ABSTRACT

The beginning of the twentieth century witnessed great changes and new trends in the political environment of the Indian Sub-Continent. Indian National Congress which had so far adopted liberal and loyal attitude towards the British Government by demanding constitutional reforms, formation of democratic institutions and more and more representation of Indians in civil as well as other Government services, now thought it necessary to raise voice in favour of Swaraj (the Self-Government). Resolution was passed in this regard in its Calcutta session of 1906. In the mean time the Congress leaders were divided on this issue into two groups - moderates and extremists. And very soon, at the Surat Session in 1907, the extremists left the party. The whole political scenario was rapidly turning into anti-British atmosphere. Hindus of the country, who had been fighting so far, in an organized way, mostly under the banner of the Congress, were now politically more sound and strong than others. A number of attractive political personalities amongst them were endeavouring for the country's liberation.

As for Muslims, they had hitherto followed, most probably under the influence of Sir Syed's advice, the attitude of non-cooperation with the Indian National Congress. Eminent Muslim leaders of those days, particularly Sir Syed's successors and followers, came forward to found the Muslim League in 1906. However, a sizeable section of their population also felt attracted to Indian National Congress. Among the pioneers who took initiative in this direction and joined the Congress, Hasrat Mohani deserves special mention. Since the beginning of his political career, he was a man of hard principles and
a staunch opponent of British government. He, therefore, participated in almost all the movements of our freedom struggle. His whole life was full of struggle and sacrifice.

Hasrat Mohani, occupies a significant place in the cultural and political history of modern India. He is held as one of the first-rank and top-most leaders of the twentieth century national movement. His deep interest in the anti-British political affairs of the country may be seen clearly in his step, that without waiting for the result of his B.A. final examination, he started publishing his famous Urdu monthly periodical entitled *Urdu-i Mualla*. Its first issue appeared in July 1903 from Aligarh, which was, in a way, the nerve center of Muslim intellectual life in India. Though initially, for some time, it was a literary magazine but very soon political topics dominated it.

As pointed out earlier, many significant events were taking place, in the beginning of the twentieth century, in the political scenario of the subcontinent. The partition of Bengal in 1905, the Swadeshi and Boycott movements, the rise of terrorism and underground nationalist activities, the Simla Deputation of 1906, the formation of the Muslim League, the split in the Congress in 1907 etc. had exhorted great influence on the contemporary Indian society. Consequently, being impressed by the situation taking place, Hasrat Mohani, like other nationalist leaders, also could not keep himself aloof from this environment. He always exhibited a revolutionary temper and came to the forefront with a spirit of sincere devotion and sacrifice. Being possessed of a sensitive nature about his surroundings, he not only absorbed the trendiest currents but also accepted the challenges as and when they came his way.
Accordingly the articles written and published by him in the *Urdu-i Mualla* gave a fairly clear picture of his stand on the contemporary political issues of those days. The Indian National Congress was the only political body of importance in the country at that time. Therefore, Hasrat Mohani as mentioned above, at once took his stand with it and started vigorously participating in its activities. At the same time when he was struggling in his youth for the country’s liberation, Hasrat Mohani also showed deep interest in the political developments of the contemporary Islamic world. Keeping in view the world brotherhood of Islam, he kept himself well informed of happenings in other Muslim countries.

He openly favoured and supported the leaders of the extremists group in the Congress and declared that in politics he considered himself, and others like him, bound to follow in the foot-steps of Balgangadhar Tilak, the leader of patriots, and Babu Aurobindo Ghosh, the chief of freedom-lovers. He vehemently criticized the leaders of the moderate wing of the Congress, the followers of the Muslim League and the founders of the Hindu Conference alike. He attempted to infuse a militant spirit into the Muslims and appealed them to join hands with the Hindus to work together for the freedom of their country.

Accordingly it was in the early year of the second decade of the twentieth century that Hasrat worked more energetically than ever to spread the message of the boycott and to win over people to Swadeshi goods. In order to preach and popularize his ideas among the masses particularly Muslims in those days Hasrat travelled far and wide in the cities of western U.P. and
eastern Punjab. He also participated in other political movements such as *Khilafat* Conferences, the Communist Movement in India, opposed the Nehru Report, campaigned for a Muslim University. He was imprisoned several times during the freedom movement and experienced lot of torture and hardships in jail. Thus all his life he actively participated in and struggled significant political issues to accomplish his object of swaraj for his motherland.

When in March 1940 the All India Muslim League in its session held at Lahore passed the Pakistan Resolution, Hasrat made great effort to avoid the country’s partition. He now started his opinion that India should be composed of a number of republics grouped in five federations that along with one princely state (Hyderabad) should form an Indian confederation. Anyhow Muslim League succeeded in achieving Pakistan. While most of the League leaders shifted to Pakistan, Hasrat remained in Kanpur. He was an elected member of India’s Constituent Assembly. He fulfilled responsibilities with full courage and confidence. Leading a revolutionary life, Maulana Hasrat Mohani passed away on 13 May 1951 in Lucknow and was buried, as per his desire, in the same city near the tomb of his spiritual mentor Maulana Abdul Wahab of Firangi Mahal.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The present thesis proposes to study the following aspects and questions:

1. What was the role of Maulana Hasrat Mohani in the freedom struggle?
2. What was the place of Hasrat Mohani in the cultural and political history of modern India?

