CHAPTER-4
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4.1. Introductions

The ancient and medieval politics in India, as politics everywhere else, were based on economic and political interests and not on religious considerations. Though there were frequent fights between the sovereign kings and rulers, they accepted each other’s religion and culture. The invasion of Muslims, however, caused some antagonism among Hindus and Muslims. At the same time, Sultanate era also saw rise of Bhakti and Sufi Movement which bounded several religions together. Sectarianism and theocracy was common during entire Sultanate and Mughal era. The actions of rulers were largely driven by their personal greed for power and wealth. Rulers as well as rebels used religious appeals as an outer colouring to disguise the play of material interests and ambitions. The Indian Hindus and Muslims shared some dissimilarity of religion and culture. The differences were even not much openly recognisable and concern of the common people. The majority of Indians lived in rural areas and were aloof from such influences and hence overall peoples of different faith coexisted peacefully without any openly organised bitterness for centuries. The religion had been an important part of their lives and they had sometimes quarrelled over religion, there was hardly any communal ideology or communal politics before the 1870s.

Though Hindus and Muslims followed different religions, their economic and political interests were not different from each other. Hindus were divided from fellow Hindus, and Muslims from fellow Muslims, by language, culture, caste, class, social status, food and dress habits, social practices and so on. Even socially and culturally the Hindu and the Muslim masses had developed common ways of life. A Bengali Muslim and a Bengali Hindu had much more in common than a Bengali Muslim and a Punjabi Muslim had. Their interactions and inter-relations led to the growth of tolerant composite culture. It was with British arrival and their policies, misunderstanding and communal discord among them began to take shape. The Hindu-Muslim communalism is described as the legacy of British rule particularly of the time period of freedom struggle. The communal problem therefore is not much old. It was more politically motivated than religiously oriented. The founding fathers of the communal triangle in modern India were the British rulers, who were neither the friends of the Muslims nor Hindus but in reality the foes of
both the communities. Moreover, Hindus and the Muslims were being equally and jointly oppressed and exploited by the British.

India’s Muslims are as varied in language, culture and socio-economic conditions as the Hindus. There is little in common between the Muslims in Uttar Pradesh and the Muslims in Kerala or in Assam or in Jammu and Kashmir. Their unifying factor is religion. This is also their marked differentiation from other communities despite the fact that in many of the areas particularly in south India their language, culture and many other things are similar and undistinguishable from their Hindu brethrens. A Tamil Muslim shares much more culturally with a Tamil Hindu than with Muslim of any other part of India. Though over 12.12 per cent of Indians are Muslims, only about 5 per cent speak Urdu, and all those who speak Urdu are not Muslims. Today, the Muslims constitute the second largest religious community in India. Majority of the populace is Hindu.

Communalism emerged as a result of the emergence of modern politics based on the people and on their participation and mobilization. It made it necessary to have wider links and loyalties among the people and to form new identities. This process required the birth and spread of modern ideas of nation, class and cultural-linguistic identity. Quite often people used the old, familiar pre-modern identity of caste, locality, sect and religion to grasp the new reality, to make wider connections and to evolve new identities. But gradually the new, modern and historically-necessary identities of nation, nationality and class have prevailed.

In particular, religious consciousness was transformed into communal consciousness in some parts of the country and among some sections of the people. Hindus and Muslims had fought shoulder to shoulder during the Revolt of 1857. In fact, after the suppression of the Revolt to check the growth of a unity among different communities they decided to follow the policy of divide and rule to divide the people along religious lines, encouraging communal and separatist tendencies in Indian politics. The colonial government treated Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs as separate communities.

British for their selfish motive promoted divisions in India but their act is/was not solely responsible for generating communalism in Indian society. It was the top most leaders of
the Indian National Congress (INC), the Muslim League (ML), Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and many communal organisations who were responsible for communalism. The reasons given for this change of tempo are very diverse. Some scholars still hold to more or less versions of the divide and rule. Discussions of the causes of religious and communal riots always run into severe problems of logic and method. It is important to avoid the danger of assuming that whenever Hindus and Muslims were in conflict, a significant number of people recognise these events in ‘communal’ terms. Certainly, it is not justifiable but becomes very difficult to avoid.

