CHAPTER 3RD
EMERGENCE OF SOCIO-RELIGIOUS CLASSES

I. Vested Interest: Class

The establishment of Shrines and the development of people's unbounded faith in them gave birth to many ceremonies and festivals, which eventually marked the emergence of a vested-interest class. This class had always an axe of theirs to grind. The class comprised the attendants and servants at the shrine. Really speaking these people rendered very little purposeful, least of all religious or spiritual service. The role of these attendants at the shrines was simply disgusting and frustrating. Without them perhaps the shrines would have been better places to go to. The mujavirs and mutwalis as they were called constituted a class of veritable drones, for they never did anything worth the name and the station they had. They were required and expected to preach Islam in its genuine form, and it was the last thing they attempted to do. In pursuance of their self-interest they misled the people. Their methods were fraudulent and through these they extracted money from the indigent and ignorant people. They were supposed to possess great spiritual power and knowledge which potential they were expected to use in the service of common people, whose only fault was their blind

1. Dr. Aziz Ahmad Qureshi, op.cit., p.98.
belief in shrines, saints and the mujavirs. After the passing away of saints, their disciples too could follow their pattern and guide the people along the right path. By and by with the passing of time materialism overcame the religious belief and the disciples of the saints who were always present at the shrine as mujavirs prompted more by material self-interest than the desire of common welfare resorted to unfair means to make money. Their cunning and vile could visibly have evoked strong reaction among the people. The false priests and so-called successors of the deceased saints could have in course of time, become exposed to public view, and this could have resulted in the growth of a strong sense of distrust of the pirs among the people and, to some extent, generated hatred towards the pirs. But such a situation had not emerged yet and was not going to emerge for sometime to come. But, if the sainthood was on decline, the pilgrims to the shrines too were not as devoted as their predecessors. Thus Hamidi Kashmiri has rightly remarked, the days of dedicated people have passed away what has remained behind are the mujavirs. What was to be found at the shrines were the priests of business mentality. It were these people who assumed full control of the shrines as though these were their own property, where they could do whatever they wished to. They showed scant regard for the teachings of Islam and the preaching of the elevated saints of bygone days. The mujavirs and pirs

2. A Nazam read out by Prof. Hamidi Kashmiri (Head and Prof. Department of Urdu, University of Kashmir, Srinagar) on the birth anniversary of Dr. Mohd Iqbal at College of Education, Srinagar.
at the shrine observed no scruples in making money by exploiting the mass of people who were credulous and superstitious. Gradually this class of exploiters came to have a vested interest in mosques and shrines— in the city of Srinagar, these religious institutions came to be dominated by two groups of pirs and mujavirs viz;

The custodians of Khanqah-i-Mualla and those of the Jamia masjid of Srinagar. From this it becomes clear that the innocent and credulous people allowed the control of mosques and shrines to be in the hands of a few people. The mujavirs and preachers, sometimes qualified, did not bother to educate the people simply because of the fact that they in the long run would stand to suffer economically. Their greed and lust for money and the very ignoble manner in which they stretched their hands to beg alms and receive them, made them objects of hatred and pity. They would sometimes quarrel with one another in a bid to grab the offerings with remorseless ease. Internal skirmishes and quarrels for lion's share in the offerings drove them to the courts of law. They did not hesitate to refrain from flight in any form over the offerings. However, it is imperative to refer to the factors that made mujavirs so powerful. In the first place the masses of Kashmir were superstitious by nature and this

\begin{enumerate}
\item This information was given by Master Ghulam Ahmad Zuhra, a mujavir of the Khanqah-i-Mulla.
\item I. Lawrence, op.cit; p.289
II. Tohfa-i-Mehboobi, p.60.
III. see Appendix I
\end{enumerate}
made them susceptible to the vile influence of the mujavirs and pirs. Secondly the ignorance and illiteracy of the masses enlarged the scope of their exploitation at the hands of the crafty attendants of the shrines. Thirdly the mujavirs in their own interest endeavoured to keep the people in dark so that they continued to be dumb and willing objects of exploitation. Generally speaking the fake shaikhs, false priests and cunning mujavirs had been ever deceitful. There are references available from the literature of the time prior to our period of study which bring the image of such shaikhs and mujavirs within the focus. Nothing would be more relevant, in this context, to refer to then certain shrueks (aphorisms) of Shaikh Nur-ud-Din Auliya.

To quote the Shaikh:

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к* The mullas flourish on cash offerings and feasts while the shaikhs stick frantically to wealth and honey. The so-called sufis donned the shred of a cloak giving up all labour and enjoy a sumptuous meal of several recipes. None pursued the true
knowledge, people became time servers, none could restrain the
self. The mullas get well on receiving invitation to a feast,
that is why they were seen running towards the mosques. Throughout
his life, Shaikh Nur-ud-Din, was greatly critical of mullas
who used the Quran as a source of profession and received money
in return for its use. What appeared astonishing about these
mullas in the later periods was the use of Quranic verses and
shrueks by them as a source of livelihood. The tactfully rall­
ied the people round themselves and taking advantage of their
simplicity defrauded them and pushed them into situation of
helplessness. However, it must be pointed out here that even
the mullas were associated with the shrines. Thus the pirs,
mujavirs and mullas insisted upon the people, particularly
their traditional murids to visit the shrines for redemption
of sins for fulfilment of their wishes. The mujavirs directed
the people to bring nazrana to the shrine. In Kashmir, this
type of pir-i-muridi had been in vogue and under this system no
special effort was made by the pirs to impart spiritual training
to the people. They did not do even as much as convey to them

1. Lawrence, op. cit., p. 270; II Muhammad-ud-Din Faug, Tarikh-i-
In Kashmir no religious duty was performed without the pirs.
There was no person other than the pir who could deliver Khut-
ba and lead the prayers. On the basis of the principle of
heredity the son of the pir succeeded his father regardless
of his worth. The pirs were doing four types of business. These
were:- 1. To go to the murids (located at different areas in
Kashmir) who were their murids since the time of their fore­
fathers. They paid them two to four rupees as muridi. 2. Sec­
ond was writing of Tawiz (amulet) and receiving money in
return. 3. Thirdly, used to deliver judgements (fatwa). 4. In the
fourth place they also received the money for preaching,
Fatiha-Khwani, Maulud-i-Sharif and leading the Jinaza (funeral)
prayers.
Dr. Aziz Ahmad Qureshi, Asran-i-Kashmir; p. 171.
the teachings of Quran.

