THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

DEMOCRACY ON A MINOR NOTE: THE ALL-INDIA MAJLIS-E-ITTEḤĀD'UL MUSLIMĪN AND ITS HYDERABADI MUSLIM PUBLICS

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

BY

SHEFALI JHA

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

AUGUST 2017

© Copyright 2017 Shefali Jha
All rights reserved

For Javeed, who might have enjoyed reading this
and
Moid and Razibhai, friends, philosophers and guides

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments……v

Abstract……ix

Introduction……1

Part I

Chapter One: Two Senses of an Ending……....29

Chapter Two: The New Rulers and Ruled……75

Chapter Three: Rulers of the Deccan……..120

Chapter Four: Hyderabad 1948……...166

Part II

Chapter Five: Reassembling the Public……..213

Chapter Six: Si(gh)ting Publics……..255

Chapter Seven: The Impersonal is Political……298

Conclusion: The Present Futures of the MIM……339

Appendix: Program of the MIM, 1958……...……343

References……...345

Acknowledgements

My debts are many and incurred over a long period of time. Without the insights, patience, humor and friendship of William Mazzarella, Hussein Agrama and Dipesh Chakrabarty this project would have been impossible, and it is a great pleasure to begin by thanking them. John and Jean Comaroff, Judith Farquhar, John Kelly, and Susan Gal have been most generous with their time and ideas over the years, and I am thankful also to Darryl Li for his thoughtful engagement with my work. Anne Ch'ien's good cheer, solid support and omniscience have been absolutely crucial to work and general well-being in Haskell Hall, for which I can barely find the words to thank her. To C.M Naim, Muzaffar and Rizwana Alam warm gratitude is due for their mentorship, hospitality and long-standing interest in the project. Thanks to Elena Bashir's untiring effort and teaching, I was able to find my feet reading and writing Urdu early on.

My wonderful cohort—Anthropology 2008—must be credited for their brilliance and collegiality that sustained me through graduate school and nurtured this project. Special thanks are due to Natalja Czarnecki, Genevieve Godbout, Yaqub Hilal, Christopher Sheklian, Xiao-bo Yuan, Shirley Yeung and Amy McLachlan for their warmth, camaraderie and keen writerly eye.

In Nusrat Chowdhury, Sabrina Datoo, Ranu Raychaudhuri, Mandira Bhaduri, Nazmul Sultan, Adam Sargent, Sayantan Saha Roy, Harini Kumar, Tejas Parashar, Gaurav Devasthali, Suchismita Das and Hasan Siddiqui I am fortunate to have found great friends and insightful interlocutors—neither this dissertation nor my life at Chicago would have been the same without them. I am grateful to Maira Hayat, Mannat Johal, Sharvari Shastry, Sneha Annavarapu, Malavika Reddy, Thomas Newbold, Marc Kelley, Daniel Morgan, Abhishek Bhattacharya, Tanima Sharma, Nida Paracha, Owen Kohl, Bill Feeney, Jonah Augustine, Jonah Rubin, Michal Ran-Rubin, Mennatallah Khalil, Do Dom Kim, Hiroko Kumaki, Patrick Lewis, Damien Bright,

Inez Escobar Gonzalez, Ali Atef, Marshall Kramer, Naveena Naqvi and Daniel Schulz for their friendship that made life in Hyde Park rich in every way.

In Hyderabad, my foremost professional debt is to Asaduddin Owaisi, who unhesitatingly allowed me free run of the party office at Darussalam, and was unfailingly gracious throughout my work with the MIM. Syed Aminul Hasan Jafri, Naseem Arifi, Aziz Ahmad, Mushtaq and Zainbhai were not only supportive of my work, they took a consistent interest in its progress. Mohammed Ayub Khan's academic inputs and long-standing engagement with my work are an indispensable part of it. It is a great pleasure to acknowledge everyone at Darussalam who made me feel welcome and at home—Abid, Merajbhai, Mubinbhai, Salim, Zafar, Muzaffar, Hamza, Mujib Khan, Hafeez, Hanifbhai, Salman and most of all, Sharif sahab. Tahir Ansari, Moinbhai, Amjadbhai, Sabira apa, Rashida baji, Nasreen Sultana were always solicitous, and forthcoming about their long relationship with the party. Among the corporators, past and present, I am particularly grateful to Mirza Saleem Baig, Mohammad Nazeeruddin, Mohsina Parveen, Ayesha Rubina and Yasmin Sultana; Meraj Mohammad and Mohammad Ghouse are no longer with the MIM, but were interested and generous interlocutors during my work. Current and former Members of Legislative Assembly and Council that I want to particularly thank are Ahmad Pasha Quadri, Ahmad Balala, Virasat Rasool Khan, Mumtaz Ahmad Khan, Jaffer Hussain Meraj, and Altaf Hyder Razvi. To all the strangers in MIM meetings and at Darussalam who went out of their way to help me find my way around the city and made time to talk to me, I remain deeply grateful.

Mazhar Hussein, Mumtaz Fathima, Mohammad Turab and others at COVA; Hasanuddin Ahmad and the late Barrister Sardar Ali Khan; F.M Saleem, Syed Mohammad and S.Q Masood all gave

of their time and investment in Hyderabad freely, for which I am very grateful. The late Rehana Sultana is much-missed and continues to be an inspiration.

My debts to friends and family in Hyderabad keep stacking up. To Susie Tharu no amount of thanks can be sufficiently rendered— without her friendship and mentorship I would be quite lost. I am also lucky to count among old friends Deepa Sreenivas, Viju Kurien, Shital Morjaria, Rekha Pappu, K. Satyanarayana, Pavana, R.Srivatsan, Vasanta Duggirala, Uma Bhrugubanda, Satish Poduval, Jayasree Kalathil, Adley Siddiqui, Parthasarathi Muthukaruppan, Sajida Sultana, B. Venkat Rao, Gogu Shyamala, Lateef Mohammad Khan, Kaneez Fathima and her family. Nobody could hope for more affectionate and steadfast friends than Liji Varghese, Samata Biswas, K. Bharani, Atul Prakash Singh and Navaneetha M— to all of them I am grateful for seeing me through many a storm and calm over the years. For Madhava and Devayani Prasad's presence in my life I am thankful every day; none of this would be possible without their love and support. I will always remain in the debt of my parents, Mithileshwar and Preeti Jha, and my brother Abhishek, who have borne my many insolences with unflagging patience, understanding and love.

I must thank Purnima Mehta and her associates at the American Institute for American Studies in New Delhi, Irving Birkner and (formerly) Tarini Bedi at the Committee on Southern Asian Studies at Chicago, Jeanne Fitzsimmons of the Nicholson Center for British Studies, and James Nye and Laura Ring at that incredible place called the Regenstein Library at Chicago for making these years of research such a pleasure. Thanks are due also to M.A Raqeeb and others at the AP/Telangana State Archives, Lakshmi and Pradeep at the Anveshi Library, the staff at the British Library (India Office Collection) in London, the library of the Idara-e-Adabiyat-e-Urdu, and the State Central Library in Hyderabad.

Parts of the dissertation were presented at annual meetings of the American Anthropological Association, the workshop on Theory and Practice in South Asia at the University of Chicago, and at the workshop on 'Many Histories of the Present' at Duke University. I am thankful to all the participants whose comments enriched my writing, and would like to express my gratitude to Vincent Crapanzano, Engseng Ho, David Gilmartin, Fadi Bardawil and Yazan Doughan in particular.

I wish that Javeed Alam, consummate Hyderabadi, my late teacher and one of the first analysts to take the MIM seriously as a political phenomenon, could have read this and given me his thoughts as promised. I am too late, but the dedication to him is a small attempt to remember and honor him. This dissertation is dedicated also to M.A Moid and Raziullah Hussain—Razibhai—for their untiring support, friendship and all the ways in which they opened up the world of the Old City and of Muslim politics to my neophyte eyes. This project could not have been conceived without their generosity, friendship and constant encouragement.

Abstract

'Democracy on a Minor Note: The All India Majlis-e-Ittehad'ul Muslimin and its Hyderabadi Muslim Publics'

This dissertation is a historical and ethnographic study of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehad'ul Muslimin (Association for Muslim Unity), a Muslim political party based in the southern city of Hyderabad. In a political universe where democracy is understood through popular conceptions of religious minorities and majorities and behaviors appropriate to both, I show how the Majlis articulates an oppositional stance to Hindu majoritarian aggression on behalf of its constituents, while conforming to the terms laid out for its functioning by the norms of secular democratic politics. Its ability to hold these contradictions together makes the party a felicitous site for a study, and a reckoning of the 'cruel optimism' that characterizes collective life in secular democracies today.

'Democracy on a Minor Note' is divided into two parts. The four chapters in Part I lay out what I call a performative history of the Muslim public in the princely state of Hyderabad, a state bound to the British colonial establishment by that notoriously ambiguous relation of subordination called paramountcy. Using material as diverse as memoirs, novels, reportage, colonial documents, even an old unpublished dissertation, these chapters deal with the period roughly coinciding with the reign (1911- 1948) of the monarch Mir Osman Ali Khan, the last Nizam of Hyderabad. They show how the internal contradictions of the state's drive toward administrative modernization coupled with political stability generated in the late 1930s new kinds of sites and sociality for a Muslim public to evolve. The growing gap between the eponymous capital city and the districts that sustained its vibrant political life, as well as the influence of nationalist politics on the subcontinent manifested, I show, in the growth of the

Muslim political party known as the Ittehad'ul Muslimin and rival forms of politics such as the Hyderabad State Congress, Hindu Mahasabha, Arya Samaj and Communist Party. By attending carefully to the imbrications of these rivalries and their socio-historical location within Hyderabadi society, I argue that the rise of the Ittehad in reaction to the politics of Hindu majoritarianism, was based on a secularized space of historical understanding that enabled the reification of Islam and of Muslim history of which Hyderabadi Muslims became subjects. With the waning of monarchical charisma, this space was defined and made visible by charismatic individual leaders, like Nawab Bahadur Yar Jang, the first president of the Ittehad, whose ability to inspire love and devotion mediated between the old aristocratic sociality and the new publics of the city, and eventually, the districts. The inauguration of the nation-state changed radically the terrain of this political space, however, culminating in the 1948 invasion of Hyderabad by the Indian army, provoked both by a successful Communist insurgency and by the increasingly violent rhetoric and action of the Ittehad leader, Qasim Razvi. Through my analysis, I demonstrate the thoroughly historical logics of charismatic authority, attached by the force of history and politics to what can be called the compulsions of rhetorical finesse.

The three chapters comprising Part II track the resilience of the Muslim public in Hyderabad city, allowing it to sustain the profound social and political transformations entailed by minoritization in a democracy. Beginning with its 'revival' in 1958, the MIM strengthened its base in Hyderabad city by reanimating the events, urban locations and forms of sociality rooted in the 1930s. I argue that functioning within an 'all India' frame and an impoverished, ghettoized and politically weakened urban constituency the MIM is a party distinct from its genealogical ancestor, the Ittehad. Articulating an oppositional discourse of unity and self-reliance in the face of majoritarian violence and state neglect, the party's imagination of a Muslim public functions

now more than ever within the logic of numbers—demographics, spatial concentrations, voting statistics as well as indices of development. Being squarely placed within the problem space of secularism as a Muslim party, the MIM's institutional life and legitimacy unfolds in the cracks of the rhetorical opposition between Indian secularism and communalism. The necessity of political representation for an embattled minority is thus manifested in two ways: its discourse is both determined by factors outside its control (necessity as imposition) and indispensable to survival as subject-citizens (necessity as need). Within the sites nurtured by and supportive of the politics of the MIM in the city, at once located in an older princely geography and in new urban chronotopes of 'backwardness' and 'underdevelopment', its electoral presence allows for the imbrication of an older male sociality centered on the 'jalsa' or public meeting, with another, less visible (though public) space of interaction populated mainly by women, at the party office at Darussalam. I show how the contradiction between the collective energies of the jalsa and the cynical humor, suspicion and distrust of political power at the party office is mediated by the charisma of the MIM leadership, heirs to the professional classes that established the Ittehad as a platform for popular politics.

In conclusion, I reflect on the futures of the MIM, opened up by a new national visibility but grounded in its durable regional pasts. My work is about the nature of social inheritances and legacies of the past that animate present forms of collective action and subjection to political authority. These, I suggest, are the questions raised by a serious engagement with minority politics articulated within the constraints and possibilities provided by the norms of secular democracy.

Introduction

Democracy on a Minor Note: the Muslim publics of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehad'ul Muslimin

Why are you working on the MIM? They're basically a communal party. (2009)

You should write the truth—the MIM is the most secular party in India. (2014)

Another word is thrown up a good deal, this secular State business…it is brought in in all contexts, as if by saying that we are a secular State we have done something amazingly generous, given something out of our pocket to the rest of the world, something which we ought not to have done, so on and so forth. We have only done something which every country does except a very few misguided and backward countries in the world. Let us not refer to that word in the sense that we have done something very mighty. (Jawaharlal Nehru, 1949)[1]

The first two admonitions were administered to me at the beginning and towards the end, respectively, of my dissertation research into the All India Majlis-e-Itteḥād'ul Muslimīn (All-India Association for Muslim Unity; abbreviated MIM), a Muslim political party based in the southern Indian city of Hyderabad. It was well-meaning advice, given by strangers curious about my; the first a student at a library during the earliest phase of archival research in Hyderabad, the other an MIM supporter during the Indian national election campaign of 2014. An important point to note here is that the MIM is not a religious party, let alone an 'Islamist' one. As the name suggests, it aspires to represent Indian Muslims as a united political constituency, and by virtue of this invites the charge of communalism, underlying which is the doubt—do Muslims have interests (social, economic, political) separable from other Indians? (Chandra 1984). Since the creation of Pakistan and India as separate nation-states in 1947, the question of secularism

[1] Part of a speech was delivered to the Constituent Assembly, the sovereign body responsible for drafting the Constitution of India, while debating the protocols of citizenship on August 12, 1949. Cited in Jaffrelot 2011, 14.

has been intricately bound up with communalism[2], that is, anxieties about territorial integrity and Muslim political representation (Tejani 2007).

The third admonition was administered by Nehru, leader of the Indian National Congress and India's iconic first Prime Minister, to his doubting colleagues in the Constituent Assembly in 1949. His words demonstrate the temporal arc built into the idea of the secular state: it was entirely unexceptional for a modern republic to institute a secular state, anything less would be an anachronism. This temporal sensibility was politically opposed to the paranoia about the integrity of the national community and territory, but as the case of Hyderabad shows, its theoretical and historical complement. Less than a year earlier, in September 1948, the Indian army had marched into the large Muslim-ruled princely state of Hyderabad—where the story of the MIM and Muslim representation begins in this dissertation—and annexed it to the Indian Union. These epigraphs thus help me sketch an outline of the fraught terrain within which the MIM functions, and that this dissertation is both located in and attempts to account for.

But one must begin also with negation. My dissertation is not able to decide either way—and neither, if I have done it right, will any reader of it be able to decide— whether the MIM is a communal or a secular party. What I seek to do instead is to describe a historical field of possibility within which judgments like these operate, in order to show what kinds of desires, pleasures and fears, social effects and outcomes, and above all what imaginations of collective life are articulated or foreclosed when we use them. In Part I of my dissertation, for instance, I sketch an alternative temporal structure to the one usually deployed to understand the passage from the oppressive, 'feudal' and—yes, communal— past of the princely state to the modern,

[2] The academic literature on communalism is vast and forms the background of my work; aside from Chandra, cited above, Dumont 1964, Pandey 1990, Tambiah 1996, and Das 2007 are the major theoretical contributions.

secular, democratic present of the postcolonial nation-state. This means attending to the ways in which the feudal and modern constitute each other in a particular experience of their coevalness, even while being grounded in the linear, secular time of 'progress'. An understanding of the past as both an opportunity and a burdensome inheritance, combined in princely Hyderabad with hopes and expectations, on occasion dread, of the future— the writers I analyze worried that because of a certain pattern of land-ownership brought in by modernizing reforms of mid-nineteenth century, the capital city of Hyderabad had come to host a most decadent Muslim ruling class of absentee landlords, enamored of 'western culture' yet unmindful of the social changes it had wrought. The relationship between the city and the small towns and rural areas of the state, between the ruling aristocracy exemplifying a 'composite culture' incorporating both Hindu and Muslim elements and its subjects increasingly polarized on religious lines, and the emergence of new publics organized around new types of charismatic figures—all these signaled open futures that demanded a recasting of the past of the state in order to understand how the present could be understood in relation to these possible futures. These unsettled habitations of modernity (Chakrabarty 2002), I show, can be effectively engaged through contemporary narratives of the present—memoirs, novels, the occasional hagiography of a beloved leader, biographies, or indeed a desperate social scientific plan for the future—which form, in this dissertation, the appropriate and comparable medium of narrating socio-political process instantiated by ethnography.

In Part II, through a broadly ethnographic account of the MIM's work in Hyderabad, I describe how minoritization entails living in the ruins of the future— 'stranded in the present', as David Scott (2013) has evocatively termed it— but without availing of a tragic sensibility. The vitality of the public that the MIM nurtures and represents today, I show, is a refusal to be cowed

by the weight of inheritances and a present out of their control. Thus, it is not a triumphal defiance that is in evidence. Instead, political life, rife as it is with suspicion and distrust of politicians—especially those one shares urban lifeworlds with—is continuously affirmed by the irreverent and constantly complaining Muslim public of Hyderabad. The pleasures of complaining (Schuster 2016) about the political party that seeks to represent them, offset the popular acclamation of its charismatic leadership most visible to the outsider's eye. This range of actions makes up the field organized by the historically grounded charismatic authority of the party leadership, which posits political representation as the first and foremost concern of a minority population in a democratic set-up.

Thus, a second axis through which I seek to approach the question of secular-modern space-time, is the operation of what Max Weber famously elaborated as charismatic authority. At first sight, the story that can be told about the grounding of the MIM's authority is classically Weberian. Its roots trace back to the Mamlikati Majlis-e-Ittehad'ul Muslimin (State Association for Muslim Unity) in Hyderabad state, I show in Part I (Chapter 3 and 4), and lay in the Muslim public mobilized by the charismatic authority of a pious nobleman, through his exemplary piety and exceptional oratorical skills; after him the party leadership was elected, not hereditary. This public was meant to support the ruling house of Hyderabad in its claim to legitimacy, but in fact became an alternative center for power, which eventually contributed to the transfer of power from monarch to people. In Part II, I show how the postcolonial urban Muslim public is mobilized around the MIM's now-hereditary leadership—vested in the men of the Owaisi family— under drastically changed circumstances. However, close attention to the social transformations that underlie these very different moments, I argue, reveals the specific historical grounding of the seemingly universal operation of charisma.

In other words, rather than think of it as a concept that describes everything from the authority of a prophet, a saint, an emperor, a medieval Islamic judge to the modern mass leader, it is important to recognize that much regulation and definition of religion viz-a-viz the law and state—a new type of state, the modern state—had to take place before an all-encompassing concept like charisma could be proposed as a way to organize very different modalities of authority across historical time and place. In doing a genealogy of charismatic authority with respect to the specific fields of possibility instantiated, first, by the Ittehad representing a 'ruling community' under monarchical-colonial rule and then by the MIM, representing an embattled minority in a nation-state, I unpack the omnivorous nature of a concept like charisma. In order to put it to work, I show, it is crucial to recognize that it specifies a field within which new and historically shaped forms of political action and collective belonging may appear.

To the extent that this condition of living in the present without hope of an open future is a shared condition of our neoliberal times, the 'cruel optimism' (Berlant 2011) of Hyderabadi Muslims speaks to and of a widely shared experience. But to the extent that the continuous danger of majoritarian violence and constant humiliation at the hands of seemingly all-powerful forces of the state appears theirs alone—in a national context— to face, it demands a certain mode of attention we are fast losing the ability to supply. I attempt in this dissertation to activate and hold on to both modes of articulation and reception simultaneously.

My work in Hyderabad was carried out between 2012 and 2014. It involved regular visits to the MIM party office at Darussalam (Dar-us-salām 'abode of peace') in Hyderabad city, attending the numerous public meetings organized by the party, occasional participation in the constituency 'walks' (paidal daurā) of the leaders, election campaign meetings, interviews with municipal corporators of the party and many, many idle conversations over tea. Occasional

forays into the new online publics of the party—fan sites and Twitter handles dedicated to the leaders, Asaduddin and Akbaruddin Owaisi as well as Youtube videos of their speeches—came rather late in the day, but were enormously instructive. As for the viewpoint of the party's many critics and some rivals, I chose to limit my exploration of these to newspaper articles, conversation and a few interviews with 'civil society' groups. This was a decision I made, and some of my friends 'on the other side' thought I was sacrificing the objectivity necessary for unbiased research.

I will not discuss here the nature of this demand for neutrality, but limit myself to acknowledging that in the end, I decided that there was no dearth of critiques of the party and these are quite readily available. They are even incorporated into the official discourse of the party, as I show in my dissertation; my task was to try and understand how and why the party worked as it did, and what role the critiques played in this. Needless to say—but perhaps it does need saying after all—I was put under no pressure or obligation to follow an official line, or subjected to any demands of vetting or censorship. The obligation came from the warmth, hospitality and generosity exhibited by everyone I met at Darussalam and outside.

An early field anecdote will illustrate what I mean. Early on in my work my most constant companions at Darussalam—a motley group of four or five men that included local media-men and employees of municipal leaders—made a discovery about my religious identity. 'You're Hindu!' said one after I told him the meaning of my unfamiliar-sounding name. Another, the oldest of the group, was quick to say, 'It doesn't matter. What's the difference? There's no difference (farq).' The confusion was understandable, since I did not exhibit the markers that usually set Hindu and Muslim apart at Darussalam—a sari, a 'bottu' or bindi (vermilion or red dot) on the forehead— making them instantly identifiable as one or other. Besides, why would I,

a Hindu, be interested in the MIM? However, the momentary discomfort of this revelation turned into an unexpected conversation: ‘really? I thought maybe you were Christian,’ said Hamza, one of the group. ‘So much confusion! Sorry, I should have said earlier’, I admitted. ‘No no, Allah gave you the virtue/ability (salāḥiyat) to be like every community (har qaum). That’s a great ability!’ he returned. I was beginning to be grateful for his graciousness when Zafar, the clown of the group, said, ‘You know what I think? I think there was some kind of mistake. Allah miāñ meant to send you to a Muslim home, and then on the way something happened, some *confusion* [English in the original].’ To which, of course, the only response was general laughter. But we weren’t done yet. ‘So you pretend to read all the Urdu newspapers then?’ asked Zafar. On protesting this affront to my sincere attempts at reading the papers at Darussalam, it was decided that I must read something out to prove that I knew my letters. A newspaper was duly brought, and to my great relief I was able to read out the headline without stumbling. ‘How about that!’ said Zafar to his friend Saleem. ‘Wāh, that’s amazing. *We’ve* been trying for so long, and we can’t read it!’ said he.

It is not often that conversations about Hindu-Muslim difference and Urdu can be had in such felicitous conditions, such that they are not ‘about’ the difference but nevertheless present an opportunity to talk about them. I also recall being grateful that the conversation did not stop with the uncomfortably quick response of ‘it doesn’t matter’. But Darussalam in my experience was precisely that kind of place, where people made place for me and helped establish friendships marked by humor and banter. Much has changed since 2014 in India and not for the better, but it is my hope that what I write about here provides the tools to read the impact and import of the changes, while keeping alive the vitality of the political spaces I encountered during my work.

In the rest of this Introduction I first, lay out the broad political context within which the dissertation proceeds; I then discuss the organizing concepts that run through Parts I and II—charismatic authority and publics— and finally, provide brief descriptions of the seven chapters that make up the dissertation.

Hyderabad: pasts and futures

Hyderabad city was founded in 1591 as a 'twin city' to 'the fortress town of Golconda' (Alam 1965: 1), capital of the Qutb Shah dynasty that ruled over the eastern Deccan plateau in the 16th and 17th centuries. Mohammed Quli Qutb Shah, poet and fifth king of the dynasty, named the city after the Caliph Ali—also known as Hyder— cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet. It was also known as 'Bhagnagar'. Social scientists do not set much store by the 'legend' of the founding, but the story goes that the king named the city after a young dancing girl he had fallen in love with, called Bhagmati, conferred with the title 'Hyder mahal' after marrying the king. This story is apocryphal, but its popularity already shows the elements of the romantic that the city claims as its own: the overcoming of religious and class difference through love, and through the poetic charm of chivalry.

Today the fort of Golconda is a must-see ruin for tourists while the 16th century city is the 'Old City' (purānā or qadīm shahar' in Urdu):

> The City of Hyderabad was planned on a grid pattern consisting of two main roads, running E-W and N-S and intersecting at Charminar (four minarets), the city centre. It thus formed "four quarters" …divided into 12,000 precincts (*mohalla*s) and its main thoroughfares were lined with 14,000 buildings including shops, mosques, rest houses and *Madrasa*s (Oriental Schools [sic]). Of its four quarters, the north-western was set apart for royal palaces and state offices, and the north-eastern for the residences of the nobles. (3)

The kingdom of Golconda fell to the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb's armies in 1687, and it was not until 1763—nearly a century later—that it would come to be the capital of another ruling

dynasty, that of the Asaf Jah. By the twentieth century, Hyderabad was the most populous Muslim-ruled princely state in colonial India[3], and the Asaf Jah rulers of were known by the title 'Nizam-ulmulk' (Order of the Nation), or the Nizams of Hyderabad.[4]

The Asaf Jah dynasty ruled for seven generations: it is said that this was foretold by an old sage to the then military commander in the Mughal army Qamaruddin Chin Kilich Khan, who accepted the old *faqir*'s hospitality, tired and hungry from battle. Unable to eat more than seven kulchās or leavened bread offered by the sage, he was told he would found a dynasty of kings that would rule for seven generations.[5] Such stories are not uncommon in the lore of royalty, of course—the divine ordination of the adventurer as king, not by pomp or ceremony but by the Holy Man— but seen in the light of the events of 1948, when the state met its violent end during the reign of the seventh Nizam, this tale perhaps also represents a certain fatalism that may contain a hint of rationalization—it was thus decreed, the end of the Asaf Jah on the throne of Hyderabad could not have been prevented by mere human agency.

Less poetically, historians have pointed out that the sovereignty of the Asaf Jahs was always contested and distributed unevenly in the region (Chander 1987); the state took definite shape and sovereign authority crystalized after treaties with the ascendant British in the mid-nineteenth century. If the status of Hyderabad's sovereignty remained an open question, it was because of the murky legality attending the concept of paramountcy (Lothian 1951; Menon 1956; Ray 1989; Noorani 2013; Beverley 2015), which meant that whatever the position *de jure*

[3] Hyderabad city was the capital of the state of Hyderabad.
[4] Mir Osman Ali Khan Asaf Jah VII was the last Nizam, declared by *Time* magazine (February 22, 1937) to be the 'richest man in the world' in a cover story that laid out in salacious detail the life of an Oriental monarch. The first Asaf Jah ruler founded the state of Hyderabad in 1724 as a governor of the Deccan—the region just south of the Vindhya mountains on the subcontinent—in the Mughal empire.
[5] Among others see El-Edroos 1994 and Austin 1992

(treaties and agreements), *de facto* the British were in power and it suited them to keep the terms of their overlordship vague. In the pithy terms of British colonial reason: 'We do not want to settle questions, we want questions not to arise' and, when challenged, the blunt tautology 'paramountcy must remain paramount' (Pernau 2001, 35, 144). Within the bounds of paramountcy, however, a new kind of 'centralized state' took shape, especially after the suppression of the 1857 rebellion against the rule of the British East India Company—during which Hyderabad aided the British— under the sixth Nizam, Mir Mahbub Ali Khan (1866-1911) and his Prime Minister Mir Turab Ali Khan, Sir Salar Jang I. This was 'modern Hyderabad', until the reign of the last Nizam, Mir Osman Ali Khan (1911-1948), by the end of which time it came to be known as 'feudal Hyderabad' (see Chapter 1).

When India became independent on August 15, 1947, Hyderabad was one of three princely states to refuse accession to the Indian Union. From the latter's point-of-view, the importance of the state's geographical position and political significance can hardly be exaggerated. It was landlocked, sharing borders only with the provinces of the newly independent nation. The subjects of the Nizam were linguistically diverse, speaking at least four major languages (Telugu, Marathi, Urdu and Kannada), each of which left an imprint on the other (Gumperz and Wilson 1971). However, what was most significant at the time was that he ruled over a 'Hindu' majority, representing not only a 'feudal' power, but one that was in the hands of a 'tyrannical' Muslim minority. The Ittehad'ul Muslimin of Hyderabad state, ancestor of the present-day MIM, gained infamy during this period of confrontation by aggressively championing the cause of independence for Hyderabad state, especially through the actions of its armed wing, the 'Razākār' (volunteer) organization. Also significant was the growing armed

peasant rebellion against the Nizam's rule, led by the Communist Party of India in the districts of Telangana.

Under the circumstances, it was clear that the Government of India would not stand for a sovereign state at the heart of its territory, particularly a Muslim-ruled state that may develop political ties with Pakistan (Menon 1956). As the Nizam continued to claim his sovereign status and attempted to secure an intervention from the United Nations, the Indian army invaded Hyderabad in a military operation that lasted four days (ending on September 17, 1948). This was described by the Indian government as and is today popularly referred to as 'Police Action'.[6] Though largely unmentioned in official histories, there is evidence to suggest that during the military operation, Muslims all over the state were massacred in large numbers both by the army and Hindu groups. While the capital itself was taken without incident, many Muslim families migrated to Hyderabad from the districts where the violence had been most severe (Mirza 1976; Noorani 2001). The current Muslim population of Hyderabad is largely composed of families that were rendered destitute as a result of the fall of the Nizam's government, and people who fled from the terror of 'Police Action' (Naidu 1990). For many Hyderabadis, with 'Police Action' came a sudden reversal of fortune—going from an affluent, powerful numerical minority to a vulnerable, despised and destitute one (Engineer 1984, 289).

Today, depending on context and circumstance, 'Hyderabad' could stand for a part of a city, or the whole named on the map: it is shorthand for what are often called the 'twin cities' of

[6] For details of various aspects of these events and their consequences, see Khalidi 1988 and Khalidi & Aqil 1998. I discuss them in more detail in Chapter 4.

Hyderabad and Secunderabad (not Golconda), a division that goes back to colonial times[7]; it is the rival Indian city to Bangalore for the unofficial title of 'India's Silicon Valley', so in a sense its newest referent is a 'township' especially developed during the 1990s to house multinational corporations and BPO (business process outsourcing) companies and tellingly named 'Cyberabad'. According to the 2011 census figures, Muslims comprised roughly 30% of the city's population (over 6.5 million; with the recent additions to the larger metropolitan area, 7 million)[8], and live mostly in the southern part of the city, that is, the Old City. Thus, the number of Muslims in Hyderabad is considerable, and relative percentages mapped onto bounded spatial distribution has facilitated political organization, unlike most Muslims in India, under their own party, the MIM or Majlis.

The MIM has seven seats in the Telangana State Legislative Assembly, all from Hyderabad city, and two in the (upper house) Legislative Council. Of these, four come from constituencies squarely located in the Old City of Hyderabad—Yaqutpura, Charminar, Bahadurpura and Chandrayanguṭṭa—and four from areas that include parts of the old and new city—Karwan, Malakpeṭ and Nampally. When I say 'new' I mean what long-time Hyderabadis call the new city, the part of Hyderabad north of the river Musi that was settled in the early twentieth century during the rule of Mir Osman Ali Khan. The Nampally and Mallepally neighborhoods are a good example—they were among the first localities to be planned and settled in the move north in the early 1920s. This is where Darussalam is located, right behind the railway station that is known to visitors as the Hyderabad railway station but locally only as Nampally station. These are constituencies that have, over time and processes of re-districting,

[7] Secunderabad was established as a cantonment area in 1798 to the north of what was then Hyderabad city, following the Nizam's treaty of alliance with the British East India Company.
[8] http://www.census2011.co.in/census/city/392-hyderabad.html

remained under MIM control both in terms of municipal representation and seats in the Legislative Assembly.

This is also the area that has elected MIM presidents—in this instance, Asaduddin Owaisi— to the position of Member of Parliament from Hyderabad since 1983 (when his father, Salahuddin Owaisi was first elected to the seat; see Khalidi 1993 for details). Successive attempts to challenge their hold on the seat have failed comprehensively in every election cycle since.[9] Although the party has expanded into neighboring cities and towns,[10] its base, the place that its leaders and cadre call home, and which they are most actively engaged in is the Urdu-speaking parts of Hyderabad city. Because of its status as the capital, in which an extraordinary amount of resources and influence are concentrated, the importance of the MIM as a party of the city—not to mention the Muslim party of the region—is disproportionate to its actual 'numerical' political base:

> Hyderabad and Ranga Reddy [surrounding district of the city] form a large share of modern economic activity in the Telangana region. It comprises 44% of the manufacturing and 39% of construction of the region…These two districts comprise 54% of modern services GDP in Telangana and this share has risen by 12%...since 1999-2000. This high proportion of modern services, especially financial services, is one characteristic of a world city economy. [11]

However, Muslims 'have been less (sic) in modern and public services and more in traditional services and manufacturing…[they] seem to be moving more towards manufacturing and

[9] See the following news report, for the most formidable challenge posed to Asaduddin Owaisi in recent years, by a multi-party coalition, in the 2009 elections:
http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/Asaduddin-caught-in-Mahakutamipincers/articleshow/4363906.cms

[10] At the municipal level their successes have been rather more than at the state or national levels in other states. However, a big first came in 2014 in neighboring Maharashtra, where 2 out of a total of 24 MIM candidates won seats in the Assembly for the very first time.

[11] From the Srikrishna Commission Report, formed to look into the demand for Telangana state. Cited in Pingle (2014, 44).

construction while the non-Muslims are moving towards modern services' (ibid., 45). Thus, while they comprise a substantial part of the city's population and its historical landscape (Hyderabad is often seen as a 'Muslim city'), and that city itself has grown exponentially in the last three decades, the Hyderabadi Muslims who form the MIM's main constituency have economically precarious lives in occupations for which there may not be a future in the 'world city economy.'[12]

These numbers are not all. There is the specific history of the region itself, and the city's place within it to be considered in order to appreciate the full extent of constraints that operate on the MIM's Muslim constituents. I go into this more fully in the first chapter, but this is a good place to provide a broad orientation for that discussion.

In December 2009, a massive public movement erupted in Hyderabad and its surrounding districts, demanding the bifurcation of the state of Andhra Pradesh (henceforth AP) to form a new state of Telangana. In 2010, the Anveshi Research Center for Women's Studies published a 'broadsheet'—first of a series— titled *Nizam's Rule and Muslims: Truth and Fairy Tales about Hyderabad's Liberation*.[13] This collected a set of responses to the ongoing popular agitation for the formation of a separate Telangana state (province) in the south-east region of India, then the state of Andhra Pradesh (AP). AP was formed as a result of the reorganization of Indian states on linguistic lines in 1956, the first to be so formed. The language community on which it was based was Telugu, and the new state included Telugu-speaking parts of the British Indian province of

[12] A 2014 news-report notes the 'significant amount of discrimination by the administration' that has resulted in the poor infrastructure and lack of basic facilities characteristic of life in the Old City: http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/Years-of-neglect-angers-Old-City-voters/articleshow/34247322.cms?utm_source=twitter.com&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=Bushra-Baseerat

[13] http://www.anveshi.org.in/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/nizams_rule_broadsheet_english_nov_2010.pdf

Madras Presidency, joined to the Telangana region of the princely state of Hyderabad. This new national geography that emerged from the dismemberment of imperial geography inaugurated a new regional imaginary, but in the case of AP, riven with economic and cultural tension from the very beginning. [14] The map of the new state of covers the 9 districts that comprised the eastern part of the Nizam's state.

In the broadsheet the questions raised were, as the title suggests, specifically about the legacy of the Nizam's rule—and of the princely state—for the imagined future state of Telangana. The questionable basis of the merger with Andhra was the focus of the demand for Telangana, but what was the distinctiveness of the community on which the demand for a separate political unit could be based, if not language? The state's partisans claimed both the 'progressive' legacy of the Telangana Armed struggle (1946- 1951), referred to above, against big landlords and the Nizam, as well as the 'composite culture' (shared by urban Hindus and Muslims) fostered by the 'feudal' Hyderabad state. The contradiction between these commitments often showed itself clearly. Was the Nizam to be seen as the despotic ruler who tyrannized over a Hindu majority and built his grand capital at the expense of his impoverished subjects? Or was he the benevolent monarch who laid the foundations for a 'developed' Hyderabad, and oversaw a largely peaceful state while both India and Pakistan were engulfed by the horrors of communal violence? In other words, was he a 'secular' monarch to be celebrated, or was he a 'communal' tyrant responsible for the region's economic 'backwardness'? Moreover, what was one to make of barely disguised anti-Muslim 'connotation' (see Srivatsan's contribution to the broadsheet) of these new disparagements of the Nizam? Could September 17

[14] Hyderabad state comprised three major regions, now part of separate, linguistically organized states; Telangana is the largest and Telugu-speaking part. Since the 1950s the new state had seen agitations opposing the merger and demanding a separate state of Telangana, on account of its 'distinct culture' and economic exploitation at the hands of 'enterprising' Andhras.

be ‘Telangana Liberation Day’ if it meant recalling the slaughter of Muslims and their deliberately inflicted destitution in the aftermath?

I report this in such detail because these discussions helped me conceive of a different mode of writing the twentieth-century history of Hyderabad state, where the Ittehad’ul Muslimin was formed. In addition to accounting for the genealogy of the MIM, it was necessary to historicize the opposition between the feudal and modern, autocrat and democrat, secular and communal, while looking into the events—such as the Telangana rebellion and Police Action—that organize these enduring themes today. In a 2014 exchange within the AP Legislative Assembly that became an instant online hit, MIM leader and MLA (Member of Legislative Assembly) Akbaruddin Owaisi asked his Andhra interlocutors critical of the Nizam, ‘I fail to understand…what does the past, which is more than fifty years old, has (sic) to do with today’s bifurcation [of the state]?’[15] For him this was a rhetorical question—though he would go on to offer a long list of the state’s achievements as a proof of its modern and developed status— but I recognized in it the need to take that question seriously. No ethnography can bracket the historical question of the lineages of the present, and for me these questions opened up a place from which to construct a narrative of the past that speaks to its attenuated life in the present.

It was towards the end of my own work in Hyderabad that the formation of Telangana as a separate state became a certainty—June 2, 2014 is the now-celebrated official date. Two things struck me in particular about the ongoing discussions on the culture and regional specificity of the new state: firstly, questions of past wrongs had been reopened, and a new type of approach to both the princely state and the silent brutality of its destruction seemed possible. And secondly,

[15] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O6BtgNmpsiU

the ambivalence of the MIM towards the prospect of a Telangana state, which was constrained by its reading of the past and its possible impact the future:

> …the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party or Indian People's Party, a Hindu right-wing organization] can never think of coming to power in an integrated Andhra Pradesh but they will have a chance in a separate Telangana. We are just saying that when they sit for discussion to decide the fate of the state, MIM should have a chair at the table and Muslims as a stakeholder should be heard. (Cited in Pingle 2014, 155)

This encapsulates the place of the MIM within the political ecosystem of the region: in its capacity as the representative of a significant minority it takes a position in view of the threats posed by majoritarian Hindu political forces. However, its position is one of constraint, in a larger sociopolitical field outside of its control—when 'they' decide on the 'fate of the state', Muslims ought to be 'heard' as 'stakeholder', in a striking use of neoliberal vocabulary of participation in a political process.

Since the formation of the state, it is precisely this hedging of bets coupled with its enduring political presence in the capital that has enabled the party to work with the party in power in the state, the Telangana Rashtra Samiti (TRS; Organization of the Telangana Nation). Often seen as hypocrisy or absence of principle, the party's 'landing on its feet' no matter which way the decision on bifurcation went, instead shows the absence of the luxury of principles. As I show in Part II of this dissertation, working as best as possible within an externally determined field has been the secret of the MIM's success and longevity. This also makes it a felicitous site for an understanding of the contradictions of principle and pragmatism in political life, specifically with respect to a persecuted and vilified religious minority as Indian Muslims increasingly are. The possibilities and dead ends of political representation, manifested so clearly in the Telangana moment, form a major theme of this dissertation.

Charisma and its publics

A party that brings out no manifestoes during elections and has no publicized document of policy or ideology, constant contact with their constituents is necessarily the mainstay of the MIM's institutional life—as many of the leaders will say proudly. When I first met party president Asaduddin Owaisi in 2009 to talk to him about the project, he told me how they relied on 'everyday contact with the people, that's the strength of a party like ours: *attend* five weddings, some meetings (jalsōñ), meeting-greeting (milnā-karnā) …everything *depends* on this.' In general, I found, the calling card of the Majlis is their ''awām se rabt' (contact with the people) or 'hamesha 'awām ke darmiyāñ rehna (constantly being among the people). This is accomplished in a variety of ways, in neighborhoods, in public meetings and through regular, daily visits to the party-office at Darussalam.

But the other side of this accessibility, as I discuss more fully in Chapter 7, is the distance necessitated by the charismatic authority that the party's functioning is based on. The balance between continuous contact and accessibility on the one hand, and remoteness and inaccessibility in terms not only of social class but also by virtue of the aura of power, is crucial to the way this relationship between the Muslim public and its leaders works. In the princely state of Hyderabad, on the other hand, the question of accessibility did not arise. The noble pedigree of the man who inaugurated the mass political phase of the Ittehad'ul Muslimin, Nawab Bahadur Yar Jang, was a major guarantor of his authority. To the extent that his mastery of rhetorical forms and exceptional oratory enabled him to be a leader of a new kind of public, which appeared as if called into being by him, he mediated older and more recent forms of political sociality. After his death in 1944, a public mobilized by charisma could not, it appears, be sustained without it, and so it was that the last president of the Ittehad was Qasim Razvi, a

commoner with one great skill—public speaking. It was under his leadership that the Razakars came to overshadow the workings of the party, and in large part due to his exaggerated rhetorical challenges that Hyderabad came to be seen as a dangerous enemy of the Indian Union.

I highlight these differences—which form the subject of Chapter 4—in order to underscore the ways in which any employment of the concept of charisma requires historical specification that pushes against its deceptively value- and context-neutral thrust. It is well-known, as a recent study has reiterated, that Max Weber borrowed the concept from its particular usage and place in Christian theology and transformed it into an agnostic sociological 'type' of authority. This was an enormously productive transformation, since it illuminated something crucial to the ongoing social dynamic of mass society and the forms of authority enabled by it in contemporary Europe. But it is useful to remind ourselves what the points of difference between the Pauline concept of charisma and the Weberian translation of it were:

> By ignoring Paul's conception of charisma as a communal blessing spread across group members, Weber…redefined the term as a specific form of domination, an individual endowment used by remarkable leaders to command authority over their followers. Furthermore, while Paul's use of the word related strictly to the close and small Christian communities of his time, Weber generalized charisma to express an 'extraordinary' quality manifest across cultures and throughout history. (Potts 2009, 119)

Weber's sociological elaboration of the concept is to be found in Part Two of *Economy and Society*, where he emphasizes the 'completely value-free sense'—that is to say, sociologically— in which he uses the term, going on to specify the characteristics of charismatic authority. Thus, he states that

> the "natural" leaders in moments of distress—whether psychic, physical, economic, ethical, religious, or political—were neither appointed officeholders nor "professionals" in the present-day sense…but rather the bearers of specific gifts of body and mind that were considered "supernatural" (in the sense that not everybody could have access to them) (Weber 1978, 1111-2)

The sociological frame appears in the quotation marks and a phrase like 'were considered'—they perform the same function in Weber's description, which is to ground the 'fact' of charismatic authority within the perceptions and opinions prevalent in a given society or the sub-group that obeys the leader, leaving the social scientist in the omniscient position of knowledge while disavowing it at the same time. Furthermore, this authority is ahistorical, though it holds more and more 'the further back we go into history' (ibid.) Thus the natural and supernatural, for instance, are like empty sociological vessels to be filled in by the requisite norms of any society, from Palestine under Roman rule to the Germany of Luther and Thomas Müntzer.

However, there are shifts in genre and corresponding shifts in emphasis within Weber's writings on the subject—the 1919 lecture 'Politics as a Vocation' surely forms one of the more forceful and dramatic expositions of the concept. It is towards the end of this lecture that it becomes most clear that for him, charisma is nothing less than the way out of the iron cage of rationalization, and this is the common thread of his treatment of the concept: it is 'in a purely, value-free sense…indeed the specifically creative revolutionary force of history' (1117).

Walter Benjamin's concept of aura—discussed across many pieces of writing in different ways, but most famously in 'The Work of Art' essay—recognizes, on the other hand, the importance of historical context to thinking about (auratic) distance, and its dialectical opposite— closeness— produced in specific conditions by certain types of society (Benjamin 1936/2008).The film-star and the dictator, according to Benjamin, whose performances are mediated through 'the apparatus' of media of communication in order to appear unmediated, are products of mass society. The art object possessed once an aura by virtue of the relationships it was embedded in, and in the traditions that it was part of. Mass society 'liquidates' these traditions (ibid., 22), even as it creates the conditions for not only a new kind of art form—film—

but also new conditions of seeing and judging (ibid., 37). The Venus de Milo and a painting by Picasso may appear to occupy the same place with respect to the sociologist of aura, but Benjamin shows that they are fundamentally different objects with respect to the traditions and historical contexts they are embedded in and come to— in the case of the statue of Venus, for instance—represent.

I contrast Weber's concept of charisma with aura in order to demonstrate the importance of unpacking the histories embedded in concepts, and to treat them as historically determined ways of thinking about the world. In the dissertation, I have found it convenient to use charisma and aura interchangeably as terms, though in each instance taking care to ground them in a discussion of the historical moment I describe. Moreover, it can be argued that the resemblance between the contexts and phenomena that Weber and Benjamin— though separated by a decade and nearly two wars—were thinking about sanctions this use, even though the differences are instructive.

The concept of publics, on the other hand, appears not to sit well with aura or charisma, which display more of an affinity with terms like 'community', 'cult' or 'the masses', that is to say, either older forms of kin-based (or at the very least face-to-face) sociality or their dialectical opposite: contingent, anonymous and potentially threatening 'anomic' types of sociality (like the fascist crowd). Recent theoretical contributions to the study of publics have grappled precisely with the ways in which the concept helps think about sociality that may span the spectrum from text-mediated relations between strangers (Warner 2005), to embodied and illiberal forms of collective action in the world (Hirschkind 2006; Cody 2015). By working with the idea of charismatic publics, I draw on these discussions to show how forms of publicness evolve historically from imperial to national imaginaries of sovereignty, instantiating specific repertoires

of rhetorical address and ways of mobilization. Furthermore, they reveal the inherently protean character of modern publics: at once abstract and embodied, constitutionally sanctioned gatherings of a populist cast, a community of often critical, disaffected citizens brought together by the love of a leader but socially distanced from him.

Thus in my work, the range of terms that could be used to describe the collective space of appearance and interaction I have in mind, encompasses 'millat', 'qaum' (both broadly understood to be community) and 'public'. This last was most often employed by MIM party members in third person, to describe their constituents in general as well as audiences at their public meetings, and visitors to the party office. The terms 'millat' and 'qaum' were only ever used, in party contexts, when making speeches, that is, when addressing crowds at a public meeting or jalsa directly. Thus, 'we' were a millat or qaum, while 'they'—referring to the very same people—were a public; 'our public', to be sure, but a public.

My ethnographic work situates Hyderabadi Muslims as voters, supporters, members, office-holders and leaders of the MIM party—as well as its detractors. Clearly this does not include every single Muslim who lives in Hyderabad city, though the MIM would like very much to claim that it does. There are solidarities of class and neighborhood, not to mention sect and language. Urdu is the major language here, followed by English as a distant second—Telugu, for instance, does not occupy a very important place, being associated often with 'district Muslims', that is to say, not of the city. But it is also not the case that everyone here knows everyone else, or that strangers are unwelcome, or even that they are paid any special attention unless they become 'regulars'. Yet, there is a sense in which the city constitutes the boundaries of social and political belonging— while acknowledging the existence of countless other Muslims who could

be potentially part of this public (in a modality similar to what William Mazzarella calls 'the open edge of mass publicity').

I find the concept useful, firstly, because it works with stranger sociality as a mode of urban living that I think is also central to the way that the word 'public' is used by South Asians, but find it necessary to qualify the criterion of anonymity. How do we think of anonymity? One may perhaps be anonymous online, or when writing to or reading a newspaper, watching the news etc. On the other hand, when attending public meetings with friends, or being one of fifty visitors to Darussalam, for instance, it becomes clear that the difference between a bounded community and a public is far from self-evident in urban contexts where one's name, the language one speaks and the neighborhood one lives in (and people's persistent eliciting of this information on first meetings) all identify and locate one immediately. This does not require active interaction—clothes and body-language are immediately read as signs of one's place in the world—as my own early experience, recounted above, showed. Moreover, the Urdu newspapers and local news channels that form an integral part of the mass-mediated landscape of political mobilization in Hyderabad are also squarely situated in a small-scale urban sociality, where journalism is not the work of professional experts but accidental apprentices, and institutions tied up closely to well-known local personalities and families.

The MIM is sited as a Muslim political party at the intersection of these first and third-person constitutions of collective life, squarely within what Hussein Agrama has called, following David Scott, the 'problem space of secularism' (Scott 1999; Agrama 2012). This means that the question—is the MIM a secular or a communal party?—is constantly at the center of political legitimacy both for the MIM and its constituents. But it also means that the party is uniquely

situated to help us think about the power of incitement these questions exercise, as well as the vast socio-political terrain they obscure from view.

Chapter Outline

As noted, the dissertation is divided into two parts. Part I looks at the last years of Hyderabad state, focusing on the reign of Mir Osman Ali Khan, the last Nizam of Hyderabad. In Chapter 1, I begin by framing the period through the eyes of two very different Hyderabadis, one a cautiously optimistic social scientist writing his dissertation on Hyderabad state at Cornell in 1929, and the other an urbane, rather less sanguine Urdu novelist, whose novel about Hyderabad city was published in 1947. The former, Hashim Amir Ali, became well-known as an expert in that quintessentially postcolonial modernizing discipline of 'village studies', and the latter, Aziz Ahmad (d.1978), was not only one of Urdu's foremost writers but also a well-known cultural historian of Islam. Through their writings I show how different the diagnoses and prognoses of the past and future of the state looked on the eve of the 1930s to a planner's anxious eye 'westernization' had affected Hyderabad badly, and its effects must be corrected—and in 1947—nothing could save Hyderabad's utterly degenerate ruling class. These are also distinct—and distinctively modern—genres of aligning the past and future with the present, and as such present a textured frame for the rest of the chapters.

In Chapter 2, I look at the careers of two kinds of bearers of charisma—one the leader of the Ittehad'ul Muslimin, Nawab Bahadur Yar Jang (1905-1944), already mentioned above; the other, Communist poet and much-loved Hyderabadi man-about-town, Makhdum Muhiuddin (1908-1969). Through a comparative discussion of their lives, the views of their contemporaries about them and the points of articulation and disarticulation between their politics, I demonstrate the spectrum of publicness in Hyderabad city. From the male sociality of university hostels and

poetry readings and tea-shops in the city, to large political meetings, religious meetings such as the Milad-un-Nabi, commemorating the Prophet's birth, as well as meetings called to discuss particular issues—Hyderabad city's Muslim publics began moving away from the influence of the court and government and channeling 'popular opinion' on proposed laws or changes in the ruling structure of government. My main texts in this chapter are memoirs, newspaper articles and hagiographic biographies of the nawab, meant to be circulated in pamphlet or booklet form.

Having thus laid the ground, Chapter 3 discusses specifically the rise of the Ittehad'ul Muslimin as a seemingly paradoxical entity—a mass party to represent Muslim interests in a state that was increasingly being viewed as a 'Muslim state'. In this chapter I show how, from 1938 onward, the state's political present and futures became increasingly tangled and molded by the demands of the anti-colonial nationalist movement, particularly the virulently Hindu majoritarian strand of it. Under the leadership of Bahadur Yar Jang, some of whose speeches I analyze in detail in this chapter, the Ittehad became a mass organization, opening branches in all major towns and cities of the state. At the same time, however—and here again I follow the thread of the last chapter—the Communist-led peasant movement against the depredations of rural notables, was gaining ground in the Telangana districts of Hyderabad.

In the last chapter of Part I, I chronicle the rise to power of Qasim Razvi, the last president of the Ittehad. I argue that while Bahadur Yar Jang's charismatic qualities were peculiarly embedded in the Hyderabad city milieu, Razvi as an outsider from a small district town rose to the leadership of the party and used his demagogic skills to marshal public support. Evident in this was a certain hollowing out of charismatic presence into its mere appearance, in a highly intensified form. I present different views of Razvi through the eyes of both admirers and rivals; the catastrophic end of the state, and the massacres of Muslims that followed after the

Indian army invaded in 1948, are told through first-person accounts of officials of the regime, and most importantly, a memoir by Progressive Urdu writer Ibrahim Jalis. Jalis, who went over to the Ittehad'ul Muslimin at the time of crisis, and returned to the Communist fold after migrating to Pakistan, wrote this reflective memoir almost as an act of atonement. His narrative voice constitutes a foil to Aziz Ahmad's fatalist cynicism in Chapter 1 and loops back to it.

Part II comprises three chapters, the first of which takes up the story of the MIM in post-Independence India. Here I demonstrate how the sites of the Muslim public were reanimated— in the aftermath of Police Action— by the Urdu press, and then by election campaigns, an entirely new site of political mobilization for Hyderabadis. In the first two elections, held in 1952 and 1957, Muslims voted in large numbers and against the ruling Congress. In this chapter I also show how the presence of a Muslim crowd and any talk of issues particular to them invited the charge of 'communalism'. Thus, targeted—in government employment, unchecked violent crime, vengeful court cases, as well as afflicted by economic distress— as a religious minority that had been, until recently, a ruling class, Hyderabadi Muslims were barred from seeking redress publicly for the problems raised precisely by the minoritization that accompanied democracy.

In Chapter 6, I document the revival of the AIMIM under the leadership of Abdul Wahid Owaisi in 1958, and the passing of the mantle to his son, Sultan Salahuddin in 1975, whose charismatic appeal rested on his identification with his poorly educated, impoverished constituents. In this chapter I discuss the different modalities of the 'jalsa' and show how crucial a site this has been for the party's functioning and continuing legitimacy. I argue that while in princely Hyderabad, the leadership was elected, under a democratic regime the instability of political authority leads to the practice of securing it in and by the family name. I further show

how inheritance is not manifested only in names, but in the repertoire of rhetorical styles practiced by MIM leaders, as well as the content of speeches that continually refer to the legacy of their family and remind their publics of the 'service' rendered by them.

Finally, in Chapter 7 I turn to Darussalam and discuss a major shift that has occurred in the profile of the publics addressed by the MIM—its party office was, between 2012 and 2014, frequented by Hyderabadi Muslim women. While the proliferation of screens—TV, phones—and of new media has brought women into the space of the 'jalsa' virtually, at Darussalam they meet their elected representatives for a variety of needs. Many come to seek financial help, some to seek domestic intervention and others still with paperwork. Often, they are disappointed in their expectations, but at Darussalam one could meet other resourceful women who were not only good at getting their own jobs done, but also at guiding others in their troubles. The availability of Darussalam as a space for all these different types of interactions, it seemed to me, was also a significant, if undervalued, achievement of the MIM.

I began this Introduction with a brief discussion of the larger political and historical frames, and spatio-temporal co-ordinates of the dissertation. It seems appropriate to conclude with a very different sensibility of space and time than the ones that animate anxieties about nationhood and secularity. Here in a quotation from a historian-writer's account of his visit to Hyderabad city, is the Hyderabadi reproducing the stereotype of the Hyderabadi:

> The people of other cities say we are a little lazy,' said a shopkeeper in the bazaar, 'that we all behave as if we are little Nizams. That we work slowly, eat slowly, wake up slowly, do everything slowly. Many shopkeepers in Hyderabad don't open their shutters until 11 a.m. We like to take life gently, to take lots of holidays and only work when we have no money in our pockets.' (Dalrymple 1998, 202)

The turning of princely Hyderabad into a tourist-friendly theme, a cultural singularity in a 'fast world' of exchange (not the 'bazaar'), is noteworthy. In light of the processes described above, it

also shows in what unexpected ways the traumatic past can be animated in the present without having recourse to the elegiac or nostalgic. Something of this embrace of the past and present, I think, only in a more energetic and assertive fashion, has been effected for Hyderabadi Muslims by the MIM, within the constrained spaces provided by the logics of minoritization. Given these constraints, the MIM is simultaneously, like every other party (dynastic, occasionally violent, with a rich leadership and a poor base) and unlike any other party (accessible, familiar, 'our own') in its public practice and local presence. The MIM works on the premise that political representation is crucial for persecuted minorities in a secular democracy, that both provides for and constrains the terms on which such representation must work. This dissertation is an attempt to understand the ways in which this premise impacts the lives of Hyderabadi Muslims in the present, and draws connections between a stigmatized past and a closed future. These, it may be said, are the terms of minority politics—and perhaps they point to the conditions of political existence generally in our world today.

PART I

Chapter One

Two senses of an ending: Hyderabad 1929/1947

> "His Highness!" "His Highness!" shouted galloping policemen, and the people in the streets hastily divided and piled themselves up on either side of the road. Silence seemed to fall on the masses, and only the voices of those in command were heard while a carriage drove past, a carriage driven by an English coachman in yellow satin…In the carriage sat H.H the Nizam, quietly dressed, as usual, in a dark English suit and the yellow Hyderabad turban, and on either side of him were the two eldest princes, while behind him stood a tiny princess, who bowed incessantly to her father's delighted subjects.[1]

This is a description of the imposing Muharram procession in Hyderabad city, and the scene of the seventh Nizam, Mir Osman Ali Khan (1886-1967)—in 1913, recently crowned— 'quite unexpectedly, and heralded only by the whizzing, whirring rockets' driving into the 'huge, humming, buzzing beehive' of the crowds gathered on 'Langar day'[2] (Law 8). Though the 'modern' in the title partly signifies contemporaneity, it is also evaluative; as the English writer notes, 'when we…watch the progress that is now being made, we cannot but feel hopeful concerning the future of the largest native State in India' (32).

This description conveys a sense of the charismatic presence of the monarch in the midst of his subjects; particularly noteworthy are the English coachman and the 'usual' suit of the Nizam. Not an elephant or a crowd-pleasing gold coin in sight, Osman Ali Khan's drive through the silent mass of his subjects, to whom his appearance is unexpected, is already far from the

---

[1] From John Law's *Modern Hyderabad* (1914, 8). Law was in fact Victorian socialist writer Margaret Elise Harkness (1881- 1921), who wrote accounts of her travels to Egypt and Hyderabad, and combined the emergent Victorian professions of journalist and novelist with socialist sympathies which made her part of a circle that included Engels and Eleanor Marx. [2] The 5th day of Muharram; this was a procession unique to Hyderabad, where various groups of soldiers marched past Diwan devdi (the Salar Jang mansion in the old city) and up to the Nizam's palace. An account, and the origin story, can be found in Server-ul-Mulk 1898, 93-94, and in Law (5). See also Shah 2008, 596.

conventions of 'oriental monarchy' associated with his father's reign.[2] Even so, Harkness reports that 'here, among his own people, he looked quite happy and pleasant' though on other social occasions 'at which English people had been present' he had had a 'bored and uninterested expression' (9). This positive description of the Nizam was to become somewhat rare towards the end of his reign thirtyfive years later, when he—and Hyderabad state— would appear as an anachronism in a newly independent, sovereign nation-state. The seventh Asaf Jah remains an ambivalent figure in the story of modern Hyderabad, which we will see, is always just here, in the present reaching out to the future—in 1913 as much as in 1928 and 1948.

Historians of Hyderabad have written consistently marking the late nineteenth century as the point at which the state began to be modernized. Transition is a consistent theme of the story, the difference being in the dates; thus, titles like *From Medievalism to Modernism* (1987), *The Passing of Patrimonialism* (2000), *From Autocracy to Integration* (2000)[3] give us histories where the past ends, as it were, in 1853 or 1948 and something different— the present, the modern— comes into being. On the other hand, in Urdu accounts of Hyderabad, especially those written after1948,[4] the trope of 'rise and fall' is common: *Haidarābād kā urūj o zavāl* ('The Rise and Fall of Hyderabad', 1964), *Suqūt-e-Haidarābād* (1998; similar in many respects to the 1988

[2] Lynton and Rajan's *The Days of the Beloved* (1974) is still the best account of the reign of Mir Mahbub Ali Khan, Asaf Jah VI, if a little breathless in its adulation of that popular monarch. The title comes from his name: 'Mahbub' meaning 'beloved'.

[3] 'Pre-colonial order to Princely state, 1748-1865' is the title of Sunil Chander's unpublished PhD dissertation, cited before, arguing that Hyderabad only became a proper state after centralization of power in the hands of the government based in the capital as a result of Sir Salar Jung I's administrative reforms (see below). 1853 was the year of his appointment as *diwan* or minister to the Nizam. Most recently, Eric Beverley (2015) has added his argument about minor sovereignty and a cosmopolitan 'princely modernity' to the list.

[4] A text like Zahir Ahmed's *Life's Yesterdays: Glimpses of Sir Nizamat Jung and his times* (1945) is a nostalgic account of the past, and the life of a nobleman rather than 'popular' histories written after 1948.

collection *Hyderabad: After the Fall*), *Zavāl-e-Haidarābād aur Police Action* ('The Fall of Hyderabad and Police Action', 1986) etc. Time is figured differently here, sloping down towards crisis rather than flowing forward—Hyderabad was once great/developed/modern, and then it was destroyed. These narratives do not complement each other so much as belong to different genres of writing the past and its relation to the present. One could say that the difference between the two is the question they try to answer: 'How did this (modernity/the demise of autocracy) happen here?' and, on the other hand, 'why did this happen to us?' It would be easy, and pointless, to privilege one over the other precisely because they are answers to different questions about the past (Collingwood 1939). The first captures the elements of transition in Hyderabad that are familiar and comparable to other histories, which do indeed bear comparing—how could they not?— while the second tries to account for a loss, positioning history as a taskmaster of sorts, and the writer as a somewhat melancholic subject of transformation.

My aim in this chapter and the next is to lay out a performative history of modern Hyderabad that connects with—and accounts for— both. Performative in two senses: one, the argument proceeds by showing rather than stating; that is, I show how the state itself, its social and political differences were thought about and experienced as a legacy of the past, and a question for the future. This is to emphasize experience of historical change—the possibilities opened up and felt to be foreclosed by it in relation to 'older' ways of ruling, relating to others and conceiving of one's place in the world *by* the ruling class. In the second sense, it is performative because it allows me to substantively introduce places (regions and languages of the state, the city, institutions like Osmania University), characters (planners, professionals, aristocrats, the Nizam and his courtiers) and sensibilities meant to meet the specific aims of the

ethnography. Thus, what follows is not a general history of Hyderabad in these years—of which, fortunately, there are several—in order to provide context for ethnography. My texts for this chapter function as both primary and secondary sources. The first is an English dissertation written by a Hyderabadi bureaucrat training in agricultural science: Hashim Amir Ali (1903-1987) submitted *Social Change in the Hyderabad State in India, as Affected by Western Culture* in 1929, but never published it. The other is an Urdu novel, translated into English twenty-odd years after its initial publication in late 1947: Urdu litterateur and cultural historian Aziz Ahmad's novel (1913- 1978) *Aisī Bulandī, Aisī Pastī* (translated as *The Shore and the Wave* by Ralph Russell).[5]

The idea of a performative history comes down to my realization that an ethnographic account needs a history that is appropriate to its ends. This I take to be the exploration of a certain historical space and time, not entirely unfamiliar, but somewhat distant; to meet these ends must be to emphasize narrative and interpretation of 'fact' and 'event'. The specific question pertaining to the dissertation is: what were the social factors internal to Hyderabadi society state and politics that account for the rise of the Majlis-e-Itteḥād'ul-Muslimīn Mamlikat-e-Āṣafiyā-Islāmiā (Council for the Unity of Muslims [of] the Āṣafiyā Islamic kingdom;

[5] For more on Russell (1918-2008), the well-known British Marxist scholar and teacher of Urdu, see his website http://www.ralphrussell.co.uk/index.html and *The Annual of Urdu Studies* No 24, to be found here: http://www.urdustudies.com/Issue24/index.html
The translation was first published in 1971, twenty-five years after the original, the title of which literally translates as 'Such Highs, Such Lows'. It was revised by Aziz Ahmad in collaboration with his translator— his colleague at the School of Oriental and African Studies, London— resulting in a slightly pared down and modified text. Russell identifies Farkhundanagar as Hyderabad in his prefatory remarks, observing quite rightly that 'the political fictional disguise was no disguise at all to anyone who knew Hyderabad, and need no longer be maintained. Aziz Ahmad grew up in Hyderabad, and indeed, at the time when the novel was written, had spent most of his life there.'(7) Unless otherwise noted, all quotations are from *The Shore and the Wave*; *Aisi Bulandi* when referring to the Urdu. Grateful thanks to Hasan Siddiqui for bringing this novel to my attention.

henceforth Ittehad) in the princely state? And since the Ittehad is the ancestor of the modern-day MIM, the aim is ultimately to help understand the world in which the MIM does its political work, which is to say, the world of the urban Hyderabadi Muslim.

