

Sufi Response to the Pakistan Movement: A Case Study of Pir Syed Jamaat Ali Shah

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Abstract

The struggle for independence gained significant traction in the 1940s. All India Muslim League (AIML) started organizing the Muslim community on a large scale, especially in the provinces where the League's influence was still weak. These included the North West Frontier Province (NWFP), where the Congress had widespread support, and Punjab, the birthplace of the Unionist Ministry. Numerous Muslim leaders in these provinces' urban and rural areas contributed to the cause of Pakistan's popularity. Among those who disseminated the AIML and Jinnah message throughout Punjab and the NWFP was Pir Syed Jamaat Ali Shah. He visited the two provinces and spoke at public events to rally Muslim support for Pakistan. In the process, he significantly enhanced public perceptions of AIML and its leader Jinnah while also exposing the negative effects of Congress policies, which primarily affected Muslim interests in South Asia.

Key words: Pir Jamaat Ali Shah, All India Sunni Conference, Muhammad Ali Jinnah

Introduction

Sufis are an important component of the Muslim society. Islam and Sufism came to South Asia almost simultaneously. The spread of Islam in South Asia is generally attributed to the proselytizing efforts of the Sufis. Owing to their teachings and exemplary lives, they attracted large following, which make them one of the most influential groups of the Muslim society. The teachings and behavior of some of them implied a subtle and guised protest against the high handedness of the rulers and socio-political abuses of the age, whereas some of them publicly criticized the kings and state policies. After almost eight centuries of political rule, the Muslims of India were reduced to a dependent status by the British by the beginning of the 19th century. This political hegemony in India as well as in other parts of the Muslim world was attributed by the Europeans not only to their superiority in science and technology, but also to their religion.

The South Asian politics saw a change during the 1920s and 1930s. Many people had long cherished the ideal of Hindu-Muslim unity, but it was destroyed by a series of political developments that showed how clearly hostile the Hindus were toward the Muslims and the All India Muslim League (AIML) in particular. The relationship between the League and the Congress also worsened, and many Muslim leaders lost faith in the Congress's treatment of Muslims.

To address the perceived need for self-determination for Muslims a political movement aimed for the creation of a sovereign country named Pakistan (from the Muslim-majority areas of British India) was started under the leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The Pakistan Resolution was passed by All India Muslim League on 23 March 1940 finally achieved its aim in the form of the creation of an independent state of Pakistan on 14 August 1947.

Pir Syed Jamaat Ali Shah ‘... the most well-known Indian Naqshbandi-Mujaddidi of the twentieth century India prior to independence.’ (Buehler, 1993) played a leading role in supporting and actively disseminating the demand for Pakistan. The present study examines the role of Pir Syed Jamaat Ali Shah in the Pakistan Movement during the last decade. In addition to his services for the cause of the movement, it also explores his relationship with Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Literature Review

There is not much literature available on Syed Jamaat Ali Shah's life. An important work is Syed Akhter Hussain and Tahir Farooqi's *Sirat-i-Amir-i-Millat*, a book written by his grandson and his disciple. Unfortunately, it lacks criticism and has some factual errors as well. Sadiq Kasuri's two works *Jahan-i-Amir-i-Millat* and *Anwar-i-Amir-i-Millat* deal with various aspects of the life of Jamaat Ali Shah. The first book focuses more on his religious contribution, and only refers to his political activities in passing. Similarly, the second work, which is an edited collection of articles on his life by various authors, is also devoted to the study of his religious activities. Arthur Frank Buehler's doctoral thesis *Charisma and Exemplar: Naqshbandi Spiritual Authority in Punjab (1857-1947)* deals with the Sufi Revivalist Movement of Syed Jamaat Ali Shah. It exclusively deals with the religious aspects of his multi-dimensional activities. It does not discuss his political views and activities.

There are other books that deal with the political activities of Jamaat Ali Shah with reference to various political events. These include, for instance, Janbaz Mirza's work *Tahrik-i-Masjid-i-Shaheed Ganj*, which treats the Shaheed Ganj Movement in a historical perspective. Though it gives us some information about him, it does not cover his other activities, particularly those in the 1940s. Similarly, Jalaluddin Qadiri's two works, *Khutbat-i-All India Sunni conference* and

Tarikh-i-All India Sunni Conference discuss his role with reference to All India Sunni Conference. Most of the literature is in Urdu language. There is limited literature in English language on Jamaat Ali Shah's political activities particularly regarding the Pakistan Movement. The present study is an attempt to fill this gap.

Methodology

The methodology pursued during the course of the study is both historical and analytical. Both primary and secondary sources have been consulted. Primary sources like Punjab Police Abstract (1940-1947) give valuable information about Jamaat Ali Shah's political and religious activities. In addition, Hakim Muhammad Musa Amritsari Collection in the Central Library of the University of the Punjab contains valuable research material, such as issues of journal *Anwar-i-Sufiyya*, which have been consulted and cited. In order to consult primary sources, library research has also been undertaken.

