
UNIT 18 SIR SYED AHMED KHAN, MOHAMMAD IQBAL, M.A. JINNAH AND ABUL KALAM AZAD

Structure

- 18.0 Objectives
- 18.1 Introduction
- 18.2 Sir Syed Ahmed Khan
 - 18.2.1 Aligarh Movement
 - 18.2.2 Political Thought
- 18.3 Mohammad Iqbal
 - 18.3.1 Islam and Ego
 - 18.3.2 Cardinal Principles of Iqbal's Political Thought
 - 18.3.3 Nationalism
 - 18.3.4 Democracy
 - 18.3.5 Islamic Democracy
 - 18.3.6 Socialism
 - 18.3.7 Individual
- 18.4 M.A. Jinnah
 - 18.4.1 Liberalism and Jinnah
 - 18.4.2 Nationalism
 - 18.4.3 Two-Nation Theory
- 18.5 Abul Kalam Azad
 - 18.5.1 Romantic Phase of his Ideas
 - 18.5.2 Nationalism
 - 18.5.3 Democracy
 - 18.5.4 Post-Romantic Phase of his Ideas
- 18.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 18.7 Some Useful Books
- 18.8 Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises

18.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit deals with the political thoughts of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Mohammad Iqbal, M.A. Jinnah and Abul Kalam Azad. The unit will enable you to know their views on:

- Relationships between Islam and Hinduism
- Relationships between Hindus and Muslims
- Relationships between Islam and Politics, and tenets of democracy
- Nationalism.

18.1 INTRODUCTION

British colonial rule brought about a number of changes in Indian society along with the spread of modern education which generated consciousness of nationalism in Indians of all religions. Nationalistic feelings found expression through political, socio-cultural and religious processes and activities. The enlightened individuals belonging to the Hindu and the Muslim communities generated consciousness in society and particularly in their respective communities. In the latter part of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries there emerged several social, religious, cultural and political movements and organisations in India. These movements were mostly led by the Hindu and Muslim leaders in their respective communities. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Mohammad Iqbal, Mohammad Ali Jinnah and Abul Kalam Azad were among many others who influenced Indian society

significantly. These leaders developed their political thought regarding the relationship between religion and politics, democracy and rights of individuals, sovereignty and nationalism. Islam has been the hub of their views. But they did not make what can be termed as original contribution to political thought.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan,
Mohammad Iqbal, M.A. Jinnah
and Abul Kalam Azad

18.2 SIR SYED AHMED KHAN

18.2.1 Aligarh Movement

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan founded the Aligarh movement. This movement aimed at spreading modern education and creating political consciousness among the Indian Muslims. The first national awakening among the Muslims found expression through this movement. He was assisted in his movement by able persons like Khwaja Altaf Hussain Ali, Maulvi Nazir Ahmed and Maulvi Shibli Numami. This movement is known as 'Aligarh movement' because it had started at Aligarh. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan established Mohammedan Anglo Oriental (MAO) College at Aligarh in 1875. This college developed into Aligarh University in 1890. The Aligarh movement aimed at spreading Western education among the Muslims without weakening their allegiance to Islam. The movement also aimed at introducing social reforms among Indian Muslims. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan condemned polygamy and social ban on widow remarriage. Widow remarriage was permitted by Islam. The Aligarh movement was based on the liberal interpretation of Quran. It strived to harmonise Islam with modern liberal culture.

18.2.2 Political Thought

The political thought of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan can be divided into two phases: First phase spanned up to 1887, and the second phase started after 1887. During the first phase Sir Syed Ahmed Khan stood for Hindu-Muslim unity. Expressing the need for Hindu-Muslim unity he said that for "centuries we have been living on the same soil, eating the same fruit on the same land..... breathing the air of the same country." In 1873, he declared that religion should not be an obstacle for nationalism. He advocated separation between religious and political matters. According to him the religious and spiritual matters were not linked with mundane affairs. As a member of the Viceroy's legislative council he strove for the welfare of both Hindus and Muslims. In 1884, he made it clear that "by the word qaum, I mean both Hindus and Muslims. What we see is that all of us, whether Hindus or Muslims, lie on one soil, are governed by the one and the same ruler, have the same sources of benefit and equally share the hardships of a famine". He was not a religious bigot or Hindu baiter. He worked closely with the Hindus in the scientific society and the Aligarh British India Association. He sought donations from the Hindu Rajas and Zamindars for MAO College. Hindus were well represented in the management and the teaching community. In the initial years of the college, the Hindu students outnumbered the Muslims. Cow slaughter was banned in the college. Along with Surendra Nath Banerjee he demanded restoration of age for civil services examination from 18 to 21 years. He revived the British Association at Aligarh for his purpose.