Similarly the mujavirs and other mullas of the shrines prescribed only such practices as met their own. Thus day in and day out they abused their office yet they (Mullahs of the city and of the villages) exerted their influence over their people. Thus the Mullahs and mujavirs had been dominating the society down to the grass-root level. The mullahs and mujavirs made it incumbent on the people to visit the shrines on some particular days. In this context Lawrence has rightly remarked that the mujavirat (custodianship) has completely turned into shopping whereunder Mujavir like a greedy creature always thought of his reward. A large group of idle people (mujavirs) stood for reception at the main gates of the shrine and accompanied the devotees like shadows and finally stretched their hands for alms. It is an accepted fact that their method was always disliked by the people and they hesitated to pay them willingly. The mujavirs instead of praying for the good of the people spoke nonsense and vulgar.

The invocation for the blessings of the devotees by the mujavir depended upon the amount of money that the mujavir expected to receive from the devotees. It has been observed

1. Ibid; p.291.
2. Kh.Gh.Mohi-ud-din, Tohfa-i-Mehboobi; p.59
that the mujavirs often snatched the money from the purses and pockets of the devotees. The mujavirs made the people to believe that the saint buried in the shrine was alive and one who would tell a lie at the shrine would commit dishonesty. They further added that as seekers they would receive blessedness commensurate with the amount they offered to the mujavirs at the shrine, themselves, all the time, posing as intercessers and mediators between the people and the saint. Such claims as these motivated the innocent devotees to do as the mujavirs wanted them to, and visibly moved the gullible devotees handed over all the money to the mujavirs.

This type of profession and business one came across at all the Ziarats and astans of Kashmir. But the top-ranking shrines dominated by the unscrupulous types of mujavirs were:

2. Shrine of Shaikh Nur-ud-din.
3. Shrine of Baba Zain-ud-din
4. Shrine of Shaikh Hamza Makhdoom
5. Shrine of Hazratbal.
7. Shrine of Baba Payam-ud-din

1. Dr. Aziz Ahmad Qureshi, op.cit; p.98.
And there were many other shrines where Muslims of Kashmir paid nazr-u-nivaz with great pleasure. The income of these shrines was considerable and was divided among the mujavirs as per the fixed schedule. Besides paying the cash the villagers also brought a share of their paddy crop as an offering to the shrine and one walnut tree in every village was devoted to the shrine of the saint. Moreover, it was customary to bring sheep, goat and cocks to the shrine for sacrifice. Lawrence, while corroborating this fact, says that "the votive offering of the boatmen is a fat ram."

The people sometimes earmarked a cock, with a view to bringing it as a gift to the mujavir of the shrine on the eve of a festival. The Babas, Rishis and Pirzadas, though men of knowledge, were respected in every nook and corner of the valley and they exercised tremendous influence over the common masses. The ministers of Rishi shrines were and are still known as Rishis. They did not lead the ascetic and celibate life of their famous predecessors. They confined their duty to the collecting of offerings and it was a job very far removed from the purpose which they were meant to serve, while they led lives of simplicity and austerity and followed a high level of thought. The mujavirs

1. Lawrence, op. cit; p.289.
2. Ibid; p.288.
3. Ibid; p.237.
4. Ibid.
had their clients throughout the Valley. Even the pandit community paid them wherever they (mujavirs) visited their respected asami (client). They had their clients outside the state also and proceeded thereafter every two years to collect the nazrana and alms from them. These so-called pirs and keepers of people's conscience usually played fraud on the innocent and ignorant people. Many of them used to keep a hair in a glass tube and go from village to village to tell the people that they (mujavirs) had a relic of Dustgir Sahib or some other saint. Recently one such cheat was caught in a village, beaten and driven away. The so-called holy relic was snatched. His only request was to them not to destroy the glass tube as that was worth something. Hair, he did not mind. He could get many more.

Even as the mujavirs welcomed the idea of large congregations at their shrines, they never cared to provide any facility to the pilgrims at the shrines. What they cared for the most was to induce the pilgrims to offer all that they had on them and not what they could afford. This was invariably the case with each shrine and every mujavir in Kashmir. Besides many

1. Lawrence, op.cit; p.291.
2. This information was supplied to me by Mir Ghulam Rasool Nazki (Retired Director Radio Kashmir, Srinagar). Mr. Nazki is a respectable/knowledgable gentleman.
new shrines were constructed mainly for the purpose of raising money from it. The progressive increase in the number of shrines in the Valley bears witness to this fact. Thus the mujavirs self-chosen role drifted them from their well marked path of duty, and instead of rendering positive religious and spiritual service, they commercialised their jobs (Khidmat). This naturally defeated the very purpose of all these institutions, the practice of holding religious ceremonies and making offerings at these shrines gained ground. This naturally created a vested interest among the class of mujavirs. This section was completely a parasite class entirely dependent on the society. A thorough survey of most of the shrines in general and important shrines in particular has revealed the extent to which the mujavirs have created and preserved this vested class interest. This chapter is totally based on the information of the mujavirs and those who are having links and intimate contacts with the shrines. Besides the information gathered from the knowledgeable and reliable people, though not linked with the management of the shrines, have by and large confirmed the findings referred to above.

The organisation and management of the shrine establishment was somewhat like that of a monastery. The mutwali of the shrine had a dominant position and he regulated all the activities and daily tasks of the shrine. Selection of the mutwali and mujavirs was made on hereditary basis and there is no reference to
suggest that their selection was made on democratic lines. Only in rare cases, however, the mutwali and not the mujavir was chosen by a lot. Even the ladies fought for the heir and share of the mujavirat (custodianship). But many mujavirs of modern times, who dislike the idea of begging for alms, by feigning to be what they really are not, have either sold their anwari (brokerage) on contract basis or received mitava, a form of lease. But no reference helps us to know the complete withdrawal of any mujavir from the shrine custodianship, because it has brought them handsome dividends. While interviewing a mujavir of Makhdoom Sahibs shrine, it could transpire that he had a two week turn in a month at the shrine and his minimum amounted to rupees fourteen thousand a month and on occasions of Urs it touched rupees twenty four thousand a month.