The texts I have chosen are singular texts, though they share a certain unease about their 'present' and a critical stance toward the 'past', but differ quite decisively in their prognosis for the future. Singular, not only because both these genres of writing (critical social science; the Urdu novel) were very new, but also because the authors pushed their limits in interesting ways. Hashim Amir Ali's is the work of a would-be social scientist as problem-solver, somebody who wants to use his expertise to improve the lives of his fellow countrymen—in this case, Hyderabadis. His analysis of 'social change' allows us to discern a broader structure articulating new forms of authority with existing ways of exercising power, which result in the failure of Hyderabad's new modernizing schemes, as in the field of Agriculture or Education. He is able to describe both the inadequacy of understanding these shifts in terms of 'Hindu' vs 'Muslim' or 'feudal' vs 'modern' *and* why they came to appear in these binaries.

Amir Ali was attuned to the changing times, as popular politics began finding its feet in Hyderabad in the 1920s; in hindsight, his voice appears Cassandra-like in its urgency, and futility. Aziz Ahmad, on the other hand, was a self-conscious aesthete deeply influenced both by his immersion in Urdu and European literature and literary history. As a critic, novelist and short-story writer he brought the weight of his enormous erudition to bear on everything he wrote. He published his novel nearly two decades after Amir Ali's doctorate, just a year before the collapse of the state of Hyderabad. His nihilistic description of the present and vision of the future in *Aisi Bulandi* owes not only to his sense of the irredeemable decadence of the state's ruling class, but also to the horrific violence of Partition. Individuals may or may not find some

imperfect happiness in *Aisi Bulandi*, the society which is the central protagonist of the novel appears doomed.

In keeping with the times, a major trope for historical change in both is 'westernization', though they use it slightly differently. It is relevant to state here that both authors received state scholarships[6]to pursue graduate degrees: Amir Ali to America to get a PhD from Cornell, and Aziz Ahmad to England, where he took an MA in English Literature at the University of London and subsequently traveled around Europe. For both 'westernization' is the fetishization of European objects, ideas and history by the Hyderabadi ruling class, but while for Amir Ali this cannot but be a debilitating relationship, for Ahmad it opens up new ways of being and acting—which may not be better, but are qualitatively different.

In the following sections, I begin with a brief comparison of the texts and authors, followed by a detailed discussion of each, before considering Amir Ali and Ahmad's subsequent careers in the conclusion. These texts bookend the time that Part I of the dissertation deals with, in terms of changes in spaces of experience and horizons of expectation (Koselleck 2002:126). What is described here are two narratives of Hyderabad that knit past and future together in different ways to describe the present, which in one case is in the 1920s and the other in the 1940s. In these twenty years, the question of popular rule emerged and became the dominant

[6] These scholarships were started at the end of the 19th century for students to go to England for higher education and were much-coveted. An interesting historical vignette here : a special committee of 'mulki Hindus' (Leonard 1978) was formed by the Hyderabad government to look into the matter of granting scholarships to upper-caste Hindu students, who would, it was argued, lose caste if they travelled abroad. A counter-lobby formed to advocate their cause, arguing that 'the times in which we were living were not the same as those in which our ancestors had lived, that we could not, with impunity, remain stationary while all the rest of the world was moving' since it was well-known that 'the advantages accruing from a sojourn, however short, in the land of the most enlightened people on the face of the earth, the English—in the land of those whom Providence had put in charge of the destinies of India—were very great.' (*Hyderabad in 1890, 1891*, 10)

element of all political activity, for the first time independent of the regime and increasingly hostile to it. The Hyderabad regime stayed steadfastly loyal to the British throughout their rule—the seventh Nizam proudly wore the British title of 'Our Faithful Ally' and 'His Exalted Highness'— and its nobility found an affinity with the conservative bent of the English ruling class. One ruling community (hukmarān qaum) allied with the other in Hyderabad, seeking out affinities even as contestations of power between them proceeded simultaneously.[7]

When was modernity? 1947/1929

We must begin with Aziz Ahmad's masterly snapshot of urban Hyderabad from *The Shore and the Wave*, as the novelist's eye becomes nature's own, looking down on the city:

> …at this moment the sky took a fancy to see what was going on in the city. It tore a gap in the clouds and looked down with its deep blue eyes. The Rajah of Rajahs' Hindu cook was soaking gram cakes in yoghurt (*dahī-baṛē*). His Muslim cook was grilling shish-kababs on the spit. His youngest wife was thinking of the handsome young Arab who had eyed her appreciatively from the corner of the road. The British Resident was confiding to the Finance Minister his distrust of the Prime Minister. The ruling prince, Khan Hazrat, had just taken another tablet of opium, and was picking his nose and trying to make up his mind whether to sign the papers sent by the Resident or to write an elegy to the Grandson of the Prophet, martyred thirteen hundred years ago. Near the Four Turrets [*Charminar*] the horse-carriage drivers were making fun of a group of eunuchs dressed as women. A labourer (sic) was carrying on his back a fifty-pound sack of cement. A man was putting up a poster advertising a Charlie Chaplin film. In short, all was right with the world. (15)

[7] Beverley (op. cit.) has a detailed account, tracing these conflicts from the early nineteenth to the early twentieth century. In my view, the question of resistance to the British in terms of sovereignty is complicated precisely by the Hyderabadi upper classes' affinity with the ways of the English aristocracy. These are not necessarily at odds with the practices of patronage that authorized the generosity of 'welfare measures' during famine etc. in Hyderabad—as Beverley attempts to show. The effort to rescue Hyderabad from its latter-day image as a stagnant backwater (because) presided over by a Muslim autocrat is understandable, but in the academic literature on the period hardly controversial. The crucial question is about the co-existence, and dependence of a modern state apparatus on 'feudal' economic and social relations—obviously a larger and contemporary question. For a critical discussion of the book and a response by Beverley see https://networks.h-net.org/node/22055/reviews/103451/leonard-beverleyhyderabad-british-india-and-world-muslim-networks-and

This passage from the opening chapter of the novel is a description of 'time past' in the narrative present (the mid- to late 1940s, also the time of writing). By this time, it is possible for Ahmad— himself a much-travelled teacher of English Literature at Hyderabad's Osmania University and erstwhile private secretary to Princess Durru Shehvar[8]— to assume the role of observer and commentator as a novelist, and member of the rising Muslim middle class of the state, both connected to and critical of the aristocracy. As in the novel, the jagirdar (jāgīrdār) or large landowning class[9] under the aegis of the Asaf Jah dynasty, is the arch villain of most historical narratives of pre-1948 Hyderabad. But Ahmad's description astutely captures the doubleness associated with this representation: both the genesis of a unique 'composite culture' as well as a unique kind of decadence came to be associated with this group. Khan Hazrat is Muslim while his Prime Minister—the Rajah of Rajahs—is Hindu, and counts members of both religions in his household.[10] The power structure of the state is captured in the two

[8] Princess Durru Shehvar (1914-2006) was the wife of Prince Azam Jah, elder son of the Nizam of Hyderabad, and daughter of the last Ottoman sultan Abdulmecid II.

[9] A *jagir* was a land grant made by the Nizam, granted in return for military services in the initial years of the founding of the state and then for a variety of purposes, including for the maintenance of places of worship, in return for different kinds of service, or in recognition of some claim. The classification of landed property for the purpose of efficient administration and revenue extraction was the center-piece of Salar Jang's reforms. For a discussion of different types of jagir and landholding patterns see Raj (1987, 48-52) Pernau (2000, 59). The highest nobility—families that came to the Deccan with the first Nizam's army (Chander 1987; Faruqui 2013)— in the state were masters of large heritable jagirs comprising several hundred villages; mostly absentee landlords who administered their own rates of taxation and systems of justice, welfare etc. The lower aristocracy comprised people who had smaller numbers of villages and were more recent entrants into the list of grantees. For the order and the titles that indicated status see Pernau (op. cit.).

[10] This is a portrait of Maharaja Kishan Pershad (1864-1940), Minister of Hyderabad for long periods under the sixth and seventh Nizams. Margrit Pernau contrasts the 'twin-star' of Mir Mahbub Ali Khan and the Maharaja, his loyal minister, with the figure of Mir Osman Ali Khan, the seventh Nizam, and his cohort of ministers and bureaucrats. She identifies the former as 'the essence of an epoch' (Pernau 2000, 69), Muslim monarch and Hindu minister exemplifying the

sentences about the Resident, the ministers and Khan Hazrat: while the 'courtiers' indulge in intrigue, the 'ruling prince' is free to spend his time attending to the business of state or in religious/aesthetic pursuits. The difference between his duties and the Resident's activities subtly indicates the difference between the power-centers: the Resident is an active plotter, while the prince acts basically by not acting, and his minister partakes of leisurely picnics with sundry wives. Life in the city goes on unconnected with these activities, but it is noticeably less fleshed-out than the description of the activities of the nobility—as if its sole purpose was to signal the disconnect between the two. This is an early and unambiguous sign that the subject of this novel is the life of the elite classes of Hyderabad city ('Farkhundanagar')[11].

Ahmad was from Aurangabad, the state's 'second city' in the Marathi-speaking Marathwada region in the western part of Hyderabad, and became a young protégé of Maulvi Abdul Haq (1870-1961)[12]. A relative latecomer and outsider to the capital city of Hyderabad, Ahmad got a state scholarship to study in England, where he got a degree in English Literature and traveled around Europe in the 1920s before coming back to teach at Osmania University. In some of his work, he drew characters from individuals and families known and recognizable to rapidly becoming things of the past to be celebrated and idealized through the ups and downs

---

grace, generosity and cultural refinement of *Hyderabadi tahzīb* (culture). The 'Rajah of Rajahs', who only appears in the first chapter of the novel, stands as a figure of the past, treated with ironic distance throughout. On Kishan Pershad also see Green 2014, 177- 204.

[11] Derived possibly from the chronogram of the year Hyderabad city was deemed to have been 'completed' (A.H 1006/ CE1597): 'farkhundā buniyād' (of prosperous/fortunate foundations). This became the title of the city (Server-ul-Mulk 1898: 77).

[12] Known as the father of Urdu (baba-e-Urdu), Abdul Haq was a lexicographer, teacher, publisher and editor of old Urdu and Persian classics, and devoted his life to the propagation of the language founding the Anjuman-e-Taraqqī-e-Urdu (Organization for the Development of Urdu). He was also involved with the founding of Osmania University in Hyderabad city.

of the reign of the last Nizam. The felicitous writing, fiction and social history[13] at the same time, does not fully exorcize the discomfort of reading about real people known to the writer. But in this also Ahmad is faithful to the relationship of the present to the past in this genre of writing. He replaces idealization with a savagely voyeuristic distance from his characters, thus capturing—also thematizing, as we will see— the resentful relationship of the middle class with the effete aristocracy, old and new. This critical voice was symptomatic of the times, when from the pro-Nizam Ittehad to the Hindu supremacist Arya Samaj and the explicitly anti-Nizam Communists[14] were all challenging the status quo in their particular versions of popular politics.

A more contemporaneous and optimistic account of Hyderabad in the 1920s is provided by the sociological text I consider here from 1929. A few years after the sky looked down on the city of Farkhundanagar in Ahmad's novel, a young Hyderabadi aristocrat— connected with the Salar Jang family and educated at the English-medium Nizam College, where all the highest bureaucrats of the state came from— was finishing a dissertation in rural sociology at Cornell University's stillnew Department of Agricultural Economics and Farm Management. This document, titled *Social Change in the Hyderabad State in India, as Affected by Western Culture,* bore all the marks of the very latest in theories of society current both in the Indian academy and in Euro-America. *Social Change* is possibly the only attempt of the time at documenting and trying to understand Hyderabad society, without on the one hand relying entirely on the history of the ruling house and the aristocracy, or on the other, ethnological

[13] As Russell observes: '*The Shore and the Wave*…presents a picture of an important but too little-known section of Indian social history.' (6). His previous novel *Āg* ('Fire'; 1946) was also an attempt at writing fiction as social history; it is set in the princely state of Kashmir.

[14] The poster of Chaplin might be read as a reference not only to the popularity of English cinema in the city, but also of the rising popularity of leftist politics, especially among university students. More on this in Chapter 2.

descriptions of the sort found in the *Castes and Tribes of the Nizam's Dominions*.[15] Elements of both are to be found in Amir Ali's dissertation, but mobilized to answer a different set of questions. The challenge of finding answers to these became clear to him by a kind of trial and error (of) method; as he put it in his concluding 'methodological note':

> This study originated in the desire to understand the rural problem of the Hyderabad State in India. When all possible data had been collected it was found that almost all the material available dealt with the State of Hyderabad and gave little attention to its people. In other words, the data were of a political or of a historical rather than of a sociological nature. (Amir Ali 1929, 224)

In the process of formulating his 'desire to understand' the 'rural problem', Amir Ali struggled with the new ways of 'knowing' a place.[16] He does not specify what 'all possible data' means, but the census and reports of various government departments are mentioned. More importantly, he brought to his analysis an interpretive toolkit based squarely on his own experience of Hyderabadi society. As I show below, while the dissertation was not based on ethnographic fieldwork, its authoritative claim of producing a new kind of knowledge of Hyderabad rests on processing personal experience, though the stated framework is borrowed from William Ogden, Robert E. Park and Indian nationalist sociologist Radhakamal Mukherjee. This gives his work a strong subjective and descriptive thrust. Bringing together currents of American and Indian

[15] The most helpful account of this moment is still to be found in Bernard Cohn's 'The Study of Indian Culture and Society'. Amir Ali did draw on *Castes and Tribes* for his descriptions, and he was also influenced by the new 'village studies' work, as we shall see below. In the late nineteenth century, Urdu periodicals and papers had begun to give evidence of a nascent public, imagined to consist of a literary and cultivated class of people. John Roosa (1998, 180) discusses the work of Urdu writers and journalists like Muhib Hussain (1849- 1929) in addressing a lay public and attempting to define behavior appropriate to public space and discourse of a non-aristocratic variety.

[16] This point must have been driven home to him by the Chicago sociologists, though they specialized in studies of the city—before going on to Cornell Amir Ali studied briefly at the University of Chicago. He credits Robert E. Park in his acknowledgements with having 'indicated the possibilities of this study and initiated the analysis.' (iv). There are several general accounts of the Chicago School; I have found the essays in Tomasi 1998 helpful as an overview, as well as the more critical Bannister1987.

nationalist sociology *Social Change in the Hyderabad State in India, as Affected by Western Culture* is marked by a deep sense of ambivalence towards 'modern Hyderabad'. The source of this ambivalence is the double recognition that one is both an active participant in and a not entirely comfortable observer of 'social change', which is seen as giving rise to new social and political problems in the guise of solving old ones. Thus, the 'rural problem', argues Amir Ali, is entirely a result of the administrative reforms carried out in the mid-nineteenth century that established Hyderabad as a modern princely state.

There are several points of similarity between Aziz Ahmad and Hashim Amir Ali, though their writings are of different genres, styles and sensibility, not to mention separated by two decades in time. The first is obviously 'western culture' as a problem: this is significant because here British influence was not exercised on the basis of a 'rule of colonial difference'—British officials were employed by the Nizam, but worked with and under Hyderabadi ministers and officials. The Resident was certainly a force, but he had to tread carefully with respect to the ruler and his courtiers, at times appearing as a courtier himself.[17] What both Aziz Ahmad and Hashim Amir Ali suggest is that more than the political exercise of paramountcy, it is the cultural presence of the English that Hyderabad's elite have (failed) to reckon with.

Both write from within the ranks of the ruling class, though from very different positions. It is interesting that for each of them 'the past' has certain similarities, though they refer to different time periods. Ahmad writes of the world inhabited by Amir Ali as that of the past; his disguised portraits are of the modernizing elite much more than of the old aristocracy of Hyderabad, who belong squarely in the realms of romance. But the future is not much better. For

[17] Khalidi 2005 gives a succinct account of the participation of British Residents, soldiers, travelers and merchants in the high social circles of Hyderabad, especially from the 19th century onwards. In the twentieth century, English governesses were added to the social circle of Europeans in Hyderabad, as they became status symbols for the nobility.

example, the character over whose vantage point the novelist interposes his in the quote cited earlier, is from the new aristocracy—Ahdi Husnkar Jung[18] looks down on the city spread out before him and at the hills around him, seeing a space for new roads, buildings and habitation. Jung is the efficient secretary of the Rajah of Rajahs, and his building scheme runs through the novel. [19] This could easily describe Hashim Amir Ali, who also writes about the world of the old aristocracy passing, but with faint nostalgia— the days of grand processions, elephants and showers of gold on the assembled populace. But it is, for both, a point of departure—what the present is *not*. It is almost as if the present—in 1929 or in 1947—cannot be understood without this particular image of the past.

It is significant that neither text focuses on the politics of Hindu-Muslim relations, though the emergent lines of conflict are part of Amir Ali's framework. This may partly be due to the location each focuses on—Aziz Ahmad portrays the lives of the urban elite, where Hindus and Muslims, roughly equal in number, partake equally of the ruling culture, and where class overrides religious difference to a great extent, as we have seen. He takes aim at the moral corruption of an entire way of life, and therefore for him 'Hindu' and 'Muslim' are not salient categories. However, taking account of rural Hyderabad, Amir Ali must contend with a predominantly 'Hindu' population beginning to make demands of the city's 'Muslim' elite. For Amir Ali, 'caste' and 'tribe' are sociological categories but not political ones, so that in the last

[18] A portrait of Mehdi Nawaz Jung (1894-1967), Secretary to Hyderabad's Executive Council (1926) and later Congress minister as well as Governor of Gujarat after 1948. He is credited with building up the Banjara Hills neighborhood in the city; in the novel his inspiration for this comes from the posh Malabar Hill neighborhood in Bombay.

[19] Akbar 1970; see in particular the contributions by Zulfiqar Ali Khan ('Life Sketch') and Mary Nundy ('Mehdi Bhai and Banjara Hills') to this memorial volume. Amir Ali also built a home in Banjara Hills, and attained a position similar to his friend Mehdi Nawaz Jung in Hyderabad state—he became private secretary to Sir Akbar Hydari, Prime Minister of Hyderabad in 1937.

analysis ‘Hindu’ and ‘Mohammedan’ appear as the two major communities between which the future of the state must be decided.

In Sections II and III below, I follow chronology in taking up Hashim Amir Ali’s worries about western influence first, which show how ‘old’ and ‘feudal’ Hyderabad of the 1940s was in fact ushered in by the modernizing reforms of the mid-nineteenth century. I then move on to a discussion of *Aisi Bulandi* where Aziz Ahmad records the emergence of a new kind of subjectivity that is marked by the uneven history of encounters with ‘western culture’. Neither Amir Ali nor Ahmad trivializes these encounters as being simply destructive or constructive; rather, they are concerned with describing their entirely unforeseen, in some cases superficial and in others deep long-term effects on Hyderabadi society.

II

Hindus, Muslims and western culture

Social Change begins by introducing the state of Hyderabad and its geological features, literally situating its population: the ‘eastern granitic section covering the major half of the state is inhabited by a Dravidian people’, while the ‘lava region of the Northwest corresponds remarkably with the spread of the Maratha race’ and the ‘south-west is populated with still another race, namely the Kanarese’ who appear to be something of a residual category, presenting ‘a mixture of the Eastern and Western sections’ much like ‘the natural environment in which they live.’ (7-8)[20] But there is a newer aspect of race: ‘designations [that denote] merely differences in faith’ (Hindus, Parsees, Jains, Buddhists, Christians, ‘Mohammedans’ and Sikhs listed in a footnote in chronological order of ‘origin’) ‘<u>have become</u> associated with differences

[20] These are instantly recognizable tropes in colonial sociology, ancestor of Indian rural sociology of the nineteen fifties and sixties; see Desai 1969 for a representative sample. Amir Ali bases his description here on FJ Richards’ ‘Cultural Regions in India’ (1929).

in race' (my emphasis).[21] We are not given details, but this is enough to note that by making 'faith' the natural, the essential element of religion he is able to point to the historical process of its association with race. This does not lead him to question the naturalness of race itself, because that (like ethnicity today) is the stable 'etic' scientific concept.

The thesis is simple:

> The introduction of Western culture has disorganized an Eastern society. A society organized on the basis of relatively isolated village communities, and a decentralized form of government has been giving way to a relatively high degree of communication and a centralized form of government, with a consequent competitive order. […] In short, the study shows how the purely Eastern civilization in this particular region is gone forever, and that although a purely Western one can never come to be, whatever the future may bring, the mingling of the old and the new have at present brought about confusion, suffering and social paralysis. (17)

The history of this self-contained eastern village up to this point is divided up into the history of the 'Hindu' and 'Mohammedan' communities on the subcontinent, further sub-divided into racial categories of Aryan and Dravidian among Hindus. The development of the caste system is again contemporaneous: the growth and expansion of the 'confident happy and successful' Aryans (27) into occupational groups that became rigid over time, especially as a result of the contact with 'conquered dark skinned Dravidians' with respect to who 'racial purity' needed to be maintained (30).[22] Though finding the work of sociologists like Mukerjee and Altekar imprecise (33), Amir Ali nevertheless draws on them to describe the 'functioning of village communities', listing the familiar attractions of the co-operative nature of work, the justice rendered by village elders,

[21] Stocking (1987) shows how current evolutionary models of civilization connecting climate and race in Victorian ethnology influenced and were influenced by the writings of men like Henry Maine, the stamp of whose ideas can be seen in Indian sociology of the time, like Mukerjee's. The emphasis on studying climate to understand 'culture' must also have been reinforced for Amir Ali by the Chicago School's interest in the links between the environment and human habitation.

[22] This account is taken from Radhakamal Mukerjee's then recent *Regional Sociology* (1926), and as Bernard Cohn argued, is the version of ancient India taken up by the early Indologist's encounter with Hindu texts through the mediation of Brahmin interlocutors. See Cohn 2004,136-171; see also Ballantyne 2002.

relations 'controlled by caste'…in short, a place where 'the spirit of voluntary service was…a part of the mores' (34). The relations between 'government' and village were of 'non-interference'— this from a lengthy quotation from Mukerjee—and this continued with the conquest of the Deccan by the 'Mohammedans', who simply became yet another revenue-extracting government, not particularly interested in disturbing the village community. The 'contact' is described by Amir Ali in the following terms, which were to be heard often in Ittehad discourse later:

> …they were perfectly suited to each other. The Mohammedans, coming from the north had been trained with the help of nature to lead and to conquer and to rule. The natives were sedentary, attached to the soil and already used to living a quiet village life organized on the basis of small and large communities…The villages paid tribute to the new king and even the one God of the Mohammedans along with his prophet and family, added another few to the long list of the deities of the masses. (53)

Evidence of points of contact between the two communities is found in practices such as the veneration of Sufi saints (who 'assumed the garb of Hindu mendicants') by Hindus, the stamp of 'Hindu festivals of joy' on Muharram, otherwise an 'occasion for bereavement and sorrow'. Amir Ali cites his own memory of 'a few words of a hymn he heard in childhood; it was "Hashanna, Hoshanna Panee Bhejo", the last two words of which mean "send rain".'[23] Another example is of the sixth Nizam, Mir Mahbub Ali Khan being attributed 'divine powers'; it was believed that invoking his name 'kept away serpents'. (56).

Interestingly, these examples serve as evidence of the first encounter between Hindus and Muslims, and yet they are all taken from the late nineteenth century to the 1920s. This becomes clearer by an abrupt contrast, when historical time intervenes suddenly with the 16th

[23] 'Hasan' and 'Hussein' become 'Hashanna, Hoshanna' in this Telugu-ized rendering. Mirza Zafarul Hasan (see Chapter 2) remembers similar veneration of the imams in his childhood in a Telangana village (now the town of Sangareddi, a little over an hour's drive from Hyderabad city) around the same time: 'Ashanna, Oshanna Lala…' (Hasan 1971, 28). Following a royal order in 1926, the more 'festive' aspects of Muharram were abolished.

century founding of the city, which 'became the nucleus from which culture spread out'; thus the 'earlier kings' at first ruled from Golconda, 'a heavily walled fortress,' but 'when assimilation had gone on for some time these kings descended from the fortress [of Golconda] and founded near by (sic) the present city of Hyderabad in 1589.' (58) This telescoping of time, moving from timelessness to specific dates is not accidental. In her discussion of the trope of the 'Deccani synthesis', Karen Leonard identifies the major infrastructural features of this thesis, citing the work of H.K Sherwani— major historian of the Deccan— on the medieval Bahmani dynasty (1347-1518):

> Hindus held government offices: some rulers had Hindu wives; some rulers knew Indian vernaculars: Bahmani relations with Hindu kingdoms were not based on religious enmity; Hindu traders in the Deccan were not displaced; Muslim saints were revered by nonMuslims; cultural ties were retained with Iran and Arabia; and, finally, Hindu temple architecture showed Islamic influences.[24]

This trope, parts of which are recounted by Amir Ali above, describes what is assumed to be a peculiar feature of the region's political and social history, stretching from fifteenth century courts to twentieth century urban culture:

> The Deccani synthesis theme has been applied to the Bahmani kingdom, its five successor states of Ahmednagar, Bijapur, Golconda, Berar, and Bidar, and the Nizams of Hyderabad.[2527] But no historian has defined 'synthesis' and then investigated the cultural

[24] Sherwani 1953, cited in Leonard 2014, 239. That Sherwani was himself invested in ascertainable historical truth can be seen by the fact that he was uncomfortable with the founding legend of Hyderabad city: the legend of the love and marriage of a young Mohammad Quli Qutb Shah with a Hindu dancing girl Bhagmati, after whom the new city was named first Bhagnagar and then Hyderabad. Sherwani noted that there was no historical evidence for this story, but of course the legend endures (Austin 1992). Contemporary defenders include Narendra Luther, the best-known amateur historian of Hyderabad, who observed in a 2014 newspaper interview that '[n]othing symbolizes the legacy of Hyderabad as much as the romance between Prince Mohammed and Bhagmati.' http://www.thehindu.com/features/metroplus/if-rocks-couldtalk/article5582799.ece. Accessed February 2014

[25] Leonard, on the other hand, prefers 'the concept of a plural society' because 'the general notion of cultural plurality, with a small political elite presiding over more localized, segmented social groups, seems readily applicable to Hyderabad' (238), so that we find 'patterns of culture relevant to different levels and groups in society' (237). Thus, this 'Deccani synthesis' refers to the culture of the political elite of Hyderabad, who 'shared the exercise of political and economic

> elements represented in any one of these cases or the social composition of the groups participating in any of these allegedly composite cultures […] Rather, historians have simply cited instances of Hindu-Muslim interaction, failing to separate cultural patterns from social structure in their discussions. (232)

Once more Muharram is cited as the major exemplar of this dominant public culture. Leonard tells us that several of the leading Hindu Kayastha and Brahman families in Old City neighborhoods not only served *sherbet* to the procession of mourners, they held *Majlis* meetings and kept *alams* or standards (symbols of the martyrs and of the *panjatan* or Prophet's household) in their homes.

It will be remembered that by the time Aziz Ahmad writes his description of the composite culture of Hyderabad's courtly classes, when 'all was right with the world', it is with irony. However, as in Law's *Modern Hyderabad*, Amir Ali's description, and the historical narratives that Leonard cites, this coming together of two disparate cultural elements, the Hindu and Muslim is of key importance to the imagination of Hyderabad. It has a history, as one can see from the difference in its various iterations at different points in time, but always accompanied by the shadow of a certain ahistoricity, as if capturing some mythic essence of Hyderabad. Already in Amir Ali's work a combination of the two can be detected—while his history section is based on the model of 'synthesis', his diagnosis of present ills involves the disorganizing element of a third community, bringing 'western influence'. Before, 'like ants, the nobles lived on the produce of their aphids, the villages: but like ants they also gave their aphids protection and care and nourishment…Even in the villages…[c]ertain families were recognized

---

power' as well as 'a common adherence to the Mughal court culture' (238). Later in her work she modified her analysis by expanding the scope of this plurality, conceding that this 'Mughlai' culture moved beyond the court and spread to homes and neighborhoods of the capital: '[a]ll those who lived in the city, especially the neighborhoods of the old walled city, participated in that dominant public culture, regardless of their religious affiliations and private religious observances.' (279)

as superiors, others as inferiors: but the superiors helped the inferiors and the inferiors worked for the superiors.[26]

Into this pyramidal structure came the English, these 'people of Northwestern Europe, always tending to be more self-reliant and aggressive than the inhabitants of warmer climates' and brought the new spirit of 'contract' and 'competition' with them. Inevitably 'the old order' gave way to 'chaos and exploitation of the most ruthless sort.'[27] (71) Salar Jang I became diwan in 1853; the result of his reforms[28], according to Amir Ali, was that

> …the large territories covering the fringes of three distinct ethnic groups each different from the others with regard to natural environment to the characteristics of the people and to language and other parts of culture, were bound together and rapidly modeled after the fashion of the Prussian state. This state certainly became very efficient in itself, but not having evolved from the interaction of nature, culture and man in the region it failed to provide for bonds between the rulers and the ruled. (77)

It is not clear how the parallel with the Prussian state comes to be drawn here, neither is the comparison pursued at any length.[29] The ideas echo those of Radhakamal Mukerjee's (1923).

---

[26] The striking simile of ants-and-aphids is offered here in contrast to the simile of the large fish eating the small; Amir Ali quotes Sir Thomas Roe's famous characterization of Indian society (in 17th century Mughal India) as one where the people 'lived as fishes do in the sea—the great ones eat up the little'. This is the famous 'law of the fish' or *matsya nyaya*, ancient Brahminic wisdom about the state of justice in the absence of a legitimate ruler (Sarkar 1920). The contrast between the aphids and fish similes captures the polarity still evident in social science literature on patronage—exchange or domination? For references see Chapter 7.

[27] This narrative is taken entirely from British sources, or sources that rely on them like Bilgrami and Wilmott's *Historical and Descriptive Sketch of His Highness the Nizam's Dominions* (1883). For a clear parsing of the narratives about Hyderabad's near-bankruptcy and the British role in it see in particular Leonard 2014, 201-230. A historical overview of Hyderabad state enabling comparison with other princely states can be found in Ramusack 2004; Regani 1963, Chander 1987 and Leonard ibid., 25-45 deal in detail with the establishment of the state in the late eighteenth to the early British interventions in the nineteenth; Yazdani 1976 for an overview of the early nineteenth century, that is, before the reforms brought in by Salar Jang.

[28] Bawa 1986, Raj 1987 and Ray 1988 are good sources for the reforms.

[29] It is nevertheless suggestive—the two did proceed almost contemporaneously; these were measures being implemented by the British in the provinces ruled by them, and to this extent there was a 'European' model. Salar Jang also staffed his bureaucracy with North Indians trained under the English system.

And at this point it becomes clear that the concern with the relationship between rulers and ruled is in fact Amir Ali's major concern in the dissertation, though completely absent from his stated problem—and he is concerned with the rulers in the main. His critique of the new scheme of public education, begun in 1854 in Hyderabad, and the introduction of the railways—both of which were classic modernizing schemes, bears this out. The introduction of this new kind of education in English, Urdu and Persian was most effective in the city, but in the districts and villages, he claims, the task was entrusted to the revenue bureaucracy and was therefore neglected in favor of their major administrative duties.[30] And what it achieved in the city was to create a monster:

> The younger generation of the upper classes were thus given to see only the better side of England. They read the English poets and gradually began to like them. They memorized the names of the ruling dynasties of England and learned that Henry VIII, in spite of his six wives was a real good sport.[31] […]
> Some were sent to England; to Eton, to Oxford and to Cambridge. They came back after having learned to hunt foxes and shoot pheasants. After returning to their homes some kept up these associations with England by sending their

---

However, the parallel with Prussia is also suggestive of an uncanny comparison: in the postunification Second Reich a young Max Weber interested himself in the 'agricultural problems of eastern Germany' and wrote a report on a survey commissioned in 1890 on agricultural workers in the 'East Elbian region.' (Mommsen 1984, 23) Weber's cautious assessment of the merits of the decaying 'patriarchal estates' exacerbated by his desire to 'repress my native liberal antipathy for the eastern landlords' and his pessimism towards the future of the monarchy (25) are echoed by Amir Ali's attitude towards Hyderabad, though he makes lesser effort to hide his antipathy.

[30] This is a sympathetic reading of the state's approach to education. John Roosa attributes the low literacy rate in Hyderabad to a lack of 'political will', which left it 'far behind other princely states such as Baroda, Travancore and Mysore.' (Roosa 1998, 151)

[31] A fuller account of the melding of English aristocratic culture with Hyderabadi sensibilities is to be found in Zahir Ahmed's biography of Sir Nizamat Jung (1871-1955)— one of the first generation of aristocrats to acquire English education and then sent to England— appropriately titled, as cited above, *Life's Yesterdays*. In an early passage Sir Nizamat Jung describes his visit to Trafalgar Square in late-Victorian London, where he is shown 'Nelson's Monument and the fine equestrian statue of King Charles I. These reminded me of two great events in the history of England, and the figure of the Royal Martyr haunted my imagination for a long time and made me a Royalist afterwards.' (Ahmed 1945, 11)

> laundry to it. Others brought back masterpieces of art and loads of fineries (sic) and still others talked in ravishing terms of the prostitutes of Paris and the glories of the English countryside. (84)

This fetishization of names and things European extended to the realm of domestic consumption, argues Amir Ali, gradually tilting the balance of trade towards imports by the decade 1911-1921. To illustrate the stages of this process he cites a travel piece published in *Once A Week*, 'an English magazine', in 1872. The unnamed author claims that the city 'thoroughly retains all the characteristics of an Eastern city in its primitive state' and records his impressions of one of the 'houses of the nobility'. Here he is treated to 'all kinds of wonderful things which were pointed out to us—musical boxes, barrel organs, mechanical toys, gaudily painted prints, green wine and finger glasses arranged in ornament brackets, coloured plaster of Paris figures of dogs and cats…it gave one an idea of being in a large china shop' (90).

From these initial 'inroads of material objects, the cultural significance of which had not yet been fully grasped' eventually came the massive imports of articles classified under the duty free and 'miscellaneous' heads in statistics of the 1921 decennial census reports ($14 and 11 million respectively, together outdoing the largest export material—cotton—which stood at $21 million). But the real problem is larger:

> The introduction of every new article of Western manufacture has the same effect as that of a new invention in the West; only more so because aside from replacing an object of the former culture, it imbues a new idea which is Western and therefore alien. […] Just as English words are merely words to the Indian student[32] and not related to things, so also articles of Western manufacture are <u>for a long time</u> mere objects without their full meaning and unaccompanied with any emotional reaction. They even tend to have a demoralizing effect; just as the appreciation of a beautiful English poem makes a student

[32] Zafarul Hasan (op. cit.) recounts his initial English lessons at a government school in Sangareddi, where the boys would 'repeat sentences after the teacher—actually, sing in chorus—along with the Urdu translation, about 40 to 50 children at a time: a cat ran; ēk billī bhāgī. A fat rat; ēk motā chūhā…boys that didn't even know their a b c properly but wanted to show off their English would go about saying with great relish, "a b c d; you my lady" (19-20). The children in this village, remembered in the 1970s with nostalgia, had clearly learned what English signified.

> in India feel a little inferior because of it being an accomplishment of his masters, so also every new discovery and invention of the West…makes him only a little more pessimistic and robs him a little more of his confidence.[33] (96; my emphasis).

Thus, the object is empty of 'emotion' but still desired: the desire is already an index of domination, and when it is acquired—whether as words or things—it only serves to deepen the sense of domination. It makes little difference that the rulers are Indian and British rule 'indirect'; European influence is not limited to the machinations of the Resident and the intrigues at court. Gradually perhaps 'full meaning' and 'emotional reaction' will come to inhere in the object, Amir Ali seems to suggest, but we are not sure what this would mean for the dominated (who are the ruling aristocracy of the state here). But the unevenness of this process is the secret of the distance between the rulers and the ruled in Hyderabad.

No more ants and aphids, now the entire nature of the socio-economic order has been transformed; this transformation is at the root of social tensions that are being understood as Hindu-Muslim. After all, 'for six hundred years, Hindus and Mohamedans have continuously rubbed shoulders and economic bonds have been established between the two peoples. Now the economic order is changing and consequently, new relations are coming to exist between the peoples of two faiths, one of whom happens to be the rulers and the other the ruled. (135-36)

---

[33] Roosa (1998, 161) quotes a 1925 speech by Syed Hussain Bilgrami—protégé of Salar Jung and Director of Public Education (1883) in the state—to show that while supportive of the principle of free public education, he nevertheless strongly felt that 'education given in Government institutions is insufficient, if not injurious, to Mohammedans…Boys that attend these schools from their early youth grow up ignorant of the vast mass of oral traditions, religious tales, anecdotes etc. which form the folklore of the Mohammedans…They acquire offensive ideas of personal liberty, far removed from the true liberty taught us alike by the best in our own old literature and in the literature of ancient and modern Europe.' This is from a speech made in British India. Bilgrami was a 'non-mulki', as people from north India who staffed the post-reform administration were called by native Hyderabadis (themselves 'mulki'). Amir Ali's ideas are obviously cut from similar cloth, but fashioned very differently; he worries not so much about the corruption of morals and new ideas, but that these are symptoms of an inferiority complex.

This is exactly the opposite of what eventually happened in Hyderabad politics, though Amir Ali wants to think about it from a different—one might say a liberal Congress nationalist—position. It is also perhaps the view of an insider to the governing class, favoring gradual reform of the socio-economic status quo (also, it bears noting, a mainstream nationalist concern). A third term in this opposition between the rulers and ruled follows, somewhat unexpectedly: 'whatever problems exist in society—the State alone is in a position to remedy them.' Why? Because 'the upper and lower classes both only feel vaguely that something is wrong, but even if some of them can diagnose the social maladies, they are unable to arouse public opinion for the simple reason that public opinion does not even nominally exist in the Hyderabad State[34]—it is a feudal domain, governed by a ruler who is still an autocrat.' (136)

In the analysis he provides Amir Ali's concern with the ruler's autocracy is actually quite limited; it is interesting precisely because it illuminates the mores of the modern bureaucracy functioning in a patrimonial regime. At the heart of Hyderabad's troubles, according to him, is the growing distance between the city-based governing class, whose expenditure increases every day thanks to their 'westernized ways' and the impoverished peasantry that support this lavishness while being squeezed off their land by the same process of westernization (in this case resulting in famine, epidemics and widespread rural indebtedness; 137-154).[35] The state is far from indifferent to their plight; specific departments and schemes within them have been set up

[34] Amir Ali is right in asserting that there is no Hyderabad-wide public; but the picture was more complicated in the capital at this time, as we will see in Chapter 2.

[35] Later historians—especially of the Telangana armed struggle (1947-51)—would describe these processes in similar fashion, though for them this ruling class was a remnant of 'medieval' times. Amir Ali also leaves out the crucial mediating class of rural revenue-farmers or *deshmukh*s, who became both government servants as well as powerful local notables as a result of the reforms. For references see Chapter 2.

to ameliorate the situation, but these, according to Amir Ali have either completely failed or performed far below expectation. How does one explain this?

Bureaucracy, Hyderabad style

To answer this question three case-studies are presented, of the department of agriculture, the Cooperatives department and the department of Education. I will discuss aspects of the first and last here. The department of agriculture under the Revenue department was set up soon after the accession of and as a result of the young Nizam's initiative in 1912. For the first five years, it functioned smoothly under the management of an English gentleman farmer. When a young Hyderabadi with an MA from Edinburgh was appointed as head in 1917, his first act was to plan an expansion of the department, demand more money and personnel to implement a high-sounding 20-point agenda that Amir Ali observes 'hindered the development of practical procedures and introduced a considerable amount of theorizing' (175). Only 20% of the newly expanded budget was to be spent on 'research and output' while the rest was for 'the maintenance of a large staff… [consisting of] a large number of petty supervisors, inspectors, clerks and office peons' (179-180).

The scheme was not sanctioned until 1925,[36] but soon after 'the secretary and minister in charge of the Department were swarmed with young city Mohamedans looking for jobs under the new scheme'. Thus, the lower rungs of the department were staffed by the Minister of Agriculture's 'dependents and acquaintances' so that, as happens in such cases, according to

[36] Between 1919 and 1925 the new Nizam had tried to take on the British and assert his internal autonomy by expelling English officials, taking control of the state by dismissing his minister and assuming charge of his duties and insist on the return of Berar, territory 'perpetually leased' to the British, very reluctantly, by his father. The experiment ended in failure, with Lord Reading's famous public rebuke of the Nizam in a letter reminding him that 'the sovereignty of the Crown is supreme in India, and therefore no Ruler of an Indian State can justifiably claim to negotiate with the British government on an equal footing.' (Cited in Pernau 2000, 143)

Amir Ali, 'relations between the individuals in the group [the higher and lower rungs of employees] become formalized and social distinctions … begin to receive so much attention that technical and scientific functions tend to be overlooked entirely.' A second problem arose because of the use of Urdu, the official language; as a language used for administrative purposes, its use to designate technical functions presented unique difficulties:

> For example, extension workers were given the title of "Supervisors" or "Inspectors", the men who were intended to do research on the Experiment Stations were called "Superintendents of Farms". The cotton expert was called "Superintendent of cotton" and to the Entomologist was given the anomalous title of "Superintendent of Insects and Beetles". <u>These misplaced designations reacted psychologically upon them</u>. In a period when the Governmental officials of the administrative departments occupied the positions of Pharaohs, a Deputy-Director of Agriculture wanted to be Deputy-Director in the same sense in which a Deputy-Director of the Revenue Department was Deputy-Director…and the Inspector or Supervisor of Agriculture thought it was his duty to inspect or supervise agriculture with the same authority and point of view that characterize the Inspectors and Supervisors of the Police Department (186- 187; my emphasis).

In the first case, the collegiality required for the furthering of research, then, is undermined by social hierarchies inserting themselves in the infrastructure of the institution and molding it to the society—rather than the reverse. Similarly, in the second the difference between the authority of the expert and the powers of the administrator threatened to be blurred—in the heads of the people who had to exercise the power—by the use of a common language. This language was one of command, it signified power over people as opposed to mastery over nature, and when used in the latter context it molded the bearer to its own field of signification, suggests Amir Ali. The problem is not Urdu, it is with the translation of technical expertise into *administrative* vocabulary. This is supported by the culture of patronage within the appointments, mirroring the functioning of the bureaucracy in Hyderabad. And here he speaks from experience: he was one

of the young experts employed in the department, as he wryly acknowledges when quoting from an adverse report of its functioning by another English expert hired in 1928 to study its functioning. Harold H Mann's[37] report stated that 'as a means of discovering materials or methods of general agricultural value or of demonstrating these to the people the farms have been almost wholly a failure and in some cases notably at Sangareddy (sic).' Amir Ali adds in parenthesis 'Which, by the way, the present writer "superintended" for a whole year' (188).

The establishment of Osmania University is another illuminating example of a similar process. The university was the first to make an Indian language (Urdu) the medium of instruction. For this it was justifiably celebrated within and outside the state, yet the fact remained that within Hyderabad state the main languages spoken were Telugu, Marathi and Kannada. Amir Ali cites a government report justifying this choice of medium, to argue that 'Urdu is the cultural and official language of the state and of polite society, and is generally spoken by those classes of students proceeding to a college course' and comments wryly: 'Nothing better could have been desired for people belonging to "polite society" or in touch with the State's "culture" and officialdom' (212). Thus it was that the university had the 'reverse effect' of what was intended, given the problem of a growing distance between the rulers and the ruled: whereas with the domination of English all languages 'suffered…against a common enemy', with Urdu 'partnership in suffering…gave way to conflict; the tendency to dominate on the one hand and to resist on the other.' The other effect was indeed to broaden the base of school education—more students were drawn into the education system than before, but 'since

[37] Author of an early 'village study' titled *Land and Labour in a Deccan village* Harold Hart Mann was a well-known expert on agriculture and a professor at the Poona College. The report cited here—*Organization and Work of the Agricultural Department, Hyderabad State*— was one of three he produced after his study.

Urdu was the language of officialdom and of "polite society", the outlook of students too was dominated and limited by a desire to enter government service' (213).[38]

Amir Ali's eventual diagnosis of 'cultural lag' is inadequate to his description of the problem, though in keeping with his academic influences and his sense of what must be done. 'Adjustment' to the times is urgently needed, he concludes, and this means the 'collection of factual data and intensive social research' so that the 'gravity of the situation is realized' (221-222). If this were to happen, the future of the state could be decided between its two major communities peaceably:

> The Mohamedan ruling class will cease to merely exploit when they realize that their very existence is dependent upon the welfare and prosperity of the masses. The Hindu leaders and people, on the other hand, will also see that not only is it impossible to do away altogether with an alien oligarchy after it has existed in a region for six hundred years, but that more can be achieved through the establishment of cooperation and better mutual relations. (222)

In hindsight this reads like a desperate plea, a warning and premonition all packed into two sentences. It reveals the stakes of the dissertation, and the depths of the author's immersion in the categories that were already central to thinking about Hyderabad society and politics on the eve of the fateful 1930s. On returning to Hyderabad, Amir Ali would appeal to Mann to recommend 'a comprehensive programme of village development as a whole' which would involve acknowledging, in the first instance, that 'we ourselves know very little about the rural problem.'

[38] In *Shahr-e-Nigārān* ('The City Beautiful') the Progressive Urdu writer and critic Sibte Hasan (Sibt-e-Hasan)—North Indian, educated at Aligarh— writes of his life in Hyderabad between 1935 and 1939, and tells of first visiting the comfortable hostels of the University with his friend the poet Makhdum. 'I was envious of the good fortune of these Deccani young men. "Are you here to study or to be nawabs? What will you do when you get out of college and leave all this behind?" I asked, fired by jealousy. 'Clerk in a government office', smiled Makhdum.' (Hasan 1994, 58)

And this of course would mean the end of expertise in the form required and recognized by the government at the time.[39]

It was Amir Ali's sensibility as a reform-minded aristocrat that enabled him to be a good Hyderabadi nationalist, and also made him a good Indian nationalist— mediated by his expertise in village studies, which he would put to use in Bengal and Delhi (see Section IV below). He would interest himself in studying calendars[40] and the different ways in which they organized time; he would lecture on the 'message of the Quran' to young students. The passing of time, how people thought about it and organized their worlds, and how these worlds were connected with each other—these appear to have been Hashim Amir Ali's abiding questions, apart from conducting and supervising rural research. He brought his urbane optimism in the moving forward of time and people to better futures to his social scientific outlook, and this, I suggest, enabled him to be at home in the Indian Union as in Hyderabad state. In this he differed greatly from his fellow Hyderabadi, Aziz Ahmad.

---

[39] 'Dr. Mann heard me, and with his characteristic effervescence and truthfulness, gave me to understand that if he made such a recommendation the government would ask him to pack up and clear off: "We have called you as an expert," they would say, "and you practically confess that you know nothing about the problem." This is taken from Amir Ali 1960, a remarkable study of the same villages studied at different points in time by the same team of researchers. The team was led by Amir Ali and his Bengali associates were Tara Krishna Basu, a Bengali Kayastha graduate from Calcutta and Jiten Talukdar, a college student from 'a persevering Namasudra caste in East Bengal', as the Introduction puts it. The appendices publish extracts from the diary entries of each of the three researchers as they proceeded with their work in 1933 and are fascinating documents, showing the different sensibilities each brought to ethnographic work in a village, especially with respect to caste.

[40] In Hyderabad he studied various systems of organizing time current in India and recommending changes—accepted by the Nizam— to 'rationalize' the Persian Fasli calendar widely used in Hyderabad (Amir Ali 1947). He also made a name for himself as a scholar of The Quran, attempting to situate it historically and make its message more accessible to young people through publications such as *The Student's Quran* (1961) and *The Message of the Quran* (1974). See References for details.

So High, So Low

As we have seen Aziz Ahmad's chosen metaphor for Hyderabad's urban society is topographical, not temporal, contrast: so high, so low. Like Amir Ali he sees a relationship between the landscape and people, but in philosophical irony. The opening paragraph of *Aisī Bulandī, Aisī Pastī* introduces the city of Farkhundanagar by complimenting its inhabitants on their good taste:

> Love cannot develop to the full without separation, they say, and no landscape is perfect without heights and depths [bulandī aur pastī]. That is why there is a hill near every big city, and if God has endowed the citizens with good taste, they build their houses on the hill as well as in the plain. If He has not, they build a temple or two on the hill or discover somebody's shrine there, and go and visit it from time to time. From the top of the hill, they gaze down for a while at the city below, admire the scene, and then return to their narrow streets.
>
> Near Farkhundanagar, capital of the princely state of that name in central India, lies the hill which now bears the name of Kishanpalli, but which in former days was called Gipsies' Hill.

The opening chapter is a brief, poetic history of Farkhundanagar: beginning with the rocks, the 'gipsies' who made it their home as empires rose and fell[41], and ending with a beginning—of good taste, one could say, in the start of a project to build homes for the rich in the now-abandoned wasteland of Kishanpalli. Here the past is less the story of a contact between races with distinct characteristics than a change in political economy—the gipsies lost their trade as empires changed hands and the city grew.[42] This is a philosophy of history, rather than a historical succession of events. The triumph of urbanity over nature is quite as central to

[41] For a history of the Lambadas— the 'gipsies' mentioned here—telling the story traced by Aziz Ahmad here, see Bhukya 2010. 'Kishanpalli' is Banjara (Gipsy) Hills, still home to the affluent in Hyderabad city.

[42] Aziz Ahmad was interested in theories of race, especially in the context of the rise of Nazism. He wrote a short monograph tracing the genealogy of theories of race in 1941, comprising a discussion of Victorian anthropological texts—like Frazer's *The Golden Bough*— and through them the caste system, as well as racial justifications of the colonial project. He stated his conclusion in the very first paragraph, framing his inquiry: racial superiority and inferiority was a matter of 'propaganda'.

idealized city life, as living with it appears to have been for Amir Ali's idealized village. The writer-narrator's urbane agnosticism[43] toward religion is apparent—the worship of a deity placed high above oneself is a mark of ungodly 'bad taste' in urban neighborhoods of 'narrow streets'.

At the center of the novel is the story of Nur Jahan and her family, located in the middle rungs of the aristocracy, and her relationship with her first husband Sultan Husain, an engineer by profession. This is an unhappy and in the end, violent relationship that leads Nur Jahan to ultimately divorce and marry her childhood playmate Athar, also from a prominent noble family of Farkhundanagar.[44] This is as much of a plot as the novel provides. Aside from Nur Jahan and Sultan Husain, the only characters to be treated in depth are her mother Khurshid Zamani, sister Sartaj and Husain's Delhi friend Surendar—a remarkable character, as we will see. In this sense, the novel is like an impressionist painting; there are points of emphasis where the contrast of light and shade, or different hues becomes accentuated, but only when looked at as a whole, and from a certain vantage point.

Three generations of Farkhundanagar elite are presented to us, all embedded in elaborate kin networks. Nur Jahan's mother Khurshid Zamani begum is the daughter of Qabil Jung, and

[43] The words in Urdu are khudādād zauq, literally God-given taste; I think the playfulness here depends on the superiority of the rational abstraction of the one God, over the 'magic' of temple and shrine. For an interesting discussion of secularity as the delegitimizing of magic (in favor of monotheism) rather than of 'religion', see van der Veer (2013).

[44] The English title *The Shore and the Wave* emphasizes Nur Jahan and Athar's relationship over the socio-historical emphasis of the Urdu title, being taken from a Persian couplet capturing Athar's love for her. Although she is the heroine of the novel in the sense that the narrative traces her journey to a certain consciousness of autonomy, the novel is more about Farkhundanagar, its elite, their lives and relationship to the world around them.

her father Sanjar Beg, the son of another aristocrat, Mashur-ul-mulk.[45] Her maternal family includes notoriously dissolute Anglo-Indian step-uncles Niyazi and Mahmud Shaukat and aunts Nazli and Kahkashan, all children of Qabil Jung's second marriage to her mother's ex-governess, AngloIndian Grace Crewe. Nur Jahan's mother tries to arrange suitable matches for her children among the aristocracy, but does not grudge marriages into the new professionally qualified nonaristocratic class. Thus, Khurshid Zamani Begum is quite satisfied with Sultan Husain, and her eldest daughter Mashur un Nisa's husband Abul Hashim, both 'consultant engineers' and government employees of sound means. The scene of action shifts between the fashionable parties, offices and homes of Farkhundanagar and the Savoy Hotel at Mussoorie, a hill-station in the northern British Indian state of the United Provinces, where the elite (from all over India) gather to pass the hot summers. Private events—marriage, parties, dinners, dances and summer relationships—and big historical events such as Partition are often juxtaposed to make a point. The novel ends, as shall see, with his Delhi friend— receiving news of Sultan Husain's death, just as the details of the Partition plan are being relayed over the radio to a group of largely indifferent card-players in Mussoorie.

The metaphor of heights and depths is generative at many levels. There is, of course, the immediately visible contrast between the lives of a majority of people and that of the elite, even though the former remain in and as background to the main narrative. They appear on and off, as the gipsies, women construction workers preyed on by Niyazi and Mahmud Shaukat, girls

[45] As Russell tells us in his explanatory note: …'Jang' and 'Mulk' that recur in the names of the characters are not personal names, but titles of the state aristocracy. Of those which occur frequently through the novel 'Jang' represents the lowest rank. The next above it is 'Mulk'…' (Ahmad 1971, 222). Also see Pernau 2000, 62.

brought up within the household to keep the men 'occupied'[46], and as unknown victims of government corruption (see below). Then there is the contrast between the heights of Kishanpalli and what is called 'the city'. When Nur Jahan breaks down and confides her marital troubles to her snobbish sister Sartaj, she confronts her brother-in-law accusing him of wanting to put his wife in purdah:

> My dear Sultan, I hear that you want to follow city ways. But city girls are quite different from us. We went to Panchgani finishing school. Do you think we can be like them? Don't you know who Nur Jahan is? The grand-daughter of Mashur-ul-Mulk and Qabil Jang, the daughter of Sanjar Beg, the niece of Nadir Beg, and the sister of Sir Taj-ul-Muluk's granddaughter-in-law [i.e herself]…
> […] Do you take us for city loafers like you? Who was the grandfather of your grandfather? Nobody ever heard of him! But the whole city knows us. Understand?" And she laughed triumphantly. (100-101)

This refers to the Old City of Hyderabad. As Ahmad puts it a few paragraphs before this tirade, 'Sultan…came from a purely 'old city' background. His forebears had grown up in the dark alleys of the old city' (99). The new aristocracy, having left the old city behind less than fifty years before, has already consigned it to the oppressive traditions of the middle-class, who may live in Kishanpalli—as Sultan Husain does—but belong to the 'dark alleys of the old city.'[47] His extreme possessiveness of Nur Jahan is seen to be linked with this from the beginning, when we

---

[46] Though this is portrayed as a custom not followed by 'westernized' homes, and resorted to by Khurshid Zamani begum as a fallback on the 'old ways'. The figure of the dependent girl in an aristocratic household is the center of many a feminist narrative; Jilani Bano's novel of Hyderabad's jagirdar elite, *Aiwan-e-ghazal* ('The House of Ghazal',1967) and Wajida Tabassum's stories come to mind (see footnote 61 below).

[47] Leonard discusses the gradual eclipse and re-emergence of the 'mulki' that is, native Hyderabadi, aristocracy in comparison with the English educated north Indian Muslims (nonmulki). One of the axes of difference was living space: Salar Jang's attempt at keeping the balance of power between the native nobility and the new bureaucracy involved 'insulating the inhabitants of the old city from the English-oriented culture developing in the new city and Secunderabad' (Leonard 2014, 53). This began changing even during his lifetime, and by the 1920s there was little of the separation left, though the 'old city' would retain its association with out-of-date, non-English ways.

are told of his ideas about marriage: 'A girl who is a complete stranger to you, about whose appearance, character and temperament you know nothing, enters your life by a secret door and comes into your heart. All her life she worships you. This is real romance.' (51) Even as Ahmad shows up Sartaj as a snob, he shares elements of her assessment of the socially conservative, upwardly mobile Muslim middle-class. He satirizes both, but certainly from the lower reaches of Kishanpalli.

Although money, government employment and religion enable marriage alliances between the lower aristocracy and this middle class, Ahmad suggests that the gap between Kishanpalli and the old city is too great. Her elite kin-network enables Nur Jahan to break out of her abusive marriage to Sultan Husain, even as it is her aristocratic 'self-respect which she had inherited from her grandfather and mother' that keeps her in it in the face of her husband's adultery (91). The consciousness of this gap is prefigured in the marriage proposal. Sultan Husain 'engineer', educated in America, sends his proposal for Nur Jahan's hand in an officious Persian document detailing his 'pedigree' and claiming descent from the Prophet. Begum Khurshid Zamani, educated at a convent and by an English governess, gets her brother Nayazi to read it to her, and in his dismissive attitude Ahmad conveys the comic desperation of Husain's attempt to claim status through the use of Persian in a society where English is already the dominant language of power: '…son of Jafar Husain, son of Tahawwar Husain…son of Khwaja Miran Shah, son of…so and so…Khurshid, this is that idiot Sultan Husain's pedigree […] Sultan Husain has sent his pedigree and asked for Nuri's hand.' (53).

Three tides of westernization

The first two chapters of the novel describe historical change in terms of story as well as plot. As the paragraph cited in Section I shows, in the society of the 1920s court intrigues and aristocratic picnics go on simultaneously with the exhibition of Chaplin films and the burdensome lives of laborers, even as the idea of building homes for the rich takes shape in the aristocratbureaucrat Ahdi Husnkar Jung's mind. That was the life of the city sketched by the realist writer. The introduction of the heroine, Nur Jahan, involves signaling change in terms of literary history: in the romance credited to the Rajah of Rajah's exalted authorship (*The Magical Tale of the Magnet and the Straw*), the heroine is 'the enchantress Nur Jahan. Her skin was like ivory, her cheeks bloomed like the rose, her delicate body was slender as the cypress' etc. The next chapter introduces the novel's heroine:

> The real Nur Jahan's skin was not at all 'like ivory'. 'Delicate'? Yes, if you like, but only because every six months when the doctor examined her, he diagnosed anaemia…'A face like a peri?' I cannot say. I could only give an opinion if I had ever seen a peri. Still, she was not bad-looking… (18)

Aziz Ahmad was a man of many talents and interests— his earliest work includes literary criticism, short stories, novels, translations of Aristotle, Dante, Ibsen and Shaw. His wide range of interests was too singular for him to join any of the major movements in Urdu writing, the Progressive Writers movement being the most active of the time.[48] He was sympathetic to the aims of the movement—broadly, to reinvent literature as a vehicle of social change, rather than

[48] He did, however, author the first insightful study of the movement in its early days (Ahmad 1945). This is a short and closely argued analysis of the major formal and thematic preoccupations of the movement, coupled with detailed discussions of its major adherents. According to Ahmed Ali, a non-Marxist Progressive writer, the Progressive Writers' movement was 'essentially an intellectual revolt against the outmoded past, the vitiated tendencies in contemporary thought and literature, the indifference of people to their human condition, against acquiescence to foreign rule, enslavement to practices and social beliefs, both social and

as an elite form of cultivation—but his own critical effort was aimed at connecting the new demand for realism with the existing traditions of Urdu literature, though the practitioners polemically defined their own 'modern' literary practice in opposition to it. The novel, for instance, he saw as an expression of the urge to tell stories, much as the old romances, epics and myths were in an earlier time.[4951] Thus this passage from the enchantress Nur Jahan to the 'real Nur Jahan' documents historical change by drawing attention to genre convention, and formally demonstrates it by incorporating the romance into the novel, framed by the irony made possible by what Bakhtin argued was the heteroglossia of the genre (1981: 259- 331).

51

As we have seen with opening passage, there is direct narratorial commentary too. The best example of this is to be found in the following passage, appearing to echo Amir Ali:

---

religious, based on ignorance, against the problems of poverty and exploitation, and complete inanity to progress and life. It was the outcome of a desire to revive literature and the arts and to relate them to life, and assert the belief in man's ultimate destiny as a free and civilized being.' (Coppola 1974, 35) This more or less summarizes the points in the Manifesto issued by the AIPWA in 1935. See Coppola 1974 and Jalil 2014 for histories of the PWA; in Urdu Jafri 1987 is the canonical insider's account.

[49] The history of the genre in South Asian languages is part of a contentious history of modernity on the subcontinent. Critics and historians of Urdu literature have debated the origins of the novel in these terms: the dating of the 'first Urdu novel' has been a matter of discussion (Asaduddin 2001) because the criteria for narrative that qualifies as a novel are broad. The story of the novel told by Aziz Ahmad himself in his short essay on the Urdu novel ('Urdu mēn nāvil kē khadd-o-khāl') argues that early attempts in Urdu that still have characters and events conforming too closely to the 'dastan' or 'qissa' (stories) are ancestors of the novel proper, which only comes into its own by the end of the 19th century with realistic characters, speech taken from 'everyday life' in 19th century India. Also crucial is the construction of a plot that relies on the logic and development of character rather than miraculous interventions. Nazir Ahmad (1830- 1912) is identified as 'the first successful Urdu novelist', part of the reaction against 'allegorical narrative' ('ibārat-ārāī) that dominated Delhi (Ahmad 1945, 141). However, the overt and conscious didacticism of these novels—also noted by Aziz Ahmad— would lead critics to posit Mirza Hadi Rusva's *Umrao Jan Ada* (1899) as the first 'modern novel' in Urdu. See Ikramullah 2006 (1945), Russell 1971 for histories of the novel; Oesterheld 2001 for an argument about the novelty of Nazir Ahmad's work, and for a fascinating discussion of his novels in the context of British patronage of 'Ordoo and Hindee' literature, see Naim 2004, 123.

> Three tides of westernization have flooded upon our noble families. The first was after the Mutiny of 1857, in Sir Sayyid's day…something like that of the Turks and Egyptians today: that is, European ways, European clothes, horse-riding, frocks for girls, 'Darling' as the form of address for all the women of the family, dogs, English food, English drink…in short, a desire to be just like the sahibs.

The second brought 'nationalism, self-respect, a sense of dignity, and an enthusiasm for western literature, the western arts and sciences, and so on', but this nor the third ('call it westernization or nationalism, socialism, free-thinking') left much of a trace on 'the characters of our novels'. Effectively, then, 'our noble families' remain in the grips of the first tide. That is to say the phase roughly corresponding to Amir Ali's complaint about the unthinking consumption of western objects without 'emotional significance'. But for Ahmad, it appears, the aristocracy are ridiculous but the middle-class rather more destructive. For instance, Sartaj's husband Haidar Mohiuddin, judged unattractive, owns a Rolls Royce, which may be seen as a comic symbol of the pretensions of this class as a whole:

> …it must have been the first that ever came out of the Rolls Royce factory. White, shining like silver, ugly, proportionless—but anyway it was a Rolls. It had been presented by the late Khan Hazrat to the late Sir Taj-ul-Muluk on his victorious return from the Tibetan war; and the late Sir Taj-ul-Muluk had given it away with the dowry of his daughter, Haidar Mohiuddin's mother. (96)

But the fetishistic relation to objects embodied by the middle class constituted by government employees, has serious consequences for others. Abul Hashim's home (the engineer married to Nur Jahan's eldest sister Mashur) is a case in point; he 'ordered his bougainvilia from Sylhet, from Japan, from Spain, from Texas, and God knows where else…His house was built in the 'German', that is, the cubist style' etc. Since 'this had been paid for out of the contractors' "percentages" … Abul Hashim's house was beautiful, while schools and hospitals had leaking

roofs, that roads were often left half unmetalled, and that the labourers often received less than half of what the account books showed under the head of wages' (40-41).

Ahmad's own position by implication appears to be one of keeping afloat in the third tide of socialism and 'free-thinking', as he incorporates influences as diverse as D.H Lawrence, Zola and Galsworthy in his writing.[50] What interests Aziz Ahmad are the foibles of this ruling class, not reform or social change by adaptation and self-reflexivity, which appear to be completely ruled out in the novel. He places little hope in a bourgeois revolution, and there is no inkling of any other kind.[51] However, the novel also deals with the complexities of the relationships between the rising Muslim middle class and the lower rungs of the aristocracy, juxtaposing them with the mores of British Indian elites and an emergent Indian bourgeois consciousness.

Urdu literary theorist Muhammad Hasan Askari called *Aisi Bulandi* the first Urdu 'social novel' (*ijtemā'i nāvil*), a comment that was apparently included in the publicity material.[5254] In his short 1949 review he discussed this judgement in detail, emphasizing the difficulties of classifying novels in this way. One characteristic of such a novel, argued Askari, was that they consciously painted a picture of a society, and were not interested in individuals as individuals but to the extent that they represented a social 'trend' (rujhān):

> As far as possible, one ought to represent the collective acting as a collective, as for example in Sholokhov's novels or in Zola's *Germinal*. The problem is that it is not often that the collective acts as one, aside from events like war, riots, or a strike; when one

[50] The theme of the novel, according to him, is 'the same as that of *The Forsyte Saga* [the English novelist John Galsworthy's 1922 novel]; that the principle and sentiment of ownership/property (haq-emilkiyat) can never establish a claim on a woman's love.' I have been unable to locate the original, which is quoted by literary critic Sulaiman Athar Javed (Rahi 2011, 43).

