Chapter – 7

Maulana Mawdudi’s views On Composite Nationalism and Two Nation Theory

The Muslims of the sub-continent were grousing in dark between 1925-1940, after the failure of khilafat movement, till the ‘Resolution for Pakistan’ was passed. During this period they were leaderless and had no common goal or manifesto. Leading Muslim intellectual like Mawlana Azad had joined Congress and the Ulama like Mufti Kifayatullah, Mawlana Ahmed Sayeed, Mawlana Hussain Ahmed Madani of Jamiat-i Ulama-i Hind supported the Congress. Ubaidullah sindhi believed that Western Nationalism would emancipate the Muslims. The Hijrat movement had failed. Muhammed Ali Jinnah who was proclaimed as the ambassador of ‘Hindu Muslim unity’, had migrated to London due to the prevailing circumstances and deep depression. Later Muslims realizing his organizational capacities invited him back. He, therefore, returned to India in 1934 and successfully revived the Muslim League. It was under his leadership the ‘Resolution for Pakistan’ was passed at Lahore in 1940. By then Muslims were divided in two camps, one was with the Muslim league and the other with the congress.

During the struggle of the freedom movement, the most important issue which concerned Mawdudi was about the national and religious identity of Indian Muslims and their position in the
future India. The thought which was haunting the mind of Mawdudi was whether the liberation of the country from the clutches of British Raj will bring religious, cultural and national freedom to the Muslims. Whether the Muslims will be a part of government after independence. If a democratic, national states, a state without religion is established, then what will be the status of Islam and Muslims. We must try to establish a *Dar al-Islam*, if not a full fledged *Dar al-Islam*, at least in free India where Muslims have independency to carry out their religious, social, cultural and economic affairs themselves with governing authority. Which he called a state within state. He presented three outlines for future India, i.e., International Federation, Cultural Zones and Transfer of population within specified period and partition of the country. He neither had faith in a ‘Composite Nationalism’\(^1\) proposed by the Congress nor Muslim Nationalism as proposed by the Muslim league. As a Muslim intellectual, Mawdudi, had his own view point. He was of the view that neither composite nationalism nor Muslim nationalism are Islamic in their orientation, therefore, he warned the Muslims of the sub-continent to be beware of both. Though he was not fully into politics but as a Muslim intellectual, he proposed for the Muslims of the sub-continent the Islamic concept. We, therefore, need to examine Mawdudi’s views on Nationalism, Composite Nationalism, Muslim Nationalism and the Two Nations Theory.

\(^1\) The purpose of composite nationalism or Indian nationalism was to unite all communities into one. The other purpose was to erase their religious identity, so that they become one with the rest. The purpose was to finish their language, script, dress, culture and civilization, so that the all become one with each other.
During Freedom struggle of India the most significant political problem was of ‘Nationalism’. During the days of freedom struggle the terms ‘Nation’, ‘Nationality’ and ‘Nationalism’ were abundantly used but there was hardly any clarity about its meaning. The Congress leadership believed that all people living in India would constitute one Nation and the people belong to different religious minorities would constitute sects but their rights would be guaranteed. To promote Indian Nationalism the Indian National Congress launched two schemes. One was the educational scheme called the Wardha scheme and the Vidya Mandir scheme the second called ‘Muslim mass contact movement’. The aim of Congress was to unite all Indians irrespective of their cast, creed, region and religion, in order to achieve Puran Swaraj or Complete Independence from the British Crown.²

Mawlana Abul Kalam Azad, a well-known intellectual of the late 19th and early part of 20th century preached the concept of Hindu Muslim unity through his generals Al-Hilal and Al-Balagh. After the failure of Khilafat movement he advised the Indian Muslims to join Indian National Congress. He was appointed as the president of All India Congress Committee. Maulana Mawdudi, who held Azad in high esteem initially and considered him to be the successor of Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi and Shah Ismail was stunned at this call of Azad. He called it as the greatest tragedy of this century.³

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Azad championed composite nationalism as a political counter part of religious universalism and as a political substitute of the older universal pan-Islamism as against Iqbal’s concept of separate state for the Muslims. The majority of Muslim people supported the views of Iqbal and Jinnah but the Ulama of Deoband agreed with Azad. Iqbal’s political thought became the main inspiration of the Pakistan movement and that of Azad the rallying point of Muslims towards ‘Composite Nationalism’ in India especially after 1947. From his rigidly traditional positions, Azad departed in 1920 after the failure of the Khilafat movement and found a basis for the political alliance with Indian National Congress. Azad had two main arguments against the creation of Pakistan. Firstly, he favored the role of a powerful diaspora of the Muslims in India and secondly, he considered the separation of India as harmful for Muslims of the sub-continent in the long run. He was also opposed to unitary government for the whole of India. In 1946, he favored a federal constitution with a weak center and provinces holding residuary powers.  