Let us first see the vested interests of the attendants of the shrine of Khanqah-i-Mualla, the duties and responsibilities of the mutwalis and other attendants of the shrine can be distinctly followed from the Wazaifnama of Mir Mohammad Hamdani. The mujavirs, besides performing many other functions had to arrange for the meals of the pilgrims coming from far flung areas. Lawrence in this connection has said that "the finances of the shrine are based on the assumption that the offerings of the

1. Lawrence, op. cit; p.289.
2. see appendix IV
proxis, which are chiefly made in kind, will be sufficient to defray all expenses, the chief of which is the giving of food to travellers. But the mujavirs hardly cared for this duty and buttered their own toast on both the sides. There is hardly any reference to show that the food was given anywhere at the shrines. The mujavirs of Khanqah-i-Mualla were not an exception to this rule. Their activities on many occasions led to clash of interests among themselves so much so that they to bring litigation against one another and get their cases decided by the courts of law, reduced their duties to mundane level and the collection of money became their chief motive. There were and still are four major families linked with the custodianship of the shrine at Khanqah-i-Mualla. These are:

1. Zohras
2. Mirs
3. Qazims
4. Muazins

These families had their fixed time, Schedule of duties. The mujavirs have assigned the weekly schedule of duty to themselves in the following order:

1. Haft Miran (the week of Mirs)
2. Haft Qazims (the week of Qazims)
3. Haft Bangian (the week of Muazins)
4. Haft Gadval (the week of Gadyals)

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1. Lawrence, op.cit; p.289.
2. The only exception was the shrine of Baba Payam NoDin near Gulmarg where food was served to the pilgrims.
5. **Haft Imameen** (the week of Imams)

6. **Haft Khadman** (the week of Khadims); and

7. **Haft Farshan and Charagan** (the week of Farshan and Charagan)

A peculiar feature of this arrangement of the **naubutdars** (the parties concerned) was that they sold their rights to the contractors and received the money of **nazr-u-niyaz** (neth)\(^1\) through the agency of contractors—what is more strange is that the **muazins** sold even their **azan** (call for prayer) to contractors who were engaged during the days of **Urs** (festivals and fairs). The **mujavirs** for their self-aggrandisement made rounds on the compound of the shrine in search of the devotees. They were always in search of new methods and techniques of acquiring money. Once intizamia committee of the shrine put two locked white iron safes one inside the main gate and the other outside the gate for donations needed for repairs of the Khangah during the Dogra period. Seeing this, the **mujavirs** put another green safe opposite to the white safe. The income received through that box (green safe) amounts to five lakh and fifty thousand rupees annually at present! Besides, the mujavirs had issued receipt books to raise funds for themselves\(^2\). They had made a rule that if anyone among them had no male child but a daughter instead, she would not receive her share in the income of **nazr-u-niyaz**.

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1. *Neth* is a Kashmiri term which means extortion of money by members of privileged class from the superstitious and ignorant masses.

2. This information was supplied by Master Ghulam Afzal Zehra in a written statement.
This ruling gave birth to the disputes and many cases of dispute among the rival claimants to the share of nazr-u-niyaz (offerings) of the shrine were referred to courts of judicature. The cases of Fatima Bibi v/s Gh. Mohi-ud-din Hafiz; and Yusuf Shah Nawabazaar v/s Khazir Mohmmad bear testimony to the fact. These disputes arose mainly because of the vested interests of the attendants of the shrine.

JAMIA MASJID

Jamia Masjid occupied the first place among the centres of congregational prayers. It had no relic and, therefore no place to enshrine one. It was only a place of worship and enjoyed the highest esteem of the people. Even the Dogra rulers recognised the supreme importance of this mosque. The Mirwaiz dynasty, was responsible for conducting prayers at the mosque. The Maharaja used to betow khilat comprising a shawl, a choga, a fard and a joder to most of the ulama of Srinagar and Mirwaiz dynasty was given special preference.

It is noteworthy to mention here that Mirwaiz dynasty rendered service by way of preaching and giving sermons. In course of time waiz khawani became a profession. With this

1. see appendix V
2. Mohammad-ud-Din Fauq, op. cit; p.432.
waizeen (preachers) got an opportunity to think of pure interest and work for self-aggrandisement. The people of Srinagar came to be divided into two streams of followers dedicated to Mirwai family and the other to Mirwai Hamadani family. Accordingly the mosques and shrines were divided too.

In course of time, the mosque became the centres of political activity and it was here that leaders would sometimes indulge in personal politics. The Maulvis who were assigned the duty of making the people understand Islam and the Quran, themselves indulged in the game of politics which was not at all conformity with the tenets of Quran and the teaching of Hadith. The Maulvis for their selfish ends raised controversies among the people in order to have a complete hold over the masses. A controversy was generated over the question of disposal of bones of the sacrificial lamb. Certain Maulvis said that the bones should be buried, while others asserted that these should be thrown away in the normal course. A similar controversy was raised over the disposal of the Nikah-Shirini while some pirs wanted it to be distributed among the people, the others would have it thrown away in handfuls.

1. see paper, Jamia Archives, File No. 147 1936
2. see paper, Shah Meer, July 19, 1938
   It was the last Friday of the month of Ramdan (Jummat-ul-vidah) in 1983; that the two leaders came to the Jamia Masjid and the people cheered and greeted them with slogans like "Abhi, Abhi Khabar Ayl, Shera-Bakra Bai-Bai".
3. This information was furnished by Master Ghulam Ahmad Zhura in a written statement.
The clash of interests among the Maulvis involved them in mutual conflicts. They used mosques, under a plan to secure public support.

Generally it so happened that one Waiz contradicted his opponent, and the ignorant masses became the victims of their exploitation. People got divided into rival factions. They fought and quarreled, and there were occasions when they created a law and order problem and the law enforcing machine had to act. In his famous Shahru-Ashoob Abdul Ahad Nadim has very aptly depicted this state of affairs thus:

(Their voices are very pleasant, but their sermons are poisonous. They communicate the poison of dissension to the people and this is a practice which even non-believers are ashamed of. When they spread the poison of hatred among the people, the masses get divided into rival groups which confront each other. The waiz gets a lot of money. Dhussas and turbans are bestowed on them.)
in heaps. For this practice even the non-believers would censure the mirwaiz).

The fundamental enmity between the two schools of waizeen again came to fore-front after the 1931 freedom movement. The group of Hamadanis gave their whole-hearted support to the freedom fighters, and the other waizeen of Jamia Masjid opposed them. It culminated into a great hatred, and the two groups were named as Sher and Bakra. They were branded as such for about fifty years. Both the groups were at daggers drawn, looted, killed and persecuted the women of each other, if the poor lady happened to belong to a rival household.