Ram Puniyani argues that in India there existed two types of communalism. The dominating one is Hindu communalism and other one is Muslim communalism. After examining the Hindu communalism in the previous chapter, it becomes necessary to analyse Muslim communalism also. Muslim communalism has acquired its communal shape basically in an effective way in the period of colonial rule under the banner of the Muslim League (ML). Thus Muslim communalism is examined one by one in different historical periods.

4.2. In Early Medieval India

Though India was/is a land of multi-religions, creeds and faiths, it was not plagued by the worm of communalism. There existed religious divisions. They were not communally organised and divided. The religion of Muslim that is the Islam in India has historically been represented by both its mysterious form of Sufism as well as its various exoteric traditional forms. Enter-community relations were largely cordial and peaceful. Some religious riots had taken place but to contextualise them in the communal terms appear not justifiable. However the Muslim invasion and the patronage of Muslim rulers to the people of their own religious faith have some elements religious/communalism parochialism during the medieval period. The Mughal rulers exploited communal feelings as a mode of competition among the various communities through the Mansabdari system for extension of their empire.1 However, the decline in Muslim

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political power in India from the late eighteenth century onward changed Muslim attitudes significantly. After the demise of the Mughal Empire, Islamic fundamentalism increased. Muslim elites, seeing a decline in their power, prestige and influence, focused on ways to revive their ascendancy. This generated in India’s Muslim elites a preoccupation with the revival of their lost glory, which has been an important factor in the rise and spread of Islamist ideology the world over.²

4.3. The extension of Muslim Communalism during the colonial period

In the beginning Muslims viewed the British rule in India as alien to Islamic culture and tradition. They however fought the first war of Independence of 1857 jointly with Hindus by projecting the last Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zaffar as their ruler/leader. Some believe/d that a major factor in the growth of communalism in India was/is the existence of several religions in it. It is not true that communalism arise/d inevitably in a multi-religious society. The religion as a belief system, which people follow as a part of their personal belief and the ideology of a religion-based socio-political identity, that is communalism is distinguished. Both are one and same. Religion is not the cause of communalism, nor is communalism inspired by religion. Religion comes into communalism to the extent that it serves politics arising in non-religious spheres. Communalism has been rightly described as political trade in religion. What is significant is that along with the rise of nationalist fervour among Indian people, communalism too made its appearance around the end of the nineteenth century posing serious threat to the unity of the people and the national movement. In nineteenth and twentieth century India witnessed, on the one hand, the rise of the Indian national movement and, on the other, the growth of religious revivalist organizations among both Hindus and Muslims. The Arya Samaj (Aryan Society) was established in 1875 to promote Hindu reformation and to reconvert Hindus who had been lost to Islam. Calls for Shuddhi (purification) and Sangathan (organization) among the Hindus prompted Muslim organizations to call for tanzim (organization) and tablīgh (evangelism).³


³ Haqqani, “India’s Islamist Groups.”
This rise of Muslim separatism was rooted both in the north Indian Muslim response to the loss of political power and Hindu resurgence. This was to some extent due to the relative backwardness of the Muslims in education, trade and industry. The educational backwardness of the Muslims had more harmful consequence. Since modern education was essential for entry into government service or the professions, the Muslims lagged behind non-Muslims in governmental jobs. Moreover, the British government had consciously discriminated against the Muslims after 1858, holding them largely responsible for the Revolt of 1857. Muslim upper classes which consisted mostly of zamindars and aristocrats during the first 70 years of the nineteenth century were very anti-British, conservative and hostile to modern education. Shah Waliullah of Delhi sowed the seeds of Muslim separatism in eighteenth century, which gradually grew into a large tree with the help of a number of Islamic organisations/institutions. Prominent among them are Indian Union Muslim League (ML) (1906), Tablig-e-Jamaat (1911), Jamaat-e-Ulma-e-Hind (1919), Jamaat-e-Islami (1941) and All India Muslim Majlis-e-Mushawarat (1964). They are recognised as have been in forefront in keeping the movement of Muslim separatism alive at the cost of the social and emotional integration of the two major religious communities in the country. The Shuddhi and Sangathan movements among the Hindus and the Tabligh and Tanzim religious movement among the Muslims had invoked religious revivalism.