Pir Syed Jamaat Ali Shah: A Brief Biography

Syed Jamaat Ali Shah was born in 1841 in the Village Alipur Sayyidan in Narowal District of Punjab. (Buehler, 1993) (Kasuri, 1994) His parents were lineal descendants of Syed Muhammad Saeed Nauruz Shah Shirazi, who had come to India along with a large contingent of Persians accompanying the second Mughal Emperor Hamayun, (d. 1556) in his campaign to re-conquer India. (Buehler, 1993) Jamaat Ali Shah's father Syed Karim was a sufi scholar as well as the landowner of Alipur Sayyidan. His father took the services of Hafiz Shahab-ud-Din Kashmiri, to help his son learn Quran by heart. He was taught Urdu and Persian by Maulana Abdur Rashid Alipuri, Maulana Qari Hafiz Abdur Wahab Amratsari taught him grammar and logic. After that he joined Dar-ul-Uloom Numania, Lahore where he benefited from Maulana Ghulam Qadir Bahirawi, and learnt religious sciences from him. (Syed Akhtar Hussain, 1975)

He studied religious sciences in India from two well-known reformist Naqshbandi Sufis Maulana Irshad Hussain Rampuri (b. 1832- d. 1893), and Maulana Shah Fazl Rehman Ganj Muradabadi (b. 1794- d. 1895). He also studied from Maulana Abdullah Tonki (b. 1850- d. 1920) (renowned theologian and Arabic language teacher at the Oriental College and Government Lahore), Maulana Muhammad Ali Mongiri (the first Rector of *Nadwat-ul-Ulama*), Maulana Faizul-Hussain Saharanpuri, Maulana Hassan Kanpuri, Maulana Mir Muhammad Abdullah, Maulana Muhammad Mazhar Saharanpuri and Maulana Muhammad Omar Ziauddin Istanbuli. (Kasuri, Asatidha-yi-Amir-i-Millat, 1996) He received permission to transmit *Hadith* from Muhammad Abdur Rahman Panipati and when he travelled to Makkah Maulana Shah Abdul Haq Allahabadi Makki gave him authorization to narrate additional *Hadiths*. (Ahmed, 2023) All his teachers were well known theologians and scholars of their times.

The most notable Sufi order in India is the Naqashbandiyya. Bahauddin Naqashband, a local of the town of Naqashband, which is close to Bokhara, is credited with founding it. Ahmad Ata Yaswi (d. 1116 A.D.) developed it. During the reign of Mughal Emperor Akbar (1556-1605 A.D.), Muhammad Baqi Billah (1536-1603 A.D.) founded the order in India. The renowned Indian Naqashbandi Sufi Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi (d. 1624) contributed to the order's increased popularity in the 17th century.

Although Syed Jamaat Ali Shah came from a family of Qadiri Sajjadanishins, but initially his father had introduced him with the Naqshbandiyya order. In 1891, Syed Jamaat Ali was formally initiated into the Naqshbandiyya - Mujadidiyya order by the most renowned Naqashbandi Shaikh Baba Faqir Muhammad Churahi (d. 1897). He was soon given authorization to initiate followers into the Naqshbandiyya order.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Pir Syed Jamaat Ali Shah rose to prominence as a prominent Naqashbandi Sufi reformer. He initiated a Sufi revivalist movement with the goal of reforming Sufism "from within" and ridding it of all influences and accretions that were not Islamic. He established Anjuman-i-Khuddam-as-Sufiyya (1904) as a Sufi organization to further his movement, hoping to bring together the various Sufi orders and spread Sufi knowledge. Later, the Anjuman also took another initiation by started publishing *Risala-i-Anwar-as-Suffiya*, the first Sufi journal in Punjab. (Ahmed, 2023)

Jamaat Ali Shah remained at the forefront of Ulema-i-Ahl-i-Sunnat's campaign against Ibn-i-Saud and Wahhabism. He also played a leading role in Anti-Qadiani movement and to counter the Arya Samaj Movement. He also joined *Anjuman-i-Khuddam Ka'ba* and participated in the Cawnpur Mosque Movement. (Ahmed, 2023) He also took active part in politics, particularly in Khilafat Movement and the movement for the recovery of Shaheed Ganj Mosque in Lahore. He was also elected the founding president of All India Sunni Conference (1925) and presided all three All India Sunni Conferences held respectively in Muradabad (1925), Badaun (1935) and Benarus (1946). In addition, he played an instrumental role in Pakistan Movement by supporting All India Muslim League and Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Discussion

Mass Mobilization for Muslim League Support

Jamaat Ali Shah mobilized the masses in order to win mass support for the Muslim League. For this purpose, he employed varied strategies ranging from tours in North-western regions of India to issuing *fatwas* (religious decrees) in favor of Muslim League and condemnation of Pro-Congress Muslims and Muslim groups. He also did considerable image-building of both Muslim

League and Jinnah by publicly supporting its policies. In addition, he also actively participated in the activities of other pro Pakistan groups. These activities are discussed as under:

Tours in North-western Regions of India

Syed Jamaat Ali Shah played an important role in mobilizing the Muslim population of the Punjab and NWFP for supporting the Muslim League, which was fighting for the cause of Pakistan. For this purpose, he toured the length and breadth of the two provinces. For instance, he toured Rawalpindi, Peshawar, Kohat and Sialkot in April 1938, and addressed the people in huge gatherings. (Kasuri, 1994) Similarly, in 1944, he toured Hoshiarpur District in East Punjab. (Akhtar Hussain, 1975) During the 1945-46 elections, he toured many places despite his old age and deteriorating health in order to muster support for the Muslim League candidates. In early September 1945, he visited Rohtak. (Kasuri, 2001)