Azad sought the basis of his political alliance with Indian National Congress, on the basis of the following Quranic verses and the Mithaq-i Madinah:

“Serve Allah, my people for you have no god but Him”.  

The Mithaq-i Madinah contains the following clause, i.e., the Jews of Bani Awf will be a part of the Muslim ummah. The Holy

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5 7:59, 65, 85.
Prophet (PBUH) said, due to an agreement between the Jews and the Muslims, they will be considered as one ummah and therefore, there will be no discrimination between them. According to Maulana Mawdudi, it was a time bound agreement for the sake of a military alliance. Therefore, it will be improper to refer to it as composite culture as it is used in the present day political terminology.

He found that the convent between Prophet Mohammed and the people of Madinah included Jews and Pagans, where in Muslims as well as non-Muslims parties were described as a single community. Azad’s conversion to Indian Nationalism was final and irrevocable and he continued to identify himself with congress until the end.

Mawdudi, was bitterly critical of the concepts of Composite and territorial Nationalism, proposed by Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madani in his work Mutthida Qawmiyat aur Islam. Mawdudi writes that Moulana Hussain Ahmad, convincently ignores the role and struggle of Jamaluddin Afgani, Mohammed Abduh, Mohammed Ali, Shaukat Ali, Iqbal and Azad who raced a banner of revolt against Europe when it was dividing the Muslims on the basis of race, language and nationality.6

The Jamiyyat al-Ulama, the religio-political organization of Muslims divines, established in 1919 also held similar political views. Rasheed Ahmed Gangohi, one of the founder members of the Deoband seminary criticized Sir Syed Ahmed Khan’s Islamic

6 Tahrik-i Azadi Hind Awr Musalman, vol.1 pp.316. See also Masala-i Qawmiat, p. 84.
separatism and approved political association of Muslims with Hindu’s as early as 1888 with certain qualifications. Mahmud al-Hasan, his disciple had committed himself more firmly to an alliance with the Congress. By 1927, Jamiyyat-al Ulama had fully committed itself to Azad’s theory of composite nationalism. Later this theory was also supported by Anwar shah and Hussain Ahmed Madani who migrated to Hijaz. Between 1940- 47 the Ulama of Deoband and Jamiyyat al –Ulama Hind vehemently opposed the Pakistan movement.\(^7\)

Initially Maulana Mawdudi opposed Indian Nationalist stand of Madani, also of the Deoband Ulama and the Pakistan movement between 1937-47. He established Jammat-i-Islami in 1941 and assumed its leadership. The Jammat was a disciplined organization with its units in every state of the union. Basically a religious organization which discusses the socio-economic and political issues.

In fact the establishment of the Jammat-i Islami was due to the wide ranging debate on the political future of the India in the 1930’s. Mawdudi too like the other participants in this debate, wanted freedom: “To put an end to the British rule is absolutely necessary, rather obligatory. No true Muslim can reconcile himself to slavery.”\(^8\) He too was committed to democracy: “No sane person can oppose democracy per se, and say that India should opt for monarchy,

\(^7\) Islamic Modernism in India- Pakistan pp. 186-194.
\(^8\) Siyasi Kashmakash, Vol 1, pp 27-28 See also Tahirik-i Azadi Hind Awr Musalman, vol.1 pp. 323.
autocracy or any other form of government.\textsuperscript{9} The areas where Mawdudi differed with others was the way of life in free India, the values on which it’s culture was to be based, especially the place of Divine Guidance in it. Should freedom mean only a change of hands, i.e., the natives replacing the aliens, or should it usher a good society, questions Mawdudi. The good society, said Mawdudi, cannot be visualized by mere imitation of the west and whole sale adoption of western civilization.\textsuperscript{10}

Mawdudi, criticizes Hussain Ahmad Madani’s concept that Nations are born out of territorial boundaries. He questions the validity of his statement by citing the examples of U.S.A. Do the blacks, the red-Indian and the White constitute a White Nation? Do the Germans and Jews constitute a nation? It is a fact that people of other countries would refer to the black and white as Americans. However, both blacks and white are two different nations and not one. Likewise writes, Mawdudi the Hindus, the Muslims, the Sikh, the Christians and the Zoroastrians living in India, cannot constitute one nation. They are different.\textsuperscript{11}