**SHRINE OF MAKHDOOM SAHIB**

The attendants and mujavirs of the shrine of Makhdoom Sahib constituted a class by themselves with a clear cut vested interest in the shrine named above. Since the religious ceremonies were growing apace the quantum of offerings at the shrine also increased. The pecuniary aspect became the determining and motivating factor of the activities of the mujavirs. Predictably they tagged their ties more strengthly with the shrine had there been no offerings and naz-r-u-nivaz, there would have been hardly anybody in the compound of the shrine. So far as the shrine of Makhdoom Sahib is concerned there were three groups viz; Pir Sahiban Paen, Pir Sahiban Bala and the Khadims and other beggars.¹

¹ Khawaja Ghulam Mohi-ud-din, op.cit; p.62.
This provides a clear proof of their vested interests which led the parties to fight against each other on a number of occasions. Each group wanted to hold its own against the other group and even the Khadims who had to obey the orders of Pirs tried to become equal share-holders. They played an obnoxious role in exacting money and sometimes snatched the money from the pockets of the spectators and devotees. They did not hesitate in calling them names in a bid to grab money.

The mujavirs of Makhdoom Sahib shrine were and still are known throughout the valley for their mismanagement and misrule. A police picket had to be posted permanently at the shrine when the babas and pizzadas of the astan quarrelled among themselves over the offerings which virtually have been reduced to spoils by the pugacious pizzadas. Infact the devotees and the pilgrims to the shrine demanded the posting of a police picket there. The attendants, at the shrine, since time immemorial had been at draggers drawn. They knocked the gates of the courts time and again for getting once and for all settled their claim to being the rightful heirs custodianship of the shrine and to share in the offerings.

1. The Khadims came to serve at the shrine later. They were engaged by the two groups of Pirs. They got a small share in lieu of certain services which they were supposed to render. see appendix-I.
2. Khwaja Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din, op.cit; p.69.
3. see appendix-I.
Finally the parties agreed to refer the cases to arbitration. The parties submitted written statements explaining their respective positions. The statements of the shrine attendants were mainly in regard to their respective self interests. Thus for their own aggrandisement, the parties tried their utmost to win the case by collecting material in support of their statements. This ultimately brought many things to light.

The Pir Sahiban claimed that the Khadims were appointed later by the Pirs as their personal servants. They did not want these services to be rendered any longer, so they felt that the Khadims should be ousted from the shrine. The Khadims on their behalf refused to accept Muhammad Ali as the adopted son of Makhdoom Sahib. They further claimed that adoption is not recognised under the Shariat Law.

So far as the question of adoption is concerned, the arbitrator argued, "whatever be the truth about the adoption, the fact remains that the ancestors of Pir Sahiban Paen have been recognised as the descendants of the saint."

1. I. The respective rights of the parties in conducting various religious rites and ceremonies performed at the shrine.

   II. Their rights to the management of affairs of the shrine other than religious ceremonies.

   III. The share which the Khadims should get out of the offerings made "Shamadan Dearhi Andaruni".

   IV. For the manner in which the other income occurring to the parties is to be please see appendix-I.

2. I. see appendix-I; and

   II. appendix-II
The arbitrator as a proof cited various orders issued, from time to time, under the various Mughal Emperors. This clearly indicated that the Shaikh Qasim, ancestor of Pir Sahiban Paen, was recognised as the grandson of the saint. The fauliat was conferred to Shaikh Qasim and his descendants. The descendants of Hassi Reshi (Pir Sahiban Bala) were given a half share in the offerings. So far as the question of Khadims was concerned, the arbitrator decided, the Khadims who had been attached to the shrine for a century could not be ousted in such a sweeping fashion, particularly when they had been confirmed by the orders passed by the civil courts. Under such circumstances, it was impossible to oust the Khadims from their services. The Khadims were allowed to perform Khatam-Khwani while the rights to all other observances like Azan, Peshwai, Nimaz and Nat-Khawani rested in the two groups of Pir Sahiban. The arbitrator further said that the Khadims were to be allowed to receive two-fifths share of all coins up to and including fifty paisa and the remaining three-fifths was to go to the Pir Sahiban. But this rule was applied only to Shamadan Deorhi Andruni. The offerings made at other two places called Deorhi Biruni and Rouza Sharif would go to the Pir Sahiban. There were two other items involving the principle of distribution. These were nan and shirini a share of which had to be given to

1. See appendix-I
2. Ibid.
those that kept watch on the shoes which the devotees removed while entering the sacred precincts of Rouza Sharif (Jora Bardari). Finally, the visitors and devotees, the main donors lodged a complaint against both the Pir Sahiban and the Khadims, with the arbitrator, for their (pirs and Khadims) wrong attitude. They (devotees) argued that it was the offerings of the people which was shared by the Pirs and the Khadims among themselves. The people also contributed for the up-keep and maintenance of the shrine. But it was very unfortunate that their interests had never been either properly presented or adequately considered. They also presented one more complaint before the arbitrator about the forcible exactions made by the shrine attendants, the devotees suggested that the parties should be ousted from the shrine for such an offence. The Pirs and the Khadims not only took Nazr-u-Niyaz within the premises of the shrine but they went round the villages collecting money. They recited the following couplet from Allama Iqbal justifying the existence of this custom.

"Ba Muridan roz-o-Shab andar Safr
Az Zarurat-hai millat be-Khabar".

"Wandering through night and day among their 'murids) disciples who are not aware of the requirements of millat".

1. See Ghulam Mohi-ud-din Sofi, op.cit; p.61.
The whole case brings forth purely personal and vested interests of the Pir Sahiban and the Khadims. They had no scruples in fighting for these interests among themselves and in joining hands with one another when it was for them to fight, the devotees in a cause common to themselves.

HAZRATBAL SHRINE

With the enshrinement of the holy relic (hair) in baradari at Bagh-i-Sadarabad famous as Hazratbal, a new class of people known as mutwali, muiavirs and khadims came to settle at Dargah in order to consolidate the activities and manage the affairs of the shrine. The shrine which contains the holy relic (hair) of Muhammad Mustafa (S.a.w.s.) was thronged by almost all sections of people from urban, rural and far-flung areas. Thus innumerable people visited the shrine on every day particularly on Fridays and other festive occasions viz- fairs to seek blessings; deliverance from pain, agony and fulfilment of other desires. The people paid the nazr-u-niyaz (offerings) both in

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1. See for the whole case the award given on 12.12.1961 by the Financial Commissioner of the State. Copy of the original award is at Appendix-I. See also Appendices II and III.

2. At Hazratbal there was no population. It was far away from the city habitants. But with the arrival of relic a village first came into existence there which with the passage of time became an urban centre.
cash and kind. The offerings so received were divided among
the attendants of the shrine as per the rules laid down in the
Tagseen Nama.\(^1\) (partnership deed) The offerings made in kind
would be divided into two shares. One-half would go to the
Banday family and the other half would go to Khadims of the
shrine. Likewise the income of Nazr-u-Nivaz received on days
of Urs, were also distributed among the Bandays and the
Khadims.