Another standard bearer of Muslim communalism was the Aligarh movement of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, an outstanding intellectual of India. Sir Syed’s thoughts are linked with the strengthening of the consciousness and corporate will of the Indian Muslims with the wider advancement of Islam. In the beginning of nationalist/independence movement, Sir Syed was opposed the communal politics. Instead he raised the demand for special treatment for the Muslims in the matter of government service. Till 1880

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4 Ian Talbot, *A History of Modern South Asia: Politics, States, Diasporas* (Yale University Press, 2016), https://books.google.co.in/books?id=sXsmCwAAQBAJ&pg=PT109&lpg=PT109&dq=rise+of+Muslim+separatism+was+rooted+both+in+the+loss+of+political+power+and+Hindu+resurgence.+Its+standard+bearer+was+Sir+Syed+Ahmad+Khan&source=bl&ots=ayLWZw-lg&sig=il-

cZND3vCF56T6BgeGR8zJa&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwif5e25m9TYAhURSo8KHXHZDUYQ6AEIKDAA#v=onepage&q=rise%20of%20Muslim%20separatism%20was%20rooted%20in%20both%20loss%20of%20political%20power%20and%20Hindu%20resurgence%20of%20Sir%20Syed%20Ahmad%20Khan&f=false (Retrieved on January 13, 2018).


communal consciousness as a driving force was absent both in the Hindus and the Muslims. Sir Syed, announced in 1884, “Do you, not inhabit this land? Are you not buried in it or cremated on it? Surely, you live and die in the same land. Remember that Hindus and Muslims are religious term. Otherwise Hindus, Muslims and Christians who live in this country are by virtue of this fact one Qauam (nation or community).” At another occasion he opined that “We (Hindus and Muslims) eat the same crop, drink water from the same rivers and breathe the same air. As a matter of fact Hindus and Muslims are two eyes of the beautiful bride that is Hindustan. Weakness of anyone of them will spoil the beauty of the Bride (Dulhan).” What changed him later is said to be the political situation which he perceived us going to be anti-Muslims. The domination and resurgence of nationalism in the form of Hinduism was considered the cause of change.

Some sections of the Hindu communalists used religion as the mobilizing factor for their selfish interests. Till the founding of Indian National Congress (INC), he used to believe in the oneness of Indians, that is the Hindus and Muslims. The establishment of the Indian National Congress (INC) in 1885 sowed the seeds of uncertainty and made him view the Congress as a Hindu body, whose major objectives were against the Muslim interest. Side by side Hindu communalism also began demanding and echoing. From the 1870s, a section of Hindu zamindars, moneylenders and middle-class professionals began to arouse anti-Muslim sentiments. They talked and wrote about the ‘tyrannical’ Muslim rule in the medieval period and the liberating role of the British in saving Hindus from Muslim oppression. In Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, they took up, correctly, the question of Hindi, but gave it a communal twist, declaring, totally un-historically, that Urdu was the language of Muslims and Hindi of Hindus.

They also started a movement for banning cow slaughter. All over India, anti - cow slaughter propaganda was undertaken in the early 1890s. The campaign was, however, primarily directed not against the British but against Muslims; the British cantonments, for example, were left free to carry on cow slaughter on a large scale. The Punjab Hindu Sabha was founded in 1909 attacked the Congress for trying to unite Indians into a

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7 Bipin Chandra, Communalism in Modern India (New Delhi: Har Anand Publication, 2008), 112.
single nation. They opposed the Congress’ anti-imperialist politics. Instead, they argued that Hindus should placate the foreign government in their fight against Muslims. One of its leaders Lai Chand declared that a Hindu should believe that he was “a Hindu first and an Indian later.” The All India Hindu Mahasabha founded in 1915 spearheaded the activities of the Hindu communalists. Tilak’s propagation of the Shivaji and Ganapati festivals, Aurobindo Ghosh’s semi-mystical concept of India as mother and nationalism as a religion further contributed to increase in communal tendencies.