But surprisingly during the second phase Sir Syed Ahmed Khan changed his views (in December 1887). Until then he had a background which was almost similar to that of the Congress. But during this phase imperialist thought found expression in his writings. They were based on the "emancipatory", "democratic" and "progressive" characterisation of the British rule. Unlike before he opposed the application of principles of representative and parliamentary government. He held that the western form of democracy and nationalism would not operate in India. He said that in a country like India which was complex and full of diversities of castes, religions and races, the system of representative form of government would not satisfy the principles of equality. Democracy believes in the rule of the majority. In his opinion such a system would lead to the domination of the more educated and more numerous Hindus over the less educated and less numerous Muslims. He opined that the Congress demand for a representative form of government would hurt the Muslims most.

He said that so long as the religious, castiest and racial differences exist in India, the western model of democracy could not be established. He felt that if the western model of democracy was adopted in India, "the large community would totally override the interests of the smaller community." This argument was carried forward by the communalists who believed in the two-nation theory. According to this theory Hindus and Muslims were two separate nations which had separate economic, political and social interests and different cultural and historical background, and who cannot form a single nation and Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was averse to the process of elections. In 1888 he said that the system of election would put the legislation into the hands of "Bengalis or Hindus of Bengali type", a condition of utmost degradation" and the Muslims would become slaves of Hindus. On similar grounds, he rejected the applicability of the Self-government in India, which in his opinion would result in the "maltreatment" of Muslims. He even opposed the freedom of speech and the press. He openly supported the Lyttous attack on the freedom of press.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan was even opposed to political agitations. He argued that they would tantamount to sedition and being anti-government or at least it would arouse the suspicion of disloyalty in the official mind. He exhorted Muslims to shun politics and remain non-political and non-agitational or politically passive and "complete a breach" between the Muslims and the Bengali-dominated Congress. He sought to establish Anglo-Muslim alliance to arouse the Muslim feelings against the Congress.

He changed his views because of the influence of British officials on him. He required the help of the government for the college founded by him. The British officials took advantage of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's desperation. They influenced his views to the extent that he became a man of ideas which were totally different from those he had cherished earlier. The MAO college principal, Theodore Beck, influenced him the most. Beck set out to counter the "evil" influence of Congress by counterposing Sir Syed Ahmed Khan against it. He worked hard to create a "strong conservative school of thought" and "complete a breach" between the Muslims and the Bengali dominated Congress.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan relented under the influence of Beck. He turned against Congress. The growth of Hindu revivalism and its links with the Congress intensified his anti-Congress feelings.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan had limited influence on the North-Indian Muslims. He catalysed social and educational reforms among sections of Muslims. His influence was not all pervasive. His sustained campaign against the Congress prevented the movement from going beyond Aligarh and its neighbouring districts. A large number of Muslims remained uninfluenced by him.

Check Your Progress 1

Note : i) Use the space provided below for your answers.

ii) Check your answers with that given at the end of the unit.

1) What are the tenets of two-nation theory?

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2) Explain the views of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan regarding the applicability of concept of democracy.

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18.3 MOHAMMAD IQBAL

Mohammad Iqbal attempted to provide a systematic basis for the political ideas of Indian Muslims. He provided a critique of the political ideas of liberal democracy in relation to the Islamic political ideas. For understanding his political ideas, it is necessary to understand his views on Islam and ego.

18.3.1 Islam and Ego

Iqbal believed that Islam has been rendered useless for the modern man because of its medieval spirit. It was so not because of the weakness of Islam per se but because of the fact that people did not understand the true spirit of Islam. He blamed the orthodox and self-seeking sufis for providing a narrow interpretation of Islam. Iqbal believed that medieval mysticism deprives the followers of Islam of healthy instincts and puts forth only the obscure thoughts. He believed that revival of true Islam was a must for the cure of the world. A careful study of Islam was necessary which could give "a kind of insight into its significance as a world fact". Islam had potential of becoming a "living force".

Iqbal's vision of society, state and politics was based on his view of Islam. According to Iqbal the ideal society on earth will be established by the Muslims—chosen people of God, the deputies of God in the East. A Muslim is not an extraordinary person (titan) but a common man and an "embodiment of good to all the world". He possesses the qualities of "justice and benevolence". Iqbal believed that only by "self-affirmation, self-expression, and self-development" can the Muslims become more strong and free". These are the three stages through which the uniqueness of ego can be achieved.

