a political power in world affairs. Muslim political thought of the colonial period was an ally of the colonial powers in their drive to ensure that Islam could never again challenge their supremacy. Nationalism and democracy had replaced Christianity in Europe; the colonialists offered the same formula to the new political elites in the Muslim world. The result was the dismemberment of the *Ummah* into subservient nation-States ruled over by equally subservient ruling classes.[30] This political

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30. See my paper *Nation-States as obstacles to the total transformation of the Ummah*, *op. cit*. Also other papers presented at the Muslim Institute world seminar on 'The Impact of Nationalism on the Ummah' (1985), compiled in M. Ghayasuddin (ed), *The Impact of Nationalist on the Muslim World*, London: The Open Press, 1986.

subservience is further reinforced by the emergence of a powerful global capitalist system which also controls the economies of the Muslim areas of the world. The Muslim ruling classes also receive the economic rewards of political subservience through the capitalist system.[31]

While all this was inevitable and logically followed the victory of European colonial powers over the ageing, enfeebled and corrupt monarchical regimes in the world of Islam, there is something else that was also equally logical and inevitable: the emergence of an Islamic movement to challenge the power of the west and to defeat and dispossess the subservient elites, their governments and the nation-States system. The fact that the colonial powers thought that they had overcome Islam's political power for good shows how little they knew and understood Islam. They paid scant attention to the fact that the Islamic State is an integral part of Islam. Islam is incomplete without the Islamic State. If the Qur'an and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet are the spirit of Islam, the Islamic State is the body in which the spirit finds its fulfilment. The Islamic State is the natural habitat of the Muslim. Every Muslim longs to live in an Islamic State. This position of the Islamic State is so central to Islam that every ruler, no matter how deviant, has claimed that his State is 'Islamic'. So much so that most subservient, secular nation-States of the contemporary colonial system still claim to be 'based on Islam'. The point is that in the absence of the Islamic State the spirit of Islam does not disappear and evaporate: it simply manifests itself in the political culture of the *Ummah*. Slowly the spirit of Islam, the belief system of the Qur'an and the *uswah hasanah* of the Prophet, upon whom be peace, reassert themselves in the form of an Islamic movement in order to establish the Islamic State. There is thus a striking similarity in the style, content, method and leadership of the *jihad* movements of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in West and North Africa, Central Asia and India, and the recent movement in Iran that has led to the Islamic Revolution and the establishment of the Islamic State of Iran. But the defeat of the *jihad* movements left the colonial powers unchallenged and supreme. The political power of Islam was a fallen giant and the colonial powers replaced it with Muslim political pygmies. The *jihad* movements arose at a time when their leaders, all *ulama*, still believed and hoped that the rising power of *kufr* could be prevented from overwhelming the whole of the world of Islam. That was not to be. The final fall came with the defeat of the

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31. The economic theories of the west, including communism, have also produced theories of poverty and development for the subservient elites and their States.

Uthmaniyyah State in the First World War, the secularization of nationalist Turkey by Mustafa Kamal, and the abolition of the *khilafah* in 1924.

A fallen giant rises only slowly and falters many times before it gets back on its feet. The rise of the fallen giant of Islam, too, was likely to be slow and at first tentative.

The victory of colonialism over Muslim political power in all parts of the world created a situation that had not existed at any time before. This situation for all Muslims was tragic. One group—the Muslim colonial elite—went on to rationalize and accept defeat as a permanent condition and produced, as we have seen, a body of political thought specially suited to the colonial period. This group has gone on to produce permanently subservient, but nominally 'independent', nation-States in all parts of the *Ummah*. Before colonialism the *Ummah* was divided into centres of political power exercised by dynastic rulers, some acknowledging nominal allegiance to the *khilafah* in Istanbul. Defeat at the hands of colonialism reduced all Muslims to the same political condition. They were united in defeat. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that Muslim political thought in the colonial period differed little from place to place, country to country, or continent to continent. The reason is not only that defeat evoked identical reaction in all parts of the *Ummah;* the primary cause of this uniformity in political thought was its origin in Europe. As has already been suggested, Muslim political thought during the colonial period was not the outcome of any original thinking on the part of the Muslim colonial elites; this special brand of political thought was largely induced by the intellectual climate of Europe that accompanied colonial expansion. Although there were a number of colonial powers, they were all European and represented the same intellectual and philosophical trends in history. This meant that the intellectual impact of colonialism on the Muslim society was identical whether the colonial power was France, Germany, Holland, Italy, or Britain. Colonialism, therefore, also represented the growing intellectual and philosophical (they called it 'scientific') unity of the powers of *kufr*. Though the colonial powers fought each other in wars, some of them global, over political and economic goals, they were united in *kufr* against Islam. The Muslim colonial elites and their political thought were, and still are, partners in global *kufr*. This and this alone explains the willing subservience to *kufr* of all regimes in the Muslim world today. The nation-States and their political and economic systems are all integral parts of the global power of *kufr*. In this situation, if Islam is what we believe it to be, the power of Islam too would