The Bandays, since the enshrinement of the relic worked
as mutwalis.\(^2\) According to Tagseen Nama,\(^3\) the Bandays got nine

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1. The very word Tagseen Nama tells us that it is a property
and there is a dispute among the partners when a shrine
became a property, and the exploiter go to knock at the
doors of the courts, it is certainly a worldly affair, and
it has nothing to do with the purification of soul and
attainment of salvation. There are court cases even for
the guardranship (tauliat) of mosques. One would like to
ask, why go to court when there is no pecuniary consider­
ation at stake? One would not mind if one is or is not a
mutwali if one undertakes the job to please Allah.

2. Tarikh-i-Aowani-i-Kashmir, Vol.1 p.238

3. The legality of Tagseen-Nama still holds good as the amount
of nazr-u-nivaz is distributed among the above mentioned
families as laid down in the Tagseen-Nama. And if any
dispute arises among the said families with regard to the
distribution of the share of the offerings they move the
secular courts and lay a claim to their share on the basis
of the Tagseen-Nama.
anna per rupee and the remaining seven anna would go to the Khadims. Besides, if a pilgrim directly handed over anything in cash or kind to the mulavir, that was not divisible. If a Khadim died, his place was filled by his eldest son and out of this income he gave a share each to his brothers according to Taqseer Nama. There were also green iron safes for offerings installed at the shrine into which the pilgrims thrust their offerings. The receipts of these were distributed among the various claimants on the basis stated above. One interesting fact about the affairs of Dargah as also those of other shrines is that since the establishment of Idara-i-Awaaf, the mutwalis and mulavirs ceased to spend a penny on the construction and maintenance of the structures at the shrine. Obviously, these people have a vested interest in their share of the income.

Shrine of Dastgir Sahib

The attendants of the Ziarat-i-Pir Dastgir were not good at performing their duties. Their attitude and activity had had thrown up a wall of separation between the devotees and the saints whose work in the cause of God and religion had been genuine. It is worthy to mention here that it were the descendants of Saiyid Buzarg Shah popularly known as Sakhi Shah.

1. See Appendix V
2. See Supra; p.145.
who worked as the Sajadannisheen and chose the mujavirs for the up-keep and maintenance of the Shrine. They appropriated the offerings made at the shrine by the devotees and divided it according to their fixed schedule. However, the behaviour of the mujavirs was not satisfactory. They welcomed and respected only those devotees who offered money to them. They ignored and by-passed those devotees who had nothing to offer. Generally the devotees were fed up with the attitude of the attendants of the shrine who cared for nothing else than their self-interest. While visiting the shrine one could find number of green iron safes with an attendant beside each safe. Besides, an iron safe was to be found at the entry gate and one also near the chamber housing the relic.

The income of these safes was distributed among the Sajadannisheen and the mujavirs. Strangely enough, the attendants of the shrine charged money for the cups of drinking water calling it as aabi-shafat, though the drinking water was supplied to the shrines free of charge by the Dogra Maharajas. Very curiously also the rice offered by the devotees at the shrine was given to them as Tabruk by the attendants against cash payments. Moreover, they also distributed the holy ashes

1. 'Khilasat-ul-Tawarikh' (Mirza Kamal's Trans.), op.cit; p.409.
2. But the mujavirs did not receive their due share in the offerings.
among the pilgrims as Khaki-Shafat and charged in return for this. Thus from ashes to water both of which were free and from shrini (sweets) to rice, everything had a price which the attendants charged from the credulous devotees. This was the range of exploitation of the common, ignorant and superstitious masses by the attendants of the shrine who certainly had a definite vested interest in what they practised.

SHRINE OF SHAIKH NUR-UD-DIN AND OTHER RISHI SHRINES

The attendants of the Rishi shrines of Shaikh Nur-ud-Din, Baba-Payam-ud-Din and Baba Zain-ud-Din played the same parasitical role, as other Babas, who lived at the expense of society and contributed nothing, thereby causing damage to the pious tradition of great rishi saints. They confined their duties and services to the collection of offerings instead of providing facilities and guidance to the devotees. They neglected the spiritual and educational aspects of the devotees which the sufis and saints had assiduously worked for. This set path was however followed and acted upon by the immediate disciples of saints. So was the case with first generation of rishis after Shaikh Nur-ud-Din. They established themselves throughout the Valley for the pious mission of preaching humanism and all that. "The most respectable people of this country are the Rishis, who, although they do not suffer themselves to be
fettered by traditions are doubtless the true worshippers of God. They revile not anyother sect, and ask nothing of any one; They plant the roads with fruit trees to furnish the traveller with refreshment; they abstain from flesh and have no intercourse with the other sex".1

But the mujavirs at the rishi shrines commonly known as 'Rishis' did not lead the ascetic and celibate life of their predecessors. The people in the vicinity of the above three important rishi shrines engaged themselves in custodianship or mujavirat of the shrines. They went round all the parts of the Valley annually to collect the alms commonly known as Reshut2 from the people. If a Rishi had only one or two families as Khadims in any village, it was their duty to help the Rishi in collecting shali (paddy) and other articles from the whole village. The concerned Khadim had to pay more than what the others paid. The rishis of Ashamuqam shrine wore a peculiar headdress with Zigzag bars of colour,3 while visiting their murids for shali from Zamindars and maize from the Gujjars. The entire population of Aishmuqam used to go to different areas of Kashmir and K'shtiwar for getting alms. However, it should

1. This reference has been cited by Lawrence from Ain-i-Akbari, Lawrence, op.cit; p.287.
2. The people who visited the shrines anytime in the year would stay at their traditional Rishis residence. They took something as gift or nazrana to their rishis. They also carried rice and other necessaries to prepare the meals for themselves.
3. It is said that once Baba Zain-ud-Din sent one of his Khalifa fr for water. But on the way he was seized by the officials for forced labour. The Khalifa returned late at night and was much rebuked by Shaikh Zain-ud-Din. But as the Khalifa gave the reason the whole liddar river got dried up due to the indignation of the rishi. It caused a great loss to guild of crop. On knowing the real situation the people of the whole area came to Aishmuqam and begged for pardon of the Shaikh.
as mentioned here that the turban was not to be used for the purpose of begging but it was merely an identification mark so that further occurrence of mistakes would be stopped. But the Rishis who were far away from simple living and high thinking used this as a source of livelihood, thereby abusing its original usage. The families which were engaged in naubatdari at the shrine of Baba Zain-ud-Din were as follows:

- Mir, Shah, Baigh, Baba, Ganai, Khadim, Tantray, Haji, Nayak, Hashmi, Bhat, Muthi and others. However, those who did not possess the anvari also got benefitted because of the fact that they also had their murids in different parts from whom they received cash and kind.