The philosophy of "egoism" or "self" of Iqbal is significant from the point of view of his political ideas. Iqbal was dissatisfied with the economic and political system in society. The Society has created institutions which have enslaved the individual. It undermines the religion and ethical principles. Iqbal, therefore, offers a higher ideal worth emulating. The "ego" must be kept within proper limits. And this can be done by only obedience and discipline. It will ultimately lead to the viceregency of God. Iqbal believed that those Muslims who are guided by the Quran or the Book of Wisdom will fulfil this mission.

18.3.2 Cardinal Principles of Iqbal's Political Thought

The conflict between east and west or between love and reason form the cardinal principle of Iqbal's political thought. Iqbal had shown strong distrust of west and western civilisation. To him the West symbolised values of materialism and it was in contravention of the high values of spiritualism and religiosity characterising the East. The bases of west is reason, while that of the eastern civilisation is love.

Iqbal felt the need for creation of an ideal society. He was critical of the western conceptions of various political ideas, i.e. the nation-state, nationalism, equality, liberty, democracy, interpretation of history, the socialist movement in the west etc. He opined that western political thought emerged along with the emergence of capitalism. The capitalist society is product of material civilisation. To Iqbal the purpose of society should be to make the life of its members happy and good. Every member should find opportunities for the development of his "ego" and personality. The capitalist society cannot secure, Iqbal believed, good life of the people. Its basis is the profit of a few. Science, philosophy, democracy, constitution and fundamental rights of equality and liberty are all subservient to the exploiting classes.

18.3.3 Nationalism

In Iqbal's opinion nationalism provides a psychological and political justification for the nation-state. The capitalist system was responsible for its emergence. It is based on the consideration of territory. Nationalism merely attaches an individual to a territory. Patriotism, according to Iqbal is different from nationalism. Patriotism is "a perfectly natural virtue and has a place in the moral life of a man". But nationalism according to Iqbal, is a political concept and is not in consonance with the spirit of Islam. He believed that if nationalism was accepted in its ideal form, Islam would no more remain a living factor. Nationalism "comes into conflict with

Islam when it begins to play the role of the political concept.... demanding that Islam should recede to the background of a more private opinion and cease to be a living factor in the national life." Iqbal, however, was not opposed to the concept of nationalism which had potentialities of uniting people of a particular country for the achievement of freedom. Such a concept of nationalism, according to Iqbal, was not inconsistent with the spirit of Islam. But religion could be a more uniting factor of people than nationalism. He believed that the westerners wanted to use nationalism "to shatter the religious unity of Islam to pieces". Iqbal was not opposed to the national movement but viewed nationalism as a disturbing element in politics.

Iqbal felt that the modern world had become a danger aiming at 'de-islamisation' of the Muslims. Nationalism was one such danger. Iqbal was afraid of the possible growth of nationalism in India. He started with the assumption that India was not a nation. Muslims and nationalism are not identical according to him because they were a minority. In the countries where Muslims are a majority, Islam has accommodated nationalism. Muslims in India constitute a cultural entity.

Do Muslims form a separate nation? According to Prof. Moin Shakir, Iqbal has no clear-cut answer to this question. He believed that Muslims were "bound together not by racial, linguistic, or geographical ties, but their communal brotherhood". He concluded that India was not a single nation. The idea of nationalism would be an obliteration of diversity, which would be most undesirable according to Iqbal. But it does not mean that Iqbal was not in favour of a United India. He felt that fusion of the communities was not possible in India. Instead, mutual harmony and co-operation of different communities should be sought. To him the talk of one nation was "futile". Iqbal's insistence on the maintenance of distinct communities by recognising them as separate entities gave rise to Muslim Nationalism. This has made him the father of the Idea of Pakistan.

According to Moin Shakir the feeling that the Muslim League carried Iqbal's concept of Muslim Nationalism to its logical end is not valid. He never thought of partitioning India. Instead he suggested the idea of a separate Muslim state in the North in his presidential address to the Muslim League in 1928. He demanded only "a state within a state", and not a separate state. Moin Shakir says "Thus, Iqbal's scheme seems to have no relation to the league demand for partition. But the league leadership exploited Iqbal's name to give strength and sanctity to the demand for Pakistan". Even Jinnah's and other Muslim leaders' attempts to rally the anti-Hindu forces in the parties under the guise of the two-nation theory was more profoundly inspired by Rahmat Ali than Iqbal. Iqbal had great respect for non-Muslim Communities. He was opposed to the narrow and sectarian nationalism inside and outside India as the basis of polity. He had great passion for India's freedom.

