Obstacles Towards Muslim Unity: An Analysis of the Root Causes

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Abstract: "The unity of Muslim nations as such is not against the interest of any non-Muslim nation. For the purpose of achieving this objective several efforts have been made and organizations and institutions established in the past, but those efforts did not bear fruits as expected.

For the unity or disunity of Muslim nations has a direct bearing on the development and sustenance of the Islamic civilization in this chaotic world, this paper argues that without identifying the real obstacles that lie behind the disunity of the Muslim nations and people, all the efforts for bringing about the Muslim unity would not be fruitful. This paper mainly focuses on the identification of the fundamental obstacles which stand in the way of Muslim unity and argues that with the change of circumstances the nature of the real obstacles has also changed which needs to be seriously investigated by the scholars. In this paper the root causes of Muslim disunity are identified and analyzed.

It is contended here that the real obstacles standing in the way of Muslim unity are not external rather they are purely internal and mostly relate to Muslim culture and the socio-political atmosphere of the Muslim world. These obstacles are multi-dimensional and deeply related to educational, cultural, political and social factors. Finally, an in depth analysis of these obstacles and some solutions to overcome these obstacles are presented which is followed by a conclusion".

Introduction:

Would that I had sown all the seed of my ideas in the receptive ground of the people's thought! Well would it have been had I not wasted this fruitful and beneficent seed of mine in the salt and sterile soil of that effete sovereignty! Or what I sowed in that soil never grew, and what I planted in that brackish earth perished away. During all this time one of my well-intentioned counsels sank into the ears of the rulers of the East, whose selfishness and ignorance prevented them from accepting my words [Jamāluddīn al-Afghānī].[1]

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(Lahore Islamic Publications Ltd., 1960), p.148.

[60] Abul A'lā Mawdūdī, *Jihad in Islam* (Malaysia: International Islamic Federation of Student Organization, 1981), p.6.

[61] S. Abul Ala Mawdudi, *Unity of the Muslim World*, Khurshid Ahmad ed. (Lahore: Islamic Publications Ltd., 1967), p. 13.

[62] Abu Ala Mawdudi, Process of Islamic Revolution; an address delivered at the Aligarh Muslim University (Delhi: Markazi Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, 1970), p. 22.

[63] Abul A'lā Mawdūdī, *Tafhim al- Qur'ān,* vol. I (Lahore: Idārāh-i Tarjumanul Qur'ān, 1973): 36.

[64] Aziz Ahmed, "Mawdudi and Orthodox Fundamentalism in Pakistan," *The Middle East Journal,* vol. 21, no.3 (Summer, 1967): 378.

[65] *Correspondence Between Mawlana Maudoodi and Maryam Jameelah* (Lahore: Mohammad Yusuf Khan, 1973), p. 57.

[66] Sayyid Abul A'lā Mawdūdī, *Tarjumān al-Qur'an* (August 1936): 483.

[67] Kazi Zulqadr Siddiqi, S.M. Aslam and M.M. Ahsan, "A Bibliography of Writings by and About Mawlana Sayyid Abul A'lā Mawdūdī" in Khurshid Ahmad and Zafar Ishaq Ansari, eds. *Islamic Perspectives: Studies in Honour of Mawlana Sayyid Abul A'la Mawdudi* (Leicester: The Islamic Foundation, 1980), pp. 3-14.

[68] See Abdul Rashid Moten, *Revolution to Revolution: Jama 'at-e-Islami in the Politics of Pakistan* (Kuala Lumpur: Islamic Book Trust, 2002).

[69] See Sayyid A.S. Pirazda, *The Politics of the Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam Pakistan, 1971-77* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2000).

[37] "Madi al-Umma wa Hadirouha wa ilaaJu ilaliha," (The Past and Present of the Ummah and the Treatment of its Maladies), *al-Urwah al-Wuthqa*, pp. 45-60.

[38] al-Wahdat al-Islami-yah" (Islamic Unity), *al-Urwa al-Wuthqa*, pp. 130-140.

[39] "al-Amal wa Ṭalab al-Majd" (Hope and the Pursuit of Glory), *al-Urwah al-Wuthqah*, pp. 151-162.

[40] Ibid.

[41] N. R. Keddie, *An Islamic Response to Imperialismh*, pp. 81–84.

[42] Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age*, 114.

[43] Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, *Secret History of the English Occupation of Egypt* (London: Unwin, 1907), p. 100.

[44] Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), p. 55.

[45] Sir Dr. Muḥammad Iqbāl, the descendant of a Kashmīrī Brahmin family, converted to Islām, was born in Sialkot in 1877. After schooling in the little township, he went to Lahore, England, and Germany for higher studies. Iqbāl had a Master's in philosophy from College, another Master's from Cambridge and a Ph.D. from Munich received for work on Persian metaphysics. He had also qualified as a barrister in London.
'Atāullah, *Iqbal Nāmā*, Vol. II (Lahore: Sh. Muḥammad Ashraf, 1951), p. 231; Sayyid Abdul Vahid ed., *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbāl* (Lahore Sh. Muḥammad Ashraf, 1964), p. 278.

[47] Muḥammad Iqbāl, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Lahore: Sh. Muḥammad Ashraf, 1965), pp.7-8. Iqbāl's use of the term "reconstruction" is meaningful as it denotes an action aims at a new construction in the light of the requirements of the age, without changing the basis.

[48] *Speeches and Statements of Iqbāl*, compiled by "Shamloo" (Lahore: Al-Manar Academy, 1948), p. 224.

[49] The famous speech of Iqbāl reads as follows: "I would like to see the Punjab, Northwest Frontier Province, Sind, and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single state. Self-government within the British empire or without the British empire, the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim State appears to me the final destiny of the Muslim at least of North-West India." See Jamil-ud-din Ahmad, *Historic Documents of the Muslim Freedom Movement* (Lahore: Publishers United Ltd., 1970), pp. 121-137.

[50] Muḥammad Iqbāl, *Letters of Iqbāl to Jinnah: The Political Future of Muslim India* (Lahore: Ashraf, 1956), p. 24.

[51] Jamil-ud-din Ahmad, *Historic Documents of the Muslim Freedom Movement*, p. 123.