So was the case with the Rishis of the shrine of Nur-ud-Din at Charar-i-Sharif. At Charar-i-Sharif there were basically eleven families which are entitled to mujavirat. These Rishis are called Chetidar in the local terminology. The Rishi system of mujavirat is also hereditary. The mujavirat was also sold at Charar-i-Sharif. Now the number of Chetidars has reached thousands. Those who did not have naubatdari, had their murids in villages who paid them on different occasions. Abdul

... It was then that the Khulfa wore the coloured turban as an identification mark known as Reshi Kachin in Kashmir.

2. Lawrence, op.cit; p.288.

1. This information was obtained during the visit to the place in the course of an interview with Rishis and others on 20.3.1989.
2. The names of the headmen of the above said eleven families were as:


3. The Qadida which is in the possession of Maste Ghulam Nabi at Charar-i-Sharif makes mention of the eleven families which are entitled to mujavirat.
Ahad Azad has rightly remarked in his Qasida that all the people of Chrar received *Azuka* through the durbar of Shaikh Nur-ud-Din. The shrine did not provide for begging among the people of Chrar but the residents in the neighbourhood received alms from different areas of Kashmir.

So it does not need any evidence to prove that all these shrines and mosques lost all the sanctity and respect, they had once enjoyed. These places became the dens of intrigue and conspiracy among the warring claimants and these holy institutions were polluted to such an extent that they were no more than the property of unscrupulous and dishonest exploiters. This was the darkest side of their existence and every right thinking man was sorry for this.

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**MUSLIM REVIVALIST MOVEMENT**

In almost all the religions, as we can notice from their history, the laity, particularly the more gullible and superstitious sections have been exploited in all times and in all the parts of the world by the priests for their selfish motives.

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1. The Qasida is in the possession of Master Ghulam Nabi at Chrar-i-Sharif.
2. The retired Master Ghulam Nabi informed that once he had gone to Kamraz area and stayed there for a night. Meanwhile a person came there saying "I am a rishi from Chrar" which he was not. The people showed him all respect without caring to verify his antecedents.
Infact they reduced this exploitation of ignorant and illiterate followers to a system and traded under it without any investment. The Roman Catholic Church exploited the Europeans for a considerable period of time. Similarly the Brahmans in India exploited the common and innocent Hindus only to ensure their position as supreme. Similarly in Islam, the priests followed the same path and held people in a state of perpetual bondage.

This unhealthy trend prevailing in different religions was ultimately defeated by the thinkers and right minded socio-religious reformers who received support from the educated class. The Renaissance in Europe was one such movement. Among other things it aimed at eradicating superstitions beliefs among the Christians. Similarly in India the educated class of Hindus opposed caste system\(^1\) and other evils.

Within Islam too emerged a movement which stood for abolition of obnoxious customs, superstition and the mundane activity of the dervesh and the ulama acting in flagrant violation of Arabia itself.\(^2\) Ibn Taimiya\(^3\)(1263-1328) was the

1. Mahatma Gandhi played a heroic role in uplifting the Harijans to the status of other community brethren.
2. The destruction of Abbasid Caliphate at the hands of Mongols, marked the decline of Islam as a world force. This event sent tremors through the Muslim world. During this time the Sunni traditional law had come to stay and many innovations had crept into Islam. H. Laoust, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 1971
3. Not unlike Martin Luther, Ibn Taimiya sought to strip away the medieval superstitions. Ibn Taimiya attacked belief in the power of saints and plousmen all the associated practices, such as worship of tombs and reliance upon the intercession of the Prophet(pbuh) or the saints. Edward Martimer, *op. cit.; p.60.*
first man to raise the cry and he revolted against superstitions, tomb worship and other customs and traditions.¹

It would sound strange here that Ibn Taimiya who was a great enemy of the cult of tombs² was himself buried in the cemetery of the sufis, as irony would have it, his tomb is today an object of reverential homage of countless visitors.³ After the death of Ibn Taimiya the dominant form of contemporary Islam was permeated with abuses particularly at the hands of Turks.³ Some new customs and traditions had crept into the practices of the Muslims. These beliefs and superstitions remained intact with them for a considerable period of time. No reform movement seems to have taken place to check the beliefs, tomb worship and similar other practices until the

2. Edward Mortimer, *op. cit*; p. 60.
3. It must be pointed out here that Ibn Taimiya held Ulama (worldly) responsible for all the innovations in Islam. Many of the judgements appeared to him heretic based on the consensus of the Ulama who had refused to examine whether their opinions were in harmony with the Book. The Ulama as such deprived the people of the right of *Ijtihad*. Julius Germanus, *Modern Movements in Islam*; pp. 9-10.
beginning of the last quarter of the eighteenth century A.D. The reform movement in Islam was launched in Central Arabia where Wahabbism had its origin. The movement was founded by Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahab (1703-1783) of Najd. He wanted to preach and practice what actually had been said and done by the Prophet (pbuh) and his companions.

Because of his vast study and profound knowledge of the Quran and Hadith, he vehemently criticised saint worship, grave-worship and other innovations. He wanted to restore Islam to its puritan and pristine glory.

In Kashmir there were many unislamic practices prevalent among the Muslims during our period. The impact of shrines and their regular attendants also known as vested interest class gave birth to many irrational and negative factors. Doubt the Muslims had embraced Islam long before our period of study but they had not severed their ties with the age old beliefs. They (Muslims and Hindus) sometimes worshipped the same object. For instance, the foot print at

1. He was shocked it seems, by the laxity of the society in which he grew up—its neglect of the prescribed rates and prayers, its promiscuity and its tolerance of superstition. Edward Mortimer, op.cit; p.60.
2. Edward Mortimer, Faith and Power; p.244. However it is very necessary to mention here that Muhammad Ibn Wahab had made a thorough study of the writings of Ibn-Taymiya and these writings had great influence on him.
3. Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab, Tawheed Kaev hay; p.20
4. Edward Mortimer, op.cit; p.249.
Yaripora and Fatehpore were worshipped and revered by members of both the communities with equal zest. The Hindus took it as 'Vishnu Rād' and the Muslims as 'Kadam-i-Rasul'. The idol worship which was common among Hindus took the form of grave-worship among Muslims.