have to emerge and be consolidated in a global Islamic movement to confront the globally consolidated power of *kufr*. What must now happen globally is what happened 1,400 years ago in the narrow strip of territory known as the Hijaz. The only difference to this is that there is no prophet to come. The new global confrontation, showdown and victory of Islam over *kufr* must happen as the result of a prolonged struggle.

In the historiography of Islam the ultimate victory of Islam over *kufr* is conceptually well established, but it has been regarded as such a distant prospect that its relevance to political discussion has always been ignored. Although it is true that the ultimate global victory of Islam over *kufr* is still a distant prospect, it is now necessary to include it in our framework of political thought, if only because Muslims have already suffered, at the hand of colonialism, global defeat. If victory is ultimately assured then the best time to remember it is when we are utterly defeated.

Once the defeat of Muslim political power was complete and the colonial powers had dismembered the body of the *Ummah,* Muslims were bound to begin to turn their attention to the problems and processes of recovery from an impossible situation. Just as the processes of the decline of Muslim power had been spread over many hundreds of years, the stages of recovery were also likely to be very slow to begin with. The first phase of this recovery process got mixed up with what we now know to have been the period of the consolidation of colonial power; this consolidation of colonialism was called 'movement for independence'. In some parts of the Arab world colonialism came wrapped in the national flag of 'independence' from the Uthmaniyyah State and disguised in the heady intoxicant of Arab nationalism.[32] This was closely followed by a dagger of zionism.

The earliest attempts at recovery from this depth of defeat and subservience are represented by the Ikhwan al-Muslimoon in Egypt and the Jama'at-e Islami in British India and later in Pakistan. The founders of the two movements were born within three years of each other: Maulana Abul Ala Maudoodi in 1903 and Hasan al-Banna in 1906. When the Ikhwan was found in March 1928, Banna was only 21. When the Jama'at was founded in 1941, Maudoodi was 38, had been editing his monthly, *Tarjuman al-Qur'an*, for 15

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32.   For an example of confused thinking about Islam and Arab nationalism, see A. L. Tabawi's summary of Rashid Rida's memorandum to the British prime minister, Lloyd George, in Khurshid Ahmed and Zafar Ansari (eds), *Islamic Perspectives*, Leicester: Islamic Foundation, 1979, pp.335-340.

years and had published a much-celebrated book, *Al-Jihad fi al-Islam.* Banna was assassinated in a Cairo street in February 1949 when only 42; Maudoodi led the Jama'at until 1972 when he 'retired' from active leadership of the 'party'. He died in 1979, aged 76. These movements emerged in countries with large Muslim populations and attracted large numbers of Muslims throughout the world. The Ikhwan and the Jama'at filled the void left by the abolition of the *khilafah* in 1924. These movements emerged in the darkest era of Islamic history when Islam had, for the first time, ceased to possess a State of its own. The Ikhwan and the Jama'at came to represent the spirit of Islam in search of a body, the Islamic State. The fact that neither managed to establish a territorial Islamic State must not take away from them the light they and almost they alone represented in an era of total darkness. This was at a time when the Muslim political thought of the colonial period was bent upon taking the *Ummah* deep into a *neo-jahiliyyah* of the worst kind. If the *Ummah* is not as deeply immersed into *jahiliyyah* as it might have been it is largely, though not entirely, due to the Ikhwan and the Jama'at.

Having said that, it must also be said that the Ikhwan and the Jama'at did not challenge the *jahiliyyah* as they might have done; they did not generate the level of energy, or the power of Islam, that was required to break out of the political impotence to which Islam had been reduced. In Pakistan the Jama'at tried to generate the required energy in the cold and damp furnace of democracy within a colonial system. The Ikhwan better understood the role of domestic imperialism (*al-isti'mar al-dakhili*)[33]. For this reason more than any other the Ikhwan was suppressed to a much greater extent in Egypt than the relatively mild hardships faced by the Jama'at in Pakistan.