18.3.4 Democracy

To Iqbal democracy was one of the important features of the modern western system. This democracy is different from and opposed to the Islamic democracy. This concept of democracy is the invention of the west. It believes in the sovereignty of the people and in the concept of liberty and equality. Western democracy is the result of a reaction to the past dominated by the feudal structure of Europe. Iqbal thought that these features of democracy are inconsistent with the tenets of Islam. Unlike in western democracy, the sovereignty in Islamic democracy does not lie with the people. Sovereignty, according to Islam, is vested in God; not in the people. To Iqbal the western concept of democracy will be meaningful for a few in the society. This concept is based on the principles of exploitation. The concept of majority of the western democracy may not be always wise. According to Iqbal, equality and liberty of western democracy are not real. Democracy is a comparison of imperialism and buttresses the interests of the exploiters. Therefore, as a rule of the people, it cannot be realised. According to Iqbal, in the garb of democracy, operates "the demon of autocracy". Liberty and other so-called rights are merely a cover in capitalism. Democracy is the continuation of the authoritarian rule of the past.

18.3.5 Islamic Democracy

He condemned the western concept of democracy and urged an acceptance of Islamic democracy. Islamic democracy did not "grow out of the extension of economic opportunity". It is based on the assumption that every human being is a

centre of latent power, which can be developed by cultivating a certain type of character. In Islamic democracy emphasis is more on moral considerations. Iqbal's democracy does not belong to the people but to unique individuals. He was convinced that Islamic democracy would not degenerate into autocracy. The basis of Islamic democracy is shifted "from economic exploitation to better spiritual purification and better economic adjustment". Iqbal thought that a government based on the concept of one God would be more suitable than democracy of the western type. The cardinal principles of Islamic democracy would be: the principle of Unity of God, obedience to law, tolerance and universalism. Iqbal appreciated the adoption of democratic institutions in the western countries. But desired that they be in conformity with the basic principles of Islam. In the context of India also, Iqbal felt that western democracy was not suitable. He felt that if democracy was applied to India, the "communal oligarchy in the garb of democracy" would prevail in India. He, therefore, pleaded for the modification of the democratic institutions. He felt that a monarch guided by a religious and ethical code, may establish a government which may aim at the realisation of spiritual ideals through a human organisation.

18.3.6 Socialism

Iqbal was impressed by the concept of socialism as propounded by Karl Marx in the sense that it rejects capitalism, democracy and nationalism. He finds many points of similarity between Islam and Marxian ideology. He opined that both Islam and Marxism "aim at destruction of autocracy in the world, but view capitalism with disfavour, both disapprove of priesthood and church as organized institutions". He believed that Islam is a form of socialism which is not used by the Muslims. He, however, did not agree with all aspects of the principles of socialism. According to him, Marxism is concerned only with matter and ignores the soul and spirit. He also rejected the materialist interpretation of history. It was a product of Western intellectualism according to him. He believed that the great defect of Marxism is its denial of God and spiritual values. This, according to Iqbal, is the unhealthy and dark side of Marxism.

Iqbal did not agree with the Marxian concept of state and government as well. He felt that a classless society would not be achieved and the state would not wither away.

18.3.7 Individual

An individual is inseparable from the society. His truest self achieves fulfilment in the society. The highest aim of the individual is to achieve union with society. He owes his body and spirit to the society. The society of individual and community is a supreme entity. The interests of the individual and society are not antagonistic. They are mutual and complimentary. Islam recognises the worth of an individual and disciplines him to sacrifice everything in the service of God. Uncontrolled ego or lack of discipline or selfishness so characteristic of individualism can lead to anarchy. Goodness can be achieved only by the unity of man and God. From the unity of god and man are derived the secret powers of man. The concept of unity of God fosters the feelings of brotherhood. The Islamic community is not governed through human law but by the divine laws propounded by Quran. Its words are secret and eternal.

If an individual goes against the communal interest, he will have no freedom. According to Iqbal obedience is the highest virtue of an individual. Iqbal does not exhaustively deal with rights. An individual can enjoy those rights which are permitted by the law of Quran.

Check Your Progress 2

- Note : i) Use the space provided below for your answers.
ii) Check your answers with those given at the end of the unit.

1) Discuss Iqbal's views on nationalism?

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- 2) Compare Iqbal's views on Western democracy with his views on Islamic democracy.

18.4 M.A. JINNAH

Jinnah's practical politics determined his political thought. Unlike him the politics of Abul Kalam Azad was shaped by ideology.