In October 1945, on the occasion of *Urs* (death anniversary) of Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifa organized by *Anjuman Tableegh-u/-Ahnaaff Amritsar*, Syed Jamaat Ali Shah accompanied by Maulana Syed Muhaddis Kachhochhvi and Syed Bootay Shah toured Amritsar District. The routes taken by the 'caravan of light' started resounding with full throated slogans of 'long live *Amir-i-Millat*', 'long live Muslim League and 'long live Ouaid-e-Azam. (AI-Faqih, 1945)

For canvassing of Muslim League candidates in 1945-46 elections, Jamaat Ali Shah toured many areas, despite his old age and helped the Muslim League's candidates. His sons Syed Muhammad Hussain, Syed Khadim Hussain Shah, Syed Noor Hussain Shah and grandson Akhtar Hussain Shah worked day and night for the Muslim League's success. (Mazhar, 1991) In early 1947, he toured the NWFP to mobilize support for Pakistan before the 1947 Referendum, whereby it was to be decided whether the province wanted to join Pakistan or not. Thus, despite his old age, Jamaat Ali Shah made whirlwind tours in various parts of the sub-continent. (Hayat, 1991)

Issuance of *Fatwa* and Religious Appeals

In order to convince the people of the sincerity of the Muslim League for the Muslim community, Jamaat Ali Shah issued a *fatwa* (religious decree) condemning the supporters of Congress and supporting the League, its leaders and the cause for which it was fighting. On April 22, 1938, while addressing a Friday congregation in *Jamia* Mosque in Sialkot, he stated: (Kasuri, 1994)

Dear Muslims, today there are two banners, one belongs to Islam and the other to infidels (non-Muslims) which will you choose"? A II those present proclaimed with one voice 'we will not come under the banner of the non-Muslims. We will boycott those co-religionists who have gone under the non-Muslim banners'. They vowed to close their graveyards on these Muslims.

Similarly, in Gurdaspur (East Punjab), while addressing a public gathering, he declared: "Whoever is disloyal to the Muslim League will be regarded as non-Muslim and will not be buried in a Muslim graveyard". (Shah, 1996) In a similar vein, addressing the 35th annual function of All-India *Khudam-as-Sufia* on May 11, 1938, Jamaat Ali Shah said: (Kasuri, 1994)

It is binding on all the Muslims of India to join Muslim League. On one side is the banner of un-Islamic forces, while on the other side is the banner of Islam. Therefore it is the bounden duty of the Muslims to join the Muslim League at this critical juncture of Muslim history to protect their faith.

While celebrating the 'Day of Deliverance' after the resignation of Congress Ministries in 1939, Jamaat Ali Shah said: "There are two flags [in India], one of Islam and the other of *Kufr* (infidelity). O' Muslims, under which flag will you stand? [The crowd answered loudly: 'Under the flag of Islam']". Then he said: "If anyone who was standing under the flag of *Kufr* died will you bury him in the Muslim graveyard? Will you pray at his funeral? [The crowd shouted: 'No, No.']. Then he said: "The flag of the Muslim League is the flag of Islam. We must all join the League". (Ahmad M. , 1993) Addressing a public meeting in Rohtak in early September, 1945, he stated:

Dear Muslims, there are two flags: one belongs to Islam and the other to Kufr. Tell me under which flag would you like to come. Muslim League flag is the flag of Islam and that of the Congress is the flag of Kufr. Now you decide under which flag you would like to come.

The audience proclaimed with one voice: 'We are with the Muslim League and shall live under the flag of Islam'. (Kasuri, 2001) On the occasion of Pakistan Conference, held at Shahi Bagh, Peshawar under the auspices of the Jamiat-ul-Asfia on April 21, 1946, Jamaat Ali Shah not only presided over the conference, but he also delivered a forceful speech in favour and support of the League and the Pakistan Movement. (Centre) Its detail as stated by Peshawar's well-known spiritual and political guide Ameer Shah Qadri is as follows: (Kasuri, 1994)

'Jamaat Ali Shah was a strong supporter of Muslim League and Ghaffar Khan had a strong hold in Peshawar and NWFP. But Jamaat Ali Shah gave a fatwa that no Congressman will be allowed to be buried in Muslim graveyard, as it is impermissible (according to Shariah). He proclaimed this fatwa in Shahi Bagh, where the house of Ghaffar Khan is situated, and which is the centre of the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement.'

Image-building of Muslim League and Jinnah

As the Muslim League's efforts for articulating the demands of the Muslims were gaining momentum, Indian National Congress and its leaders initiated a vilification and propaganda campaign against the leadership of the League, particularly targeting Jinnah. Unfortunately, this campaign was headed by the Muslims belonging to the pro-Congress groups and parties. In these circumstances, Jamaat Ali Shah tried his best to counter this anti-League and anti-Jinnah propaganda by building the image of both. It is reflected in many speeches and public statements, which he made on various occasions using different platforms, such as those of annual meetings of All India Sunni Conference, All-India Khudam-as-Sufia, Jamiat-u/-Asfia and Muslim League.