Like the British colonialists, the communal historians attacked the notion of a composite culture in India. The Hindu communal view of history was mythological projected as Indian society and culture had reached great, ideal heights in the ancient period from which they fell into permanent and continuous decay during the medieval period because of Muslim rule and domination denying the basic contribution of the medieval period to the development of Indian economy and technology, religion and philosophy, arts and literature, culture and society, and fruits, vegetables and dress was denied. They also emphasized ancient Indian culture to the exclusion of medieval Indian culture identifying Indian culture and the Indian nation with the Hindu religion and Hindus. In addition, the communal view of history was spread through poetry, drama, historical novels and short stories, newspapers and popular magazines, children’s magazines, pamphlets and, above all, orally through the public platform, classroom teaching, socialisation through the family and private conversation.

In fact, this all was against the spirit of their (Muslim) religion, and they could not be expected to associate with these and other similar activities. Nor could Muslims be expected to respond with full enthusiasm when they saw Shivaji or Pratap being hailed not merely for their historical roles but also as ‘national’ leaders who fought against the foreigners described as Muslims. In this environment the changed face of Sir Syed advocated that “India where caste distinctions still flourish, where there is no fusion of various races, where religious distinctions are still violent.... here the larger community would totally over ride the interest of smaller community.” This argument was to be a major element in communal ideology and politics from 1906 onwards. The separatist and loyalist tendencies among a section of the educated Muslims and the big Muslim

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9 Chandra, Communalism, 112.
nawabs and landlords reached a climax in 1906 with the creation of All India Muslim League (AIML) by the leadership of Aga Khan, the Nawab of Dhaka, and Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk. Founded as a loyalist, communal and conservative political organization, instead of opposing British colonialism, it supported the partition of Bengal, demanded special safeguards for the Muslims in government services and later securing and accepting the demand for separate electorates with the help of Lord Minto. It also began preached that the interests of Muslims were different from those of Hindus. The political activities of the League were directed less against the colonialists and more towards Hindus and the Congress. It thus played into the hands of the British becoming one of the main instruments with which the British hoped to fight the rising nationalist movement and to keep away the Muslims from joining the national movement.

Another cause of growth in Muslim communalism is related to economic and culture development in the country. The Muslim community on account of its orthodox attitude towards modern education and values is itself held responsible for its economic and social backwardness. The poor Muslim masses were misguided by some of their leaders for their vested political interest misguide theme by saying: “what India needs for social justice is communal and caste polarisation for an ultimate conflict.”

Hamza Alvi in this regards points out that in actuality Muslims feared that in an Independent India they could not compete with the majority community and obtain important government positions. Feeding on these sentiments they mobilised the Muslim community in the name of religion which induced by Hindu communalism guided both the communities to the path of separatism and ultimately to partition. This communal divide ultimately resulted in the partition of the nation.

Ram Puniyani also argues that formation of All India Muslim League (AIML) stood for the interest of Muslim landlords and Nawabs. He further says that with the advancement of modern education, industries, and new means of transport and communication, there took place the rise of new classes, while the old feudal classes and princes continued their existence. These two groups of classes threw up different politics during the freedom movement. It is not an accident that feudal elements were leaders of both Hindu and Muslim communal forces. The competition of

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10 Misra, “communalism,” 99
Muslim Communalists put forward this argument at an All India scale in the name of preventing Hindus from exercising effective power and permanent domination over minority Muslims, while Hindu Communalist repeated the same almost word for word in the provinces where Muslims constituted the majority. To put to practice, the Agha Khan III, who led Simla Deputation to Lord Minto, 1906 played a pivotal role. This Deputation consisted of 35 leading Muslim leaders from all parts of British India. This was considered as the first all-India Muslim gathering under his leadership which was representative of all the provinces, regions and parts of British India. In his memorandum he presented the Muslim demands of grant of separate electorates to the Muslims under the new reforms and pleaded permission from the British Government to allow the Muslims of India to form their own political party. Lord Minto, in his address, responded positively and promised to redress the Muslim demands under the new reforms. His point of emphasis was that the adoption democratic representative institutions to Indian social, religious and political conditions were likely to place Muslims interest “at the mercy of an unsympathetic majority.” The logic of this position inexorably led to separation and secession. To support these arguments Muslim Communalists of the time preferred and supported British rule and driven to adopt the Pakistan ideal.