[51] This is one indication of his distance from the progressive school of writing. The comparison with *The Forsyte Saga* is instructive; Ikramullah (2006, 6) observes that 'the Period novel' was considered 'inferior to other types as its object is to show only one section of society at a certain period and its 'characters' are true only inasmuch as they are typical of the time.'

[52] Askari 1993. See Farooqui 2012 for a literary biography of Askari.

> wants to show how… the collective (jama‘at) came to possess a particular state of mind (khāṣ żahniyyat) one must fall back on individual types (numāinda afrād), and that brings us back to the question of what makes a social novel ‘social’. (71)

This quasi-Durkheimian problem of representing the social/collective informs Askari’s reading of *Aisi Bulandi*. Though Nur Jahan can be said to be the heroine of the novel, Askari points out, it is not *about* her but about the society she is part of. Then he goes further in his analysis: Nur Jahan’s suffering and eventual divorce (khul‘a) from Sultan Husain is a symptom of the disintegration of a society where each character is isolated but also deeply connected. Nur Jahan’s trials appear almost Christ-like in this reading: she suffers *for* the moral laxity of other women, like her sister Sartaj. Askari observes also that class is central, but joins this to his moralistic reading of the plot: had this been a lower middle-class couple it would never have come to the point of divorce, but since they belong to this decadent Hyderabadi nobility, the ‘tragedy’ is inevitable[53] (75).

Another evidence of the fact that this is a social novel, according to Askari, is the striking primacy of the character of Surendar, who he suggestively equates with the figure of Tiresias, as he appears in T.S Eliot’s *The Wasteland*[54]. Surendar is a north Indian professional; his job at the

[53] On the whole, this reading tells us less about the novel than about Askari; Nur Jahan’s suffering opens the way for her self-consciousness as an individual, and she does end up in a happy marriage eventually. The novel itself is not sentimental about its characters, inviting—most of the time— more amusement than outrage as an expression of the reader’s superior moral position. Nevertheless, there are points about Askari’s identification of the uniqueness of *Aisī Bulandī* that are insightful.

[54] Tiresias figures prominently in Greek tragic drama, of course, appearing in Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex* as well as in *Antigone*. As the paradoxical figure of ‘the blind seer’, who knows but is unable to act, he is a favorite of modernist poets like TS Eliot and Ezra Pound, who were avidly read by both Ahmad and Askari. Ahmad also cites *The Wasteland* and Verlaine’s poetry at different points in Surendar’s monologues; though Tiresias is not invoked in the text, at one point he refers to himself as ‘the Smyrna merchant’, yet another ‘outsider’—and unheroic—figure from the poem.

Delhi All-India Radio station pays him enough to spend summers at The Savoy with assorted royalty and aristocracy from the princely states, Anglo-Indian families and army officers who court young women on vacation. Surendar reflects on his 'middle class' outsider status through lengthy internal monologues that punctuate the narrative, now anguished, now sarcastic, but always somewhat self-deprecating. A character like this and his monologues 'are a new experience in Urdu literature' according to Askari, and whatever the strengths and weaknesses of the novel, it must be read in order to partake of its unquestionable novelty. Drawn to The Savoy and its elite crowd every summer, and even to Farkhundanagar, Surendar is torn between his acute awareness of their superficiality and his own desire to be part of their world:

> Farkhundanagar. Medieval arches and twentieth-century cubism. Cars and bullock-carts. Concrete roads and filthy side-streets. […] I believe…
> …That the centuries are not dead. They are alive. Alive to keep dying, and yet not completely die (sic). Alive for Genghis Khan, and for Hitler and for Churchill and for Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and for Sir Feroze Khan Noon. I believe, I believe, I believe… I believe in the great religions of the world, which preach peace and tolerance, and whose followers preach mutual bloodshed…I believe in Hegel's philosophy of history. I believe in Nietzsche, and the Superman and in syphilis which inspired the concept of the Superman. (96)

'I believe' is the translation of 'main īmān lātā hūn', locution used only in the context of religious faith. Surendar's interior monologues constitute another level of metacommentary in the novel, echoing and underscoring the narrator's concern precisely with the qualities of time and space in a place like Hyderabad, at once at the center of a world and at its peripheries, cultivated and intolerably oppressive. For Surendar this is the universal condition of humanity, where 'iman' becomes meaningless, ridden by the 'heights and depths' of history, both of which demand allegiance. This nihilistic world-view is characteristic, of course, of mid-twentieth century modernism, especially its more existentialist variants. Mention of politicians like Patel

and Noon with Genghis Khan, Hitler and Churchill also point to the immediate Indian context (Surendar, it must be remembered, lives in Delhi)—the unprecedented, horrific violence of Partition in Punjab.[55] In the face of these events, one must 'believe' in everything and nothing; the possibilities of action to thought, however, are thereby also foreclosed. Thus, Surendar's only activities are drinking, playing cards, brooding, observing people and casual conversation that bears the stamp of his 'up-to-date' opinions: 'I am proud of my class, the middle class. We design the buildings in which your Maharajahs live…Political theory has all come from the middle classes, from Machiavelli to Marx, and from Plato's *Republic* to Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. (86- 87).

Unheroic as he is, Surendar gets the last word in a novel that opened with the vision of Kishanpalli's hills under the modernizing gaze of Ahdi Husnkar Jung. The novel begins by invoking the poet Nazir Akbarabadi's (1735-1830) well-known lines about death; it also ends with Surendar invoking them while mourning his friend Sultan Husain.[56] This is part of yet another drunken internal monologue, delivered after seventeen pegs of whisky:

> I, Surendar, shall forget you, Sultan Husain. I shall forget the merchant bankers and the interstellar spaces. I promise I shall forget all which is not flesh, fur and faeces, I shall now talk of other things. Such as twenty years wasted, the years between the wars. But now the inter-war years have gone the way of inter-stellar spaces[57] and they say the English are anxious to quit India. And Gandhi and Jinnah are imploring them in chorus:

---

[55] Firoz Khan Noon (1893- 1970) was a Muslim League politician, a minister in Punjab, later minister of defense in the Governor General's Council, and also Prime minister of Pakistan. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (1875-1950) from the state of Gujarat, was Minister of Defense in the Indian government and known to be a conservative Congress 'hardliner' especially hostile to Muslim politics.

[56] 'Your wealth will lie abandoned there when Death the Trader goes his way.'['sab thāth paṛā rah jāyegā, jab lād chalēgā banjārā'] (12) *The Shore and the Wave* omits the second reference.

[57] The reference here is to the opening lines of 'East Coker', Part III of T.S Eliot's *Four Quartets*: 'They all go into the dark/The vacant interstellar spaces, the vacant into the vacant' (162), which in turn may have been influenced by Eliot's reading of the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* (Murray 1991).

‘Don’t go away,
You looked into my eyes and set my heart on fire,
Don’t go away.’[58]

Could Ahmad be suggesting that Gandhi and Jinnah have also, like the Farkhundanagar elite, only registered the first tide of westernization? And is the alternative then Surendar’s drunken reflexive and confused loneliness, keeping all the centuries alive at once? For the novelist, perhaps.

The dense intertextuality of Surendar’s monologues is definitely a medium for Ahmad’s exhibition of his own erudition and literary-philosophical allegiances, but it also allows him to introduce a self-deprecatory note into the novel’s ‘critique of life’.[59] If this character is indeed to be read as Ahmad’s alter ego[60] then it incarnates the novelist’s insider-outsider status, and more importantly, endows the unheroic with the distinction of self-reflexivity. But it is telling that this character is a middle-class drunk from north India, and the novel ends not in the heights or depths of Farkhundanagar but in the heights and depths of Mussoorie, in British India on the eve of Partition.

[58] Translation of the first lines of a very popular Hindi film song, from the 1944 hit *Ratan* (‘akhiyāñ milā kē, jiyā bharmā kē, chalē nahīñ jānā’).

[59] Aziz Ahmad presents the following view of his practice in parenthesis towards the end of the novel: ‘About myself, I only want to say that I understand realism (haqīqat nigāri) to be like *photography*. It may happen that the lens is dusty, or the *film* bad, the light inadequate, or my own perception and understanding deficient, but I have always critiqued life (zindagi kī tanqīd) from within the representation (‘akkāsi) of life. I am not terribly fond of the distinction between the real (aṣli) and the true (haqīqi).’ (211-212) There is a certain kinship to the Progressive espousal of socialist realism here, though according to Aziz Ahmad literature always stands in close relation to reality, though in different modes and at different ‘levels’ of reality (‘Haqīqat-nigari kya hai?’ in Ahmad 1945).

[60] Ahmad does this often; in his next and last novel *Shabnam* (1950) he inserts himself into the narrative as Professor Ejaz Hussain (a friend of the hero Nawazish Ali Khan), a professor of English at Osmania University notorious for his ‘obscene’ writing.

Not everyone was a fan of Aziz Ahmad's photographic school of realism. For instance, Qurratulain Hyder, possibly the best-known Urdu novelist of the twentieth century, reports taking him to task:

> People often complained to Aziz Ahmad about his tendency to disguise scandal as fiction. I said to him, 'while it's not essential that a novel or short story be imaginary (*takhayulli*)— reality always has a part to play—but if you write about real events simply with a change of names, that's scandal-mongering, not literature. And targeting people who consider you a friend! *One should draw a line somewhere*.' [English in the original] He responded, 'Bibi, you cannot imagine how degenerate (fāsid) Hyderabadi society was.' (This is exactly what Wajida Tabassum[61] says now. Man, this Hyderabad must really have been something— a veritable Pompeii, or something out of *La Dolce Vita*.)

Hyder's incisive comparison to European narratives of the grand emptiness of 'society'—Ahmad uses 'society' in the sense of 'high society' here—is appropriate here, even though tongue-incheek, as if pointing to Ahmad and Tabassum's secret desire to posit an *ancien regime* in order to equate their work with the classical European critique of feudal society. The novel and short story were genres of everyday life, and the conflict between the old and new— of inhabiting spaces, public and domestic; relationships, sensibilities about the past. The influence of European literature was ubiquitous, as we have seen; in the writings of people like Aziz Ahmad and his fellow traveler Hasan Askari English, French and German writers were eagerly discussed and their poetics incorporated into Urdu literary and critical writing. The past 'degeneracy' of Hyderabadi elite becomes, for Hyder as a reader and fellow writer, a source of

[61] Wajida Tabassum (1935- 2011), referred to above, was a major Urdu novelist and short-story writer from Amravati, in Berar (British-administered territory but nominally under the sovereignty of the Nizam; today the Vidarbha region of Maharashtra state.) Her family migrated to Hyderabad after August 1947. From her impressions of life in the city she derived the main subject of her fiction—the lives of women in Hyderabad's aristocratic mansions (devdi) immediately before and after Police Action. Tabassum, a graduate of Osmania University, was at one time a bestselling writer; her stories appeared in Urdu digests and were extremely popular. Her most famous story, also typical of her work, is 'Utran/Castoffs' (1975/1993). Much translated and anthologized, it was the basis of the script of Mira Nair's film *Kama sutra* (1996).

mock wonderment, a parody of the nostalgia that these repelled-but-fascinated accounts of the state often invoke.

Writing towards the end of the reign of the seventh Nizam of Hyderabad and the last to rule the state[62], Aziz Ahmad captured the lives of the city elite through his reign. Written less than two decades before, Hashim Amir Ali's critique of the ruling dispensation of Hyderabad shares many points of similarity with the novelist's. They share something in their silence as well; while Amir Ali mentions the religious difference as well as the emergent categories of majority and minority split along religious lines, Ahmad makes no mention of these. For him class, and the difference between the powerful and the powerless takes precedence over religious difference, an astonishing feat in the 1940s. However, the narrative standpoint from which it is written conveys a sense of the times. The political critiques and movements against this ruling elite are incorporated into Ahmad's narrative voice— in the withering sarcasm of *Aisi Bulandi* one may witness the owl of Minerva begin to take flight.

IV

Hashim Amir Ali and Aziz Ahmad might exemplify for us two different approaches to the history of Hyderabad, current at the times they were written. In political terms these approaches would characterize, on the one hand nearly every liberal nationalist formation (Indian and Hyderabadi) and on the other, the Communist assault on the regime. By the early 1940s every political group was critical of the 'jagirdari nizam' or landlord regime, seen to be the socio-economic foundation of the state of Hyderabad— including the Ittehad, the Muslim party which

[62] His grandson Mir Barkat Ali Khan, Mukarram Jah was ceremonially crowned in 1967 after his grandfather's death, which technically makes him 'the last Nizam', the title of journalist John Zubrzycki's account of his disastrous journey from prince to Australian sheep-farmer (2006). Not to be confused with Bawa 1992, where his grandfather is referred to as the last Nizam.
.

counted jagirdars among its founders and members. The terms of their opposition are explored in the following chapter, but here it would be appropriate to conclude with a word about the future/present of the trajectories followed by our two authors.

As said before, the sensibilities that made Amir Ali a good Hyderabadi nationalist served to make him a good Indian nationalist. His enthusiasm about the efficacy of planning in proper nation-building, the social scientific method as a necessary tool of progress, and ardent desire to be part of a new future in the spirit of making the lives of the 'masses' better (Razvi 1985,16), were all quite in keeping with the early Nehruvian moment. As was his social position—the enlightened aristocrat—as well as the vision of the past on which he built his prognosis of the future. Hashim Amir Ali went on to be part of Rabindranath Tagore's rural-reconstruction project at Sriniketan during his distinguished career both in Hyderabad and in India after 1948[63], counting P.C Mahalanobis of the Indian Statistical Institute among his friends.[64] When, in 1944, he defined a Hyderabadi as one who 'is a product of Hindu-Muslim culture, not uninfluenced by European and American ideas' (Amir Ali 1947: 13) he could be speaking of the liberal Congress nationalist ideal, then and now.

Aziz Ahmad, on the other hand, is still a maverick. In a recent attempt at restoring his rightful reputation as one of Urdu's foremost writers and critics, one finds him cast in the role of neglected Deccani victimized by the north Indian cabal of Urdu canon-makers (Rahi 2011: 11). This is poetic justice of sorts, since Ahmad steers very clear of the mulki/non-mulki divide in Hyderabad in his work. The other reason cited (9) for mainstream Urdu criticism's indifference

[63] After holding a research fellowship at Vishvabharati, Shantiniketan and serving as Secretary to Sir Akbar Hydari in the 1930s, Amir Ali was nominated to the Board of Vishvabharati by Nehru and represented India at the UN in his capacity as an expert on calendar reform.

[64] For Mahalanobis and the whole process of scientific planning associated with the ISI during the Nehru years, see Chatterjee 1993, 200-219. See also the biography by Ashok Rudra (1996).

to Ahmad's literary genius is his turning away from progressive themes to Islamic history on the subcontinent. This may well be the case. In contrast to Amir Ali's sensibility, Ahmad's was one of aesthetic singularity, acutely conscious of historical transformation but also wanting to transcend it through art. His successful career spanned—eventually—three continents. Like many a Hyderabadi 'expat' (Leonard 2007) he found himself first in Pakistan, then in London and finally in Toronto.

In his review of Krishan Chander's 1948 collection of stories titled *Hum Vahshī Haiñ* ('We are barbarians'), Ahmad took the writer to task for handing out neat prescriptions for communal harmony, 'much like those slogans of Hindu-Muslim amity that do little more than attest to one's sincerity. They can neither diagnose the problem nor propose a solution.' (Javed 2008, 275). In order to meet the demand made by the unprecedented violence of the 'civil war' in 1947, he argued, literature would have to rise above the usual, the customary and give up its various prescriptive formulae of 'balance' (tarāzu; the idea that blame needed to be apportioned equally between the two communities) and of instigation (sharārat; the idea that the British had instigated conflict between Hindus and Muslims). Instead, what was required was

> Hard, merciless, honest, detailed realist writing; real incidents from every village and every city— let Hindus and Sikhs write about their suffering at the hands of Muslims as experienced (jaisā unhōñ nē bhugatā hai). Stories of hell can only be written from the inside, and only stories like these can move (taṛpā saktī hai) the heart, not formulae…Such a literature would tell our future generations—and in translation, people everywhere— how barbaric (vahshī) we were. (279)

Just as Ahmad exposed the 'fasid' ruling class of Hyderabad from experience and observation, he prescribed such exposure of suffering as necessary to move the heart: anything less than a full,

collective, public admission of savagery was a feel-good formula.[65] The differences between Amir Ali and Ahmad can be seen quite starkly here, but both of them want to confront a problem and clear a space for that confrontation, to begin with the assumption that we know nothing about it.

Between them, we have two layered, temporally complex senses of the twentieth-century history of Hyderabad state, written from the vantage point of critical insiders. One could say they give us two senses of an ending, of a change in 'the nizam' or order of the realm, just as John Law's account of the new Nizam riding through his capital gives one the sense of the start of a future. The following chapter takes us to the 1930s that saw the Silver Jubilee celebrations of Mir Osman Ali Khan's reign, and later the founding of the Ittehad; a process that captures the gradual erosion of monarchical charisma, displaced by an emergent mass political affect that crystallized around a new lay leadership.

[65] Small wonder, then, that Aziz Ahmad found much to appreciate in Sadat Hasan Manto's stories of partition (op. cit. 280); though not detailed in the way Ahmad prescribes—as testimony— his stories are anti-formula and convey quite powerfully 'how barbaric we were'.

Chapter Two
The new rulers and ruled: mass politics and charismatic publics, 1938-1944

> It was Bahadur Khan's beautiful speeches (bayān) that removed the Western glasses worn by those *up-to-date* young men who had thought of the King of the Two Worlds [the Prophet] as an adviser (muṣleḥ), a *reformer,* a leader and *general,* so that they came to see the pure and shining face of the Prophet of Arabia (PBUH)… Listening to his speeches at [these] Milad meetings, I would suddenly find myself wishing that they would appoint him to teach the 'religion' classes (dīniyāt kā dars) in college and at the university...the same young men that considered these classes no more than a source of amusement (sāmān-etafrīḥ) in college, would find themselves listening to Bahadur Khan with their heart and soul (hama-tan gōsh hō jātē thē).

The writer of this biography writes[1] (titled *Hamārā Qāid*/ Our Leader) of Bahadur Khan— better known as Nawab Bahādur Yār Jang (1905-1944), legendary first president of the Itteḥād'ul Muslimīn. Ahmad Khan was a young student at Osmania University when he was inducted into the party's advisory council by the leader. His biography takes a hagiographic tone like every other biography of the nawab, which list includes the earliest, published during his lifetime (undated, but probably about 1941) and titled *Lisān-ul-'ummat* (literally 'the tongue' of the community)[2] to Hamidullah Khan's *Āftāb-e-Dakkan* ('The Sun of the Deccan', 1944), to

[1] Mohammad Ahmad Khan. *Hamārā Qāid* (Our Leader). Hyderabad: n.d (possibly 1945 or 1946). Preface by Muhammad Maslihuddin, Secretary of the Bahadur Yar Jang Academy, established soon after the leader's death in order to publish and disseminate books like these. Khan's biography was their first publication.

[2] 'He is often said to have been the best Urdu speaker [i.e orator] of his times', notes Benichou (92). 'Lisān', which comes from the Arabic, is also language, from which the Urdu word for Linguistics—Lisāniyāt—is derived. The distinction between 'millat' and "'ummat/ummah" is complex and context-specific, signifying a range of spatial co-ordinates, from a regional, national to worldwide group of shared religious affiliation. In the context of these titles I am inclined to gloss both as synonymous. The last thing to note here is that the title 'qaid-e-millat' is not exclusive to Bahadur Yar Jang; it appears to be somewhat generic at this time, as its use by

Naziruddin Ahmad's recent and definitive three-volume *Savāniḥ-e-Bahadur Yar Jang* ('Events in the Life of Bahadur Yar Jang')[3]. Of the profusion of titles conferred on Bahadur Khan during his life, the most popular and enduring has been 'qāid-e-millat' (Leader of the community). The opening quote from Khan's biography illustrates the socio-historical space within which his ascendancy as 'lisān-ul-ummat' and 'qāid-e-millat' became possible. It was very much the changing nature of Hyderabadi Muslim middle-class experience of the city and official, institutionalized Islam[4] that framed the popularity of Bahadur Khan. The nawab's charisma was housed in the reification of Islam as one religion among many (Masuzawa 2005), a process that manifested in Hyderabad in specific ways.

In the twentieth century, the field of education— we have seen in Chapter 1— was central to the modernizing efforts of Hyderabad state, and unsurprisingly became a major site for the definition and regulation of religion. Dīniyāt was introduced as a standardized subject on the newly-founded and much-heralded Osmania University's syllabus, though in the form of compulsory classes on 'religious studies' (akin to 'moral science' classes). The official reasoning was two-fold: not only was it 'the duty of every Muslim to be acquainted with religious knowledge', it was a means to counter 'by means of religious education the bad effects created in

---

Tamil and Malayali Muslims of the Indian Union Muslim League for their leader Muhammad Ismail sahib (1896- 1972) shows.

[3] Ahmad 2006-07; also used is Ghulam Muhammad's more concise *Hayāt-e-Bahadur Yar Jang* (The Life of Bahadur Yar Jang; 1974). A bibliographic essay focusing on these biographies and their writers' relationship to their subject would be a very revealing theoretical exercise in itself, but sadly one I cannot undertake here.

[4] Faisal Devji (2013, 205) has insightfully suggested that 'the religion named Islam' was a 'new kind of totality' produced in part by the logic of 'colonial secularism' and therefore also 'crucial to the conceptualization of Muslim politics in colonial India.' The career of Bahadur Yar Jang as head of the Ittehad and ally of Muslim League in Hyderabad state bears testimony to this transformation.

the thoughts of students who learn English.'[5] As our young biographer laments, the Diniyat classes at the university undermined these intentions, leading most students to treat them as a bit of free time. By the same logic, however, was also created a space of desire for the 'real' thing, true religious belonging that could animate this disinterestedness, and give meaning to the call of Islam echoed by people as different as the poet Iqbal and the Nizam of Hyderabad. In this discourse, it was anti-colonial politics—which could easily be Hyderabadi nationalist and pro-Nizam— that animated the aspiration to embody the 'message of the East', equated with Islam. This embodiment was more to do with cultivating a public persona and mastering the skills of rhetorical persuasion through public speaking—khitābat—than with individualized, ethical subjectivation.

This chapter shows how the rise of mass politics in the mid- to late 1930s in the state was predicated on the erosion of monarchical authority and of the prestige of the jagirdar class that was its main support. I argue that the shift between an older idiom of legitimation, based on the urban 'composite cultures' of rule in the capital, and a new idiom involving terms like citizenship, majorities and minorities was effected by the emergence of publics organized around charismatic figures like Bahadur Khan.[6] [6] Thus the worlds of Kishanpalli and 'the city', and the

[5] From the deliberations of the committee constituted in 1917 to decide on the curriculum of Osmania University, established by royal charter the following year. Hindu students could attend similar classes 'if the Hindus could frame a suitable course for it.' Quoted in Datla 2013: 53.

[6] My focus here is on Hyderabadi Muslims, but a similar argument can be made about Dalit politics, pre- and post-Ambedkarite, located in British-administered Secunderabad, where political activity crystallized around charismatic personalities like Bhagya Reddy Varma, Arigay Ramaswami, J.S Subbiah, B.S Venkat Rao and B. Shyamsundar. This proved to be both a strength and a major weakness for these movements. Gail Omvedt observes about the struggles for leadership through the 1930s: 'While there were ideological-political differences embodied in these disputes, the personal competition for leadership is striking. In all of this none of the Hyderabad leaders seemed to be in a position to organize any mass movement…when (the

rural 'base' and urban apex of the pyramid confronted each other and created a space for the mediation performed by charismatic politics.

An active Urdu and Telugu press, the proliferation of big and small reform-minded, literary and 'cultural' groups, and an increasingly diverse and restive student population at Osmania University were the major engines—and sites— for these new publics, involving new connections between the city and country, the rural elite and the urban aristocrat. As part of this shift— which was also one from a receding imperial to an emergent national framework—there was a realignment of the relationship between religious and political practices, resulting in the creation of a field where Hyderabad could be designated an 'Islamic state' (Islami mamlikat).[7] The bare bones of the historical progress of these agonistic forces have been described by Hashim Amir Ali and Aziz Ahmad in the last chapter; in the next chapter I will show how Bahadur Yar Jang, at the head of the Ittehad and his occasional ties to the Muslim League, re-organized the discourse of sovereignty in Hyderabad to locate it in the Muslim community rather than the House of Asaf Jah. To be sure, something analogous to this had already been proclaimed by the slogan of the Mulki movement, which based itself on the ideals of the 'Deccani synthesis': 'Long live the Nizam, the

[7] Other princely states where similar politics of legitimation were underway included Patiala, Travancore, Mysore, Rajkot and Kashmir among others. For details see Ramusack 2003 and the essays in Jeffrey 1978.

Royal Embodiment of Deccani Nationalism' (Leonard 2014: 68-69). It was most effectively appropriated, however, by Bahadur Yar Jang in declaring that Muslims of the Deccan 'regard the

---

Telugu-speaking Dalit leadership) went as Dalits to the rural areas in the 1940s they most often went to Marathwada and there had to speak the language of Ambedkarism; they had little organic connection of their own.' (Omvedt 1993, 125) Her primary textual source is P.R Venkatswamy's exhaustive two-volume personal account of Dalit politics in Hyderabad titled *Our Struggle for Emancipation* (1955). See also Charsley 2002 and Beverley 2015, 178- 179.

monarch (bādshāh) as the symbol (maẓhar) of their political and civilizational ascendancy (siyāsī aur tamaddunī iqtedār)'.[7]

As the opening quotation shows, Bahadur Yar Jang's was able to proclaim this audacious new creed because his considerable leadership abilities and personal qualities both highlighted and remedied a sense of an affective deficit in religion *and* politics, and knit them together in a way that the Nizam could not. But it is important to recognize that he operated in a specific sociohistorical field of possibility. Bahadur Yar Jang's charismatic appeal is often portrayed by his biographers as an all-encompassing domain of influence, but one only has to read between the lines in order for the lines of opposition that defined it to emerge. If the growing Congress nationalism and Hindu majoritarian politics were its defining 'enemies', the major internal force (we could say 'foe', continuing the Schmittian metaphor) among Hyderabadi Muslims was the growing influence of Communist politics. As our biographer Muhammad Ahmad Khan goes on to observe, one of the achievements of his idol was to 'break the magical hold (ṭilism) of Communism (ishtirākiyat)' on young people, by explicitly addressing himself to the 'economic viewpoint of Islam' during his last few appearances at Milad meetings. (19)

As noted above, if one had to point to a catalyzing space for all these currents of sociopolitical turbulence, one need look no further than Osmania University. I want to show how it became the locus of a new kind of sociality for Hyderabadi youth—it was a space where the urbane and irreverent manners of the capital collided with the resentments of upwardly mobile rural and small-town Hyderabad, (from where an increasing number of students came in hoping for government employment)[8]. As Hashim Amir Ali warned, the gap between the speakers of

[7] Speech at Mecca masjid, 1939 (Ahmad 1981, 36)
[8] Nizam College, the English-medium institution affiliated to Madras University, was also a gateway to government employment, and a much more popular one.

Urdu— as the language of the state— and languages like Telugu, Kannada and Marathi produced resentment rather more than pride in this Indian language university among its students.[9]

Moreover, government employment still favored English-medium graduates over mulki Osmanians (Leonard 2014, 67). But Osmania became important in a different way. These resentments turned into political solidarities and conflicts as life at the university produced new kinds of affiliation and networks that would mark a beginning for popular politics— in its hostels, classrooms, tea-shops, debating halls and drama stages, male and female students carved out new social lives and beings. Though family, neighborhoods and religious affiliation remained important, friendships, relations with teachers and other figures of authority brought with them a certain re-configuration of the public and private, breaking open—within the bounds of the university—the rigid hierarchies that governed social and political life in Hyderabad.

In order to highlight this aspect of university life, and more importantly, to illustrate the internally differentiated spectrum of political possibilities in Hyderabad, I focus on the career of the Communist poet Makhdūm Muhiuddīn (1907- 1969)[10], a sometime student of Osmania University whose circle of friends exemplified the kind of 'up-to-date' young men in Ahmed Khan's lament[11]. Makhdum's life and popularity contrasted with Bahadur Khan's in salient

[9] Every single memoir or autobiographical account of anti-Nizam political figures across the ideological spectrum and across regions—Communist, Socialist, Congress leaders or Arya Samaj members—mentions the 'suppression' of the 'people's languages' and therefore their 'cultural rights' as a key political grievance against the regime. Religious discrimination is the other major issue, discussed in Chapter 3.

[10] His full name, according to close friend and biographer Mirza Zafarul Hasan, is Syed Mohammad Makhdum Muhiuddin Huzri. There is some lack of clarity about the year of Makhdum's birth—the usual date given is 1908, but his 60th birthday was celebrated in a grand, three-day *jashn-e-Makhdum* ('a celebration of Makhdum') jalsa in 1966, so that would make it 1906. Some sources even say 1910; Makhdum himself says 1907 in an interview to *Saba* (Hasan 1978, 30)

[11] Zafarul Hasan tells of his own shortfall in attendance in the diniyat class during his B.A years; the moral of that story, however, is the independent spirit of the Vice Chancellor of Osmania,

ways: brought up in the poor household of his chachā (paternal uncle), a lower-level government employee, the poet grew to be a figure of friendliness rather than of majesty or awe. Formally joining in 1940, he remained fiercely loyal to the Communist Party, and happy to be counted among their leaders without claiming pre-eminence—though among the Urdu public he remained the foremost representative of the romance[12] and promise of Communism. His constituency was varied, but the city lay at the heart of it[13]: first as a student and then as an active party worker his circle included regime loyalists and CPI comrades, writers and politicians across the divisions of class, language and religion. While the CPI would not emerge into the political limelight until well after Bahadur Yar Jang's demise, Makhdum's early career helps us locate the attractions of radical left politics in the same milieu and the same leveling space of the city as the affective pulls of its arch enemy, the Ittehad. Finally—looking ahead to Part II— the juxtaposition of these contrasting figures of identification, is a significant node in the genealogy of contemporary Muslim publics in Hyderabad city, the core of the MIM's constituency.

Abdul Rahman Khan, who berates his erring student for daring to have his absence excused through a recommendation for leniency from Nawab Kazim Yar Jang: 'You have failed with the nawab's influence; now try for a farmān [royal decree] from 'Ala Hazrat and watch what I do. Get out!' (1971, 77) Hasan does not provide details of the consequences of this shortfall.

[12] Much critical ink has been spent on the subject of Makhdum's poet-revolutionary persona: would he have been a better poet if he had not also been a full-time Communist activist? While I am not equipped to comment on the literary quality of his poetic output, I think it is precisely the idea that he held both commitments close that makes Makhdum charismatic, in that he is the quintessential figure of the Romantic: the writer who 'acts' and the revolutionary aesthete.

[13] As one literary critic noted, 'no Urdu poet has enjoyed the kind of popularity that Makhdum had with his public (apnī 'awām), especially the love that the people of Hyderabad showered on him. This is not because of his poetry, because on that count other poets and Faiz could rightfully claim to be his equals.' (Rahman 1988, 58) My necessarily partial treatment here, focusing on his life as a public figure rather than his poetry, is a bit of a disservice to the poet. Others far more competent than I have undertaken this work, however, and I refer to these studies here.

There are three sections in this chapter, each to do with the three major fields of political activity to emerge in Hyderabad state. The first is the field of government, and in the first short section I provide an overview of the official—issuing from the Nizam and his Council— political vocabulary in Hyderabad state, which grounded the rise of Bahadur Yar Jang at the head of the Ittehad, even as the Nizam fought the erosion of the zone of monarchic authority. The next section looks at the beginnings of his public career and the factors at the core of his charismatic appeal, that is, his success in speaking to and speaking for Hyderabadi Muslims as Muslims. 'Speaking', as we shall also see, is crucial here—the public mobilized by Bahadur Khan was one of listeners as well as readers tuned to certain rhetorical styles, through public meetings (jalsa) of various types and newspapers. In the final section, we come to Makhdum's early life and career in the state, and the urban experience at the core of his popularity with the Hyderabadi public

In this chapter, I have found it useful to analytically isolate the city in order to make my argument, though it will be obvious that historically this was precisely the time that the 'jazīrā' of Hyderabad state ('the island' in the ocean of Hindustan, as Bahadur Yar Jang often called it) was being drawn more and more into the currents of subcontinental politics. In conclusion, I will look forward to the next chapter, which focuses on the history of the Ittehad'ul Muslimin from its foundation in 1928 to emergence on the *national* scene in 1947, just as a major peasant insurgency led by the Communist Party in two districts of Telangana was gathering steam. Bahadur Yar Jang died in 1944, but the political discourse he was instrumental in articulating would have a long life in Hyderabad.

I

New wine, Old bottles: political power in Hyderabad

The gradual move towards mass politics in the state can be traced to the mobilization for the Khilafat-Non-cooperation movement in British India (1920-1922/24)[14]. During the First World War, the newly crowned seventh Nizam appealed to his co-religionists to support the British against the Ottoman empire, setting himself up to 'take over the leadership of Indian Muslims' at the urging and active encouragement of the British (Pernau 97-98). Hyderabad had never been an 'Islamic state'—rather, the occasion had never arisen to assert or refute such a claim— but increasingly tangled in the imperial politics of religion and representation the Nizam of Hyderabad brought himself perilously close to identifying Islam with the state in order to buttress his claims to sovereignty. It was his loyalty that earned him the twin titles of 'Faithful Ally of the British Government' and 'His Exalted Highness' at the end of the war, but little else (Pernau 101; Yazdani 102-104).[15]

The basis and idiom of monarchical authority was shifting rapidly: as we have seen in the first chapter, Mahbub Ali Pasha (as the sixth Nizam was popularly known) became the archetype of the good ruler, famously generous and beloved of his subjects (Lynton and Rajan 1974; Raj 1987). His son would have to take a wholly different road in a different world, that is, between the Scylla of bureaucratization and the Charybdis of popular movements for devolution of power. In any case, unlike his father the seventh Nizam was notoriously short on charisma, having to

[14] The Khilafat movement officially ended only in 1924 with the abolition of the caliphate by republican Turkey. For a history of the movement see Minault 1982; for political activities in Hyderabad see Vaidya 1946, 1-2.

[15] This is not to say that titles were meaningless; on the contrary, in the universe of British and Indian royalty they meant a great deal. Therefore to be entitled to a 'His Exalted Highness' while other princes were merely 'His Highness' was quite the honor for the Nizam.

specialize in intrigue instead.[16] For example, the distribution of power between the Nizam, his Minister and the British Resident—so rich with possibilities of intrigue, as Aziz Ahmad showed us— was modified somewhat with the 1919 inauguration of an Executive Council, empowered to pass laws on certain subjects (Khan 1935; Sherwani 1940). However, the Nizam's approach to it was as a device to reduce the power of the Minister in the administration (Pernau 120), while the British hoped the field would widen for the intervention of the Resident. Thus, at the level of the state and the intentions of the major protagonists, politics was very much a game of supremacy, the field more or less familiar and defined. These changes connected very differently, however, with other types of political activity that had simultaneously begun to appear, which would change the field and therefore the ways in which the Nizam's status as 'leader and spokesman of Mahomedan India' would signify (Pernau 98).

Hindu reform organizations and such bodies as the Hyderabad Educational Conference (1914), the Andhra Jana Sangham (1921) and even a Hyderabad Political Conference (1923) had been functioning in some capacity since early in the rule of Osman Ali Khan (Ramesan 1966, Pernau 2000, Mantena 2013). Others like the Society of Union and Progress (1926) were formed in London by Hyderabadi students, which in Hyderabad city became the Nizam's Subjects' or Mulki League (1935). The importance of these organizations lay not in their aims or any great success they had in achieving them, but 'in the building of a network of personal contacts extending beyond the traditional social connections' that until then had been the foundation of Hyderabadi society (Pernau 232). These were organizations based in the capital city; they were

[16] According to a 'court story' reported by Zafarul Hasan (1978, 65), the Nizam asked Sarojini Naidu (Congress leader and English poetess known as 'the Nightingale of India' or bulbul-e-Hind), who had written poems in praise of his father as a young and loyal Hyderabad subject, what she thought the difference between them was. 'Allah blessed the late Highness with a heart and you with a head', Mrs. Naidu is supposed to have responded to the delight of the Nizam.

concerned with issues like social reform and the spread of literacy and education. The Mulki League consisted of city-based Deccani nationalists from the aristocratic and professional classes—there were lawyers and bureaucrats, recently returned from London among them— and much concerned with channeling the demand for 'responsible government' under the rule of the dynasty in favor of mulki Hyderabadis and against the domination of non-Mulkis (Leonard 2014, 70)

In the year 1936-37, the Silver Jubilee of Mir Osman Ali Khan's accession to the throne of Hyderabad was celebrated. Declarations of loyalty and panegyrics to his modern sensibilities as a ruler marked the occasion (Pernau 179). The capital city officially expanded to include the erstwhile British-administered region north of the river (Sultan Bazaar, known before as Residency bazaar) and civilian parts of Secunderabad, the cantonment area, not to mention an entirely new suburb of the capital to be settled (Jubilee Hills) in honor of the occasion. On March 10,1936, the Right Honorable Sir Akbar Hydari, Finance Member of the Nizam's Executive Council and soon to be its President, made a speech at the Indian States Broadcasting Station in New Delhi. Titled 'Modern Hyderabad', in the speech Sir Akbar—regarded as the Hyderabad politician with 'the keenest perceptions' and 'most inclined to think in larger contexts'[17]—described the unique architecture of Hyderabad's political modernity in the following terms:

> [H]armony between the old and the new order...as a carefully planned and well-considered measure of State policy, is visible in the administration itself. Thus, the unifying power of the throne, symbolic of the indivisible, all-pervading sovereignty of the State and its Ruling Dynasty, together with the ceremonials of Court that take one

[17] Pernau 207. Hydari (1869- 1941) was a non-mulki from Bombay who had risen through the ranks since 1905, when he was employed by the state as an accountant. As a politician, he was able to maintain good relations with the British establishment as much as the Congress and Muslim League, but was distrusted by Hyderabadi nobility for reasons ranging from his nonmulki status, 'his business background…his unusual will to work, his untiring energy and his great personal ambition.' (107)

> back to the dignity of Moghul days, have been reverently preserved while at the same time the administrative machinery has been completely overhauled.
> ...A Legislative Council also exists for making and revising laws and consists both of official and non-official members. No theory of mandate controls the votes of official members who are thus free to vote as they wish on legislation that comes for discussion in this Council.[18]

All three elements of Hyderabad's ruling philosophy of government are pithily articulated in this short extract: the location of sovereignty in the ruling dynasty and 'unifying power of the throne'; the administration as the locus of change, and finally, the absence of accountability to a voting citizenry—even in the most restricted fashion, as in British India— that is to say, the freedom from the 'theory of mandate' of the members of the Legislative Council. The state was proud of 'reverently' preserving its traditional political structure even as it advertised administrative modernization—a process described by Hashim Amir Ali in detail.

A year later the Princess Durru Shehvar would make a bolder statement to a room full of the city's most prominent women, at the 11th Session of the Hyderabad State Women's Conference:

> The trend of modern life has shifted its focus from tradition to reasoned action (ravāyāt sē istidlāli 'umūr kī taraf), from vague and pious impulse to organized endeavour (mauhūm o sādāh khyālāt sē munazzam jadd-o-jahd kī jānib); and our awakening marks the point of transition from a position of subordination to a desire for independence (ḥālat-e-mātahatī ko tamannā-e-āzādi sē badal diyā hai).
> Indian women all over are anxious to offer convincing tokens of their readiness and capacity to make their contribution towards national life; we in Hyderabad are no less eager to...prove by our actions not merely by our intentions that we are able to fulfil the duties of complete citizenship (shahriyat ke tamām farāiz adā kar saktē hain), and are therefore entitled to demand it.[19]

[18] IOR Mss. Eur. D798/38-41 (Tasker papers)
[19] IOR Mss. Eur. D798/38-41. The English is taken from the original publication—though this is not specified, it is likely that the speech was delivered in English and later translated into Urdu for the bilingual official souvenir.

The Princess's discourse of progress may seem diametrically opposed to Sir Akbar's emphasis on harmony between old and new, incorporating as it does tropes of 'awakening', the 'desire for independence' and of citizenship. But also noticeable is the connection established with 'Indian women' and the emergent idea of a 'national life'—and the subtle but definitive accent on the 'duties' of citizenship as the basis of entitlement, very much in tune with the Indian nationalist ideal (Chatterjee 1994, 116- 134).

I cite it here in order to show that the idiom of independence and citizenship had become part of the vocabulary in Hyderabad, even in the absence of political institutions to match. It was allied instead to a vaguely conceived, but nevertheless powerful, trope of modernity, that is to say, no radical change in social relations was proposed or implied. This speech, for example, was delivered to the elite women of the capital at their annual meeting, in part to urge them to direct their charitable endeavors towards poor working women in the state. For them the opposition between and move from 'vague and pious impulse to organized action', and from unreasoned 'tradition to reasoned action', which would lead women to the promised land of 'complete citizenship' was real and substantive even though without a material basis in the society itself. It was simply the discourse of the time, and the Turkish princess—whose younger sister the Princess Niloufer, was a great admirer of Mustafa Kemal Pasha of Turkey—would have been heard by similarly educated and cultivated women in the audience. In a state where political meetings and activity were proscribed, such 'demands' could be articulated at a 'cultural' meeting by a member of the royal household. The monarchical order was secure enough—as Hydari's speech shows— to allow for such subversive-sounding discourse.

This is why it is not surprising that though Bahadur Yar Jang and Makhdum represented extreme ends of a spectrum of Muslim political affiliation in Hyderabad, the center of that

spectrum were loyalist Congress politicians like Sarojini Naidu (1879- 1949). Mulki social ties allowed someone like Mrs. Naidu to make fiery speeches about Home Rule from a Congress platform, position herself as a patron to Bahadur Yar Jang and claim him as 'a son'—a claim gracefully acknowledged and respected by the nawab— and to preside over the formation of the Progressive Writers Association in Hyderabad, and host their early meetings (Hasan 1994, 81-82). These were not yet contradictions turned into conflict, but they rested on the existence of an elite urban culture of patronage and respect that would succumb to the leveling demands of democracy.

The discourse of modernity and tradition, whether one conceived of it as an opposition to be overcome by 'harmony' or progress from one to the other, opened up spaces for all manner of action, from royalty to commoner. But these were of qualitatively different types. Away from the rarefied sphere of official broadcasts and genteel charitable gatherings, however, a wholly different kind of alchemy between tradition, modernity and publicness was taking shape, catalyzed by the growth of a space like the Osmania University and making visible auras of the sort conferred on Bahadur Yar Jang.

II

The magnetism of Bahadur Khan

Bahadur Khan, implacable opponent of Akbar Hydari and loyal subject of the Nizam, was just the sort of liminal figure who could mediate between the world of the Osmania University student and the old aristocracy loyal to the monarchy —he was a jagirdar but not of the highest strata (Pernau 62; Khan n.d, 9), belonging to one of the smaller Muslim sects (Mahdavi Pathan,

of Afghan ancestry)[20]; he was educated at home, and at Hyderabad's seats of 'Oriental learning' (Madrasa-e-Aliya and Dar-ul-Ulum) but was an indifferent student, and did not get beyond high school owing to his family's circumstances. In other words, a motivated and cultivated man of independent means, very much part of the ruling class, but without an interest in or prospects of joining the bureaucracy. Furthermore, as a public person one of Bahadur Khan's qualities appears to be that he was a master of the small-scale, face-to-face meeting as well as the large, fifty-thousand capacity audience. Thus, he was known as someone skilled in tafsīr (explication of Quranic verse)—he held daily sessions at his neighborhood mosque after morning prayers whenever he could (Khan and Farooqui 1987, 259; Ahmad 2007, 46- 64), as well as an orator of great distinction—this combination of qualities is captured by titles by which he had begun to be known in his lifetime.

An early indicator of the kind of mediation he would carry out appears in a childhood story, about teaching himself the standard Urdu spoken in Lucknow as opposed to his father's Hyderabadi idiom— from a regular reading of the novels of Abdul Halim Sharar[21]. He felt the need to learn it, because listening to his father's frequent north Indian guests speak the standard, increased 'my sense of the defects of my own tongue (apnī zubān kē nuqāiṣ)' (Ahmad 2006, 57). Towards the end of his short life Bahadur Khan would be a star speaker for the Muslim League,

[20] Followers of Syed Muhammad of Jaunpur (in eastern Uttar Pradesh today; 1443- 1505), who claimed to be the promised Messiah or *mahdi* in fifteenth-century Mughal India (Roosa 1998, 452). Hyderabad has a large population of Mahdavi Pathans, especially concentrated in the neighborhood of Chanchalguda (see Chapter 5). For commentary on the persecution of Mahdavis and Ahmadis in Pakistan and India, see Naim 1999.

[21] Sharar (1860-1926) was one of Urdu's most prolific and popular early novelists and prosewriters; his specialty was the historical novel. He spent some time in the Hyderabad government's employ, and his *History of Islam* was taught at the university (Datla 2013, 84-95). See Ikramullah 2006, 66-89 and Naim 2012 for discussions of Sharar's craft; see Perkins 2013 and Perkins 2011 for a detailed historical treatment of his place in the formation of an Urdu literary public.

making speeches all over north India from its platform to persuade audiences of the Islamic ideal of Pakistan.[22] The mediation I referred to above manifested in Bahadur Khan becoming all things to all Muslims, as it were, based on what appeared to be his unique personal virtues. If his young disciples saw him as an agent of renewal of religious affect, for an older generation of Hyderabadi the new fields of charisma opened up by public activity themselves threatened to misrepresent Khan's uniqueness. For instance, Cambridge-educated Sir Nizamat Jang, sometime Member of the Executive Council and one of the leaders of the Mulki movement in the state, saw him as 'a soldier of God, though apparently at times he might have been mistaken by the thoughtless for a political demagogue and a platform orator in these days of perverted notions, was, in fact and at heart, an ardent and sincere lover of the peace and harmony prefigured in the Quranic ideal of good life (Ahmed 1945, 250). Added to this universal ideal, there appears the pride of 'mulki' belonging: 'Besides his uncommon worth, there is the no less memorable fact that he was an indigenous product (sic) and a pure Hyderabadi.' (251) The venerable Sir Nizamat Jang's tribute to late lamented younger colleague in the Mulki League, then, points us toward another set of mediations that the nawab was able to perform. The contrary pulls of Indian nationalism, Muslim nationalism exemplified in the ideal of Pakistan, and Deccani or Hyderabadi nationalism shaped the emergent secular public sphere—where 'religion' would be defined and understood in specific ways— of Hyderabad in particular directions that culminated in the rise and power of the Ittehadul Muslimin as a political force in the state. The charismatic career of Bahadur Khan, around which the party would crystallize, is the best available site to explore these.

[22] He is largely forgotten in histories of Pakistan, however—except accounts written by Hyderabadis.

When his father died suddenly in 1923, he left the eighteen-year-old at the head of a large family and an estate encumbered with huge debts, bringing his formal education to an abrupt end. In spite of this Bahadur Khan mastered the basics of Arabic literature, tafsīr, ḥadīṣ (traditions narrating the sayings of the Prophet) and fiqh (jurisprudence; Muhammad 1974, 20). His abilities as an orator were as much a product of keen interest and practice in the art of public speaking as of talent and disposition. He started out by making his name in religious circles by the late 1920s, when he was invited to speak in mosques during Ramadan as well as Milad (the Prophet's birth celebrations) meetings in the city (Siddiqui n.d, 30). Maulana Manazir Ahsan Gilani (1892-1956), sometime Head of Theology (Diniyat) at the Osmania University[23], recalled that early in the reign of Mir Osman Ali Khan, Hyderabad's most popular orator or 'khaṭīb' was 'Maulvi Abdul Qadir sahab', Sufi shaikh—and first Head of Theology at the university— who would preach on esoteric topics like the concept of 'wahdat al wujud'[24] at the mosque in Chowk nearly every Friday; this was the 'public's taste (mizāq)' in those days. He saw the big Milad meetings themselves as a historical step forward in the life of Muslims in the city.

> Hyderabad had its own tradition (niẓām) of reciting poetry to commemorate the Prophet's birth (maulūd-khwānī). In the fearsome stillness of the night when the whole world was asleep… from different neighborhoods of the city, the alleys of these neighborhoods, the corners of these alleys…loud, harsh noises (karakht aur sam'a kharāsh) could be heard—groups of people screaming, and of course one could only hear the screaming, nothing of what was being recited. […] The effect of political movements outside the state was being felt within, and what is now called the Khilafat jalsa[25] was the first occasion where

[23] For more on Gilani see Zaman 2012, 143- 175.
[24] The famous Sufi doctrine of the Unity of Being, ascribed to the 13th century philosopher Ibn 'Arabi. For historical overview of its early career in Islamic thought see Chittick 1994; see Green 2012 for a 'global history' of its travels with Sufism.
[25] Possibly a reference to the large meeting held on April 23, 1920 at Vivek Vardhini grounds, attended by 'ten to twelve thousand Moslems and Hindus' (Ramesan 1966, 40). Vivek Vardhini began as a Marathi school started in the British-administered Residency Bazaar area in 1901, and went on to grow into a 'complex Anglo-vernacular middle school' and college (Raj 1987, 244).

> the Muslims of the Deccan could openly express their suppressed emotions. (Muhammad 1974, 264)

These loud noises were also deemed unsuitable in other ways by the Government's Religious Affairs department (Sarrishta-e-'umūr-e-maẕhabi); according to one source, the milad-khwan 'would read poems and ghazals inappropriate for the occasion, or of very poor quality (pai-e-adab se girē huē)' and early in the reign of Mir Osman Ali Khan, tests were prescribed and specific conditions set for recitation at a Milad majlis (Idara 1978, 213). Similarly, until 1916 the celebration of saint's days celebrations—'urus—at dargahs would apparently feature a dance performance by a tawaif or dancing-girl (op. cit.; Khalidi and Aqil 1998, 38), and these were banned. Thus, the Religious Affairs department went out of its way to regulate Muslim religious practice from early on in the last Nizam's reign.

Thus, the 'well-organized, grand Milad majlis' that became the Hyderabad standard could be dated from the early 1920s effects of the Khilafat agitation. Gilani remembers seeing a stout young man at all these meetings, where he himself would be invited as a speaker, and treating him as he would a young school-going student (to his later regret) because he was ignorant of his 'family background' (Muhammad 1974, 265). He first began to take notice of the young student when invited by him to judge a speech competition, or taqrīrī muqābalā at his school, the famous Dar-ul-Ulum. Plainly superior to every other student, Bahadur Khan's performance made Gilani sit up and take notice that— as he put it in his evocative obituary of the young student twenty years later— 'the sun of oratory (khitābat) was rising (ṭulū') in the skies (maṭla') of the Deccan.' (ibid., 266)

Being established as a khaṭīb of distinction, the time came when it was impossible to hold a meeting in Hyderabad city without Bahadur Khan speaking (Siddiqui 31). Abul 'ala Maududi[26] heard the then 24-year-old speak at the Hyderabad Educational Conference in 1929 and 'felt I was in the presence of an exceptional speaker who was created for oratory (khitābat)', though his surprise at the young speaker's 'jagirdar' origins came from expectations quite the opposite of Maulana Gilani's: 'based on my acquaintance with that class, I did not expect that it could produce such a great orator, expressing such pure (pākīzah) thoughts and obviously knowledgeable.' (Ahmad 1988: 20-21)

So central did he become to Muslim public life and politics in Hyderabad city, that for an entire generation Bahadur Khan embodied a socio-historical force all on his own. Thus, the nawab's disciple and younger contemporary Muhammad Ahmad Khan, a student of Maulana Gilani at Osmania University—and writer of the opening quotation of this chapter—had a slightly different view of the evolution of Milad meetings:

> The meetings on milad-ul-nabi were big affairs even before qaid-e-millat came on the scene...but there was no ardor (kaif) in them. There were large religious gatherings—just like Christians celebrating Christ's birth— but they had no definite aim, or if they had it was basically to meet, greet and go your way...it was his alluring words (sukhan-edilnavāz) that turned Milad meetings into performances of community-building (tāmīr-emillat kā mu'ammil). (14)

Here then are two different 'pasts' of the Milad meetings, from the point of view of two different generations; the movement in both is from a deficient past practice to a better present, merely ten to fifteen years apart, and therefore helps us see the meeting—and what counts as religious—as a

[26] Founder and main ideologue of the Jama'at-e-Islami, the largest and most influential Islamist group in South Asia, who grew up in Aurangabad (the second city of Hyderabad state), studied briefly in the same school as Bahadur Khan in the capital and left Hyderabad for good in 1938, eventually settling in Pakistan. Although there were similarities in their approach to an Islamic politics, there were enough differences that he regarded Bahadur Yar Jang's positions as unclear and somewhat confused. See Ahmad Vol. III for details.

historical object. Whereas for Maulana Gilani, professor of Diniyat, group recitation of poetry was nothing but noise and the grand majlis was the platform for proper practices of speaking and listening, for his young student these later meetings were simply social occasions—until Bahadur Khan's oratory gave them proper meaning. The noise of recitation in the dark neighborhoods of the capital is entirely forgotten; the jalsa or majlis is the norm, differentiated according to its specific affective quality— not merely a social occasion of celebration, like Christmas, but a selfconscious performance of 'Muslimness', itself a new quality of being, to be recognized by its very difference from ordinary socializing. Thus, the expectations and desires centering on the public meeting place changed quickly in these years, and Bahadur Khan was both a major bearer and a beneficiary of these changes.

By 1929 'at the age of 24, he was involved in twelve different Islamic, educational and reform-minded organizations' including the recently formed Ittehad, the Anjuman-e-Tablīgh-eIslam, which he founded, the Anjuman-e-Mahdavia (Chanchalguda)[27], the Freemasons' Lodge,[28] the Majlis-e- Jāgīrdārān and the Hyderabad Educational Conference (Ahmad 132-33). In the same year, he was chosen to be one of two official representatives of the Jagirdar class on the Executive Council, and also credited with making a speech— at a public debate organized at a local notable's mansion— opposing the Sarda Bill[29] that effectively sank any chance of it becoming law in Hyderabad (Khan n.d, 23-24; Ahmad 2006, 150). These were the years when he trained in holding office as a representative, and participating in public meetings of an overtly

[27] A neighborhood in south-east Hyderabad, famously associated with Mahdavi Pathans. This Anjuman continues to exist, headquartered in Chanchalguda.

[28] For a history and discussion of the Hyderabad Freemasons' Lodge see Gribble 1910, Khalidi 2001 and Green 2014, 199.

[29] The Child Marriage Restraint Act, better known as the Sarda Act after the proposer of the bill Harbilas Sarda, passed in British India in 1929. Under the law the minimum age of marriage for girls was fixed at 14 and for boys at 18. For detailed discussions of the Act as a node of conflict for religious orthodoxy, nationalist and feminist politics, see Kumar 1993 and Sinha 2006.

political nature. The meeting about the Sarda Bill, for instance, was attended by Hindus and Muslims of the city; the audience numbered ten thousand, and a vote by a show of hands was taken at its conclusion. Only two votes were cast in favor. The speech emphasized the need to maintain the autonomy of the Hyderabad regime, which had always been solicitous of its subjects' emotional and religious sensibilities (jazbāti aur mazhabi ehsasat). In a letter to his friend Dr. Zore, Bahadur Khan specified that his opposition to the proposed law stemmed not from its content—he was opposed to child marriage— but its form, that is, as an instrument of intervention in 'our personal law and religion' (Ahmad ibid., 152). This was, unsurprisingly, in line with orthodox Hindu nationalist objections— the concept of religion as the domain of emotion, sentiment (as opposed to public reason) and, specifically, personal law, being common to the subject of a Muslim sovereign as well as of British India. However, it must also be noted that these points were argued and legitimated in a public meeting, in the format of a debate between opposed viewpoints. One might say it was the exact opposite, as an event, of the Princess Durru Shehvar's address: that was an exclusive meeting of women listening to a speech about citizenship and wanting to spread their charity among their less fortunate sisters; this a mass meeting where men were voting on what age was appropriate for girls to marry, and who should be able to judge. There the idiom was citizenship and modernity but the material basis the old order; here the idiom was defense of the old order but the basis an emergent public that would destroy the old order of legitimation.

These gradual shifts in authority are also captured by the story of Bahadur Khan's encounter with the Nizam. This is possibly the most famous story to do with his public personality; it was told to me by different people in Hyderabad as if they had been present or had heard from eyewitnesses, before I found it in Ahmad's biography as well as other written sources

(though there are more and less detailed versions).[30] The most detailed and dramatic version goes something like this. The year was 1930. 'Muhammad Bahadur Khan Jagirdar' had begun speaking at the huge Milad meeting organized every year at Victory Playground (in the Chaderghat area, very close to the British Residency), in the presence of several respected 'ulama, nobles and prominent personalities of the city, when the Nizam of Hyderabad walked in:

> 25-year-old Muhammad Bahadur Khan continued to speak. The Nizam took one look at him and knew he was Nasib Yar Jang's son. He continued his speech; a moment had not passed before the Nizam found himself as in thrall of the speech as the audience was. …and then this servant (ghulām) of the Prophet addressed himself to the Ruler thus, 'You enthroned, crowned slave of Muhammad 'Arabi (PBUH), listen and I will tell you how that master of the two worlds viewed the ethic of ruling (andāz-e-mulūkiyat)!' The crowd was mesmerized; tears gathered at the edges of the monarch's eyes. (Ahmad 2006, 43)

Next morning the young jagirdar was granted his title by the Nizam, to officially become 'Nawab Bahadur Yar Jang Bahadur'. But this story is not merely about the gain of a title; I think it has proved durable because it condenses effectively the stature of the speaker as well as the role he was to assume with respect to the ruling dispensation of Hyderabad during his short career. The drama of the moment comprises many elements, new and old—the trope of the monarch and the holy man who stands above and outside the aura of royal power; the monarch's gracious recognition of his status and acknowledgement of his spiritual stature combined with the man's youth, and implicitly, of the claim the young speaker was to advance in his subsequent career as a leader of Muslims: that the community bound by Islam, that is to say love of the Prophet (Devji 2013, 207) was the basis of the monarch's sovereignty. In other words, Bahadur Khan's address to the Nizam both recalled, or rather re-enacted a well-worn social trope as well as foreshadowed

[30] For a different version from Ahmad's, see Siddiqui n.d, 32

their future relationship. It also downplays the potential for conflict between the two, who emerge in this story not as rival centers of power, but as fellow travelers of the same ethical road.

Siting charisma

But the other important part of the story is of course the gaze under which the whole spectacle plays out: the audience at the Milad meeting, extending to the reader of the historical account. Ahmad's purple prose recreates the drama of the moment for his reader, as if s/he were an eyewitness. The presence of a Muslim public to appreciate the moment is crucial to its dramatic structure and affect. The experience of attending a Milad meeting and being receptive to Bahadur Khan's message was crucially sited in a public that was beginning to recognize the importance of oratory as a cultivated and cultivable skill. In fact, the ascendancy of Bahadur Yar Jang helped this recognition assume concrete form in the course of the next ten years, as the scope of politics outside of the realm of state grew. The charisma of Bahadur Khan was both a product of and a historically potent force that shaped the Hyderabadi Muslim public's receptivity to rhetorical persuasion.

One example of this can be found in two little booklets published by the Idārā-e-Adabiyāte-Urdu in 1940 and 1941, one titled *Fan-e-taqrīr* (The Art of Public Speaking) and the second *Khitābiyāt* (Oratory). Without going into a detailed comparison and analysis of these very interesting texts, I want to note the common motivation that underlies their publication: the need for good orators. And who better than Bahadur Yar Jang to introduce a guide to oratory? As he states in his foreword, *Khitābiyāt* fills a regrettable gap— the absence of a guide to public-speaking in Urdu, which is 'a skill essential for collective life (ijtem'āi zindagī kē liyē lāzmī fan)'; no doubt it is a gift of nature (qudrat ka 'atā) but it can be polished by following certain rules and through practice. Endorsing the young author's efforts, he ends on a more urgent note:

a community (qaum) that does not have able orators is voiceless (gūngī), and 'we have need of many, many good orators (bahut-sē acchē muqarrirīn)'.[31] No doubt his own career was a testament to these words and also inspired the writers/compilers of these booklets, a lot of whose material was taken from Victorian era English guides to public speaking suitably adapted to the Hyderabadi context. But with these words he also recorded the passing of the old social and political order and the requirements of the new, where solidarity was not given or self-evident but had to be actively cultivated, and where it was important for a qaum to have a voice. In theory, any young man could aspire to represent his qaum— birth did not count as much as talent and effort. It is significant that the author of *Khitābiyāt* is firstly, from Zaheerabad, a small town a little over 100 km west of Hyderabad in Medak district and secondly, an Osmania graduate. If his university affiliation and youth give him a certain authority in an age where political rhetoric was particularly addressing the youth as agents of change, the small-town roots demonstrate precisely the kind of leveling the new sociality organized around institutions like the university had wrought.

The relay between reading and listening— indeed the place accorded to reading in the context of this apparently face-to-face sociality— is significant. As noted in Chapter 1, by the first decades of the twentieth century the Urdu press in Hyderabad had moved beyond its origins in being organs of information about government measures and literary platforms, to become the medium through which a new thing called society and conduct appropriate to it could be discussed. According to Sibte Hasan, progressive writer and literary critic visiting from Lucknow and employed at *Payam* for the duration of his stay:

> Hyderabadis were crazy about reading books and newspapers (akhbār-bīnī aur kutb-bīnī kā junūn). The city had several bookstores, where you could get books and journals from

[31] Kamal 1941, 2

> Lahore, Delhi, Lucknow…basically, everywhere—and people bought and read them with great interest (shauq). There was a shop called Hyderabad Book Depot for English books […] I was amazed to see them sell the writings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and other Communist writers quite openly, without anyone objecting, though these books were banned in Hindustan at the time. (Hasan 1994, 63-64)

Already during the Khilafat Agitation in 1920, Abdul Rahman Rais, a young Osmanian and future editor of the newspaper *Waqt*, had been punished for defying the Nizam's firman banning public meetings (Razvi 13). By the 1930s newspapers as sites of the formation of 'public opinion' in languages such as Urdu and Telugu was fairly widespread in Hyderabad city, so that individual newspapers were identified with political positions: if the *Rahbar-e-Deccan* reported Ittehad news and was more or less the party's mouthpiece, *Ra'iyat* was the liberal, loyalist newspaper and *Payām* was identified with a progressive, left platform[32]; in Telugu the *Golkonda Patrika* was the liberal newspaper identified with the old guard of the Congress and loyalists of the regime.[33]

A clue to the unexpected political anxieties occasioned by the rise of this public appears in a series of diary entries by Theodore Tasker, Revenue Member on the Nizam's Executive Council. Excerpting his 400-page diary— kept between 1928 and 1942— for the archive, Tasker records the two major concerns of 'the Council' respecting the Nizam's behavior in the 1930s: his 'religious mania'[34] and his 'journalism'. Under the latter heading is recorded the upset caused

[32] The *Rahbar* was started in 1920 by Ahmad Muhiuddin; *Ra'iyat* in 1928 by M. Narsing Rao, and *Payām*, the youngest of these major newspapers, in 1935 by Qazi Abdul Ghaffar. Major progovernment papers were the *Nizam Gazette* (1927) and the *Subḥ-e-Deccan* (1928), both edited by graduates of Osmania University. This account of the Urdu press is taken from Ansari 1980; for English accounts, see Lal 1964 and Khan 1995.

[33] See Mantena 2014 for an overview of the Telugu public sphere in Hyderabad as compared to neighboring Madras Presidency.

[34] This is specifically to do with his 'continued and pronounced Shiah leanings, the Asafia dynasty being strictly Sunni'. A note is made of the 'nasty but outspoken article in "Sahifa" (local paper) against HEH and his bias in religious affairs. N. giving poems to preachers to

by Mir Osman Ali Khan's having 'developed a passion for writing articles, on all sorts of subjects, to the local newspapers. Apart from the loss of dignity and of respect for the Ruler, such irresponsible outpourings weakened the position of Council.' An entry dated August 1, 1937 reads 'Numerous objectionable articles by HEH in newspapers', until finally— in 1939 and clearly after much pressure— the Nizam 'promises to abstain from journalism'.[35] Tasker writes here as an English officer as well as member of the Council, so constituted as an internal check on the Nizam's powers. It is striking that the ruler himself is not worried by the possibilities of the erosion of royal aura by his participation in this newspaper-reading public. In fact, he is quite happy to use it as a medium to disseminate his views on 'all sorts of subjects', including to do with his own religious attachments; at the very least he appears to regard it as yet another efficacious channel of bolstering his position against his Executive Council.