For instance, on 20th October 1938, he sent a special message to his followers in NWFP suggesting them to join the Muslim League struggle for the achievement of freedom. Acknowledging the priceless services of Quaid-e- Azam, he prayed for the success of his mission. (Kasuri, 2001) In 1944, Jamaat Ali Shah toured Hoshiarpur District (East Punjab India) and popularized the Muslim League's message. Reporting a meeting, Maulana Shah Muhammad Jafar Phulwarvi says: (Akhtar Hussain, 1975) In 1944, there was a big meeting in Dasoocha (District Hoasharpur), presided over by (Qibla) Jamaat Ali Shah to which I had been affectionately invited. I apologized in view of my circumstances. But suddenly I was required through a telegram to reach Dasoocha, which left no choice for me. This gathering was highly successful. Hazrat (Pir Syed Jamaat Ali Shah) delivered a heart-warming and impressive speech, explaining the importance of Muslim League and exposed the machinations of the Hindus, and the Britishers, who encouraged Aarya Samaagists, Hindus and Brahmins. On October 8, 1945, Syed Jamaat Ali Shah in an interview to weekly *Saadat* (Lyallpur now Faisalabad) said: (Al-Faqih, 1945)

Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah is the only confirmed, and undisputed political leader. I recall those days when in Kashmir, I, a submissive servant of Almighty Allah, invited Mr. Jinnah to a lunch. I was sure of sweeping all round election victories of All India Muslim League, both at provincial and central levels. I foretold about the amazing election success of League. I earnestly appeal to Punjabi Muslims, besides Indian Muslims, to cast their votes blindly in favour of Muslim League forget the nature of candidates. I pray to Almighty Allah to bless Quaid-e-Azam with a long life and lot of triumphs. May Almighty Allah grant him energy to guide and serve the Ummah. May the Exalted Allah shower strength, determination and blessings on Quaid-e-Azam. His crusade for Islam will steer our nation from the crisis with steadfastness, faith, foresight and firmness.

Similarly, in the annual meeting of All India Sunni Conference, held in Benaras in April 1946, which was attended by five hundred *Mashaikh*, seven thousand ulema and two lakh people, Jamaat

Ali Shah in his presidential address strongly supported Quaid-e-Azam and said: (Muhammad Sadiq Kasuri, 1991) (Barki, 1986) (Rizvi A. A., 2000)

People dub Jinnah as infidel, but, I call him a saint, people express their own opinion, but I say it in the light of Quran and hadith. 'Those who believe in their Allah and obey Him, Allah creates love and reverence for them in the hearts of people' (Quran). Now is there anybody other than Jinnah who is loved and respected by ten crore Muslim of India. Therefore, you may call him infidel, but in my eyes he is a saint.

Jamaat Ali also used other platforms for image-building of Jinnah and League. An *Urs* ceremony (death anniversary) of Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifa (Imam-e-Azam) was organized by *Anjuman Tablegh-ul-Ahnaff Amritsar* on October 26-28, 1945, which was attended by renowned ulema and *Mashaikh* of United India. On the last day, Jamaat Ali delivered a two-hour long speech in favour of Pakistan and Muslim League. In addition, Sahibzada Anwar Hussain Alipuri, Maulana Naeemuddin Muradabadi, Maulana Syed Muhaddis Kachhochhvi, Syed Mahmood Gujrati, Maulana Shareef Kotlavi, Allama Abdul Ghafoor Hazaarvi and Maulana Basheer Kotlavi delivered forceful speeches in favour of the Muslim League and the Pakistan Movement. (Al-Faqih, 1945)

In 1945, Jamaat Ali Shah issued a declaration in favour of Pakistan Movement titled as 'Pakistan Movement and the Saints'. The declaration declared Mr. Jinnah as the best advocate of Muslim cause and Muslim League which is the only representative party of Muslims. So, all of them should unite for the struggle of Pakistan. His proclamation was supported by *Sajjada Nasheen* Khanqah Sirajia (Ghurdaspurj), Pir Syed Muhammad Fazal Shah, Amir Hizbullah (Jalalpur Sharif), Mian Ali Muhammad *sajjada nasheen* Bassi Sharif, Khwaja. Ghulam Saddid-ud-Oin (Taunsa Sharif) and Syed Muhammad Hussain *sajjada nasheen* (Sakhr Chuk Gurdaspur). (Qadri, 1978)

In November 1945, Jamaat Ali Shah presided over grand Sunni Conference in the *Jamia* Mosque Amritsar. Maulana Naeemuddin Muradabadi, Syed Anwar Hussain A lipuri, Sahibzada Syed Mahmood Shah Gujrati delivered forceful speeches in favour of Pakistan. (Conference, 1994) Similarly, on another occasion, delivering his presidential address at the public meeting of Muslim League in Lahore Syed Jamaat Ali Shah said: (Burg Gul Quaid-e-Azam No., 1976)

‘Sir Syed Ahmed Khan put forward two-nation theory and Allama Iqbal impressed the people with his poetry. Now Quaid-e-Azam took upon himself the duty of materializing this two-nation theory demanding separate homeland for the Muslims. It is an accepted rule and principle that an experienced lawyer is engaged, whether Muslim or non-Muslim for a case. Now the case is against the Britishers and the Hindus, and the Muslims have engaged Quaid-e-Azam as their pleader. Therefore, there is no ground to throw mud on his personality and subject him to mean and cheap attacks. It is nothing but a display of mere personal malice and jealousy. As far as my view is concerned, despite my utmost efforts, I am unable to find a believer of Islam of Mr. Jinnah's calibre who is rendering yeomen service to Islam.’