18.4.1 Liberalism and Jinnah

Jinnah was initially influenced by British liberalism. He was associated with the leading Indian liberals i.e. Dadabhai Naoroji, G.K. Gokhale, S.N. Banerjee and R.C. Das. His early liberalism was a product of his English education and the influence of Indian liberals. He had uncompromising faith in the concept of nationalism, democracy, secularism and the unity of the country. He told Dr. Ashraf "I happened to meet several important English liberals.... I grasped that liberalism, which became part of my life, thrilled me very much". The core of his liberalism consisted of liberty—civil, fiscal, personal, social, economic, political and international; moral worth and spiritual equality of each individual, dignity of human personality, impartial judiciary, cheap legal procedure and accessible courts, abolition of class privileges and abolition of power of money. His liberalism, to sum up, stood for: freedom, constitutionalism, absence of any type of fanaticism in social and political life, co-operation with the British government, constitutional form of agitation for the right cause, rule of law and the unity of country. He did not support the extra-constitutional method in an agitation. He felt that even the non-co-operation movement was a non-liberal movement.

He acknowledged the positive contribution of the British rule. He believed that developments such as the growth of feelings of patriotism and nationalism were the result of attitudes and policies of the British government. He expressed belief in the democratic institutions of local self-government. According to him a government should not be above public criticism. A civilised government is known for the respect it has for public opinion. Undemocratic functioning of the government leads to revolution. But he did not grant people the right to revolt. He stood for the establishment of democracy. But he felt that it should not be given to them as a gift but as a right. Jinnah adheres to liberalism as a spokesman of the liberal middle class. According to him the middle class could not fit in with a movement of the masses. Jinnah felt that with the emergence of Gandhi and Mohammad Ali masses started taking part in national movement. He felt that the involvement of the masses affected the liberal character of the Indian National Congress. Therefore, he left the Indian National Congress, and started contradicting whatever he had said earlier. 1920 was the dividing year in the political understanding of Jinnah.

His approach to politics during the liberal phase was secular. He emphasised that the people should forget religious differences. Religion should be separated from politics. He said the co-operation of all the communities was necessary for the cause of the motherland. Only if the Indians forgot their religious differences, would they be deserving "real political franchise, freedom and self-government". He did not agree with the Aligarh movement (or Sir Syed Ahmed Khan) that if the British left India, Hindu Raj would be established. He disagreed with Gandhi on the issue of mixing

religion with politics. He did not even support the Khilafat movement because it blended religion with politics.

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18.4.2 Nationalism

According to Jinnah the emergence of nationalism in India was the result of colonial policies—integration of India into a political and social unit and spread of English education. Initially he believed in the one-nation theory. He emphasised the unity between the Hindus and the Muslims. India had a single nationality. This nationalism was a liberal and secular nationalism. He did not locate patriotism in religion. He did not consider pan-Islamism as a sound ideology for the Muslims of India. In the initial phase of his career, Jinnah strived for Hindu-Muslim harmony. He labelled the “supposed rivalry” between the Hindus and Muslims as nothing more than an attempt to divert the attention from the problems and to defer reforms. Jinnah was also impressed by Gopal Krishna Gokhale when he met him in Bombay in 1904. He was so impressed by Gokhale that he stated his ambition of becoming the “Muslim Gokhale”.

According to Sarojini Naidu Jinnah emerged as the “ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity” at this meeting. He rejected the separate electorate proposed by the Morley-Minto reforms of 1909. But paradoxically, he became the Calcutta Council’s Muslim member from Bombay. Though not the formal member of the Muslim League, Jinnah supported the resolution of the Muslim League that strove to attain a “system of self-government suitable to India” to be brought about “through constitutional means, a steady reform of the existing system of administration, by promoting national unity and fostering public spirit among the people of India, and by co-operating with other communities for the said purposes”.

But after Jinnah was appointed as the permanent president of the Muslim League, his views on Hindu-Muslim unity underwent significant changes. He supported the resolution of the Muslim League which resolved to work for Swaraj, “full religious liberty” and “separate electorates”.

On the eve of the Simon Commission, Jinnah rejected the Nehru report which was opposed to the system of “separate electorates”. He described the Nehru report as nothing more than a statement of the “Hindu position”. He had sensed even before 1923 that the Hindu Mahasabha was influencing the Congress. Jinnah made three amendments on March 27, 1927 in a conference chaired by him (in relation to the Nehru report.) i) Those were separate electorates should remain, ii) there should be reservation for Muslims to the extent of one third of the seats in the central legislature and iii) residuary powers should be vested in the provinces. This proposal was rejected by the Congress in 1928. Agha Khan, the founder president of the Muslim League, who presided over the All Parties Muslim Conference in 1929, wrote about Jinnah that “For him (Jinnah) there was no future in Congress or in any camp—allegedly on all India basis—which was in fact Hindu dominated. We had at last won him over to our view”. At this conference Jinnah declared that the Simon Commission Report was “dead”. But he spelt out what was later to become his strategy for the promotion of Pakistan.