Because the Jama'at in Pakistan was committed to the exclusive use of democracy as an instrument of change, it was allowed to function as one political party among many others.[34] It is probably not unfair to deduce from this that both the Ikhwan and the Jama'at leadership grossly under-estimated the quality, kind and volume of mobilized power of Islam that was needed to defeat the power of the external colonial system and its domestic allies.

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33. Richard P. Mitchell, *The Society of the Muslim Brothers*, London: Oxford University Press: 1969.

34. For an account of the Jama'at's over-confidence and misplaced optimism in the electoral politics of Pakistan, see M. Ghayasuddin, *An Approach to the Study of the Jama'at-e Islami Experiment in Pakistan*, London: The Muslim Institute, 1976.

The question that must be asked is how much of the Muslim political thought of the colonial period had penetrated the thinking of the Jama'at and of the Ikhwan.[35] The Jama'at was the direct result of Maudoodi's political thinking over at least a decade before the organization was set up in 1941. Many of his articles written during 1933-37 are collected in a volume under the title *Tanqihat*.[36] Maudoodi believed in careful thought and detailed planning before commencing any work.[37] He defines a 'true reformer'[38] as one who undertakes original thinking and formulates the best course of action according to the situation prevailing at the time. Others simply follow him. But the trouble is, says Maudoodi, that the followers go on following the original course long after the time has passed and the situation has changed.[39] Clearly Maudoodi believes that he is undertaking original thought and proposing a line of action in the situation prevailing in India under the British in the 1930s. In an article published in December 1937 he refers to 'the concept of a revolutionary party'[40] that he has in mind. In the same article he proposes in 'rough outline' a plan to set up 'training centres' in all parts of the country to produce the kind of men necessary to bring about an 'Islamic revolution'.[41] It also seems that before the Muslim League passed the 'Pakistan resolution' in March 1940, Maudoodi believed in moving towards establishing a party in stages. He had already set up the Organization of the House of Islam (*idara-e dar al-Islam*), which was merged into the Jama'at-e Islami in 1941. It is possible that the Muslim League's bold demand to create a Muslim State out of British India hurried Maudoodi into setting up the Jama'at-e Islami.

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35. The writer is unable to answer this question with respect to the Ikhwan as he is unable to reach the original sources in Arabic. He has, however, discussed this question with sources close to the Ikhwan during his visits to Cairo. His impression is that the Ikhwan was much more of a 'religious' reform movement, started almost spontaneously. It then moved slowly towards a political role. The Jama'at, on the other hand, was from the beginning more 'political' than religious, and therefore a direct extension of Maulana Maudoodi's political thinking for over a decade before the Jama'at was established in 1941.

36. Abul Ala Maudoodi, *Tanqihat*, Lahore: Islamic Publications, 1970.

37. *Ibid.* p.164. Maudoodi ridicules the founders of the Muslim University at Aligarh for wanting to set up a university without having any idea of what the university would be or what it would do. The result, he says, was that 'Islamiyaat' was added to the curriculum as an afterthought.

38. Translations by the author from the Urdu original.

39. Maudoodi, *Tanqihat*, op. cit. p. 170.

40. *Ibid.* p. 316.

41. *Ibid.* p. 313.

It is sometimes said that Maudoodi did not at first want the Jama'at-e Islami to become a party. That Maudoodi always meant the Jama'at to be a political 'party' is clear from many of his articles in *Tanqihat*. But in another article written in the mid-thirties, Maudoodi had this to say:

> The Muslims are already an organized collectivity (*jami'at*). To create separate organizations among Muslims under new names, and to create differences among Muslims through new outward distinctions, or to create new schools of thought under names, and to divide the Muslims into different parties and conflicting groups, is in fact not to strengthen them but to make them even weaker. This is not organization, but represents creating divisions and opposing groups. Some people have blindly learned these methods of creating small organized groups from the west.[42]

In the same passage Maudoodi adds:

> If anything suits the Muslims it is a democratic movement *[jamhoori tehrik]* which assumes that all Muslims are one society in which change and stability are found in the same proportion as was the practice of the Prophet, upon whom be peace.