In March 1946, fifty-six scholars of All India Sunni Conference issued a unanimous statement supporting Muslim League manifesto. Here Maulana Abdul Rashid in charge of *Madarsa Naqshbandia*, Ali Pur Sayyidan represented Pir Syed Jammal Ali Shah. The statement was signed by the leading ulama. (Dabdab-i-Sikandari, 1946)

Support to Muslim League and its Policies

Jamaat Ali Shah gave his whole-hearted support to All India Muslim League, and its policies and activities. He supported the Lahore Resolution (1940), himself participated in the election campaign of 1945-46, issued a statement in favour of All India Muslim League manifesto in 1946 before elections, and successfully canvassed for NWFP referendum in 1947.

Support to Lahore Resolution (1940)

When on March 23, 1940, the Muslim League passed the historic Pakistan Resolution at its annual session Jamaat Ali Shah as the President of All-India Sunni Conference sent Maulana Abdul Hamid Badayuni and Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Hazarvi to represent the All India Sunni Conference. Both of them were also regular members and devoted workers of the Muslim League. On this occasion he issued a statement saying that "Muslim League is the only Islamic organization. Therefore, I advise the Muslims to join it as no other party is a well-wisher of the Muslims. It is futile to think that the Hindu-dominated Congress can be sympathetic to them and support their cause". (Kasuri, 2001) On the auspicious occasion of the Pakistan Resolution, he sent a telegram greeting Quaid-e-Azam in the following words 'With heart and soul, I, along with 90 million Muslims, are by your side and congratulate you on your success and pray for your progress'. (Qadri, 1978)

Participation in Election Campaign (1945-46)

In September 1945, bi-weekly 'Al Amaan' published Jamaat Ali Shah's statement appealing to the Muslims to vote for the Muslim League candidates. In the end of his statement Jamaat Ali Shah said "May Allah give long life to Mr. Jinnah, who is the only leader of the Muslims and really deserve the title of Quaid-e-Azam". (Kasuri, 1994) On 28th September, 1945, the daily 'Khilafat' brought out a common declaration of Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islam, Calcutta, in favour of Muslim League. Jamaat Ali Shah's name was at the top of the list including Maulana Hasrat Mohani, Hasan Nizami Dehlvi, Maulana Muhammad Bakhsh Muslim and Maulana Zafar Ali Khan. (Khilafat , 1945) Jamaat Ali Shah in a statement in late September 1945 said,

"On the occasion of Simla Conference, I have already declared the Muslim League as the only representative Party of Indian Muslims. Now all the Muslims should vote for the Muslim League

candidates and raise funds for the party. I and my companions will wholeheartedly support the Muslim League". (Al-Faqih, 1945)

He exhorted other scholars and servants to come out of their solitude and perform their duties. Pir Ameen-ul-Hasanat of Manki Sharif called a conference of Ulama and *Mashaikh* in Manki Sharif on 14 October 1945. Syed Jamaat Ali Shah attended the conference. More than five hundred ulama and *Mashaikh* participated in the Conference which decided to establish an ulama and *Mashaikh* body by the name of Jamiat-ul-Asfia and announced its support to the Muslim League in the elections. (Shah, 1996)

On November 21, 1945, Muslim League Conference was held at Shahibagh Peshawar under the presidentship of Pir of Manki Sharif. Syed Jamaat Ali Shah was also invited to the meeting but he could not attend this conference due to illness. His eldest son Syed Muhammad Hussain Shah attended the meeting on his father's behalf. Syed Muhammad Hussain Shah delivered a speech for the unity of Muslims and urged upon them that they should join their hands in the joint cause of Islam, which was represented by Muslim League. He said that Muslims could only be represented by a body such as Muslim League and not by any others. He addressed the audience that Muslims were in very dangerous state of affairs when Almighty sent Quaid-e-Azam to help crores of Muslims. He also urged upon the chiefs and leaders (of NWFP) to help the Muslim League cause. (Muslim League in NWFP) For the elections of 1945-46, Jamaat Ali Shah issued a statement that stated: (Conference, 1994)

By the grace of Allah, ten crore Muslims of India have nominated me as the Amir-e-Millat. Now it is binding on every Muslim to follow his Amir. As a matter of fact, one who obeys Amir, obeys the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) and who obeys the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) actually obeys his Allah, and who disobeys his Amir actually disobeys Allah. So, I humbly appeal to the Muslims of India to strongly support Mr. Jinnah and Muslim League, as Muslim League is the only representative party of the Muslims.

