

The Role of Ulema and Mashaikh in the Pakistan Movement

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Abstract

The main objective of the present study was to explain the role of the religious people during the Pakistan Movement. In fact, there were different schools of thought who supported the Pakistan Movement and their work and achievement cannot be forgotten during the history of the Pakistan Movement.

Key Words: Role, Ulema, Making of Pakistan.

The Ulema and Mashaikh of the Indo-Pak sub-continent played an active role in promoting the Pakistan Movement. The Ulema's tradition of the participation in the politics is very old. The Ulema belong to Chishtia, Qadria, Naqshbandia and Soharwardia and their followers actively supported the two-nation theory which led to Pakistan Resolution. The prominent names amongst them are Allama Shabbir Ahmed Usmani, Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi, Maulana Abdul Hamid Badauni, Mufti Muhammad Shafi, Maulana Muhammad Ibrahim Sialkoti, Pir Ghulam Mujadid Sirhandi, Amin-ul-Hasanat, Pir Sahib of Manki Sharif, Pir Sahib of Zakori Sharif, Pir Jamaat Ali Shah, Maulana Sanaullah Amratsari, Maulana Rasheed Ahmad Ghangohi, Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanotavi, Haji Zaman Ali Shaheed and a lot of others.

In fact, the foundationstone of Pakistan Movement was laid by Hazrat Mujadid Alaf Sani, Sheikh Ahmad Sirhandi who did not hesitate to confront with the British royal authority and put his life at stake to light the torch for the regeneration of Islamic spirit. It was kept alive, after the death of the Aurangzeb Alamgir, by the movement started by Shah Waliullah. In the first half of the 19th century, Shah Abdul Aziz intensified it and made it widespread. Later on Shah Ismail Shaheed and Syed Ahmad Shaheed converted it into the Jihad Movement for the establishment of an Islamic state in the sub-continent. They fought against the Sikh ruler of the Punjab and were martyred while fighting in the valley of Balakot in quest to establish the Will of God.

With the passage of time, the idea of the demand of Pakistan was creeping in the minds of the Indian Muslims at that time when constitutional struggle for the liberation of the sub-continent had been started. The important question which beset the minds of the Indian Muslims was that after the departure of the British what type of government would be started in India?. With the

passage of time, this question had become more and more significant and it dominated the minds of the Indian Muslims. But the native Hindus always tried to temporize the matter by saying : after departure of the British it would be settled through mutual agreement, but first of all the British should be ousted. The Hindus wanted to leave the matter as such and unsettled before the departure of the British, because they knew that, after the independence, they would outnumber the Muslims and put them at their mercy. But the Muslims never wanted to be dominated by the Hindus. They always wished to have a respectable place in the future set up of the country with due regard to their legitimate rights and religious sentiments.

After the war of 1857, some of the Ulema established religious institutions for the religious teaching so that they could prepare the younger generation to protect the cause of the faith. Some of the Ulema had started underground movement for the political and national awakening of the Muslims. First World War broke out in 1914 and the Muslims were promised by the British government to protect the Holy places of the Muslims but after the War Holy places were not protected. So the Muslims of the sub-continent started a movement. The main objective of the movement was to compel Britian to restore the status of the Sultan of Turkey who was recognized as a Khalifa of the Muslim World. Under these circumstances, Maulana Mahmood-ul-Hassan made a revolutionary plan to outset the British rulers from the sub-continent. This plan came to be known as "Silk Hankerchief Movement". The Muslims of the sub-continent started Khilafat Movement under Majlis-i-Khilafat which became the effective movement of the Muslims. Allmost all prominent Ulema like Maulana Muhammad Ali Jouhar, Maulana Shaukat Ali, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, Maulana Hasarat Mohani, Maulana Abdul Bari Farangi Mahal, Syed Sulaiman Nadvi, Maulana Abdul Majid Badauni, and Maulana Hassan Ahmad Madni joined it. At that time Ulema had no political platform. Now they felt that they must guide the Muslims under the light of the principles of Islam in their religious and political matters.

The Ulema of Deoband had organized a platform "Jamiat-ul-Hind" in 1919 through a resolution of Khilafat Committee with the following objectives.

- To guide the followers of Islam in political and non-political matters from religious point of view.
- To defend on Shariat grounds, Islam, centres of Islam (Holy places of Islam and the seat of Khilafat). Islamic rituals and customs, and

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Islamic nationalism against all odds injurious to them.