[52] Iqbal's letter to K.G. Sayyidain in *Letters and Writings of Iqbal*, B.A. Dar ed. (Karachi: Iqbal Academy, 1967), p. 56.

[53] Quoted by Luce Claude Maitre, *Introduction to the Thought of Iqbal*, M.A.M. Dar trans. (Karachi: Iqbal Academy, 1956), p 20.

[54] Shamloo ed., *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal* (Lahore: Sh. Muḥammad Ashraf, 1948), p. 204.

[55] Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, p. 159.

[56] Iqbal to R.A. Nicholson, 24 January 1921 in Bashir Ahmad Dar ed., *Letters of Iqbal* (Lahore: Iqbal Academy, 1978), p. 144.

[57] Abul Ala Mawdudi, *Towards Understanding Islam*, Khurshid Ahmad tr. (London: Islamic Foundation, 1980), p. 17.

[58] Abul Ala Mawdudi, *Come Let Us Change this World*, Kaukab Siddique comp. & trans. (Karachi: Salma Siddique, 1971), p.73.

[59] Abul Ala Mawdudi, *Islamic Law and Constitution*, Khurshid Ahmad trans. & ed.

consciousness which a genuine rationalism would have necessarily required failed to emerge" (p.37). Instead, he prefers reformism, because, for him, this movement was "tradition-bound"(p. 7).

[29] See Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Ideals and Realities of Islam* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972).

[21] His biographer Altāf Husain Hālī wrote that Sir Sayyid, from the very outset, was moved by the belief in the reality of Islam and a passion for the community of Muslims. Altāf Husain Hālī, *Hayat-i-Jawed* (Lahore: Isharat Publishing House, 1965), p. 293.

[22] L. Carl Brown, *Religion and State: The Muslim Approach to Politics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), p. 95.

[23] J.M.S. Baljon Jr., *The Reforms and Religious Ideas of Sir Sayyid* Ahmad Khān (Leiden: EJ Brill, 1949), p. 88.

[21] Cited in Husain B. Tyabji, *Badruddin Tyabji* (Bombay: Thacker & Co., 1951), p. 204.

[25] *The Pioneer*, January 8, 1877. Sir Sayyid is reported to have said that the "feelings of affection and loyalty to her Majesty have been infused into us with our mother's milk." See Shan Muhammad, "The Muslim Dilemma: Some Misunderstandings," *Aligarh Law Society Review*, Vol. 2 (1971): 62.

[26] Sir Sayyid remarked: "When there were many Muslim kingdoms, we did not feel much grief when one of them was destroyed, now that so few are left, we feel the loss of even a small one. If Turkey is conquered that will be a great grief, for she is the last of the great powers left to Islam. We are afraid that we shall become like the Jews a people without a country of their own." Cited in Theodore Morison, "Muhammad an Movements" in *Political India, 1832-1932*, ed., Sir John Cumming (London: Oxford University Press, 1932), pp. 95-96.

[27] A. Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1964), pp. 60-61.

[28] Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India*, p. 334.

[29] Shortly after he was awarded the title, Sir Sayyid wrote: "Without flattering the English, I can truly say that the natives of India, high and low, merchants and petty shopkeepers, educated and illiterate, when contrasted with the English in education, manners, and uprightness, are like a dirty animal is to an able and handsome man." (*Musāfarān i London*, Majlis-i Taraqqī-i Adab, Lahore, 1961, p.184).

[30] Sayyid Razi Wasti, ed., *Memoirs and other Writings of Sayyid Amir Ali* (Lahore: People's Publishing House, 1968), p. 33.

[31] *The Pioneer*, May 10, 1906.

[32] Hirendranath Mukerjee, *India Struggles for Freedom: A History* (Bombay: Kutub, 1948), p. 97.

[33] See Nikki R. Keddie, *An Islamic Response to Imperialism: Political and Religious Writings of Sayyid Jamāl al Dīn "al–Afghānī"* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983).

[34] Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age* (London: Oxford University Press 1962), 109.

[35] Sayyid Jamal Al-Din Al-Afghani, "Islamic Solidarity," in *Islam in Transition: Muslim Perspectives*, ed. by John J. Donohue and John L. Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 20.

[36] Sayyid Jamal ad-Din al-Afghānī, "Lecture on Teaching and Learning," November 8, 1882, Albert Hall, Calcutta, as reprinted in Nikki R. Keddie, *An Islamic Response to Imperialism; Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani, Political and Religious Writings of Sayyid* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), p. 107.

Notes and References

[1] Ismā 'īl Rājī al-Fārūqī, *Tawḥīd: its Implications for Thought and Life* (Kuala Lumpur: International Institute for Islamic Thought, 1982), p. 112.

[2] W. Montgomery Watt, *Islam and the Integration of Society* (Evansston: Northwestern University Press, 1961), p. 204.

[3] Khurshid Ahmad, "The Nature of Islamic Resurgence" in *Voices of Resurgent Islam*, John L. Esposito ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), pp. 219-220.

[4] Quoted in Richard Symonds, *The Making of Pakistan* (Lahore: Faber and Faber, 1950), p. 21

[5] Anil Seal, *The Emergence of Indian Nationalism: Competition and Collaboration in the Later Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1971), p. 351.

[6] See Barbara D. Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1982).

[7] Deoband continues to thrive with over 3000 students enrolled. The seminary's web page displays a monumental marble mosque with links providing further information in Urdu, Arabic, Hindi, and English. See Dārul 'Ulooom Deoband, India, http://www.darululoom-deoband.com [Online] accessed on January 15, 2006.

[8] According to one estimate, in 1900, there were forty such schools in North India, and in 1967 nearly nine thousand.

[9] Sayyid Mahboob Rizvi, *History of the Dar al-Ulum Deoband*, trans. Murtaz Husain F. Qureshi, 2 vols. (Deoband: Idarah-e-Ihtemam, 1980), 2:242.

[10] Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India*, pp. 154-155.

[11] Zia-ul-Hasan Faruqi, *The Deoband School and the Demand for Pakistan* (New York: Asia Publishing House, 1963), p. 68.