It is possible that by the term *jamhoori tehrik* Maudoodi means a mass movement rather than a 'democratic' one. But his article on the danger of rebellion by the masses suggests that in Maudoodi's view the people must be passive and submissive to authority.[43] Their political role would be restricted to voting in the elections. The elitist structure he gave to the Jama'at-e Islami also points in the same direction. When he talks of the survival and expansion of the Islamic civilization in the context of India, the first thing he wants is a new 'system of education' and only secondly 'just sufficient' political power to enable Muslims to establish their own system of education and pursue other goals of Muslim culture.[44] He did not think that this amount of 'political power' could only be secured in an independent India. After criticizing the new educational system introduced under Sayyid Ahmad Khan's influence, Maudoodi proposed sweeping changes. The British, he wrote, would allow such changes as he proposed because the rapidly spreading influence of

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42. Maudoodi, *Movement for India's Independence and Muslims*, ninth edition, Lahore: Islamic Publications, 1981, vol. 1, p.106.

43. Maudoodi, *Tanqihat*, *op. cit.* p. 189-201.

44. Maudoodi, *Movement for India's Independence and Muslims*, *op. cit.* pp. 124-126.

communism in India could only be checked by the 'power of Islam'.[45] The 'power of Islam' he is talking about here is to be generated through educational reform under British tutelage. In principle this is a position not greatly different from that of Sayyid Ahmad Khan. Besides, and perhaps more importantly, Maudoodi's assumption that the British would prefer Islam to communism was, to say the least, politically naive. At its root this also betrays the same wishful thinking and misconception about the western civilization being 'Christian' that was the hallmark of modernist Muslim thought.

Although Maulana Maudoodi frequently used the term 'Islamic revolution', he was essentially a gradualist reformer. This becomes quite clear in his article, 'The Correct Method of Rebuilding the Ummah'. [46] The revolutionary method, says Maudoodi, begins with 'destructive anger' against everything that is traditional in the established order, whereas the reformer begins with 'deep thought' into the causes of the society's ills. In this framework Maudoodi accuses the Bolsheviks of having wantonly destroyed all culture and civilization in Russia, 'so much so that even God has been given notice to get out of Soviet Russia.' [47] Similar 'extremism', says Maudoodi, was also shown during the French Revolution. 'The result of this intense revolutionary turmoil has been that to this day the political, cultural and moral life of France has not fully returned to normality and moderation. To this day France's national life does not enjoy the same stability as is found in England'. Later in the same article Maudoodi says that in any revolutionary movement (in India) the 'foundations of the Muslim society' would be shaken. Clearly, in his view, the 'foundations of the Muslim society' in India were sound and secure and it only needed a new system of education to repair the damage done by secular education during the colonial period. He merely assumed that the fear of communism would persuade the British government to allow Muslims to overhaul their system of education.

Maudoodi's understanding of mainstream politics in British India was rudimentary. Much of his political commentary, and there is a great deal of it, has the flavour of a detached moralizer. Of course the Muslim League was utterly secular, it was not an Islamic movement, and its leadership was not

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45. Maudoodi, *Tanqihat, op. cit.* p. 176.

46. *Ibid.* p. 177-188.

47. *Ibid.* p. 179-80. In fact the Soviet Union has remained deeply committed to the secular European culture. Today Soviet achievements in art, theatre, music, sport, scientific enquiry, higher education, etc., are greatly admired in western Europe and North America.

muttaqi. This Maudoodi pointed out at great length and in great style. That the 'nationalist' demand for Pakistan was equally secular and quite beyond the political parameters of Islam was also one of Maudoodi's favourite themes. Maudoodi also forbade Muslims from taking part in 'democratic' elections on the ground that in western democracy the people as a whole are deemed to be sovereign and their elected representatives exercise sovereignty on behalf of the people. Sovereignty, said Maudoodi, belongs to Allah alone and to participate in such elections would compromise the Islamic belief in *tawheed*.[48] The Jama'at, he pointed out, was a 'party of principles' and no short-term considerations of political expediency should divert it from the true course, which was to boycott the 1946 elections. A year later, in 1947, when partition had been agreed, there was to be referendum in the North-West Frontier Province to determine whether the area should become part of the new State of Pakistan. Maulana Maudoodi was asked whether or not the Muslims of the Frontier should participate in the referendum, and, if so, which way they should vote. Maudoodi now shifted his ground. 'Referendum is in principle different from elections to the legislative council; referendum is only concerned with the question of deciding which country they wish to join,' said Maudoodi. As such, he wrote, it was quite all right for the Jama'at members to vote in the referendum. But, said Maudoodi, the Jama'at would not advise the people to vote to join Pakistan. He added, however, that if he lived in the area he would vote for the province to become part of Pakistan.[49] The elections of 1946 were in effect a referendum on the Pakistan issue. These elections were to decide whether or not the Muslim League, led by Mr M. A. Jinnah, spoke for the Muslims of India. The point was crucial because M. K. Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad claimed that the Indian National Congress represented all Indians—Hindus, Muslims and others. In any case, to say that elections to a legislative council in British India would breach Allah's sovereignty was not very clear thinking on Maudoodi's part. Allah's sovereignty over India had been breached by the British a long time ago and perhaps also by the Mughal and other Muslim dynasties before them. In Maudoodi's India the British exercised political, administrative and judicial sovereignty from the King and Parliament in London. No legislative assembly in India, elected under British rule, was going to be sovereign. Maulana Maudoodi was also prepared to depend on the presumed preference of the British for Islam over communism to create a new system of education for