Mir Osman Ali Khan did not feel the need to perform dignity or distance, because his 'royalty' inhered in his position, the dynasty and history of the House of Asaf Jah rooted in the state of Hyderabad; the submission and respect of subjects was internal to this structure, not an external legitimating factor that would require separate attention. For him, politics was still only an affair between state-actors, with new instruments such as the Urdu press available as avenues for communication with his subjects, the dissemination of his poetic talents or his piety, or indeed simply a way to assert his autonomy viz-a-viz the Council and the Paramount Power. It is the paramount power that posits the necessity of maintaining the aura of monarchical presence that serves as a guarantor of paramountcy. However, if *Sahifa* could attack the Nizam for his 'Shiah leanings', clearly his subjects *qua* public were not only reading and listening, but also

---

recite.' These were of concern because 'the Nizam's safety was at stake'; in 1939, the north Indian Majlis-e-Ahrar apparently wired warnings to 'N. against Shiah proclivities...'

[35] Tasker Papers, Mss Eur D798/6: notes on confidential diary.

responding to His Exalted Highness. By 1937, the Nizam's religious 'proclivities' could not be mere eccentricity or royal prerogative; the surprising thing is that everyone except the Nizam appeared to be aware of this.

Moreover, this trend was irreversible. Newspaper announcements can be seen to shape the Milad meetings to turn them into events of the sort that made Bahadur Yar Jang 'qaid-e-millat'. Since many of the speeches delivered by him have been collected and re-published by the indefatigable Naziruddin Ahmad from newspaper reports, we know, for instance, that in 1942 announcements were made in papers like the *Rahbar* for an upcoming series of speeches at Milad meetings to be held at various venues in the city. These were subsequently reported in the paper. The announcement informed readers that 'qaid-e-millat' would only make three speeches that year; at such-and-such times and places (Hussaini Alam, Moti masjid, and at Zamarrud Mahal Talkies), and that in light of the 'sensitive times' they would be 'extremely important' (bahut hī aham).[36]

The speeches themselves were delivered in serial order: the first constituted a broad introduction, the second and third elaborations of points made in the first. Each speech, however, also had a repetitive component, emphasizing the same two elements: in Islam (the text of the Quran and the exemplary lives of the Prophet and his companions), the interests (mafād) of the collective take precedence over the individual, and secondly, that 'bad times' are actually a gift from God, as opposed to times of peace and happiness. These are calamities ('aẕāb) sent by God, because they have resulted—the Iqbalian imagery is notable here— in 'the children of eagles

[36] These places are in the Old City and Abids neighborhood. Zamarrud Mahal Talkies—a cinema theater, as the name suggests— was a very popular venue for public meetings and mushaira or poetry-readings. These speeches were reproduced, with two other speeches, in a separate booklet in 1986, because—as the title page says— they 'were still very important in these sensitive times' (Al-Quadri 1986).

[shāhīnzādoñ] nesting…not in the heights of the Himalayas but in pretty gardens', so that 'today I watch the offspring of the conquerors of the Deccan shake with fear of a Japanese invasion' (Ahmad 1981, 13).

Thus, it turns out that 'sensitive times' allude to the ongoing threat of a Japanese invasion and evacuation (takhliya) to the country being considered as an option by the clearly affluent Hyderabadi Muslim audiences at these meetings. This, however, is not all— it is part of Bahadur Yar Jang's skill as an orator to stitch together the Ittehad's ideology with the specifics of every situation, making 'markaziyat' (to unite around a central point) into the answer to every possible problem. Stay in the city; it is your home and the place where you are safest, says he to his audience, referring unsubtly to the threat posed in the districts by 'those seditious (fitnā-jo), spiteful (kīnā-parwar), nasty (bad-sirisht) opportunists (mauqe' kē mutalāshī) who seek to profit from your fear' (ibid., 16). If you don't have the time to think through these things, he continues, 'for god's sake (khudā kē liyē) trust those whose life is dedicated to your well-being (falāḥ).' (17)

This is a later example of the kind of sociality enabled by and channeled through Urdu newspapers in the city; I will have occasion to take up an earlier set of similar, three-part speeches in the next chapter. The point here is not only that a new set of skills were required by this multi-sited, emergent sociality, but also that this process of persuasion had to be repeated and reinforced in a fairly regular fashion. This draws attention to the agonistic nature of the field within which Muslim politics operated at this time: external threats aside, the more imminent threat of a Hindu majority, of irreligiosity and what could be the same thing, the attractions of Communism, all defined the nature of the political field. The 'meet and greet' of the Milad meetings turned now into an occasion for participating in an experience of community, but by the

same token, it came to be in competition with other such immersive political commitments. The young men uniquely receptive to the miqnāṭīsī/magnetic personality of Bahadur Yar Jang were also uniquely vulnerable to the charms of left-wing politics, to which Islam came to be positioned as an alternative.

Islam or Communism?

In 1931, Bahadur Yar Jang returned from Haj and a trip around the 'Muslim world' (bilād-e-Islam); after addressing a series of meetings in Hyderabad on his return, he was invited to address one in Delhi about 1933. Tellingly titled 'where is Asia headed?', this talk cast his reflections on his travels in a civilizational frame: the conflict of 'Asia' with 'Europe'. In this familiar—from Iqbal, at least—schema, the boundaries of Asia stretched from Egypt to Russia; as the nawab described a continent-wide awakening during the period after the First World War:

> sleepy Asia stretched, the dying man opened his eyes [a reference to Turkey aka 'the sick man of Europe' a few lines before] …it was the same resounding cry of awakening (ghulghula-e-bēdārī) that issued from Zaghloul Pasha in Egypt, Amir Shakib Arslan in Syria, Ghāzī Mustafa Kemal Pasha in Turkey, Lenin in Russia and Reza Shah Pahlavi in Iran.

Clearly an expression of the Hegelian concept of the world historical personality, mediated by Iqbal's poetry of 'the East', the condition of possibility for grouping together of such massive political differences—as between Amir Shakib Arslan and Lenin, for instance— is the British empire.[37] The same can be said of the following warning about the materialism (Christianity) of Europe and the spiritualism (Islam) of Asia:

> From the beginning of Creation until this day, Asia has been distinguished by its spirituality (rūhāniyat) and religiosity (maẕhab-parastī). While the west benefited from

[37] For a brief history of the early collaboration between and influence of revolutionary Russia and Afghanistan under Amanullah Khan on rebellious Muslim subjects of British India, see Ansari 1986.

> some part of it in its earliest phase…modern Christianity did not leave it with any guidance for living in the world. The storm of atheism (lā-maẕhabiyat), which affects all religions alike, is influencing the best of communities (khair-ul-umam i.e Islam), and it has lost its way. (Khan and Farooqui 1987, 116-117)

In this speech, Bahadur Yar Jang sees Lenin as an 'Eastern' ally against the West, not, it appears as part of the storm of atheism released from the West, for example. In a strange way, he kept to this position even as the leader of the Ittehad, challenged by the popularity of Communism among his young constituency. He was able to do this by treating Islam and Communism on par with each other, as a set of principles demanding allegiance.

Muhammad Ahmad Khan gives us an example of the 'technique' the nawab used in order to win over his impressionable young audience. At a certain Milad meeting later in his life (probably 1943), he declared dramatically that 'if I wasn't a Muslim, I would be a Communist.' Part of the audience, Khan himself thought this kind of a statement would 'send all the young people enthusiastically in the direction of Karl Marx', and so he went to ask Bahadur Yar Jang about it the next day (Khan n.d, 19). In response, his leader explained that this was one of the stratagems (gur) of 'fan-e-khitābat':

> If you want to persuade your opponent to your viewpoint, a direct attack is not the best way…I said if—and this is a very big 'if'— I did not have the wealth of Islam, I may have found Communism attractive. This creates a space of empathy (hamdardī)…the young man stops and pays attention to me, he thinks about what I'm saying… He stops, and I strike (idhar wō rukā, udhar mainē apnā vār kar diyā). Now he is not injured (ghāyal), but docile (rām); not defeated (shikast-khurda) but obedient (muṭī') and tractable (munqād). (ibid., 20)

Now of course there is much of interest in this description— a theory of rhetoric and public persuasion, the relay between the religious and the political, if one were to conceive of this as an operation of hegemony, and of the entire scene of passing this wisdom on to a troubled disciple. But I think what may be the most significant point is the assumption, articulated without

comment, that one could choose between Karl Marx and the Prophet of Islam, and that it is a matter of seducing 'young people' from one to the other. Indeed, the military metaphors for the exercise of persuasion indicate the existence of a larger field of political maneuver and tactic within which it is to be understood. This is taken for granted by both Bahadur Yar Jang and his young disciple, who admires his leader's ingenuity—the whole point of the story is to demonstrate the extent of his ingenuity in thinking about his agnostic audience and reaching out to them. Perhaps this is because both Bahadur Yar Jang's Muslim and the would-be Communist were of equally recent vintage.

It is to the formation of this agnostic Hyderabadi youth that the poet Makhdum's life and work leads us. Makhdum is particularly well-placed for this comparison, being—his friend from the university and loving biographer Zafarul Hasan tells us— just the sort of Osmania student who absented himself from 'religious studies' classes along with his friends, or asked the professors—Maulana Gilani included—questions aimed at annoying them (Hasan 1978, 128). However, Hasan insists that this was not the act of rebellion that many of Makhdum's later disciples and biographers made it out to be: he did lose a year because of his lack of attendance in dīniyāt, being among the students who cut classes because the teachers were gentle ('narm-mizāj'; 128), but they had the bad luck of running into one particularly vengeful and ill-tempered professor, who reduced their attendance below the required 60% (ibid., 129). In his own separate description of Maulana Gilani's diniyat classes, Hasan remembers 'the religious (dīndār) sitting in class listening to him, and the irreligious (bē-dīn) standing outside making smoke-rings from cigarettes, but everybody had a lot of respect for the Maulana…he did not succeed in making many of us religious, because the times (zamānā) were changing, but he did save a lot of people from becoming irreligious' (Hasan 1971, 86).

III

The city survives, the symbol of love endures: Makhdum's Hyderabad[38]

In an autobiographical article written for the newspaper *Siasat* in 1957, Makhdum Muhiuddin reminisced about his early school-going years (about 1918-1919) in the Old City of Hyderabad. He remembered being among the poor children who would walk to and from the Dharamvant High School in the Yaqutpura neighborhood, looking for a chance to jump and hang precariously onto one of the horse-drawn carriages belonging to his better-off schoolmates. It was the duty, under these circumstances, of less fortunate children on the street to yell and warn the coachman, 'Boy behind your buggy (Baggī kē pīchhē chhōkrā)!' upon which he would flex his long whip in the direction of the culprit to get rid of him (Makhdum1980, 7). However, children like him were compensated by the sights and sounds of the city while walking the two-mile (3 km) distance between home and school (Gour 1970, 3) —the fresh, hot milk to be had in one corner, the colorful array of kites to be admired in a shop, even the pleasures of the only 'school lunch' he could afford—the smell of meat, kabab and liver being fried near the always crowded Yaqutpura Gate (Makhdum 1980, 8-10). This tactile experience of the sights, sounds and smells of street-life in the Old City was at the heart of Makhdum's life, personality and politics.

Neither particularly nostalgic nor bitter, the poet's reminiscences of his childhood paint a matter-of-fact, though sensuous, picture of non-aristocratic urban life in Hyderabad. Thrown together with these is his story of the beginnings of his political commitments. His uncle, Maulana Bashiruddin —a 'kind, home-loving and religious man'—taught him to hate the British and love his country (vatan sē muḥabbat)— from the context it appears that this meant India. Maulana Bashiruddin, though a government employee, was an ardent Khilafatist and Non-

[38] This sub-title is a rough translation of Makhdum's oft-quoted line from the poem 'Bhagmatī', referring to the founding myth of Hyderabad city ('shahr bāqi hai, muhabbat kā nishāñ bāqi hai)

Cooperator at the height of the movement; his commitments led him to wear khadi at the time of the Non-Cooperation movement (his young nephew found it too rough on the skin) and attend all the antiEnglish meetings (jalsa) held in Hyderabad. But—and this was a story Makhdum would tell many times— it was also from his uncle that he first heard of Lenin and the October revolution:

> …One night at the dastarkhwān[39] for dinner, chachā gave all the women and children of the house news of the Bolshevik Revolution. He told us, with great happiness and excitement, that the Bolsheviks had abolished the monarchy (bādshāhat) in Russia. There was equality (masāwāt); there were no rich and poor any more, everyone was equal, and all ate together from the same dastarkhwān. Obviously, I didn't understand anything about the importance of the revolution, but a strange picture was planted in my imagination— what a huge dastarkhwān this must be that everyone could eat from it???' (6)

The world-historical tremors of the Russian revolution made their way to the family dinner of a pious Muslim household in the Old City of Hyderabad, through the prevailing anti-colonial atmosphere and through the thriving Urdu newspaper scene (though Makhdum does not spell this out, preferring to tell the story as if it were a foreshadowing, a sign of things to come). What emerges in Makhdum's portrait of his pious uncle is the possibility of holding different commitments—which would gradually become rival choices for his own generation—together, as we also saw in Bahadur Yar Jang's speech on Asia. Being an observant Muslim, a Hyderabad government employee, a Congress nationalist and enthused by the equality wrought by an antimonarchic force in faraway Russia, seems not to have been a problem for Maulana Bashiruddin; nor does his nephew feel the need to comment on what would have been a disparate set of affections in his own time. Makhdum confessed to being unable to keep to the discipline required by the religious life his uncle attempted to inculcate him into, but I think it can be

[39] 'a table-cloth, a piece of cloth or leather, &c. spread on the ground, upon which the dishes of a meal are placed.'
http://dsalsrv02.uchicago.edu/cgi-bin/philologic/getobject.pl?c.4:1:513.platts

argued that more than that, there were the new attractions of life in the city that were the making of Makhdum, poet and rebel.

The light of the new culture, shade of the old

Makhdum's life as a hard-up student in Hyderabad city led him into all kinds of occupations—he slept in a mosque in Sultan Bazaar, taught the odd student when he could and went hungry for days, tried selling posters of film stars to make a living; more famously, he wrote letters in English on behalf of a love-struck nawab to his Anglo-Indian girlfriend, for which his inspiration apparently came from Goethe's letters—about which he would eventually write his first literary prose piece for the newspaper *Payam*. The Osmania University moved to its new campus with accompanying hostels, in 1934— at the time this location at Adikmet was considered to be outside the city proper (still is by some Hyderabadis, as I discovered). Until then classes were held in the city, and the main office and classrooms were located in Liaqat Manzil—the home of Nawab Liaqat Jang, portrayed in Aziz Ahmad's novel as the father of Begum Khurshid Zamani. Mirza Zafarul Hasan tells a story from this time involving the poet and his friends Mir Hasan[40] and Nurul Huda (affectionately known as 'Mephisto', inspired by Goethe's *Faust*) among others. A new student, fresh from his village, was in the habit of carrying an umbrella with him at all times (Hasan 1971, 73). Makhdum and company took it upon themselves to educate him about urban ways, advising him to get rid of the umbrella because (in Hasan's satirical rendition): 'an umbrella may be a status-symbol in the village, but this is the city: Hyderabad Farkhunda-buniyad. Us city people consider this umbrella an insult to our urban ethos (shahrī tahzīb) […]

[40] Hasan tells of Mir Hasan's complaint to his professor, Maulvi Abdul Haq, that he had been refused books by the librarian at Osmania, for not putting out his cigarette while in the library. On being asked why he hadn't put it out, Mir Hasan replied, 'one doesn't feel like throwing a Gold Flake even after the last drag'. So taken was Abdul Haq with this response that he personally intervened with the librarian to get the books to his student (Hasan 1971, 84-85).

We'll take the harsh light (dhūp) of the new culture over the shade of the old; you ought to follow us and become a citizen (shahrī). And remember, if you don't burn this umbrella, we will.' The newcomer proved to be tougher than expected and refused to part with his umbrella, even attacking his accusers with it. This led Makhdum to 'defend the honor of the city' by playing a prank: instead of burning the offending object as threatened, he stole it and tied it to the highest branch of the tamarind tree in the large grounds of Liaqat Manzil, making it the center of a comic spectacle for other students (74- 75).

More famous is the story of Makhdum's first popular poem in Hyderabad, a comic nazm titled 'pīlā dushāla' (Yellow Shawl) written in 1933. The parallels with the umbrella story are striking: the protagonist is, yet again, a newcomer from the village (gāoñ sē āyā' laṛkā); this time his fetish object a yellow shawl that he keeps by him at all times, stolen (not, it would seem, by the poet and his friends) as punishment for his refusal to follow the customs of hostel life, wherein newcomers were forced to treat their seniors to sweets (miṭhāī). Makhdum's comic poem was written for a mock condolence meeting (tāziyati jalsa) organized at their hostel, Farhat Manzil, to mourn the loss of said shawl. The speaking voice belongs to the bereaved student calling out to his lost shawl and reminiscing about all the wonderful times they have shared. The final stanza of the poem is in Persian—urging the shawl to return to the owner— and contains the penultimate phrase 'man zēr tu bālā' (I am under, you on top) whose sexual connotations,[41] Hasan reports, were much appreciated by audiences, including the poet's professors. Soon the nazm spread to the other two hostels, 'Masarrat manzil' and 'Nizamat manzil', and later to other parts of the city; Telangana Communist leader Ravi Narayan Reddy, who would soon be

[41] Many thanks to Hasan Siddiqui for his help with reading this stanza.

Makhdum's comrade in the party, reports hearing of the nazm and the poet during his student days at the Nizam College (87).

In 1935, it was turned into a qawwali and performed at a charity show organized by Osmania students for the benefit of the victims of the Quetta earthquake (42), and sung in the presence of the Nizam, the princes and nobility. According to Hasan this was 'the first and last time' Makhdum appeared before the Nizam, to introduce the qawwali. Having just finished acting in a play, he stayed in costume while doing the introduction, meaning that he did not wear the customary 'dastār-baglūs'[42] or perform the elaborate salam (farshī salām) one was supposed to in presence of royalty—and joined the singers (Hasan 406). The Nizam did not appear to notice and was enormously appreciative of the famous Persian couplet, translating enthusiastically for the Resident as it was repeated in chorus (407).

The new and old cultures were spatially defined as much as temporally. This was the 'new city', north of the river, planned and ordered by the City Improvement Board (Alam 1965: 13 Beverley: 221-256); neither the heights of Kishanpalli nor the depths of the Old City, but in between and different from both. But the 'old' was also the rural hinterland to the city's Persianate, urbane sensibility into which the rural youth would have to be socialized. The court was not at the center of this new culture of the university, but tangential to it. Not only were the huge mansions Makhdum would later attack in poems like 'Haveli' (Mansion) initially home to the university, the Nizam's pride in the clever students at the university named after him could exceeded his sensitivity to courtly propriety. The separation of the two spaces—court and university— however, was crucial to the newness and spread of this culture.

[42] The dastar was the distinctive headgear—between a hat and a turban— and baglus a kind of belt, meant to be worn in the Nizam's presence. See Raj 1987, 68

The success of and the appreciation garnered by 'Pila Dushala' prompts Hasan to ask an important question: 'in a monarchy like Hyderabad, where 'ulama and heads of Sufi orders (mashāikhīn) were quite powerful, this kind of a metaphor could be presented; could it be presented in a republic (jamhūriyat) like Pakistan, without inviting a fatwa or abuse by the so-called Islamists (nām-nihād Islam-pasandoñ kī gāliyāñ)?' (44). The question is rhetorical, of course—whether in Pakistan or India (suitably modified to a Hindu majoritarian context), then and now, it is probably unthinkable for risqué verse like this to be appreciated openly and publicly by authority figures, though it might become an underground and surreptitious cult. This too is a function of the massive shift in the ground of representation from a monarch to a people, and the place occupied by religion as part of the discourse of legitimation: the Muslim monarch is the guarantor of the ruling order, what does and does not count as Islamic is not- yet- open for question, though the process is underway, as we have seen in the discussion of the Milad meetings. In a 'jamhuriyat' of the sort that India and Pakistan have become, this 'object'—Islam, Hinduism—belongs to 'the majority', Hindu and Muslim, and any one of the group may assume authority over it, speak and censor in its name.

The discourse of modernity, but with 'harmony between East and West' enabled the urbane sociality of the carefree students who smoked outside religion classes and spent more time at the tea-shop than in their plush hostels (Hasan 1971, 80; Hasan 1994, 58). This life continued outside of the university; Zafarul Hasan hosted his often unemployed and unhoused friends at his home in the city, nicknamed—yet another example of Osmania and Makhdum cool— 'Inferno'[43] (Hasan 1971, 139, 144). The story of Inferno is interesting not only because it sheds light on the close male sociality of the city, but also tells us about the boundaries of this

[43] After Goethe's *Faust*, recently staged at the university, from which their friend had already received 'Mephisto'.

sociality. Take for instance the location: Hasan's home was a spacious house where his entire extended family numbering some thirty people—including children—lived. Initially given a large room to himself, which he decorated to the best of his ability before inviting his friends over, Hasan had to abandon it and have a special room built in the compound when his friends rejected his newly done-up room. There were several complaints. It had a door that could be locked, meaning they could not come in when Hasan was away; children could come and go, there was no privacy; it was too close to the women's quarters (zanana), they could not swear freely as they were wont to do; they couldn't throw cigarettes around, there was a carpet on the floor— no, a new room was needed (143).

And so they shifted to the bamboo shed with a tin-roof that became Inferno, the crowded and untidy place where, according to Sibte Hasan 'Osmania university's unemployed youth, unfed poets and broke writers would gather every day and talk about everything under the sun…free tea and cigarettes of course was their right, but there was no particular barrier to eating and sleeping right there either' (Hasan 1994, 55). In the words of the host 'half the public stood, the other half sat…if someone moved another would quickly take his place, but if somebody was lying on the bed, you could not ask them to get up and make space. There was neither a line (ṣaf), nor a Mahmud and Ayaz'[44] (Hasan 1971, 144).

By all accounts, this informality and love of company ('mahfil-parast'—lover of parties— Hasan calls him) stayed with Makhdum all his life. As a teacher at City College—a job

[44] Sultan Mahmud of Ghazna (d. 1030 CE) and his slave, Ayaz. The reference is to Iqbal's famous lines from 'Shikwa'/Complaint (1909), extolling the ideal of equality in Islam: 'ēk hi ṣaf mēñ khaṛē Mahmud o Ayaz/ Na koi bandā rahā na bandā-nawāz' [Mahmud and Ayaz stand in one line (to pray); Neither is one slave nor the other master]. The scene at 'Inferno', by contrast—and this is Hasan's point— is of freedom and equality in the mode of carnival.

he only stayed in for two years before beginning full-time party work—he was popular with his students, as much for his poetry as personality:

> Makhdum's classrooms were informal and fun—he was more of a friend than a teacher to his students, so much so that not only were they allowed to smoke in his class, it got to a point where they would ask him for cigarettes and smoke… His classes were often full of laughter; he would often read/sing his own poetry to his students. His translation assignments would involve translating English Communist Party pamphlets into Urdu. (Tamkanat 1986, 47-48)

As a poet, he was not prolific, devoting a lion's share of his time to political activity. His poetry is collected in three slim anthologies, the first published as late as 1944 and titled *Surkh Savērā* (Red Dawn), the second a little less than twenty years later in 1961, titled *Gul-e-tar* (The Fresh Rose/The Dew-Drenched Rose) and finally *Bisāṭ-e-Raqṣ* (Dance-floor), which included both earlier collections and some additional poems, published in 1968. But his lines were memorized and much-quoted; some of them continue to be. Urdu writer, professor and the poet's fellow-traveler in the Progressive Writers' movement Zeenat Sajida's tongue-in-cheek tribute to Makhdum is the most eloquent (though dated) testimony to this—and worth quoting at length for its sheer brilliance.[45] 'He is actually a bit of a rascal (kamīnā), this Makhdum', she says:

> I asked him to write me a poem (ghazal) many years ago, so I could pass it off as my own and garner some praise at *mushaira*s... and of course he agreed immediately. But what happens is that people begin to appreciate every word as he writes it...he begins a poem, and whether he has half a line or quarter of a couplet, he's going to recite it to you. If there's no-one around, he picks up the phone; if that doesn't work he goes to people's homes— he'll rent a rikshā, take the money from you, and you'll have to listen to his poem. If he doesn't find a proper audience (dhang kā sunnē wālā) he catches hold of random people on the street and recites it to them. Actually, when people see who it is, they stop and listen. The riksha-puller, the waiter, unsuspecting little children—

[45] Titled 'man turā hājī bagoyam' ('I'll call you Haji…' from the Persian proverb- man turā hājī bagoyam, tū murā hājī bagō- that corresponds to the spirit of the English 'I'll scratch your back, you scratch mine'/ 'I'll call you haji, you call me haji'), this piece was delivered by Sajida on the occasion of Makhdum's 60th birthday celebrations in 1966. The title is a satirical comment on the nature of the occasion, where Makhdum's friends and fellow writers gathered to celebrate his life and work. The piece is much-anthologized; I have translated this extract a 1999 collection of essays titled *Makhdūm: Pāñčvāñ mīnār* [the fifth turret].

> basically, before the poem is finished he will have made several people listen to every word. And of course, his song [kalām] is like a contagious disease [marz-e-mut'ādi]—they recite it to other people, who relay it to yet others, and by the time it reaches me, the entire *public* [English in the original] of Hyderabad is parroting the poem...You see why I call him a rascal? It's easy to steal from Mir[46]- there's a chance no-one will know— but you steal half a line from Makhdum, the person you're talking to will finish the couplet and say, 'Makhdum nē kyā khūb kahā hai' [how wonderfully Makhdum has put it!].

It is as if the city itself is Makhdum's neighborhood. Other stories about him by his friends and admirers bear this out, placing the poet at home in mushairas as well as Hyderabad's famous Irani restaurants where he recited poems and conversed with groups of people over endless cups of tea. Orient hotel, Vikaji hotel, Khalil hotel—these names appear regularly in memoirs and biographical sketches by the poet's friends and admirers as places like the lost Inferno. These no longer exist, except in such accounts of life in the city, and it is significant that they are public places not for large meetings, but small groups of friends, or the occasional stranger to join a discussion. Though the social life of the jalsa and the mushaira was not exclusive or opposed to the life at a 'hotel' serving Irani tea, it was continuous with it. Like Bahadur Yar Jang in a very different way, Makhdum was a master of both scales of sociality. And so, it does not sound like hyperbole when, Mujtaba Hussain, Hyderabad's famous Urdu humorist, writes that Makhdum 'it seems… was not a human being; he was a living breathing city. For all of us who live in this city and have walked through its streets, we feel as though Makhdum's memory pervades all its streets, lanes and turnings (sic).[47]

Gendered sociality: the constitutive role of the domestic sphere

[46] The reference is to Mir Taqi 'Mir' (1723- 1810), iconic Urdu poet who stands at the head of the tradition of lyric poetry in the language. Many of his compositions have been set to music and remain popular among non-Urdu readers/speakers. For more on the poet see Islam and Russell 1968 and C.M Naim's definitive translation of his autobiography *Zikr-e-Mir* (Naim 1999).

[47] 'Knowing Makhdum'. Trans. Syed Khalid Qadri. In Alam 2010.

These practices of freedom and excess were predicated on a publicness based on a gendered demarcation, which is not to say that women were excluded from public space, but included so as to constitute the constitutive outside of the space of this free and equal stranger sociality. For instance, women were often literally in the room, in the university's classroom and/or cultural occasions like theatrical performances and poetry readings[48], separated from the men in the zanana.

An example is Sibte Hasan's graphic description of his first sighting of Makhdum at a mushaira or poetry reading:

> When Makhdum's name was called, I sat up...and what do I see but a handsome young man with skin the color of ebony, long black hair, broad forehead, a straight nose and sculpted features like a Greek god smile and step forward. He was showered with requests from all corners of the hall even as he prepared to read. I noticed the commotion in the women's section as its veiled occupants threatened to break down the barrier of the parda in the direction of the door [to get a view of the poet]. (Hasan 1994, 53)

Baji Jamalunissa, who would go on to be a legend in her own right as one of the few Muslim women activists of the CPI in the city, recalled her early sightings of Makhdum when the poet was invited to her house by her Progressive brother Akhtar Hussain, sometime in 1942:

> Makhdoom (sic) recited his poem *Andhera* (Darkness). On that occasion, I was neither introduced to him nor could I meet him. We just saw him (from a distance?) and heard his voice, which still rings in my ears…Around the same time, the CPI had arranged a meeting in Sultan Bazar…My mother and all my brothers and sisters were with me to hear
> Makhdoom, though we knew very little about the Communist Party of Hyderabad. (Alam 2010, 148-49)

[48] On the stage men often played female parts—Zafarul Hasan was often cast in the main female roles on the Osmania stage (Hasan 1971, 93). Lilamani Naidu, youngest daughter of Sarojini Naidu, was the first woman to perform on stage at the university (Alam 2010, 71-72), in Makhdum's play *Phūl-ban*, and adaptation of Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* (1904) for a Hyderabad audience (Hasan 1994, 63). Women students would also be in science classrooms, visiting from the Osmania Women's college near King Kothi (Osmania University 1968, 24).

The parenthetical question from the interviewer—litterateur Ziauddin Shakeb—expresses the uncertainty of imagining how this encounter must have played out. Baji Jamal's account of the reading bears out, albeit less poetically, Zafarul Hasan's description (Hasan 1978, 46) of the effect of Makhdum's lyrical voice—*tarannum*—on his audience, which was 'magic (balā kā jādū). When he was called upon to recite, every single person, big and small, in a large gathering would be completely in his thrall (hama-tan gōsh hō jātē).' And with his magic Makhdum is able to draw the family out into the political field—and into what would be a long and close association— by his presence and his poetry. While the parda by no means implied passivity or inaction often associated with it in a 'feudal' milieu, in many accounts of public life—political or literary— women invariably form the 'other' of urbane, carefree male sociality. At best, they are for male writers, indexes of someone like Makhdum's popularity, as we see above. By contrast, in Baji Jamalunissa's story we have a glimpse of the openings created for political affiliation precisely at the cusp of family and public life, though even here the male poet, agent of romance and revolutionary change, himself appeared free from the constraints of domesticity.

As we saw in the account of the setting up of Inferno as a space where male sociality can flourish, the labor and care of women—who cook for them, supply them with tea and their daily needs—is essential, but the strong traditions of 'parda' in Hyderabad also dictate a formal distance from the female sphere. Nearness to the female sphere constrains male sociality—the swearing and keeping long hours cannot be reconciled with the rhythms and courtesies due to women of the household. The exclusion of the domestic, or rather the predication of social life on this exclusion, is highlighted in another way by Zafarul Hasan. Makhdum married in 1933; he was a husband and father during much of his time at 'Inferno', but from the stories one would

think this was a group of single friends living the bachelor life. This is not accidental. Looking back on his student days, Hasan (1978: 57) recalls their attitude to family life:

> firstly, there was strict parda, and then there was our indifference (la-ubālipan) to domestic matters; we never talked about our families, nor were we interested in each other's domestic lives…No-one ever mentioned Makhdum's marriage in our circle. Makhdum himself never said anything about his children, except that his daughter was named Asavari; Zakia Asavari.

It is only from reading his son Nusrat Muhiuddin's moving account of his childhood—they were trained to refer to their father as 'chacha' because being his children would put them at risk from his political activities—that Hasan discovers details about Makhdum's domestic life. This indifference included, again to Hasan's regret, a complete lack of curiosity about his financial condition, whether the family had enough to get by, or whether they needed help.

Zafarul Hasan and his friends, as much as Bahadur Yar Jang and his followers appear to bear out Hannah Arendt's famous characterization of the practice of political freedom, which rests on his freedom *from* the entanglements of domesticity and of labor. While 'in order to be free, man must have liberated himself from the necessities of life', this was insufficient, because what was also needed was 'the company of other men who were in the same state, and…a common public space to meet them' (Arendt 2006: 147). Stepping out of the city and into the districts of Telangana during the armed rebellion, Makhdum would participate in a movement where women were active but issues of family and sexuality, much like the question of religion, was subordinated to the demands of historical imperative of freedom from monarchical rule. Women like Baji Jamalunissa, Pramilatai and Brijrani (all city-based participants in the armed struggle; the last two married to CPI activists KL Mahendra and Raj Bahadur Gour respectively) would ferry people and arms to and fro under cover of parda (Lalitha et al 1988). They were interpellated within these movements as resistant subjects of the Nizam, but subordinated to the

new hierarchies of public and private (Chatterjee 1993). In Makhdum's poetry too, women remained the subject of romance rather than rebellion, much as in Bahadur Yar Jang's address to the 'Muslims of the Deccan' they were addressed but never present.

Conclusion

I have found no accounts of Bahadur Yar Jang and Makhdum Muhiuddin ever encountering, much less confronting each other in person, except the following from an Urdu translation of a Russian study of Makhdum's poetry:

> In those times [during the ascendancy of Bahadur Yar Jang] Makhdum would spend time with student-leaders and address their meetings; he made every attempt to ensure that the student movement did not fragment along religious lines. His friends provide an eyewitness account of a meeting where it was Makhdum's turn to speak right after Bahadur Yar Jang. The crowd (majmaʾ) was under the spell (masḥūr) of the Nawab's speech— on the exceptional (istiṣnā'ī) character of Islamic culture in the Deccan— and did not want to listen to any other speaker. By the time Makhdum finished reciting a couple of his poems (naẓ mēn) the students had calmed down, deciding to follow the lead of their beloved poet (maḥbūb shā'ir) instead of the famous (nāmīgirāmī) nawab. It was due to the efforts of Makhdum and his friends that an integrated Students Union was formed in Hyderabad, rather than the separate organizations both Hindu and Muslim isolationist ('alāḥadgī-pasand) groups were pushing for. (Sukhochev 1993, 49)

No biography I have seen makes mention of this incident, and it is not clear which Student Union is being referred to.[49] In light of the argument of this chapter, however, it is plausible. Bahadur Yar Jang and the Communists competed for the allegiance of urban youth in Hyderabad in the 1930s, especially the students of Osmania University. In the rapidly changing political landscape of the state, they embodied very different types of charismatic energies and models of action.

[49] If it is the All-Hyderabad Students' Union, formally inaugurated in 1941 (Razvi 1985, 57), this was already a group of students looking to establish a non-sectarian students' union. In fact, by this time there were 'two small groups of students' by the name of Student Brotherhood and Anjuman-e-Taraqqi-e-Tulaba (Society of Student Development) 'under the influence of Hindu and Muslim communalists' (56). Ghulam Hyder (1973, 141) credits Makhdum with the forming of what would become the AHSU, in 1939-40.

True or not, this Russian-Urdu story makes for an apt closing anecdote for this chapter, since it has all the major elements of the argument: a willing and pliant 'young' audience, agnostic forms of rhetoric that lead to rival forms of politics, as well as the major protagonists around whom these audiences organize their desires for a future, in the receding glow of monarchical power.

The Ittehad, built up into a mass organization by Bahadur Yar Jang, became a statewide party whose center remained in the capital; the CPI, on the other hand, was strongest in the villages of Telangana and its 'City Committee' was simply one of its centers. While Bahadur Yar Jang, veteran of the mulki movement as well as sundry reformist organizations, sought to consolidate in order to represent Muslims as a political group, the young Osmania students who started the Comrades Association in 1939—Syed Alam Khundmiri, Maniklal Gupta, SM Jawad Razvi, Omkar Pershad and Ahsan Ali Mirza among others (Razvi 18-22)—wanted to 'fight against communalism and promote Hindu-Muslim Unity' (ibid.) in explicit rejection of the Ittehad. Both groups operated in the same field of agonism opened up by popular politics in challenge to the princely regime, one sign of which was that for both the Hindu-Muslim axis of the political question was inescapable.

In the following chapter, I look at the ways in which All-India movements steered the course of Hyderabadi popular politics in this direction. This is the story of the evolution of the Ittehad'ul Muslimin from a city-based Mulki organization into a statewide political force under the stewardship of Bahadur Yar Jang.

Chapter Three
Rulers of the Deccan: Mass politics and the Ittehad

> The streets are full of people. Who said Hindus are 88% [of the population] in Hyderabad? Here on the street there aren't any to be seen. They're all wearing red *fez* caps, which is exclusive to Muslims. So many people, and not a single Hindu…we shouted our slogans, and handed out the pamphlets that had been given to us. That created a sensation. People wearing the fez (they were all Hindu) ran up and began taking our pamphlets. A crowd gathered around us, and we kept shouting our slogans. Two or three minutes later the police came through the crowd, and the sub-inspector said, 'alright, you are under arrest. *Bōm mārnā band karō*.' This was local idiom, a proverb (muhāvarā) which meant "stop shouting, making noise". We did not know this at the time and couldn't understand him, so we kept shouting and they pushed us towards the Sultan Bazar police station, which they also call Badi Chawdi.

This account is taken from a short memoir published fifty-five years after the event, that is to say in 1994, by a volunteer of the Arya Samaj[1] *satyagraha* in Hyderabad city[2]. The author calls himself Virajaa (Virāja) and writes of being a schoolboy of seventeen, sent to Hyderabad from the Arya Samaj school in faraway Kangri (the Himalayan foothills of British India's United Provinces), part of a team of fifteen young volunteers. *Nizāmshāhī par pahalī chōṭ* ('First Blow to the Nizam regime') is interesting as a perspective on Hyderabad because it turns out to be a

[1] The Ārya Samāj, established in Hyderabad state in 1892 (Pernau 2000, 249), is a Hindu revivalist reform movement founded in 1875 by Dayanand Saraswati (1824- 1883), a Brahman from Gujarat. Rooted in contemporary race discourse occasioned and circulated within the British empire (Ballantyne 2002), its hostility to Christianity and Islam fashioned it into a Hindu supremacist political force (Jones 1976; Adcock 2013; Jaffrelot 2011, 74-169). Although in the beginning its main antagonists in the state— as elsewhere— were orthodox caste-Hindus or sanātanis, by the late 1930s it was the most organized and visible nationalist Hindu platform in Hyderabad (Kooiman 2002, 181-215; Benichou 2000, 59- 83).

[2] *Nizāmshāhī par pahalī chōṭ* (Virajaa 1994) is a short, 144-page memoir written in Hindi. 'Satyagraha', usually glossed as 'truth-force' (satya: truth; āgraha: insistence) was Gandhi's name for his unique form of non-violent resistance. For an early definition, see Chapter 4 of the Congress report on 'The Punjab Disturbances' (1920):
http://www.gandhiashramsevagram.org/gandhi-literature/mahatma-gandhi-collected-worksvolume-20.pdf

surprisingly intimate and honest text, sandwiched between a heroic-sounding title and 'historical' background provided in the opening and concluding chapters.

What stands out most is the comic contrast between the melodrama of the Arya Samaj's preparation for 'battle' and the realities of Hyderabad, its complacent police, jails and regime officials. Virajaa is a peculiarly suitable narrator for this story, because as he confesses early on, 'I don't know about anyone else, but I am of a fearful and nervous disposition' (58). Sent on their way by teachers who exhort them to fulfil their destiny as protectors of Hindus[3], the boys are identified and their tickets confiscated by the Hyderabad police as soon as their train crosses the border from Bombay Presidency. The police seem almost cruelly urbane: when the boys protest against having to hand over their tickets, saying 'they're ours, we paid for them!' the officer replies, 'Huzūr, now you're ours too (ab tō āp bhī hamārē haiñ). Give us your tickets, you'll get them back in Secunderabad [the British-administered part of the capital, recently returned to the jurisdiction of the Nizam's government]. Don't worry, you won't be charged with traveling without tickets.' (55) They help them find accommodation at a Hindu rest-house (dharamshālā) in Secunderabad and seem content to follow them around as the boys pretend to see the sights. Not terribly hard to deceive, the police lose them, allowing the five-member volunteer team to

[3] These exhortations—as reported by the author—employed caste tropes common to Hindutva discourse (Jaffrelot 2011, 148-150). For example, the principal compared his young charges to the hero of the epic *Rāmāyaṇa* and his faithful brother: 'I am handing you over to Mahatma Nārāyaṇ Swāmi to struggle against those oppressors (atyāchārī) who obstruct our religious rites (dhārmik kritya), just as Raja Dasharatha handed Rāma and Lakshmana over to Rishi Vishwāmitra to destroy the demons (rākshasa) who tried to hinder [his] worship (yagya).' Another teacher quoted Sanskrit to the boys, 'the day for which kshatriya [the warrior caste] mothers give birth to sons has arrived. True kshatriyas are those who give their lives in order to protect others [teacher and students being Brahmans in this case]' (43-44) For a discussion of the epic's various versions see Richman 1991; a recent multi-volume English translation of the canonical *Vālmīki Rāmāyaṇa* is in Goldman and Goldman, 1990-2016. For a rough summary of the story of the epic, including the episode mentioned here, see: https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/moynihan/sac/The_Ramayana_A_Telling_Of_the_Ancient_Indian_Epic/

eventually shout their slogans and carry out their satyagraha at Sultan Bazar—in the heart of the capital— as described in the passage quoted above. It was February 2, 1939, and Virajaa's team was one of the early Arya Samaj bands (jatthā) to be sent into Hyderabad from north India.

I start with this account, even though I will not have much to say about the Arya samaj or other Hindu supremacist movements in Hyderabad here, because it is an outsider's narrative, and also a rare, unheroic account of an event and of people that altered forever the political landscape of the state.[4] Several elements of central importance to the career of the Ittehad as a political party (which begins, properly speaking, in 1938) become visible through this narrative that actually makes no mention of it. First, the work of re-signifying social and religious identity comes into view with a new urgency— Hindu/Muslim, majority/minority, North Indian/Hyderabadi; these would eventually harden into social and political antagonism within the state, in the gaze of an emergent nation-state whose centers of power were located very far from Hyderabad.

Viraja's consternation at the inappropriately clothed Hindus of Hyderabad is one sign of the gulf that separated British India from the 'premier princely state', an instance of the composite culture discussed in the last two chapters. Used to the north Indian—and increasingly hegemonic— semiotic of identity, where the fez[5] had indeed become 'exclusive' to Muslims, his sense of disorientation seems palpable more than fifty years after the event as he pens his account. It is not quite clear if he regards this as a confirmation of the Arya samajis' belief that

[4] The Hyderabad State Congress had declared a satyagraha in Hyderabad soon after the Arya Samaj, but withdrew the call soon after because it was anxious not to be associated with these Hindu groups and their obviously communal agitation (Pernau 2000, 269-70).

[5] For a genealogy of the long and durable life of the fez as a sign of the Indian Muslim, see Amin 2005. The fez also figured prominently, of course, in the late Ottoman and Ataturk's republican social program; see Chehabi 2004 for a brief history.

Hindus were being oppressed by the Muslim regime in the state; what comes through most clearly is the shock, perhaps even incipient fear, of being outnumbered: 'so many people, and not a single Hindu'.

However, the connections between Hyderabad and northern British India appear in unexpected places too, unremarked by our narrator.[6] Ironically, these north Indian schoolboys understand the language of power in the capital and in every jail that they are sent to after, but cannot understand Dakhani Urdu, let alone communicate with Telugu-speaking 'Hindus' in the districts (as in Sangareddi jail, 107). In the passage quoted, for example, they keep shouting their slogans because, he claims, they failed to understand the 'local idiom'.[7] As long as the police speak standard Urdu they have no trouble understanding them at all, as the exchange in the train shows.[8] Politically speaking, they are treated much better than the Hyderabadi prisoners, being British Indian subjects (59, 93). Ironically, barring the odd exception (103-104) Hyderabadi Muslim

[6] The author himself is not distinguished by any sense of self-reflexivity; from beginning to end his frame remains the Arya Samaj view of Hyderabad, and no acknowledgment of surprise or change of outlook is forthcoming.

[7] I have found two textual references for this expression: John Shakespeare's 1834 HindustaniEnglish dictionary lists 'bom' as dakhni for 'lamentation, bewailing'; the other dates from 1933, a description of the Holi festival in central India (Lall 'Among the Hindus') Here 'bom thokna/marna' is elaborately described as 'the striking of the back side of the hand against the mouth and producing a loud sound' (50). I have heard the expression, but it is not frequently used today as far as I know.

[8] The boys do not understand the heavily Persianized legal language used in the courtroom where they are tried and sentenced (69), which Viraja expressly names as 'Urdu'. While the difference between the spoken standard and legalese is considerable, the author betrays his high-caste United Provinces origins in his unfamiliarity with Urdu. The efficacy of Arya samaj discourse and polemic relied heavily on the Urdu public sphere in its subcontinental headquarters, the province of Punjab, just north-west of the UP (Jalal 2002, Jones 1976).

jailers, inspectors, and jail employees end up emerging in a generally neutral or even sympathetic light in Viraja's narrative. For example, sentenced to six months of prison with hard labor (71), the boys are put to work whitewashing walls in prison, and to their surprise, given mustard oil to remedy the corrosive effects of lime (74). Their caste prejudices are respected when they refuse to eat food prepared by non-Brahmans (86) in the open-air jail in the picturesque hills of Nizamabad—'really, it didn't feel like a jail to me' (82). Finally, their Aligarh-educated jailer in Sangareddi (Medak district) invites them to a cup of homemade tea before they are due to be released, surprising his prisoners[9] (118).

Second, and this is related to the first point about the re-signification of identity, what for Viraja appears simply as a fact of life—an aspect of common sense about how a place with a 'Hindu majority' ought to be— was part of an agenda to *make* such an India. Hyderabad was ideal for these efforts because in addition to being 'the premier state', its Hindu-Muslim demographics had been shaped into a political asymmetry by the increasing hold of the modernizing administration over life in the state, and more immediately, events during the Khilafat-Non-cooperation agitation (details in the following section). For local Hyderabadis who became part of this three-party satyagraha program—involving the Arya Samaj, the Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha—it functioned as a welcome site for an agitational politics.[10] Each of

[9] The young Urdu-speaking jailer also appears to be alienated by his Telugu-speaking surroundings, being a 'non-mulki' (a north Indian) in Hyderabad (112). This may or may not be a rare occurrence; Leonard (2014, 47, 74) has argued that non-mulki North Indian Muslims staffing Salar Jang's bureaucracy helped foster a communal sense of separateness among Hyderabadi Muslims. For a counter-view see Roosa 1998.

[10] The Congress never became a mass organization in the state, commanding sporadic support from certain sections of the urban elite in the capital. Notable among these was Sarojini Naidu, a loyal state subject, poetess and orator, and her daughter Padmaja, who authored an adverse report for Gandhi on Congress' part in the Hyderabad satyagraha, leading him to call it off. For a pithy contemporaneous account of the State Congress's activities, written by the leader of the party's

these organizations had a local leadership, consisting of an older and more accommodating generation and a younger, more impatient generation of leaders and participants. For the latter, 'civil liberties' and 'religious rights' became a rallying point for asserting an emergent political subjectivity independent of and opposed to the state's ruling class. Local and subcontinent-level agendas, however, often diverged.[1111]

Ultimately, it did not matter that the agitation subsided in a few months without exciting much participation in the city, and in what seemed like a victory for the Hyderabad regime. Nothing less than the transformation of the structure of power—understood in terms of religious majorities and minorities— was aimed at, whether this meant urging an immediate intervention of the paramount power or playing to a long-term strategy of Hindu consolidation in the state as much as the subcontinent. Evidence of the former can be found in multiple appeals to the British to intervene in Hyderabad. For example, an Arya Samaj complaint from the city of Gujrat (now in Pakistan's Punjab province) went out to the Secretary of State for India in London, appealing to him 'as an enlightened gentleman, a Christian Ruler, and as the paramount power [to] put down sternly this sort of indefensible cruelty [in Hyderabad's jails].' Of course, these gentlemanly qualities stood on the solid ground of good old race theory, with a dash of sycophancy: 'The only races on this sphere who are pre-eminently distinguished for their religious toleration are the

---

old guard, see Vaidya 1946 and for an oppositional account from the leader of the more radical faction see Tirtha 1967.

[11] The colonial archive is rich in documentation—letters, press reports from British and Indian newspapers, official memoranda, petitions to the British Parliament, clarifications from the Residency and British officials in Hyderabad—relating to the satyagraha and its so-called casualties. The Congress, as noted above, distanced itself from the agitation within two months, not wanting to be part of the communal agenda of the Arya Samaj and Mahasabha. This, however, left the field open for them and effectively sent the Congress into hibernation. For a detailed discussion see Benichou 2000, 55-87; Kooiman 2002, 195-202.

British in the West and the Hindus in the East'. Perhaps more than a dash of sycophancy: 'Kindly do [intervene] and earn the gratitude of millions of those (who in the long run be sure, will be your bulwark in time of need).' The parenthesis is in this odd place, as if to indicate a mid-sentence confidential whisper.[12]

Evidence of a different and ideologically clearer kind comes from V.D Savarkar's (leader of the Hindu Mahasabha)[13] June 1939 response to Maharaja Kishan Pershad's defense of the Hyderabad regime and its ruling traditions:

> Is it not a fact that it is these contented Hindu slaves who proved traitors to the Hindu cause in the past, fought for their Moslem masters against the emancipating forces of the Maratha empire and enabled the Moslem rule (sic) to survive in Hyderabad?...Otherwise the forces of the Maratha Empire would have freed the Hindus in Hyderabad long ago and spared them their present serfdom…It is this supreme task and not only the removal of local and minor grievances of the Hindus—this work of emancipating the Hindu minds from this slavish mentality that the Hindu Maha Sabha had (sic) set before itself.[14]

As we saw in the last chapter, the Nizam's attempts at assuming a leadership role viz-a-viz Indian Muslims during the Khilafat agitation—also doing his duty by the Paramount power—helped shape this image of Hyderabad as an embodiment of 'Moslem rule'. In the aftermath of

---

[12] IOR/L/PS/1233: Coll 22/21, Arya Samaj Agitation: Petitions, Press cuttings etc. May 1939-September 1939.

[13] For Savarkar, it was precisely the distance between, say, UP and Hyderabad, that was crucial to proving the existence of a pan-Indian Hindu consciousness. Contrary to the state's argument, for him the fact that most satyagrahis came from outside Hyderabad was not a sign of weakness but of strength. Roosa (1998, 489) notes another interesting detail: one of the first leaders of a group of Mahasabha agitators into Hyderabad in November 1938 was Nathuram Godse, who would assassinate Gandhi in January 1948. More details about the Mahasabha's interest in Hyderabad are in Pernau 2000, 263. For more on Savarkar and Hindu 'nationalism' see Jaffrelot 2007.

[14] IOR/L/PS/1233: Coll 22/21 ibid. For the eighteenth-century history of alliance and conflict between the Marathas in the Deccan and Nizam-ul-Mulk Asaf Jah I, see Faruqui 2013. This history also inflected the distrust of the Hyderabad regime towards Maratha nationalism of the sort embodied by the Hindu Mahasabha and its sister Hindutva organizations (such as the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh—National Volunteer Corps— or RSS).

the NonCooperation Khilafat movement's ignominious end (Hasan 1979; Minault 1982), riots broke out between Hindus and Muslims—mobilized for the first time as political subjects against colonial rule during these agitations—all over India (Hasan 2009, 51-72). As we saw in the last chapter again, though the movements left the state relatively unmobilized, there were significant shows of political activity in the city and in some places in the districts. A new social space opened up where declarations of 'Hindu-Muslim unity' were made on a large scale, as when Gandhi's birthday was celebrated at a meeting in 1921, attended by 'over 3000 Hindus and Muslims', and ended in a temple in the city: 'Hindus and Muslims entered it without any racial distinction...Mr. Asghar changed his 'fez' for a Gandhi cap and a Poojari [priest] approached him and applied 'sendhur' (sic) on [his] forehead' (Benichou 2000, 35). The Hindu frame of this event would soon become a portent of things to come rather than the start of something new, or an iteration of the ruling culture for oppositional political ends. By 1924, the first major riot of the state had occurred in Gulbarga (Pernau 2000, 247), where only four years before a huge crowd had greeted Shaukat Ali, one of the major leaders of the Khilafat movement, as he was passing through the state (ibid., 33). Throughout the state 'the number of registered clashes rose continuously from 25 in 1927 to 34 in the next year and 68 in 1929' (Pernau 2000, 247). As we shall see below, the first riot in the city occurred in 1938, lasting 4 days, killing 'two Hindus and two Muslims' and leaving '200 injured' (Benichou 2000, 61). This is known as the Dhulpet riot—from the name of the Old City neighborhood where it occurred—and the two Muslims killed were nephews of Bahadur Yar Jang (Khan 1971, 787; Ahmad 2007, 130).

Thus, while tensions had been building over a decade, the major significance of these events lay in constituting a point-of-no-return for Hyderabadis: the kind of rhetoric spouted by Savarkar and his ilk did settle in and become quite at home in Hyderabad state, beginning with

the events of 1938-39. From this time onward, every other way of conceptualizing relations between, or cutting across identities cemented as 'Hindus' and 'Muslims' (such as mulki/non-mulki; aristocrat/peasant; city/country) effectively ended up defining itself in accordance with this opposition. The question of representation itself could not be thought without thinking religious majorities and minorities, and politics that failed to take account of this was doomed in Hyderabad (as the next chapter shows). Furthermore, these questions bound it more and more securely to the politics of the subcontinent. The state had prided itself on its distinctive traditions, but the shrill and repeated declarations of this distinctiveness throughout this decade (1938-1948) were in fact a symptom of its demise.

The rest of this chapter is constructed around these events of 1939, following a 'before and after' sequence. I begin with a brief overview of political life, and the impact of the changes in British Indian frames of governance on the state to show how, in an era of 'responsible government', the princely order responded by conceding a model of consultative 'representative government', ignoring the shifting bases of its own legitimacy (Pernau 260, 265).

Next I show how, in the climate created by the satyagraha, the Majlis-e-Itteḥād'ul Muslimīn Mamlikat-e-Āṣafiyā-Islāmia (sometimes called the Anjuman-e- Itteḥād'ul-Muslimīn in contemporary records), became the historical bridge between old and new concepts of representation in Hyderabad state. Originating as a 'quasi-religious' platform to pursue a project of unifying antagonistic Muslim sects in 1928, within a decade the Ittehad went from declaring loyalty to and defending the state's ruling dynasty and traditions against the onslaught of the Hindu parties, to articulating a new discourse where sovereignty, it was claimed, vested not so much in the Asaf Jah dynasty as in 'the Muslims of the Deccan' (musalmānān-e-deccan). In this section I work with some of the organization's own documents, especially a history published in

1941 and titled *Tārīkh-e-Majlis-e-Itteḥād-ul-Muslimīn Mamlikat-e-Āṣafiyā-Islāmia* (History of the Majlise-Ittehad'ul Muslimin , Asafiya Islamic Kingdom).

In the final section, I take up for discussion a set of three expository—unusually for him—speeches that Bahadur Yar Jang gave to large gatherings of city Muslims, explaining the provisions of the proposed Constitutional Reforms in Hyderabad (1939) and the Ittehad's opposition to them. In these speeches, the nawab sketched a brief history of government on a descending scale—in the world, in India and finally in Hyderabad—for his audience, which appears to have been picked out of current anthropological theories and political philosophy. The Ittehad succeeded in scuttling the reforms, which in any case had limited value, and would stand fast on the positions taken by its first President even after the end of the Second World War, when the political horizon had changed completely.

I

As we saw in Chapter 2, political organizations were banned in Hyderabad state; recognizing the disruptive potential of mass politics for the ruling consensus, meetings, gatherings and speeches of nationalist leaders in particular were closely watched by the regime.[15] As we have also seen, in spite of Hyderabad's overall success in preserving what has been called its 'island mentality' (Kooiman 2002, 167) well into the third decade of the twentieth century, nationalist agitations did make inroads into the state. A third element that had also always impacted politics in the state, was British legislation affecting the structure of rule in British India.

[15] Thus, a young Mohammad Ali Jinnah ran afoul of the Hyderabad regime due to a 1919 speech titled 'India of Tomorrow' (sic) delivered in the city, following which he was asked 'to refrain from visiting, without permission, any part of His Exalted Highness' Dominions, on any account whatsoever, professional or otherwise.' The charge was that addressing 'a crowd, consisting chiefly of schoolboys, young students and illiterate persons was certainly calculated under the existing circumstances to have a harmful effect.' (Ramesan 1966, 10-12).

The provisions of the 1935 Government of India Act, which followed from the Round Table Conferences[16] the state had actively participated in, envisioned not only elected ministries comprising Indian politicians in British Indian Provinces but also a vaguely defined federation comprising the provinces and princely states as a future political unit (Yazdani 167-170; Pernau 2000, 218; Ramusack 2004, 245-267), leading to the Indian National Congress's newfound interest in political movements in the princely states (Copland 1985). The election of Congress ministries in seven out of the eleven major provinces in 1937— the Central Provinces, Bombay and Madras Presidency in particular shared borders and close linguistic ties with Hyderabad (see Map 1)— strengthened this interest, adding a 'national' electoral mandate to the party's claim of political legitimacy. The formation of these governments was directly consequential for Hyderabad, because they turned out to be hostile to the state—the governments of these provinces turned a blind eye to or supported the satyagrahis making their way to the state in 1938-39, in spite of repeated complaints by the Nizam's government (Benichou 2000, 73-75).

Becoming president of the Ittehad'ul Muslimin and refashioning that organization into a mass party was the highest and most significant point of Bahadur Yar Jang's career. The Majlis-eIttehad'ul-bain-ul Muslimin became the Majlis-e-Ittehad'ul Muslimin in 1928, when the 'bain' (among Muslims, signifying an internally directed movement) was removed from the title. As noted in Chapter 2, Bahadur Yar Jang was the Mahdavi representative in this organization formed to bring the different and often mutually hostile Muslim sects together on common points—while maintaining their differences on doctrine and practice. This was what later commentators like Rashiduddin Khan would call the organization's 'quasi-religious phase' (Khan 1971, 786). This is a convenient way of differentiating the later, explicit turn towards state

[16] Held in1930-32; for a discussion of the consequences of these meetings for the co-constitution of 'minority' and 'secularism' as political categories, see, Tejani 2008, 199-233.

politics taken by the Ittehad under Bahadur Yar Jang's leadership, much like one could do with organizations like the Arya samaj. It also depends on a restricted definition of politics—not a hegemonic force intended to transform the status quo with respect to social relations, but explicitly aiming at state power. The Ittehad, of course, was political from the beginning in the expanded sense.

The *Tarikh* states that the need for a new organization arose because a two-fold lack was felt in the dominant social milieu of urban Muslim society: on the one hand, there was a 'lack of collective purpose' and on the other, where some collective purpose manifested itself, it was in the form of sectarian strife. Thus:

> …there was a lack (kamī), and this was a serious lack… of a sense of collective purpose among individuals (maqsad-e-mushtarik kā tasavvur bilkul mafqūd thā). This is why they could never work together; when people gathered, all the talk would be of salaries, *grade*, office matters (daftarī), petty intrigue (*sāzisheñ*) and how to go about getting an *allowance*. In no gathering (majlis) would issues affecting the entire community (qaum) gain significance—no thought of the past, sense of the present or worries about the future (na māẓi kā khyāl, na hāl kā eḥsās aur na mustaqbil kī fikr).

But also:

> Sectarianism was so rife among Muslims that they engaged in the most violent conflict among themselves. There were riots between Wahabi and non-Wahabi, Sufi and non-Sufi, Sunni and Mahdavi; there were fights, swords were drawn, and the powers (quwwateñ) of Muslims kept working against them. Their powers were being wasted in this fashion when the spirit of Truth (gairat-e-haq) stirred, and some mindful souls (hissās ashkhās)…attempted to gather Muslims together (jam'a) on the basis of their common kalima [creed] (Tarikh 1941, 34-35)

This rhetoric was very much a product of the Ittehad's post-1938 mass political phase, and should also remind us of the 'before and after' discourse on religious meetings, discussed in Chapter 2. In a separate report on its activities published in 1932, the impetus to form an organization like this is expressed in the following words: 'while several associations dedicated to religious reform (maẕhabī iṣlāḥ) and *social* organization (tanẓīm) among Muslims have been

formed... but there was a desperate (shadīd) need for representatives (numāindagān) and *members* of each Islamic sect, by virtue of being bearers of the flag of Islam, to appear (namūdār hoñ) together on one *stage*.' (Khan 1932: 2). Importantly, this list included 2 representatives of the now anathematized Ahmadi sect,[17] the others represented being Ḥanafi (five), Mahdavi (three, including Bahadur Yar Jang), Iṡna 'Asharī and Dāudī Shia' (three and one respectively), the Ahl-e-Sunnat wal jamā'at (two) and one each from the Ḥanbali and Ahl-e-Ḥadīṡ sects (ibid., 3).

Unfortunately, we do not know enough about the social history of Islam in Hyderabad at this time to really throw light on this classification and the representation accorded to each sect; it does appear to be based on the principle of population broadly, Hanafi Sunnis being a majority of Hyderabadi Muslims.[18] It is also likely that these were people who knew each other socially, or had some pre-existing networks of contact/communication. Finally, and most importantly, I want to draw attention to the logic and image of representation here, that is, the standard-bearer and stage in the opening declaration of the report, authored by the Secretary Mahmud Nawaz Khan (representing the Ahl-e-sunnat). The metaphor assumes an audience for the unity of Islamic sects—they must appear together on the same stage for the benefit of their individual followers, but also— under the 'flag of Islam'— as a single group among others, such as the

[17] Followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (1835- 1908), who proclaimed himself a 'messiah' in the late nineteenth-century and engaged in spirited polemics against Christian missionaries as well as Arya samaj preachers and Sunni Muslim clerics through his career. Pejoratively referred to as 'Qadianis', Ahmadis were declared 'non-Muslims' in Pakistan in 1974—by way of a constitutional amendment—and continue to be a persecuted group on the subcontinent. For a history of the sect see Lavan 1974 and Friedmann 1989; for Arya SamajAhmadi polemic, Jones 1976, 148-150; and for the sect's history in Pakistan, Khan 2012, 91-120.

[18] Rashiduddin Khan characterizes the group as 'Sunni Ulema and Mashaiqeen (sic) and religious activists of non-Sunni sects' (Khan 1971, 786).

Hindu groups organizing themselves against the state. This is a contrast with the explicitly biopolitical martial metaphor employed by the later *Tarikh* ('powers being wasted')— in 1941.

Formally inaugurated on Friday, December 7, 1928, the following objectives of the organization were briefly stated in the 1932 Report:

1) To unite the various Islamic sects within the (sic) Islamic principles for the preservation of Islam (taḥaffuẓ-e-Islam)
2) To protect (taḥaffuẓ) the economic, social and educational objectives (maqāṣid) of Muslims and
3) To express loyalty to the state and to the Ruler (mulk o mālik kī vafādārī) and to respect the laws of the state.[19]

Leaving aside the aim to 'preserve' Islam, presuming it is an object under attack, from the second and third points one can infer that Muslims are threatened socially and economically, and that loyalty to the ruler and respect for the state is in need of encouragement. Possibly the last point is meant to reassure the government that the Ittehad had no intention of making demands on the state. There were no specific points of reform proposed in these objectives, simply the ideal of unity in the interests of 'protection'. This defensive stance was at the core of the Ittehad's founding; it was no doubt galvanized by the growing anti-Muslim propaganda of the Arya Samaj and Hindu Mahasabha, and inspired particularly by the slogan of 'tanzim'(organization) raised during the Khilafat years in British India.

Even though the activities of the Ittehad in this phase are mostly seen to be limited to 'occasional representation to the Government, and the convening of Milad-un-Nabi' (Khan 1971: 786), the report lists a series of activities including the ones following from the nature of the

[19] This translation—with minor modifications— is taken from Khan 1980, 49; the Urdu originals are my additions from the *Tārīkh* (37).

organization. Thus, not only did each leader promise to refrain from criticizing other sects or using hurtful words (dil-āzār alfāẓ) against each other, but also advised others (‘awām) to do the same. Prayers were organized at Mecca masjid for victims of riots (6), statements issued or speeches made from time to time against polemical attacks on Islam, made by the Arya Samaj (4,6) and in one case, ‘measures (kārvāī) were taken’ in April 1931 to prevent riots during an Arya Samaj ‘nagar-kirtan’ that was permitted on ‘the streets of the city’ (6). From 1928 to 1938 it appears that this was the regular rhythm of the Ittehad’s activities—they met a few times, issued the occasional statements and organized local events.

In 1933, the *Tārīkh* records, they published a pamphlet to counter the Arya Samaj’s antiIslam and anti-Nizam propaganda in Hyderabad. This pamphlet is important because it constitutes a turning-point: it appears to be the first collectively authored public document circulated by the organization, and it lays out all the major positions it would espouse until the very end of its career in 1948. This is telling, because there were few similarities in the political situation of 1933 and 1948, but by the end the party had no creative resources left to rethink its positions in light of a radically different political present. As the pamphlet shows, the structure of its actions and rhetoric is, again, reactive— others (outsiders, Hindu organizations, nationalists) act, the Ittehad responds.

The pamphlet begins by taking serious objection to the December 19, 1932 meeting of the Hindu Mahasabha in Delhi (Pernau 2000, 263) and its ‘resolutions’ indicting the state’s discriminatory treatment of Hindu subjects (*Tārīkh* 39). It aims at setting the record straight, and does this by pointing out the ways in which the regime’s policies give Hindus undue weight over Muslims. The rules of inheritance pertaining to jagirs and mansabs—land granted by the state for specific purposes, which were not heritable but had to be renewed from generation to

generation—are much more relaxed when it comes to Hindus, whereas Muslims routinely run the risk of having their property absorbed into the state-administered *divānī* area (40-41). The economy of the state is entirely in the hands of Hindus—nearly all the agriculturists, village officials, moneylenders, businessmen and many large landholders (including the *samsthan*, 'little kingdoms' with Hindu rajas that paid tribute to the Nizam) are Hindu. Since Muslims are in debt to Hindu moneylenders, they do not command enough capital to enter the field of trade (tijārat), while agriculture (zarā 'at) is closed to them because of the obstruction of village officials—all Hindu. Therefore, government employment is their sole means of livelihood, and it is limited both in the means it provides as well as the extent—since the traditions of the state have always entailed giving Hindus a certain percentage of government positions as well (42). So it is that Muslims are growing poorer and weaker (muflis aur khastā-ḥāl) every day.