The Independence struggle continued to face the communalist forces from the communities who were gradually gaining strength and organisation. They made determined bid to frustrate the efforts of the communalists. The announcement of communal award of 1932 which included the demands embodied in 1927 Delhi proposals and Jinnah’s 14 points of 1929 further bolstered the communalists. From 1937 India witnessed the extreme communalism of both the Muslims and the Hindus. The Congress formed ministries in five provinces and it refused to cooperate with Muslim League (ML) therefore in 1938, M.A. Jinnah, in his presidential address of the League announced “The High Command of the Congress is determined, absolutely determined to crush all other communities and cultures in this country and establish Hindu raj in the

13 Ibid, 91.
14 Chandra, Communalism, 111.
15 Aga Khan, after Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, played a leading role not only in strengthening the political role of the Muslims of the subcontinent, but the cause of Pakistan movement also. He was in close liaison with the Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, who is largely held as the founder of Pakistan in all the critical moments of the separatist movement.
16 Chandra, Communalism, 112-113.
In 1940, addressing the students of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) he pointed out that “Mr. Gandhi’s hope is to subjugate and visualize the Muslims under a Hindu Raj.” By 1941, he announced that “Pakistan is not only a practical goal but the only goal if you want to save Islam from complete annihilation in this country.” Finally, in 1946, while asking the Muslims to vote for the League, he declared if we fail to realize our duty today you will be reduced to the status of Sudras and Islam will be vanquished from India.” The Muslim communalists launched a vicious campaign against Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad and Khan Abdul Gafar Khan who openly opposed the idea separation as the stooges of the nationalist Hindus.

To counter the Muslim communalism V.D. Savarkar of the Hindu Mahasabha and M.S. Golwarkar of the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS) led the extreme communalists of the Hindus. In 1937, Savarkar announced that Muslims “want to brand the forehead of the Hindu down and other non-Muslim sections of the Hindustan with a stamp of self-humiliation and Muslim domination” and “to induce the Hindus to the position of helots in their own land.”

In 1938, he reiterated and affirmed “we Hindus are (already) reduced to the veritable helots throughout our land.” M.S. Golwalkar in 1939 declared that if minority demands were accepted, Hindu national life runs the risk of being shattered and he attacked the nationalists for “hugging to our bosom our most inveterate enemies (Muslims) and thus endangering our very existence.” Thus both the Hindu and Muslim extremists tried to play on the fears and suspicious of majority and minority and raised the cry of ‘Hinduism in danger’ and ‘Islam in danger’ or Hindu culture and Islamic culture in danger. This creation of hatred proved harmful to both the Hindus and the Muslims in the end and thousands lost their lives in the communal holocaust which followed.

In this atmosphere of extreme communalism the British added fuel to the fire. However the British colonialists assured that they would grant Dominion status to India immediately after the war. This announcement made the Muslim League (ML) to press for a separate homeland for Muslims in 1940. The then president of Jamaat-al-Ulma, Mulana Hussain Ahmad Madni, known for his anti-partition ideas favoured territorial

nationalism\textsuperscript{18} in opposition to the separation of the nation on communal lines. He believed that fundamental institution of contemporary political life was the territorial state and India is indeed such a state. For the communalist Muslims, the ideal remained in an Islamic state and universal Islamic revolution and the Hindu nationalists, on the other hand, embraced the ideology of Hindutva.\textsuperscript{19} Asghar Ali Engineer argues that the Muslim League (ML) which claimed to be the sole representative of Indian Muslims rejected the concept of composite nationalism and advanced the theory of religious nationalism. In fact this idea of religious nationalism was mooted for the first time an Indian subcontinent. It was never mooted before anywhere else in the world.\textsuperscript{20} The demand for separate Muslim homeland was clearly crafted and put forward. The British Viceroy Linlithgow in his August 1940 offer assured the Muslims that their interests will be secured. Some nationalist leaders including communists suggested that the demand of a separate homeland to the Muslims be accepted. The British appointed Cripps Mission in 1942 and the proposals of Cripps were rejected by both the League and Congress. When Congress launched Quit India movement in August 1942, the League opposed it propagating its dream of separate homeland in the name religion. In 1944, C. Rajagopalachari placed a compromise formula before Jinnah. Owing to the adamancy of the League, both the Wavel and the Simla plans failed. When elections were held in 1946 as per the 1935 Act, the League rejected it and refused to participate in the interim government. In protest, the Muslim League (ML) observed August 16, 1946 as the Direct Action Day which led to Hindu and Muslim riots throughout India. The League, however, joined, the interim government formed under the leadership of Nehru. When Constituent Assembly was formed, the League refused to accept it. In the meanwhile communal riots flared up throughout the country in which both Hindus and Muslims suffered a lot. The February 1947, the British government announced that it would leave India certainly before June 194 further led to the intensification of fear of large scale massacre. This all finally resulted into acceptance of Mountbatten Plan by the League and the Congress. The Independence Act of 1947 made the partition legal and real. The history of communalism and separatism particularly of Muslims has become so deeply imprinted on the minds of Hindu co-religionists that it is now more or less impossible to create a unity of mind between the two major religious communities for an integrated