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48. Maudoodi, *Movement for India's Independence and Muslims*, *op .cit.*, Vol. II, p. 241fn.

49. *Ibid.* pp. 287-288.

Muslims under cover of British sovereignty. His ambiguous political thinking, mixed with Islamic justifications, could not hide the fact that the position he took before partition did not offer a *political* alternative to the Pakistan demand of the Muslim League. Even his moral position, when viewed in the context of a hostile Hindu majority, British 'sovereignty' and the near unanimity of the Muslim demand for Pakistan, appears untenable.

Once in Pakistan, Maudoodi and the Jama'at initiated the debate that is still raging in that country. Pakistan was clearly a product of Muslim political thought during the colonial period; and continued political, economic and cultural subservience to the west was part and parcel of this political creed. What the rulers of Pakistan were trying to do in Pakistan after partition is precisely what they set out to achieve all along; Maudoodi, having taken no part in the proceedings until then, now wanted an 'Islamic State'. Maudoodi, not without justification, feared that the Muslim League leaders would emulate the example of Mustafa Kamal in Turkey. Mr Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, had referred to Mustafa Kamal as 'a great hero' of the world of Islam.[50] Maudoodi's other great fear was 'revolution' or 'political turmoil'. Political elitism was his method. A people's destiny was decided by its upper classes (*khawas*), who also represented 'true power', he wrote.[51]

In Pakistan Maudoodi was a refugee and the new country's upper classes were all with Jinnah and the Muslim League. Their power was greatly increased by the fact that they were now rulers of Pakistan as well. Maudoodi had always been dismissive of the value and worth of the masses, whom he frequently referred to as 'ignorant' and only 'nominal Muslims'. To make matters worse, Maudoodi's language was Urdu, and in none of the five provinces of British India that fell to Pakistan was Urdu spoken by the masses. So the Pakistani masses were not only 'ignorant' and 'nominal Muslims', they did not even understand Maudoodi's language. In Pakistan the only people who understood Maudoodi well were the literate among the 10 million refugees from India. Others in Pakistan whom Maudoodi could reach were the 'educated' of the lower middle classes in the urban centres, basically the white-collar working clerical and some professional groups. This was Maudoodi's constituency. But the problem was that the refugees were all emotionally committed to Jinnah, his successors and the Muslim League.

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50.   Siddiqui, *Conflict, Crisis and War in Pakistan*, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

51.   Maudoodi, *Tanqihat*, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

Besides, the creation of Pakistan also created vast new opportunities in all walks of life, especially for the lower middle classes. The economic rewards of partition for a small group were high and immediate. And these were precisely the people that Maudoodi could reach and who were emotionally committed to the Islamic rhetoric of the Pakistan movement. In this way those likely to provide the rump of the Islamic movement in Pakistan were precisely those who had acquired a vested interest in the *status quo* and its continuation. Thus, sociologically, Maudoodi was in an impossible position: if he believed in an Islamic Revolution he was in the wrong place at the wrong time. For Maudoodi's small 'Islamic' constituency of the indigenous and refugee lower middle classes the creation of Pakistan had itself been a revolution. They could not distinguish between an 'Islamic Revolution' and a revolution in the name of Islam. The Muslim League's Pakistan movement had been 'Islamic' in only one dimension—in the mobilization of the Muslim masses of the entire subcontinent. This single dimension in the context of the subcontinent was at least a partial Islamic revolution. However, in a political upheaval that affected everyone, it was difficult to distinguish between a partial and a total revolution. Maudoodi, in any case, did not recognize the one single dimension in which the emergence of Pakistan was 'Islamic' as necessary for Islam. In his view the masses were 'ignorant' and 'nominal Muslims' easily led by such westernized leaders as Jinnah. Maudoodi made no attempt to profit from the mass mobilization that temporarily existed between 1947 and 1950.