Around the same time Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madani, president of Darul Uloom Deoband, in his work \textit{Muttahidah Qawmiyat awr Islam} supported the concepts of secularism and composite Nationalism as projected by the Congress party.\textsuperscript{12} Mawdudi writes that Maulana Hussain Ahmad’s contention that the

\textsuperscript{9} \textit{Siyasi Kashmakash}, Vol 1, p 204.
\textsuperscript{10} \textit{Siyasi Kashmakash}, Vol 1, pp. 176-208.
\textsuperscript{11} \textit{Masla-i Qawmiyat}, pp.77-85. See also \textit{Tahrik-i Azadi Hind Awr Musalman}, vol.1 pp.315-316.
\textsuperscript{12} \textit{Masla-i Qawmiyat}, pp.81-87.
Holy Prophet had signed a packet between Muslims and Jews based on which, Maulana, propagated a bond between Hindus and Muslims in India is not correct because the term used was in the packet was *millat*. It was a temporary military alliances which was over after three years. Therefore, Mawdudi writes, that comparing the *Mithaq-i Madina* with composite Nationalism is absolutely wrong. Mawdudi was also critical of Moulana’s equation of the councils, the boards, the district boards, the educational association with composite nationality, in which Muslims not only participate but strive hard for its membership. Mawdudi, writes that for the sake of major sin, a minor sin cannot be permitted. The severity of the sin manifolds when the majority in power is of non-Muslims.\(^{13}\)

Territorial Nationalism means, when a person in his personal capacity whether Muslim, Hindu or Sikh is not prevented from obtaining the Nationality. To achieve this, efforts shall be made to bring people together by means of common culture, habits, mentality, and style of living. Efforts should be made to evolve a common goal, a common culture and collective behavior. To attain this the Wardha and the Vidya Mandir schemes were started by the congress.\(^{14}\)

Mufti Kifayatullah, President of *Jamiat-i Ulama* writes that Moulana Mawdudi has strong evidence in support of his argument, therefore, there is no need of a further debate and

\(^{13}\) *Masla-i Qawmiyat*, pp.95-96 See also *Tahrir-i Azadi Hind Awr Musalman*, vol.1 pp.324-325, 322.

\(^{14}\) *Masla-i Qawmiyat*, pp.101-105 See also *Tahrir-i Azadi Hind Awr Musalman*, vol.1 pp.328-331.
Mawdudi, was not against patriotism and freedom movement. Like Iqbal he was against nationalism (watan parasti). He said the concept of territorial nationalism is against the spirit of Islam. He believed that to worship the country and to hold the land, rivers, mountains are forbidden. To hold them sacred is not only wrong but prohibited. The love of the country is but natural, but one cannot sacrifice religion and faith in the name of the love of the country. Mawdudi was keen that Muslim shall not fall prey to such un-Islamic view.

Mawlana Mawdudi, no doubt criticized the concept of Nationalism but supported the two nation theory presented earlier by Iqbal. Mawdudi, presents a more logical argument in favor of two nation theory when compared with his contemporaries. He writes that despite the fact that Hindus and Muslims have lived with each other for the last 700 years, yet their habits, culture, emotions and feelings are quite different. For instance a thing which is sacred in the eyes of Hindus is quite the opposite in the eyes of the Muslims. He further writes that in all festivals and day to day ceremonies from the day of birth till the day of death, the Hindus celebrate their festivals with Hindus and likewise Muslims with Muslim. Mawdudi writes that Muslims are discriminated in every aspect of economic sphere which includes, jobs, industry, agriculture etc. They are not

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15 Mufti Kifayatullah (1875-1953), was a jurist of high rank. His fatawa were published regularly in al-Jamiat. As a president of the Jamiat-i Ulama-i Hind, he defended Maulana Mawdudi and went on to say that there is no point in defending something which is undefendable. Ishtiyaq Hussain Qurashi, Ulama in politics pp. 351-352

given their due representation in state assemblies, municipal committees, local and district boards. Mawdudi, further writes on the basis of different circular issued by different officers, Vandemataram and slogans of Jai Ram Ji Ki are pronounced in schools. Cow slaughter is banned and many such other orders would lead to the formation of a Hindu state. Mawdudi, concludes by saying that under these circumstances it is difficult to even imagine that Hindus and Muslims who are ideologically pools apart would subscribe to the composite nationalism. Mawdudi, further writes that the Muslims constitute an ummah or a nation, which has a distinct moral, ethical, social, economic and political system. Therefore, Hindus and Muslims theoretically and practically are two different nations and are pools apart.  