18.4.3 Two-Nation Theory

Jinnah’s passion for Hindu-Muslim unity was replaced by his belief in the two-nation theory after he had rejected the Nehru and the Simon Commission reports. For him Hindus and Muslims no more constituted a unity. Instead, they now came to represent two separate nations. He emphasised that Muslims were a separate “party”, and he spoke the “language of a bargainer”. As a chairman of the federal subcommittee he said “no constitution would work unless it gave a sense of security to the Muslims and other minorities”. He began to emphasise that since Muslims are a nation, they must preserve their culture and separate identity. He said that Hindu extremism could be dangerous to Muslim existence. He ruled out the possibility of harmony between Hindus and Muslims. He called Congress a Hindu party which wanted to establish “Hindu Raj”. Establishment of democracy would mean complete extinction of Islam, he said.

Almost during the same period the Muslim students in Cambridge University were launching an agitation for the separate state of Pakistan. Rahmat Ali, a student of

Cambridge University founded Pakistan National Movement. He was inspired by the poet Iqbal. He wrote a pamphlet—"Now or Never : Are We to live or perish?" He strove for the formation of Pakistan which would supposedly include the following regions—Punjab, N.W.F.P. (Afghanistan), Kashmir, Sindh and Baluchistan. The Muslim League met on March 4, 1934 in New Delhi for establishing unity in the party. This terrorised the pro-British elements. Though Jinnah supported the communal award, which was opposed by the Congress, he abstained from voting on it.

Jinnah continued to ignore Rahmat Ali's call for Pakistan and his angry attacks even in 1937. But he changed his position during the election campaign of 1937.

He further emphasised that "historical" and "cultural" differences existed between the Hindus and Muslims. He held that Hinduism and Islam were "two entirely distinct and separate civilisations". They belong to different religions, philosophies, social customs and cherish two distinct bodies of literature. They neither inter-marry nor do they inter-dine. They belonged to two different societies. Jawaharlal Nehru did not acknowledge the existence of the Muslim League during the election campaign in 1937. Jinnah reacted to this attitude of Nehru and said, "there is a third party (apart from the Congress and the government) in this country and that is the Muslims". He asked the Congress "to leave Muslims alone". Jinnah complained at the All India Muslim League session held in October 1937 that the Congress discriminated against the Muslim League in the Hindu dominated areas. He made building up of a mass party of Muslims one of his priorities during 1938 and 1939. The membership of the Muslim League multiplied manifold between the Lucknow session of 1937 and the Lahore session of 1940. He still strove for an India which was independent, and where the interests of the Muslims would be safeguarded. He denounced Congress for imposing "Bande Matram (Hail to the Mother)". He compared the Muslims of India with "the Negroes of Africa" and "Slaves" in January 1938. In April 1938, he labelled Congress as a "Hindu Party". On March 20, 1940, Jinnah demanded the division of India into "autonomous national states". But he did not use the word Pakistan. But after Jinnah finished speaking at Lahore, the historic Pakistan resolution was hammered. Jinnah said that the Hindu leaders of Hindu Mahasabha wanted to treat Muslims "like Jews in Germany". Jinnah considered the "Quit India" demand as an attempt to "force Mussalmans and surrender to Congress terms of dictation".

Jinnah maintained that "Muslims cannot divorce their religion from politics..... Hence Hindu-Muslim unity or nationalism, signifying homogeneity between them in all non-religious matters, is unimaginable". Therefore, a separate homeland for Muslims was demanded. Jinnah exhorted the Muslims to prepare for the battle for getting Pakistan in Baluchistan in July 1948. In the 1940s he reminded the Muslims of the discrimination they faced in the earlier decades. Jinnah said in his message on the Pakistan Day on March 23, 1944 :

"Pakistan is within grasp....
Insha-Allah, we shall win."

Jinnah told a public meeting in Ahmedabad in October 1945 "Pakistan is a question of life and death for us". He campaigned in the 1945 elections on the issue.

On June 20, 1947, the members of the Bengal legislative Assembly voted for the partition of their province by a large majority. Sind did it later.

The 'Partition Council' was formed.

The birth of separatist Muslim Nationalism had taken place much before Jinnah started advocating it. But before Jinnah supported it, the character and content of separate Muslim Nationalism had largely been cultural. Jinnah made it a political weapon for the creation of Pakistan—a new state. He successfully gave an ideological and religious tinge to the two-nation theory.