Furthermore, the Mahasabha's claim that 85% of the population is Hindu is clearly false, since they conveniently include among themselves groups whose shadow they find polluting otherwise (43). What is more, the lower and Untouchable castes themselves proclaim their separateness from Hinduism, like the All-India Depressed and Backward Classes League that presented an address to the Nizam, acknowledging that no other place in India has made as many arrangements for their welfare (falāḥ aur bahbūdī kā intiẓ ām) as Hyderabad. Moreover, meetings attended by 50, 000 people in several instances across the *suba*s of the state had passed resolutions thanking 'Ala Hazrat, and declaring not only that they had nothing to do with the so-called upper castes among Hindus, but also that they, the depressed classes (past aqwām) constituted the majority of the population in the state (43-44). The Mahasabha's demand for more of a share in government holds no ground, because they have obtained a share of these far higher than was due to them according to their population.

Having attacked the Mahasabha's representative credentials and turned the discourse of discrimination around, the pamphlet made two more points, the second being an adverse comparison with the treatment of Muslims in Hindu states, like Bikaner (46-47). The first point, which would become much more central to the party's positions in the years to come, figures here as a statement—in contrast with other points that are argued:

> A ruler is naturally compelled (fitratan majbūr) to rely on members of his community (hamqaum afrād) in order to see to affairs of the state (qaum kā kārōbār-e-salṭanat), with subject communities (maḥkūm aqwām) being included in keeping with their loyalty and ability (vafādārī aur liāqat). This is the norm (m'amūl) of every civilized (mutamaddin) *government*. Accordingly, demands cannot be made merely on the basis of population percentages. (45-46)

This principle of monarchical rule buttressed by the realities of empire—note the language of civilization linked with government— would be held to by the Ittehad quite tenaciously, in the teeth of all opposition. All the other points respond to or attack the points made by the Mahasabha; this is a statement of principle.

The other important germ of the Ittehad's future rhetoric was in the articulation of the following claim to representation:

> On this occasion, this Majlis regards it as its duty (vafādārāna farīẓā) to warn the government (sarkār) about the tensions and anxieties (iẓtirāb o taraddud) of Muslim subjects of the Dominions (musalmān ri 'āyā mulk-e-sarkār-e- 'āli), resulting from the impression that the Mahasabha's *propaganda* is, in fact, working on the government (ḥukūmat).' (47)

Thus, for the first time, it would appear, the Ittehad issued something of a warning to the government on behalf of the Nizam's 'Muslim subjects'. In the same vein, it presented itself as the channel of their 'tensions and anxieties'. It would be five years before they would seriously undertake the task in terms of organization and infrastructure. It took a riot in the capital for this to happen, that is, the Dhulpet riot of 1938.

The invisible mover: Bahadur Yar Jang as sovereign

As mentioned before, the Dhulpet riot killed two Muslims, both nephews of Bahadur Yar Jang. The riot began when a Muslim procession passed 'through the Jinsi Chouraha locality of the city inhabited predominantly by Hindu Lodhas, some of whom were staunch Arya Samajists' (CID Report, quoted in Benichou 2000, 60). Stones were thrown at the procession, and since rumors had circulated beforehand that just such a thing might happen, the processionists, numbering 10,000, were 'armed with *lathis* and swords' and retaliated immediately (ibid., 61). The violence spread quickly to other neighborhoods; this spatial and decentralized spread was a first in the city, as was the duration (4 days). As the CID report noted, given the scale of the riot 'the exact number of casualties was remarkably low' (ibid., 61).

For our purposes here the more important and interesting element of the event is something that did not happen: an organized Muslim reaction to the death of the two young men related to Bahadur Yar Jang. This absence is made much of in the literature on the nawab and the *Tarikh*, because his charismatic influence, channeled through oratorical prowess, is given credit for controlling the large and aggressive crowd of mourners at the funeral. I cite below an account of this seminal non-event that paved the way for Bahadur Yar Jang's takeover of the Ittehad. The following description of the funeral procession of the young men, which set out from the nawab's home then called 'Mahdavi manzil'[20], is from Muhammad Ahmad Khan's biography (see Chapter 2):

> … it was not a funeral procession (julūs) of two young men in their prime, it was a raging sea with an intensifying storm. Who could control it? the government was worried, all the

[20] This was located in the predominantly Hindu Marwari (north Indian—Rajasthani— merchant caste) neighborhood—dating back to the founding of the city— of Begum Bazar, north of the river Musi (Leonard 2007, 16; Leonard 2014, 284, footnote 20). As headquarters of the Ittehad for a time, the mansion would be renamed Bait-ul-ummat (The House of the Community) in 1939 (Muhammad 1974, 88).

> smart courtiers and experienced administrators (mushīrān-e-ba-tadbīr aur muntaẓ mān-etajurbakār) at their wits' end. Everybody was sure the city would be ravaged (īñt sē īñt baj jāegī) …But they did not know how strong Bahadur Khan's hold on Muslim hearts was! This grand procession of angry and tense Muslims carried the hearse of their innocent young men for a whole two miles, without so much as a sound other than those of their own feet and the slogan of takbir…their hearts were in their mouth, the blood in their veins about to spill from their eyes, but not a sigh could escape their lips. If they took but a slightly heavier step, a voice would ring out, 'I can hear the sound of your feet!' and they would shrink back into their place, as if a spell (afsūn) had been cast. It was as if the spirit (rūḥ) of that raging crowd was in Bahadur Khan's grip, and they were as a lifeless instrument (be-jān āla) in those hands. (Khan n.d, 31)

Khan's purple prose renders the intensity of the drama of sovereignty enacted through this procession that did not turn into a riotous mob. Bahadur Khan is explicitly positioned as the fount of affective and very viscerally channeled power over people, in contrast with the 'expertise' of the government and its experienced administrators. It is their remit to keep order, but without Bahadur Khan's curiously disembodied ('a voice would ring out') but very corporeal power over the multitude, they are utterly lost. Furthermore, the young men are innocent victims that ought to be avenged and everything required for a fitting reply is at hand (just cause, weapons, fury, opportunity); it is a measure of the leader's power that he can go up against the combined force of these elements and triumph. The credit for ending the cycle of killing during the Dhulpet violence, it is suggested, goes to Bahadur Khan's leadership. It must be remembered that this account was published after his passing in 1944, but it conveys nevertheless the field in which the narrative of his leadership operated. In 1939, the post of president was created for the nawab in the Ittehad (Muhammad 1974, 85; Shikayb 1964, 296) and he occupied this position until his death in 1944. He is sometimes mistakenly identified as the founder of the Ittehad—but this is only a technical mistake. Bahadur Yar Jang did indeed found the Ittehad in the form that it became known and efficacious as a political organization.

This ascendancy was not without opposition. The position of unrivaled power enjoyed by the nawab in an organization that was, after all, supposed to be a collective endeavor of individuals with their own groups of followers, also created a field of conflict. Looking back the transformation, the *Tārīkh* suggests that the problem with the earlier structure (1928-1938) was precisely that the resolution of the 'difficulties' of the task (achieving unity) depended on the personal influence (ẕātī aṡarāt) of each leader. The one undisputed leader, by this logic, represented the unity of the community, the aims of the Ittehad embodied. But this transformation also subordinated the 'influential religious leaders of every Islamic sect' (har firqē kā ṣāḥib-e-aṡar maẕhabī pēshwā; *Tarikh*: 38), or the erstwhile leaders of the party to someone who neither came from the 'majority' Sunni sect nor had a traditional Islamic education. A group of these 'ulama and mashaikheen' broke away from the Ittehad and formed an organization called the Majlis-e-Ulama- Deccan (Ahmad 2007, 148).[21]

Supporters of the Ittehad under Bahadur Yar Jang, on the other hand, formed the Jami'atul-Mashaikh in 1941 (ibid., 150). To a gathering of this organization at Zamarrud Mahal he made a remarkable speech in 1942, summarizing the division of labor and alignment between 'religion' and 'politics' occasioned by his own ascendancy. He identified his own practice as a specific kind of politics: 'I am in the field of politics. If my politics is not Quranic, it will be Satanic (shaiṭānī), and if my aim is not the exaltation of the True Creed (a'lā-e-kalimat-ul-ḥaq)

[21] The immediate reason for the split in 1940 was apparently Bahadur Yar Jang's call to Hyderabadi Muslims that they refrain from mentioning their sectarian affiliation in the planned decennial census and identify only as 'Muslim' belonging to the religion of 'Islam'. A section of the 'ulama felt that his motivation for doing this was to hide the small numbers of his own sect (Mahdavi) from the public (Khan and Farooqui, 49-50).
Ahmad claims that these efforts against Bahadur Yar Jang were 'instigated' and encouraged by 'a certain lawyer, who was a trained maulavi and had passed an exam from the Urdu Law class…and who was extremely jealous of Nawab sahab's popularity' (149). He cites a letter from a friend of Bahadur Yar Jang's to confirm the name of this lawyer: Abdul Wahid Owaisi, first president of the MIM.

then I am on the wrong road.' (ibid., 54) By claiming the space of religious intention and action for his politics in this fashion, Bahadur Yar Jang laid the ground for the following warning:

> Those who want to work towards a certain kind of reform among Muslims, I will consider it my duty to serve them as a volunteer (raẓākār); if the Jami'at's aim is not to clash with the Majlis in political matters, not to destroy the unity of Islam, but to bring Muslims together, then I am at your service. But the day their mission becomes to divide instead of bringing together (vaṣl ki bajāy faṣl), self-love in place of love of God, love of individual appetites (nafs-parastī) over the welfare of the millat—that day, laying aside all the niceties of respect and politeness and with all his abilities (ṣalāḥiyatoñ), the person who stands against you will be Bahadur Khan, and he will consider this his duty to the millat. (Khan and Farooqui 1987, 55)

The speech ended on a politer note ('if I have given offense, consider my youth and forgive me'), but the message and the moment were unmistakable. The Ittehad, whose prime objective was to represent Muslims as a unified group, would henceforth decide where the line between the religious and political was to be drawn, and what were the proper ends of any organization of Muslims. In one sense this was left open: as long as they did not oppose the Ittehad and its project of unity, he would support them. But in another sense, it was clearly a laying down of the law: his opposition would be a formidable force to overcome. By assuming this kind of authority, not only did Bahadur Yar Jang laicize Muslim leadership in Hyderabad, he ensured its enmeshing with the logic of majorities and minorities—that this was dictated by the needs of the census is significant[22]— which was the basis of the Ittehad's politics even as it opposed its terms (as we shall see below).

This Islamist politics—very different, note, from something like Maududi's Jama'at-eIslami, famously distrustful of politics and political functionaries in its mission to build an

[22] Also in 1940-41, the Ittehad published pamphlets containing instructions and started an office to guide Muslims on their response to the questions on the census form, emphasizing that this was crucial to retaining their 'Islamic government' and political power over Hyderabad (Ahmad 2007, 213). It was felt that 'Muslims in the villages are mostly ignorant (jāhil). They hide the exact number of women and children in the household; put down the wrong language; often nonMuslim census officials leave them out.' (*Tarikh* 96).

Islamic state—was reflected in the expanded aims and objectives of the new, post-1938 Ittehad. Here they are, as listed by the *Tarikh*; especially notable are points B and C:

Aims and Objectives (*Aghrāẓ o Maqāṣid*)

A. To encourage the Muslims of the Āṣafiā kingdom to read the Holy Quran with a view to understanding and following it, so that they may grasp this Rope of Allah (ḥabl-Allah) securely, and to try and ensure proper instruction of *The Quran* in the country (mulk)
B. To encourage Muslims to come together on shared concerns (‘umūr) such as religious (maẕhabī), economic (ma’āshi) and social (ma’āshrati) while affirming their affiliation to their respective sects (maslak); to be united (muttaḥid) and refrain from creating confusion/disorder (ifrāṭ o tafrīṭ se eḥterāz karēñ) on political (siyāsī) matters.
C. The present status of the Muslims of the Asafia kingdom must continue forever (hamēshā barqarār rahē), because the person and throne of the ruler is a symbol (maẓ har) of their collective political and civilizational ascendancy (siyāsī aur tamaddunī iqtedār)[23]. On this basis, every amendment to the law of the land (dastūrī tarmīm) must affirm the ruler’s eternal royal authority (iqtedār-e-shāhānā) and the respect due to it.
D. To maintain all the advantages (mafādāt), privileges (imtiyāzāt) and rights (huqūq) that Muslims of the Asafia kingdom have enjoyed by inheritance (ta’wārisan) and in practice (ta’amalan), not only in order to preserve political power (siyāsī iqtedār kī baqa’) but also to secure their economic and cultural status.
E. To try and see that the Muslims of the Asafia kingdom maintain harmonious relations with non-Muslim communities (ghair-muslim aqwām) while remaining bound by Islamic injunctions (aḥkām-e-Islami), and thereby secure the integrity and autonomy (waḥdat o khud-mukhtārī) of the Asafia kingdom. (14- 15; Muhammad 1974, 86)

Point C is a statement of principle rather than a plan of action, and it is the pivot of the Ittehad’s aims and objectives; the first two points are internally directed at Muslims, while the last two are to do with the Other: the state, political opponents, ‘non-Muslim communities’. How does one make sense of the performative force of a statement like ‘the present status…*must* continue

[23] Munir Ahmad Khan appears to have translated ‘iqtidar’ as ‘rights’. But he cites ‘The Constitution of Majlis adopted on Mar. 15, 1942’ (87) as his source, while this clause is taken from the ones listed in the *Tarikh* (15). It is possible there has been a modification in the wording of the Constitution by 1941, but the substance of the clause seems to match with the one translated by Khan:
‘The ruler and the throne are the symbols of the political and cultural rights of the Muslim community in the state. This status of Muslims must continue forever. It is therefore for this that the maintenance of the prestige of the ruler must attain first importance whenever a change in the constitution of the state has to be affected.’ (72)

forever'? A declaration, claim and demand combined, who is it addressed to and what kind of field of address does it presume? It has been suggested that this was a sign of the Ittehad's contact with the All-India Muslim League (Benichou 2000, 98), and that it was in the nature of a bargaining counter—'extremism as a political strategy' to force the opponent to seek terms of rapprochement (Shikeyb 1964, 305). If the League resisted minoritization by positing a separate and unique Muslim 'nationality', the Ittehad through Bahadur Yar Jang claimed the entirety of the space of the state in the name of the Muslim community that had the right of rule by virtue of 'its' history. In the following section, I will look closely at Bahadur Yar Jang's series of speeches in order to show how the durability of imperial frameworks of politics created the conditions of possibility for such an utterance—the performative force of 'forever' owed itself to a conception of the future that would be continuous with a certain version of the past and present of Hyderabad state. Dominion status within the British empire (Tejani 2007, 238; Owen 2002) was the farthest political horizon for such an utterance, and the concept of a 'ruling community' the operative concept for political power.

This was a highly organized and successful change in Muslim politics in Hyderabad. Learning from other movements such as the Andhra Mahasabha, Bahadur Yar Jang stipulated (Ahmad 2007, 141) that each neighborhood (mohalla) in the city, and each village should be treated as a 'unit' where all Muslim residents would choose one representative based on majority opinion (ba-ghalbā ārā'). Each unit should firstly conduct a census of the Muslim population—in order to 'aid reform measures (iṣlāḥī tadābīr)—which will show members the extent of the community's backwardness and decay (pastī aur inḥiṭāṭ). In order to aid unity and organization, every branch must hold public events—speeches, sermons, seminars, religious meetings (taqārīr, mawā'iẓ , maẓāmīn, mahafil-e-d'awat)—so that Muslims may gather and overcome their

sectarian differences. A library consisting of the latest and most suitable newspapers and journals should be started (pro-Ittehad papers like the *Rahbar-e-Deccan* were prescribed while 'wrongheaded' papers like *Payam* were not to be read; on literary journals there was a broader outlook, including 'high quality' journals like *Sāqī*, *Nairang-e-Khyāl* and the state's own *Sabras*[24] ibid., 143). He also laid emphasis on encouraging Muslims to take to trade and start businesses (tijārat aur ṣan'at), by persuading them that these were not a matter of shame (bā'iṡ-e-nang-o-'ār) but of pride (ibid., 144). Women-in-parda (pardanashīn mastūrāt) were addressed in specific ways, illuminating further the socio-economic base of the Ittehad: on the one hand, they were encouraged to economize on household expenses and engage in small-scale home-based production of goods like envelopes, clay toys, accessories, needlework and embroidered cloth of certain types, even cigarette packs and matchboxes; the local Ittehad branch could make the required arrangements to supply raw material and sell the finished product. On the other hand, women were to be special objects of religious reform, inclined as they were 'to be fixed in their practice (lakīr kī faqīr), with a tendency to elevate ritual (rasm) to the status of religion (maẕhab)' (ibid., 145). To what extent this twinning of productive potential with refinement of religious subjectivity was actually put into practice or accomplished is unknown, but the normalization of its terms is itself a significant social fact.

The Ittehad's base was among the lower landed gentry and lower middle-class, who it sought to organize often against the new elites of 'Kishanpalli' and the old jagirdars. Annual 'donation' for membership was 2 annas (at this point the Andhra Mahasabha's membership cost 4 annas; Benichou 148), but in addition people in the neighborhood could be encouraged to

[24] This is interesting because these journals published progressive and modernist literature, translations from European literature and discussions about the politics of aesthetics. Clearly here 'literature' simply functioned as a site for cultivating a certain modern, aesthetically informed reader without regard to actual content.

direct their charity and zakat to their Ittehad branch as well, since it would be used to benefit their own neighborhood or village (Ahmad, op. cit., 146). But the nawab felicitously mediated old and new worlds, as evidenced, for example, in the acquiring of the 'Darussalam' (Dar-us-salām, 'abode of peace') property for the city headquarters of the Ittehad; known as Qamar Bagh at the time, it was purchased for a sum of 90,000 rupees[25] by him from Nawab Wali Dad Khan, a prominent Afghan nobleman in 1943 (Ahmad 2007, 224; Leonard 2007, 310). It was ideal for the nawab's purposes because, as he wrote to a would-be benefactor in 1943, 'consisting of three large, solid buildings it can immediately provide an office for the Majlis, a space for the razakars and a hostel for Muslim students; with a little effort, it could even provide the Majlis with a regular source of income.' Most of the money was raised by him through donations from nobles sympathetic to the Majlis and the "awam" (common people), and some of it came from his own pocket (Ahmad 2007, 225).

This mediation enabled the holding together of contradictions between statement and action that would haunt the Ittehad after Bahadur Yar Jang (Chapter 4): on the one hand, the party itself functioned on the basis of modern representative principles employing the vocabulary of majorities, elections, economic productivity and social reform; on the other, it proclaimed publicly the foreignness of democracy as a form of political organization.

II

In September 1937, the formation of a committee to recommend constitutional reforms in Hyderabad was announced (Pernau 261). Known as the Aiyangar Committee after its chairperson

[25] Since the amount is mentioned in a letter written by Bahadur Yar Jang it is likely that this referred to the currency of Hyderabad state at the time, that is to say the Osmania sicca.

Diwan Bahadur Aravamudu Aiyangar, this 'Reforms Committee' consisted of five members in all[26] and submitted its report in August 1938 (1347 Fasli)[27]. It recommended that the Legislative Assembly have 42 elected members based on a joint electorate while 33 members were to be nominated; Hindus and Muslims were to have 'parity' or an equal number of seats, Christians would have two and Parsis one (Pernau 2000, 273; Kooiman 2002, 205-211). The declaration of these reforms in July 1939 gave the Arya Samaj and Mahasabha the excuse they needed to call off their flagging agitation and agree to work with the government. The Ittehad remained implacably opposed, firstly to the whole idea of reforms in the political system, and then to the specific proposals of the Committee. This opposition became its first public battle—and victory—and unfolded over the course of several months in 1938 and '39, firmly establishing its presence as a domestic political force. In this section I look at this unfolding, by focusing in particular on a set of speeches made by Bahadur Yar Jang to rally his constituency in the city.

Prior to the announcement of the Committee in 1937, Bahadur Yar Jang, Mir Akbar Ali Khan, K.S Vaidya and M. Narsing Rao of the Andhra Mahasabha (editor of *Raiyat*)—basically, all loyalists of the regime and representing conservative to liberal opinion—met on their own initiative to come to an agreement about the Hindu-Muslim question. With the announcement of the Committee—which Bahadur Yar Jang was kept out of—these talks, apparently very close to an agreement (*Tarikh* 69), broke down. While the report was being considered by the government and awaited the Nizam's official approval, the satyagraha program hit the state. As we saw in the opening section, Maharaja Kishen Pershad issued a statement in support of the Hyderabad regime urging Hyderabadi Hindus and Muslims to stay united in accordance with

[26] Aside from the chairperson, Kashinath Rao Vaidya, Mir Akbar Ali Khan, Prof. Qadir Hussain Khan—all lawyers, the first two also liberal Congress supporters—and a bureaucrat from the Hyderabad Civil Service, Ghulam Mahmood Qureshi.
[27] IOR/L/PS/13/1234; Benichou 2000, 93.

their longstanding traditions. A public meeting was held to celebrate this statement and thank the Maharaja for issuing it, in April 1939 (Ahmad 2007, 21; Khan and Farooqui, 170).

In his introductory remarks Naziruddin Ahmad notes that this speech was historic, not only because of the large number of people who attended but also because Bahadur Yar Jang spoke and introduced a new clause in the resolution already on the table—which merely had to do with showing support and thanking the Maharaja for his statement. This new resolution—translated below—was passed by an overwhelming majority of 30,000 to 3 (21). Ahmad cites Muhammad Ahmad Khan's characteristically dramatic description of Bahadur Yar Jang's arrival at this meeting:

> The chair of the meeting (jalsa) was the leader of the nationalist faction (qaum-parast jam'at) and famous lawyer Mir Akbar Ali Khan. The Presidential address was being read, when the distinctive (makhṣūṣ) sound of honking was heard. Suddenly the cry of 'Allah o Akbar' rang out, and shouts of 'Long live Bahadur Yar Jang' rent the air. For fifteen minutes, the presidential address remained in suspension. The sole representative (wāḥid numāinde) of the Muslims of the Deccan had been announced. (Ahmad 2007, 107-108)

The representative status of the nawab must be established in this fashion precisely to show that the 'official' representative nominated to the Reforms committee, superior in social status and in education, does not in fact represent. It would turn out that whatever Mir Akbar Ali Khan had thought he was coming for (to preside over a 'meeting for peace and unity'), the whole point of the jalsa was precisely to announce the arrival and position of a new politics.

In his speech, the nawab quoted liberally and approvingly from the Maharaja's piece and details the old family links between them:

> I not only love the Maharaja but revere him. My ancestor Nasib Yar Jang the First was close to Maharaja Chandulal of heavenly abode (baikunṭhabāshī), and my grandfather Muhammad Daulat Khan, Nasib Yar Jang the Second, would often present himself at Raja Mahendar Pershad's. My father stayed loyal to the Maharaja Bahadur to the end of his days, and today my brothers and I keep the faith (unkē 'aqīdat-mand haiñ). (ibid., 23-24)

Notable is the familiar idiom of Hindu religiosity (baikunthabashi, literally he who lives in Vaikuntha, the seat of the Hindu god Vishnu; this invocation is very specific to sect) as well as the emphasis on their higher rank in relation to his own family of Muslim Pathan jagirdars. This is a performance of syncretism as well as a description of it. Bahadur Yar Jang goes on to support the Maharaja's argument in his piece that democracy is not a suitable form of government for every people:

> What Mr. Gandhi realized at Rajkot[28], the Maharaja's experience had showed him many years ago—that the actual aim is good government, not a particular type of government…the Maharaja is a Chhatri (Khatri); in his veins runs Suraj-bansi Rajput blood, the same blood that ran in Raja Ramchandraji's veins…he understands that for peace and harmony to reign… it is essential that propriety of rank (ḥifẓ -ĕ-marātib) be maintained between subjects (ri'āyā) and government (ḥukūmat). Subjects should ask in the appropriate fashion, and the monarch (bādshāh) must bestow as he would his royal favor (marāḥim-e-k̲ẖusravāna). (28-29)

From this the new clause to the resolution emerges quite clearly, and since such a powerful case has been made for it, it passes as resoundingly:

> This meeting fully supports the spirit of Maharaja Bahadur's statement, that our present form of government is better than the so-called government of democracy (jamhūriyat kī nām-nihād ḥukūmat). Until the subjects agree to behave appropriately (ḥusn-e-sulūk) and co-operate with the government as they should (ishtarāk-e-'amal), no reforms should be implemented in the state (mulk). (31)

Khan and Farooqui report in their footnote (178) that Mir Akbar Ali Khan—the nawab's friend, coparticipant in the 'unity talks' and colleague in the Mulki movement—objected to the resolution being introduced at this stage, without any prior discussion. Khan is the writer of this footnote, and confirms that this move was planned among the Ittehad leaders; thus, Mazhar Ali Kamil (lawyer and future president of the Ittehad) told the barrister that a resolution once

[28] Reference to Congress and Gandhi's failed program of satyagraha in the Western Indian princely state of Rajkot (of which his father was sometime diwan) against the autocracy of the prince, in 1938-39. The last phase was ongoing at the time of this speech; the final collapse would not come until a few weeks later, but the similarities with the Hyderabad situation are striking. See Jeffrey 1978, 240- 274.

introduced and on record could not be withdrawn, and so a vote must be taken. This was done and Mir Akbar Ali Khan was, of course, one of the 3 people opposed. This procedure of voting and affirmation by a large crowd, at the end of a powerful speech, was not unprecedented—in the last chapter we saw the instance of the discussion on the Sarda Bill. The Ittehad deftly turned a large audience of listeners into active participants expressing their views on *the* political issue of the day. The irony of using democratic procedure—including the coercive powers of majority opinion—to oppose the democratic principle of government appears not to have made itself felt (for a similar argument see Roosa 1998, 468).

Aside from being opposed in principle to the idea of reforms and of democracy as majority rule, the Ittehad was also opposed to specific proposals contained in it. Bahadur Yar Jang wanted, for example, the announcement to make very clear that Hyderabad was an Islamic state. The Nizam had wanted to include a reference to the founding of a 'Muslim state' by the first Nizam in the Deccan; the Resident and Akbar Hydari had opposed this because it was bound to be seen as a provocation by the '12 ½ million Hindu subjects' of the state (Benichou 95; Roosa 1998: 535-37). Playing his usual games within the political structure the ruler shared the draft and objections with Bahadur Yar Jang, now pre-eminent leader and representative of Muslim public opinion, fueling his public criticism of the Council and minister (ibid., 96-97).

Nevertheless, the Reforms were announced in July, as noted above; in a speech made at Mecca masjid on August 3, 1939 the nawab called them 'not reform, but deform' (Ahmad, 33). To explain the Ittehad's objections to the Reforms, and of course to continue to rally Muslim public opinion around the party and build its platform bit by bit, a series of speeches was organized at the newly acquired headquarters at Darussalam.[29] Held on August 23, 24 and 25th of

[29] See also Roosa 1998, 510-11.

August, each speech in the series was devoted to one topic relating to the nature of government: the first was a 'sketch' of different types of constitutions (dasātīr) prevalent in the world, the second was to do with the political conflicts (siyāsi kashmakash) on the subcontinent that had impacted Hyderabad, and the final speech was to be about the specifics of the Reforms scheme under consideration.

> Underscoring the pedagogic nature of this series, Bahadur Yar Jang told his audience: You have been listening to the speeches I made aiming at your hearts (qulūb); today I address (takhāṭib) your heads (dimāgh) more than your heart. I apologize if you do not find in them the enjoyment (lazzat) or sweetness (chāshnī) that has drawn you to me (khinchte rahē haiñ) …I think the comparison [made by the chairperson] of this meeting with a school (madrasa) is apt, and hope you will give me your attention as a student (ṭālib-'ilm) would. (Khan and Farooqui, 181)

Without going into the 'debate' (ikhtilāfi baḥaś) about human origins—whether Darwin right or the 'older viewpoint' (qadīm nazariya) of Adam's creation by God (Khuda) correct— we go on to the possible origins of government. For this Rousseau's authority from *The Social Contract* (*Mu'āhida-e-'imrānī*) is cited, to speculate that perhaps after humans had begun their 'civilized' (mutamaddin) life and rights of ownership (milkiyat ke huqūq) over land had led them into conflict, everyone in the 'tribe' (qabīlā) must have chosen one 'strong, powerful, wise, educated and knowledgeable' (mu'amla faham) person to be their leader (amīr). Or perhaps a strong person convinced them to obey him, based on his physical strength (jismāni ṭāqat) and strength of character (kirdār ki quwwat); these were the times when the foundations of monarchical rule or government (imārat, bādshāhat yā ḥukūmat) were laid. Without going too much into the specifics of this version of Rousseau, I want to highlight two points: one, that liberal contract theory forms the grounds of this political history grounded in linear time, and two, that the physical and moral excellence of the would-be ruler is emphasized (ibid., 182). These are the crucial elements of the frame that Bahadur Yar Jang offers his audience to make sense of the

reforms: the authority of history and political philosophy, as modern disciplines *and* as substantive descriptions of the world.

Gradually populations grow and from tribes, nations (qaum) are formed, nobles are needed, and the science of politics (‘ilm-e-siyāsat-e-madn) is born; this is the phase of ‘the Pharaohs in Egypt, Nimrod of Babel, Ashoka and Vikramaditya in India, Nero and Julius Caesar in Rome and Alexander the Great in Greece’ (183). In this ancient phase of history, however, there were also leaders possessed of exceptional foresight and wisdom very far above the common people’s; they laid down laws that would turn people towards God (ẓawābit-e-min-jānib Allah). David and Solomon in the history of Israel exemplify this moment; it can also be found in India, but ‘today it is the Muslim community that adheres to this faith (eiqān kī ḥāmil) most strongly, because they hold The Quran to be the law governing their life (ẓawābit-e-ḥayāt) as well as community (qānūne-ijtema’i).’ Again, the emphasis is not on God’s law being sacrosanct, but the virtues of the Lawgiver and intentions of the law in guiding a people towards God.

From these pristine origins, the story of a fall is told—in due course these excellent rulers came to be corrupted, primogeniture was established as the principle of rule and they immersed themselves in luxury and pleasure (aish o ‘ishrat; ibid., 185). Disquiet grew among their subjects, so much so that there came to be a common trend (rujhān) against monarchy; this is how democracy was born; the city-states of Athens are an example. This reference to Athens is an occasion to cite Aristotle’s *Politics* as the ‘oldest treatise’ on politics, in which that ‘famous Greek philosopher’ describes governments as being of two types: good and bad (acchī aur burī ḥukūmat). This argument is worth quoting in detail:

> Good government is based on the consideration of common good (mafād-e-‘ama) rather than private interest (aghrāẓ-e-zātī), and bad government is one where private interest takes precedence over the common good. He [Aristotle] does not care whether power (iqtedar) is concentrated in one person, or divided among individual representatives

> (numāinda afrād) or all residents of a state (bashindagān-e-mamlikat). According to him, it is the purity (pākīzagī) of intention (nīyyat) and practice (ṭarīqa-e-'amal) that proves the ends of an action (natāij-e-'amal) good or bad. He prefers an *aristocracy* of incorruptible nobles (a'yān) to the rule of a numerous, but self-centered *oligarchy*. This is not hard to understand for people who live in Hyderabad, because they can simply look at their own experience. (ibid.)

This fascinating appropriation of Aristotle to understand Hyderabad's present could attest to the Aristotelian tradition in Islamic philosophy[30], but significantly, that is *not* invoked here. The realm of the universal belongs to Aristotle as a sign of the West ('the world')— even he, standing at the head of Western political philosophy so enamored of democracy, said good government mattered over principle of government (specifically, number and representation). In his third speech Bahadur Yar Jang returns to the critique of the oligarchy that rules Hyderabad—the people who live in Aziz Ahmad's Kishanpalli, or Hashim Amir Ali's young men who think Henry VIII a 'good sport' after an English education (see Chapter 1). This defense of aristocracy is meant also, of course, to erect a theoretical and historical barricade around the throne of Hyderabad. The fact that this legitimacy was now in need of defending, and the terms of the defense are provided by ancient Greece and revolutionary France (see below) in this 'school' attended by 30,000 people indicates not only how the world of Hyderabad city had transformed in four decades, but that the Ittehad was well aware and able to address the educated Muslim professional classes of the city on their own terms.

After Aristotle, however, monarchy prevailed everywhere for centuries. The next stop in this world history—one could say anti-Tocquevillian history—of democracy is the French Revolution, which 'presented history in a new way' and once more the clamor for democracy rose everywhere (186). The point toward which the argument was building has finally arrived: the current situation in Europe and elsewhere (the second world war would be declared in a few

[30] The classic source for this is Rosenthal et al 1975; also see Gutas 1998.

months) demonstrates the truth that 'human nature (fitrat-e-insani) needs to bow to One, and so gradually democracy is becoming less and less effective as a form of government' (187). In conclusion Bahadur Yar Jang reminds 'this audience of Muslims' of Islamic history and philosophy of government, confining himself to examples from the life of the Rightly Guided Caliphs (and among them the second, the Caliph Umar). The emphasis is on the virtues of the Caliph, of course, but also on the fine balance that Islamic philosophy of government strikes between democracy and sovereign power: 'on the one hand, we find democracy in all its glory in the Rightly Guided Caliphs (Khulafā-e-Rāshidīn) with their advisory council (majlis-e-shura), and on the other we see that the Commander of the Faithful (amir-ul-mominīn) is not bound by their advice.' In spite of being so powerful, however, the Caliph was accountable for his conduct to his subjects (188).

If Islamic history begins and ends with the first four Caliphs in Bahadur Yar Jang's speech while 'the rest of the world' is placed squarely within a narrative of the present linking past and future in progressive, linear time, there is nevertheless a pedagogic and moral use of the past that is common to both temporalities. It is rhetorically marshalled in order to persuade that there are excellent reasons for opposing democracy as a form of government even while recognizing the virtues of its 'proper' practice. The status of Islamic history is exemplary in one way— justice, accountability and democratic sensibility is embodied in the Caliph— while Aristotle, Rousseau, the French Revolution, the English Constitution (to which a brief reference is made) right down to Hitler and Mussolini (186-187) exemplify through argument, and the movement of time itself a moral truth about human nature and its need to obey sovereign power. How much better it would have been, concluded Bahadur Yar Jang, if a professor of Osmania University had talked to you about these topics; alas, 'the limits placed on them (unkī

pābandiyāñ)[31], and my own boldness (mērī be-bākiyañ) have forced me to shoulder this responsibility, and I freely admit that I find myself falling short (qāṣir pā rahā hūñ).' (189) It is difficult not to admire the poetic quality of this rhetorical tactic, smoothly turning a 'frank' admission of weakness into strength, underscoring a masterly performance of reasoned argument.

The structure of the second speech is circular rather than linear: its main argument is spelled out in the very beginning, and the speech travels back to the same point in the end: a 'bird's eye view' of Indian history ('Indians have always worshipped their kings as gods—Sri Krishanji and Ramchandarji are examples, as is the worship of the late Nizam, Mir Mahbub Ali Khan') tells us that the demand for democracy on the part of 'Hindus' arises purely out of British influence, and ressentiment. Positing the majority-rule principle of democracy entailed not only the transfer of British power to themselves, but also enslaving the Muslims, rulers for nearly a thousand years,' (192). The rest of the speech proceeds by focusing on the Deccan. Here the major point is that since Alauddin Khilji's Deccan campaign, that is to say for 'six hundred years' there has been a history of Muslim rule in the region, unbroken even by the British conquest of the subcontinent.

A minor but significant theme is the continuance of Islamic law as the law of the land—since this was already available, the question of legislation did not arise (192-194). The second half of the speech is entirely devoted to the present, that is, the reign of Osman Ali Khan—as we get closer to the third and final speech specifically about the Reforms. Bahadur Yar Jang notes correctly that the royal intention behind the 1920 'firman' mandating an expansion of the Legislative Assembly, was nothing other than that 'in addition to his bureaucrats, he should also

[31] In 1938, the Hyderabad government had placed a ban on government employees' participation in the activities of 'communal organizations', in which the Ittehad was included at this time (Benichou 57, 83).

know something of his subjects' problems and needs from them, and so a few more educated and thoughtful people (aṣaḥāb-e-fikr o rāi) could be included among his advisors (mushīr) on legislation' (196). Now, as developments in British India impact Hyderabad more and more ('as the ministers of princely states dance on the wire stretching between Wardha and Delhi'; Wardha being one of Gandhi's homes), this has turned into a demand for democratic government (197).

Bahadur Yar Jang ends this second speech by complaining about the false campaign against Hyderabad state that depicts it as a regressive backwater where 'everybody is deprived of religious rights, or any kind of rights of citizenship' (198). The 'real demand' is for political power, that is to say, 'responsible government', as M. Narsing Rao stated clearly during their talks; this could not be conceded, because it would mean that 'Muslims, being but 11% of the population of the state' would have no voice at all in an elected legislature when faced with an overwhelming Hindu majority (202). And finally, the two-hundred-year old English liberal chestnut that had made itself so comfortable in high nationalist politics on the subcontinent appears: constitutions depended on context, and clearly not every country (mulk) was suited to democracy or the rule of the people (jamhūriyat aur 'awām kī ḥukmarānī). The most important requirement of democracy was commonality of thought (rabṭā-e-khyāl), and here were two communities that had lived together for a thousand years and still could not sit down and eat at the same table (203). In a characteristic rhetorical move, Bahadur Yar Jang closes by stating, 'once more—I have said this before and have no hesitation in repeating—that perhaps if I lived not in Hyderabad but some other country, I would be among the foremost advocates (mudd'aiyōñ) of responsible government and of democracy' (203-204).

Already we have a good sense of the Ittehad's objections to the very idea of reforming the legislature. Their objection to the Reforms—where representation was based on 'interests' and

occupation—clearly rested on the small numbers of Muslims across classes; they were concentrated in the jagirdar class and among the professions, in the law (203). In the final speech some of the specific proposals put forward by the Ittehad to the Aiyangar Committee are mentioned; the party feels the need for the government to listen to the people more, and therefore advocates not only the constitution of advisory committees to be attached to each ministry, but also periodic 'conferences' to be held in each district where people may present their grievances etc. (210-11) What the Ittehad opposes at every level is the merest whiff of elected representation, in principle as we have seen: they are against the granting of the smallest of powers to village 'panchayats' ('this will create the kind of problems we now have in the cities; and there are but a handful of Muslims in the villages'), the creation of municipal bodies for towns (209-210), representation for Muslim women and of course, an elected legislature. There appears here an interesting contradiction of principle with regard to the question of sovereignty, and this more than any of the other defensive proposals, shows the impossibility of the minority position the Ittehad is already backing into. On the one hand, they claim that sovereignty rests with the Muslim community of the state, via the Nizam:

> The Report claims that Ala Hazrat is the embodiment (maẓ har) of the people's sovereignty. Firstly, he is sovereign in his person…in a democracy the head of the government is the representative (numāinda) of the sovereignty (iqtedar) of the people by virtue of being related to them by race (nasl), nationality (qaum), religion (mazhab) and nativity (vataniyat). If the head of the state (mamlikat) must necessarily be linked to his subjects with respect to his ideas and trust (fikr o 'etemad), then in this case the Majlis regards 'the people' as referring to the group (jam'at) with which the monarch of Hyderabad has racial, national and religious ties' (208).

On the other hand, the principle of joint electorates based on representation by class proposed by the Committee, is opposed on the following grounds:

> They have studied and ignored the history of the last twenty years in British India. Joint electorates without reserving seats for Muslims have been proposed. They think Hyderabad is the abode of gods (farishtōñ kī sar-zamīn); Hindus in spite of being Hindus

> and Muslims in spite of being Muslims are completely unaffected by what is going on in British India. They did not find it necessary to safeguard the interests of Muslims, who are the real foundation of rule, who have watered the garden of the state with their blood and have provided every comfort and facility to others while governing for six hundred years (207).

The historical claim to sovereign power coupled with an appeal—disguised as a demand— for safeguards is a contradiction of tone and strategy born of a defensive political program. How could one be both sole possessor of sovereignty and in need of safeguards? This incoherence in its position can only be understood in terms of a desperate attempt to suture past with unstable present and hazy future. The same struggle can be seen in what seems like quibbles with the wording of the report, when the nawab complains about the terms of representation granted to Parsis and Christians: "At least two Christians and one Parsi must be among the 33 nominated members of the Assembly." … Why does it say 'at least'?' he asks; could it be to make room for an 'at most' of '22 Christians and 11 Parsis'? (221) The danger, then, is from any non-Muslim voting bloc that could outnumber Muslims in the Assembly. Furthermore, there is the legitimate worry that the minimum requirement of election—40% of the votes must come from one's own community—will mean the election of unrepresentative candidates, because their fidelity to the community will deprive them of the votes needed from other communities (217). The terms in which this is expressed, however, make it clear that this is a caste and class-based worry: 'I ask you, will the proper people be elected in this process? What if, instead of Abul Hasan Syed Ali sahab [his colleague in the Ittehad presiding over the meeting] some Sheikh Salar, or in place of Syed Muhammad Ahsan sahab some Ghoru sahab is elected?' (ibid.) This is meant to be comic of course. The contrast between these names is one of pedigree, and the fear—again, legitimate, but in quite another way—is that elections will introduce a new basis of political leadership into

the existing system where social and political authority are continuous and map onto each other seamlessly.

In its own way, the Aiyangar Report struggled with a receding ideology of legitimation and an emergent one too; the Ittehad was right to seize on the confusion between the two versions of sovereignty present within its discourse: on the one hand 'the ruler was regarded as "the source of law and justice"' and on the other, 'as the "embodiment of his people's sovereignty"' (Pernau 272). However, these struggles were of a different order: here, the emergent possibility did not spell disaster, but transformation that was already underway. The Legislature conceived by the Reforms Committee was, in fact, an advisory body (ibid.) But Bahadur Yar Jang was quick to recognize the effect of introducing the elective element instead of nomination, and of extending the network of local government: 'the world knows and every student of politics understands that once you concede an elected legislature, rights cannot be given but tend to be transferred by themselves (khud-ba-khud muntaqal honē lagtē haiñ) as times change' (Khan and Farouqi 214). If I were convinced that Muslims could hold their own in the Assembly and protect the Asafia Islamic state, he goes on to say, I would argue to extend the rights of the Assembly myself, because 'no intelligent person, and one who feels the pain of the country…can put up with Hyderabad's current ruling *oligarchy*.' (215)

Here is another instance of the use of a counter-factual scenario—if this were not the case, I would not be forced to do X— to invite a different perspective on the conflicted interiority of the leader. But this point is important because it points to the actual suggestions made by the Ittehad in the context of the Reforms—they argued that the current system, the 'oligarchy' running Hyderabad, was insupportable. For example, speaking on behalf of its still-evolving base, the Ittehad proposed an <u>expansion</u> in the bureaucratic apparatus—all administrative

appointments must be decided on the basis of 'personal ability (ẕātī qābiliyat), aptitude (fiṭrī ṣalāḥiyat) and loyalty to the country and state (mulk o salṭanat ke sāth vafādārī), so that favoritism and nepotism (bejā pāsdārī o qurbā nawāzī) may be prevented and educated young men may be given the opportunity to serve' the state (Ahmad 2007: 203). Similarly, it demanded the tightening and clarifying of rules pertaining to salaries, pensions, transfers and promotions in government service (ibid.) and that in order to 'attend immediately to economic development and organization (iqtiṣādī t'āmīr o tanẓ īm) … the government draw up a three or five-year *program* and implement it' (ibid., 204).

This, then, was a logical and historical extension of what Salar Jang had started, in an age of Soviet Five-Year plans for economic development and in the face of the criticisms detailed by the likes of Hashim Amir Ali. Possibly because these demands for the expansion and streamlining of the administrative structure were not distinctive features of the Ittehad's platform, they were not highlighted in Bahadur Yar Jang's speech. They were simply part of the discourse of progress and modernization in the state by this time; as we saw, the discourse of governance was itself organized around these tropes. The politics of representation, on the other hand, mirrored the demands of the Hindu organizations, and this line of antagonism was the center-piece of the party's platform. In the final part of this last speech Bahadur Yar Jang says two things that bears this out. One, he borrows from Iqbal's critique[32] of the statistical principle of democratic representation to legitimate his own defense of Muslim claims in Hyderabad:

> I can see that Hindustani Muslims…find our stand very strange, because it has been a while since they lost political power (ḥukūmat) and have since been slaves to the British along with the Hindus. And when the tides of democracy hit them, they also acquired the technique of counting instead of weighing (220).

[32] The closing lines of Iqbal's 4-line poem titled 'Jamhūriyat (Democracy)', first published in the 1936 anthology *Ẓarb-e-Kalīm*: 'Democracy is a form of government/That counts bodies instead of weighing them' (as cited in Roosa 1998, 449)

The idea that the historical importance of Muslims in the state was due to their status as ruling community is in fact reminiscent of turn-of-the-century arguments made by founders of the Muslim League—also belonging, at the time, to the landed aristocracy of Northern India (Shaikh 1998). In his opposition to the leveling principle of substitutable equivalence, however, Bahadur Yar Jang also finds himself in agreement with arch enemies of his politics and of Hyderabad state, and against his fellow Hyderabadis:

> I agree with Dr. Moonje that because of the Council's shortsightedness [on the proposal for joint electorates] the Himalayas that is the Asaf Jah state—which did not bend to the power of Nadir Shah—has moved. As Mr. Savarkar says, this fortress of Islam that remained unaffected by the attacks of the Marathas and Hindu kings from south India, has finally been breached (222).

Moonje and Savarkar were, of course, leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha and had welcomed the proposals of the Reforms Committee, claiming them as a victory for the Hindu cause (Kooiman, op.cit., 208) and a direct result of their anti-Hyderabad agitation. Bahadur Yar Jang's acknowledgement and agreement shows, paradoxically, how much Hyderabad politics was now to unfold under the gaze of the emergent majoritarian nation-state. The Hindu-Muslim question in Hyderabad—which conspicuously left out other communities, religious and otherwise—replicated the terms of the national deadlock, even while claiming difference.

III

The reforms were discreetly 'shelved' following the start of the war in September (276), but it was rumored that concessions had been made to the Ittehad's demands. The Nizam had in fact 'prompted by Jinnah…made secret promises to Bahadur Yar Jang that he would not allow the introduction of Reforms which would give Muslims less than 51 per cent representation' in the proposed Legislature (Benichou 98; Pernau 274). Encouraged by the Nizam's tacit support on this issue, the Ittehad went from strength to strength in the early 1940s: all major towns of the

state had a local branch, and district headquarters were 'equipped with a local library, gymnasium and a small-scale industry' (Khan 1980, 69). Through 1940 and 1941 it consistently demanded more autonomy for Hyderabad state and the setting up of weapons factories in the state—in order to aid the war effort better—and urged 'the Muslims of the Deccan, nay, the Muslims of India' to refer to the Nizam as '"His Majesty" or "Jalālat-ul-Mulk"' (Benichou 100). Also in 1940, official recognition was obtained for the party's armed (with 'poleaxes' or 'tabar') volunteer wing, called simply the Razakar or Volunteers' Organization (tanẓīm-e-raẓākāran) and its regulations drawn up.[33] Of course the existence of a paramilitary 'volunteer' body attached to a political party was not an innovation at this time: this Fascist model of organization, along with a cult of male discipline involving body-building, exercise and demonstrations of physical prowess, had become popular across the world and certainly on the subcontinent (Raza and Roy 2015). Bahadur Yar Jang himself was an enthusiastic organizer of the Khaksar movement in Hyderabad city and this heavily influenced the organization of the Razakars. In the beginning, they did what other such bodies, attached to political parties, were required to do: wore khaki uniforms (with a black fez cap), maintained a schedule of exercise, drills and marches, saluted the Asafia flag and organized and watched over the Ittehad's public meetings (Benichou 2000, 99; Roosa 1998, 522).

Caught in the intrigues of the court, the Nizam-Ittehad relationship fluctuated as the power and presence of the organization grew. By January 1941, Bahadur Yar Jang had formalized the party's theory of sovereignty into a new 'political creed' (kalima-e-siyāsī; Ahmad 1981: 223) which the assembled audience would recite after him:

> We are the Kings of the Deccan; the Throne and Crown of the Deccan are symbols of our own political and cultural sovereignty; His Exalted Highness ('Ala Hazrat) is the soul of

[33] http://bahaduryarjung.org/PDF_Books/MIM/DastooreAmalTanzimRazakaran_MIM.pdf

> our Kingship and we form the body of his Kingship. If he ceases to exist, we cease to exist; and if we are no more, it will be no more. (Benichou 109; Khan 1980, 72)

Calling this a 'kalima' or creed of faith merely underscored all the steps that Bahadur Yar Jang had already taken towards operationalizing a space of political theology. In a further twist, it became (in)famous as the creed of 'Ana-al mālik' (I am King; Benichou 108).[34] From here it seems like the next logical step to declare, as he did in 1941, that '[I am not] dying for the sake of the King of the Dekkan (sic)…I am not *Abdul Malik* [slave of the king], but *Abdullah* [the slave of God]' (Pernau 279). It did not matter that this theory of sovereignty was denied formally and publicly by the Nizam in 'an extraordinary Gazette issued on May 7, 1941':

> The sovereignty of H.E.H is indivisible, inalienable and absolute…the Nizam and his government have not found it possible to accept the theory of responsible government for the same reason as those which impel them to reject the doctrine like that propounded by [the] Ittehadul Muslimeen (sic) which implied the division and diffusion of H.E.H's sovereignty among 15 lakhs of his subjects and those belonging to a particular class. (ibid., 73)

By 1943, Bahadur Yar Jang was defiant enough to proclaim, yet again, that he would fight for the Asafia flag because it was 'an Islamic symbol', not because it was the 'flag of Chin Qilich Khan Asaf Jah [the first Nizam] or Nawab Osman Ali Khan' (Khan 1980: 73; Pernau 280). For this he was banned from speaking within the state for a period of a year; he was able to turn the ban to his advantage by giving up his title and property, which meant no longer being formally

[34] The most interesting thing about this Arabic rendition, apparently, of 'we are the kings (badshah) of the Deccan' is that I have not been able to find it in any of the Urdu sources, but it appears in nearly every English source (Khan 1980 is an exception), primary and secondary (Benichou 108; Pernau 277), particularly those critical of the Ittehad (Rajeswara Rao 1972, 4; Reddy 1973, 9; Sundarayya 1972, 17). Shikayb claims that the attribution of this creed to Bahadur Yar Jang was a 'vulgar allegation (behūda ilzām)' concocted and disseminated widely by 'the 'ulama of the Deccan, on the behest of the court (darbār)' (66) The rendering into Arabic obviously does something, makes too visible, perhaps, the complete transformation of the 'religious' into a tool of sovereignty in the space of political theology. It is also, of course, uncomfortably close to Mansur Al-Hallaj's (858- 922 CE) cry 'Ana-al Ḥaq' (I am the Truth/God) that led to his execution (Massignon and Gardet, n.d); if it was a fabrication, it clearly played on this 'blasphemous' association as well.

bound by fealty to the Nizam outside Hyderabad (Pernau 280). As 'Bahadur Khan' and with the Nizam's permission, he spent the year touring British India and speaking from the Muslim League platform at various places (ibid.); in 1944, his titles and jagir were duly returned and the ban lifted.

I end this section on a note of irony. On his return, Bahadur Yar Jang was enthusiastically received by his followers and party-members, who wanted him to concentrate on Hyderabad rather than on the Pakistan movement.[35] His response was published in the *Rahbar-e-Deccan* on April 17, 1944:

> I am pained to see that the love and attachment the organization should occasion is being focused solely on the leader. I fear that this relationship of the millat of Islam with an individual will lessen the relationship with God; you shouldn't be surprised, under the circumstances, if I only work outside the state (ṣirf bāhar kā ho jāuñ), so that your connection with individuals is broken and you trust to your own strength (dast o bāzū). (Muhammad 1974, 142)

Too much charismatic authority threatened, then, not only to render its subjects too dependent, but dependent on the wrong, that is, worldly authority. The strength of the community was its collective relationship to God, and if this came to be mediated through an individual—whether ruler or demagogue—it would take away from collective strength. The ironies are multiple—firstly, we saw how precisely this relationship was cultivated throughout the nawab's career; secondly, the entire politics of the Ittehad had ostensibly centered around defending Hyderabad against the effects of subcontinental politics or 'outsiders'; thirdly, the complaint is about being followed a little too sincerely and loved too much, and finally, the sadly ironic fact that this statement was issued two months before his sudden death on June 25, 1944.

[35] He never did formally join the party, forming and heading the All-India States Muslim League instead (Kooiman, op. cit.).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have told the story of the Ittehad'ul Muslimin 's emergence as a distinct political platform in Hyderabad. I began by giving an account of how north Indian Hindu agitators sent to the state in order to defend the freedoms of their co-religionists allegedly under attack by the Muslim regime perceived and experienced it. This is the gaze under which Hyderabad's politics unfolded from this point onwards. Bahadur Yar Jang's ideas and public presence shaped the rise of the Ittehad as a Hyderabadi nationalist force, organized around a vision of Hyderabad as an Islamic state—which the Hindu parties claimed that it was. Equal parts of economic self-interest, a conservative political philosophy and the very real threat of aggressive majoritarianism formed the discourse of the popular politics inaugurated by the party. The contradictions in its platform would not become crises until a decade later.

In the late 1930s the Nizam found himself deep in the waters of democratic nationalism in all its hues— from the Congress' more liberal version, overlapping in many places with the Arya Samaj and Hindu Mahasabha's virulently sectarian Hindu supremacist version to the Muslim League's championing of Muslim interests. Presiding over what Pernau argues was a crisis-ridden 'patrimonial system', the Nizam was interested in keeping and enhancing his power particularly viz-a-viz the British and to this end clearly saw the benefits of courting Muslim nationalists in particular, but these very interests also dictated an antipathy to all forms of democratic politics based on the idea of representative government. For a time then, the Nizam's ends coincided with the Ittehad'ul Muslimin 's, though the strong anti-British component of the Ittehad's politics under Bahadur Yar Jang was far removed from the ruler's own identification with British royalty. However, he was now faced with the charismatic force that could organize a public threatening to undo the basis of the monarchical order. Mir Osman Ali Khan's attempts at harnessing these popular energies to prolong his rule—in the face of nationalist and Hindu

majoritarian assertion— became central to the mediation performed by Bahadur Yar Jang between the past and present, but in the exact opposite direction than intended. Both worked toward the destruction of the three-way colonial structure of paramountcy (Nizam—Minister/Executive Council—Resident), and shared a desire for an independent, sovereign Hyderabad state. As we have seen, the creed of the Ittehad, however, amounted to claiming that the Nizam ruled not because his forefathers had founded the state and ruled for six generations, but because he was Muslim, who were uniquely equipped to wield power by virtue of having ruled in the Deccan 'for centuries'.

By the time of Bahadur Yar Jang's passing in 1944, the Ittehad had 450 branches all over the state; the early years of his leadership had seen this number go from 58 in 1937 to 354 in 1939 (*Tarikh* 94). His political stance was complicated, even to the end of his life. For instance, Munir Ahmad Khan cites his 1944 letter to 'a former President of the Railway Employees Union' asserting that 'I have always been opposed to the organization of the labour (sic) and peasants on communal lines…I did not lend my support until the representatives of both communities jointly asked me to' (Khan 1980: 78). Membership in political organizations only partially indicates adherence to some core ideological principles at this point, partly because of the divergences between national and state-level politics, and partly because parties themselves adjusted principles and strategy in response to a fluid historical situation[36]. Thus, ardent would-be Communists like 'the Arutla brothers' Ramachandra and Lakshmi Narsimha Reddy were Arya samaj supporters opposing conversions to Islam, effected by Bahadur Yar Jang's tours in the early 1930s, in their villages (Reddy 1984, 19; Roosa 1998: 443), their comrade Ravi Narayan Reddy a Gandhian doing the same (Reddy 1973, 7-8). The leftist Comrades' Association, started

[36] A recent account of the CPI's changing policies with respect to the Pakistan demand and Muslim politics in general is in Asdar Ali 2015, 33-68

in 1939, supported the group of Hindu students at Osmania University agitating for their right to sing the 'Vande mataram' song as a bona fide prayer (Leonard 2014, 74; Datla 2013, 138), on the one hand, and nominated two members to join the Ittehad, on the other; the latter rose to become part of the central Majlis-e-Shura, before having to leave as it became increasingly 'sectarian and communal' (Razvi 1985, 37; Roosa 1998, 541-544). Old Congress leaders like M. Narsing Rao, Sarojini Naidu and Kashinath Vaidya, we have seen, were Mulki nationalists and loyalists of the regime. But already the politics of the state were being shaped by the gaze of an emergent Hindu supremacist politics, anticipating a Hindu nation-state where Muslims in particular were the designated unIndian Other.

The Ittehad, for its part, broke the power of the old aristocracy and jagirdar class for good even though it inherited their prejudices: 15 of its 20-member Majlis-e-Shura in 1942 were lawyers, 'half of them hailing from the districts' (Khan 1980, 70). Its strongest presence was in the western districts of Marathwada (the towns of Latur, Osmanabad, Parbhani, Bhid and Nanded)—where the politics of Hindutva was also most entrenched. In Telangana, Warangal, Nizamabad and Medak were important centers, while Raichur and Bidar in the Karnataka region were considered strongholds (ibid., 70). These names would recur in the disaster landscape of Police Action in 1948 as the scenes of 'a Muslim tragedy', as Wilfred Cantwell Smith called it. The Ittehad'ul Muslimin originated and grew in the city of Hyderabad, enabled by its urban traditions and spaces; it practiced a mass politics enabled by democracy while declaiming against it as a 'western' form. It is perversely logical that its destruction would be hastened by the districts of Hyderabad state.

Chapter 4
Hyderabad, 1948: A Tragedy in Two Acts

> A deathly silence had fallen upon Abid Road. As if it was the carriage of death that was approaching, not Huzur Nizam's car. And suddenly a black car— a Rolls Royce, perhaps— sped down the road on the *wrong side* (kings and monarchs usually travel on the *wrong side*; to be on this side would be lèse-majesté). People stared at their 'beloved monarch', who, despite being His Majesty wore a dirty black Rumi cap without a tassel and a black achkan [overcoat]. An embodiment (mujassima) of darkness (syāhī), he appeared for a second and receded from view, leaving darkness in his wake.
>
> I think he was the man of the moment, who in some indefinable way touched the dreamlife of the Muslims of Hyderabad. At a time of uncertainty and change, he had managed to tap into their psyche. It was his blustering talk—all promises and threats and ridicule—that the ordinary Muslim citizens of Hyderabad wanted to hear, no matter how disconnected from reality it might be. In return, they supported him, while accepting, even delighting, in his shortcomings. A popular comment at the time summed it up: 'What if Qasim Razvi is an inexperienced leader, untested in the affairs of state? What if he turns out to be a scoundrel? These are no times for a saint!' To blame Qasim Razvi for the tragedy of Hyderabad, therefore, is to miss the point: he did not lead Hyderabad astray; the people chose him for the job, fully aware of his political inclinations and shortcomings, as the individual most likely to reflect their hopes and fears.

In Chapter 1 we saw Mir Osman Ali Khan ride down a busy Hyderabad street in 1913, through the optimistic eyes of a visiting English socialist. The first extract translated above is taken from a text of mixed genres, a memoir-reportage titled *Do Mulk, Ek Kahānī* (Two nations, One story) by the Hyderabadi socialist writer Ibrahim Jalīs, who wrote these words describing the Nizam's ride from his King Kothi palace in the new city to the Mecca masjid in the Old City, to celebrate Hyderabad's independence on August 14, 1947. Finally hailed by his subjects on Abid road as 'His Majesty', he was greeted by cries of 'Long live Shah Osman'—and by the cynicism of young rebels such as Jalis, from whose prose you could not guess that this was a festive occasion. The second is taken from a memoir written in English by Hyderabad bureaucrat Mohammad Hyder, published only recently and titled *October Coup* (2012). This is his uncannily insightful evaluation of the charismatic authority of the last president of the Ittehad'ul

Muslimin, Syed Mohammad Qasim Razvi. Between these two figures of receding sovereignty, the story of the destruction of Hyderabad state and the institutional inauguration of democracy must unfold. They represent one point of culmination in the narrative sketched in the last three chapters; to the extent that these are genealogies of a Muslim public in Hyderabad city, strands of this narrative will recur in Part II, when we encounter the All India Majlis-e-Ittehad'ul Muslimin now operating in the state of Telangana.

As noted in the last chapter, the Ittehad raised the demand for an independent Hyderabad with 'His Majesty' the Nizam at its head, through the war years. They were not alone in their imagination of an autonomous future. Various territorial schemes for making this independence viable were sought, at the level of the Minister, the Nizam and the British government (including, that is, the Resident, the Political Department, the Viceroy and the Political Secretary), the key issue being, of course, territorial expansion and the securing of a coastal outlet (Pernau 301-303). Meanwhile possible constitutional arrangements were being discussed at the central level; in other words, by the end of the war, it was clear that British withdrawal from the subcontinent was imminent, but the shape of the political unit that would emerge in the wake of this withdrawal was uncertain. Aziz Ahmad satirized the reversal of roles on the subcontinent—the last-minute scramble of the British to leave and the nationalists' desire to delay their departure—through a popular Hindi film song (see Chapter 1, footnote 60); to the desperation of the 'Faithful Ally' this satire applied tenfold. In hindsight, it is hard to understand or forgive the bureaucratic delay, denial, face-saving legalese and deliberately engineered confusion on the part of all state-level actors with respect to Hyderabad: the British, the Nizam, Jinnah, Nehru and Patel from the

Congress (Pernau 305-309; Jeffrey 1978: 306- 328; Noorani 2013).[1] Unless one deals in terms of what Mohammad Hyder calls 'the dream life' of power. This chapter is about the best-known, and yet, least documented. period in the history of the Ittehad'ul Muslimin. It discusses the ascendancy of Qasim Razvi to the presidentship of the party, the increased prominence of the Razakar paramilitary organization in the Ittehad's politics, the build-up to 'Police Action' or the invasion of Hyderabad state by the Indian army in September 1948, and finally, the aftermath of the destruction of the state and its impact on Muslim lives in particular.

Since the chapter depends on a knowledge of several simultaneous events, a rough chronology at the outset is useful. On June 12, 1947 the Nizam of Hyderabad issued a firman announcing that the state would remain independent, that is to say, accede to neither of the two recently-declared states (the '3 June plan') of India and Pakistan.[2] After hectic negotiations between the Congress government in Delhi and Hyderabad, mediated crucially by the new Viceroy Lord Mountbatten, it was decided that the state would have until October 1947 to make a decision and sign the Instrument of Accession. The Ittehad'ul Muslimin forced a postponement of this by staging what was widely considered a coup (details below), and in November 1947 a Standstill Agreement, to hold for a year, was signed between the Government of India and Hyderabad. Negotiations continued during this time, a plebiscite was mentioned but never seriously considered as the means of reaching a decision. By the end of the year things were

[1] Jon Wilson has recently argued (Wilson 2016) that the departure of the British mirrored their arrival and history of rule on the subcontinent: it was dictated by paranoia and the desperate need to make order out of chaos and appear authoritative while doing it. Parts of his fascinating account bear comparing with Ranajit Guha's powerful thesis on the colonial (and postcolonial state) as a 'dominance without hegemony' (Guha 1997)

[2] The Diwan of Travancore had made a similar announcement a day before on behalf of his state (Menon 1956, 63), but was forced to resign his post a month later. On August 15 Kashmir and Hyderabad were the states that had not signed the Instrument of Accession prepared by Patel and Menon, while Junagadh—among the western states of Kathiawar in Gujarat—had announced its accession to Pakistan (ibid., 85-102).

literally at a standstill with hopes of a settlement fading rapidly, the agreement being honored mostly in breach by both sides.[3]

Hyderabad expected support, it appears, from international 'allies' ranging from Pakistan to England to the UN, against possible Indian aggression. From the Ittehad's platform Qasim Razvi, elected president in December 1946, made speeches threatening to unfurl the Asafia flag from the ramparts of the Red Fort in Delhi and the Razakars battled Communist-led insurgency in Telangana and terrorized upper-caste Hindus in the Marathwada and Karnataka regions. In Telangana, they defended both Hindu and Muslim landlords from the revolt of their tenants and the landless poor led by the CPI, while in the other districts they targeted Hindu property. The invasion of the Indian Army came on September 13, 1948—they marched in from five sides, as if to underscore militarily the isolation of the landlocked state within Union territory. If such overwhelming force was used in expectation of a certain magnitude of armed resistance, this expectation was belied; by September 17 they were outside the capital city, having encountered almost no resistance and left in their wake a destructive trail of attacks on and massacres of Muslims in Marathwada and Karnataka regions. It is often forgotten that this was the first act, as it were, of the tragedy of Hyderabad; the second was visited upon the peasants of Telangana, who had fought and struggled for land, and for a new configuration of power that many assumed a democratic nation-state would guarantee. They were faced instead with a national government

[3] The Indian Union imposed an unofficial economic blockade and encouraged cross-border raids into Hyderabad territory; the state restricted the use of Indian currency within its borders, banned exports of gold and precious gems to India and loaned Pakistan the substantial sum of Rs 20 crore (Noorani 2013, 175-200; Benichou 2000, 215-225). In a particularly passive aggressive move the Indian government appointed K.M Munshi the Agent-General to Hyderabad; Munshi was the uncooperative Congress Home Minister in Bombay Province during the Arya SamajHindu Mahasabha satyagraha in 1939. His conservative Hindutva sympathies were also wellknown (Noorani 2013, 175; Bhagavan 2008).

squarely on the side of their landlords and backed by military force much superior to the Nizam's.