- To establish and protect the general religious and national rights of the Muslims.
- To organize the Ulema on a common platform.
- To organize the Muslim community and to launch a program for its moral and social reform.

The result of the cooperation of the Ulema was that the Khilafat movement became very widespread and popular with the Muslims masses. The period of the Khilafat was also an era of Hindu-Muslim unity. During the stormy days, both the communities, Hindus and Muslims were dominated by the only thought of driving out the British from India. The Jamiat Ulma-i-Hind decided to cooperate with the Hindus unconditionally, to achieve this objective. But there was a group of Ulema who did not like the Jamiat to give unconditional support to the Congress. As a result of this controversy among Ulema, the Jamiat was split into two groups. The pro-Congress Ulema were led by Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madni who launched a campaign of propaganda against the Muslim League. The anti-Congress Ulema disassociated themselves from the Jamiat and remained aloof from the Congress movement.

In 1938, a delegation was sent by Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi to the Quaid-i-Azam about the cause of the principles of Islam. So the anti-Congress Ulema decided to support the Muslim League in the light of the teaching of Islam. All India Muslim League passed the following resolution in its meeting on 4th of December, 1938 at Delhi.

In every province and district where the spiritual influence of Ulema could be utilized for the purpose, brief Fatwas and manifestoes should be issued on behalf of Ulema, in which the Muslims warned against joining the Congress and the disadvantages from religious point of view of any association with the Congress should be clearly and emphatically explained to them. These Fatwas should be published under the authority of AIML through the agency of the local League in the language of each province and district. I (Pirzada ,1947).

With the passage of time, the Ulema at the sub-continent decided the cause of Pakistan. In 1940 AIML appointed a committee of the leading Ulema and prominent thinkers of Islam to prepare a draft of the system of government for it. The committee consisted of such a galaxy of stars as Syed Sulman Nadvi, Maulana Abu AalaMuddoodi, Maulana Azam Subbani, and Maulana Abdul Majid Daria Abadi.

2 (Chiragh-1960).

In 1942 AIML declared that government of Pakistan would be based on principles of the Quran and Sunnah. The Ulema who had kept themselves aloof from the Congress movements decided to support it. They played a very vital role in strengthening Pakistan

Movement.... The prominent names amongst the pro-League Ulema were Maulana Ashraf Ali, Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, Maulana Zafar Ahmad Usmani and Mufti Muhammad Shafi.

At that time, the need of an organization of pro-League Ulema was felt to support the cause of the Pakistan Movement. Therefore, in a big gathering of Ulema, in October 1945 at Calcutta, Jamiat-ul-Ulema Islam was formed which proved a big landmark in the struggle for the establishment of Pakistan. Due to the participation of Ulema in the Movement, the objectives of Pakistan Movement became more and more clear and their followers joined it for the achievement of Pakistan. With the passage of time, some more Ulema decided to join Jamiat-ul-Ulema Islam and its branches were established all over the country. Mufti Muhammad Shafi joined Jamiat-ul-Ulema Islam and became the member of the central working committee. He went all out in support of the Pakistan.Movement Mufti Muhammad Shafi started a movement with pen in favour of Pakistan and wrote a number of pamphlets and issued a Fatwa (religious decree). He had conviction that establishment of Pakistan is inevitable. Besides contributing through his writing, he made extensive tours of the sub-continent to motivate the Muslims in favour of Pakistan. His speech and statement took the Muslims by storm everywhere he went. His great efforts to counter influence in NWFP on the eve of the referendum of 1947 are unforgettable.

In the elections 1945-46 Jamiat-Ulema Hind decided to support the Congress which had rejected the demand of Pakistan and stood for united India. During this critical juncture, Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani along with his companions gave an unflinching support to the League and pleaded in favour of the Quaid-i-Azam against all opposition which had been directed by the nationalist Ulema. He publically announced his complete and irrevocable faith in the honesty and integrity of the Quaid-i-Azam. He also warned the common Muslims against the designs of the Congressite Ulema.