Avtarparash assumed the form of Pirparasti. The muavirs of the shrines took the place of the pujaris of temples. The erection of tombs and celebration of anniversaries of saints with enthusiasm was regarded to be such practices as were in conformity with the teachings of Islam. It had become very difficult to distinguish between the Hadith and non-Sunnah. The Hadith and sayings of sufis, maulvis, darwāsah and poets were regarded as equally valid. The people did not consider it a sin to call a saint a nabi (pbuh) and nabi as God. Maulana Hali has thus remarked, "Nabi (pbuh) could be raised to the pedestal of God. The status of imams could be raised higher to that of nabi (pbuh). People would make offerings at the sanctuaries day and night and would invoke the blessings of the martyrs. All this would not impair the principle of Tawhid (unity in oneness of God) nor would it obliterate Islam." There were many other customs and superstitions ingrained in the very nature of the Kashmiri. Mirza Heider Qughlat had said that so many heresies have been legitimized in Kashmir.

1. Sofi Ahmad Muslim, Tarikh-i-Ahlihadis; p.86.
2. Ibid; p.86.
that people know nothing of what is lawful or unlawful. The so-called Pirs and sufis are "forever interpreting dreams, displaying miracles and obtaining from the unseen information regarding either future or the past....Consider the holy path (shariat) second in importance to the true way (tariqat) and that in consequence the people of the 'way' have nothing to do with the 'Holy Law'. The observations of Mirza Haider close with the following prayer—"May the most high God defend all the people of Islam from such misfortunes and calamities as this and turn them all into the true path of righteousness". The saint-worship, grave-worship and such other practices have been noted with great concern by the great poet Dr. Muhammad Iqbal who after his return from Kashmir wrote some verses in Persian which convey that the Kashmiri who is praying to God has made the graves as idols by mounting decorated stones on the graves.

Besides, while answering letter of Muhammad-din-Fauq Iqbal wrote to him that he had written a lot on Kashmiris and had done them a good turn, but he had missed to write something on practice of grave-worship among Kashmiri Muslims.

1. G.M.D. Sufi, Islamic Culture in Kashmir; p.10.
He was also a redoubtable opponent of muiavirs for their activities at Khangahs and shrines.

These practices eventually gave rise to a movement among the educated people in Kashmir during the reign of Maharaja Ranbir Singh (1857-1885). Some people with Husain Shah Batku, as their leader raised their voice against tomb-worship, Pir Muredi and criticised the astanparasti. These customs were deep rooted in the Muslim community. Husain Shah made bold to say that these traditions had been borrowed by Muslims from Hinduism. He also emphasized and advocated tauhid (oneness of God) and delivered a series of lectures on tauhid and urged the people to follow all that had been practised by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). His criticism of grave-worship and saint-worship was not liked by the mullahs, muiavirs and muftis of Srinagar. As a matter of fact, the pirs and guardians of shrines were having complete hold over the society. Fearing the erosion of their influence over the

1. Husain Shah being resident of Batakpora near Madin Sahib in Srinagar was nicknamed as Batku by the Mullahs.
2. Tarikh-i-Hasan, Vol.1; p.442. Husain Shah had visited many literary centres in India. He had the privilege of being pupil of prominent Ahl-i-Hadis leader like, Nazir Husain Dehlavi. He gained much knowledge from these associations which ultimately brought about a great change in his religious thought.
4. Tarikh-i-Hassan, Vol.1; p.442.
5. During our period of study, an Anjuman criticised the mullahs and muiavirs for their attitude. The mullahs by exploiting the ignorant masses got so much support that the followers of the Anjuman were nicknamed as Yezar pirs and the Anjuman fizzled out. G.H. Khan, Freedom Movement in Kashmir; p.75.
dumb-driven millions of Kashmiris they (pirs and mujavirs) raised a cry against Husain Shah and issued fatwas (decrees) against him, accusing him of being an infidel.\(^1\) There was panic and disturbance in the valley and hatred was generated among the people against Husain Shah. The Muslims were not allowed to talk to him.\(^2\) The opposition of the mullahs and mujavirs was so strong that Maharaja was compelled to give orders for Husain's expulsion from Srinagar.\(^3\)

However, Husain Shah was able to influence and motivate the minds of some prominent citizens of Srinagar namely Sabzar Shah, Abdul Aziz Chikan, Maulvi Hasan Shah and others.\(^4\) Having been expelled from Srinagar, Husain Shah preached Islam and criticised the customs and superstitions in many villages\(^5\) of Tehsil Shupian. He got reasonable response from Shupian which has been referred to by Lawrence in his work. He observed that as many as two hundred families in Shupian accepted the Wahabi faith.\(^7\)

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2. Muslim, April 2,1953; p.11-12.
3. Maulvi Ghulam Nabi Mubarki, Khutba-i-Sadarat; p.31. It must be pointed out here that Husain Shah did not lay any emphasis on Jihad like Wahabbi leaders in India.
5. He went to village Yaripora and Naasoor to preach his doctrines and fought Ahmadiyas there as they had made it their centre of preaching.
6. Founder of this movement was Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab of Najd. That is why it became famous as Wahabi Movement. Tarikh-i-Hasan, Vol.1; p.442.
7. Lawrence, op.cit; p.285.
Husain Shah succeeded in influencing the great personalities like Atta Muhammad Khan, a raise of the time. He won a considerable number of followers. That section of the residents of Srinagar city who had accepted doctrine continued their tirage against the superstitions, tomb-worship and grave-worship. They faced too much opposition at the hands of mujavirs, rishis and mutawalis of the shrines. It should be mentioned here that this movement was a great challenge to them(mujavirs) and jeopardized their interests. The mullahs resorted to social boycott of the wahabbis. They (mullahs) justified the violence against wahabbis. The mullahs issued fatwas to the effect that the dead bodies of the Ahl-i-Hadith should not be buried in the Muslim graveyard and no Muslim should enter into matrimonial alliance with them, nor were the Ahl-i-Hadith to be allowed to enter the mosques. The wahabbis did not gain much ground in Srinagar except at Narwara, where Sabzar Shah carried on his activities.

After the death of Husain Shah, the movement gained ground mainly owing to the efforts of Anwar Shah of Shopian.

Anwar Shah vehemently criticized the customs, the Muslims of Kashmir had been following blindly. He challenged the ceremonies and rites performed by the Muslims. He launched his tirade against the shrines. For this reason the Ahl-i-Hadith people were nicknamed and denounced as Kutab and Ahl-i-hawa.

However in due course of time Anwar Shah laid the foundation of Ahl-i-Hadith mosque at Zaldagar. He succeeded in influencing and motivating a prominent shawl trader of Kashmir namely Haji Muhammad Shahdad.

With the passage of time the followers of Ahl-i-Hadith constructed some new mosques and gained some more ground.