[12] A.M. Zaidi, ed., *Evolution of Muslim Political Thought in India*, vol. III, *Parting of the Ways* (New Delhi: S. Chand, 1977), p. 686; See also Tahir Mahmood, *Muslim Personal Law: Role of the the State in the Sub-continent* (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1977).

[13] See Abdul Rashid Moten, *Political Science: An Islamic Perspective* (London: McMillan, 1996), pp. 133-34.

[14] Muḥammad Ayūb Qādrī, *Tablighī Jamā'at Kā Tārīkhī Jā'izah* (Karachi: Maktabah Mu'awiyah, 1971), pp. 92-3.

[15] Godfrey Hansen, "Islam in Asia Towards an Islamic Society," *The Economist*, September 4, 1982.

[16] The Wahhābis are the followers of the Salafiyyah movement of Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb (115-1207AH/1703-1792CE). Ibn 'Abd –al-Wahhāb preached return to the Qur'ān, the *Sunnah* and the *Sunnī* legal positions that were worked out in the first three centuries of the Islamic calendar. He revolted against laxity and corruption among the rulers and the Muslim masses. For a comparative view of the contexts of such movements see William R. Roff, "Islamic Movements: One or Many?" in William R. Roff, ed., *Islam and the Political Economy of Meaning* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), pp. 31-52.

[17] They called the others "Wahhābi." These orientations, Deobandī, Barelvī or Ahl-i Hadīth, would come to define sectarian divisions among Sunni Muslims of South Asian background to the present.

[18] Faruqi, *The Deoband School and the Demand for Pakistan*, p. 36.

[19] W.C. Smith, *Islam in Modern History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), 60. Sharabi objects to using "Islamic modernism" to these thinkers because "the critical

conditions in other places. Lastly, it is necessary to mention the role played by the media and the press in influencing pan-Islamic consciousness. Indeed, there was a symbiotic relationship between the growth of pan-Islamic consciousness and the growth of the press. The more Indian Muslims discovered about the fate of their brethren elsewhere in the Islamic world, the more they wished to know. Each Muslim calamity gave birth to the booming of the press and the flourishing of great newspapers.

leadership, in their struggle for Pakistan, believed that the *'ulāmā'* were not capable of giving a correct lead in politics because of their exclusively traditional education and total ignorance of the complexities of modern life. The *'ulāmā'* remained, by and large, hostile to the idea of a Muslim national state led by the Westernized Muslims for their laxity in adopting Islamic code. In the final years of colonial rule, a minority group among the Deobandī *'ulāmā'* formed the Jam'iyyat-i Ulāmā-i Islām to support the Muslim League and the demand for a separate Muslim state. In independent Pakistan after 1947, they became a minor political party with a fairly simplistic call for the primacy of Islām in public life. Like other Pakistani political parties, the JUI has been subject to factional splits coalescing around personalities more than issues, and there were perhaps a half-dozen factions and reorganizations over its fist half century. [69]

Despite the lack of Muslim unity, from the 1920s onwards. Muslim societies achieved their freedom from direct foreign rule. The end of Western rule, however, did not bring an end to transformative western influences in Muslim societies. In many cases their impact is redoubled. The process of meddling in the Muslim world continues. New elites, Bhuttos, Hoveidas, Bourguibas, continue to emerge to manage the new economic and political structures. Most of them are trained in the West, subscribe to Western values of secularism and nationalism, support Western culture, and happy to see it given substantial freedom to flourish in Muslim societies. Indeed, these new elites enjoy the support of the super powers who see in secularism and nationalism the germs that could disrupt the idea that the Muslims of the world constitute one, united *ummah*. Paradoxically, their efforts did little to erode the profound sense of the distinctiveness of being Muslim. On the contrary, more and more Muslims have developed a Pan-Islamic dimension to their consciousness; more and more have engaged imaginatively and emotionally with the fate of Muslims in far away lands. In South Asia this development was given a particular intensity because of the British colonization of Muslim lands and the consequent loss of Muslim power giving rise to the feeling of insecurity among South Asian Muslims. One development that led to Pan-Islamic consciousness was the increased frequency of travel undertaken by Muslims, since at least 1860, to Britain and to Europe to absorb Western learning and modern skills as well as to Cairo and Istanbul to pick up the latest in Muslim ideas.

Equally important in this respect was the increase in the number of Muslims performing *hajj*. While some settled in the Hijāz as scholars or traders others returned home with the stories of Muslims and their

threat primarily as an onslaught against Islām as a religious and cultural entity. They were alike as well in an overriding emphasis on encouraging a range of ritual and personal behavioral practices linked to worship, dress, and everyday behaviour. These were deemed central to *Sharī'ah* and essential means to promote Muslim unity.

The Westernizing modernists, like Sir Sayyid Aḥmad Khān and Jamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī, emphasized the acquisition of scientific and technological knowledge and skills as mandatory in Islām. Muslim unity can be attained if they are educated and if they are powerful. It is their failure in the realm of science and technology that has created an image of Islām being uncaring and unjust. Sir Sayyid equated the interests of Indian Muslims with an unquestioning loyalty to the British; Afghānī believed resistance to non-Muslim aggression and reconquest was the duty of Muslims all over the world. Afghānī pioneered the elite-based pan-Islamic movement in the subcontinent. These Westernizing modernists, even if they meant well in their desire to defend Islām, in effect presented a truncated and deformed Islām. In contrast, Iqbāl, Mawdūdī and others called for a return to the original message of Islām, to discover its relevance to the existing milieu and to strive to change the status quo to conform to the tenets and principles of Islām. Their primary concern was to elevate the principle of *tawḥīd*, the oneness of God and the unity of creation. They built models for distinctive polities that challenged the alternative systems such as nationalism, capitalism, and Marxism. They sought modernity in ways that simultaneously asserted the primacy of Islamic values and avoided the dark side of western modernity. The call of the *tajdīd* is for a comprehensive reform along Islamic lines in all aspects of life. Iqbāl called for a "League of Muslim nations," Mawdūdī, in addition, called for a universal Islamic revolution.