\textsuperscript{18} Engineer, \textit{Lifting the Veil}, 15.
\textsuperscript{19} Haqqani, “India’s Islamist Groups.”
\textsuperscript{20} Asghar Ali Engineer, \textit{Communal challenge and secular response} (Delhi: Shipra Publications, 2003), 91.
Indian society. Religion continued to be used as a mobilizing factor by the communalist in post-independent India.

4.4. Muslim Communalism in post-Colonial period

Despite the violence seen during the Partition and subsequent separation of India on the basis of religion, Indian society accepted a secular fabric to the society. The communalists though marginalised preach communalism to polarize the masses. The main weakness of system after independence was/is that it remained/remain passive towards communalists till violence breaks out. This is like treating the symptom not the disease. Due to the passiveness in fighting only communal violence and not communalism, its threat remained and survived.

After Independence, the Hindu as well as Muslim communal forces started taking divergent shapes. Both India and Pakistan started seeing each other as major threats. Partition instead of resolving the issue of communalism became an instrument of exploitation in the hands of communalist blaming Muslims for the partition of Bharat Mata/Akahnd Bharat. The communalization of Indian politics and society continued unabated in the post-independence period. The entire periods has seen increase in communal conflicts. The communalist kept exploiting the religious sentiments of the people. Communal politics has resulted in accentuating communal sentiments in every state of India. In some cases, it is seen that the state itself has played a direct role in inducing communal riots. The post independence period also inhibit the communalism has been a continuous phenomenon even during post-independent time.

At the time of partition, it was only the elite of the Muslims who left for Pakistan. Only poor Muslims and a few professionals and traders were left behind. The status of the Muslims in India in comparison to upper caste Hindus was/is pathetic. The first generation of Muslim leadership after Independence consisted of nationalist leaders of Congress like Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, Rafi Ahmad Kidwai, Dr. Zakir Hussain and many others. Their common commitment was for communal harmony, composite nationalism and secularism, with emphasis on education. During the early days both the people and the government were busy in economic development which indirectly helped

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21 R. Upadhyay, “Islamic Organisations.”
in communal harmony. Communalism continued to percolate. Muslims preferring internalisation remained as divided ethnically as they were before the partition. The orthodox members of Religious community feel that they have a distinct identity with their own cultural pattern, personal laws and thoughts. They accepted this position preferring to co-exist with Hindus in an environment of peace and security. Communalism flourished because the communalist leaders flourish it either in the interest of their respective communities or in their self interests. The post-colonial Indian society continues to face communal politics which not only creates divisiveness among the different people and communities but also leaves the scope open for further communalisation of the society at large.

The communalists were a marginal force in the beginning years of independence. The defeat of communal forces in consecutive elections till 1977 led people to believe that communalism has been overpowered in India. However the Communal parties of all religions existed and continued to be active even outside politics posing threats to the secular fabric and forces of the polity and thereby to the unity and integrity of the nation. This has been used to mobilize people for electoral gains more often causing communal riots. With the coming of eighties as Irfan Engineer examines that a small section of Muslim in the North India, especially in those areas which were traditional centres of Muslims artisan- like Meerut, Aligarh, Moradabad, Varanasi, Azamgarh became prosperous by developing entrepreneurship in business. This section of Muslims began to adopt a high profile in politics which had adverse effects on the minds some of Hindus. This section of Muslims was led by the new leadership. It was this leadership which led two major movements: the Sha Bano movement and the Babri Masjid movement in an aggressive manner, which basically has made the communalist Hindus hostile towards the Muslim community and caused the series of communal riots throughout the India? Basically these movements in post-Independence became the main factors for the growth of religious fundamentalism and communalism.