Mawdudi, also criticized the Muslims League’s concept of Muslim nationalism. He writes that Muslim League leadership is western oriented but being Muslims they are also interested in Islam. The League leaders have borrowed their political views from Western sources, but being Muslims, whatever they want to project they do it under the banner of Islam. They neither have the knowledge of Islam nor the wisdom, therefore, their thinking, acts and deeds are at variance. The result is the mix-up of the western political theories with Islamic terminology, therefore, their path is like the path of those who are the champions of composite nationalism.

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nationalism. The concept of Muslim league is totally at variance with the concept of Islam in the following aspects writes Mawdudi: their speeches, their resolutions, their writings clearly indicate that their concept of ‘Muslim Nation’ is to unite the Muslims against the Hindus to protect their national interest. As the freedom fighters united against the British to obtain independence, the champions of Muslim league have targeted the Hindus by uniting the Muslims against them. As a result of this Islam and Muslims have became a party to it and are being targeted. Therefore, the Hindus consider the Muslims as their political and economical rivals. This has created an adverse impact and has become a great impediment in the programs of the Muslim community in the sub-continent.  

Mawdudi, points out the contradictions in the theory of Muslim nation as propounded by the leaders of the Muslim League. He writes that the Western concept of economy and polity which they present are out rightly contrary to the Islamic concepts. On the one hand they talk of a government. Based on Islamic concepts but cite and favor such Muslim governments and nations which are basically un-Islamic. They define the principals of Islamic economy but favor the western principles; they talk of the government of God on the one hand but favor the establishment of their government on secular and democratic pattern on the other. Lastly they express great pride over the medieval Muslim kingdom and culture and its

protection but extends support to those who are responsible for its destruction. Most of the persons who are instrumental in virtually running the party, i.e. Muslim league have no idea of Islamic state, then how can one expect from such a party that it would implement an Islamic order in their proposed Pakistan.²⁰

Maulana Mawdudi, writes that it is also essential to examine their methodology through which they want to establish an Islamic state. They are of the view that in such of those province in which Muslims are in majority they would initially establish Muslim government by applying the British secular constitution and after Muslim gain power, it would slowly transit and implement the Islamic government. Mawdudi, outrightly rejects this viewpoint of Muslim league and cite the examples of Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Egypt and questions have they succeeded in established a Islamic state. Mawdudi, thus conclude by writing that it is altogether different to be Muslim by birth or simply by the term and to be a Muslim whose aim of life and goal is to be practically a Muslim in every sphere of his/her life. Muslims who are devoid of Islam ethically, morally and spiritually and who are Muslims simply by birth will not be able to establish a *Hukumat-i Ilahiah*.²¹

Mawdudi, writes, “as a Muslim it does not concern me that in India where ever Muslims are in majority, they will be able to form the government, what concerns me utmost is whether in Pakistan the foundation of the government would be on the basis of

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Gods sovereignty or a western concept of manmade democracy”. If it is on the earlier basis, it will definitely be a Pakistan but if it on the latter then it is no Pakistan. Mawdudi writes, if Pakistan is established in the latter pattern then, Muslims would perform such duties and functions which are performed by the non-Muslims. Instead of Ram Das, Abdullah Khudai is holding the fort, still it is not Islam. Mawdudi, writes that this Muslim Nationalism is as harmful as the Indian Nationalism.22

He called upon the people to consider these basic issues. He reminded the Muslims that the real character was, that of party, which has a world outlook adhere to certain moral standards, and bears a message for humanity. Islam, he emphasized was not a cultural tradition in which one is born but it requires conscious believe in world view involving one’s behavior in every walk of life, to qualify as a Muslim. Anyone could become a Muslim, irrespective of his parentage, domicile, race, color or language. The way of life that Islam preaches could not be tied down to degenerate Muslims society and it’s so called National interest.23 He further writes that Islamic party must be truly universal in its approach. He writes, “We regard our problems, as the problem of life of all human being, and we offer in the light of the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of his Prophet such solutions to these problems as we would ensure will bring prosperity for all.24

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