On their part, the heroism of squads and the later organized and planned stage of rebellion notwithstanding, the CPI dithered on its analysis of 1947 as an event (was it time to launch the Indian revolution or support the postcolonial national state?) and the nature of the Congress leadership[4], and this affected their revolutionary program. Though its terms seem arcane, at stake was a reading of intention and action that would orient meaningful strategy. Was the insurgency directed against the Nizam's government *in favor* of the newly established Indian state, or was it a demand for a fundamental change in the social order and land relations that was by no means going to be supported by the new state, resting as it did precisely on the old rural order? And if the latter, what were the appropriate tactics and resources to be brought to the battle—was armed resistance viable and desirable, or would electoral politics pay greater dividends?

For the Congress government in New Delhi, at long last the reins of power had been handed over and the work of state planning and 'nation-building' awaited: for them both the Razakars and the Communists were equally dangerous 'law and order' problems.[5] They may have spared a thought for the composite culture of Hyderabad, but they could not have—any more than the Nizam state could— three to four thousand liberated villages where the writ of

[4] The split in the Communist Party of India in 1964 (the breakaway faction calling itself the CPIMarxist) was to a large extent a product of these confusions and differences; later splits that led to the formation of the CPI (Marxist-Leninist) were also predicated on the legacy of Telangana and 'its lessons', to borrow from the title of CPI-M leader P. Sundarayya's book. For details see Sundarayya 1972 and Rao 1982 (party sources) Elliott 1974, Pavier 1981 and Dhanagare 1982 (academic analysis).

[5] Thus V.P Menon, architect of the 'integration of Indian [princely] states' wrote of 1948: 'This stalemate was doing no good either to Hyderabad or to India…I was by this time more worried by the activities of the Communists and the Razakars than about accession or responsible government for Hyderabad.'

central authority did not run (Rao 1972, 14)[6]. As noted in Chapter 3, all brands of politics in Hyderabad had to contend with the distance between city and district; the CPI was no different, where the dilemmas of 1948 manifested themselves in a momentary break: The 'City Committee' of the party ('Raj Bahadur Gour, K.L Mahendra and others'), distinct from the Andhra State Committee that was directing the Telangana insurgency in the main (included Ravi Narayan Reddy, DV Rao etc.) issued a statement in early 1948 declaring its goal to be 'Azad Hyderabad', but ruled by a peasantworker order. The Andhra Committee were aghast,[7] and quick to issue a corrective—the CPI's platform was and had always been linguistic reorganization of states (Sundarayya 1972, 179), a principle that had been practically accepted by even the Congress party led by Gandhi since 1920 (Harrison 1960, 276).[8]

To certain Hyderabadi eyes the Congress and Communists appeared the same, and united not only in their anti-Hyderabad Indian nationalism, but also 'violence', as in this latter-day reckoning by Omar Khalidi: 'While the list of the Rizakar (sic)[9] atrocities is fairly lengthy, the

[6] This number varies in sources: Gour 1973 says 2000, and Sundarayya (1972, 124) 3000.

[7] Once more the city/district, Mulki/non-Mulki division asserted itself here, mapping on to an incipient Telangana/Andhra division. Most Telangana Communists were to become part of the CPI (labeled 'rightist' or 'revisionist' by the CPI-M, excoriated for their 'sectarian Chinese line' in return), including Gour, K.L Mahendra, Ravi Narayan Reddy, Arutla Ramachandra Reddy and Makhdum. For details see Mahendra 2006.

[8] Some Communists did have close political relationships with Congress leaders and were eager to negotiate with them after August 1947 (Mahendra 2006, 33, 37)

[9] Khalidi wants to challenge the narrative on the razakars by emphasizing the generic meaning – 'volunteer'— of the term, and he signals this by spelling it 'rizakar' in this piece. While I recognize the impulse behind this and the position it arises from, I think the restoration of some original meaning to a historical field of semantics is of limited value as a political gesture. Similarly, it is important to recognize the large element of cynical calculation in the naming of the Indian Union's invasion of Hyderabad 'Police Action', but efforts to popularize its codename 'Operation Polo' merely make the point that two sovereign entities were in question, which is, again, politically unhelpful. This sort of rechristening discards the vast semantic field of emotion, memory, history and association conjured by 'Police Action' in the popular realm, and moves the question wholesale into the space of competing state sovereignties and law.

record of the Nizam's opponents, whether that of the Andhra Mahasabha, the Socialists, or even the State Congress is not violence-free either' (Khalidi 2006, 146).Through these convergences and divergences, confusions of 'friend and enemy' the narrative of the fall of Hyderabad crystallized, casting the Razakars as unmitigated villains, while the slot of heroes would change according to the political allegiance.

In Part I as a whole, my attempt has been to situate the political field of Hyderabad state in general and the Ittehad'ul Muslimin in particular within the context of rival visions of past and future operative within the state and outside, particularly within a generalized opposition to what Hashim Amir Ali, Aziz Ahmad and Bahadur Yar Jang named the ruling oligarchy of the state. As noted in Chapter 1, the history of the last few years of Hyderabad—roughly the period between 1946 and 1948— is usually told either as a morality tale or as the inexorability of the laws of historical/sociological process. I called these two different questions with which to approach the past: 'why did this happen to us?' vs 'how did this happen here?'. In the preceding chapters I have woven both together in my account of the political field in Hyderabad state; in this chapter I will conclude Part I by drawing on four first-person narratives. Two of these are in Urdu and have never been translated, the other two were written in English: Badar Shikayb's *Hyderabad ka 'Urūj o Zavāl* (1964), Ibrahim Jalis's *Do Mulk, Ek Kahani* (1948), cited above; Mohammad Hyder's *October Coup* (2012) and Fareed Mirza's *Pre- and Post-Police Action Days in the erstwhile Hyderabad State: What I saw, felt and did* (1976).[10] Each of these texts

[10] Primary and secondary sources on these final years abound, especially in English. Among the major primary sources are first-person accounts by Mir Laik Ali (1962), last president of the Executive Council in Hyderabad, Major General El-Edroos, head of the army (1994). For Indian Union's point of view, the best narrative source is Menon 1956; see also Munshi 1957 and the government's *White Paper on Hyderabad* (1948). Communist accounts and major secondary literature have been cited in Chapter 2 and 3. The most recent addition to the latter is Hashmi 2017.

looks back on the fall of Hyderabad state to the Indian army in September 1948, and was written by people who felt implicated in the events leading up to it in some capacity (though Shikayb's is only intermittently a first-person narrative). Hyder and Mirza were both bureaucrats, and critical of the Ittehad; Shikayb was a member of the Ittehad's Advisory Council or Majlis-e-Shura until the Razvi years, and Jalis joined the ranks of the Ittehad in 1947, leading a group of writers (Anjuman-e-Muslim Muṣannifīn or Association of Muslim Writers, to counter the Anjuman-e-taraqqī-pasand Muṣannifīn or the Progressive Writers Association, of which he used to be a member) to produce propaganda for the party (Jalis 1949, 31).

The rest of this chapter is organized into the following three sections: first, I provide a more detailed introduction to the texts and writers mentioned above; I then go on, in Section II, to show how the role of the public-as-crowd contributed to the assumption of power by the Ittehad'ulMuslimin in Hyderabad by late 1947. Also in this section is an account of the rise of Qasim Razvi and the Razakar organization. The final section deals with the invasion of the Indian army, and three types of responses to the events leading up to it and after exemplified by Hyder, Mirza and Jalis.

I

Ibrahim Hussain 'Jalis' (1923- 1977) is almost too felicitous a narrator to end the story of Hyderabad state that the last three chapters have told. Hailing from the Hyderabad Karnataka town of Gulbarga, he was the third of eight brothers and a sister. In any other family, he would be quite exceptional, but this was one that also gave Hyderabad two of its most respected litterateurs, both part of Makhdum's circle: Jalis's eldest brother Mahbub Hussain 'Jigar' was a Progressive journalist, critic, and legendary co-founder and editor of the newspaper *Siasat* (more

about this in Chapter 5), a Hyderabad institution; his youngest brother Mujtaba Hussain—who we briefly encountered in Chapter 2—is one of Urdu's foremost writers.

Jalis studied in Aligarh—rather than Osmania—before heading to Hyderabad city for a career as a Progressive writer, employed intermittently at Deccan Radio and frequenter of teashops and literary meetings. In 1945, he was part of the group that helped organize the Urdu Progressive Writers' Conference in the city.[11] Then, in 1947 as the Communist-led insurgency took off in the districts of Telangana, stories of the horrors of Partition traveled to Hyderabad, along with Muslim refugees from surrounding provinces, who found a warm welcome in the capital. Jalis recalls in his memoir breaking with his Leftist friends and 'heading into Darussalam with my imbalanced state (ghair-mutvāzī zehen) and poisoned mind' (Jalis, 1949: 28) into the Ittehad'ul Muslimin led by 'mujahid-e-azam (Great Warrior)' Qasim Razvi. A few months after the fall of the state Jalis fled to Pakistan, where he wrote and published this memoir, the second part of which was an account of his arrival in the new country and renewed allegiance to the Left.

Badar Shikayb, also writing from Pakistan, tells us that he felt compelled to write his own account of the fall of Hyderabad after reading Laiq Ali's indictment of the Nizam (10) and Ittehad as the main parties responsible. In the main, he is concerned with absolving his sovereign, exposing the Executive Council's failures (284) and examining the internal politics of the Ittehad in the runup to 1948, which made it complicit in the destruction that followed. Shikayb's is the only detailed account of the factionalization of the party's leadership after the death of Bahadur Yar Jang, and highlights clearly his Hyderabadi disdain for the small-town origins of Razvi's politics.

[11] The best account of this event is Krishan Chander's *Paude* ('Saplings'; 1964); especially noteworthy for its extraordinary portrait of Jalis's brother Jigar.

This assessment was shared by Mohammad Hyder (d. 1973), employed as the First Taluqadar or Collector of Osmanabad district in the Marathwada region. Hyder was the son-inlaw of the last kotwal or Commissioner of Police of Hyderabad, and as an efficient, fair-minded bureaucrat tried to do his duty to keep the peace in chaotic conditions in his district. After the takeover of the Indian army a military government was installed in the state, and Hyder imprisoned—charged with colluding with Razvi and his razakars. His memoir, published posthumously as *October Coup*, was written while in Osmanabad jail and revised just before his death.

Finally, Fareed Mirza's is a short, self-published report put together in 1976. Mirza was a tahsildar (Revenue officer in charge of 100-150 villages comprising a single 'taluk') in Nanded, another town in Marathwada, and resigned his position to protest against the violence perpetrated by the Ittehad and the Razakars in the district. His resignation was widely publicized and he became—as he announces on the cover of his report— 'one of the seven Muslims who had openly advised the Nizam to accede to the Indian Union'. In 1948, as we shall see, this required a great deal of courage, especially for someone who appears to have been on his own, without a wellconnected family. Mirza's truth-telling did not stop there; after the establishment of the military government he continued to document the violence committed by the army and civilians against Muslims in the districts, and attempted to do in his individual capacity as much as he could. The writing of this 50-page report with its prosaic, descriptive title— the only 'testimonial' of its kind to have a semi-public life (since it was privately circulated) since 1948 right up to the 1980s—was part of his desperate effort to leave a trace of what had happened to Hyderabadi Muslims in the aftermath of 'liberation'.

Do Mulk provides a rare view into the last year of Hyderabad city as the capital of the state, because it describes Jalis's reflections on the dramatic change in his political allegiances at a time when the lines were clearly drawn. Though written from a place of deep anger, regret and guilt, Jalis's account also gives us one of the few nuanced portraits of Qasim Razvi, the Ittehad's notorious last president. Perhaps this is because of the similarities in their social locations: both from the districts and outsiders to the city (Razvi was from Latur, in Marathwada), from the professional classes (a lawyer), and both graduates of Aligarh Muslim University. Fervent anti-royalist that he was, Jalis saw in Razvi a morally upright and incorruptible soul defeated by the corruptions of his own organization and the treacheries of the Nizam and his government.

This is important for my story not only because it helps draw a more nuanced portrait of the Ittehad leader than has been the case in histories thus far, but also to argue—as I will—that Qasim Razvi's charisma was an instance of routinization by peculiar kind of intensification. Weber argued that charisma is an unstable force, and it is inevitably subject to 'routinization' by institutions and the passage of time; I want to suggest here that a certain hollowing out of charismatic embodiment is more consequential to our thinking about publics and politics. That is to think with Marx's famous description of historical repetition—first as tragedy, when there is substance and the event/person creates around him a field of signification that he comes to embody; then as farce, where the subject of charisma is hollow, 'repeating' gestures and words he believes by knowing that that his audience wants to hear them. What we see with Razvi is a repetition of the tropes used by Bahadur Yar Jang, even an intensification of them, but it seems as though the discourse were speaking the man than vice versa (a relationship analogous to the one captured by the opening extract from Hyder). Hyder provides a good example from his first conversation with Razvi, in November 1947:

> ‘I see much to admire in Hindu social reform’, he declared. ‘I freely admit that they are more advanced educationally and more sophisticated politically, and better off economically. We rule, they own! It’s a good arrangement, and they know it!...
> Unbidden, he took up the issue of Hindu-Muslim relations again. For the poor Hindu in the countryside of provincial Hyderabad, he said, his Muslim neighbour (sic), equally poor, equally powerless, was not the enemy. Engendering enmity resolved nothing.
> ‘I am uncomfortable about this kind of talk, about Hindus and Muslims,’ he said with emphasis, ‘because it suggests that conflict between us is inevitable. Our experience in Hyderabad proves otherwise. The incitement to violence is being introduced from outside; it does not answer the needs of the people. (Hyder 2012, 12)

These contradictions—a Muslim ‘we’ along with ‘our Hyderabad’— could actually be held together, as we have seen, in Bahadur Yar Jang’s time, and by him specifically as a mulki aristocrat and upholder of ‘composite culture’ (‘it’s a good arrangement’), while also being a new type of representative politician (‘we rule, they own’). The element of class in the ‘countryside’ is new, but added to the Mulki trope. The problem was that in November 1947 the contradiction is glaring and appears as denial at best, and cynical defense of self-interest at worst.

Metaphors of dreams, fantasy, emotion and madness were much-used to describe the state of affairs in Hyderabad at this time. The Kashmiri nationalist leader Sheikh Abdullah looked back on his chance meeting with Razvi in Delhi and remembered advising him to ‘confront facts not emotionally but realistically’ and failing in his counsel. ‘As a matter of fact, those days Indian Muslims seemed to be suffering from a nervous breakdown. They deserved sympathy, not anger’, observed the Sheikh (Abdullah & Amin 2013, 230).

These comments raise the question of the nature of political action for us: how do we think about the relationship between intention, action and performance in this instance? If Razvi was ‘authorized’ by his constituency to up the ante through extravagant rhetoric, can we speak of a will to destruction? If he fulfilled his mandate faithfully, what does this tell us about the role of fantasy and dream *at a collective level* within a means-ends, instrumental conception of politics? Hyder’s insight is valuable because it is careful not to make too strong a distinction between

'dream life' and 'full awareness'—Razvi represented not the pathological 'breakdown' of Hyderabadi Muslims, but their impossible position. Sheikh Abdullah himself would find out very soon how twisted the 'realistic' possibility was.[12] Asked to choose between certain minoritization and the merest possibility of sovereign political existence in a precarious political climate, they staked their 'hopes and fears' on the latter.

II

Politics in Hyderabad: 1946-1948

Through the tortured negotiations of 1946-48 the power of the Ittehad'ul- Muslimin grew, and was exhibited in its ability to incite effective mob action against the government in the streets of Hyderabad city. On the other hand, democracy made its institutional debut in the context of this scramble for power, as I show below. As noted earlier, mass mobilization of another type than the Ittehad's was also underway. Beginning in the late 1930s, the Andhra Mahasabha (AMS) — then 'ridiculed as the 'doras' sabha [landlords' association]'— was 'transformed into a people's sabha…after communists joined' (Thirumali 2003, 110). The Communists turned the Mahasabha into an organization for the peasantry of Telangana; while the old guard 'upgraded some existing schools and libraries', the leftist wing 'counter-attacked by reducing the enrolment fee to the Andhra Mahasabha from 4 annas to 1 anna' (Benichou 2000, 148).[13] In 1944, the AMS split, having effectively been taken over by the Communists

[12] As the ongoing tragedy of Kashmir reminds everyone every day. Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah (1905- 1982) repudiated the politics of the Muslim League and led the struggle against the Maharaja of Kashmir (Hari Singh). He became Prime Minister of the state in 1948, but being suspected of furthering Kashmiri nationalism over unitary Indian nationalism, was imprisoned in 1953 for eleven years. In the 1970s he reconciled himself to New Delhi's intransigence on Kashmir and became Chief Minister of the state.

[13] This move was revealingly debated in the pages of *Raiyat* in September 1944, between Narsing Rao, questioning the wisdom of mobilizing people who knew little of the affairs of state, and 'Comrade Raj Bahadur Gour', attacking Rao's conception of politics in response. Narsing

under the leadership of Ravi Narayan Reddy and ending all chances of Congress securing a mass base in Hyderabad (Benichou ibid., 147-148). As in the Ittehad, then, the old base of the Mahasabha was the landed gentry and urban professional classes, exemplified by 'moderates' like M. Narsing Rao (Bahadur Yar Jang's friend and opposite number in the search for a Hindu-Muslim settlement, and the editor of the newspaper *Raiyat*) and younger leaders like B. Ramakrishna Rao.[14] These moves were a result of pressure from the growing base of small tenants and landless agricultural labor (a division that would later haunt the CPI's Telangana program) in the party (Thirumali ibid., 119).

This was the broad context within which the struggle for leadership within the Ittehad'ulMuslimin was placed, which was connected to the crowds mobilized by it in the city. The two instances discussed here announced the arrival and consolidation, respectively, of the leadership of Qasim Razvi. The first is what became known as the 'Dichpally mosque' incident in 1946, and the second is what Hyder called 'October Coup' a year later (see below).

The struggle for 'ittehad': factions and 'what if' points, 1944-1947

After Bahadur Yar Jang the Majlis leadership quickly collapsed into factions. More—and this is an analytic that suggests itself forcefully when reading about this phase of the party— each of his successors appear to have possessed just one of the qualities that he had brought to his position, and that to excess: Abul Hasan Syed Ali (d. 1953) was a great organizer and had friends among the Hindu leadership and at court, but he preferred intrigue and closed-door negotiations to

---

Rao's disquiet was expressed in—surprise—a series of three articles, while Gour's response was contained in a pithy two and a half columns of newsprint. I cannot go into the details here, but it is worth pointing to the unexceptional nature of what would be an unusual event today—a significant political debate in an Urdu paper between two Hyderabadi 'Hindus' for a newspaper-reading public.

[14] B. Ramakrishna Rao (1899- 1967), a Brahman landlord from Telangana, trained as a lawyer and would be the first Congress Chief Minister of Hyderabad state in 1952.

public meetings. Mazhar Ali Kamil, the third President, was elected because he was known for his piety, but unlike with Bahadur Yar Jang this meant being 'harmless' and peaceable, if of unimpeachable character. Finally, of course, there was Qasim Razvi, a very effective public speaker and unafraid to exercise his considerable power, but crossing the line into demagoguery that Bahadur Yar Jang had somehow avoided. If he had laid out a script for the leadership of the party, being the man for whom the post was created to be a vehicle for his authority, his successors found themselves somewhat imprisoned by that script. This was not routinization in the Weberian sense, but the intensification of a certain feature or quality of the aura within a larger process of reification.

The nawab's close associate and General Secretary of the Ittehad, Abul Hasan Syed Ali, was elected to the presidency in late 1944. A veteran of the Mulki movement, 'educated at Aligarh and a successful Advocate', (Shikayb 307) Abul Hasan Syed Ali appears to have brought his mulki ideology to the Ittehad and retained it as the key ingredient of his politics. In contrast to Bahadur Yar Jang's complete re-definition of sovereignty in Hyderabad state and ideological stand on Muslim rule in the Deccan, Syed Ali emphasized agreement with 'the Hindu community (jamā'at)' based on certain conditions:

- if they agreed to sever their connections with political groups based outside Hyderabad
- undertook to oppose the Congress agenda of linguistic division of provinces in India, which would mean destroying the culture and civilization (tahẕīb o tamaddun) of the Muslim community (jamā'at) and dividing Hyderabad state into three and merging these parts with their respective linguistic regions
- to commit to the principle of composite nationalism (mushtarik qaumiyat) by agreeing that representation in the Assembly and administration be based on Hyderabadi nationality (qaumiyat) without regard to religion
- agree to give up the demand to prop up local languages (muqāmi zubanōñ) against the national language Urdu, which is neither a Hindu nor a Muslim language but a product of our mutual interaction (bāhamī ishtirak)

These were specific conditions, and their contractual, semi-legalistic form went against the grain of Bahadur Yar Jang's enunciation of non-negotiable political principle. This was the spirit of the Nizam's Subjects League—not a mass organization— and had contributed to the break-up of its leadership along Hindu and Muslim lines (Khan 1980, 52). After this Syed Ali joined the Ittehad, and according to Shikayb it was in large part owing to his organizational abilities and efforts that the party established itself in the districts (Shikayb ibid., 308).

By the end of the nawab's life there had been a bit of a falling out; Shikayb claims this rift was engineered by the Nizam's machinations to counter the growing power of Bahadur Yar Jang. Thus in 1944, Syed Ali, who should have been the nawab's chosen successor, had to stand and win in a presidential election against the named successor, one Fazal Hussain (Shikayb 310). In a sense then, Bahadur Yar Jang's authority was already beginning to recede, in that the man he had explicitly nominated to head the party, and supported by 'the most extreme faction of the Ittehad' was defeated in an election by the Shura (by a majority of 106 to 31; Benichou ibid., 156). In the beginning, that is between December 1944 and 1945, Syed Ali held firmly to the opposition to the Reforms scheme as set out by his predecessor. However, things had changed not only because decolonization was imminent, but also because the Hyderabad State Congress had a more radical leadership under Swami Ramanand Tirtha (1903-1973) that was not afraid to push for responsible government (still 'under the aegis of HEH the Nizam', but he would be 'a constitutional monarch'; ibid., 158), and of course the Communists in the Andhra Mahasabha were gaining strength.

While the evaluation from English sources sounds one-sided in judging Syed Ali 'a political careerist ready at any time to abandon his principles if offered some high government appointment' (cited in ibid., 156), it may in fact speak to the contrast with his predecessor's

reputation, and Shikayb concurs with this assessment in general (315). Bahadur Yar Jang's worst enemies could not accuse him of being a creature of the government or dependent on anybody for political advancement. Shikayb tells of a secret meeting with 'leaders of the State Congress at the Salar Jang palace' where a deal was reached, formulating a joint demand for 1) two Hindu and two Muslim ministers, to be included in the Executive Council as the people's representatives ('awāmī vizrā') immediately, 2) the principle of territorial representation to be adopted instead of interest-based representation for elections [contrary to the Aiyangar Committee's recommendation, *and* the Ittehad's position spelled out by Bahadur Yar Jang], and 3) the right to approve the Budget to be included among the rights of the Assembly (312).

Shikayb is generous in his critique, though he opposed his new leader in the meeting of the Working Committee of the party: Abul Hasan, he argues, could see that the political situation had changed completely at the end of the war, and the Ittehad's position would have to be modified accordingly to reach a settlement with the moderate, loyalist leaders of the Hyderabad State Congress.[15] He had assumed, perhaps, that his authority as President entitled him to reach such a settlement on whatever terms he saw fit—and indeed, Bahadur Yar Jang had had just this kind of authority, but of course it was not the position that had conferred it but vice versa. His actions showed that Syed Ali was fully aware of this while denying it in principle.

He did not disclose the specific conditions of his compromise with the State Congress to the Working Committee and concentrated on arguing the necessity and importance (ahmiyat aur ẓarūrat) of reaching a settlement, thus 'indulging in a little bit of politics here (thoṛī siāsat sē kām liyā)' (ibid.). In spite of his own dissenting note, claims Shikayb, first the Committee passed it

[15] Unknown to him and others in the Shura—he certainly does not mention it—the British Resident, Arthur Lothian, had taken a hand in the affair and urged Abul Hasan Syed Ali to seek common ground with the 'moderates' in the State Congress, instead of demanding rejection.

and then their decision was presented and ratified at both the advisory committee for the annual conference of the party and the conference (ijlās) itself. On both occasions, he emphasizes, 'Syed Mohammad Qasim Razvi was the mover (moḥrik) of the resolution', thus signaling Razvi's membership of what would soon be recognized as the Syed Ali faction of the Ittehad.

Since the settlement threatened the power of the sitting ministers, ministerial hopefuls among the aristocracy as well as the Nizam, Shikayb claims that the 'treasury of the government was opened up' to fund a press campaign against Syed Ali (313). The entire affair was presented in the Urdu press as a conspiracy and rather more of a cloak-and-dagger affair than it had been (Benichou 158); leading the charge was Abdul Rahman Rais, editor of *Waqt* and vocal representative of the 'extreme faction' in the party. Since the Ittehad did not have a mechanism to deal with a situation like this—such as a vote of confidence— to recover his position Syed Ali presented his resignation for the Shura to reject; if they had, he would continue. Shikayb claims that 'if arguments and counter-arguments had been presented, and if it had come down to a majority vote, there was every chance of the resignation being rejected' (314), but this possibility was circumvented by a meeting called by certain 'big men of the community' (akābirīn-e-qaum), including aristocrats like Ali Nawaz Jang (an old Mulki hand and erstwhile Chief Engineer) and Akbar Yar Jang, ex-Judge at the High Court and Babukhan, one of the state's leading industrialists. In order to 'prevent disunity (inteshār) among Muslims', they persuaded Abul Hasan Syed Ali to hold to his resignation, and not let it come to a debate and vote. The very people who would be most adversely affected by this settlement—which, be it noted, would be between the most conservative politicians in the state at a radical time—were able to exercise a veto over it. With this resignation Abul Hasan Syed Ali's credibility and '*public position*'

suffered fatal damage; vengeful, he continued to intrigue within the Ittehad with 'his group', even though he could never again hold an official position within it.

A formal element of Shikayb's account of this fiasco of the Ittehad must be noted. As he wrote the story of these years he resorted often to counter-factual scenarios: if only Abul Hasan Syed Ali had continued to lead through to 1947…the gulf between Hindus and Muslims would have been bridged, better sense may have prevailed etc. (315) If only Bahadur Yar Jang had still been alive, he would have assessed the situation differently; besides, the Hindus respected him… (305-306). To Shikayb, and to the casual reader of Hyderabad's history in this period, it seems as if everything depended on a few individuals. As if the weight of history and of the future of all the devastation, the lives of people who were massacred or scarred for generations had fallen on a chance encounter, a single misstep, some small vanity or a petty ambition. Personal virtue or failing appears to be the fatal hinge on which possibility of triumph or ruin turns, at least since Bahadur Yar Jang's time. This accounts for the sense of tragedy—in the formal sense, an inexorable movement toward disaster—that hangs over Muslim narratives of the time. 'Fate' is invoked once—in the elevation of Razvi to the presidentship of the party in 1946—but at each point in his story Shikayb introduces an 'if only' as if to retrospectively disrupt its inexorable logic. This, too, is an effect of the charismatic figure as fetish: its virtues and frailties appear magnified as fate in others' lives.

Coup I: Leadership and mass action

Though Abul Hasan Syed Ali was 'a statesman who…could foresee the next 50 years' (Khan 1980: 91)[16], it appears that he could not see clearly what was right in front of him; his

[16] This paraphrases Shikayb's assessment of him, taken from a pamphlet circulated during an Ittehad meeting in his own (Syed Ali's) defense: 'I still remember a sentence from this pamphlet, to the effect that leadership (rahbari) requires the kind of foresight which can look ahead 50

vengefulness and personal influence within the Ittehad prepared the way for more factionalism. The project of saving the Muslim community in Hyderabad from debate that could lead to disunity, continued with the next president of the Ittehad, Maulana Mazhar Ali Kamil. The Maulana was 'a successful Advocate at the Dar-ul-Qaza [the Qazi court, to administer Islamic law], a rousing narrator of the Prophet's life at meetings (majālis-e-sīrat) and of such exemplary character and virtues (akhlāq o kirdār) that he reminded one of the earliest Muslims' (Shikayb 318). However, he was also old and ill, and 'had agreed to become the President to save the organization' from a major split (Khan 1980: 91); regardless, Syed Ali's faction decided to make a contest of the election. 'Members of the Majlis and Hyderabad's intelligentsia (ahl-al-rāi) were shocked when Qasim Razvi's candidacy for President of the Majlis-e-Ittehad'ul Muslimin was first announced', claims Shikayb, as if contrasting the weight of the party's name and the groups most associated with its status and function, with the obscurity of Razvi (319).

He lost the election, but as the President could appoint his Working Committee, the Maulana generously—perhaps also to prevent further dissension—appointed Razvi and his friends to his committee. Instead of working together 'to serve Muslims', they tried to undermine Kamil's leadership from the very beginning. Tactics included publishing scurrilous pamphlets ('the likes of which have probably never been seen in the history of Hyderabad')—to discredit him and their rival faction (ibid., 316). But more tellingly:

> An attempt was made to induce among the members from the districts a sense that the presidency of the Majlis was not the property (ijāra) of the city people (shahar Hyderabad ke arkān); they had the required talents and abilities (ṣalāḥiyat aur ahliyat) too. This group was constituted into a veritable opposition party (hizb-e-ikhtilāf) and every meeting began to be devoted to taking apart resolutions passed by the Working Committee; every decision was subject to *challenge* in a consistent expression on noncooperation ('adam ta'āwun).

---

years and guide the community (qaum) accordingly. There is no doubt that Abul Hasan Syed Ali warned the community of the dangers ahead at the right time…' (Shikayb, 314).

The division and hierarchy between the city and districts has been a theme highlighted in the preceding chapters. The culmination of these skirmishes came in the form of public, crowd action of an unprecedented sort in the capital. It was also entirely appropriate that this should follow a recognizable script from such incidents in British India: in February and March of 1946, news spread that a hut, being used by patients as a mosque, had been demolished by the authorities at the Christian-run leper asylum in Dichpally, in Nizamabad district (Benichou 159; Shikayb 320). The Ittehad's version of events is narrated by Shikayb:

> A group from the Majlis inspected the spot and appealed to the government to rebuild the mosque. The Christian Mission had the support of the English Minister (ṣadr-ul-mahām); the Nawab of Chhatari [President of Executive Council] and the other members of the Council could not stand up to him. To channel Muslim anger and protest against the weakness of the government's *policy* a meeting was organized…as soon as the meeting began on the appointed date [March 13, 1946] and angry speeches (garmā-garam) began to be made, a message was received from the President of the Council. He wanted to talk to some Muslim representatives and resolve the matter. Thus, Abdul Rahman Rais— the editor of *Waqt*— Mahmud Ali Al-Hashmi, Maulana Iftekhari and the present writer, headed to Shah Manzil [official residence of the Minister] as a group and the meeting dispersed with cries of 'On to Shah Manzil!' (Shah Manzil chalō)[17]

A settlement had in fact been reached by the time the angry crowd reached the grand environs of Shah Manzil, but it was too late to prevent the attack on the Nawab of Chhatari and the 'English minister' (Revenue and Police department) Wilfrid Grigson's house—both were set on fire, and the minsters themselves assaulted. 'Each and every member of the [negotiating] group pleaded

[17] Apparently one Ahmad Khan declaimed 'if the Dichpalli mosque could not be built, *Shah Manzil* should not be allowed to stand'. The 5000-strong crowd doubled by the time they got to Shah Manzil (cited in Benichou 159; original account in IOR L/PS/13/1203: 151). The meeting was held at Zamarrud Mahal Talkies—a venue we have encountered before in Chapter 3. [18] There are interesting divergences between this version and the English interpretation of events, quoted by Benichou in his account. He suggests that the 'Rais group' was behind the incident, while Shikayb points clearly towards 'Syed Ali's group, led by Qasim Razvi'. Both note that vociferous condemnation of the happenings and of the failure of Kamil's leadership was issued in the papers by the latter the next day. Thus, according to Shikayb this was hypocrisy and conspiracy, while in Benichou—the British version— it was opportunism. Also, he claims that Kamil resigned soon after this incident, while Shikayb claims that he stayed until the December 1946 elections, that is for nearly a year.

(minnat) with them that the desired resolution had been achieved, but who would listen to them…it looked like a well-planned *scheme*…the ignorant multitude (jāhil ‘awām) had become an instrument of certain leaders’ shortsightedness (Shikayb 321). This unprecedented attack on the highest representatives of the government— and in the person of Grigson, British authority— marked a turning point in the history of politics in the state and, of course, of the party. Some people were arrested but ‘the case against them was finally withdrawn’ and no serious action was taken (Benichou 160, 169). Instead, the Nawab of Chhatari had to resign his position and leave in disgrace (though, strangely, he would be back for more in another year).

The British were baffled by this turn of events. A handwritten note attached to the Resident’s telegram to Delhi about the ‘rioting’ sums it up: ‘A case of Moslems protesting against the actions of a Moslem administration. The Nawab put a misplaced trust in the behaviour (sic) of his co-religionists.’[18] Religious identity was the only frame in which crowd action, suspicion and solidarity viz-a-viz the state could be understood— the nawab’s act of refusing police protection for the meeting could only have relied on the shared substance of Muslimness, but of course the crowd could not be trusted to respect even that most basic of ties. A quick judgment dictated by the deteriorating communal situation in British India and two hundred years of colonial reason, this little note does succeed in illuminating the paradoxes of the Ittehad’s ascendancy in this final phase of its political career. Representing the injury that had been done to Muslims in a state ruled and administered by Muslims, the ‘Dichpally mosque riot’ allowed the contradictions of class, mulki and non-mulki antagonism and above all, the operation of paramountcy to emerge in and as a single instance of crowd violence that did, in fact, disregard the naturalized logic of religious solidarity dictating political action. The cause of

[18] IOR L/PS/13/1203, dated 16 March, 1946. The Nawab of Chhatari had refused police protection for the meeting.

the flare-up or the intention behind it was never really established, though from its effects deductions were made and circulated as rumor, the 'wildest' of which the Resident noted in his telegram:

> a Left wing section of the Ittehad'ul-Muslim (sic) under communist influence, trying to show their strength, that it was part of quit india movement (sic) aimed primarily to Grigson…that it was a Mulki movement to discredit leading non-mulkis, that it was a Shia plot engineered by Salar Jung to discredit Chhatari in favour of Mirza Ismail [who was, in fact, invited by the Nizam to become the next President of the Exectuive Council], or that an endeavour to exalt person (sic) was at the back of it with a view to getting rid of incubi imposed on him by the British Government. [19]

The most interesting thing about the aftermath was that nobody wanted to take credit for this momentous demonstration of the power of the street; everybody, even the infamous editor of *Waqt* (Rais), pleaded innocence. Thus, on the one hand the logic of religious-political solidarity appeared to reassert itself in the disavowal of the violence, and on the other, the violence itself inaugurated a new phase in the politics of the Ittehad'ul Muslimin. The party's leadership appeared to have failed in controlling the violence, but it was clear that it would now have a new kind of energy to channel through its platform.

The party's desperate attempts at positing internal 'ittehad' or unity above all else, especially after this spectacular public 'failure', eventually succumbed to the logic of representative democracy in the election of Qasim Razvi to the Presidency in December 1946

[19] In his fortnightly report dated March 19, 1946 Lothian would actually point to Rais, and note that he had accused the communists and Abul Hasan Syed Ali's group instead (L/PS/13/1203: 152). The Communists once more appear as the doubles, as it were, of the Ittehad. Links could be established, of course, between the Ittehad and the CPI if required: as we saw towards the end of the last chapter, there may have been some overlap in membership. Certain family ties could help make connections too: one of Abul Hasan's daughters had married (in 1942) Syed Alam Khundmiri (1922-1983), fellow Mahdavi, radical Osmanian and founder of the Comrades' Association.

after a three-way contest (326). The irony of this contest—in light of future events—was that Razvi ran as the middle-of-the-road candidate; Abdul Rahman Rais, true to form, was the 'extremist' (intehā-pasand) contestant, while Anisuddin Ahmad (head of the Ittehad branch in Bhid district in Marathwada) was a moderate of the old guard. Shikayb tells us that in a two-way contest Razvi would never have won, and wryly observes, 'Qasim Razvi was merely a man of emotion (jaẕbātī insān), but he knew how to win elections—he had picked up a few models (mashqēñ) from his student days in Aligarh' (ibid.) This is a subtle and polyvalent insinuation: non-mulki skills in realpolitik had elevated an unworthy person to leadership, which is what democracy can do; and of course not just any old place but that bane of 'mulki' Hyderabadis, Aligarh. Thus it was that a person nobody had apparently thought a plausible candidate for leadership only a few months before, became the face of the Ittehad, not only for 1947-48 but for every future narrative of the party.

Coup II: October 1947

> … 'the little corporal', Kasim (sic) Razvi…short of stature, slight and tense, with penetrating looks and shrill voice, was an effective speaker with histrionic talents. (Khan 1971, 788)

> Razvi, 44, short, bearded, a graduate from Aligarh, a lawyer by profession with piercing eyes, a tireless worker…was a firebrand speaker and an emotional leader. (Khan 1980, 92).

> He was a small man, short and very thin, with sharp Arab features. A full beard added greatly to his personality…I knew him to be an able organizer, a man of iron will, and a very dangerous enemy…he looked ordinary enough at close quarters, except for his bright, piercing eyes. (Hyder 2012, 11)

It is instructive to put together descriptions of Razvi from different sources, if only to note the tropes common to them, and that the physical attributes appear to index moral qualities.[20] The recurrence of the combination of short stature and 'piercing eyes' is particularly

[20] Munir Ahmad Khan (1980) does not cite a source for the second description quoted here, but he was a student of Rashiduddin Khan's at Osmania University—from whose work the first description is taken. The last one is from Mohammed Hyder.

striking, the classic image of the fanatic ('a wild-eyed Moslem fanatic', a 1948 *Life* magazine article would say)[21] only punctured, in the first instance, by the 'shrill voice' and 'histrionic talents'. The contrast with Bahadur Yar Jang could not be starker; Rasheeduddin Khan underscores this point by observing:

> Gone were the days of the benign Bahadur Yar Jung leadership, whose grace and culture had partially helped to conceal the 'fascistic' overtone of the Majlis' doctrine…Razvi personified the *reduction ad absurdum* of the Majlis. He could not and did not play down the political reaction, social obscurantism and traditionist (sic) fixation of the Majlis.

Margrit Pernau observes insightfully that while the charismatic persona of Bahadur Yar Jang had produced (and was produced by) a number of hagiographic accounts, by contrast 'Qasim Razvi remains strangely impersonal in the collective memory' (Pernau ibid., 322). Precisely this 'grace and culture' and the kind of mediation performed by the nawab discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, were the basis of his aura. Razvi, on the other hand, appears as Louis Napoleon would appear in Marx's famous words, the farcical version ('reductio ad absurdum') of the still-remembered, tragically dead hero.

No surprise then, that '[u]nder his presidentship, the party was transformed into a radical and fanatical organization of the lower middle classes' (ibid.) The taint of petit bourgeois small-town origins appears to cling to Razvi just as 'grace and culture' did to Bahadur Yar JangMohammad Hyder, for instance, describes his early life and career in the following manner:

> Qasim Razvi was a small-time lawyer from Latur in Osmanabad district, a town known as a commercial centre for cotton…the town attracted him for a variety of reasons: It was economically vibrant as the commercial hub of the region; and he had contacts there, established through his father-in-law, Abdul Hai…It offered other possibilities too, as Latur was not known for its adherence to law and order. As a wide, open town, it held an attraction for those who liked fishing in troubled waters. (Hyder, 15)

[21] 'Hyderabad: the last great princely state bows to India'. *Life*. September 27, 1948: 106

Furthermore, the not-quite-authorizing role of Bahadur Yar Jang in Razvi's career appears in Hyder's and Shikayb's accounts. Hyder notes, for instance, that Razvi was conferred with the title 'Siddique-e-Deccan'[22] by Bahadur Yar Jang, for offering ('a dramatic and well-publicized offer') to donate all his property to the party—on being moved by one of the nawab's speeches. In 1943, Hyder himself had a chance to bring up the subject with the nawab, who 'assured me that Qasim Razvi had changed after joining the Majlis. I noted that he said Qasim Razvi had changed; he did not deny his past.' (ibid.) Shikayb records in his turn that this offer, judged by the Working Committee have been 'made in haste, and at the spur of the moment (josh aur jaldbāzī)', was duly discussed and it was decided that he could keep the property while remitting some percentage of the rent to the Latur branch of the party; however, 'it is said that despite repeated reminders no receipts were ever sent to the central party office' in Hyderabad (Shikayb, 367). At the same time, Shikayb claims that Bahadur Yar Jang, 'who was well-acquainted with all the best qualities and weaknesses of every member, high or low, of the Majlis-e-Ittehad'ul Muslimin, once characterized Razvi as "frenzy personified (junūn-e-mujassim)"'[23] (ibid.) Such accounts highlight the mythic qualities and relationship between these two defining figures of the Ittehad in an implicit narrative of decline and fall— or as we might say following Aziz Ahmad, 'aisi bulandi, aisi pasti.'

Razvi's moment really came after the Nizam's June 1947 declaration of Hyderabad's independence and refusal to accede to either India or Pakistan. As noted earlier, the opening passage from *Do Mulk* is set on Abid Road, two miles from Darussalam; after this point, it appeared as if—

[22] Hyder 'thought it blasphemous to compare him with Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique, the first Caliph of Islam [especially because he] had amassed a fortune in shady dealings.' (ibid.)
[23] Munir Ahmad Khan translates this as 'fanaticism personified' (Khan 1980, 92).

> the Residency, supposed to be the place where *Paramountcy* lurked (kamīn-gāh), had shifted to Darussalam. *Paramountcy* and all the powers of the Crown had been transferred (muntaqal) to Qasim Razvi.… Top officials began to do the rounds of Darusslam rather than King Kothi or Shah Manzil…their fates depended on a single *telephone* call.' (Shikayb, 154, 164).

Razvi quickly took steps to secure his position in a body that was full of his detractors. These included measures like the holding of all ward and district-level elections in the party under the supervision of a (pro-Razvi) representative from the central office in Hyderabad, prohibiting the issuing of press statements, delivering speeches or writing newspaper articles without the prior permission of the party (mamlikatī Majlis), and gathering younger recruits who thought him 'the savior of the nation and their hero' as opposed to the Ittehad's old guard who were regarded—recalls Shikayb bitterly— as 'opportunists, utterly incompetent, lazy, and anti-national (nirē kāhil, be-'amal, mauq'a-parast aur mulk ke dushman)' (Shikayb, 328-329).

Under the new leader, the Razakars were transformed into a serious para-military organization.[24] While they had been required to maintain a regime of physical exercise, marches and drills as well as 'five obligatory daily prayers, recitation of two or three Quranic verses' under the leadership of Bahadur Yar Jang (see Chapter 3), their numbers by the end of 1942—two years after the official founding of the organization—had only reached six hundred (Khalidi 2006: 143). Razvi turned it into an autonomous organization under a separate command, and raised its profile as a defender of the nation to such an extent that 'leave aside young men, old people, children and women readied themselves to be sacrificed to the cause of freedom'

[24] Towards the end, in 1948, a 'Women's Legion' also appeared to have been started, photographs of whose training were published by *Life* magazine in their September 27, 1948 issue (107). 'The attack came before the legion was ready to fight', according to the text-gloss on the photograph. I have not found any other reference, even trace of this legion.

(Shikayb: 332). In a bizarre development, a branch of the Ittehad apparently conferred the title of 'Field Marshal' on their leader and from then on:

> his life took on a military aspect. In public and private (khilwat o jalwat) he was accompanied by a uniformed ADC and bodyguards; in addition, a stenographer would accompany him wherever he went…and while Bahadur Yar Jang employed a private secretary at the end of his life…for Qasim Razvi's position a private secretary was indispensable. To this post he appointed someone he knew a trusted, a man who used to be a *drawing master* at a Middle School in Latur' (ibid., 333).

The contrast with Bahadur Yar Jang in birth and ability, of his lack of pageantry and Razvi's excessive reliance on it testifies to more than Shikayb's snobbery. It suggests a fatal weakness and a certain kind of hollowing out of the position, which, paradoxically, had never carried more power. As we shall see in the final section, when the war-of-words with the Indian Union escalated this weakness would manifest itself in an overly close identification with the Razakar organization.

In December 1946 elections were held in Hyderabad on the basis of the Aiyangar Committee's dated recommendations (Venkatswamy 1955, 359), and in August 1947 the new Legislative Assembly was inaugurated. The Hyderabad State Congress (HSC; barring some individual 'moderates') boycotted, demanding full responsible government. As a result, the new Executive Council constituted in November 1947 comprised members of the Ittehad'ul Muslimin, who had accepted the reforms on Jinnah's advice (Shikayb, 336), the most prominent leader of the 'Depressed Classes' from the city, B.S Venkat Rao[25]. How the Ittehad came to dictate the shape of government is through yet another, very different type of crowd action.

[25] Caste conflict and division would present a vexed problem for Muslim political discourse in and of the state; broadly it was understood as a means, as in the Ittehad's discourse, to break up the monolith of a 'Hindu majority'. Even for nationalists like Hashim Amir Ali, this politics signaled 'division' and 'parity' between Hindus and Muslims in the Assembly was meant to address the problem. As he put it in a July 1946 broadcast over Deccan Radio: 'If…our feudal

The 'October Coup' (echoes of the October Revolution are hard to miss here) in 1947 dramatically and publicly demonstrated the ascendancy of Razvi as the center of power in Hyderabad. A Standstill Agreement with the Indian government had finally been prepared after hectic negotiations in Delhi, the Executive Council had recommended its acceptance, the Nizam had agreed to sign, and all that remained for the Hyderabad delegation[26] to do was to get the signature and take the document back to Delhi. As later recorded by Mountbatten's attaché:

> At three'o'clock in the morning, a crowd estimated at about twenty-thousand swarmed around the three adjacent houses occupied by Chhatari, Monckton, and Sir Sultan Ahmed. There were loudspeakers in the crowd telling them to remain orderly and to create no disturbance beyond preventing the delegation from leaving. No Hyderabad police were seen at the time and the Ittihad publicly took credit for this militant challenge. (cited in Benichou, 188)

In 1938, Bahadur Yar Jang had tightly controlled the movements and emotions of an angry crowd to prevent them from rioting, establishing his undisputed leadership over Hyderabad's Muslims. Less than a decade later, Qasim Razvi actively organized a public show of allegiance to the Nizam by demonstrating his ability to assemble a restrained crowd. Whether in fact this was a coup or a pre-planned move[27] involving the Nizam, Razvi and the city police (the

---

regime or bureaucracy as some people call it, is to give place to arithmocracy or Government by the arithmetical rule of three, why not only 10 percent to Brahmins, and 30 percent to Dheds and Chambars (sic)? ...you must admit that they have not…tried to divide for the sake of ruling.' (Amir Ali 1947, 8) Something like this attitude prompted Ambedkar, acknowledged and undisputed national leader of Dalits to urge that 'the Scheduled Castes need freedom and their whole movement has been for freedom. That being so they cannot support the Nizam.' (cited in Venkatswamy 1955, 427). For Dalit objections to the principle of parity, see ibid., 345 and for an account of their support to the Ittehad and the razakars, ibid., 402, 418-423, 477.

[26] The delegation consisted of Sir Sultan Ahmed (barrister and sometime adviser to the Chamber of Princes), Sir Walter Monckton (constitutional adviser to the Nizam and a friend of Mountbatten's) and the Nawab of Chhatari, Minister once more.

[27] Wartime comparisons were quick to come: Nawab Ali Yavar Jang compared the situation to fascist Italy ('we have a Victor Emmanuel and a Mussolini', cited in Noorani 2013, 157).

negotiators were eventually evacuated by an army truck; Noorani 157) in order to force changes in the agreement, it did not succeed in its purpose. The same agreement was signed a month later (November 29), in a worse atmosphere of mutual suspicion.

Thus, the Ittehad was able to dictate the appointment of a ministry and head of Executive Council of its choice. Laiq Ali, the last Minister of Hyderabad state, was an industrialist and considered a level-headed man, with no particular ideological bent or enemies. His Council included some old Congress members, a representative of the Depressed Classes and of the Lingayat caste of the Hyderabad Karnataka region, as well as four full-time members of the Ittehad working committee (Hyder 2012, 18-19). They were all loyalists of the regime and new to governance.

The game the Nizam had played with Bahadur Yar Jang—now supportive, now showing public disapproval—he played again with Razvi as leader of the Ittehad, who in turn had learned a lesson from the Dichpalli protest and directed the quiet presence of a crowd at representatives of the government. From the early public meetings that voted on social measures like the Sarda Act (see Chapter 2) and passed a resolution against democracy in Hyderabad (Chapter 3), the politically active urban crowd had split along broadly religious lines and literally laid siege to the government in the security—now prison—of their rarefied spaces where policy was made and negotiations carried out. Conversely, while the crowd was a political actor and a weapon in all three cases (in the funeral procession of 1938, the Dichpalli mosque demonstration and the October coup), there were qualitative differences: in the first it was not conceived or 'used' as

---

However, there are good reasons to doubt that the Nizam had been rendered helpless by Razvi, rather than using him for his own purposes (Benichou 190; Noorani 2013, 158-159). In any case, a sense of disbelief about the goings-on is discernible in the historical accounts: Pernau notes that 'in a manner difficult to comprehend, the Ittehad and Nizam gambled away the possibilities for a peaceful solution' and Noorani, even more direct, calls it 'as foolish as it was sordid' (156).

proof of authority except after the fact, while in the mass action of 1946 and 1947 it was actively deployed for the ends of its leaders. These differences on the genealogical map of the crowd as agent, as symptom and as embodiment of democratization should not be lost sight of in any analysis; they also play an important part in accounts of Razvi's leadership and its failure to control the political energies the breakdown of the old order of authority had unleashed in the state. The notorious Razakars are a case in point.

Even though a more sympathetic account of Qasim Razvi, for instance, is to be found in Jalis's text, he agrees with Shikayb—and Mohammad Hyder's later account would also confirm— in his assessment that Razvi had grand visions for his paramilitary but no real control. The man he put in charge of the organization was one Bashir Ahmad, 'the most ignorant and dissolute man (jāhil-tarīn aur āwārā-tarīn ādmī) in the whole of Hyderabad…under his supervision the Razakars perpetuated every kind of crime— theft, dacoity, rape, kidnapping, looting and arson. So terrible and notorious had the movement become, that Razvi sahab himself could not control it.' (Jalis 1949, 41) Moreover, when cautioned and advised against retaining such followers, the leader's response was, 'a Musalman cannot be immoral (bad-kirdār).' Jalis takes this enigmatic statement to signify Razvi's naivete, in judging others by his own standard of conduct: 'Qasim Razvi is not, but an ordinary ('ām) Muslim can be immoral; in fact, disguised as a Razakar he wasn't even a Muslim any more (Musalmān bhī bāqī nahīñ rahā).' (ibid., 42). Jalis's comment here suggests a possible way to understand Razvi's statement: so reified a figure had 'the Muslim' become in the discursive universe of the Ittehad, of which Razvi was a sincere and faithful inhabitant, that that picture of the world held fast for him.

Hyder reports a different conversation with him in mid-1948, after making it clear that he had no intention of going soft on the Razakars in Osmanabad district as Collector:

> I want the Razakars to be an effective defence force: we don't have that…All we have is a bad name: well, I don't want that! By God, I will hang the Razakars if they misbehave!' He continued: 'They swear they are righteous warriors,' he shook his head sorrowfully. 'Maybe all Razakars are liars. But since I am myself a Razakar…' he smiled, pursuing the thought inwardly.
> 'Seriously,' he continued, 'I have staked my reputation on building up the Razakars, and I hate the false and malicious propaganda against them. But I want a clean movement, Hyder Sahib; I want to make it an all-party affair, and purge it of all unhealthy elements.' (Hyder 2012, 43)

Jalis does not give us a time for his conversation, so it is difficult to compare these words over time. The desire for a 'clean movement', and 'purge it of all unhealthy elements' appears to be exactly what Jalis would have wanted to hear in response to his advice. However, the element of doubt introduced here (maybe they are all liars) is also dissolved by referring to the self (but I am one too, and I am sincere). He is more than willing to defer to the authority—social, it must be noted, as much as professional—of Hyder, almost like a parent inviting partnership in authority over a child (you must discipline them). This identification with the Razakars, and the repeated emphasis on the 'I' (as punishing sovereign, as participant, but also an increasingly desperate observer) attests to a certain megalomania, as well as to the vulnerability that appears to go with it. More than any ethical consideration[28], even patriotism, the Razakar organization has to do with the Ittehad's president's personal reputation—which of course was none too savory. The need to create and sustain in a paramilitary organization in one's own image, a band of

[28] It must also be noted here that this was not an exclusively Muslim force, though they were required to swear the following generic oath at the time of joining:

> I…do hereby solemnly pledge myself to dedicate my life to the cause of the party to which I belong and to Hyderabad when called upon by my leader. In the name of Allah, I will fight to the last to maintain the supremacy of Muslim power in the Deccan (cited in Benichou 2000, 208)

Among the non-Muslim volunteers for the Razakar organization were Dalits ('untouchable' castes) recruited by B.S Venkat Rao, president of the city-based Depressed Classes Association and minister in the Ittehad-dominated Executive Council, and B. Shyamsunder, himself a member of the Ittehad (Venkataswamy 1955, 402, 468).

disciplined followers who would fill the lack in social position in a place where social position was still everything demonstrates that the logic of charismatic authority had traveled some distance from Bahadur Yar Jang's ability to Razvi's need to command.

The corruption rife within the ranks of the Ittehad is also explained in a similar fashion by Jalis. There was no accountability because the choicest opportunists had found their way into the kind of power Hyderabad had never allowed them to dream of before. For instance, Shikayb notes that the weapons that the government gave the party to supply the Razakars in the districts for the defense of the state were sold on the black market in large numbers, and there was no account of who got the money and how much (ibid., 334).[29] The public was aware of the rapacity and ambition of its new government, and in Hyderabadi fashion create funny anecdotes signaling this. Thus, records Jalis the satirist, comic stories circulated about the new members of the Ittehad's Executive Council:

> When official news of 'most respected'(izzat-māb) Yamin Zubairi sahab's appointment as minister (vazīr) reached his place, his sons began dancing around the house, singing 'Abbajan has become king (bādshāh), Abba-jan has become king'. Annoyed, the 'most respected' gentleman began beating them. Begum sahiba tried to intervene on her children's behalf, 'why are you hitting them? A young child's tongue is auspicious—you're a minister today, you could be king tomorrow!' (Jalis 1949, 22-23)

Jalis goes on to comment on the frequency of these kind of derisive stories and the enjoyment they occasioned among Hyderabadis, who 'were pained by the idea that a common (m'āmūlī) lawyer had become minister'. This was because they had no experience of democracy ('jamhūriyat'); after all, both Mussolini and Hitler had been sons of commoners. He ends with a characteristic twist: 'I mention Mussolini and Hitler here because Hyderabad's "democracy"

[29] The Communist insurgents of Telangana also benefited from this black market, which involved leakage from the government; they got many of their best guns from 'corrupt military and police officers' (Mahendra 2006, 29) and also the worst, 'local .303 guns' (derisively called 'Razvi guns', because the 'pipe of the gun would burst after one or two shots', ibid.; Khalidi 2006,145) from this supply line opened by their enemy.

was a lot like the one that had been established in Germany and Italy.' (ibid.) The funny stories on the streets of the city (like Makhdum's verse, a 'contagion' of dark humor), suggests Jalis, were a reaction and defense against a fascist leveling of hierarchy posing as democracy. It may have had elements of ingrained respect for aristocracy, but it was also a recognition, perhaps even a fear of the greed and ambition (could it be, after all, that a lawyer who was minister today could in fact be king tomorrow? What would that mean for kingship?) that drove their new ruling class.

'Pre- and Post-Police Action': of duty and loyalty

As a tahsildar in Nanded town of Marathwada, Fareed Mirza recorded instances of police collusion with Razakar bands and threats to his own life for trying to go against the diktat of local leaders of the organization. He decided to resign from his post, because, as he said in his letter of resignation:

> When I look upon such acts as a human being and hear about them, it affects my feelings very deeply. As a muslim (sic) I am entirely overcome by a sense of utter shame that such inhuman acts should be committed by members of my community, and when I think that I am also a member of the Government whose duty it is to safeguard the lives and property of its poor subjects which it is not doing, I feel a great pain. (Mirza 1976, 13)

As a bureaucrat, of course, Mirza's duty was to the state, but in circumstances where the state was collapsing and its structures of authority increasingly tangled with the arbitrary writ of the Ittehad's razakars, he chose to speak 'as a human being' and 'as a muslim'. He was quite alone and unprotected by the higher authorities in his district of Nanded; we do not know of any colleagues or superiors who took this step of publicly voicing dissent, though they supported him privately and advised him to act with caution. Others, his social superiors, chose the opposite course for entirely honorable reasons. For instance, Mir Moazzam Hussain (1914- 2013), who was collector of Nalgonda and arrested after Police Action, told the writer William Dalrymple:

> I was in a real dilemma: I could see both sides of the picture. He [the Nizam] was living in a make-believe world…I knew that, of course. But when the crunch came I realized that my loyalty had to be to the Nizam. After all, my ancestors had given everything for the throne for two hundred years. I couldn't just abandon ship. I had to do my duty. (Dalrymple 1999, 209; also cited in Noorani 2013, 297)

Hussain was heir to the Fakhr-ul-Mulk family, one of the highest nobility of the state. His ethic of loyalty manifested in his decision to fulfill the duty required of him in the district of Nalgonda, where he was posted as First Taluqdar. Mohammad Hyder, we have already seen, was sent to Osmanabad in the same capacity; their loyalty to the state and the Nizam, based on historic allegiances and against all calculations for the future, was for them the paramount value that dictated their actions. They could also depend, of course, on family connections, as well as their 'merit' as bureaucrats—efficiency, loyalty and courage—to be recognized by another government that relied on a highly select bureaucracy (as the Collector of Nalgonda, site of the most radical part of the Telangana insurrection, one can only guess what Hussain's role must have been in the counter-insurgency operations)[30]. Hyder states his position quite clearly: 'the Government of Hyderabad was not in the business of inciting its district administration to acts of violence, or of tolerating them… It was not some unrecognized or illegal regime whose writ I administered' (Hyder 2012, 88-89)

However, in the post-Police Action scenario, both were punished for this loyalty, and in similar ways: Moazzam Hussain was sentenced to death 'after a farcical trial full of paid witnesses', his sentence commuted to life, and after three years 'in solitary cells, following an appeal in the High Court, I was honourably (sic) acquitted' (Dalrymple 1999, 211). Hyder was also imprisoned in 1949 on similarly false charges, sentenced to death and acquitted by the High

[30] Officially, he was 'said to have ordered the death of twenty "innocent Hindus" after a group of several hundred Communists had attacked and killed several dozen Razakars' (Sherman 2010, 162).

Court on appeal, again after three years (Hyder 2012, 88, 111). His memoir was an attempt at setting the record straight; as such, it contains details of charges, affidavits, counter-affidavits and other legal details, and he recorded each detail he could recall in jail in order to produce it in court for his defense. He was entitled to a re-instatement but the government successfully denied him this, which was a blow for someone who 'keenly felt the break with that validating connection to my profession' (ibid., 174), even though his life continued in relative comfort among friends and family in Hyderabad city.

For Fareed Mirza things were different. His patriotism mingled with a serious sense of 'Muslimness' shared, perhaps, in the new social phenomenon that the Ittehad under Bahadur Yar Jang embodied, but also articulated with a sympathy for Congress nationalism. From 'a lower middle-class Muslim family' in the city, Mirza graduated from Osmania University in 1940 (Mirza 1976, 1); though against the 1938 satyagraha, he was subsequently influenced by Nehru and Gandhi's writings, so that by the time he left the university to join government service he 'had developed a great respect for these Congress leaders.' As far as one can tell from his brief account— which privileges event-information over details about people, assuming a certain type of familiarity with the context and the people mentioned— he had few resources to fall back on when he resigned[31] and made his dissent public along with others like Baquer Ali Mirza, Mullah Abdul Basith and Nawab Manzoor Jang ('I thought he would be like all the Hyderabad Nawabs…[but] found him a step ahead of all of us in nationalist ideas'; ibid., 18) in 1948.[32]

[31] Hyder had also resigned in August 1948, but as a gesture of protest against the government's lack of support for his law and order measures in Osmanabad ('I was not packing my bags just yet'). He did not receive a reply (Hyder, 63)

[32] The other three signatories to the letter were 'Mr. Ahmed Mirza Retd. Chief Engineer, Mr Mohd. Hussain Jaffery, retired Director Public Instruction and Mr. Hussain Abdul Muneem, retired Accountant General' and 'on August 13, 1948 [our] statement…was published in "Payam" (ibid., 19).

Eventually, their statement was published first in *Payam* and then in *Imroze*, one left-leaning and the other a Congress newspaper, where they urged good relations with the Indian Union and the disbanding of the Razakars, ending by appealing to their fellow countrymen in the name of their loyalty:

> We, who have remained faithful for generations cannot remain as silent spectators (sic) for long…It becomes criminal to keep quiet, when we see that due to the wrong policy of a party, the State will be destroyed. Whatever majority such a party may have, 'Do not obey anybody against God.' (ibid., 21)

By the next day, they were being pilloried in the Urdu press as 'the seven traitors of the country' (*Nizam Gazette*, *Rahbar-e-Deccan*) and 'Mir Jaffar and Mir Sadiq'[33] (from the son of one of the signatories, a government servant and others). They could get support from certain nationalist quarters, as Mirza himself reports, but were generally shunned by Muslim friends and even family (28-30). Shoebullah Khan, the young editor of *Imroze*, was brutally murdered a week after by Razakars.

Khan's murder appeared to have been staged as a warning: shot thrice close to his office while on his way home, his right hand was chopped off 'as if in fulfilment of Razvi's threat', made two days before, that 'any hand raised against the honour (sic) of Muslims would be cut off'[34]. Today Shoebullah Khan is remembered as a martyr and nationalist hero; then, according to Ibrahim Jalis, he was a small-time operator and something of an opportunist, killed because of a personal grudge. The killers subsequently became witnesses against Qasim Razvi, testifying

---

[33] Standard contemporary exemplars of traitors—in general, but in particular to the Muslim cause: Mir Jaffer Ali Khan betrayed Nawab Siraj-ud-Daula in the battle of Plassey (1757) against the East India Company's army led by Clive, while Mir Sadiq, a general in the Mysore army, betrayed Tipu Sultan in 1799 against Company forces led by Wellesley.

[34] http://narendralutherarchives.blogspot.com/1999/11/; http://www.thehindu.com/todayspaper/tp-national/tp-andhrapradesh/Remembering-a-legend/article15287211.ece, Last accessed May 15, 2017.

that it was on his command that Shoebullah Khan was killed (though he was never convicted of the crime). Jalis claims this was false, and Razvi condemned the act in conversation with the person responsible (Jalis: 57-58). Whether or not Qasim Razvi was personally responsible, the fact remains that he did not condemn them publicly or 'hang them' for misbehavior, and it was a gruesome reminder to everyone that the decisions of legitimacy and illegitimacy of violence lay—in the capital of the state—with the Ittehad's razakars. Writers, journalists, civil servants—all the new professional classes inhabiting the new city—were drawn into their space of operation.