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23 Ibid, 121.
24 Engineer, Lifting the Veil, 38.
4.5. Muslim Communal Organisations

Communalism has been instrumental in the promotion of communal organisations which leads to strengthening of communal elements and weakening of the secular forces. The various voluntary organisations of Muslims had come into existence after 1969. Wilkinson, Srikanta Ghosh, Manvinder Kaur examine as like Hindu communal organisation (as discussed in Second Chapter), some Muslim organisations like Majlis Tamir-e-Millat, Muslim Majlis, Majlis-e-Mushawarat, the Indian Union Muslim League (IMUL) and the Jamat-e-Islami, Jamaat-ul-Ulama-e-Hind, al-Ulma, Jamaat-e-Islami Hind and other local Muslim organisations also surfaced during riots and from time to time voiced their communal demands. Each of India’s radical Islamist groups, whether in Kashmir or elsewhere, traces its ideological origins to one or more of three principal sources. The first source is the Darul Uloom Deoband, a conservative madrasa established in 1867 to train Muslim reformers and to combat Western influences. The second is the Jamaat-e-Islami (Islamic Society), which was founded by Abul Ala Maulana in 1941 to serve as the vanguard of global Islamic revolution. And the third is the Wahhabi movement originating in Saudi Arabia. R. Upadhyay observes that it is sad but true that movements launched by various communal organisations in the name of championing the cause of Indian Muslims have in fact not only kept them in a closed society but also have caused tremendous harm to them.


28 Haqqani, “India’s Islamist Groups.”

29 Upadhyay, “Islamic Organisations.”
4.6. Issues of Muslim Communalism

During eighties Muslim communalists mobilised certain Muslim issues on communal lines and agitating for. These Muslims due to their communal attitude affected simultaneously the Hindu communalists. Asghar Ali Engineer says that “we must be remembering that a minority whether ethnic or religious- has to adopt proper strategies for its own safety and security. If it adopts an aggressive stance, even for its legitimate demands, it ends up by further antagonizing the minority community.”  

It will also concurrently irritate the majority community (Hindus). There are the certain issues Muslim face and are struggling to resolve them according to their religious positions which are not one and uniform. They are as follows;

4.6.1 The Muslim Personal Law

The issue of Personal law is one which constitutionally guaranteed. It has, since independence, been a conflicting issue between Muslims and Hindus largely projected as by Hindu communalist as the issue of Muslim Appeasement. After independence this been a concern of Communal politics. The talk about reform in Persona Laws becomes challenging as it faces resistance from the Muslim religious forces. Irfan Engineer argues that the Muslim Personal Law Board members strongly resists any effort to reform the Sharia’s or even reinterpret the Sharia’s according to the contemporary condition and needs. In this way the Muslim religious leadership in India has gone to the ridiculous extent of validating divorce which may be sent via a cell phone text message by writing the word talaq (divorce) thrice or by pronouncing the word thrice over the cell phone, even while in an inebriated condition fit of rage or sleep talking. Reforms enacted in a majority of the Muslim countries have been resisted in India, not only by traditional religious thinkers but also by the second generation moderate leadership.  

Another communal attitude of Muslims community has found in this context when Supreme Court decide the case of Shah Bano in 1985, granting maintenance to a divorced Muslim women in accordance to the secular law. This judgment was vociferously opposed by the moderate Muslim political leadership and political Islamist. Not only are they opposed to a uniform civil code, but even to any attempts at

30 Engineer, *Lifting the Veil*, 37.
31 Engineer, “Political Leadership,” 116.
32 Ibid, 119.
reform of their personal law. Non-interference by the State in their personal law is regarded by them as the touchstone of Indian secularism. The Muslim Personal Law Board even decided to establish Islamic Courts in all States of the Country and appealed to all Muslims to refer disputes in family matters to these Courts and abide by their decisions. These and other such issues are not necessarily communal but their presentation and projection is communally branded to create the dissentions in the society for the benefits of communalists.