In many respects Maulana Maudoodi's position in Pakistan was similar to the position in which Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed and Shah Ismail Shaheed had found themselves in the Pathan areas of the North-West Frontier just over a hundred years before. Maudoodi himself has analysed the causes of the failure of the *jihad* movement. In Maudoodi's view a major cause of their failure had been that they

> did not make suitable effort to prepare ground in the area where they undertook *jihad* for the establishment of the revolutionary Islamic rule. Their army... had been mustered from all the four corners of India, and their position in the north-western part was of immigrants... Both the leaders probably harboured the misunderstanding that since the people of the Frontier region were Muslims they would eagerly welcome the Islamic rule... But eventually it was revealed by experience that regarding the so-called ['nominal'] Muslims to be the true Muslims and

expecting from them things that can only be expected from the true Muslims was a blunder...[52]

From this, says Maudoodi, any future revivalist movement must learn the lesson 'that unless a political revolution gains root in the social, moral and cultural life of a people, it can never meet with success.'

The actual situation that faced Maudoodi in Pakistan immediately after the State had been created was that its people, the 'nominal Muslims', had been drawn into a totally secular nationalist movement under secular leaders. In terms of Maudoodi's framework, the experience of the Pakistan movement made the people of this area even more 'ignorant' and even more 'nominal' as Muslims. This development was in a direction opposite to the one Maudoodi thought essential for a 'political revolution'. As such Maudoodi should have turned his attention to preparing the 'social, moral and cultural life of the people' as a prelude to a 'political revolution'.

What might have happened if Maudoodi had followed his logic in Pakistan is a moot point. The fact is that once Pakistan had been created and Maudoodi found himself in Lahore he abandoned his pre-partition position. The nationalist emotions, mixed with Islamic rhetoric, that accompanied the creation of Pakistan now became Maudoodi's preferred political ground. But this ground was essentially and exclusively that of the Muslim political thought during the colonial period. Maudoodi now had to take the step he had refused to take before the partition of India: he had to enter the secular politics of Pakistan on terms dictated by secular leaders in the name of Pakistani nationalism. On this ground Maudoodi, the hard, uncompromising moralizer of his days in India, became an ordinary politician with all the attendant hazards of compromise and expediency. The subsequent role of the Jama'at-e Islami in Pakistan is that of a secular political party with an Islamic name within the framework of Muslim political thought of the colonial period. Outside Pakistan the Jama'at has used its influence almost exclusively in the service of some of the most corrupt rulers ever to emerge in the world of Islam. The Jama'at's support of the Saudi regime and its support for the Pakistani rulers' time-honoured foreign policy of subservience to the United States are two sides of the same coin.

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52.   Maudoodi, *Movement for India's Independence and Muslim, op. cit.*, Vol. I.

No other 'Islamic party' in any other country has fared much better. Whatever the differences in their respective roles in different countries, as a generalization it is true that they have all failed to escape from the iron grip of subservience imposed through regional, racial and State nationalism. Every 'Islamic party' has ended up by operating within the Muslim political thought of the colonial period, which is an extension of the political thought of the western colonial powers; not one of the 'Islamic parties' has generated the threshold energy necessary to escape from the orbit of colonialism. The conclusion is inescapable: that the choice of the party structure itself is a departure from the political message of the Qur'an and the political method of the *Sunnah* of Muhammad, upon whom be peace. There cannot be a constitutional, electoral, democratic or peaceful reversal of a course of history that has been imposed on the *Ummah* by the force of arms of an hostile, alien civilization. Muslim political thought of the colonial period was rationalization of the necessity of submission to the west. The present political order in the Muslim world is a continuation of the colonial period through ruling classes that are submissive, dependent and subservient to the political power of global *kufr*.

This is a very significant qualitative change that has occurred within the last 50 years. The colonialism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was pursued by competing colonial powers in different parts of the world. In this era of so-called 'decolonization' the former colonial powers have transformed themselves into a single global power of *kufr*. Colonialism as global *kufr* is now more oppressive than direct colonialism had been. This power of global *kufr,* as we have repeatedly experienced in recent years, is primarily directed at Islam and the Muslim *Ummah.* The local agents of global *kufr* are the present rulers of Muslim nation-States. In the last 50 years, while colonialism has regrouped as *kufr* in a global united front against Islam, the world of Islam has further disintegrated into a heap of defeated, dismembered, weak and frightened nationalities.