Given these efforts, religion, which under the impact of secularism lay dormant for a while, had re-emerged in Muslim politics and society. These movements have succeeded many Muslim states to declare their identity as part of the Muslim *ummah* in their official designation. Yet, the unity of the Muslim world remains elusive. The most noticeable aspect of the South Asian struggle for Muslim unity was the disunity between various Islamic movements as well as factionalism within each organization. The Deobandīs went their separate ways. The Deoband *madrasah* grew into a more modern school, exhibiting sharp differences with other Muslim traditionalists, and even with its own offshoots in other countries. Sir Sayyid was, of course, disowned by Afghānī. Iqbāl and Mawdūdī championed Muslim nationalism.   The Muslim political

the Qur'ān and the teachings of the Prophet (SAW). Even *ṣūfīs* and their practices had to conform to *Sharī'ah*. Mawdūdī reminded the Muslims that they belong to *ummatan wasaṭan* (a just and balanced community) and that they have a pivotal role to play in the service of mankind by enjoining what is right and forbidding what is evil. This is an invitation for a revolutionary movement to unify the whole of mankind. For this purpose, Mawdūdī founded the Islamic party, the *Jamā'at-e-Islāmī*, which, to him, is engaged in a continuing revolutionary struggle to establish the supremacy of Islām.

From 1920 to 1928, Sayyid Mawdūdī translated several books from Arabic and English into Urdu. In September 1932, he acquired the ownership of the journal *Tarjumān al-Qur'ān* from its founder and became its editor and publisher. From then onwards, the *Tarjumān* claimed a lion's share of Mawdūdī's time and attention, and became the vehicle for the articulation of his ideas, and the "mission of his life."[66] He continued to edit *Tarjumān* until the very last months of his life in 1979. In addition, Mawdūdī was a prolific writer and, according to one estimate, he authored more than 138 books and treatises on different aspects of Islām[67]

Mawdūdī was supported by a number of *'ulāmā'* who joined him in Lahore to form the new organization in 1941 including Maulānā Sayyid Abūl Ḥasan 'Alī Nadvī and Muḥammad Manzūr Nu'mānī of Deoband. *Jamā'at-i-Islāmī* has been influential in the development of Islamic revivalism across the Muslim world in general and India and Pakistan in particular.[68] The vast majority of the *Jamā'at* participants were western educated, not seminary educated. They were engineers and others with technical training, lawyers, doctors, and university professors, and, generally speaking, they had little respect for the traditionally-educated *'ulāmā'*.

Conclusion

The quest for a distinct Muslim identity and Muslim unity has a long history in South Asia. It started long before the idea of Pakistan germinated in the minds of the intellectuals. The Deoband movement served as an example of one important model of contemporary Islamic thought and action, a major example of what can be called "traditionalist" Islamic activism. The *madrassahs* in Deoband, and the *Tablīghī Jamā'at* movement linked to it and other religious movements emerged to revive the Muslim *ummah*, 'imparting awareness about their distinct socio-cultural and religious identity. Together, however, for all their variety, these Deoband movements were, in fact, alike in regarding the Western

almost entirely from the Western-educated Muslim professionals. Mawdūdī mounted scathing criticism against the Muslim League leadership. Mawdūdī was convinced that the western-educated element in the League's leadership would never be able or willing to establish an Islamic state as conceived by the *Jamā'at*. He stated that the aim of Indian Muslims should be "Islamic revolution," which meant educating the people in the spirit of Islām, training the true Muslim scientists, philosophers, economists, jurists, political leaders, etc. who would lead in the long run to the building of "the world society based on the true principles of Islām."[62]

Following the partition of India in 1947, Mawdūdī migrated to Pakistan and struggled to transform the new by born state into an Islamic republic. Thus, though Mawdūdī viewed Islām as a world-wide revolutionary movement, he subscribed to the "Islām in one country" (Pakistan) thesis. This he considered essential for two reasons: first, an ideology, to be useful, must have an empirical import and must make reference to particular cases or examples, for it is simply impossible to build a pattern of life merely in the abstract. Second, the ideology, to attract world-wide attention, must demonstrate its worth by evolving a happy and successful system of life and must present its theories and fundamental principles in operation.[63] Far from repudiating the principles of pan-Islamism, as Azīz Aḥmed had argued, Mawdūdī considered Islām in one country as a stepping stone to effect world-wide attention.[64]

The strategy chalked out by Mawdūdī for Muslim unity includes preaching the unity and sovereignty of Allah (*tawḥīd*). Earlier attempts at reviving Islām, to Mawdūdī, centered on piecemeal modifications of Islamic law and compromises between Islamic and un-Islamic principles which resulted in the dominance of Western ideas. It is the apologetic approach of Sir Sayyid Aḥmed Khān and others in India which made Western civilization "the judge of the merits and faults of Islām – not vice versa."[65] The correct approach is to re-establish pure Islām in the world of the twentieth century.

The preaching of *tawḥīd* entails, as well, first, scathing criticism of western ideologies and philosophies and exposing their fallacies and weaknesses; secondly, a critical examination of all kinds of innovations in religion and a careful delineation of the boundaries between Islām and un-Islām; and thirdly, a revitalization of the spirit of *ijtihād*, i.e., exerting one's utmost to show how Islamic principles can be applied to new circumstances and conditions. Mawdūdī would not permit the slightest deviation from the path of true Islām, which he considered as resting upon

was the whole of mankind. Those who surrendered to the will of God are welded into one community, *ummah*. This *ummah* is radically different from those communities/ nations, which are founded on the basis of race, color or territory.

Islām, wrote Mawdūdī, "actually is the name of a movement which started with a purpose and some principles. And the word Muslim was meant for the group which followed the movement and went forward with it."[58] The objective of the movement for Islamic revival is to establish the Islamic system of state rule characterized by the sovereignty of God. Man can only legitimately act as God's vicegerent, His *khalīfah* on earth, and to exercise the divine authority within the limits prescribed by Him. The term used by Mawdūdī to identify the Islamic state is "theo-democracy" which means "Kingdom of God" administered by the entire Muslim population in accordance with the *Sharī'ah*.[59] Clearly, this theo-democracy contrasts sharply with secular Western democracy, with the sovereignty of the people as its philosophical base. Islām repudiates the philosophy of popular sovereignty and rears its polity on the foundations of the sovereignty of God and the vicegerency of man. Additionally, in Western democracy, the government undertakes to fulfill the will of the majority; in Islām, the government is obliged to fulfill the purpose of God.

