P R E F A C E
In the early period of Islam undoubtedly the social life of Muslims was dominated by the religion. Everything which Muslims did was for Islam. Naturally the aim of education could, therefore, be no other than to mould the life of Muslims into an attitude of obedience to the belief and teachings of Islam. One of the basic teachings of Islam is to allow an individual to develop his potentialities to the fullest possible so as to enable him to attain the material prosperity and the world of spiritual reality as well. But it insists at the same time that individual capacities should be developed in such a manner that they may not impede the development of Islamic society, rather they should be linked with it and may contribute to its harmonious growth. In other words, Islam would frown upon this enlargement of individual personality if it comes in the way of development of "Millat". It declines to allow the claims of "Millat" to be eclipsed by those of the individuals. Dr. Iqbal has rightly said that the individual isolated from the community is an abstraction. He is real only so far as he absorbs the purposes of community and creatively expresses them through his own personality.

One of the major factors responsible for spectacular achievements of early Muslims was this happy fusion of the self and the state over which Islam laid so much emphasis. It was this concept of social individuality that contributed to a large extent the phenomenal development of Islam in early period. However, with the march of time this concept of social individuality was lost sight of and enthusiasm for seeking fresh facts and discovering new
frontiers of knowledge could not be maintained for long. The result was the narrow traditionalism which cut at the very roots of liberalism, and sounded the death-knell of scientific search for which the early Muslims had a great passion. In this connection it may be pointed out that these seekers of new frontiers had gone too far. Their unqualified faith in reason was also not a happy development. It was perhaps Imam al-Ghazali who saw for the first time the dangers of dominance of reason over revelation and he rightly took up cudgels against it and by his forceful writings disfranchised it. However, the result of al-Ghazali’s crusade against reason led to an unfortunate development that the traditional schools clung obstinately for centuries to their old traditions and would not introduce any change in their system in the context of the new age. It may be exaggeration, but exaggeration of a vital truth that traditional institutions in India have changed very little and there is nothing to show that they have made any fruitful efforts to adjust themselves to the social and intellectual demands of a new society. Most of them are still following the curricula which have refused to show any awareness of the new world. They are producing men who cannot play a meaningful role in the Indian society in general and Muslim society in particular. The question is how these institutions can be made useful to our society in the context of the changed times. The present monograph makes a modest attempt to understand their problems and offer suitable suggestions so as to make these institutions an effective instrument to mould Muslims into useful citizens within the framework of Islamic teachings.
Many persons have contributed either directly or indirectly to the writing of this monograph. It is with deep appreciation that I acknowledge the inspiring guidance and encouragement which I received from my guide Prof. S. Maqbul Ahmad. It has been my good fortune to have worked under Prof. S. Maqbul Ahmad who is considered an international authority on Islam and the Muslim world. I have no adequate words to express how much I am indebted to him for his stimulating discussions and suggestive criticism. I would also like to express my deep debt of gratitude to my friends Mr. Shahabuddin Ansari of School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University and M. Waseem Khan Sherwani of the Ministry of Education who not only helped me in collecting the materials for this monograph but also took great pains in critically examining the entire manuscript and suggesting suitable changes in it. No less indebted I am to Dr. Khalilur Rahman Azmi who had been a source of encouragement at all times. It was he who persuaded me to take up this work and offered me every kind of assistance to finish this job. I am also grateful to Syed Ausaf Ali and Syed Murtaza Ali Naqvi of the Indian Institute of Islamic Studies for providing me access to the valuable collection they have built up at the Institute. I am beholden to my friends Iqtedar Hussain, Qasim Siddiqui, Zakir Ali, Imtiyaz Ansari and Abdul qadim Khan for making frequent encroachments upon their time. I wish to express my thanks to Dr. Abid Raza Bedar of Jawaharlal Nehru University and Dr. Mahmudul Haq of Aligarh Muslim University for sparing their time in discussing some of the matters pertaining to traditional education.
Lastly I must record my indebtedness to my wife who bore with me during the period and willingly took upon herself the entire responsibilities of running the house.

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