In this dismal situation there was no obvious known alternative source from which the power of Islam could possibly emerge and make a significant impact on the global power of *kufr*. Even in relatively small areas, such as Palestine, where Muslims outnumbered their enemies by a large margin, *kufr* was able to impose its dominance. That zionism and its backers must prevail has been repeatedly and brutally made clear. All possible routes to the manifestation of Islam as effective political power were blocked. In their own

estimation the western powers and their Muslim allies felt certain that they had finally and successfully overcome Islam for all time to come, just as they had earlier overcome Christianity. In evidence they could point at their political, economic and cultural dominance of 'independent Islamic States'. They could also point out that all the 'Islamic parties' and *ulama* and *fuqaha* of the colonial period had also accepted the political ideas and ideals of the west. The west had locked and sealed all the doors; there was no way Islam could re-emerge in a significant political role on the stage of history. For all practical purposes Muslim societies were irrevocably trapped in the deterministic progression of history towards westernization and secularization. Some 'Islamic parties' and some thinkers and philosophers had tried to apply the brakes in futile 'reactionary' attempts to halt the course of history. But the die was cast and the end of Islam as a dominant civilization and culture had been achieved and secured in the neo-colonial order.

The global power of *kufr,* and the westernized ruling classes in Muslim nation-States, felt so sure of their ground that they launched a worldwide campaign to control the remaining influence of Islam as well. The lead was taken by the Saudi regime. The Saudis, taking full advantage of the physical location of the *haramain* in their kingdom, set up a vast Islamic bureaucracy in Makkah, Madinah and Riyadh under such names as Rabitah al-Alam al-Islami, Islamic University and Dar al-Ifta. Other regimes, all agents of *kufr,* joined in this show of 'Islamic solidarity'. They started holding Islamic conferences all over the world. They also set up a mini Islamic 'united nations'[53] and began to meet in 'Islamic summits' and conferences of 'Islamic foreign ministers'. Many well-meaning workers of the 'Islamic parties' were taken in by this sudden expansion of the Islamic circuit and the opportunities it offered. In Europe and North America the Saudis set up and financed 'Islamic organizations' that would support them as leaders of the Islamic world.[54] Many of these 'Islamic leaders' serving the Saudi monarchy's global Islamic pretensions are from the 'Islamic parties'. In this way Muslim political

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53. This is the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) which has an 'Islamic Secretariat' in Jeddah.

54. It is often pointed out that I, too, attended many of these conferences. Of course I did. But my attendance at these conferences was in pursuit of only one goal: to promote the setting up of the Muslim Institute in London. The contacts I made at these conferences were used exclusively to secure moral and material support and resources for the Muslim Institute. The Preparatory Committee of the Muslim Institute had come into being in 1972, and its *Draft Prospectus* was published in 1974. My first 'Islamic conference' was in Libya in July 1973. For an account of that conference, see my book *Towards a New Destiny*, Slough: The Open Press, 1974.

thought of the colonial period has extended its hold, through 'Islamic parties' and subservient *ulama* and their weak and dependent institutions, over the greater part of the Islamic hierarchy as well. Even in Iran the Shah's bureaucracy exercised enormous influence among the *ulama* of Qum and Mashhad.[55]

Even today, after allowing for the influence of the Islamic Revolution in Iran, it must be said that the dominant influence in the world remains that of the Muslim political thought of the colonial period. The Islamic Revolution in Iran has clearly freed Iran from the iron grip of colonial political thought. The early attempts at counter-revolution in Iran came from sources that wanted Iran to remain within the orbit of the colonial system. These attempts have been defeated but the feudal and capitalistic economic systems remain largely unaffected. So long as feudalism and capitalism remain, the back door to counter-revolution will be open. At present the electoral system in Iran is serving its purpose of bringing forward the *muttaqi* leadership in the representative institutions of the State. However, if feudalism and capitalism survive with large concentrations of wealth in few hands, it is conceivable that some day they will use their economic muscle to manipulate the electoral system and infiltrate the highest echelons of the new Islamic State.[56]

Be that as it may, the overriding and all-important fact about the Islamic Revolution in Iran is that its spiritual and intellectual roots lie entirely within Islam and entirely outside the influence of the colonial system and the body of ideas and institutions that represent the Muslim political thought of the colonial period. Before the Islamic Revolution in 1979 it was difficult to believe that there existed a source of Islamic leadership still not contaminated by the political ideas of the west. The separate and almost isolated development of Shi'i theology, theologians, their institutions and the emergence of *usuli* ulama actively engaged in *ijtihad* on contemporary issues has clearly produced both the ideas and the leadership that were necessary to challenge the domination of Muslim political thought of the colonial period and its institutions. The second most important source of the power of Islam is the Muslim masses. The Muslim masses, too, were largely uncontaminated by

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55. At the Islamic Thought Conference held in Tehran in February 1985 three of the leading *ulama* in the new order, the President Ali Khamanei, the head of the Islamic Propagation Organization, Ayatullah Jannati, and the speaker of the Majlis Hashemi Rafsanjani, openly said that the system of Islamic rule established in Iran was still not accepted by some Shi'i *ulama* and *maraje*.