The Islamic state is characterized by a total absence of nationalism which, to Mawdūdī, is antithetical to the idea of a universal *ummah*. It has no territorial restriction on its scope of activities. Its approach is universal and all-embracing: "Islām requires the earth not just a portion, but the whole planet."[60] Islām clearly rejects the claims of racial and geographical factors to order the loyalties of Muslims. For such a notion disrupts the essential unity of mankind and narrows down the cosmopolitan outlook of Islām. The national idea produces a materialistic outlook on life and territorial and racial consciousness counteracts the humanizing spirit of mankind. Islām, to the exclusion of all other belief systems, came up with the alternative system based upon the conception of equality of men. "Even the worst opponents of Islām acknowledge that there is no religion apart from Islām that has succeeded in obliterating distinctions of race, color, language, place of origin and nationality in establishing universal brotherhood of men."[61]

The *ummah* of Islām is defined by spiritual traditions and inner consciousness. Mawdūdī even rejected the existence of Muslim nationalism as incompatible with Islām. In the sub-continent, the Muslim League was wedded to the concept of Muslim nationalism. The most noteworthy feature of the struggle for Pakistan is that its leadership came

the sense of this humanitarian ideal Pan-Islamism ... does and will always exist."[54]

Iqbāl, it must be noted, was not suggesting that Muslims should politically unite under one government. Iqbāl implied the formation of an association of the Muslim countries to better their own lot and to uphold peace and justice in the World. His idea of pan-Islamism remains embedded in what he called "A Commonwealth of Muslim Nations" or "League of Muslim Nations." He understood that Muslims needed to be knit together by some kind of bond and overcome their subjugation by colonial powers through national self determination. However, they must avoid fragmentations that would come as a result of the divisiveness of nation-states. Iqbāl observes: "It seems to me that God is slowly bringing home to us the truth that Islām is neither Nationalism or Imperialism, but a League of Nations which recognizes artificial boundaries and racial distinctions for facility of reference only and not for restricting the social horizon of its members."[55] In a letter to R.A. Nicholson, Iqbāl attempted to explain the seeming contradiction between the Muslim's loyalty to his community and his commitment to a universal social order. He wrote:

> ... if you want to make it [universalism] an effective ideal and work it out in actual social lie, you must start ... with a society exclusive in the sense of having a creed and a well defined outline but ever enlarging its limits by example and persuasion. Such a society, according to my belief, is Islām.[56]

Iqbāl's notion of universalism postulated the superiority of Islamic principles and a world integrated on these principles.

Iqbāl's idea of pan-Islamism was further taken up by Sayyid Abul 'Alā Mawdūdī (1903–79), founder of the *Jamā'at-i Islāmī*, who added his considerable weight to its presence in Islamic thought on the subcontinent, and beyond. The core of Mawdūdī's *Weltanschauung* is formed by Islām, an Arabic word that "stands for complete submission and obedience to Allah."[57] Its fundamental postulate is the unity and the sovereignty of God (*tawḥīd*) who created man and the universe and whose all-pervasive law governs the universe. The scheme of life envisaged by Islām is known as the *Sharī'ah*, as prescribed in the Qur'ān and the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (SAW).

Mawdūdī believed in historical continuity in the sense that Islām has been continuously in existence since the human race began with Adam, the first prophet of God. Additionally, Islām is universal. It is not wedded to any particular race or region, nor is it the sole property of any particular group of people. It is the common legacy of the whole of mankind. From the beginning, the audience of the Qur'ān and Prophet Muḥammad (SAW)

Qur'ān, he argued, is a book emphasizing deed rather than the idea. In order to keep pace with modern times, the teachings of the Qur'ān as a living force must be projected in the light of modern thought. The *ummah*, to Iqbāl, is a compact universal entity and any attempt to divide it into sections and parochial entities is against the mission of the Holy Prophet. Muslims must, therefore, unite by shunning un-Islamic practices, by returning to pure Islām, and by adapting the canons of Islām, through *ijtihād*, to meet contemporary exigencies.

Iqbāl was convinced that the survival of Islām and the unity of Muslim *ummah* were dependent on the centrality of Islamic law. This law, however, has to be reconstructed in the light of modern circumstances. Iqbāl distinguished between the eternal, immutable principles of the *Sharī'ah* and those regulations that were the product of human interpretation and thus subject to change. He believed that the restoration of Islamic vitality required the "reconstruction" of the sources of Islamic law. The conservatism and respect for tradition that had characterized Islām since the fall of Baghdad must be jettisoned and replaced with the right to *ijtihād*, to reinterpret and reapply Islām to changing social conditions. The right to *ijtihād* belonged to all qualified Muslims and not just to the *'ulamā'* and he suggested that this right be transferred from the *'ulamā'* to a national assembly or legislature. Given the complex nature of many modern problems, the legislature should seek the advice of experts from traditional and modern disciplines. This collective or corporate *ijtihād* would then constitute the authoritative consensus (*ijmā'*) of the community. Iqbāl believed that through reinterpretation, it would be possible to develop Islamic equivalents to Western concepts and institutions. Thus, for example, Iqbāl concluded that because of the centrality of such beliefs as the equality and brotherhood of believers, democracy was the most important political ideal in Islām. Though history, after the period of the Rightly Guided Caliphs, had prevented the community from realizing this Islamic ideal, it remains a duty for the Muslim community. It is the same ideals of equality and brotherhood that militated against Iqbāl's acceptance of the concept of nationalism. Nationalism, to Iqbāl, is not merely antithetical to the universal brotherhood established by Prophet Muḥammad (SAW), it was the tool used by the colonialists to dismember the Muslim world. The political ideal of Islām was a transnational community that transcended ethnic, racial and national ties; it was based on an inner cohesion that stemmed from the unity of the community's religio-political ideal. Islām "does not recognize the barriers of race and nationality or geographical frontiers. In

humanitarianism to be made relevant and applicable to modern times. This task of reinterpretation could not be undertaken by Muslims because of their deplorable condition under British rule and Hindu hostility. He advised Muslims to avoid the Congress party for the same reasons offered by Sayyid Aḥmad Khān. He pleaded with Muḥammad 'Alī Jinnāh to take over the mantle of leadership of Indian Muslims. In 1930, in his famous Muslim League presidential address, Iqbāl made the first clear demand for the "formation of a consolidated Muslim State" in or outside the British empire, "in the best interests of India and Islām."[49] In his letters to Jinnāh dated May 28 and June 21, 1937 Iqbāl wrote: "To my mind the new constitution [the Government of India Act 1935] with its idea of a single Indian federation is completely hopeless. A separate federation of Muslim provinces... is the only course by which we can secure a peaceful India and save Muslims from the domination of non-Muslims. Why should not the Muslims of Northwest India and Bengal be considered as nations entitled to self-determination just as other nations in India and outside India are?"[50] However, Iqbāl's vision encompassed the unification of the entire Muslim *ummah*, as he advocated a pan-Islamism based on his belief in One God.