Jinnah's two-nation theory even distorted his earlier concept of liberal democracy. His new concept of democracy was limited to his idea of separate homeland for Muslims. He did not deny the spiritual aspects of democracy in Islam. He opposed the application of the western type of democracy in India. According to him, India was not fit for democracy. He said the majority of the people are "totally ignorant, illiterate, untutored, living in old superstitions of the worst type, thoroughly

antagonistic to each other, culturally and socially... It is impossible to work a democratic parliamentary government in India". Majority rule will become tyrannical in India. Muslims will suffer in economic, social, cultural and political aspects of life. He said that the joint-electoral system would lead to the enslavement and virtual extinction of the minority community. This aspect of the Aligarh movement, which was rejected by Jinnah earlier, influenced the later phase of his politics and thought.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan,
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Check Your Progress 3

Note : i) Use the space provided below for your answers.

ii) Check your answers with the answers given at the end of the unit.

1) Discuss Jinnah's views on concept of nationalism.

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2) Explain briefly Jinnah's views on the two-nation theory

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18.5 ABUL KALAM AZAD

Azad represented a synthesis of the west and the east. He combined religion with reason. He had basic differences with the Aligarh movement :he did not believe that the majority Hindus would prevail upon the identity of the minorities or the Muslims. He was not hostile to the British rule before 1905. His earlier political attitude was shaped by his understanding of Islam. He had regarded Islam as a guide for all actions which could provide solution to all the problems. In Islam, according to Azad, religion and politics are obverse and reverse of the same coin.

18.5.1 Romantic Phase of his Ideas

Azad opined that an understanding of Quran would help in political, social and cultural reconstruction of life. He expressed his political views in 'Al-Hilas', which covered "romantic" phase of his ideas. He expressed profound belief in the sovereignty of God, establishment of the divine kingdom, order and good government and in the supremacy of truth. He analysed Indian politics in terms of religion. To him the believers are "friends of God" and non-believers are "friends of devil". The "friends of God" are ready to die for the truth. They are not afraid of anything in this or next birth. The "friends of devil" take recourse to force and do not love truth.

He felt that politics in India needed drastic overhauling. For achieving this it was necessary that the "friends of God" organised themselves into a party of God. He believed that Islam ensured complete equality, liberty, tolerance, freedom of conscience and expression, fraternity and brotherhood. In 1914 he attempted to organise the ulema to take up the cause of Islam. He tried to develop a systematic Islamic theory of politics along the lines of his romanticism. Perhaps he was the only Muslim intellectual to do so. Till the end of the First World War Azad cherished and pursued this aim. After the First World War he realised that "romantic"

approach to politics would not yield desirable results. He became an uncompromising anti-imperialist. He advocated unity among the countrymen. He said that nationalism was consistent with the spirit of Islam. He called Pan-Islamism as a misnomer. He wanted the Muslims to join Congress. He said if Muslims joined the Congress, it would not be an unislamic act. This realisation of Azad marked the end of romantic phase of his ideas. The Jalianwalabagh tragedy and the end of the Khilafat movement eroded his faith in romanticism.

18.5.2 Nationalism

According to Azad Indian nationalism was neither Hindu nor Islamic. This was secular and was a synthesis of Hindu and Muslim cultures. He became an advocate of Islam in liberal and Islamic sense. He no longer remained hostile to the western civilisation. He said that religion and reason were not opposed to each other. There are two aspects of Azad's concept of nationalism. They are—first, his attitude towards the British, second, his attitude towards his countrymen. Up to 1905, Azad was not anti-British. He was influenced by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, though he did not subscribe to the philosophy of Aligarh movement. Afterwards he got disillusioned with the British and became anti-imperialistic. Till the end of the Khilafat movement though Azad emphasised the Hindu-Muslim unity, he was still under the influence of Pan-Islamism. He still wanted a separate party for the Muslims.

After he came in contact with Gandhi following the Jalianwalabagh tragedy and the Khilafat movement, he emphasised that the Hindus and Muslims formed a single nationality. He felt that nationalism could be a strong force, if it was liberated from religious orthodoxy and narrow-mindedness. Gandhi said Azad's faith in nationalism was "as robust as his faith in Islam". Azad believed a unity between Hindus and Muslims would bring nationalism in India. He was opposed to the partition of India on religious grounds.

Unlike the liberals, he believed that if constitutional means were not successful in achieving their political purpose, violence could be always taken recourse to. Non-violence for him was a matter of policy, not creed.

18.5.3 Democracy

He supported democracy during the "romantic" phase of Al-Hilal. He remained a firm supporter of democracy even after he abandoned "romanticism". He preached two different types of views during the "romantic" and "post-romantic" phases of his ideas.

In the first phase, he did not regard democracy as a way of life. He considered only Islam as a true and perfect religion. The Prophet was considered the personification of all values beneficial to mankind. He held that unity and sovereignty of god and establishment of supremacy of righteous order are the real elements of democracy. Unity of God implied the sovereignty of Islam, which aimed at abolishing the sovereignty of man. To him democracy is based on the will of people, characterised by tolerance, equality and liberty. Liberty was an essential prerequisite for the development of individuals in every society. He said the absence of liberty resulted in slavery which was against the tenets of Islam. He, however, said in case of war liberty of a person could be curtailed. He said unrestricted liberty is dangerous. Liberty like Islam demands faith and action. That is why he supported the Indian National Movement.