With the association of Maulvi Ghulam Nabi Mubaraki the movement of Ahl-i-Hadith from 1920 A.D. onwards further succeeded in moulding and influencing the people. Maulvi Ghulam Nabi was the imam and preacher of the Bazhar mosque. His knowledge and oratory attracted a sizeable number of people to Ahl-i-Hadith.

1. Maulvi Abdul Ghani, Khatijat-ul-Kubra; p.3-4.
2. M.D. Khan, op.cit; p.108.
3. It was the first mosque of the Ahl-i-Hadith in the whole Valley. They (Ahl-i-Hadith) made this mosque a centre of their preaching.
4. Maulvi Ghulam Nabi Mubaraki, Tahqeeq-i-Want-Juma; p.4.
The Mullahs, muftis, mujaitirs and mutwaliirs did not stop their tirade against the Ahl-i-Hadith for the opportune moment to humiliate them. That is why, the Ahl-i-Hadith were forcibly driven out of the Aali Masjid on the day of Id-ul-Fitr. Their presence in the mosque on such an occasion was not liked by the Hanafis. They (Hanafis) charged them for creating chaos and confusion.¹

The Ahl-i-Hadith did not deflect from the course of their activities. They persisted in preaching their mission. One important point which the mullahs, and mujaitirs feared the most was the denial by the Wahabbis of the doctrine of Hayat Nabi² (concept of the perpetuity of the Prophet s.a.w.s). The Wahabbis further advocated that there could be no link between the living and the dead. They also regarded it mushrikana (polytheistic to consider the ambiya and aulid as successor before God.³ Evidently they wanted the society to follow the principle of Quran and Hadith. The Ahl-i-Hadith in the twenties of this century founded Anjumn-i-Ahl-i-Hadith. Following were the founding members of the Anjumn. Haji Muhammad Shahdad, Ghulam Nabi Mubarki, Abdul Aziz Chikan, Shaikh Shah Muhammad, Dr. Ramzan Ali and others.⁴ Haji Muhammad

¹ Mirwaiz Ahmad-ullah, op. cit; p.1-2.
² M.I.Khan, op. cit; p.103.
³ Sofi Ahmad Muslim, op cit; p.34.
⁴ Ibid. mx M.I.Khan, op. cit; p.103.
Shahdad was made the first President of the Anjumn and Mubarki its Secretary. The establishment of the Anjumn-i-Ahl-i-Hadith was, however, not liked by the Mullahs and Muftis. They issued fatwa against the organisation.¹

The ahl-i-Hadith now filed a case against the mullahs, muftis and others.² After a couple of hearings, the court decided the case in favour of the Ahl-i-Hadith which greatly encouraged them to carry on their mission. Thereafter they openly preached against dīras and shrines.³ The growing influence of the Wahabbis alarmed the mullahs who in collaboration with other opponents of the Wahabbis established in 1932 A.D.⁴ the Anjumn-i-Tablig-ul-Islam, in order to fight menace of the Wahabbis.

IMPACT OF THE MUSLIM REVIVALIST MOVEMENT

The Ahl-i-Hadith movement throughout the period under study preached and emphasized the two main sources of Islam. These constitute the Qur'an and the Hadith.⁵ They wanted the Muslims to follow with tenacity the teachings of Qur'an and

1. M.I. Khan, op. cit; p.100
2. Haji Muhammad Shahdad, op. cit; p.3.
3. M.I. Khan, op. cit; p.108.
5. M.I. Khan, op. cit; p.108.
Hadith in pursuit of the faith. In order to smoothen the way for this the Ahli-Hadith launched a tirade against all those practices and traditions that were contrary to shariat. Their mission and subsequent activities brought them into direct conflict with self-aggrandised vested-interest class who wanted to keep the common and credulous Muslims in a state of ignorance and illiteracy. The fatalist and superstitious Kashmiris had all along been under the sway and control of mullahs¹ and mujavirs. However, the Wahabbis courageously went forward and tried their best to purge Islam of the customs and traditions that had crept into it due to local influences. In the process the Ahli-Hadith movement made an impact on a section of the people. Consequently the practices of arranging Juma Chahe and Khatam Sharif were abandoned in the Ahli-Hadith families. They waged a crusade against the celebration of Urs and anniversaries of the saints². Though the anniversaries of the saints are still celebrated by a great majority of the Muslims in the Valley but growing indifference towards the participation in and attendance at the festivals of saints now exists among the educated Muslims³. But more importantly the Ahli-Hadith succeeded in exposing the evil of exploitation resorted to

1. G. H. Khan, op. cit; p. 72
2. Maulvi Anwar Shah, op. cit; p. 11.
by the muiavirs, mutwails and the mullahs. This helped the Ahl-i-Hadith in relieving, to some extent, the common and ignorant people from the tyranny of the Pirzadas, Babzadas, Rishees, mullahs and the custodians of the shrines. Though the majority of Muslims remained uninfluenced by the teachings of the Ahli-Hadith the movement did not fail to change the attitude of a sizeable section of the Muslims. The spread of education and circulation of literature greatly helped in extending the Ahli-Hadith movement. Many people including some of the piris, mullahs and mutwails (custodians of the shrines) could not close their eyes to the growing influence of the Ahl-i-Hadith as they themselves said Wahabbi ideas were gaining ground in the city of Srinagar. Consequently the visits to shrines for grant of boons and tying the strings to the gates and windows of the shrine have died down among the Ahli-Hadith families. The Muslims as a matter of fact fought against each other. The mullahs played a nefarious role in dividing the Muslims into different sects for their self-aggrandisement. They preached the things that served their own interests. The Ahl-i-Hadith fought against the inter-community differences and stressed unity among the Muslims. They emphasized the concept of tawhid.

1. The cunning muiavirs still defraud the credulous people as and when they find an opportunity.
5. M.I. Khan, op. cit; p.185.
(unity of God). This really aroused the sense of awareness among the Muslims of Kashmir who had all along considered mullahs as their true masters and had reposed great confidence in their pirs.\(^1\)

However, one should not lose sight of the fact that Islam mainly spread in Kashmir due to unending efforts of sufis, sadats, saints and rishis. The crusade against the worship of shrines by the Ahl-i-Hadith has been interpreted by a great number of people as an attack on the pious sufis. The attitude of the Ahli-Hadith has come in for censure and this attitude more than any thing else is believed to have the spirits of the common engendered much ill will against them. In such an atmosphere as this the Ahli-Hadith obviously failed to gain much ground in the Valley.

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1. K.R. Lawrence, op. cit; p.295.