It would be erroneous to interpret Iqbāl's demand for a Muslim state as limited nationalism for, in the same speech, he says, "if it means a displacement of the Islamic principle of solidarity, is simply unthinkable to a Muslim."[51] He requires his country men to free themselves not merely from Western colonialism but they would also have to avoid fragmentation that came as a result of divisiveness of nation-states. He condemns racialism and limited world outlook. Islām is neither nationalism nor imperialism. Islām is violently opposed to the idea of racial superiority, which is the greatest enemy of human race and an obstacle in the way of international unity and cooperation. Islām, to Iqbāl, has already solved the color question "which modern European civilization, with all its achievement in science and philosophy has not been able to solve. Pan-Islamism, thus interpreted was taught by the Prophet and will for ever. In this sense, every Muslim is a Pan-Islamist and ought to be so."[52] When Iqbāl realized that Muslims were in danger of giving up the universality of their ideal in favour of a narrow patriotism and false nationalism, he felt it his duty, as a Muslim and a well-wisher of humanity, to remind them of their true role in the drama of evolution.[53]

Iqbāl argued that in order to fight against the enemies of the "human race," it is necessary to cultivate and revive the original culture enjoined in the teachings of Islām and exemplified in the life of the Holy Prophet. The

radical and provocative as that of the Aligarh, and there was not much in his philosophical view that could not be reconciled with that of Sayyid Aḥmad Khān and his associates. Yet, Afghānī found the naturalism of the Aligarh movement wanting and suspected their commitment to Islām. The reason for this scathing criticism is to be found not so much in the rationalism of Sir Sayyid but in the fact that the Aligarh movement was very much subservient to the British which ran contrary to Afghānī's project of pan-Islamism as the most effective way to combat imperialism.

Muslim Unity through Islamization

Jamāl al-Dīn al- Afghānī's idea of pan-Islamism and Muslim modernism was, as discussed above, a blend of Islām, secularism and nationalism. Pan-Islamism advocated by that sensitive and remarkable thinker, Muḥammad Iqbāl (1877-1938) was different.[45] Afghānī's appeal for Muslim unity and solidarity has a rather weak link with Islām as a faith; Iqbāl's pan-Islamism was squarely based upon Islām. Yet, Iqbāl expressed great admiration for Afghānī calling him a *mujaddid* (renewer) and "one of the most advanced Muslims of our time."[46]

Like Sir Sayyid and Jamāl al-Dīn al- Afghānī, Iqbāl admired the accomplishments of the West, its dynamic spirit, intellectual tradition and its science and technology. He would like to see Muslims emulate the West in these respects. The knowledge of things, according to Iqbāl, elevated the West. Further, "the extension of man's power over Nature has given him a new faith and a fresh sense of superiority over the forces that constitute his environment."[47] Iqbāl, however, was critical of its excesses such as European imperialism and colonialism, the inequitable system of capitalism, the divisive nationalism, and the moral bankruptcy of secularism. To Iqbāl, "The mistaken separation of spiritual and temporal which has largely influenced European religion and political thought... resulted in a set of mutually ill-adjusted states dominated by interests not human but national."[48] Thus, all the problems the capitalist society faced were the inevitable consequences of the lack of spirituality and absolute values, which resulted in the spread of nationalistic ideas and of the separation of church from state. Iqbāl did not see in nationalism any progressive content, and he reduced it to the odious Machiavellianism which justifies any means for achievement of the end.

Islām, on the other hand, was an ideal which, if fully realized, should suffice for humanity to live in harmony and free from evils arising out of modern capitalism, imperialism, nationalism and the like. Nevertheless, Iqbāl saw Muslims all around in a miserable plight. He desired the values of Islām, of international brotherhood and a sense of social justice and

Since Western power thrives on modern science and technology, reasoned Afghani, it had to be possessed by Muslim countries deliberately and urgently. This was considered to be the only way to stop the further decline and disintegration of the Muslim world. Afghānī argued in *al-'Urwah al-wuthqā* that Muslims, who were superior in all fields of human endeavor, "are stagnated in their education and knowledge." The reform suggested by some Western educated individuals, like Sir Sayyid, was not successful in treating the malady of the *ummah*. For these individuals, reform meant taking pride in emulating the West in their dress, food, and furniture, belittling the indigenous culture and people, and running to the service of the foreigners. The solution was a return to the fundamentals of Islām. The Muslims must realize that their strength in the past was due to their adherence to Islām.[37] Islām declined because of the weakening of the solidarity among Muslims and the division of Islamic territories into different kingdoms ruled by despotic and whimsical rulers. Muslims should unite and learn from the experience of other nations.[38] It was the time for them to wake up to the bare essentials of their humanity.[39]

Afghānī defended Islām's compatibility with the spirit of inquiry saying that "The Islamic religion is the closest of religions to science and knowledge, and there is no incompatibility between science and knowledge and the foundation of the Islamic faith."[40] He, however, argued that religion should be reformed in cases where it contradicts reason and modern science. He identified himself with Martin Luther.[41] He urged Muslims to adopt those Western sciences and institutions that might strengthen Islām. Thus, for Afghānī, "the centre of attention is no longer Islām as a religion; it is rather Islām as a civilization. The norm of human action is no longer the service of God; it is the creation of a human civilization flourishing in all its parts."[42] By this subtle shift of emphasis from the spiritual aspects of the Islamic community to its political and cultural success in comparison with other "civilizations," Afghānī opened the doors to a wholly secular interpretation of the history of the Islamic world and of its constituent parts. Afghānī has aptly been described as the leader of Islām's "Liberal religious reform movement."[43]