Azad said Islam recognises the value of equality. He said Islam "swept off racial and national distinctions and showed the world at large that all human beings held an equal rank and all possessed equal rights. It proclaimed that excellence did not lie in race, nationality or colour. It was only righteous action that counted and the noblest among man was he who did his work most righteously." Islamic conception of equality is thus not mechanical but spiritual.

Sovereignty of the Prophet and the Khalif constituted the perfect conception of equality, and it only could take the shape of the whole nation's free will, unity, suffrage and elections. That is the reason why the sovereign or president of a republic is designated Khalif. Khalif literally means nothing more or less than representation. It gives full rights to women and puts them at par with men. Islam is superior to western ideologies. Western system of equality is not real. Islamic way of life is full of equality—economic and political as well as social.

18.5.4 Post-Romantic Phase of his Ideas

In the "post-romantic" phase his views were no more confined to the influence of Islam. They spread under the influence of West. He expressed belief in the sovereignty of the people. He said that the country belonged to the people. All people enjoyed equal rights. The head of the state or Caliph should be elected by the people. The head of the state should not claim special privileges in relation to the people. The head of the state should consult people having insight in all administrative and legal matters. The treasury of the country should be considered as the property and possession of the people. He made a plea for the establishment of parliamentary form of government in India. He said "National government must be a cabinet government". But he never discussed the merits or demerits of parliamentary and presidential form of governments at the academic level. He believed in federalism. He supported greater autonomy of the states.

18.6 LET US SUM UP

The political thought of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Mohammad Iqbal, Mohammad Ali Jinnah and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad focused on the issues relating to the relationships between Islam and Western political concepts i.e. democracy, nationalism and nationality, relationship between Islam and Hinduism, between Hindus and Muslims and attitude towards the British. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan initially stood for Hindu-Muslim unity. But later he changed his views and became an ardent supporter of the two-nation theory. He even opposed the introduction of tenets of democracy in India. "Ego" or self-discipline and self-principle are the cardinal principles of Iqbal's political thought. He was highly critical of the western concept of democracy. To him nationalism was a political concept which usually came in conflict with religion. However, he supported nationalism, it aimed at achieving freedom. Religion could be a more uniting factor. He said Hindus and Muslims were two nations. While his views on the two-nation theory are not clear, and he wanted a "state within the state" for Muslims, his views became an inspiring source for the Muslim League. He opined that Islam contained all the vital aspects of democracy and he called it Islamic democracy.

Jinnah was a liberal in the initial phase of his career. His views on religion and politics were coloured by his liberalism. In this phase he believed that India was a single nation. But after the Nehru and Simon Commission reports, he became an ardent supporter of the two-nation theory. His later views distorted even his earlier liberal perception of democracy.

Unlike the other three leaders Azad believed that Indian nationalism was secular and was a synthesis of the Hindu and Muslim cultures. He stood for the synthesis of west and east. He supported the western concept of democracy. He said this concept of democracy was not averse to the principles of Islam.

Check Your Progress 4

- Note:** i) Use the space provided below for your answers.
ii) Check your answers with the answers given at the end of the unit.

1) Discuss Azad's views on Nationalism.

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2) Discuss Azad's views on Democracy.

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18.7 SOME USEFUL BOOKS

V.N. Datta, *Maulana Azad*, Manohar, 1990, New Delhi.

Gandhi, Raj Mohan, *Eight Lives: A Study of Hindu-Muslim Encounter*, New Delhi, Roli Books International, 1985.

Hasan, Mushirul (ed.) *Communalism and Pan-Islamic Trends in Colonial India*, New Delhi, Manohar, 1985.

Jalal, Ayesha, *Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, The Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*, Cambridge University Press, 1985.

Schimmel, Annemarie, *Gabriel's Wing: A Study into the Religious Ideas of Sir Syed Mohammed Iqbal*, Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1964.

Wolpert, Stanley, *Jinnah of Pakistan*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1984.

Moin Shakir, *From Khilafat to Partition*.

18.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) See Sub-section 18.2.2
- 2) See Sub-section 18.2.2

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) See Sub-section 18.3.3
- 2) See Sub-sections 18.3.4 and 18.3.5

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) See Sub-sections 18.4.2 and 18.4.3

Check Your Progress 4

- 1) See Sub-sections 18.5.2 and 18.5.3