Similarly, on December 28, 1945, a huge meeting was held in *Pakki* Mosque of Chaador Distt. Umraoti (India) which responding to Jamaat Ali Shah's declaration passed a resolution to support Muslim League in general elections. (Sayeed, 1998) Jamaat Ali Shah was also nominated as a member of the *Mashaikh* Committee appointed by the Muslim League in 1946 to mobilize public support in favour of the demand for Pakistan. Other members of the Committee were Pir Aminul Hasanat of Manki Sharif, Khawaja Nizamuddin of Taunsa Sharif and Makhdum Raza Shah of Multan, etc. (AI-faqih, 1947)

During the elections, the government passed an ordinance according to which canvassing in the name of religion became a punishable crime with fine and three years' imprisonment. Chaudhary Abdul Karim of Qila Gujar Singh, an active Muslim Leaguer, called a conference in Islamia College Lahore under presidentship of Syed Jamaat Ali Shah attended by Maulana Abdul Hasanat Qadari and Maulana Jamaal Mian Farangi Mahali and a large number of other ulema and the people. This conference decided to violate the ordinance. It is important to recall that during the Shaheed Ganj Movement Jamaat Ali Shah had insisted on following a legal and constitutional course of action, when many others were demanding to initiate a Non-cooperation

Movement directed towards the government. But with the start of the Pakistan Movement, he was so much devoted that he shifted from his previous attitude. Abdul Karim appealed in the name of Islam and asked the people to cast their vote for Muslim League. (Jafari, 1966) (Inqalab, 1946) Jamaat Ali Shah in his presidential address said: (Kasuri, 1994)

The Government and Congress should be aware that Muslims have come out of their slumber and they have marked out their destination. Now no power on earth can ignore this demand. Some exploiters of religion abuse Mr. Jinnah openly, but he has never reacted. This is the greatest proof of his being the genuine leader. Khaksar too have threatened me with murder. I would like to tell them that I am a Syed and Syed is never

afraid of death. I enjoin strictly upon my colleagues in mystic order as well as my disciples to vote for Muslim League candidates only and I also appeal to the people at large.

After the Conference, Jamaat Ali Shah published his signed statement in weekly *AI-faqih* that "Muslim League is the only representative party of Muslims as those who are not in it, are actually enemies of Islam". (AI-faqih, 1946) Similarly, Pakistan Conference was held at Shahi Bagh, Peshawar under the auspices of the *Jamiat-ul-Asfia* on April 21, 1946. He presided over it and delivered a speech full of fervor in support of the League and the Pakistan Movement. (Shah W. A.) In addition, as mentioned earlier, during the 1945-46 elections Jamaat Ali Shah toured all over the sub-continent, despite his old age and helped the Muslim League candidates win the elections. His sons Syed Muhammad Hussain, Syed Khadim Hussain Shah, Syed Noor Hussain Shah and grandson Akhtar Hussain Shah worked day and night for the success of Muslim League. (Mazhar, 1991) (Conference, 1994) (Gilmartin, 1979)

Joint Statement in Support of Muslim League Manifesto (1946)

In March 1946, fifty-six scholars of All India Sunni Conference issued a unanimous statement supporting Muslim League manifesto. Here Maulana Abdul Rashid in-charge of *Madarsa Naqshbandia* Alipur Sayyidan represented Syed Jamaat Ali Shah. The statement was signed by the leading ulema of the time. (Dab-dab-i-Sikandari, 1946) The elections of 1945-46 were decisive for the Muslims of India, as creation of Pakistan now seemed a foregone conclusion. Jamaat Ali Shah was invited to deliver an address in Sialkot. He came despite serious illness, but could not deliver the address due to weakness. He stayed at *Pakka Garh* locality of Sialkot. He instructed thousands of his disciples and visitors from his bed to support Muslim League candidates. This created renewed fervor in the Muslims of Sialkot. (AI-Faqih, 1945)

Canvassing for Referendum in NWFP (1947)

North-west Frontier Province was elevated to the status of a province in 1901. With the start of the political process, *Khudai Khidmatgar* affiliated their party with the All-India National Congress. NWFP remained in the political control of *Khudai Khidmatgar-Congress* alliance. Before the partition of India, they jointly formed their Government in NWFP twice, and at the time of the referendum of 1947, it was in power which made it hard for the Muslim Leaguers to mobilize support for Pakistan. In these circumstances, Jamaat Ali Shah toured NWFP with other ulema, *mashaikh* and *sajjada nasheens* of India to mobilize support for Pakistan before the referendum of 1947. (Hayat, 1991) They addressed public meetings and used their influence to win the referendum in which they succeeded, and people voted heavily in favour of joining Pakistan.

Participation in the Activities of other Pro-Pakistan Groups

Jamaat Ali Shah exhorted other scholars and saints to come out of their solitary state and perform their duties. Therefore, he participated in the activities of other groups, which were pro-Pakistan and pro-League. Pir Ameen-ul-Hasanat of Manki Sharif called a conference of Ulema and *Mashaikh* in Manki Sharif on October 14, 1945. More than five hundred ulema and *Mashaikh* participated in the Conference, including Syed Jamaat Ali Shah. The participants decided to establish an ulema and *Mashaikh* body by the name of *Jamiat-ul-Asfia* and announced its support to the Muslim League in the forth-coming 1945-46 elections. (Shah S. W., 1996)

Preparation of Aligarh Pakistan Scheme

At the instruction of Jamaat Ali, Dr. Zafar-ul-Hassan of Aligarh University, with the cooperation of his pupil, Dr. Afzaal Hussain Qadiri prepared in September 1939 a scheme along with charts, maps and foreword, titled "Indian Muslims Issue and its Solution". It was submitted to the Muslim

League Working Committee, which was later known by the name of 'Aligarh Pakistan Scheme'. It became a milestone in the history of the Pakistan Movement. (Kasuri, 1994)