In the elction of 1945-46, AIML had a very tough time in NWFP.where “ Khan Brothers” were in power in the province. The Congress won the elction in NWFP and succeeded in forming the provincial government led by Dr. Khan Sahib. At the time of the partition of the sub-continent, referendum was held in NWFP. The Ulema and Mashaikhs put the whole weight at their support and force in the blance of League. The Quaid-i-Azam specially sent Allama Shabbir Ahmed Usmani to NWFP. in support of the League. He along with Mufti Muhammad Shafi, Pir Sahib of Manki Sharif and Pir Sahib of Zakori Sharif intensified the activities in support of the Muslim League. They made strong tour of the province and tribal areas to mobilize the support of the Muslim masses for Pakistan. Their earnest efforts succeeded in paving the way for a landside victory of the League.The referendum was held on 06-

17 July, 1947 and 289,244 votes were cast in favour of joining the New Constituent Assembly as against 2,874 for continuing with existing Indian Constituent Assembly. 3. (Qureshi 1969).Ulema and Mashikh played a stupendous role, in this victory which is worth writing in golden letters in the annals of the struggle for Pakistan.

Another referendum of the same type was to be held in Sylhet Bengal which was under personal influence of Maulana Hussain Ahmed Madni who usually passed the month of Ramzan in Sylhet. This area, in fact was under the personal influence of pro-Congress Ulema. Their influence could only be countered through the Ulema of the same stature and size. Moreover, in Sylhet, “ The Muslims were faced with a serious handicap, for through”. They formed 60.7% of the population. They had only 54.27% votes of the total electoral role . 4 (Nadvi 1976) The AIML choice, to counter the influence of pro-Congress Ulema fell on Maulana Zafar Ahmed Usmani Maulana was very popular amongst the Muslims of Bengal and Assam on account of his learning, piety and candidness. He toured Sylhet and spent the Holy month of Ramzan and explained the importance and need of Pakistan for the Muslims. He worked hard to organize them and generate support for Pakistan. Thus the systematic and organized campaign of the league in which Maulana Zafar Ahmed Usmani along with other Ulema played vital role, resulted in a decisive victory for her. The voting was 239, 619 for separation and joining East Bengal 181,041 against separation. 5 (Nadvi 1976).(Ibid)

The most prominent name among the Ulema was Pir Jamat Ali Shah who had millions of followers in the country. He was a staunch supporter of the Aligarh Movement for which he contributed Lakhs of Rupees. 6 (Nawa-i-Waqat 1982). In spite of his old age and weak health Pir Jamat Ali Shah toured throughout the country to get the support of AIML and Pakistan. After the passage of Lahore Resolution he gave an all out support to the Quaid-i-Azam for the achievement of Pakistan. He made intensive tours of the country to generate support for the AIML. He advised his followers to work for the AIML and emphatically declared that he would not lead the funeral prayers of any devotee if he had not participated in the Pakistan Movement in any capacity. 7 (Naw-i-Waqat). Pir Jamat Ali Shah supported ALML during the elections 1945-46. His sincere campaign in the election of 1945-46 resulted in grand success of AIML candidates. He attended All India Sunni Conference held in Benaras on 30th April, 1946 and passed the following resolution.

The session of All India Sunni Conference fully supports the demand for Pakistan and declares that Ulema and Mashaikhs belong to Ehl-Sunat-Wal-Jamat will make every possible sacrifice for the establishment of an Islamic government.

They take it as their responsibility to establish a

government according to the Islamic jurisprudence based on the Holy Quran and Sunna”.

In this conference some nationalist Ulema criticised the Quaid-i-Azam. Pir Jamat Ali Shah defended him by saying.

“ Think of Jinnah Sahib whatever you like, but I say that Jinnah Sahib is Waliullah. 8 (David 1988). Pir Jamat Ali Shah previously led Masjid Shaheed Movement for which the Muslims had given him the title of “Amir-i-Millat”. During referendum in 1947 in NWFP he also visited the province and mustered his support for AIML. While presiding over a session of Jamiat-ul-Ulema –i-Islam Punjab, Pir Jamat Ali Shah Said.

“Both the Government and the Congress should carefully note that the Muslims have shaken off their lethargy now stand awakened they have determined their goal of Pakistan, and no power on earth could fail the Pakistan Movement 9 (Raees 1966)“.

The credit of making the Pakistan Movement a success goes to Pir Sahib of Manki Sharif. He joined AIML in 1945. When Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his followers were trying to fail the Pakistan Movement. Thousands of Pir Sahib of Manki Sharif followers worked for promoting the cause of Pakistan Movement. In NWFP., a secret meeting of Mashaikh of NWFP and Punjab was held at Peshawar in 1945. This meeting was arranged by Pir Sahib of Manki Sharif. In this meeting, he said that Pakistan was the only source of honour and freedom for the Muslims of Indo-Pak- sub-continent. He appealed to Mashaikh to join the Muslim League. He also attended All India Sunni Conference and spoke continuously for two and a half hour and made the following historical announcement.