56. In recent months, these fears have been expressed to me by many people in Iran.

the political thought of the colonial period. They responded to the emotions of nationalism on such occasions as the question of the ownership of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in 1951. Nationalist leaders in other parts of the world have also succeeded in temporarily mobilizing the masses against their patrons, the colonial powers. But at no time before had the Muslim masses in any part of the world been offered an Islamic leadership that was independent of Muslim monarchies as well as outside the political thought of the colonial period. In the Muslim masses of Iran the *ulama* also discovered a fathomless source of the power of Islam that had not been tapped by the Islamic movement before. This was in sharp contrast to the view Maulana Maudoodi took of the Muslim masses, regarding them as 'ignorant' and 'nominal Muslims'. The fusion of the *ulama* and the Muslim masses in Iran has produced the unique and invincible power of Islam that defeated the established regime, defeated the internal sources of counter-revolution, defeated external military and economic intervention, and is fighting a prolonged war against a confederacy of global and regional enemies. This unique power of Islam has also created a new State with a new constitution and a whole range of new Islamic institutions outside the framework of the political thought of the colonial period. Within a short period the Islamic Revolution has undone the system of domination so laboriously perfected by the colonial powers and their agents over three hundred years.

The critical breakthrough has been made. Two very rich sources of the power of Islam, the *ulama* and the masses, both outside the straitjacket of colonial political thought, have been discovered and brought together in much the same relationship as existed between the *muttaqi* leaders and the people in the Madinah of the Prophet and of the *khulafa al-rashidoon*. It was this political link of *taqwa* in the leadership and its reflection in the masses that had been fractured by the coming of monarchy to the house of Islam from the beginning of Umaiyyad rule in Damascus. The gulf between the rulers and the Muslim masses widened progressively throughout history. But, as Imam Khomeini pointed out in his comment on the passing of the Uthmaniyyah State, while the origin of political power, however deviant, was within the house of Islam there was always the chance of closing the gap. With the coming of colonialism, and especially the Muslim political thought born of colonialism, this gulf became unbridgeable. The 'Islamic parties' and other Islamic movements that tried to bridge the gulf failed and eventually ended up on the side of the ruling classes created by colonialism, with few or no links with the Muslim masses.

The great contribution of the Islamic Revolution in Iran is that this ever-widening gulf between the rulers and the ruled has been irrevocably bridged. This has been achieved by creating new centres of stability, excellence, power and *taqwa* from among the *ulama* and the people on the mainland of Islam and by sinking the island of *jahiliyyah* that had become attached to it, like a parasite, under the influence of colonialism.

I venture to suggest that the Islamic Revolution in Iran has followed an entirely new political concept and method in the history of Islamic movements. In Iran there is no assumption of at least partial excellence and 'Christian' affinity between the west and Islam: instead there is total rejection and no compromise on the basic issues of State and politics in Islam and in a Muslim society. In Iran there was no arrogance based on the assumption of excellence and knowledge on the part of the leaders and contempt for the 'ignorant' masses. Other 'Islamic parties' and movements assumed that the Muslim colonial elites, institutions and the 'democratic' political processes of the colonial period could be used or persuaded to become 'Islamic'; no such assumptions were made in Iran. In Iran the colonial elite, its institutions and procedures were all confronted, defeated, abolished and punished.

The fallen giant of Islam has risen again, at least in Iran, and the fear that this has instilled in the hearts of the global power of *kufr,* and among the Muslim agents of *kufr,* can be seen and felt everywhere. The political pygmies of colonialism are preparing to fight Islam yet again. Islam had to fight its way out of the Hijaz 1,400 years ago and it will have to fight its way back on the stage of history now. The new political power of Islam that is represented by the Islamic State of Iran, has to infuse its strength into the rest of the *Ummah,* bypassing the rulers and the colonial elites, and reaching the *ulama* and the Muslim masses directly.