Condemnation of Congress Policies

In addition to countering the anti-League and anti-Jinnah propaganda of Congress, Jamaat Ali Shah openly criticized the policies and activities of Congress. For instance, on September 18, 1928, a meeting of All India Sunni Conference was held in Muradabad, which was presided over by Syed Jamaat Ali Shah. The conference passed a resolution unanimously, stating: "This meeting considers Nehru Committee Report as dangerous for the interests of the Muslims and condemn it". (Qadri, 1999) After the formation of Congress Ministries in the wake of 1936 elections in India, while addressing large gatherings in Rawalpindi, Peshawar and Kohat in April 1938, he exposed the impacts of the Congress policy, which were detrimental to the Muslim interests. He gave convincing arguments in rejection of Congress and its policies. Addressing the inaugural ceremony of the Kohat District Muslim League, he exhorted the Muslims to unite under the banner of Islam, because Hindus could never be well-wishers of the Muslims. He prayed to God to unite the Muslims and save them from the clutches of pro-Hindu coterie of the so-called Muslim scholars. (Kasuri, 1994)

When the Congress Ministries resigned in 1939, Quaid-e-Azam appealed to the Muslims to celebrate 'Deliverance Day' on Friday, December 22, 1939 in order to thank God. Jamaat Ali Shah observed the Day in his native town Alipur Sayyidan Sharif, District Sialkot (now Narowal), where he addressed a large public gathering, and revealed the adverse effects of the Congress policies during the last two years when the ministries had functioned (Kasuri, 1994).

Jamaat Ali Shah also used the platform of *Dar-ul-Uloom Markazi Anjuman-e-Hizbul Ahnaf* in order to condemn the policies of Congress. In its annual function at Lahore on September 14-16,

1945, which was presided over by Syed Jamaat Ali Shah, a provincial Sunni Conference was formed, which resolved: (Kasuri, 1994)

‘Congress, Majlis-i-Ahrar and Khaksar are in no way the representative organizations of the Muslims. Congress is the party of infidels and apostates and is the worst enemy of the Muslims and can never be expected to represent their rights and interests. So to vote for the Congress is haram (unlawful) and Ahrar, Khaksar, Unionists, etc. are the paid agents of Congress and so are not entitled to represent the Muslims.’

Efforts for the Establishment of Islamic System in Pakistan

Under the guidance of Jamaat Ali, a committee was appointed by the AISC to formulate a strategy and program for Islamic Government, comprising religious leaders. Maulana Naimuddin Muradabadi was the Chairman of this committee, who after the independence of Pakistan prepared a report to guide the framing of constitution of Pakistan according to *Shariah*, which was to be presented to Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. (Ahmad M. , 1993)

After the creation of Pakistan Jamaat Ali Shah worked hard for the enforcement of Islamic system of government in Pakistan by leading a movement '*Tehrik-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat* along with Pir Manki Sharif and Maulana Abdul Sattar Khan Niazi. (Kasuri, 1994)

Relationship With Jinnah

Throughout the Pakistan Movement, Syed Jamaat Ali Shah supported All India Muslim League and Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and directed his followers to support Muslim League and rally together under the banner of Quaid-e-Azam. He also directed them to popularize the message of the League, and its efforts for the creation of a separate homeland for the Muslims. According to Pirzada Muhammad Anwar Ali Chishti, a renowned activist of the Pakistan Movement: (Kasuri, 1994)

'In 1936 Pir Jamaat Ali Shah told my father that he wanted his son (Anwar) to devote his life for the Muslim League as a soldier of Mr. Muhammad Ali Jinnah. During a hot midday in April 1936, when A I I- India Muslim League working committee's session was going on in Barkat Ali Muhammadan Hall of Mochi Gate, I presented during interval my spiritual and temporal and my father's letters to Mr. Jinnah introducing me to him as a very good speaker and saying that we have dedicated this young man's life for the Muslim League. Both of them praised my eloquence and asked Mr. Jinnah to accept me as his soldier. Highly pleased at this gesture of dedication, Mr. Jinnah addressing Maulana Shaukat Ali said, "This young man is our first crusader in Montgomery (now Sahiwal) District.'

On July 26, 1943, a Khaksar supporter, Rafiq Sabir of Mozang, made an attempt on Quaid-e-Azam's life. This news was broad casted from Bombay Radio the same evening. Syed Jamaat Ali Shah was in Hyderabad Deccan those days. All India States Muslim League President Nawab Bahadur Yar Jang broke this news to Jamaat Ali. The next day he wrote a letter to Quaid-e- Azam. (Kasuri, 1994) (Dabdab-i-Sikandari, 1946) In his letter he said: (Kasuri, 1994)

'I have been appointed Amir-e-Millat by the Muslims. Therefore, what you are doing for the creation of Pakistan is actually my duty. But being an old man of 100 years I am unable to do my duty. Therefore, it is obligatory for me to share with you my burden, which has been transferred over your shoulders. Rest assured, Nimrod's hostility against Prophet Abraham, Pharaoh's hostility against the religion of Prophet Moses, and Abu Jahel's hostility against our Prophet (peace be upon him) carried forward the march of Islam. Therefore, this dastardly attempt on your invaluable life is a good omen for your success. I congratulate you for the success of your mission. Never mind at all and do not retreat, whatever the hurdles in the fulfillment of your mission. God creates his enemies whom he wants to succeed. I pray to God to humble your enemies. My companions and I shall always be by your side. You too should pledge not to give up your mission.'