Afghānī, it must be noted, was a rationalist but "he did not agree with the extremist rationalism of at least some of Sayyid Aḥmad Khān's views, and regarded his new *'Ilm al-Kalām* as a heresy in so far as it seemed to falsify the words of the Qur'ān."[44] Likewise, he criticized socialism, communism, and nihilism. His fierce criticism, however, was directed toward Sayyid Aḥmad Khān and the Aligarh movement. Reading the two thinkers, it appears that Afghānī's views on Islām was as much

decline of Islām was that it was no longer politically integrated and all-embracing. Afghānī did not resort to mass movements; he worked through kings, emirs and rulers of Muslim world to achieve the objective of Pan-Islamic unity. In the very beginning, Afghānī's project of the alliance of Muslim countries envisaged an agreement between Afghanistan, Belujistan, Kasghar, Yarkand, Bukhara, and Kokanda, with the approval of the Sulṭān of Turkey and with financial support from Indian Muslims. Later, while staying in Egypt (1871-79) after his expulsion from Turkey, Afghānī for a time lost interest in Pan-Islamism. In Cairo a group of young patriots gathered around him and started to publish newspapers in which they criticized the regime of the khedive and the colonial policy of the British. In private as well as in public statements, including the press, Afghānī agitated for opposition to foreign oppression and for the necessity for political reforms. His followers organized the so-called National Lodge on the basis of which a year later 'The Free National Party of Egypt' emerged with its "Egypt for the Egyptians." Accusing the khedive of collusion with foreigners and of betrayal of national interests, Afghānī and his companions demanded the limitation of the khedive's power and the introduction of the constitutional parliamentary system. Afghānī's antigovernment activity resulted in his deportation from Egypt. Soon after, he realized the futility of attempting to overthrow the colonial regime with the help of one country. Consequently, he returned to the idea of a political alliance of the peoples of the Muslim world. The mouthpiece of the Pan-Islamic propaganda became *Al-'Urwah al-Wuthqā* (The Inseparable Link) which Afghānī, together with Muḥammad 'Abduh, started to publish in March 1884. Pan-Islamic agitation directed the struggle against colonial rule, in particular against British oppression. Afghani's ideas on Muslim unity, modernist reforms through the opening of the gates of *ijtihād*, and the liberation of Muslim lands from foreign domination have been the key factors in the subsequent development of Muslim nationalism and the liberation struggle.

Afghānī was touched by the sheer power and supremacy of Western powers that were increasing their encroachment upon the Muslim world. He concluded that the European countries were prosperous and powerful because of their scientific and technological superiority. In a "Lecture on Teaching and Learning," given in 1882 in Calcutta, Afghānī said that:

> ... science is that noble thing that has no connection with any nation, and is not distinguished by anything but itself. Rather, everything that is known is known by science, and every nation that becomes renowned becomes renowned through science...[36]

Sir Sayyid adopted the policy of absolute loyalty to the British with his vision of Muslim revival territorially limited to India, Afghānī with his universal outlook for Muslim revival, perceived the protection of the Muslim *ummah* on a Pan-Islamic scale and argued for taking up the challenge of the Western onslaught. He had warned about "the danger of European intervention, the need for national unity to resist it, the need for a broader unity of the Islamic peoples [and] the need for a constitution to limit the ruler's power." He ascribed the decline of Muslim power to a combination of European imperialism, autocratic Muslim rulers and a retrogressive *'ulamā'* that saw no place for Islām in the modern world. Afghānī called for engaging as well as confronting the West.[34]

One hurdle, among many, on his way to pan-Islamism, was nationalism. Muslims among other peoples around the world have increasingly become conscious of their own separate languages, cultures, ethnic and national identities. Afghānī, therefore, argued that a Muslim is required to abandon his/her "rooted identity" and his/her "created identity" in favour of a sacred identity, that is, the sense of belonging to the *ummah* whose master is not a human being, but Allah. But giving up these identities does not mean abolishing them altogether because Allah created human beings as "nations" and "tribes." He explains that:

> ... a strong feeling of ethnic identity must be counted as integral to human nature. However, if necessity has created this sort of individualistic racial solidarity, there is no doubt that such solidarity can disappear just as it can arise. When men recognize the existence of the supreme judge ... [they] no longer ... have any need for an ethnic sentiment which has lost its purpose and whose memory has been erased from their souls; judgment belongs to Allah, the Sublime, the Magnificent.[35]

Afghānī's political program of pan-Islamism (*ittihād-i islāmī*) sought to mobilize Muslim nations to fight against Western imperialism and gain military power through modern technology. Muslim unity according to his thought can only come about if Muslims were strengthened militarily through modernization, just like the West. Pan-Islamism was an idiom of resistance directed against European military, political, economic domination and missionary assault on the Muslim world. Afghānī used this as an ideology to save the Muslim world from European domination. He called for the independence of individual Muslim nations. He regarded it the religious duty of Muslims to reconquer any territory taken away from them by others. In case of failure, they are advised to migrate to a land where Islām can be fully preached and practiced. Resistance to aggression was the duty not merely of the Muslims of a particular region or only of those who are colonized but of all Muslims. The cause of the

that the Muslims of India had strayed from the teachings of the Prophet (SAW). Were they to recognize this, correct their course, and apply themselves to progressive tasks, their religious and temporal life would be renewed. Unlike Sir Sayyid, he favoured political activity on the part of the Muslims. He believed that "... unless their (Muslim's) political training ran on parallel lines with that of their Hindu compatriots they were certain to be submerged in the rising tide of the new nationalism."[30] It is these endeavours, among others, that made the Aligarh movement to pay increasing attention to the unity of the Muslim world. In 1906, the Aligarh school sent a telegram to the Viceroy stating that "The Mohammedans of Aligarh have heard the news of the British ultimatum to Turkey with profound grief and alarm, and request Your Excellency to use the influence of the Government of India in persuading the British Government to avoid an Anglo-Turkish war, and earn thereby the gratitude of the entire Mohammedan population of British India."[31] From 1910 onwards, the dominant feeling among Muslims, including those educated at Aligarh, was that the old policy of loyalty to the Government was of no use to the Muslim community.[32] Pan-Islamic sentiments captured the imagination of the Muslims. Aligarh graduates, Maulānā Shawkat 'Alī and his brother Mawlānā Muḥammad 'Alī, provided the leadership to the Khilāfat movement and suffered imprisonment. Subsequently, Aligarh movement supported the two nations theory of the Muslim League and helped in the struggle for Pakistan. The first prime minister of Pakistan, Liaquat 'Alī Khān, was an Aligarh graduate as was the first Military President of Pakistan, General Muḥammed Ayūb Khān who ruled from 1958 to 1969.