4.6.2. Urdu language

With the Pakistan movement, Urdu came to be considered in popular preparation as a language of Muslims. However, after the partition, Urdu language became the national language of Pakistan, where as in India, it slowly and gradually lost its existence and importance. Government of India has also showed its negligence towards it. This over all neglect of Urdu stems from a public perception that it is a language of the Muslims and they demonstrate commitment to its survival as a symbol, whether they speak Urdu or not. They demand Urdu should be made the second official language in those States where Urdu speakers constitute a significant percentage of the population. The moderate leadership has sought to ensure unity of the Muslim community. In this, it has found itself tacitly promoting policies and strategies that bear similarities to the Islamist goal of homogenising the culture of the Muslim community around Urdu on one hand and religion on the other.

4.6.3. Babri Masjid

The issue of Babri Masjid is historical. Soon after independence it bought into public by Hindu communalist when they allegedly installed Idols of Lord Ram inside the Masjid in 1949. Since then it has been more vigorously perused by communalist. With the demolition of Babri Masjid in 1992 by the Hindu communalists, the issue gains momentum. They argue that Masjid stood on the birthplace of the Hindu Lord Rama. To face the challenge two organisations which were formed—the Babri Masjid Action Committee (BMAC) and the Babri Masjid Coordination Committee (BMCC) which worked at cross purposes. They competed with each other in occupying the moderate

33 Kaur, Challenges to Secularism in India, 117.
34 Engineer, “Political Leadership,” 118-119
35 Kaur, Challenges to Secularism in India, 117.
36 Engineer, “Political Leadership,” 118-119
space within the community and posing themselves as champions of Muslims instead of focusing on saving the Masjid. The Babri Masjid became an issue of mass mobilisation by the Hindu communalists.\textsuperscript{37} If talk about the Militant Islamist then their groups gained some ground as Muslims rioted across India to protest the destruction of the Babri Masjid. The riots were followed by bomb blasts in the Bombay Stock Exchange, an attack Indian official attributed to collusion among organized crime groups that involved Muslims and Islamist organizations.\textsuperscript{38} The issue is still pending in the Supreme Court of India. It still serves the cause promoting communalism in India.

4.6.4. Deobandi and Barelvi fictions

One more issue has been found in the occasional violent conflicts between the Deobandi and Barelvi fictions. In India there are two Islamic schools (Deobandi and Barelvi) of jurisprudence that is the fiqh. Their debates often revolve around issues of the superiority of one sects or fiqh over another, often branding opponents as kafirs (non-believers) and their practices as shirk (polytheism).\textsuperscript{39}

4.6.5. Other Issues

Apart from these, Muslims are misled by myopic Muslim leadership of persons like Imam Bukhari. They raise demands communally to maintain Muslim identity and other cultural issues.\textsuperscript{40} They dabble in politics and are found to be issuing fatwas in favour of one party or the other.\textsuperscript{41} These all are in no way useful to Muslim interests. It is contended that the concession of communal demands by the Government is creating an impression of pampering of the Muslim community whereas the reality is that Muslims remain the most backward community, educationally as well as economically. Hamid Dalwai in his book entitled \textit{Muslim Politics in India} exposed the communal politics of Islamic fundamentalists and said, “Unless Muslim communalism is eliminated, Hindu communalism will not disappear.”\textsuperscript{42} Unless our political class, social scientists and intellectuals irrespective of their religious affinity discuss the issue in totality and initiate effective steps to stop the movement for separatism, possibility of social integration in

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Ibid, 118.
\item Haqqani, “India’s Islamist Groups.”
\item Engineer, “Political Leadership,” 119.
\item Kaur, \textit{Challenges to Secularism in India}, 117.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Indian society may remain a dream. Banning of certain organisations and lifting it subsequently is no answer to the problem.\(^{43}\)

4.7. Conclusion

Despite the fact that after independence India adopted a secular democratic constitution the problem of communalism continued to survive. The thought that partition would end all communalism at least in that part of the country that would become India failed. Communalism has not only survived but has grown significantly since Independence. It is manifesting itself in various ways and dimensions. This results into strengthening of Hindu and Muslim communalism. The educational backwardness Muslims and their insufficient representation in the public service cause the feeling of relative deprivation and such feelings contain the seeds of communalism.

\(^{43}\) Upadhyay, “Islamic Organisations.”