Nawab Bahadur Yar Jang gave Bakhshi Mustafa Ali Khan (the messenger of Jamaat Ali Shah) an introductory letter for Jamaat Ali Shah. But when the messenger reached Jinnahs' residence, he

found him in the grip of doctors. He returned after presenting the letter and gifts to Quaid-e-Azam's sister Miss Fatima Jinnah. On August 11, 1943 Quaid-e-Azam replied to Jamaat Ali Shah in a letter: (Kasuri, 1994) (Akhtar Hussain, 1975)

'With your blessings for me I feel that I am already successful in my mission. I promise that whatever the differences and hurdles in my way I will never flinch back from my stand. You have sent a copy of Holy Quran conveying to me how I can lead the Muslim until I am well-versed in the Holy Quran and the religion. I promise to learn and recite the Holy Quran and for this purpose I have arranged its English translations and am looking for a scholar who can teach me Quran in English. Your prayer rug is meant to tell me, how I can expect the people to follow, until I follow the Divine Commands. Therefore, I promise to offer prayer. You have sent a rosary, requiring me to recite Darood Shareef (seek blessing) how can a person get the blessings of God, if he does not beg His blessing to his Prophet (peace be upon him). I will follow your command.'

On July 17, 1946 Jamaat Ali Shah congratulated Quaid-e-Azam through a telegram on League's marvelous victory in elections. Quaid-e-Azam sent a reply acknowledging his services: "This is the outcome of your vital support and prayer. Now the creation of Pakistan is a foregone conclusion". (Akhtar Hussain, 1975)

On August 14, 1947, the Muslims of India achieved an independent homeland after a long and hectic struggle. On this auspicious occasion, Jamaat Ali Shah sent a telegram greeting to Quaid-e-Azam. He appreciated Jinnah's services for the cause of Pakistan, and also prayed for his success as a statesman. He wrote to Jinnah: "To achieve a country is easy but to run a country is very difficult. May Allah bless you with the ability to run the country". (Akhtar Hussain, 1975)

Jamaat Ali Shah died on August 30, 1951 at the age of 110. Towards the close of his life, he had become ill, but despite his deteriorating health, he kept on attending to his activities such as touring different regions of Pakistan. His dream of Pakistan becoming a reality was fulfilled in his life

time, but he could not live longer. On 14th August 1987 Government of Punjab awarded Syed Jamaat Ali Shah with '*Tehrik-i-Pakistan* Award' for his services in the Pakistan Movement. (Nawa-i-Waqt, 1987)

Conclusion

The decades of 1920s and 1930s in South Asian politics witnessed a shift in the ideas of many prominent Muslim leaders, including Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The ideal of Hindu-Muslim unity, which was long cherished by many, was shattered owing to the various political developments, which manifested a clear hostility of the Hindus in general, and the All-India National Congress in particular, towards the Muslims and All India Muslim League (AIML). For these reasons, these two decades witnessed the formulation of attitudes of the Muslim and the Hindu communities towards each other. The League- Congress relations also deteriorated, and many Muslim leaders got disillusioned with the Congress policies vis-a-vis the Muslims. Therefore, during the 1940s, the struggle for independence got considerable momentum. AIML began mobilizing the Muslim community at mass level, particularly in provinces where the hold of League was yet weak. These included the Punjab, where the Unionist Ministry was formed, and the NWFP, where the Congress enjoyed mass support. In urban and rural areas of these provinces, many Muslim leaders popularized the cause of Pakistan. Pir Syed Jamaat Ali Shah was one of them, who spread the message of AIML and Jinnah in the length and breadth of the Punjab and NWFP.

Syed Jamaat Ali Shah toured the two provinces and addressed public gatherings mobilizing support of the Muslims for the cause of Pakistan. While doing so, he did considerable image-building of AIML and its leader Jinnah on one hand, and exposed the adverse implications of the Congress policies, particularly affecting the Muslim interests in South Asia on the other hand.

Appendix

A Letter by Bahadur Yar Jang to Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah

Hyderabad Deccan
3rd August, 1943

My dear Mr. Jinnah,

The bearer Khan Bahdur Bakhshi Mustafa Ali Khan is a messenger from Amir Millat Pir Jammal Ali Shah Saheb who has millions of followers all over India and is held in great esteem among them. He does not belong to the category of Kifaithullah, Ahmed Saeed and Hussain Ahmed Madni. He has always kept his hands clean from any political intrigue and is quite content with his religious pursuits. Every time that I had the occasion to see him. I found him very generous in applauding you and possessing a deep regard for you. His press statement in connection with the assault on you has caused a deeper impression on his followers, among whom are people of high position and influence also. He sends through his messenger a letter and some presents to you. Among these is a manuscript Qur'an written in Medina is a sheet made in Yemen of the type that was very dear to Prophet Mohammad (P.B.U.H.). I request that you may kindly receive his messenger in your presence for a few minutes and send back to the Pir Saheb a letter of appreciation and thanks. It would be very useful to accord a warm appreciation to this sacred old man's most sincere sentiments.

Praying for your quick recovery and long life; with salaam to Miss Jinnah.

Yours most sincerely,
Mr. Bahadur Khan

Source: (Pirzada, 1977)

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