“ I have made it clear to the Quaid-i-Azam that if at any stage he deceived the Muslims or tried to introduce in Pakistan a system other than Islam, Mashaikh and his followers would not accept his leadership” 10 (Riaz-ul-Haq 1980).

In the referendum of NWFP he convinced the people to cast their votes in favour of Pakistan. The invaluable services which he rendered to the AIML during the referendum in NWFP would never be forgotten.

During the peak days of the election campaign, Shamas-ul-Ulema Khawaja Hassan Nizami of Tounsa Sharif issued the following statement.

“ Pir Ghulam Mohay-ud-Din, Sajjada Nasheen of Hazrat Pir Mehar Ali Shah had ordered his followers to side with the Muslim League. The Jamit-ul-Ulema-i-Islam at Calcutta had also given a Fatwa asserting all the Muslims to support the League and he who does not abide by it would be sinful. 11 (Nadvi 1966) .

Another Mashiakh of Maulana Fazal Shah, Sajjada Nashin of Jalalpur Sharif, appealing the Muslim Community said.

“Interest of the Millat demands from every Muslim to vote for AIML.”

The descendents of Hazrat Mujdid Alf-Sani played a magnificent role for promoting the cause of Pakistan

Movement in Sindh. Hazrat Ghulam Mujadid Sirhindi was renowned scholar of Islamics. He aligned himself with the Quaid-i-Azam in his mission for achieving an independent state for the Muslims and amalgamated his society. “ Jamiat-ul-Mashaikh” with AIML. This organization was merged into the AIML on the call of the Quaid-i-Azam.

Another personality from Sindh who had strong contribution during the Pakistan Movement was Shaikh Abdul Majeed Sindhi. He embraced Islam at an early age and after that he became a staunch Muslim and worked for the welfare of Indian Muslims. Shaikh Abdul Majeed Sindhi was a prolific writer and he used the sharp shafts of his pen against Hindu moneylenders, Sindhi vaderas and the British. He was sincere supporter of the Pakistan Movement. Maulana Abdul Hamid Badayuni had an active part in Khilafat Movement. He made a countrywide tour in opposition to Nehru Report. Maulana Abdul Hamid Badayuni supported and seconded the Lahore Resolution on behalf of Ulema and Mashaikh. In 1945, he toured NWFP and Punjab in connection with election campaign in favour of AIML candidates. He also went to Baluchistan and NWFP for the propagation of Pakistan Movement on the request of Pir Shahib of Manki Sharif. Maulana Abdul Hamid Badayuni met the Nizam of Deccan and persuaded him to have a meeting with the Quaid-i-Azam. In 1946 he performed the duties of the secretary of the delegation of Ulema which was sent to Saudi Arabia and Middle East to make the Muslim world aware of Pakistan Movement.

Khawaja Qamar-ud-Din Sayalvi, was an active supporter of the Pakistan Movement. He was very influential in his region. He firmly stood against Tiwanas who were trying to defeat the AIML candidates in their constituencies. It was due to Khawaja Sahib efforts that Muslim League candidates won 100% seats in districts Jhang and Sargodha. He was a generous, sincere and spiritual leader who had devoted his life for the glory of Islam and the Pakistan Movement.

There were so many other scholars and Mashaikh who devoted their life for the establishment of Pakistan. Sajjada Nashin Diwan-Aal-i-Rasool of Ajmer Sharif appealed to the Mashaikh in the name of Khawaja Moeen-ud-Din Chishti to give their Gaddis and join AIML to materialize the dream of Pakistan.

Nearly all the scholars of Brelvi school of thought actively worked for the cause of Pakistan. The most renowned Ulema of them were Maulana Naeem-ud-Din, Maulana Abdul Hasnat Mahmood Ali, Maulana Ghulam Muhammad Tarannum, Mufti Ghulam Moeen-ud-Din, Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Hazarvi, Maulana Sanaullah Amritsari, Maulana Muhammad Ibrahim Sialkoti and Maulana Fazal Ilahi Wazirabadi were amongst them.

Ulema and Mashaikh completely changed the atmosphere during the Pakistan Movement and made the tough task of the Quaid-i-Azam easier and ultimately Pakistan came into being. 12 (David 1988)

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