Another Islamic modernist who championed the Pan-Islamic movement was the charismatic leader, Sayyid Jamāl al-Dīn al-Asādābādī (known as Al-Afghānī). He established the movement in its political form, striving to achieve the political unity of Muslims to fight against colonialism and the colonial powers. His was an age of European expansion into the heartlands of Islām, and of a frenzied search by Muslims for ways to ward off foreign conquests. As a vocal critic of Western imperialism, Afghānī called for a revival of Islamic civilization to counteract European domination. He traveled widely throughout Muslim lands in the Middle East and Central and South Asia, attempting to mobilize the masses in a pan–Islamic movement against the imperial threat.[33] His diagnosis of the situation consisted essentially of two parts dealing with the conditions of Western domination and a call for Pan-Islamic unity and reform.

remain aloof from all kinds of political agitation because by taking an active role in the Indian Mutiny of 1857, they had already placed themselves in danger by arousing British antagonism. In his attempts to dissuade the Muslims from forming an alliance with the Hindu-dominated Congress, he cited the Qur'ān and said that "the command of God was that Musalmāns could not be friends of non-Muslims. It can be plausibly maintained that the "two nations" theory, the rallying cry for the creation of Pakistan, can be traced back to the work of Sayyid Aḥmad Khān. Sir Sayyid insisted that Muslims could cooperate with Christians who were people of the Book. "If they could be friends, it could only be with Christians."[24] He was of the view that Muslims should have friendship with the British if they want to take their due rights. He tried his best to convince the British that Muslims were not against them. The Aligarh College Committee at the inauguration ceremony declared that "The British Rule in India is the most wonderful phenomenon the world has ever seen."[25] Throughout, he fought to preserve the Muslim interests in education, in jobs, and in the government. He constantly hammered upon the theme that the best chance of preserving Muslim interests in India lied in allying with the British. Though Sir Sayyid wished to see Turkey as a powerful independent Muslim state since Turkey "is the last of the great powers left to Islām," he would not allow any pan-Islamic loyalties to hinder this purpose.[26] After the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78, he felt that Muslims might make much of their loyalty to the Turkish *khalīfah*, he was adamant that loyalty was owed to the British.[27] He encouraged the Indian Muslims "to accept an emotional espousal of the 'colonial sociology' of India in which Indian Muslims - of all classes and all regions - were a corporate group, marked by their past as rulers and their present as a minority in need of protection."[28] Indeed Sir Sayyid was rewarded by the British in many ways. In 1878, he was nominated as a member of the Vice Regal Legislative Council;[29] in 1888, he was knighted as the Knight Commander of the Star of India; in 1889, he received an honorary degree from the University of Edinburgh.

There were many others who followed Sayyid Aḥmad Khān and built upon his work and ideas. Prominent among them were Nawāb Abdul Latīf Khān (1828-1893), Mawlvī Muḥammad Ḥusain (1846-1904), Justice Sayyid Amīr 'Alī (1849-1928) and Justice Badruddīn Tyabjī (1844-1906). Justice Sayyid Amīr 'Alī rose to great eminence, was an intellectual, lawyer, and government official. His principal objective was to reconcile classical Islām with modern needs. Amīr 'Alī contended that Islām was a positive force, adaptable to contemporary conditions and necessary for spiritual enlightenment and practical advancement. His theme emphasized

that the Muslims would not be able to retrieve their lost position without the support of their English rulers. He also realized that the conservatism had made the Muslim community prisoners of outmoded ideas and that they could not be infused with new life and vigour without a rationalistic reinterpretation of old Islamic values in tune with modern conditions.[21] He viewed the social degeneration of Muslims as a temporary phase which could be overcome by constant endeavour in two distinct directions: the adoption by the community of western learning and education, and a rapprochement between the British and Muslims.

To impart modern education, Sir Sayyid founded the Aligarh Movement, which was primarily an educational venture. He established the Gulshan School at Murādābād in 1859, Victoria School at Ghazīpur in 1863, and a Scientific Society in 1864. The Society published translations of famous English works on history and political economy in Urdu to acquaint Muslims with the knowledge and literature of nations of the West. When Sir Sayyid was posted at Aligarh, he started the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental School in 1867 which became a college in 1875 and was granted the status of University to be called Aligarh University in 1920. Many of the individuals who would stand in the vanguard of the later Pakistan movement are identified with this university.

Like many other Muslim thinkers of the nineteenth century, Sir Sayyid was convinced that Muslims need to acquire Western science and he attempted to show that modern science is in perfect harmony with Islām. To that end, Sir Sayyid went ahead and re-interpreted Islām with the help of modern *'ilm al-kalām*. He insisted that Islām was completely compatible with reason and with "nature" and that the "work of God" (nature and its laws) was in conformity with the "word of God" (the Qur'ān). In short, he was very much a 19th–century advocate of science and positivism.[22] Sir Sayyid was severely criticized by the *'ulamā'* and others for he had no training in any natural science or in philosophy of science and he had never finished his traditional education. Yet, he made a foundational contribution to the spread of modern education and rationalist thought among the Muslim elite in India. The intention of Sir Sayyid was to enthuse young Muslims to imbibe modern science and remain Muslims. His motto was: "The more worldly progress we make, the more glory Islām gains." [23]

Sir Sayyid constantly pleaded Muslims to remain loyal to the British government. He advised them to shun active politics and not to participate in the Congress movement. He felt that the Muslim community should