The View from Darussalam

When Ibrahim Jalis went over to the Ittehad he broke violently with many old friends. Trade unionist and CPI leader K.L Mahendra tells us that 'Jalees (sic) and a few other went to the office of *Payam*, hurled abuses at Akhtar Hassan (sic) and threatened him' (Mahendra 2006, 24). As Muslim refugees from Partition came into the state and were sought to be used by the government in its own game of numbers (Jalis, 37-38; Gour 1973, 40-45)[35], the Urdu press, led by dailies like *Waqt* and *Rahbar-e-Deccan,* liberally dished up anti-India views. Jalis calls them 'traders of poison (zeher ke tājir)', and writes of being drawn into the hate being relayed through this media, widely read in the city (Jalis, 27). News of the horrific violence of Partition, for example, focusing specially on Hindu and Sikh attacks on Muslims were relayed day after day, intensifying his sense of anger and helplessness. News of the gruesome fate of one particular victim, an old flame from his student days at Aligarh, proved decisive for his move toward Darussalam. Ignoring his father's disapproval, and the advice of his 'older brother Mahbub

[35] This quickly turned into an ugly anti-refugee sentiment, especially in the Urdu press, as soon as the 'muhajirin' began to organize themselves and demand rights from their hosts; they were also accused of having 'abused our hospitality' (Gour 1973, 67)

Hussain ‘Jigar’ and [his friend] Mir Abid Ali Khan, who told me again and again that this is the wrong path; you ought to write stories again, why this rubbish (bakwās)?’ Jalis confesses to writing a stream of articles that made him popular in the city: ‘I held my pen in my fingers and began to serve Islam quite resolutely (must‘aidī se)’, he writes in retrospective self-mockery (ibid., 30-31).

At least part of the credit must go to the quality of his writing. In *Do Mulk,* for example, in one short chapter Jalis covers the entire course of the ‘negotiations’ between India and Hyderabad:

> Sardar Patel would say: Hyderabad is an ulcer in the stomach of India
> Mujahid-e-Azam would reply: This ulcer will be the death of India
> Sardar Patel would opine: Hyderabad’s freedom is the delusion of a madman (diwānē kā khwāb)
> Mujahid-e-Azam would counter: This madman is wiser than rational (hoshmandōñ) people
> Pandit Nehru claimed: We’ll take over Hyderabad soon
> Mujahid-e-Azam responded: We’ll fly the Asafia flag from the Red Fort (ibid., 46)

At the same time people talked among themselves in the city, rationalizing the state’s stand, constructing different histories and geographies in an imagined global order of nations and economies:

> Hyderabad is as large as Britain in area—if Britain can be independent, why not us? We have everything we need—railways, planes, factories; we have iron, coal and gold mines. We have never been dependent on anyone before and we’re not going to be in future. (ibid., 47-48)

Jalis is able to show the rhetorical structure of the historical event in this rendering, allowing us to glimpse both the events and their absurd but compulsive logic. The back-and-forth, thrust-andparry verbal combat between Congress leaders and Razvi demonstrates the isomorphism of the discourses of ‘statesman’ and ‘fanatic’, as well as the reactive structure of the Ittehad’s stance. The rationale offered by street-talk in the capital emphasizes what remains a trope in

Hyderabadi narratives of 1947-48: ‘why not us’? But the question always was, and Jalis hints at this in leaving it in this form at the end of a chapter— who was the addressee of this question? That neutral and powerful ‘third’ position used to be occupied by the King-Emperor and his representatives in India, and neither Pakistan nor the UN, nor the old English imperialist class would be interpellated into occupying it.

Throughout his narrative Jalis struggles to keep the progressive lens alive and in focus, as if to draw attention to the class nature of communal conflict that had disappeared from his own view earlier. Thus, he notes that the economic blockade effected by India against Hyderabad, affected poor and middle-class Muslims disproportionately, and even communal killings by Arya samaj and RSS volunteers on the borders—on trains to and from Hyderabad, for instance—did not get close to the jagirdars and nawabs traveling in them: ‘Nawab Zain Yar Jang Bahadur, and many such ‘Jang Bahadurs’ traveled quite often between Bombay and Hyderabad, without being among the passengers attacked [by AS and RSS thugs]; they kept a good hold on return tickets on railway travel as well as on life.’ (ibid., 60).

Perhaps the most important part of Jalis’s politics was his hatred of the Nizam and this class of aristocrats; this was the broad zone of overlap between the Ittehad and the left, which enabled him to cross over from one to the other. This hostility runs through his narrative, but the overlap becomes clearest in Chapter 12, titled ‘the intrigues of Jagirdars and capitalists’, where he details the rumors spreading in the city that the Nizam had in fact reached a secret deal with the Indian Union for fear of Qasim Razvi, and in order to safeguard his considerable wealth (ibid., 63). This was no surprise, considering the historical record of the House of Asaf Jah, says Jalis contemptuously:

Once more his loathsome nature (makrūh fiṭrat) was tending towards betraying the ignorant

> (jāhil) Muslims of Hyderabad, who thought he was Amir-ul-Mominīn [leader of the Believers], the Caliph of the Muslims, the symbol of Muslim sovereignty (ibid., 64)

The last was, of course, the Ittehad's own ideological platform, but Jalis here repudiates even that, including it with the other politico-theological illusions vested in the Nizam. In articulating this anger Jalis speaks the truth of the Ittehad's anti-royalist politics on the eve of its destruction. This is the logical culmination of the discursive space opened up by Bahadur Yar Jang's re-founding of the Ittehad'ul Muslimin, a point where 'Islam and Communism' meet in a dialectical reversal— it is the emergent democratic nation-state that is invested in keeping the Nizam as royal figurehead, and the young Hyderabadi nationalists around Qasim Razvi who regard such figureheads as nothing but an impediment to their ideal of political community.

September 1948

When the Indian army entered Hyderabad the streets of the city were taken over, writes Jalis, by Arya Samaj and RSS 'goons, who shouted everywhere: take three lives for one/ kill Muslims, slaughter Muslims (ek kā badlā tīn-tīn/ māro Muslimīn, kāto Muslimīn)'. Razakars burnt their uniforms, threw their weapons into wells or buried them, and Muslims discarded their now distinctive sherwani (overcoats) and Turkish caps in favor of Gandhi caps and Nehru jackets. Writing of the change in his neighbor, Jalis meditates on this change while in hiding, in a remarkable passage:

> [Hamid Khan] has shaved off his beard, so nobody can tell if he is Hindu or Muslim…most people take a long time to recognize him now, and if they do they say 'Hamid Khan has become Hindu'. Religion (maẕhab) is only in his clothes, and religion is nothing but clothes. Communal riots are not conflicts between Hinduism (Hindu mat) and Islam, or the teachings of the Quran and the Veda; it is the conflict of the dhoti (loincloth) and the pajama, Turkish and Gandhi caps. The religion taught by Muhammad Arabi (PBUH) and Krishan Murari is totally different from the one taught by John Bull. This is why, after August 15 1947, every Hindu became a Hindu in a new way (az-sar-e-nau) and every Muslim became Muslim in a new way.

> And now this Hindu said to the Muslim: 'no Turkish caps to be seen on Abid Road today', and the Muslim replied: there weren't any Gandhi caps on Abid Road yesterday'. As if a Muslim was not a Muslim but a Turkish cap, and a Hindu not a Hindu, just a Gandhi cap. (ibid., 104)

This critique points in the direction of the majoritarian narrative discussed in the last chapter, but it does more. It points also to the three-way structure of recognition that guides this logic of representation-by-metonymy: under the gaze of 'John Bull', and at the precise moment that it ceased to be directly operative, Hindus and Muslims were created anew, their histories of domination and subordination took on new pasts and futures (Turkish caps yesterday, Gandhi caps today). As if History—as John Bull, perhaps— itself is the imagined spectator of the change on Abid Road, heart of the new city, where Gandhi caps have won a decisive victory over Turkish caps. But more, this passage also gives us the evocative image of 'religion' as Saussurian sign, interchangeable and equivalent in value like clothes, or an object among commodities: now one is valued, now the other, and one must 'be' by appearing accordingly. In suggesting these directions of thought the passage transcends its own frames of reflection, which do not see the continuity of the logic between these two moments of conceiving religion as represented and representable totality. The Turkish cap points to the logic of the Quran and the Prophet standing for 'Islam', just as the Gandhi cap points to the Veda and Krishan Murari standing for 'Hinduism', making each Hindu and Muslim a 'representative of' rather than, simply, Hindu or Muslim. This is the moment that Zafarul Hasan lamented as the censorious power of religious authority, now operative in a new register of representation than in the princely state of Hyderabad (see Chapter 2).

Conclusion

In a semi-official report now in the public domain[36]—after years of official stonewalling—the details of anti-Muslim violence unleashed in the wake of the invasion are revealed. Chilling extracts include:

> We can say at *a very conservative estimate* that in the whole state at least 27 thousand to 40 thousand people lost their lives *during and after* Police Action
> It is a significant fact that…the four worst affected districts (Osmanabad, Gulburga, Bidar and Nanded) had been strongholds of Razakars…In the town of Latur in the home of Kasim (sic) Razvi—which had been a big business centre, with rich Kucchi Muslim merchants, the killing continued *for over twenty days*. Out of a population of about ten thousand Muslims there we found barely three thousand still in the town. Over a thousand had been killed and the rest had run away with little else besides their lives and completely ruined financially.
> During our tour we gathered, at not a few places, that soldiers encouraged, persuaded and in a few cases even compelled the Hindu mob to loot Muslim shops and houses…Unfortunately there was a certain element in the army which was not free from communal feelings *probably because some of them could not forget the atrocities committed elsewhere on their own kith and kin*. (Noorani 2013, 362- 363; emphasis mine)

In these conditions, Fareed Mirza's truth-telling in the face of risk continued. He visited villages in Marathwada—Nanded, where he had been witness to the Razakar's marauding, and Aurangabad— by himself, as a member of the Relief and Rehabilitation Committee, and the independent Hyderabad Relief Committee, and recorded the ongoing persecution of Muslims. These reports documented the widespread but unacknowledged structure of victors' justice prevailing in these districts, and were published by the Urdu press as well. An example is one from Aurangabad district where, on the one hand, 'noble but illiterate Hindus, risking their own lives, saved many individual muslims and helped widows', on the other, there was the systematic indifference of the new order: 'we found that no Government officer had taken any trouble to ask

[36] The Sunderlal Report, reproduced as Appendix 14 in Noorani's book. It was named after the venerable Congress head of this 'fact-finding' delegation 'consisting of Pandit Sunderlal, Kazi Abdul Ghaffar and Moulana Abdulla Misri'; their tour was conducted between November 29 and December 21, 1948 and they 'toured through 9 out of the 16 districts of the state, visiting 7 district headquarters, 21 towns and 23 important villages… [also interviewing] over 500 people from 109 such villages as we did not visit.' (Noorani 2013, 361)

the Muslims about their sufferings after Police Action and in what condition they were leading their lives.' Being the Congress nationalist he was[37], or perhaps in order to best call the state into existence after the old fashion, an appeal to a patron, Mirza ended this particular report by asking: 'May we draw the attention of the Government of Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and the followers of Mahatma Gandhi to the plight of widows, orphans and other sufferers in this area?' (ibid., 48). Widows and orphans, of course, are the classical figures of charity and welfare; here was an appeal to fulfil a duty in accordance with Gandhi and Nehru's much-celebrated ideals of generosity. Outrage, or a citizenly demand for justice could not be articulated, because the 'sufferers' of Aurangabad were not citizens of India, no matter their legal status, but ex-aggressors who had been conquered. Hyder put it with characteristic clarity: 'the same systematic bias of separation and contempt that was applied by the West towards colonial India was applied by free India to an intractable Hyderabad' (Hyder 2012, 174).

The structure of the narrative in the report explains why, I think, the silence that surrounds the anti-Muslim violence of Police Action cannot be broken by mere exposure[38], or by bringing facts (statistics, numbers, detailed descriptions) to light. This is obviously important—else why would the government of India have taken such trouble to cover it up—but unless the narrative is examined it is far from sufficient, as is evident from the repeated but unsuccessful attempts to compel some kind of ethical or political acknowledgment through exposing the

[37] Thanks to his past actions he was reinstated into public service as 'deputy collector' or tahsildar in August 1949 (50), but resigned in 1961 'protesting against injustices done to him'; possibly his promotion was deliberately delayed or refused.
[38] See also Noorani 2001 for an earlier attempt at an 'exposé' on the killings.

facts[39]. The narrative tells us that it is understood as a reaction, as vengeance justified by the actions of the Razakars before—the systematic 'collective punishment' meted out to Muslim youth who were shot, women who were abducted and raped repeatedly and other forms of humiliation that did not even make it into official reports, was naturalized as a truth of human nature, obscuring its colonial logic (Sherman 2010, 151-169 for an excellent discussion of these continuities and their implications for the postcolonial state). Thus, the question is not that nobody 'knew' about Police Action as an act of vengeance, it is that there is no place for that knowledge to take the form of an acknowledgement. What kind of an addressee would such a process require, and what would an appropriate response look like?

Aziz Ahmad proposed one response in Chapter 1: everyone must tell the story of their own injury, and the global republic of letters must know of 'our' savagery. This is similar to the model of exposure—the facts must be captured in narrative, and be related in first person. Ibrahim Jalis's is another kind of narrative. He speaks in first person not of injury but of accountability, his own and others'; he does not present himself in the court of world opinion to be judged and condemned. He narrativizes his own vulnerability to his conscience, examining how and why he could act in the manner that he did, against his own convictions and habitus. The 'facts' are secondary, it is not they but the self that must be exposed to itself. The kind of sensibility and strength—and an appreciation of how slippery 'reality' can be— required to write such a narrative is very different from the one advocated by Aziz Ahmad. Mujtaba Hussain would write in his obituary for his brother:

---

[39] As Noorani records in the article referred to above, Omar Khalidi's *Hyderabad: After the Fall* (1988) published extracts, and much before him, Wilfred Cantwell Smith wrote about the massacres in his early piece—published two years after the invasion— titled 'Hyderabad: A Muslim Tragedy' (1950). Fareed Mirza's personal efforts have been referred to above, and were in circulation locally at least since the late 1970s.

> This is the book where Jalis sahab confronted not only the politics that partitioned the subcontinent, but himself. Here he painstakingly put his shattered self (wajūd) back together again, sparing himself nothing…through this book he picked out one by one the thorns pricking his heart. After this he became strong as a rock once more and stepped out to do battle again. (Jafar 2008, 155)

A key moment in this confrontation is when Jalis is forced to take account of his actions by a Communist friend who comes to visit him while on the run from the Indian army. They are both fugitives now. His friend ('Raj Kapoor') berates him for sending young men to their deaths with his speeches from the safety of Deccan Radio (109). As for himself:

> I've been right here, in the fields of Telangana with Makhdum Muhiuddin, where…30 lakh [3 million] people have thrown off the yoke of the jagirdars and capitalists and built themselves a human heaven (insānī jannat), where only human beings live, and teach the whole land (arẓ-e-Himāla) how to live well (adāb-e-zindagī).

This conversation has a profound effect on Jalis, but for a latter-day reader serves as a reminder of the brutal suppression of the revolt. Neither the delusional Razakar nor the actually existing 'human heaven' would survive the un/compromising vision of the nation-state. As Sundarayya puts it (1972, 197), during the counter-insurgency operations of the Indian army 'People used to say, "Men who were satisfied with sheep have been replaced by men who are not satisfied except with a whole buffalo" (gorrelu tinewadu poyi, barrelu tinewadu vacchadu)'. In these times of the brazen assertion of majoritarian power in India, we can think with this proverb: if the 'reality' of weak numbers and no preparation served as a check on the nightmare of Razakar violence, what can serve to check the violence of a majoritarian force, backed by the powerful claim to legitimacy electoral democracy provides? Perhaps the obsessive repetition of the fanatical Razakar today is an alibi for the 'dream-life' of aggressive majoritarianism, against which there is little recourse in 'reality'.

Today, with the inauguration of the state of Telangana in 2014 and its reorganization of the terrain on which Muslim politics operates the imbrication of these different histories must be attended to in a new way. While the anti-Muslim violence of 'Police Action' has begun to be recalled now as an injury, the defeat of the peasant revolt has been forgotten in its institutionalization as heroic event, integrated into the region as essence (the 'naturally' radical spirit of Telangana), or simply as another episode of the 'freedom struggle'. Furthermore, the divide between the city and the districts that marked the princely state continues to be salient. The governmental discourse of 'development', for example, allows for a legacy of princely modernity— symbolized by urban planning, architecture etc.—to be posited.

As a minority formation, the space for political representation both enables and constrains the potentials of Muslim politics today. It is a space not for collective fantasy, nor even optimism but of holding the line, doing the minimum and ensuring survival. In other words, it is a space for the past and present, but not an active, recognizable vision of the future; within it there are possibilities of new social realities emerging and relations being forged that were not possible before, but the horizon is uncertain. This is the space created over long years, regular public meetings, everyday interactions and election cycles by the All India Majlis-e-Ittehad'ul Muslimin.

PART II
Chapter Five
Reassembling the Public: The Revival of the AIMIM

The election campaign was at its peak in Hyderabad city in April 2014; every evening there were meetings addressed by MIM leaders at various places in the Old City. On my way to one such meeting one night I parked my scooter in nearby Chatta Bazaar. My parking spot was right in front of a dusty shop owned by an old man surrounded by various big and small electrical appliances all taken apart and awaiting his attention. I asked his permission to park in front of the shop, which he gave me hesitantly and proceeded to ask where I was headed. He smiled indulgently when I told him, 'you are going to the Majlis jalsa—here, at Diwan Devdi? Who's speaking? I might stop by later, I don't know…in any case I'll vote for them. I used to go to every single one when I was younger, you know. I went to the big one Phisalbanda.' 'You were at the Phisalbanda meeting!' my surprise pleased him. 'Oh yes! It was a huge, huge meeting. I saw Wahid sahab, young Sultan Salahuddin…so much we have seen and endured (kyā kyā dēkhe). This is our party, no matter what they do; it is important to be organized. This is what boys these days don't understand (yahī bāt ye ājkal ke poṭṭe samajhrai nai).'

The event being recalled by the old electrician of Chatta Bazaar was the public meeting or jalsa held to 'revive' the Majlis, now called the All India Majlis-e-Itteḥād-ul-Muslimīn (henceforth MIM), in March 1958. I quote this extract from my notes because it felicitously locates the MIM (and my own work) in space and time. About the momentous elections of 2014—which forms the 'cut-off' point for my research— I will have more to say in later chapters; here I want to draw attention, firstly, to the venue of the public meeting (Diwan devdi) in the Old City. This is the site of the old Salar Jang palace, seat of the family of ministers ('diwan') of which the most famous was Salar Jang I, the 'modernizer' (see Chapter 1). Nothing remains of this mansion except the barely identifiable grand main entrance, covered in hoardings and posters, a gate through which two-wheelers and pedestrians navigate often chaotic traffic. It is now home to shops mostly selling uncut cloth and readymade garments. In the heart of this space, literally in the middle of the road a platform would be erected with white plastic chairs in front of it, arrangements for bright lights and sound (loudspeakers, mikes) would be made, and people

would sit on the chairs, stand around, stop by on their way home and sit on their bikes or scooters and listen to the speech. The 'public', its livelihoods and representatives appear to have comprehensively though unostentatiously taken over a space where probably a stately garden and a fountain adorned the environs of a palace.[1] The electrician would need a specific conversation about old Hyderabad, perhaps, to recall the grandeur of Diwan Devdi, but mention of the MIM public meeting, in the context of an election where 'ittehad' was being fought over once more, immediately conjured for him the founding jalsa of Phisalbanda.

This chapter gives an account of the revival of the MIM and its early political fortunes during the 1960s. I show how, in the first ten years of the post-Police Action dispensation, Hyderabadi Muslims were addressed and constituted as a minority in a secular democracy, precisely by the discourse of secularism and communalism in which they came to have a special place. A large part of these discussions is accessible to us today through the vibrant Urdu newspaper scene, which constantly represented to the authorities the opinions, grievances and claims of Muslims in the city as well as the districts, and also conveyed through its editorials and reportage, the norms and expectations of the new dispensation into which they had been violently thrust. As an early site for the reassembling of the Muslim public— in its poverty, pessimism and vulnerability the complete opposite of the princely-colonial public—the Urdu press counseled its readers to limit their political presence to voting for the most powerful parties who could provide them with some security and see to their welfare.

Secondly, I show how, after ten years of relative quiet and two electoral contests, the constraints of an apparently permanent position of minority became clearer to Hyderabadi Muslims. It was at this time that the MIM was revived by the nomination of Abdul Wahid

[1] This appears to have happened almost unnoticed, through sheer indifference: http://www.thehindu.com/mp/2004/01/14/stories/2004011400230300.htm

Owaisi to the presidentship. By reanimating the old sites of Muslim public presence—religious meetings, for instance—Owaisi generated a new momentum and helped reconfigure the field of agonism in which Muslims could appear and be represented as political subjects. The fierce debates and opposition that marked the revival of the party, and Owaisi's invocation of the Indian Constitution as the founding source of legitimacy for it, both contain persistent, long-lived tropes of MIM discourse down to the present.

One important point I consider in relation to the first two is the—agnostic and agonistic—nature of electoral politics in India as a distinctive and hegemonic site of legitimation, the dynamics of which the MIM's early career allows us to glimpse. For instance, from the 1950s to the present the leadership of the party has vested in the Owaisi family and thus, become hereditary—in marked contrast to the Ittehad in Hyderabad state, where primogeniture was the principle of the ruling house and 'oligarchy', in tension with which the new Muslim public and its leadership emerged. How did this happen? How, in an age of popular sovereignty and electoral democracy, did political representation become a heritable office, and what have been the implications of this for the Hyderabadi Muslims who form the MIM's core constituency?

These questions are both separate and related, and I pursue them through the next three chapters at different levels. In this chapter, I show how the circumstances attaching to the revival of the MIM, the doubts and suspicions that marked the entire process defined the passing on of the mantle of leadership from father to son, down to the present generation. In the next two chapters, the argument is based on the forms of action, and structures of expectation and disappointment made possible by the party for its constituents. If the charisma—or lack thereof (Abul Hasan Syed Ali)— of the Ittehad's elected leadership contributed to the formation and consolidation of a Muslim public in Hyderabad state, in independent India's democratic set-up

the charisma of the family name must be legitimated constantly, as it simultaneously serves to fix the instability of authority in an electoral democracy. While, for example, in the Urdu press—one of the major sites of the public— family ownership is taken for granted and is even desirable, because it is seen as a passing on of skills in an apprenticeship, in electoral politics a similar logic of apprenticeship is tied up with the enormous energies of a mobilized public, the power of large networks of patronage and the responsibility to steer one's constituency through the field created by the whims of an—at best—indifferent majoritarian state.

In the following three sections, I lay out the post-1948 circumstances in Hyderabad, where amidst widespread internal displacement, retrenchment from jobs and near-complete political marginalization, Muslims in Hyderabad city began to piece together a socio-cultural life centered on the Old City in a new way (in the next chapter I discuss how the Old City itself became a new space in the decades to follow). In October 1951, the Telangana Armed Struggle was officially called off by the CPI, which had already begun to organize for electoral politics. In 1956, the state of Andhra Pradesh was formed, combining the Telugu-speaking districts of the erstwhile Madras Presidency with the Telangana part of the Hyderabad state, and the city as its capital. Under these circumstances, Hyderabadi Muslims re-animated different sites of gathering, all linked to one another but also distinct: the Urdu press continued to be vibrant, but added to it was a proliferation of 'religious and cultural' organizations like the Majlis-e-Tā'mīr-e-millat (Association for the Renewal of the community), and elections or electoral cycles.[2] If newspapers

[2] Munir Ahmad Khan (1980, 144- 188) has an excellent discussion of the All India Majlis-eTamir-e-millat, as does Moid 2011. First started in 1950 by a schoolteacher, Syed Khalilullah Hussaini, as the small 'Bazm-e-Aḥbāb' (Assembly of Friends) in Hyderabad city, the Tamir was officially inaugurated in 1954. Much of its work was reform-oriented, but it also participated in advocacy (fact-finding commissions for riots, demands for rehabilitation, election advice) organized financial help for poor Muslim students, and was involved in cultural activities like

like the newly founded *Siasat* and the *Rahnuma-e-Deccan* debated the right course of action for the community as a whole and provided a significant site for these conversations to be had, organizations like the Tamir rallied middle-class Muslims in particular in a highly successful effort to deliberate on the plight of the community and welfare measures that were needed in order to recover from a collective calamity (Khan 1971, 790-791).

The early elections, on the other hand, involved poor and lower middle-class Muslims, much more than the press and the Tamir, and often at cross-purposes with it; held in 1952 and 1957, in these elections voting trends went against the Congress especially in the Old City, quite against the sober and practical advice of the press to support the strongest party. The Old City's Muslim electorate, now including a large number of people who had fled the districts for the safety of the capital and sorely in need of representation—as we shall see— laid the grounds for a revival of the MIM in 1958. Section II discusses the early debates surrounding this event and the party's early career under the leadership of Abdul Wahid Owaisi (d. 1975). These early years of the MIM in Hyderabad already help us see, as the subsequent chapters will demonstrate more fully, the indispensability of politics for life as a minority, at the very same time as its demands and disillusionments. In these years electoral politics emerged as *the* site where contentions about the past and present could be made, and even, in the rare case, a future posited.

In Section III I briefly introduce Wahid Owaisi's eldest son Sultan Salahuddin Owaisi (1936- 2008), the legendary MIM leader credited with building the party over his fifty-year career as municipal corporator (councilor), MLA (Member of Legislative Assembly) and finally Member of Parliament from Hyderabad. As someone who built a reputation for being fearless, always accessible yet authoritative, Salahuddin Owaisi became known as 'Sālār-e-millat'

---

organizing libraries, poetry readings and literary discussions. A lot of this was explicitly aimed at combating Communist influence among young Muslims (Khan 1980, 147-152).

(commander of the community).[3] In control of the streets and an expert in realpolitik, Salahuddin Owaisi created to a large extent the field in which his sons, Asaduddin and Akbaruddin Owaisi function as authoritative leaders of the party, though they have effected as well as channeled transformations in it. Thus, one of Salar's early achievements discussed here was to gain control of Darussalam for the party, and thereby spatially (re-)establish the claim of the MIM to be 'the only representative party of the Muslims' (Musalamānōñ ki wāḥid numainda jamā'at). The second—discussed in Chapter 6— was to recognize clearly the constraints of the political field in which Muslims had to act— they were asked to be exemplary secular citizens in a system which positioned them collectively as a threatening, 'anti-national' religious minority. Through the cracks of these contradictions Salahuddin Owaisi steered his party with great success, maneuvering deftly between the ethic of conviction and of responsibility (Weber 1919/1994). The training that probably enabled these recognitions and actions came from his father's experiences in the field of post-Police Action Muslim politics.

I

Animating a public, Site I: the Urdu press

In July 1949, nearly a year after Police Action, the following words appeared in an editorial in the Urdu daily *Rahnuma-e-Deccan*, counseling, appealing and stating that

> Muslims have withdrawn from the field of politics and they have no intention (irāda) of returning to it, because they are aware that if they do, this will mean supporting one party and opposing another. They are no longer in a position to withstand even the lightest knocks (mār) of opposition (mukhālifat) from any party. So weak (saqīm) have they

[3] 'Salar' could also be glossed simply as leader or chief, as in 'leader of a caravan' (salar-eqāfila), but connotations of military leadership and valor dominate; certainly in this case the title operates in that field of signification. However—as I note in the Introduction—this is a telling historical inversion of the princely title 'Salar Jang' ('leader in battle'), which, as we have seen, was a substantively bureaucratic position. Salar-e-millat, on the other hand, captures the warlike nature of the political field in a democracy.

> become that they need the support of every party and every institution (idāre), and most importantly the right and effective support of the government (ḥukūmat).[4]

This captures the sense of 'fall' that afflicted the Hyderabadi Muslim community after 1948, as well as the sense that the new government required of them an admission of defeat, and the assumption of this position of needy recipient of benefits to be conferred by the state. The agnostic nature of politics was simply not viable for a community in need of protection and support—it is worth noting that a distinction was being made here between a patron-client relationship (obedience exchanged for protection) and a political relationship, one of declaring for one party and standing by it against others (friend-enemy). Or rather, to be weakened politically meant accepting that every political group was a patron; what was being offered in exchange for security and stability, was the assurance of occupying the position of indigent client for the foreseeable future. This was the logic of minoritization that the MIM was able to turn into a space for collective political agency, with the help of a mobilized Muslim public created through the early electoral cycles of 1952 and 1957.

The *Rahnuma* editorial went on to list the 'three issues' that needed the attention of the government urgently: providing help to Muslims in need and the re-appointment of Muslim government employees; strict measures against hooliganism (gunḍāgardī) in the villages (dehātōñ; referring to 'the districts' more broadly), and finally, against the increasing activities (sargarmiyāñ) of Communists. It is not clear if the hostility against the CPI is because of their dispossessing Muslim jagirdars of their property or another expression of loyalty to the military

[4] Editorial. "Tīn masāil". *Rahnuma-e-Deccan*, July 3, 1949. This was only the second issue of the paper, which was seen as a continuation of the pro-Ittehad *Rahbar-e-Deccan*, banned by the military government. The editor was one Syed Mahmud Wahiduddin and some friends, local Urdu litterateurs (Ansari 1980, 79). As before, all translations from Urdu are mine unless noted otherwise.

government then in power, and conducting a brutal counter-insurgency campaign in Telangana (possibly both). The first two issues refer to the persecution of Muslims after Police Action, as we saw in Chapter 4; 'gundāgardi' is a euphemism for the 'reign of terror in the districts' (Khan 1980, 120), but could also include Communist activity.

Official figures admitted that '3 thousand Muslims from the districts had sought refuge in the city and district headquarters… [in addition to] the immigrant refugees' from other parts of the subcontinent numbering '50 to 75 thousand'. With the end of jagirdari system (abolished on August 15, 1949) a large number of small jagirdars and their dependents, now destitute 'with no savings worth the name' and used only to spending, were added to this group. And finally, as the first issue shows and the retrenchment of even high and well-connected bureaucrats like Mohammad Hyder and Mir Moazzam Hussain illustrated in the last chapter, there was a complete, Hindu-centric overhaul of the administrative machinery—exactly as predicted and feared by Bahadur Yar Jang (ibid., 125-126). Administrative and army recruitment which, as we saw, had been the major source of employment especially for Muslims in Hyderabad city, but also the state in general, was suddenly taken away. Khan cites an order from the military governor stating 'from now on the majority community would be given greater opportunity in the army ranks. The number of Muslim Officers and Jawans is being reduced' (ibid.)

This blatant replacement of Muslim rule with Hindu rule, and the persecution of Muslims did not go unremarked; the Urdu media, old mulkis[5], and organizations like the Jamiat-ul-

[5] Thus Barrister Sri Kishen, a nationalist from an old Hyderabad family, observed bitterly: 'Now you have finished this Hyderabad of ours altogether, in every sphere of life…When people come to you in distress and want your aid in getting them out of their awful plight, you remind them of their past mistake and ask them to forgive and forget and do what they can to solve their own problems, and want them to make room for other people because according to you they are more fitted (sic) and efficient for the job than we are. Still you want us to feel pride in being citizens of

Ulamae-Hind, a pro-Congress national-level Muslim organization raised questions about these policies. The Socialist Party protested the policy of retrenchment, and the Urdu papers editorialized continuously about the issue. There were also calls for the release of Muslim prisoners, against most of whom there was no evidence and the Special Tribunal[6] convened for adjudicating these cases was hampered by the sheer volume of cases before it. In this context:

> In April 1949, thirteen Urdu newspapers jointly asked the government to free Muslims who had been imprisoned 'on mere suspicion' and had yet to stand trial. The editors suggested that these men had suffered in jail long enough and that their continued detention would serve no good purpose. To release them would help create a 'harmonious atmosphere' in the state, and it would foster the minority community's confidence in the government. (Sherman 2010, 157)

Thus, Urdu newspapers sought to populate the new site of 'minority' within which Muslims had to appear as collective subjects, by simultaneously combining an appeal to justice-as-legality with the logic of the exception—the state had the right to decide, and in the interests of good government it would be best to exercise discretion and show clemency. They were not wrong in reading the moment. For instance, they had an advocate in Nehru, who urged Home Minister Sardar Patel— his hardline colleague more inclined towards a view of justice where exemplary punishment was a demonstration of sovereign authority—to pay attention to the exceptional circumstances of Hyderabad. The 'rather attractive culture' of Hyderabadi Muslims, who were 'very much above the average', but more importantly, of course, the 'madness' of Partition had exhibited itself in Hyderabad in 1948, and should be forgotten and forgiven just as it had in other parts of the country.

India, while we are made serfs this way' (Sri Kishen 1952, 132; my emphasis). More on this trope below.

[6] Consisting of three judges, all Hindu, transacting the business of the court in English rather than Urdu. Thus, as Sherman notes, in principle and mode of functioning the rules and procedures of the Tribunal 'strongly resembled those which had been passed by the colonial government during the twentieth century' (Sherman 2010, 157).

Finally, there was the danger that disaffected Muslims would turn toward Communism against the Congress (ibid., 159).

The tussle between Nehru and Patel—note how personality-driven the entire field was—as well as the long-winded legal process meant, however, that no action would be taken until the election-year of 1952—when the site of electoral politics created a new opening for the logic of 'forgive and forget' (see also footnote 5 above) and 'exception' to come together. What this later moment also made possible, which could not even be mentioned in 1949, was some reference to the killings of Muslims during Police Action and after. In 'forgive and forget' the 'action-reaction' mode of approaching the events of 1948 was cemented—both sides would have to be forgiven, but only one side, that is Muslims-as-Razakars, would bear the burden of being recipients of forgiveness and forgetfulness, and therefore be remembered and remain unforgiven (see Introduction). Hindu and military violence was literally to be forgotten, or—which is the same thing— only remembered as a 'reaction'. It bears noting that these were the foundational years of the republic, and this narrative was an integral part of nation-building repression, which would return again and again with greater frequency and ferocity each time.

The newest entrant on the newspaper scene was *Siasat* ('Politics'), started on August 15, 1949 by Abid Ali Khan and Mahbub Hussain 'Jigar' (eldest brother, as noted in Chapter 4, of Ibrahim Jalis), well-known in the city for their close friendship from their student-days at Osmania[7], as much as for their involvement in progressive literature and politics. In a short time

[7] Zafarul Hasan (1971, 261), for example, refers to them together as 'Abid Jigar' in his memoir: 'Abid was cheery (khush-mizāj) and Jigar irritable (tunak-mizāj); together they made for a *normal* nature (mizāj)'. This friendship is central to the story of each man's public life, and to the building of the newspaper as a labor of love and the pre-eminent Urdu newspaper in the city. Mir Abid Ali Khan was a nawab from a prominent jagirdar family (A. Khan 1980, 454). Today the Chief Editor and owner is his son Zahid Ali Khan, once family friend and supporter, now chief

and under the tight discipline of Jigar's editorship *Siasat* would grow into the most trusted and circulated Urdu paper in the city. Following a different line from the *Rahnuma* (the chosen name of the paper was, after all, 'Politics')[8], they urged Muslims to support the Congress, which as the most powerful party would 'bind their fate to the future of India' (cited in Sherman 2015: 130). Both newspapers, along with other Urdu dailies like the *Payam* (res-started in 1949) and *Hamara Iqdam* (1950)[9] carried editorials, news and letters to the editor documenting and commenting on the socio-political situation of the state and anxieties about the future.

Precisely by taking different positions in debating the future, and through very different styles, these papers restored the vitality of the Urdu press in Hyderabad, which served as a major sign of and avenue [10]for the rebuilding of an urban Muslim public, and showed that it would not be cowed into silence. It now comprised a large number of poorer and freshly arrived immigrants from the districts in addition to the older middle classes both north and south of the river, but by the end of the decade, in 1959 7 out of 10 Urdu dailies published from 'the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad' had a limited circulation not only within the Urdu-reading public of Telangana but also 'cities like Madras and Bangalore' (Khan 1965: 48). The city's Urdu newspapers, then, were from the 'beginning'—the immediate aftermath of Police Action—firmly entwined with socio-political project of reassembling a public and making it present, not only in the form of reporting news, opinion and grievances, but actively advocating for them, and

---

opponent of the MIM in the city and often referred to derisively as 'Nawab sahab' by party supporters.

[8] For more on the opening statement of *Siasat*, declaring its intention to be always impartial and objective, see Ansari 1980, 92. As we shall see in the next chapter, the present-day avatar of *Siasat* cannot be held to this founding promise/premise.

[9] Ansari 1980 is a good source for the career of the major newspapers. *Hamara Iqdam* does not find mention in his story, possibly because it shut shop in the 1960s.

[10] I was told that 'in those days' if one had to write to someone in Hyderabad and did not know their address, a letter sent 'care of' the *Siasat* office would invariably do the trick.

debating and evaluating the directions the Muslim community could take in the new dispensation. They continue to occupy this critical space of collective reflection today, though—with the institutionalization of electoral politics and the spread of television and social media—under very different circumstances (see Chapters 6 and 7).

Site II: Electoral politics

Elections, as mentioned before, provided a fresh avenue for Muslims to register their anger at the new dispensation and to help inaugurate a new public existence, defined by new codes of conduct. Becoming voters meant that Muslims re-entered the field of politics that the *Rahnuma* had advised them to stay away from in 1949 (the paper would change its position in keeping with the times). Taylor Sherman has discussed the campaign for the first General Elections and state elections— both held in 1951-52— in Hyderabad and demonstrated how the secular-communal binary operated as an ethical vocabulary to discipline Muslim voters and politicians. Given the aggressively communal appeal of the Hindu parties: the battle against Hindu majoritarianist politics could only be waged on a purely secular front by Muslims holding themselves to a higher standard of secularism' (Sherman 2015: 137). What this standard meant in practice was clear; Muslim candidates from the Congress 'avoided acting as spokesmen for Muslim interests, preferring instead to address questions of democracy and development more broadly' (ibid., 136).

In the 1952 elections city Muslims voted, by and large, against Congress candidates and for the Communist-led People's Democratic Front (PDF)—for example, in the 'Hyderabad city' constituency (part of which would later become Pathergatti and later still Charminar constituency), the Congress candidate Nawab Mir Akbar Ali Khan (see Chapter 3) was

'thoroughly defeated', while the PDF candidate Syed Hasan[11], who 'a great majority of Muslims voted for' was victorious (Khundmiri 1971, 89). The Congress nominees 'had all been drawn from the elite and feudal families' (Khan 1980, 343); the candidates of the PDF, on the other hand, 'were a fine blend of political activists with proven quality (sic) and included the much adored Makhdoom Mohiuddin, who…was dramatically released on the eve of elections' (ibid.)

In her 1985 novel, *Bārish-e-Sang* (A Shower of Stones), about the plight of the Telangana peasantry during and after the Communist-led rebellion, Jilani Bano stages the following conversation between the protagonist Saleem (having fled from landlord terror from his Telangana village, now a riksha-puller in the city) and a middle-class, newspaper-reading passenger:

- S: 'Sir, what do the papers say today? I believe the Communists have given their weapons to the police?
- 'Yes, they're saying they'll stand in the elections too…get votes, form a government…no more fighting' (laṛāi-jhagṛē)
- 'Really? Then everyone in the village will vote for Makhdum sahab' said Saleem happily.
- 'Why would you vote for Makhdum?'
- 'What else can you do, sir! The jagirdar, moneylenders in our village are terrible—they harass us all the time. They're not afraid of the police, only of Makhdum sahab.'
- 'But the Congress is in power now—the Nizam's system is gone. Pandit Nehru is taking the jagirdars' and moneylenders' lands and giving them to the poor. You should vote for the Congress; these Communists are thugs (guṇḍē)' said the gentleman, getting off and going into his office. (Bano 1985, 230)

In the novel this conversation is followed by deep confusion on Saleem's part—if Pandit Nehru was indeed going to return their land, how was it that the Congress candidate from his village

[11] Mahendra (2006, 52) states that both Abdul Rehman (Malakpet) and Hasan stood from a separate platform called the Democratic People's Party (DPP), supported by Communists but also allowing for a distance from the CPI's politics. I have not found any other mention of this separation, though Mahendra is surely right to note that the Muslim vote in 1952 was 'against the Congress but not necessarily with the Communists in the city' (ibid., 53).

was the cruel landlord, Mallesham? (ibid.) The realist novelist in her narrative writes about a poor Muslim family indebted over generations to upper-caste Hindu landlords, probably to disrupt the settled imagination of power distributed across religious lines in the Nizam state and sketch a class-based profile of that impossible figure—the slave-like Muslim peasant in a Muslim state. Post-independence elections, however, were not—as she shows in her novel—about disrupting settled representations, but continuing them. Or resettling them within new orthodoxies.

It was during Makhdum's election campaign that the field within which secularism and communalism as evaluative concepts operate, emerged most clearly at this time. Because his meetings attracted large Muslim crowds in the Old City, and in his speeches, he 'raised economic issues and kept on emphasizing Muslim participation in the people's prolonged struggle', he was accused of being communal (Khan 1980, 345). 'His opponents circulated rumors that "under the shelter of Makhdoom (sic), the Razakar movement is raising its head again"' (Sherman 2015, 138).

The PDF issued statements refuting these allegations, affirming its stance that the 'ordinary, poor Muslim' had suffered during Police Action while the jagirdars and capitalists had escaped.[12] Whether or not this affected the results, the charge leveled against a known Communist for abetting communalism—which had a very potent shorthand in 'Razakar'—showed clearly that these terms signified Muslim particularity in a political field enabling collective action different than before (see also Section II).

While Congress leaders like Prime Minister Nehru fulminated against Hindu communalism in election speeches and directives to the party (ibid.), old members of the Arya

[12] *Rahnuma-e-Deccan* December 15, 1951. Pp 4.

Samaj like Pandit Narendra addressed public meetings as part of the Congress campaign for Mir Akbar Ali Khan (undoubtedly an example of Hyderabad's famed composite culture). On the other hand, a large number of Muslims in election meetings and any attempt at raising issues pertaining specifically to the particular forms of harassment and persecution suffered by them by virtue of being Muslim, immediately became fair game for a charge of communalism. No other Communist leader, of course, was similarly charged—the popular, articulate Muslim leader was perfect, because in addition to being a Hyderabadi Muslim he was also surrounded by an aura of violent anti-state activity and illegality as a Communist, who had been 'underground' as part of an armed rebellion a few months before (and the CPI was still banned). Finally, in light of the history laid out in Part I, this was a peculiarly resonant accusation in Hyderabad city: once more the old Ittehad's politics was seen in a continuum with Communism, through a shared 'moderate' Congress and Hindu right-wing political lens.

Elections entrenched the logic of demographics and statistical frames of representation: at this time the population of Charminar, we are told, was 58% Muslim and 42% 'Hindu voters [belonging] to the long-established Hindu families' (ibid., 88). Both Congress and PDF candidates were selected keeping these numbers in view, and it was assumed that the communities would go by the religion of the candidate, and only secondarily by class or party. Mir Akbar Ali Khan, for instance, was expected to get the Muslim and Congress Hindu vote, but in this instance the election of the 'progressive' commoner over the liberal nawab showed the mobility of the political field that the Congress had failed to factor in.[13] PDF victories were won in Muslim majority constituencies with convincing margins, while Congress candidates, where

[13] The turnout in each constituency averaged at about 40% in these elections, but 'valid votes cast' were half of the number of electors—clearly people were still unsure about the procedures of casting their ballot.

they did win, scraped through. Sadly, Makhdum's was a counter-example: in spite of being the 'most popular person' (Mahendra 2006, 53) 'much adored', 'darling of the Muslim masses' (Khan 1980, 130), he lost both the State and Parliamentary elections by narrow margins.[14]

Quite another point indexed by this episode were the constraints of Communist politics in assuming the representation of Muslims in Hyderabad at this critical juncture. Class solidarity/conflict simply was not an adequate political language for a group that was systematically persecuted on the basis of its religious identity across classes — aside from the very highest levels of aristocracy (and sometimes even them, though they had choices that the others did not, as we saw in Chapter 4). To the extent that the PDF/CPI shared in the nationalist discourse represented by Nehru, for instance, they saw Hindus and Muslims as equivalent groups internally divided by class.[15] As we shall see in the following section, *Siasat* was the most eloquent spokesperson for this point of view broadly identified with the liberal-left, whereby its opposition to the revival of the MIM in 1958 went to the extent of supporting the draconian and clearly illiberal law of Preventive Detention used against Abdul Wahid Owaisi and some of his associates in March 1958 by the state.

[14] In the Shalibanda (usual pronunciation of Shah Ali Banda) Assembly constituency he lost by 780 votes to Congress candidate Masuma Begum, wife of his ex-professor at Osmania University, Hussain Ali Khan. The 'valid votes' numbered 21,560 (out of 45, 195 electors); Makhdum got 9,373 to Masuma Begum's winning 10,153 votes (Khan 1980, 605). He eventually won a bye-election from Huzurnagar in Nalgonda, the district where every single Assembly seat (14) was won by the PDF in the aftermath of the Telangana rebellion.

[15] As for their stand on caste politics, the PDF supported candidates from Ambedkar's party, the Scheduled Caste Federation (SCF) in the elections, five of whose members were elected to the Assembly and one to Parliament (Venkatswamy 1955, 643-644). The 'veteran vanquished generals of the Razakar regime' fought on Congress tickets and lost (ibid., 645-646). B. Shyamsundar, the most articulate of the Dalit leaders in Hyderabad state and former member of the Ittehad, stood in the Malakpet constituency and in Nalgonda (against Communist leader Ravi Narayan Reddy); received 84 votes in one and 200 in the other (ibid.)

This was not its only limitation; the CPI's championing of the unified state of Andhra Pradesh formed on linguistic lines (formed in 1956) was unpopular, since it resulted in the breakup of Hyderabad state and was executed in the face of growing student protests against 'nonmulkis' in the city and towns of Telangana. In August-September 1952, for example—soon after the elections— student protests in the district of Warangal, against the transfer of local teachers from a college, spread to Hyderabad city's restive students. There were strikes, rallies, processions, confrontations with the police, school principals, storming of offices and burning of police vehicles etc. The police fired into the protesting crowds of students— young high schoolers, it appears, and mulki Hyderabadis from city institutions like Dharamvant High School, Chaderghat High School, City College, Dar-ul-Ulum and more. It was the leaders of the PDF—the Naidus (Jaisoorya and Padmaja, children of Sarojini Naidu), the writer Suleiman Arib and others—who were asked to talk to the agitating students and mediate with the state government on their demands, that 'non-Mulkis be sent away and unemployment rooted out'.[16] These would become familiar features of all student agitations in independent India, but in this case are particularly notable because these students were associating themselves with street demonstrations *and* the authority of Leftist leaders. Mulki politics still resonated with them, and they were not afraid to agitate for their demands. Election campaign crowds probably had a great deal to do with the legitimation of renewed energy spilling onto the streets.

In 1957, the PDF did not recover the base they thought they had among Hyderabadi Muslims, though they still voted for the Congress only reluctantly (Khan 1980, 352-53). Part of

[16] Cited in the report of the one-man Inquiry Committee (Reddy et al 1953, 94) constituted to look into the incident. Slogans like 'Non-Mulkis go back' 'Madrasis go back' and 'Idli-sambar go back' [referring to the stereotypical food associated with Madras Presidency] were raised during this agitation, and would be again in the much more serious movement in 1969.

the reason for this, as noted above, was precisely the constraints of its own ideological frame. Another important factor, which I will return to in the next two chapters, is noted by Khan in the following words: 'Muslims had also learnt that on the whole the Leftists could fret and fume, they could not be depended upon for any derivative benefit which only accrued from the ruling party circles' (ibid.) Thus, along with the limitation of sovereign political representation— a party that would speak for them as rightfully part of the national substance—there was also the added handicap of a serious lack in the governmental space of patronage. For a community that was in dire need of state support both financially and in terms of basic security, this lack of 'derivative benefit' cornered by Congress patron-client networks was especially hard.

Under these constrained political conditions *and* enabled by them, the MIM was called into being (once more). Qasim Razvi—one of the few top leaders to be convicted and sentenced, was released from prison in September 1957— made a quick visit to Hyderabad before leaving for Pakistan, in which time he tried to hand over charge of the Ittehad'ul Muslimin to a group of very reluctant ex-Shura members. [17]

II

In the meeting held at Adikmet—close to the Osmania University campus—Razvi and about 40 people from the 144-member Shura decided, 'after much argument, that a revived Majlis must…resume political activity to be effective' (Wright 1966: 679). However, none of the people present were willing to take the lead, that is, to be nominated president by the departing Razvi. 'Sometime after midnight, Razvi summoned a local lawyer Abdul Wahid Owaisi, who had not been a major figure in the organization, and prevailed upon him to accept the office' (ibid.) This

[17] He was 'convicted for "dacoity" and condemned to seven years of rigorous imprisonment. Razvi was released on September 10, 1957 on the understanding that he would migrate to Pakistan' (Khan 1971, 788) Also to be noted in this context is that the Razakar organization had been outlawed by the Indian government, but not the party.

is an origin story that is told and retold in MIM public meetings today, the themes of the story emphasized and magnified for maximum effect: the fear that prevailed among other possible contenders for the presidency, their refusal to answer 'the call', and the singular courage displayed by Abdul Wahid Owaisi—'Fakhr-e-millat' (Pride of the Community)—in accepting what was then a crown of thorns (kāñtōñ ka tāj).

Abdul Wahid Owaisi began his arduous task of re-organizing by speaking at street-corners and mosques around the city, most importantly—again— in Milad meetings. It is said that his first small meeting had three people in the audience, of which one was most likely his son Sultan Salahuddin. On October 6, 1957 he made his first speech to 'the Muslims of Hyderabad' at a Milad meeting, introducing themes that would be repeated not only over the next few months, but even by his grandsons today. Highlights of the newspaper report are therefore important to reproduce here:

> …This was Maulvi Owaisi sahab's first speech after being named President of the State (mamlikati) Majlis-e-Ittehad'ul Muslimin . Last night, he was addressing a huge gathering of Hyderabadi Muslims (musalmānān-e-Hyderabad) at the [unclear] mosque to commemorate Milad-ul-Nabi…He said that Indian Muslims suffered from many problems
> (pareshāniyōñ) today, but these were temporary ('āriẓī) and would be resolved with time. He reminded his audience that the Prophet had to contend with much opposition when he first unfurled the flag of Islam in Mecca…he struggled (muṣāib jhēle) patiently not for a day or some months, but years…
> He appealed to the Muslims of Andhra Pradesh to strengthen the Majlis-e-Ittehad'ul-Muslimin, which was their representative organization (unkī numāinda tanẓ īm), so that their voice (āwāz) could be strong and they were able to get their demands (maṭālbāt) accepted. He said that there were 40 lakh [4 million] Muslims in Andhra Pradesh, and there was no way such a large minority (aqliyat) could be ignored.
> He discussed the Majlis's 12-point program [see Appendix] in detail, saying that it was drawn up to better (durust karnē) the socio-economic (m'āshī) condition of Muslims. All our activities will aim at this end—to better their condition (ḥālat), so terrible (kharāb) and backward (past) after Police Action…He posed a question to the opponents of his program…if the 4 1/2 crore [40.5 million] Muslims of India organize such a party under the Indian Constitution and demand their share of rights (apne ḥiṣṣe ka haq), how does communalism enter into it? Today many Muslims are poor and unemployed; if their party (tanẓ īm) asks the government to arrange for employment, how does communalism come

into it?[18]

The first thing to note here is the venue and the occasion—a mosque on the day of Milad-ul-nabi, very much in the tradition of the Ittehad. Secondly, the felicitous use of the occasion and the example of the Prophet— Milad meetings are precisely the places to recall and reflect on his life and actions as good Muslims. In the much-altered circumstances of the community, possibly this was a theme that pervaded many a Milad meeting[19]; therefore, the MIM's use of this platform to elaborate their political program and set up a field of argument with their opponents was fitting.

Secondly, and this would again be a lasting trope, the authority of the Indian constitution— Dastur-e-Hind— as a founding document is invoked repeatedly, in order to emphasize the secular formation of Muslims as a distinct interest group among other groups asking their 'share of rights' (a telling choice of words— rights continue to be conceived as being 'given' or 'granted' by the state), with numbers large enough that they 'cannot be ignored'. This was already the implicit logic of Nehruvian secularism, advocated by the Urdu newspapers (in addition, the word for representative, 'numāinda' is used in parliamentary contexts).[20] The difference was that Wahid Owaisi's MIM embraced the legal-political position of minority in order to legitimate a separate representative platform for Muslims, rather than their reliance on 'stronger' political parties. It worked through the cracks of the central contradiction of Indian secularism: the demand that Muslims, above all, had to remain 'secular', but at the same time,

[18] 'Majlis-e-Ittehad'ul Muslimin ka āinda program: Owaisi ṣāḥab ki taqrīr'. *Siasat* October 7, 1957: 6.

[19] The most important of these was the one organized by the Tamir-e-millat in the city, a tradition started in the 1950s and that continues to this day.

[20] The root is the Persian 'namūdan: to appear, show or exhibit' etc. Thus 'rah-numa'— as in the newspaper— is literally someone who 'shows the way' or a guide. Numainda immediately calls up 'representative' as an English equivalent, which illustrates its very different valence from 'mazhar' or 'manifestation' that was used, recall, for the Nizam (as a symbol of Muslim sovereignty).

perform their minority identity *as* Muslims. In other words, as Muslims they had to demonstrate that they were happy to let the political parties claiming to be secular—like the highly factionalized Congress—to set the terms for their involvement in the political process. This amounted to following the *Rahnuma*'s initial advice. Wahid Owaisi changed the terms of this demand to the extent that he posited the need for an organized representative platform to effect political bargaining with other parties. This was an eminently secular project, totally tied to the logic of political representation already manifest on the subcontinent—the Hobbesian process of vesting authority in a single entity that would, in fact, found a new community, 'the Muslims of Andhra Pradesh', on the boundaries of religious belonging, historical experience and interest. Wahid Owaisi drew on the history of the Ittehad to burnish the representative status of the MIM, and on the other hand attached the spatial imagination of the party to the newly formed state of Andhra Pradesh, and its legitimacy to the Indian constitution.

Thirdly, as Owaisi's speech shows, the dreaded charge of communalism was repeated regularly and by all manner of Muslim groups, including the Tamir-e-millat, which actively advocated working with other communities and supported the Congress by and large (see also Section III). Over a short period, Wahid Owaisi had generated enough momentum through his speeches to start a discussion in the city about the pros and cons of reviving the Majlis as a political party. After the disaster of 1948 and the slow, invisible persecution over the next ten years, was it really wise for Muslims to regroup as a separate political entity? The Urdu newspapers published opinion and counter-opinion, most critical of the proposal: Muslim Congress leaders issued statements 'condemning the political activities of the Majlis and the abuse of religious sermons to arouse Muslim communal feelings'; an ailing Maulana Azad, the

Congress's most prominent nationalist Muslim leader, issued a statement of condemnation, as did organizations like the All India Shia Conference (Wright 1963, 236-237).

Wahid Owaisi continued to hit back at his opponents, through the same newspapers that also reported his meetings and speeches. For example, on January 13, 1958 he was reported by *Rahnuma* as saying 'Nobody can stop the Majlis from participating in Parliamentary politics; it will not follow the advice of any individual or party…the Majlis without political participation would be like a body without a soul.' This, of course, bears comparing with the Ittehad's assertion that the Nizam was the soul of the Muslim 'body's' sovereignty; this is crucially different, in that the MIM as heir to the Ittehad, would be the body of which electoral politics was the soul. In other words, politics was now a means and an end in itself, the very activity of electoral participation a sign of autonomous presence in a democratic polity.

The problem of the people and of the orientation that Muslims as a large minority could find within the structure of popular sovereignty thus haunted the MIM from the very start. In a locution that would be repeated in each report[21] of such meetings—of which there were several, and every day— the *Rahnuma* noted 'the president of the Majlis-e-Ittehad'ul Muslimin, Maulvi Owaisi sahab, was addressing a large gathering of Muslims (musalmānōñ ke ēk baṛē ijtemae' ko mukhātib) in Sultanshahi last night'.[22] Another interesting example comes two days later, this time from a meeting in Qazipura in the Old City:

> The Constitution (dastūr) provides reservations (taḥaffuẓāt) for a limited time, to the country's backward classes (pasmānda tabqāt) for their welfare (t'āmīr) and development

[21] These reports were filed by an agency—the Deccan News service— that sent out young reporters to write up events like these for the local Urdu papers. Another agency of this type was Bharat News, run by a highly respected and well-known Hyderabadi journalist Ejaz Qureishi. None of these were professionally trained reporters; rather they were mentored on the job by seniors like Jigar and Qureishi and learned newspaper reportage as a craft.

[22] 'Majlis pārlimānī siāsat mēñ ḥiṣṣa lēgī: Ṣadr-e-Majlis ka 'ailān'. *Rahnuma-e-Deccan* January 14, 1958: 5.

> (taraqqī). That is the Constitution; these supposed Constitutionalists interpret (tāwīl) it in all kinds of strange ways (ajīb o gharīb) when it comes to Muslims. Muslims stand accused of being communal (firqāvāriyat). Is this the correct interpretation of the Constitution?

As usual, he was addressing 'a large gathering of Muslims'.[23] The emphasis on the substantial presence of the crowd, and of a Muslim crowd, is important here as in itself a demonstration of legitimacy. This was not 'emotional rhetoric' either, but lawyerly argument presented to a Milad meeting, and once more the emphasis on constitutional legitimacy was underscored (I capitalize the Constitution precisely because it holds this 'proper' place in the discourse, as founding document). As with every newspaper, the events of the city were usually reported on the same page every day, to add to the iterative nature of the content.

De facto barred from both citizenly participation and governmental welfare by virtue of being Muslim in post-1948 Hyderabad, the 'Muslims of Andhra Pradesh' were called upon to constitute themselves as a community through the MIM, in order to enter the symbolic space of the sovereignty of the People. To the extent that this new polity was based on the continuation of colonial logics of sovereignty— Hindus and Muslims constitute the nation—it was entirely in keeping with the way the new state was actually organized, but the very same logic could also freeze each group into its particularity and set rigid boundaries of political becoming. The Hindu majority could aspire to the 'national' even in, and because of its particularity (India is a Hindu nation), but the Muslim minority could only appear and actualize its citizenship within the field of sovereignty delimited by parties like the MIM. Nevertheless, at the 'sub-national' level the new state of Andhra Pradesh presented an opportunity and a new opening that could possibly counter this reification by expanding the community beyond the boundaries of the old Hyderabad state and its political legacies, and Wahid Owaisi was quick to note and welcome its formation—

[23] *Rahnuma-e-Deccan* January 16, 1958: 5.

even though the Mulki agitation in the city in 1952 had signaled the dangers of Andhra domination in government employment etc.[24]

The build-up culminated with the jalsa at Phisalbanda that the old electrician remembered attending as a young man. This was the event of official revival or (ahayya) of the Majlis held on March 2, 1958. In a February 26 press note issued by him and reported in the papers, he stated that the last date for joining the Majlis-e-Shura' of the party, by depositing a voluntary monetary contribution ('chandā') had been extended from February 5 to the 27th; a further condition for joining this governing body of the MIM was that one should *not* be a member of the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, the Jamiat-ul-Ulama-e-Hind or the executive committee of the Congress party. Wahid Owaisi owned a house and a large property at Phisalbanda, where the meeting actually took place. It was considered a suburban wilderness then (today it is the site of the Owaisi hospital), part of the city referred to as 'atrāf-e-balda' (literally areas 'surrounding the city').

Describing the crowd of 'more than ten thousand people' assembled by afternoon to participate, the *Siasat* report observed:

> From the early hours of the morning thousands (hazārōñ ki ta'dād meñ), Muslims and people from other groups (musalmān aur dīgar firqoñ ke lōg) were seen proceeding

[24] The percentage of 'Urdu speakers' in the new state was 9.8%, down from 11.6% in 1951 (6.8% in the Telangana + Andhra region in post-Police Action circumstances) and 13% in 1941 in Hyderabad state— this last according to the rather disorganized wartime census that the Ittehad had actively intervened organizationally in. Rashiduddin Khan (1971, 789, 833), who is the source of this data, notes that 'from 1891 to 1931 the percentage of Urdu-speaking persons in the Nizam's Dominions continued to remain constant at 10.4 per cent'. It will be recalled that Bahadur Yar Jang was especially concerned that Muslims in the districts should record the 'correct language' in their census forms. On the whole then, according to percentage figures, Khan's implicit suggestion is that 9.8% in Andhra Pradesh was close to the 40-year normal in Hyderabad state.

> towards the meeting at Phisalbanda. The outer reaches of the grounds presented a spectacle resembling an *urs* or a fair (mēlā).[2525]

But they did more than simply attend; the constitution of the new party— prepared by an advisory council or Majlis-e-shura comprising some old Majlis members and Owaisi— was presented to them in the form of specific articles or clauses, including clauses affirming allegiance to the Indian Constitution, a five-year term for the president, and support for Nehru's efforts at nation-building through development (ta'mīrī kām). The people in attendance raised their hands and collectively shouted their approval of each clause—'over the objection of the three-man Drafting Committee'— and Wahid Owaisi was approved as President for the next five years (Khan 1971, 789). Even the otherwise skeptical *Siasat* was impressed by the numbers, though they did also highlight the fact that according to the new constitution adopted by the Majlis, there was no procedure for the removal of the president.

Additionally, the fights and recrimination continued in the pages of *Siasat*, *Rahnuma* and the pro-Majlis *Hamara Iqdam*.[26] On the day, for instance, a statement was issued by a section of the majlis-e-shura' not in attendance, repudiating Owaisi's claim to authority: had there been a quorum for the meeting of the council? Had the proper procedures laid down for the calling of a meeting been followed? In fact, said a few prominent members of the council not in attendance at

[25] Urs refers to the Sufi commemoration of a saint's passing, held every year at the tomb of the saint on the designated date. It is a festive occasion. This report is to be found in the *Siasat* of March 3, 1958.

[26] On March 4, 1958, for instance, editorials in *Siasat* and *Rahnuma* both condemned this new move to 'drag' Muslims into the agonism of politics (*Rahnuma*, p.3), while what was actually important was 'social reform' (ma 'āshī iṣlāḥ) which 'Owaisi sahab could definitely not undertake' (*Siasat*, p. 3). *Rahnuma* also gave a detailed account of Wahid Owaisi's former activities against the Ittehad in general and Bahadur Yar Jang in particular, and accused him of being nothing but a power-hungry opportunist, an assessment shared by *Siasat*. Finally, while *Siasat* characterized the new president's obviously autocratic moves 'reminiscent of Hitler', *Rahnuma* called the new MIM 'unconstitutional' (ghair-dasturi)— in light of the Ittehad's old constitution.

the jalsa, this was not the 'real' Majlis at all—Muslims should not be duped by Mr. Owaisi's 'propaganda' and instead, wait for them to call a proper Majlis meeting. From the beginning, however, the newspaper reports referred to him as the president of the Majlis, even while editorializing against him and carrying reports questioning this status. As far as the public was concerned, it is safe to say, Abdul Wahid Owaisi was the new president of the Majlis-e-Ittehad'ulMuslimin, rules and procedure pertaining to the old Ittehad notwithstanding. This was a break from the old party in more ways than one, though the genealogy would resonate, much as the present of democracy would with the princely-colonial past.

Unlike the Ittehad, the new party would from the beginning be defined by the lack of 'ittehad' or unity, the target of incessant surveillance, suspicion and criticism. While Bahadur Yar Jang's was the task of laying out a proper discourse of political action among Hyderabadi Muslims, and 'ittehad' figured as the main concept and rallying cry in that field, his role as leader was never seriously disputed, and neither was the party's status (despite a challenge from a section of the ulama, as we saw in Chapter 3). For the MIM, however, unity was a double-edged sword: it was reminiscent of the old 'Razakar'-oriented Ittehad, and it operated in a field of relative powerlessness. Thus, while on the surface the concept appears to be identical with itself, the weight of the performative work it had to do after 1948 was considerably more, very differently positioned and always in danger of miscarrying.

On March 14, 1958 Wahid Owaisi was arrested and sent into 'preventive detention' for 'arousing communal hatred and preaching violence' (Khan 1971, 789), along with one of the editors of *Rahnuma*, who was a supporter, and *Hamara Iqdam.* The Preventive Detention Act was a draconian Constitutional provision that allowed for the arrest and detaining of individuals

at the discretion of the state, for a period of up to three months—subject to extension.[27] The Andhra Pradesh (AP) High Court upheld this move in response to a writ of *habeas corpus*, reasoning:

> It is not the form but the substance that is sought to be conveyed [by a speech] that counts. The language may be unobjectionable; yet the spirit behind it if skillfully conveyed work havoc. The speech is to be judged by its potentialities in the context of surrounding circumstances and its inherent mischievous tendencies. (cited in Wright 1963, 238)

In Hyderabad state, the banning of preachers of the Arya samaj from speaking at public meetings and the requirement that meetings be held with prior permission from the authorities had been seen as attempts by a feudal autocrat to restrict the freedom of religion. By contrast, a duly constituted postcolonial republic's executive and judiciary, could now pre-emptively punish the 'potentialities' of a speech and its 'inherent mischievous tendencies', without recourse to legal redress.

The March 16 editorial of the *Rahnuma* ('These arrests!')[28] did not fail to point out the duties of liberal, democratic government to protect freedom of speech (not religion), noting that it did not agree with Wahid Owaisi's politics either, but this was not the way a democracy should function. Especially in light of his own repeated avowals of constitutional loyalty, that no crime had been committed, and the 'poisonous speeches of Sanghis and Mahasabhaites' had been 'shown exemplary lenience' (rawādārī ke qābil-e-qadr jazbe ka muẓāhara) by the state. *Siasat*, on the other hand, decided in a few lines on its editorial page that this would put a much-needed stop

[27] Taylor Sherman notes again the continuity with colonial practices of punishment in this provision: 'In incorporating this "extraordinary" power into the "ordinary" law of the new constitution India's new rulers, like their predecessors had done during the successive crises of the previous two decades, continued the process of normalizing penal practices which previously had been regarded as exceptional' (Sherman 2010, 163). 'Preventive detention' had been used extensively against Communists.