3. To analyse the role of Hasrat’s Urdu monthly, Urdu-i Mualla in the political scenario of the Indian sub-continent.

4. To study the role of Hasrat Mohani in the political development of the contemporary Islamic world.

5. To examine Hasrat’s role as an admirer and upholder of Hindu-Muslim unity.

6. To estimate Hasrat’s efforts to popularize the swadeshi movement.

7. To review Hasrat’s inclination towards the Communist Movement.

8. To study Hasrat’s endeavour to stop the partition of the country.

9. To assess Hasrat’s role after independence, to review and analyse his political ideas and personality.

Thus an attempt has been made in the following pages to present an account of Hasrat Mohani’s contribution during our freedom struggle. The thesis is entitled as “Hasrat Mohani: A Critical Appraisal of his Political Career and Ideology”. Initiating with the discussion of Hasrat’s family background, providing details of his early political career and activities, and highlighting his role after independence, a special emphasis has been laid in this work on Hasrat’s political activities which took place during the first half of the twentieth century and its impact on Indian life and thought. In this context Hasrat’s Urdu-i Mualla has served as the most authentic source material and has been properly utilized for our work. The British Government official records preserved in the National and State Archives have also
benefited us. Some material regarding his political ideology has been derived from his poetical verses. Similarly, the letters of different political personality of the freedom movement are also very helpful for the present work. Moreover all modern works on Hasrat and on National Movement, both in English and Urdu, are also of great significance and have been completely utilized. The thesis, comprises seven chapters, the detail of which is as follows.

CHAPTER – I

FAMILY BACKGROUND : EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION

This chapter traces the ancestral chronology of Maulana Hasrat Mohani in detail. The history of the town Mohan has also been dealt with. The main factors responsible for the development of Hasrat’s personality were his family background and his education which have been discussed in detail. His deep interest in poetry has also been described. His student life in the M.A.O. College and the then circumstances and reasons for his expulsion from there have also been discussed in detail.

CHAPTER II

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES 1903 to 1910

This chapter will deal with Hasrat’s career from 1903 to 1910. He started his career as a journalist by publishing an Urdu monthly entitled Urdu-i Mualla from Aligarh. All important political events during the above period and it’s impact on the people has been discussed. The partition of Bengal in 1905, Swadeshi movement, the foundation of the Muslim League, the Surat Congress and its significance, Hasrat’s first imprisonment in 1908 and the
hardship faced by him in the jail are other important aspects discussed in detail in this chapter.

CHAPTER III

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES BETWEEN 1910 TO 1918

An attempt has been made in this chapter to discuss in detail Hasrat's involvement in the political activities between 1910 to 1918. On his release from Allahabad Jail Hasrat again started the publication of the Urdu-i Mualla from Aligarh in October 1909 and started his own printing press known as the Urdu Press. This chapter discusses in detail the different articles published in the Urdu-i Mualla and its effect on the people. The Kanpur Mosque incident, the Muslim University movement, the freedom movement and beginning of the 1st World War, the Lucknow pact, the silk letter movement and Hasrat's second imprisonment in 1916 and other important aspects discussed in detail in this chapter.

CHAPTER IV

HASRAT IN KHLIFAT AND NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENTS

This chapter reviews, Hasrat’s role in the Khilafat and Non cooperation movements of the Indian freedom struggle. Hasrat’s pivotal role in the Khilafat movement has been discussed. This chapter also discusses the Montague-Chelmsford Report of 1919, which provided separate Muslim electorates, as envisaged in the Lucknow Pact of 1916. But Hasrat Mohani strongly opposed the report and the new constitution. The Indian leaders reacted by launching the Non-cooperation movement in 1920. Mahatma Gandhi and Hasrat Mohani
differed in their views as regards the non-cooperation movement. The
difference of opinion between Mahatma Gandhi and Hasrat Mohani relating to
various significant political issues has been reviewed in detail in this chapter.
Hasrat was imprisoned for the third time in 1922 and was inflicted with a lot of
injustice and various false charges were put on him which has been discussed
in detail.

CHAPTER V

POLITICAL ROLE FROM 1924 – 1937

This chapter reviews Hasrat Mohani's political role from 1924-1937. The
Communist party was established in India in 1925 under the auspices of
M.N. Roy and many more leaders of India, and Hasrat Mohani was one of
these leaders who played a crucial role in organizing and forming of the
Communist Party on Indian soil. The role of Hasrat Mohani in the various
communist conferences has been elaborately discussed. The response to the
Nehru-Report and his attitude towards civil disobedience Movement and his
complete participation in it, the formation of the Azad Party by Hasrat Mohani
and Maulana Azad Subhani, its aims and objectives and the publication of the
'Mustaqil', a paper published by Hasrat in 1928 are other important aspects
discussed in this chapter.

CHAPTER VI

ASSOCIATION WITH MUSLIM LEAGUE AND PAKISTAN
MOVEMENTS
Maulana Hasrat Mohani was deeply involved in the national political developments but simultaneously took keen interest in contemporary Muslim social life and politics of the country. His association with the Muslim League and his active participation in all its activities has been dealt with in this chapter. His complete participation in all the Pakistan movements also form an important theme of this chapter. An attempt has been made in this chapter to analyse Hasrat’s scheme and programme for an independent India.

CHAPTER VII

HASRAT AFTER INDEPENDENCE

After independence most of the Muslim League members made their way to the newly achieved Pakistan but Hasrat remained in India. The extracts from his personal diary have been utilized to illustrate his stand in this chapter. This chapter aims to analyse his role as an active and responsible member of the constituent Assembly. His views are reflected in his speeches which have been quoted in this chapter to show his point of view on various significant issues discussed in the Assembly.

In the conclusion an attempt has been made to assess Hasrat’s personality and political career. An attempt has also been made to trace his links with the political struggle and freedom movement of the country. The impact of his political ideas on the freedom movement has also been explained. His efforts to make the Muslim community a politically conscious and educated community has also been assessed.

The thesis also comprises a bibliography of both published and unpublished contemporary, semi-contemporary and other works utilized in its
preparation. Moreover, there are some appendices also through which an attempt has been made to bring to light the original material regarding the subject.