[28] 'Yē giraftāriyāñ!' *Rahnuma-e-Deccan*, March 16, 1958: 3.

to Owaisi's activities, which were harmful for Muslims, especially in the districts. It was time for old Ittehad members to reclaim the property of the party from the government and put it in a trust for the welfare (falāḥ aur bahbūd) of the Muslim community.[29]

But *Siasat*, in tune with its postcolonial Congress-Left political slant, had ignored the basic lesson of the anti-colonial movements that founded Indian democracy—that popular sovereignty does not live by bread alone. Wahid Owaisi's ten-month imprisonment did not go unnoticed by his public, who by degrees began to rally around the fledgling party through elections. The 1960 municipal elections in Hyderabad city bore witness to the power of this mobilization: in what Munir Ahmad Khan calls a 'bombshell' victory, the barely two-year old MIM won '19 seats securing 63% of the contested seats' and 'of the 22 Muslim Congress ticket-holders, only two could win against the Majlis' (1980, 210). This victory was prefigured in a bizarre way, that is nevertheless illuminating: Khan reports that the 'popularity of the Majlis during the Municipal elections can be assessed by the commercial advertisements appearing in the dailies wherein new perfumes were promoted in the name of the Majlis President' (ibid., 208).[30]

The relay between the mosque, the bazaar and election meetings is an early and definitive indication of the new spaces and logics within which the MIM would grow as a political brand.

---

[29] Majlis leaderōñ ki giraftārī'. *Siasat*, March 16, 1958: 3

[30] In the *Rahnuma-e-Deccan* issues of March 25 and March 28, days before Eid-ul-Fitr, 'Gulzar Company of Macchli Kaman' (one of the old arches- kamān- surrounding the Charminar in the heart of the Old City), "'Attar-e-Owaisi, Owaisi Scent" are advertised on pages 7 and 5 respectively, in the former as the 'smell of/for the adornment of the soul' ('āraish-e-rūḥ ki khushbū). 'Fakhr-e-millat' himself is announced to be visiting 'in the evening', and buyers are encouraged to both come and see him and contribute to the 'Bait-ul-mal', a charitable endeavor for the welfare of poor Muslims (it is not entirely clear if this 'religious treasury', the establishment of which was one of the party's 'religious objectives', was a private initiative or the party's own). These were important days during the month of Ramzan, when he would also have spoken at various mosques.

The passions and the interests were both entwined in its efficacy, in a different economy than with the Ittehad in princely Hyderabad: voters were asked to express their support through buying perfume, that essential part of Eid festivities, from their leader's hands. Neither the electoral arena nor the market was a space of alienation—in the Marxian sense, outside of one's life and control— in this case. A small company, an ephemeral but key 'product', advertised in a local paper and a leader who relied on this small-scale, nearly face-to-face sociality, not frittering away his aura on selling scent for Ramzan, but in fact building it in contact with his impoverished constituency. His grandsons have moved to patronizing new shops, 'hotels' advertising biriyani and Haleem— Ramzan food especially popular with Hyderabadis old and new—and marriage 'function-halls', indicating the new sites of business activity during and after the festive season and otherwise, but they appear as bearers of aura based on distance, who lend their presence than their name to the product advertised, and usually surrounded by admirers and followers wanting to be in the frame of the photo to be published in the *Etemaad* ('Trust/Confidence' the party's Urdu newspaper) the next day. It is announced in the newspapers as an event in itself, a chance for people to come and catch sight of them quickly, perhaps even take a selfie or two for their Facebook profile photos. A small beginning was thus made by 'Owaisi scent'.

Three things that happened during and after Owaisi's preventive detention that additionally speak to the future pattern of the MIM's political life. First, before being arrested he handed over charge to his son, Sultan Salahuddin, thus securing the family's hold on the leadership of the party. Evidently, young Salahuddin Owaisi was good at the job he was handed, and was one of the successful candidates in the 1960 Municipal elections (from Mallepally in the

'new city')[31]. Second, the state government run by the Congress used its legislative power over the Corporation to checkmate the party's 'powerful municipal pressure-group' and re-establish its own dominance. They merged the Hyderabad and Secunderabad Municipal Corporations, creating a body with 94 corporators (28 from Secunderabad), in which the 19 MIM corporators were made 'manageable' unlike in the previous 66-member Corporation. This manageability was expected to last, since 'the Majlis has practically no hold and can aspire to none in the Municipal Constituencies of Secunderabad which have decisive Hindu populations' (Khan 1971, 789). Thirdly, and helped by the state government's demonstration that going against the ruling party would have repercussions, success in these elections also created the conditions for defections and factions that broke away from the party, citing its highly personalized, family-centric leadership.[32]

With respect to the MIM, and putting aside the causal role of the circumstances detailed above, one can say that the irony of democracy was precisely that its fissile potentials had to be contained by the bond of familial inheritance. In the princely state this stability was provided by

[31] This is a neighborhood close to Darussalam—known to have been one of the strongholds of the PDF. It was here that Baji Jamalunissa first heard Makhdum recite his poetry at their home, and Jilani Bano- the novelist quoted earlier- grew up in this neighborhood. http://www.thehindu.com/features/metroplus/society/ward-of-words/article5649076.ece

[32] Six out of the 19 MIM corporators defected from the party when Wahid Owaisi nominated his son to lead the group in the Corporation. In the 1962 Assembly elections three of these stood against the party's candidates. Each one lost quite miserably, though the MIM itself could win only one seat—but that was the prestigious Pathergatti seat, where young Sultan Salahuddin defeated the Congress veteran Masuma Begum, the candidate who beat Makhdum narrowly, it will be recalled, in 1952.
Similarly, in 1964 municipal elections were held, where the party only returned 8 candidates, but none of the defectors won, while 'Majlis hardliners' did (Khan 1980, 214). Munir Ahmad Khan's analysis of these electoral results takes seriously their political dynamic and evaluative aspect, unlike other numbers-based analyses that hailed these elections as 'a containment of the communalists' (ibid., 213). Thus, he notes that underperformance by MIM corporators was 'punished' by low turnout even where there were victories, while a Congress Hindu candidate was preferred over a 'Majlis turncoat' (ibid., 214). I discuss elections as a site of mobilization more fully in Chapter 6.

the over-arching authority of the throne, and with the advance of democratic aspirations and organization, by the hold of the rhetoric, which I tried to show in Part I, became reified as a structure that the party's leadership could not break out of. Beginning anew, and with the entirely different legitimizing space of electoral politics, this stability of authority was sought in dynasty, or to allude to Santner's (2011) suggestive analysis of popular sovereignty, the flesh of the flesh. Possibly the most important indication of the efficacy of this logic, and one cited often by leaders themselves, is that voters not only do not care about this but actively support it through the ballotbox.

This remains true of the MIM, as well as across South Asia (Chiriyankandath 2014). Political families also evolved into brands that could be trusted based on their history of public service, at the same time as politics became a primary means for accumulation—of property, money and influence in patron-client networks. Here again it is worth underscoring the very different, historically evolving field in which charisma operates and becomes efficacious as political authority. In the relay between mosque, market and election meeting— and getting from 'Owaisi scent', where the product bore the name to endowing other products and services briefly with the aura of political celebrity in the present— another space must be added to the multifocused dispersion of charismatic aura, that is to say, the stability and name offered by family inheritance captured in a name.

If authority within the party was sought to be immunized against the demands of democracy by fixing it to the legitimacy of a proper name, in the larger field of state recognition the problem of the party name would present another persistent challenge. The continuing force of state suspicion and surveillance, and the ways in which it created possibilities of action for the

MIM by staging a different type of confrontation between legality and legitimacy, manifests most clearly in 'the Darussalam case'.

III

Principle or/and Interest: Winning Darussalam

The trial to determine the ownership of Darussalam began in April 1963. Drawing on personal interviews and contemporary newspaper articles, Theodore Wright (1966) discusses part of the long-drawn out trial. The property itself, according to a witness at the trial 'consists of 4 ½ acres worth Rs. 5 lakhs ($100,000).' The legal dispute arose, Wright tells us, because the state government decided to 'release the Darussalam to whomever could establish a legal claim to the property.' It was not registered as a *waqf* property, so it fell to the court 'to decide between four claimants: the revived Majlis Ittehad-ul-Muslimin (sic), a pro Congress splinter group called the Andhra Pradesh Majlis, [Khaleelullah] Husseini's Tamir-e-Millat, and Nur-i-Alam Khatun, widow of the Majlis' late leader, Nawab Bahadur Yar Jung.'[33] (ibid., 678)

A brief history of the acquiring of the property has been recounted in Chapter 3. Most of the money was raised by Bahadur Yar Jang, as I noted there, through donations from nobles sympathetic to the Majlis and the "awam" (common people); some of it came from his own pocket (ibid., 315). However, today old-timers simply say that the money came from the 'millat' or 'qaum' (community), and thus Darussalaam was deemed to be their property.

In view of this history, the question of legal title to Darussalam turned on the absolutely central question of who or which group represented the millat, and the trial proceeded as acrimoniously as Wright documents it did because the groups involved attempted to discredit the others and establish their claim as sole representative of the Muslims. Each organization accused

[33] Khan (1980) mentions a fifth claimant- the Waqf Board. But according to Wright, it became clear early on that Darussalam was not in fact a *waqf* property.

the other of misrepresenting their own clout, of corruption, and of having links to the Razakar movement. More specific to the MIM, their opponents' lawyers questioned 'the literacy of the party's municipal councillors (sic) and the adequacy of Salahuddin Owaisi's education' (Wright 1966, 682). As we will see in Chapter 6, this theme—that the party was one of illiterate and undereducated people not up to the responsibilities of representation taken on by them—would stay with the party until another generation, and be recalled by it with a certain pride.

Since the nawab was a founder member and closely identified with the Majlis in its pre-1948 avatar, it should have been fairly simple to establish the party's legal right to Darussalam, but in fact it was this very fact that stood in the way. The Majlis had a difficult battle to fight, because as Wright points out, it could not risk alienating the Hindu judge by claiming continuity with a party made notorious by the Razakars and their activities in the years leading up to Police Action. But if it laid too much emphasis on the discontinuities between the Ittehad'ul Muslimin of Hyderabad state and the current AIMIM, it would be difficult to prove its legal claim on Darussalam. Their opponents did not fail to play on this. Thus, one of the witnesses for the MIM— among the newly elected Municipal corporators—'blurted out' under persistent questioning about the Ittehad's goals, '"the ambition of the party was to capture Delhi by the use of power", then adding on second thought, "in conformity with what is laid down in the constitution."' (Wright 1966, 680). A better illustration of the schizophrenic present of the MIM—or indeed of the kind of neophytes that made up the party's membership— could hardly be found.

According to a contemporary newspaper report, Wahid Owaisi's strategy was two-fold: on the one hand, he dissociated the MIM with the 'Razakar organization' and emphasized that the party was built on democratic foundations (jamhūri buniyadōñ par qāyam), and on the other

he stated that the old name was important for the limited aim of establishing legal title to the property; as soon as this was restored to them the party would change it.[34] These statements, which headlined the newspaper report, were made in response to what appeared to be gratuitous questions from the judge, who asked them quite out of context. The exchange itself went like this:

> The chief judge asked Mr. Owaisi [representing the All-India Majlis-e-Ittehad'ulMuslimin] if the Majlis-e-Ittehad'ul Muslimin only represents one sect (ēk hī firqē ki tarjumāni kartī hai)?'
> Maulvi Owaisi: No
> Chief Judge: Then why is your organization (tanẓ īm) called the All-India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimin?
> Maulvi Owaisi: The name is old (sābiqa) but this party (jamā'at) is functioning according to the Constitution of India (tābe' dastur-e-Hind kām kar rahī hai), and there are opportunities for every sect and class (har firqe aur tabqe ke liye) as far as politics is concerned (sho'ba-e-siāsat mēñ). We have proved this in practice ('amlan) by having nonMuslims succeed from this platform.

At this point in the trial, the report shows, Wahid Owaisi was not a witness himself but actually examining another witness—Khalilullah Hussaini of the Tamir-e-Millat, who was explaining that his was not a political organization in the sense that it did not participate in politics 'in practice' ('amlan), though it did issue statements commenting on, in support of or against particular political groups, events etc.[35] This is why the judge's question seems oddly placed, examining the examiner on a totally different topic. But perhaps the topic was in fact related—it was about the question of politics, and what counted towards a legitimate political platform. 'In practice', that is to say to participate in elections and make representative claims, secularism demanded

[34] 'Ittehad'ul Muslimin sābiqa nām hai, āj Majlis dastūr-e-Hind ki farmān-bardāri mēñ kām kar rahī hai.' *Hamara Iqdam* April 10, 1963: 4.

[35] The Tamir was generally opposed to the MIM, of course, though occasional electoral battles found them backing the same candidate, as would happen in 1967. Earlier in his statement Hussaini had implicitly undermined Wahid Owaisi's leadership of the party by stating that he had only come to know about it from the newspapers.

that political activity not be related exclusively to a religious group. The Tamir, being a non-political organization and not part of 'practical' politics, may well serve its community, but the MIM's name and its practice could not be admitted to coincide.

The Chief Judge's question would continue to arise for the party in the years to come, and at many levels, as I discovered during my work in Hyderabad. During the 2014 election campaign, I got talking to Ghafur, a longtime Osmania University employee and someone I would run into and talk to once or twice a month. He would always ask me questions about my research, being critical of the MIM but also very interested in it. 'Why don't they change their name?' he asked me, 'if you want to expand your party you have to appeal to different groups of people. Look at the BJP; everyone knows it's a Hindu party, but their name is Bharatiya Janata Party; or the caste parties— Samajwadi Party [Socialist Party], Bahujan Samaj Party [the party of the Majority][36]...you have to have a *general* name at least.' But why should they, I countered; it's a recognizable name, everyone knows it, and surely what matters is actual practice ('amal)? I found myself speaking the language of practice at the time to Ghafur, before I had had a chance to look at this old report of the trial. But the gap between name and thing demanded by our secular nizam is quite central to the way it operates, as if oriented toward what in Lacanian terms might be called 'the big Other' inscribed in the Symbolic order of the postcolonial nation-state. In the eyes of the law and self-representation of the Indian nation-state there must be universality, even if 'in practice' specific castes and communities are represented by particular parties, and 'everybody knows'. Except in the case of Muslim parties—it does not matter that

[36] The major electoral base of the SP is the Yadava caste, classified as a Backward Caste, especially in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh (though they have a presence in other states), and of the BSP the Dalit caste of the same state, though again, they have some presence in other states. For a statistical analysis of the social base of various Indian political parties, see Thachil 2014, 78. An ethnographic discussion of the SP is to be found in Michelutti 2008; for the BSP see Narayana 2011 and 2014, also Chandra 2004.

they may have Hindu candidates, 'everybody knows' that they only represent Muslims, and are therefore, in fact, communal and potential fifth columnists. In yet another instance of operating through exceptionality, all these parties co-exist and flourish within the system an in more or less similar ways, through their own particular publics and networks of patronage that sustain them. Specific constraints operate, as I have shown, but they are also conditions of possibility for parties like the MIM and for their publics to appear as political subjects within a field of sovereignty.

It is telling that the case was not eventually settled through a court judgment but, apparently, through a political bargain (Khan 1980, 373). The story of how Darussalam was won (hāsil kare) by the Majlis often forms an important part of stories to do with its early struggles and successes, which genre of narrative is the most beloved of all among Majlis supporters. In 1969, a renewed agitation for a separate Telangana state began in Hyderabad city, and quickly grew into a violent mass movement. Students, once again, were at the forefront, but this time the state Congress leadership's internal factions also played an important role in strengthening the agitation. As I noted in the Introduction, the state of AP offered the MIM certain opportunities of political action that a history of intense rivalry and agonism with the Hindus of Telangana state, or the erstwhile Hyderabad state—could not. As Khan (1980, 296) puts it:

> Muslims in the post-Police Action days had come to believe that the Arya Samaj-based Telangana Hindu leadership would be more vengeful towards them and would revive the memory of oppressive feudal Muslim rule…while Andhras as aliens and more businesslike were not so harsh in their temperament. They had also proved to be fairly accommodative. The Andhra presence, in this version, provided the stranger element needed in order for erstwhile Hyderabadis to reconcile with each other, or at least operationalize an uneasy truce. Thus, while supporting the demand for 'justice' for Telangana and acknowledging that Mulki rules had been disregarded to benefit outsiders, and that the surplus of Telangana was being spent in the Andhra districts, the party stopped short of calling for a separate state.

On the other hand, there was the fact that a younger generation of Muslims, as we saw in the 1952 instance, felt quite keenly the loss of potential employment and of a certain type of public culture that was home to them. The crucial deciding factor for the MIM's equivocation on this occasion appears to have been their awareness of the extent to which the Congress's factional politics was driving the agitation.[37]

The Tamir-e-millat, the MIM's main rival for Muslim public opinion, decided to come out openly in support of the demand when it was at its peak. It held meetings, published statements and deputed its members to work with other organizations participating in the agitation. At least part of its motivation was also to do with the precarious place of Muslims as a religious minority in any new political arrangement. Thus, Khalilullah Hussaini was apparently 'haunted by the fear that the absence of Muslim participation in the regional movement would lead to a situation similar to Bombay, where Muslims with their decline (sic) to support the Shiv Sena had turned it into an anti-Muslim organization' (Khan 1980, 290)[38]. Thus, in both the MIM's and the Tamir's stands on the Telangana movement a calculated gamble had to enter, which essentially had to do with the security of Hyderabadi Muslims. That they took opposite positions on the issue should not obscure the common conundrum, and the extent to which the fate of Muslims was tied up with the 'goodwill', or in fact the complete lack thereof, of the majority community, which, while it may differ politically and according to region and caste, could at any moment in its relation with Muslims become only 'Hindu', without negative consequences.

[37] For a general overview of Andhra Pradesh leadership and its politics of the time see Bernstorff and Gray (1998).

[38] This is a desperately charitable reading of the Shiv Sena's violent, chauvinistic and antiMuslim politics: see Katzenstein (1979, 96, 136) and Eckert (2003, 90-91) for details. I also discuss the Shiv Sena as an unlikely comparison for the MIM in the Introduction.

In the event, the MIM's stand proved prescient. After a few impressive electoral victories, the breakaway group called the Telangana Praja Samiti (TPS) came back to the Congress fold in 1971—after the party's massive national election win that consolidated Indira Gandhi's power in Delhi—and the demand for a separate state was quietly buried, after ministerial positions had been distributed in the required ways. The cynicism of realpolitik evidenced by the Congress politicians in the Telangana movement opened up a field of action, and this the MIM read correctly by and large, taking care to balance criticism with support of the state of AP. The Tamir-e-millat decided to act on principles of 'truth and justice' and sought to conform to the 'regional character' of the demand, attempting to 'rise above personal interest' (Khan 1980: 290-291). To the extent that their aim was to demonstrate Muslim assent for Telangana they may or may not have succeeded, but they had definitely been let down in their attempt at acting on principle by trusting, as it were, in the powers that be.

The MIM benefited in many ways from this—their arch rivals were discredited, and their own authority established. There was also the definitive emergence on the scene, as unchallenged leader, of Sultan Salahuddin Owaisi. As mentioned before, the story of how Darussalam was won is quite a favorite, and it goes something like this. The Congress Chief Minister, Brahmananda Reddy, called Salar (Salahuddin Owaisi) at the height of the Telangana agitation in 1970, to ask for his support in what was an increasingly precarious political climate for him. Salar, being the far-sighted politician that he was, asked that Darussalam be 'given' to the MIM in return for their support: 'Darussalam dētē ke Jai Telangana bolna?' (will you give us Darussalam or shall we say Victory to Telangana?) And that was the end of the litigation for Darussalam. Noteworthy here are the half-joking tone of the threat, delivered in Hyderabadi idiom to a powerful person, by someone who knows he holds an advantage over him. The pleasures of the narrative are

manifold, not least of which is the fact that the entire process—from the beginning of the court-case to its end— lends itself to suspicion and conspiracy theories.

In this frame, it is not unreasonable to assume, as many of the people who told me the story did, that the sole purpose of the legal proceedings was to undermine the fledgling party's claim to representative status and authority. This belief was strengthened by the story of the behind-thescenes deal that ended the trial— evidence that the law was simply an instrument of political maneuver. Thus, the story appears to celebrate the deal-making aspect of politics and Salar's ability to play the game and win against a more powerful opponent: not only did he get the property, he made the government pay rent, with interest, for their two-decade use of it as a fire station. The money was apparently used to establish small shops right outside the compound as well as a medical dispensary and an Industrial Training Institute, the dilapidated buildings of which can still be seen in the grounds. Here the narrative suggests moral superiority over a petty opponent— the deals and threats were for the larger benefit of the community and not for profit or personal interest; it is not then an absence of principle (with respect to Telangana, for instance) that is at issue here, but knowing which principle to privilege in a given situation.[39]

And so it was that in March 1970 the MIM established its headquarters in the building that is once again the nerve-center of its political life. If in princely Hyderabad it was conceived as an office with specific institutional as well as social functions—a hostel for poor Muslim students, an economic resource for the party and a military headquarters— in independent India,

[39] It is also entirely in keeping with this discourse that the Congress is accused of deliberately propping up the MIM in order to counter political rivals like the Communist Party/Telangana Praja Samiti etc. In this telling (understandably popular both on the Left and the Right) the MIM is a Frankenstein's monster created by the all-powerful Congress, which sacrificed principle to narrow self-interest. Once more, the similarities with the narrative around the Shiv Sena of Maharashtra are striking.

claims to ownership would have to deal with the mechanics of representing a community that was an impoverished but assertive minority in a democratic set-up.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have laid out the socio-political context of the revival and early years of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehad'ul Muslimin. A new kind of urban Muslim population and the terrors of post-Police Action life in Hyderabad state, where for all practical purposes Hindu rule was sought to be substituted for the Muslim princely order, helped define the sites for the renewal of political life. The Urdu press, as in the closing decades of the erstwhile princely state, rallied a reading public and took on the role of a specific type of representative in its advocacies, airing of advice, opinion and grievance as well as reportage of news across the city and state. It stood for and with Hyderabadi Muslims, mediating the new order for them. The vibrancy of the press could be seen from the almost immediate establishment of different points of view, politically speaking, within it, which could not always be seamlessly mapped on to party positions.

The second major site for the Muslim public of Hyderabad to appear and matter, were elections. Of these they had little experience and nearly no training, because unlike in British India, in the state elections had been held once before 1948, and those under a very restricted franchise and a general atmosphere of standing on the edge of a precipice. In the seemingly liberal 'forgive and forget' discourse of the new national state, the burden of forgiving and forgetting—for the foreseeable future, it seemed—was carried by Hyderabadi Muslims, in exchange for the hope of reconciliation and redress. These were not forthcoming. Instead, I have shown how the imperatives of secularism actualized themselves through the site of elections, where Muslim crowds at meetings and attempts to represent problems specific to them could plausibly be labeled communal. The even-handedness of secularism was reproduced in electoral

practice by condemnation of Hindu Right-wing politics (simultaneously incorporating it within the nationalist fold), at the same time as tiptoeing around the obvious and specific problems Muslims faced as a group. The name for both majoritarian aggression and minority representation was—and continues to be— 'communalism'.

Into this field of contradictions, ten years after Police Action, the MIM entered as a political participant on behalf of 'the Muslims of Andhra Pradesh'. This was more of an aspiration at this time, and a lofty one at that, for a party whose electoral base did not even plausibly cross the boundaries of Hyderabad city into its 'twin', the ex-Cantonment area of Secunderabad. But, I suggest, in this aspirational future boundary of its constituency one can read not a vain hope so much as a signal of newness, of a desire to adopt and adapt to the new political geography of the nation-state. Within this new context, the MIM under Abdul Wahid Owaisi realized early, Muslims would have to act on the intersections of religious affiliation, political interest and the promises of citizenship. The dominant paradigm governing the party's politics at this dangerous time was the acutely felt need among Hyderabadi Muslims for place in the sun of popular sovereignty. This is something that the MIM's very vocal and numerous opponents—especially in the Urdu press— did not quite grasp, in their understandable anxiety to adhere to the security promised by good citizenly behavior on the part of Muslims. What this meant in practice, which they were constrained to ignore, was to depend on the Congress and other powerful national parties, and on the 'majority' to behave as citizens of a democracy and a neutral state. But popular sovereignty had come to Hindus and Muslims as Hindus and Muslims on the subcontinent, and whatever internal differences they had, with respect to each other they were—and are— locked into the highly unequal antagonism of majority against minority.

I have further discussed how other possible political axes—region and class in particular— have fared in relation to this agonism. Focusing on two moments spanning a decade between them— the founding of the party in 1958 to the municipal win in 1960 being one, and the 'winning of Darussalam' being the other— I have sought to demonstrate how elections and political expediency were recognized by the MIM, more perspicaciously than its opponents, to be specific types of action in relation to the power of the majority and the vulnerabilities of the minority. These were modes of action where the question of intentions and principle did not arise, but which depended on an ability to hedge one's bets in the continuously changing present, in a field outside of one's control. In a way, this was the full actualization of Hyderabadi Muslims' early—though in that case an unmitigated disaster—recognition that 'these were no times for a saint', precisely in a democratic order that demanded secular saintliness from them.

In 1975, the presidentship of the MIM officially passed on to Salahuddin Owaisi, from whom it would pass to his eldest son, Asaduddin Owaisi, in 2008. As I also showed in this chapter, dynastic succession in South Asian politics, as evidenced in the case of the MIM, is a way of dealing with the instability of authority in a democracy by turning the 'crisis of investiture' (Santner 2011) into an opportunity for it (investiture). However, and this is an anthropologist's point, all investiture is not created equal. In the next chapter, I will show how Salahuddin Owaisi steered his party through the 1970s and 1980s, very different times to be leading a Muslim political party than the fifties and sixties. With the new state consensus being violently negotiated through the blood and iron of Indira Gandhi's megalomaniacal rule in Delhi, in many ways Salar was the ideal and typical 'strongman' leader for Hyderabadi Muslims. This is, no doubt, yet another chapter in the memory of the electrician I met in 2014 in Chatta Bazaar, who could not forgive or forget 'kya kya dekhe' (everything we have seen/been through).

Chapter 6
Si(gh)ting publics: the new Old City at the jalsa

> The Assembly session was about to start, so they called a meeting and sent us the agenda. I read the agenda to Salar. He listened patiently to the whole thing, and then began dictating to me the points we would raise in the meeting. They had nothing to do with the agenda! I told him, 'Bawa, ye kyā kar raēñ? Ye sōb nai hai is agendē mēñ; iskō lēke gaē to jāhilōñ ki jamā'at bolte apan ko' (Bawa, what're you doing? These points don't figure in this agenda; if we take these, they'll say we're a party of illiterate people). He said to me, 'miyāñ, ye *unka* agenda hai. Ismēñ apni bāt nai hōti; apni bāt apan bolna, aur koi nai bolte... [loud cheers] (son, this is *their* agenda. It won't talk about us; we have to say our thing, because no-one else will…)[1]

One of my favorite events at Darussalam was the 'taqrīrī muqābalā' or speech competition. These were held two to three times a year in order to commemorate the lives and achievements of past leaders of the party, and involved schoolchildren between the ages of 10 and 16. Advertisements for the event would appear in the party's Urdu newspaper *Etemaad* a week or fortnight in advance, with details of the topic, directions on registering for the event and the names of the people on the committee in charge of conducting it (Municipal corporators, an MLA or a longtime member of the party). The first prize-winner would not only win a 'gold' medal but more importantly, have an opportunity to make his speech in the presence of the party leadership to a large and appreciative audience during the public meeting or jalsa organized in honor of the departed leader's death anniversary.

The topics were usually general enough to enable the inclusion of a wide range of information and rhetoric, and specific enough to anchor it within the ideological frame of the MIM—'qaid-e-millat ba-taur muqarrir' (qaid-e-millat as an orator), 'fakhr-e-millat aur ittehad-e-milli' (fakhr-e-millat and unity)' or 'salar-e-millat ki milli aur ta'līmī khidmāt' (salar-e-millat's

[1] Excerpted and translated from a 2010 speech in memory of his father, by MIM MLA (Member of Legislative Assembly, Hyderabad- Chandrāyangutta) Akbaruddin Owaisi, younger son of Salahuddin Owaisi.

services to the community and education). In response, one usually saw ten to fifteen boys of various ages and abilities, often in school uniforms and accompanied by a teacher all crowding into the spacious visitors' hall at Darussalam. They would be called into the adjoining meeting room one after another to deliver their speech to a three to four-member committee of judges, their audience including reporters of local Urdu news channels armed with handy video-cameras—and of course, the occasional anthropologist. Most of the young participants would stumble over their memorized speech—authored by their teacher or a parent— or, alternatively, try to get it all out in a torrent before they had a chance to forget. Stock sentences and phrases would be repeated by participants from the same school, thus exposing a common author drawing his material from a well-known source. It is hard to describe the effect of hearing grand metaphors such as 'unkī taqrīr taqrīr nahīñ thī, ēk pahāṛi nadī thī…ēk shō'la thī…' (his speech was no mere speech, it was a river of the mountains…it was a blazing fire…) repeated by voices ranging from a high falsetto to a deep, somewhat adult baritone.[2]

Speech competitions like these are not limited to or even original to the MIM; they are an established form of school activity (as in elocution, essay-writing or debating competitions between institutions) as well as outreach for organizations such as the Tamir-e-millat, the Anjuman-e-Mahdavia etc. One can immediately see how many things they accomplish at once in this case— firstly, they draw people into the orbit of the party in different ways (coming to Darussalam; opening up the possibility of speaking to a local audience and of course, acquiring some minimal knowledge of the contributions of founder figures of the party). Secondly, textual accounts are only one source of knowledge and material for our young orators' speeches— MIM

[2] This description was originally written by Ibrahim Jalis (Ahmad 1979, 12; also see Chapter 4) of Bahadur Yar Jang's speech. When I first began attending these competitions in 2011-12, they were restricted to boys; by the middle of 2013 the first separate competition for girls had been held, though they cannot yet claim the privilege of speaking from the party's public platform.

jalsas and the speeches made by party leaders therein, also make up an important part. Often an alert parent or teacher collects material over several meetings and public speeches in order to write a speech for his/her child or student.

There is certainly a relay of circulation between the spoken and written word-- the spoken word is conveyed to live audiences both at well-known venues in the city and through live telecasts on certain Urdu news channels; a somewhat delayed circulation follows through social networking sites on the internet and the daily Urdu newspaper *Etemaad*. Thus, the spoken word and rhetorical performance is much more important than the written word; jalsas are occasions to gather, see friends and acquaintances. Also, particular speeches are recorded on phones and played over time, imitated for a lark or seriously (as in the case of our young competitors at Darussalam), certain parts memorized to be repeated at leisure (among friends or to interested anthropologists, for example).

Thus, the pedagogic circle is complete—the information contained in the speech literally circulates from speaker to audience and back until it simply becomes part of public knowledge, for which it is sometimes difficult to track down 'sources'. This extends to form as well as content as far as these competitions are concerned: particular ways of speaking, gestures, metaphors and word imagery, quoting well-worn Urdu couplets have to accompany the knowledge/memory of material in order to be successful as a speech. This is a difficult thing to achieve, and at no time was this clearer than when it failed during the speech competitions (an instance of which we have already seen). Young children struggling to strike a certain posture, imitate a certain tone of voice, and bring the required gravity to a couplet from Iqbal[3] showed

[3] The generally popular couplet that one hears repeated in the competition is from his *Tulu'-e-Islam* (The Dawn of Islam): 'hazārōñ sāl nargis apni be-nūrī pe roti hai/baṛī mushkil se hotā hai

clearly that in order for a speech to be efficacious a certain kind of persona and attitude needed to be performed, which had very little to do with the will or the intentions of our young orators. Observing them in their struggle, I was struck by their efforts to imitate the body language, hand movements and even timbre of voice of the leading orators of the MIM. This is unsurprising and could be considered another form of homage (or flattery) to the party that was, after all, the organizer of the event. But there are two further aspects of this to be considered.

Firstly, there are limits to the speaker's success— under no circumstances can a young speaker surpass the leaders of the party in their performance. Such a possibility is inconceivable ideologically (no-one is better than the leadership), but also laughable because of the very different conditions of performance and their stakes. The youth as a good trainee and serious competitor may exhort and inform at best—his is a mere display of skill. The men's leadership role gives them an additional range of rhetoric unavailable to the novice: command, invite identification through laughter or pathos, switch between personal and impersonal address, and comment authoritatively on contemporary events. However, there remains the (mimetic) connection between the two that points to the second interesting aspect alluded to above— it is as if in the performance of the inexperienced novice the effort that goes into putting together the original is revealed. It becomes clear that these are practices that answer to a set of expectations, written and unwritten rules of bodily hexis that may be taught and learned by imitation. [4]

---

chaman mēñ dīdāwar paida' (rough and literal translation: a thousand years does the narcissus lament its darkness/ with great difficulty is one with true vision born to the garden.)

[4] I do not argue that this is specific to the Muslims of Hyderabad, though I am obviously able to specify and historicize most clearly in their case. While historical ethnographies of political rhetoric in different regions of South Asia by and large remain to be written (Bate 2009 being an exception), comparisons readily suggest themselves with other politicians in the region--especially Andhra, Telangana, and Maharashtra. Another set of comparisons, of course, can be made with movie stars (for a powerful argument—not based on rhetorical form— about the

As I showed in Chapter 2, this field of rhetorical mastery in the service of political representation has a genealogy that goes back to the first challenges posed to monarchical authority in Hyderabad state. In Chapter 4, I showed how rhetorical performance became reified into repetition in the context of the rise of Qasim Razvi to the position of leadership of an increasingly fascist-type organization. Simultaneously, I juxtaposed these forms with genres of writing such as newspaper articles, memoirs and novels. In the context of electoral democracy, and a public that increasingly reads mostly news and information, I want to suggest in this chapter that today, elements of humor, satire, exhortation, celebration, and pathos combine to nurture and shape the energies of a new celebrity-hungry public. This testifies to the simultaneous shrinking and intensification of the sites of the public, illustrated by the subordination of all genres of narrating political subjectivity, to electoral politics.

However, because of the specific genealogy of the Muslim public in Hyderabad, this is a continuous source of legitimation; the MIM's calendar of jalsas runs through the year. Each one provides an occasion for male sociality and camaraderie, and the exhibition of solidarity as the public presents itself in order to affirm its representatives. To the extent that the MIM's stance of defiance with respect to majoritarian aggression—intensified since the 1970s—manifests in certain types of rhetorical performances, it creates a space of solidarity and security for Hyderabadi Muslims across spaces, such as the mosque, the vast Darussalam grounds, specific street-corners, and times, such as on specific days during Ramzan, anniversaries to commemorate leaders, or to discuss events. Furthermore, the performative force of rhetoric in these contexts works not only separating supporter from opponent, friend from enemy, but also doing so by continuously breaching the recognized and recognizable bounds of the unsayable. It is partly to

---

desire for sovereignty embodied in the cult-status of specific movie stars in South India, see Prasad 2014).

this aspect that the opening extract from Akbaruddin Owaisi's speech—rich in all the generic elements referred to above— refers; as I also demonstrated in Chapter 5, the MIM has always worked through the insertion of items not on the agenda, so to speak, jostling to make some space for its constituency within a political field they cannot control.

In Sections II, III and IV of this chapter, I will look at different kinds of public meetings, cutting across time and space, in order to show how these gatherings and their different modalities activate, perform and sustain the party's relationship with its public. Each of the instances I work with is also a specific instantiation of publicness— an exceptional mosque meeting during Ramzan in 1993 in response to an exceptional event; public meetings to commemorate anniversaries, such as the one our child-orators could address; and finally, election campaign meetings, big and small. Through these meetings the personalities of the speakers—leaders of the party—are also performed, and a relay set up between their image and the kinds of affective responses their rhetorical performances receive.

The first is a unique event that speaks to the tension between realpolitik and principle, raised in the last chapter as well as here. Further, I demonstrate the extent to which the MIM depends on the spaces and recent histories of the city. In the last chapter I discussed the ways in which poorer Muslims were addressed by the party through electoral politics—in this one I go into this more fully, and show how the city itself changed over time. Thus, some of the places mentioned in this chapter are familiar from Part I (Darussalam, Mecca masjid), but many are 'new' locations—near palace-turned-slums, housing projects for the poor, a middle-class neighborhood, or the middle of a market (Chapter 5). These are places no self-respecting Hyderabadi Muslim middle-class person would have lingered in—and would not today—princely Hyderabad, but are now host to a very different class and type of male sociality. These

meetings, often implicitly but sometimes explicitly, ground the MIM's presence in the city, its claim on its history and an authority based on this claim, in both senses of the word—it presents their authority with constraints, as well as with strong roots.

Thus, I will begin in the first section, by focusing on the ways in which the city's spaces themselves have changed, or in many cases, remained unchanged along with the lives of people who inhabit them. The streets, hotels and smells of Makhdum's childhood still remain, though framed by a completely different understanding of 'urban blight', 'decay' and that universal panacea of 'development' that can never be attained. Also an integral part of this story is the seemingly endemic Hindu-Muslim violence that set the Old City apart even in the imagination of fellow Hyderabadis; from the late seventies to the mid-nineties and up to the early 2000s, violence often only made news if it spread beyond the Old City. For a period of fifteen years, about 1978 to 1993, every Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, I was told during one informal conversation, was sworn in while the Old City was under a curfew. Perhaps there were exceptions, but the impression is a strong one and an accurate rendition of the frequency with which communal violence erupted in the city, as several studies have recorded (Engineer 1984; Kakar 1996; Varshney 2002; Gayer and Jaffrelot 2012).

This contributed to the aura of danger that my own work was often viewed with, by friends and strangers alike: I found myself feeling especially brave after friends' reactions to my attending late-night meetings in the Old City, even though there was never an occasion where actual courage had been required or fear felt. I was usually with my friends Moid and Razibhai, and a year into fieldwork, was familiar enough a site at jalsas to be treated to tea and much friendliness. Still, history is not to be taken lightly, and the deep distrust, potential for Hindu-Muslim violence and the spectre of the riot would manifest occasionally. At Darussalam—about

which more in Chapter 7—I was asked once by my friend Saba, a young professional, 'aren't you afraid to come here (tumko ḍarr nai lagtā)? It's not your *area*, these are not your people (ye tumhāre lōg nahīñ), and you're alone. What if something happens? I'd be really scared.' Undoubtedly, her vulnerability and mine are of a completely different order because of who we are. Further, as someone whose family had moved out of the Old City during the early 1980s 'because of the daily problems: curfew, riots' she had a visceral sense of the dangers of the city that I, as a stranger, had only read about. In Saba's fear, I recognized once more and with greater urgency the sedimented boundaries of sociality that define our cities, and the enormous leap of faith that Darussalam and the MIM party cadre had taken by making me feel welcome and quite fearless when among them. This was, however, also a function of the intervening years of peace, where the Congress's hegemony was effectively challenged by the TDP, which was more effective and willing to control communal violence, while investing in a financial expansion of the capital away from the Old City.

I

Violence, backwardness, communalism: the new Old City

'The biggest thing Salar did was to make certain areas safe for Muslims…and for the party', I was told by a municipal corporator at Darussalam one afternoon, who was talking to me about his induction into the party during the leader's time. What he meant, though he did not elaborate on this much more in the interview, is twofold—as the ellipses between 'Muslims' and 'the party' shows. One, of course, referred to the role the MIM played in Hyderabad to defend Muslims during communal riots in the late 1970s and early 1980s; the other was to engineer, through these very mechanisms, the concentration of their population in areas of the Old City that had been of mixed Hindu and Muslim composition. The out-migration of threatened Hindu

populations and in-migration of Muslims from places that they were outnumbered into these areas, mimicked the logic of partition. The constituency that elected MIM corporators, MLAs, finally, in 1983, the first party MP (Member of Parliament) was consolidated during these years (Naidu 1990, 120-122; Mahendra 2006, 85).

It is only recently, in the last ten years or so, that the communal violence and rioting deeply associated with the party through its activities in this time, have begun to fade somewhat. Certainly my own work in Hyderabad, and on the MIM, would have been impossible in the 1980s and 1990s; but they played a crucial role in shaping the ground on which the party stands today. Several factors impacted the occurrence of communal violence, and they changed over time. Thus, no easy line can be drawn from the 1940s to the 1970s, even though one can expect points of articulation with the past. Munir Ahmad Khan calls riots of the late 1960s in the city, for example, 'clash-based' (1980, 321). These were more 'accidental', that is to say 'neither carefully planned in advance nor…deliberate' (ibid.); a personal quarrel, or a petty business confrontation could escalate into armed groups of Hindus and Muslims attacking each other in the streets and destroying and looting property.

This changed in the 1970s, especially after the Emergency years (1975-77). Many of the riots after 1977 through to the early 80s, however, were engineered by factions within the ruling Congress party to discredit a sitting Chief Minister. As such, there was a certain predictability to them— they would usually be timed to occur before or during an election; there were specific sites from which they could begin. For instance, the calling of a 'bandh' or a city 'shutdown' by a political party in order to protest specific events could turn into a riot, or a religious procession of one community could be used to start one. Furthermore, these were times when widespread police brutality—torture, in-custody deaths, 'encounter killings'—began being documented by

organizations such as the APCLC (Andhra Pradesh Civil Liberties Committee) and PUCL (People's Union for Civil Liberties).[5] Anti-police sentiment was also widely displayed in postEmergency riots. Within this field of violence, for parties like the Hindutva-based Jan Sangh— supported by RSS and Arya Samaj networks—and the MIM, riots were means of establishing dominion over territory as well as their own constituents; riots were occasions to decide whose writ would run within a particular part of the city, and to challenge the settled consensus in particular neighborhoods.

The coming together of cynical factional politics, police brutality and anti-police public sentiment, and rioting can be seen in the 1978 'Sabzimandi riots'. These originated in March 1978, not in the old city or the 'Sabzi-mandi' ('Vegetable market'; the area gets its name from what used to be the largest vegetable market in the city in the Karwan area, one of the oldest neighborhoods of Hyderabad just north of the Musi river), but near Osmania University, in Nallakunta. The incident that started it figures in the annals of the women's movement in India, as an infamous case of impunity that galvanized feminist organizations and lawyers into protesting state violence against women from vulnerable communities[6]: Rameeza bi, returning home from a late-night movie show with her husband Ahmad Hussain, was arrested by the

[5] http://www.pucl.org/history.htm; the APCLC was founded in 1973 and had already been active in documenting state repression of the renewed Left insurgency in Andhra Pradesh from 1969 onwards. 'Encounter killing' refers to an ongoing mode of staged killings, wherein death at the hands of police is claimed to be the result of an armed confrontation or 'encounter'. For more on the AP context, see Human Rights Watch 1992, Kannabiran 2004, and Balagopal 2011; for a history of the CPI (Marxist-Leninist), founded in 1969, and leader of a tribal-peasant rebellion that began in West Bengal and spread to Andhra Pradesh among other areas, Banerjee 1980 & 1984. For the spectrum of Muslim political response to the Emergency years (1975-77), see Wright 1977.

[6] The 'Mathura case' became better known in this regard: in 1972, a 16-year-old Adivasi girl was raped by the police in Maharashtra, who were let off by the Supreme Court in 1979 on the grounds that she had consented and was sexually active (Haksar 2005, 132-33). In a similar structure of rationalization, Rameeza bi was alleged by the police to be a prostitute (Kannabiran 1996, 32-41).

Nallakunta police and raped by four policemen at the station; on protesting, her husband was beaten to death by them. The Left students' union (AISF) of the university, locals from the neighborhood gathered outside, there was sloganeering and stone-pelting. A contemporary report observed that the police responded by teargassing and firing in the air, after which the protests spread, and 'basti youth and students attacked policemen wherever they found them' ('People's protest', 719). Eighteen police-stations were attacked, especially 'in Muslim areas' (ibid.); the 'protests grew into a movement, setting transformers, buses on fire' (Mahendra 2006: 88). The opposition parties—including the MIM and the anti-Congress front, the Janata Party (People's Party)[7]—called for a bandh, which was a massive success 'to their own surprise' (Khan 1980, 326). The agitation also spread to the Telangana districts, where student processions and police firing were reported ('People's Protest', ibid.). The one demand was that the policemen responsible should be arrested, for which no protest ought to have been necessary, except the government decided that it was a matter of the 'morale' of the police (ibid.) and, no doubt, its own prestige.

According to CPI leader and trade unionist K.L Mahendra—who was friendly with the MIM leadership and cadre— the party fueled the anti-government violence for its own ends:

> Salauddin (sic) said [to him over the phone] that M.M Hashim, Home Minister, admitted Rameeza Bi (sic) in the maternity centre run by Jamaat-e-Islami. Hashim wanted to develop the Jamaat against the Majlis. Further, Chenna Reddy [Congress Chief Minister] has not included Majlis MLAs in any of the sub-committees' (Mahendra 2006, 88)[8].

[7] According to the report cited above, however, 'the Janata Party was not very active. It was the basti youth, often led by the Muslim Majlis, and the students who took the lead' ('People's protest', 719)

[8] Farah Naqvi (2010, 'This Thing Called Justice') has pointed out, on the other hand, that it was only their involvement that 'made Rameeza's case a case at all. The protests following her rape were led not by women's organizations but by the MIM. Scores of Muslim protestors led by the MIM carried her husband, Ahmad Hussain's dead body…laid it before the police station and seized control of the station. Six protestors died when the police opened retaliatory fire. There

At the same time, however, the Chief Minister himself and some of the English media 'blamed the Muslim communalists…portraying the incidents as a communal riot', which was clearly false:

> It is true that, particularly in Hyderabad, it was Muslim youth who were in the forefront of the struggle and were killed. But at no time was the struggle directed against another community. It was directed at the police and the government. ('People's Protest', 720)

While the MIM certainly plotted its own moves against the government—as well as its would-be political rivals— through the violence, the narrative quickly put together by the politicians about the 'real' reasons behind the massive anti-police upsurge is suspect. Clearly, it is also not limited to a single political party: as a Leftist politician Mahendra is as eager to posit his own knowledge of 'underlying' causes and intentions of the agitation as the Congress Chief Minister and MIM leader. The deep, historically grounded necessity of positing politics as a total, all-knowing control of the destructive energies of a mobilized people is exhibited in this consensus. If the MIM wanted, it was implied, they could stop the violence at any time, thus neatly shifting responsibility from the state to the 'communalists'.

In view of the history of post-Police Action Hyderabad, it should come as no surprise that participation of city Muslims in anti-state violence facilitated the quick plausibility of 'communalism' as a description/cause of the events.[9] Once more the Muslim crowd appears in the script prepared in 1952, inspired by 1948; it would be that much easier to take the next cynical step and fit reality to narrative. Already, K.L Mahendra had noted that while the protests were raging, in the Sabzimandi area Muslim houses were attacked, evidence that there 'was an

---

was mayhem in Hyderabad city.' For details of the findings of the Muktadar Commission of Inquiry, see Prasad 1978. The policemen were eventually acquitted.

[9] Also significant is the fact that Chenna Reddy sought to blame the CPI-ML ('Naxalites') for the agitation in the districts ('People's Protest', 719). Another set of readymade culprits going back to 1948 (Chapter 4 & 5).

attempt to rouse communal feelings to divert from anti-government feeling' (ibid., 89). And sure enough, after a slow simmering of tensions, riots broke out in Sabzi-mandi in August (Khan 1980: 327). The same year, a month later, the Congress Chief Minister addressed the newly consolidated 'Ganesh procession' at Charminar[10]; by 1980, this was a full-blown show of Hindu strength against Muslims (Varshney 2002, 114; Naidu 1990, 129), and a major origin of riots.[11]

Despite the ultimate asymmetry in numbers— more Muslims were killed than Hindus— people still remember how these riots were treated, by aggressors on both sides, 'like one-day cricket matches, where the killings are the runs' (Kakar 1996: 57). [12]Notice that it was not

[10] Ganesh Chaturthi celebrates the Hindu god Ganesh and usually falls around September. Its public celebration was, in the 19th century, turned into a nationalist statement by B.G Tilak, Congress 'extremist' leader from Maharashtra. In Hyderabad, until 1978 there were 'three major processions, and even these were local, with their termination points at a nearby pond, or well, or river…and moved in opposite directions' (Naidu 1990, 128-29). The routes were altered that year to make for one large, central procession, addressed by the Chief Minister at Charminar, until 1983—when the Congress was decisively ousted from power by a new regional force, the Telugu Desam Party (TDP; Party of the Telugu Nation), and this practice was discontinued (ibid.) In 1980 the RSS and VHP-run Ganesh Samiti 'took up the task of bringing together all the old city processions to form a single, monolithic procession' (ibid.). This organization continues to organize the procession, which terminates now in the heart of the city at Hussainsagar lake amid a general shutdown—except for processionists— and heavy police presence.

[11] In 1984, the worst of these—due again to a tussle for power between the Congress and the newly established TDP—took 45 lives and injured 270 people, mostly Muslim. 'For the first time communal violence took place even in the central shopping area of Abids' (Subba Rao 1986, 284). This report contains a detailed discussion of the anti-Muslim discourse of the inquiry commission constituted to look into the 'looting, arson and stabbing' during the September 1984 riots, which colored its narrative of communal violence. Hindus, for example, were described as 'groups of persons living in small numbers in the old city' and victimized by their Muslim neighbors, flush with newly acquired 'Gulf money' (from family members working in West Asia), whereas Subba Rao points out that they were 57% of the area's population, and Gulf money was an entirely unconnected issue (ibid.) See also Footnote 16 below.

[12] This is a study of participants and victims of communal violence by a practicing psychoanalyst, right after the massive December 1990 riots in Hyderabad city, the first major incident after 1984. Kakar interviewed the 'warriors'—professional or semi-professional wrestlers, each a local authority in his area and able to command groups of ardent young men— who were at the center of the killings and well-known to the police as such. There is a Hyderabad history to be written of the transformation of wrestling as a form of self-cultivation patronized by the Nizams and their courtiers, into the contemporary 'use' of wrestlers to provide

likened to war, but a competitive game of one-day cricket—a recently invented and massively popular, particularly through the new medium of color television— format of the game. This macabre analogy captures several elements of these semi-organized killings: they were, as noted above, like a game played between two sides trying to assert territorial control of urban space; they were somewhat symmetrical on both sides, and a tit-for-tat structure operated, which is why stabbing was the common mode of killing—unrelated, unsuspecting passersby would be identified as Hindu or Muslim by the opposite side and knifed on the street. Another similarity was in the structure of emotion associated with the two: cricket was not 'just a game' but tied up with national honor and prestige, this violence was about defending the honor of the 'qaum' or community (ibid., 58).[13]

Finally, there was a structure of spectatorship presumed—as if the community itself was umpire (judge) and crowd, cheering for a victory in the bloodsport of rioting in the arena of the public street, and the state's security apparatus was at best an additional hurdle that upped the stakes and at worst, part of the crowd.[14]

---

muscle wherever it may be needed: to politicians, settling shady real estate transactions, feuds etc.

[13] One of his Muslim interviewees—local strongman and MIM corporator— told Kakar and his associate that 'there are only four fighting communities in India: Sikhs, Marathas, Rajputs and Muslims', and so of course the Muslims could not back down when attacked (Kakar 1998, 58). Here is a small but significant instance of the durability of colonial race theory—from which the concept of the 'martial race' springs—in postcolonial social imaginaries, and the work that it continues to do in shaping socio-political action. Recall the discussion in Part I of this theme in the discourse of Hashim Amir Ali and Qasim Razvi.

[14] A possibly apocryphal story was occasionally recounted about a national-level meeting called by Muslim leaders from North India and attended by Salahuddin Owaisi, sometime in the late 1980s. It was proposed that every state representative would compile a list of destruction and damage suffered by Muslims in their area, so that this could be presented to the government as part of an appeal for security and justice. Salahuddin Owaisi said he had nothing to report, since 'we've settled our scores (ḥisāb-kitāb) locally'. On being angrily denounced as a communalist, he apparently asked that a mufti or seminary issue a fatwa to the effect that it was wrong of Muslims to defend themselves against attack, and if they would take on this responsibility, he

However, a consistent element was a hostile relationship between the police and Muslim crowds, and the dominant sense—with good reason, as we have seen— that the 'ḥukūmat is Hindu' (ibid., 125, 129). This continues today, as I will have occasion to discuss in the following chapter. But this sense of alienation did not always result in an attachment to the MIM as the protector of Muslims, though this was definitely a large part of the party's legitimacy, built in these years. The following set of complaints that Kakar heard from a young disciple of an anti-MIM wrestler, was similar to the things I was told twenty years later:

> In jail, we were so thirsty and hungry, but never received any water or food. After leaving the jail, when I went to the Majlis office, the leader said, 'why are you upset? You are not dead— you're still alive.' When Hindus get arrested, a BJP leader immediately arrives and gets them released on bail. We keep rotting in jail. The Majlis is of no use to us. The leaders fight among themselves. They collect money in the name of poor Muslims like me and then eat it up themselves. They have opened a medical college but the number of Muslim students in the college are only five paise to a rupee (5%). Where do they have money for the fees? The college benefits Hindus more. (ibid., 70)

These complaints are, as I have indicated, common. They are indicative of a phenomenon I explore more fully in the following sections and the next chapter, but which I have alluded to in Chapter 5—the continuous and pervasive co-existence of expectation and disappointment, faith and distrust that marks the relationship of the MIM's public with the party and its leadership. This is a function, I have suggested, precisely of the concentration of every important aspect of collective life into the one sphere of electoral politics. This is a space and modality which the charismatic leader both nurtures and sustains as a public, but one that must inevitably also lead to failure and disenchantment inasmuch as politics is about nefarious deals and short-term bargains within a larger context of the relative powerlessness of a minority in a majoritarian polity. In order to ground this public and its expectations in the space-time of Salahuddin Owaisi's pre-

---

would follow it. Whether this is factually correct or not, the story has a certain narrative truth, being faithful to Owaisi's persona and the nature of rioting in Hyderabad city.

eminence as MIM president, we must attend more closely to the changed city that it inhabits, which was shaped in the 1970s and 1980s.

The medical and engineering colleges were opened in the late eighties, after Salahuddin Owaisi famously declared that the state had left Muslims to fend for themselves, so 'Muslims should stand on their own feet, rather than look to the State for help'[15] He was not wrong. Ratna Naidu's classic study of the Old City was carried out between 1984 and 1986, and highlighted not only the poverty and 'congestion' in which the dense non-neighborly sociality of Hindus and Muslims had to be lived, but also other indicators that demonstrated the complete neglect of the area: for example, '70 per cent of the schools in the walled city are run privately, either by individuals or by community organisations (sic)…on rented space usually part of the landlord's house' (Naidu 1990, 88). Furthermore, according to the same study, 'unemployment was found to be higher among the Muslim and the scheduled caste and tribe communities, which have an unemployment rate of 21 per cent as against 16 per cent among the Hindus' (ibid., 82), and these communities also 'predominated in low-prestige occupations'. As for the supposed newfound prosperity as a result of employment in West Asia, or 'Gulf money':

> The status of most of the occupations pursued in the Gulf is low, and is coupled with job uncertainty. Further, the savings that are sent home are not as substantial as one might expect. Thus Gulf earnings have brought about only minor changes in the standard of living and temporary relief from economic hardship. The more lasting impact…seems to have been cultural and social.[16] (ibid., 100)

[15] 'Holding them captive?' *The Hindu,* April 27, 2003.

[16] This refers to the following changes, described earlier in the text: 'the manner of wearing purdah among women and the mode of headgear among men; the Arabic language is becoming increasingly popular…luxury goods that are freely available in the Gulf.' (Naidu 1990: 98). Thus, the social and cultural factors are mostly to do with appearing in public differently than before, and in order to distinguish oneself from the surroundings. However, Naidu and her team also note that the highest percentage of Gulf employees comes from outside of the walled city—

Year after year MIM MLAs brought up the lack of basic civic facilities—drinking water supply, proper drainage, road-repairs, electricity, garbage clearance—in Legislative Assembly sessions, and demanded more funds and autonomy for the Municipal Corporation (in which they had a big presence).

Different in tone and content from these social scientific surveys is a short survey-cumstudy published by the *Siasat* daily in 1984.[17] This slim booklet is a two-man effort: one an ethnographer-cum-surveyor (Baghi), the other a statistician (Hussain). It has a conversational tone, and provides social commentary very much in keeping with the *Siasat* style, indicative of its institutional position in the city. This generic element is significant, because this distinguishes it from the usual type of 'urban studies' kind of work. It is what makes it valuable for an ethnographer to read as text, involving questions, concerns and evaluations that stem from a deep embeddedness in and a feeling of responsibility for the city, the community, and their present and future. Therefore, I do not read for the numbers presented—which by and large corroborate other studies coming from the same time and places— but mainly for the rough-and-ready method and the narrative voice. For instance, the dense sociality of Hyderabad city is manifest in these introductory words by the author/researcher:

---

which is only the 'core area' of the Old City—from the historically Arab neighborhood of Barkas.

[17] *Qadīm shahar kā Ma'āshī Survey: Musalmānōñ kē ma'āshī, ta'ālīmī o samāji masāil* (An economic survey of the Old City: the economic, educational and social problems of Muslims). Hyderabad: Siasat, 1984. Carried out by one Amjad Baghi (the second name is possibly a poetic pseudonym, 'bāghi' meaning 'rebel', though not written as such), the survey was inspired by the letters of young Hyderabadi men working in 'Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states', who felt insecure in their jobs and worried about having to return home (14). The numbers were worked out and tabulated by Mehdi Hussain, a lecturer at the Anwar-ul-Uloom college, and the entire exercise was carried out under the guidance of Professor Waheeduddin Khan, one of Osmania University's most famous sons, founder-director of the Centre for Economic and Social Studies in Hyderabad and a pioneer of urban studies.

> Yaqutpura holds the distinction of being the most backward area in Hyderabad city and it was from there that I began work on the survey.[18] I am a member of the public (‘awāmī kārkun) and in that capacity generally acquainted with the New City- but particularly (khāṣ ṭaur par) familiar with the alleys and by-lanes of the Old City. Here I think it is important for me to make it clear that I had no difficulty conducting this survey, because it turned up friends or people I knew in every *basti* who helped me with the work. (15)

The survey was conducted in the bastis of Yakutpura, which had all sprung up in the 1970s and included ‘629 households’ adding up to ‘4,329 souls (nufūs)’ (ibid., 23). The distinction between a ‘basti’ and a ‘mohalla’ is important: the former is usually used with reference to a slum, while the latter usually denotes a neighborhood. Baghi pays attention to the altered pattern of naming in these urban settlements, indicating the politics of slum-building: Jawahar Nagar, Owaisi Colony, Aman Nagar, Indira Nagar etc (ibid.) Each name points to the political entity behind the work that had to be done in order for it to be classified and recognized as a slum; thus ‘Indira’ and ‘Jawahar’ indicate Congress affiliation, while ‘Aman’ refers to Amanullah Khan, the popular MIM MLA (more about him below). This naming pattern departs significantly from the old neighborhoods of the city, which were named, variously, after groups residing there—Irani gali, Mughalpura, Brahmanwadi; ‘things’ associated with them—Doodh (milk) Bowli, Rethi (sand) Bowli; or indeed old mansions or institutions, such as Diwan Devdi, Purani Haveli (old palace).[19]

---

[18] This theme of backwardness is common; during one campaign meeting held in the area, a friend reminded me that Yaqutpura was known as ‘chakupura’ (chāku meaning knife), indexing the ‘lawlessness’ and prevalence of violent crime in the area. Another friend, who lives there, told me how he maintains his distance from the surroundings by minimizing his children’s contact with the neighborhood and ensuring that he is well-respected as a professional. In the 2014 election campaign the MIM incumbent had a rough time appealing for votes because of the widespread impression, repeatedly and publicly expressed, that he had done nothing for his impoverished constituents.

[19] For a book-length study in English, see Prasad 1986. *Siasat* has a long history of documenting and celebrating the city, especially by assembling literary figures to write about it; see for instance *Hyderabad ki dastan* (The Story of Hyderabad), also published in 1986. This is a collection of articles published in the newspaper ‘over thirty-eight years’ and written by well-

Many bastis have been built, and continue to be built, on graveyards (ibid., 16). Illegal transactions in land, it will be recalled, were central to the making of local centers of power involved in communal violence. It can be understood in light of this expansion of the city and the demand for housing among the poorest sections of the urban working population, who were drawn into networks of patronage operating in 'political society'. One could say that these new patrons took the place of the old nobility, only in a new structure of obligation—votes for the most basic forms of shelter, and security of life. But the newness of structure is all-important—neither subjects nor citizens, these urban populations can become 'the poor' or 'Hindu' and 'Muslim' voters, or crowds in their precarious collective existence. Thus, there is an entire history of urbanization and its sociopolitical foundations layered into a single descriptive paragraph of this 'survey'.

The specific issues of concern are also interesting: aside from the usual 'housing' and 'education', there is chronic indebtedness (qarẓ) and 'unmarried girls' (anbyāhi laṛkiyāñ). It is a massive expense to marry daughters off, notes Baghi, and the very same people who invoke 'Islam and Quranic teaching' when it comes to their own, do not hesitate to demand huge dowries and expensive weddings when it is time to acquire daughters-in-law. So it is that many educated women have been married off to 'illiterate (jāhil) or less educated boys', because men of their own class and education present correspondingly higher financial demands (ibid., 21). The fact that this was a question included in the survey, and is highlighted as a major problem in the report points to the kind of audience these findings were aimed at—not merely government departments and inter/national development agencies, but a society that would recognize the

---

known Hyderabadi literatteurs like Muhiuddin Qadri Zore, Tamkeen Kazmi and Ashfaq Hussain, with an afterword of sorts by Prince Muffakham Jah, the younger grandson of Mir Osman Ali Khan and brother of the last titular Nizam of Hyderabad, Prince Mukarram Jah.

breach of shared norms of sociality. As we shall see in Chapter 7, these are the kind of problems—and the frames—that are brought to the MIM party office for redress, positioning the party as both social and political authority, a role that it is often unable to fulfil. What it has been able to, with great success, is mobilize the collective energies of its Muslim public and continuously perform its legitimacy through the jalsa—a tradition, we have seen in Part I, that goes back to the early days of the Ittehad, but must now contend with an entirely different class of Hyderabadi Muslims.

II

In contrast to the everyday routines of the party office at Darussalam (see Chapter 7), the public meetings/ jalsas of the MIM are occasional, well-planned and hyper-visible affairs. There are various kinds of meetings— some to commemorate the party's founder figures, others to mark a religious occasion like the Milad and still others, as and when required, to discuss current political affairs or the jalsa-e-ḥālat-e-ḥāẓirā. All these are in addition to the annual celebration of the revival of the party on March 2, and the youm-al-Quran (day of the Quran) meetings during the month of Ramzan. Aside from the Milad meeting that usually had a separate section for women, the others were understood to be for men: they were held at night, usually starting around 9 pm ('b'ād-enamāz-e-'Ishā'; after the sunset prayer) and going up to midnight or 2 to 3 am. The venues could be the large grounds of Darussalam or the slightly smaller space known as the Khilwat ground, close to the beautiful Chowmohalla palace in the Old City. I do not, of course, include the election campaign meetings—of these there are several every evening for the entire period of the campaign, as we shall see in the next section. During Ramzan, jalsas would be held in prominent mosques after afternoon prayers and in Hyderabad's iconic Mecca masjid—which I will have occasion to refer to again below—on alternate Fridays of the month.

A jalsa was always an occasion for excitement—people would make plans to meet and go together, speculate about who would speak in the beginning (the most important speeches are always in the end) and look forward to what Akbaruddin Owaisi (everyone's favorite speaker; in Section III I will have occasion to show why) would say that night, if he did speak. Afterwards, as I knew from people at Darussalam, the men would gather in all-night tea-shops or at homes to discuss and dissect the speeches. On occasion, the discussions would carry forward to Darussalam the next day, where it was not uncommon to see people reading the news-report of the meeting that they had attended. 'You're coming today, right?' I would be asked on the morning of an especially anticipated jalsa. Some party-members would travel to other towns when meetings were held there and come back with details. They had special sense of vocation, distinct from the 'public', as I discovered during one conversation at Darussalam, after a jalsa at held in the town of Anantapur, some distance away from Hyderabad, now in the state of Andhra Pradesh. I asked one of the caretakers of the party office if he had gone, to which he replied— of course not, only 'leader types' attended jalsas with such alacrity. He pointed to a couple of his friends—see them, they are leader types, big men (baṛe ādmi). I wanted to know what that meant, and both he and his friend—let me call them Majid and Ahmad— told me in their way. Majidbhai said 'you need to have a huge heart (itnaaaa baṛā jigar, lit. liver) to be a leader. Who else can endure our public? (Apni public ko aur kaun bardāsht kar sakte?) It's real hard work; you have to run around day and night, and then listen to all the abuse (gāliyāñ sunni padtīñ). Can you and I do that? (Āp-hum kar sakte?)' Happy to be identified as an ordinary non-leader type, I agreed with Majidbhai—it wasn't for everyone.

His friend Ahmad, on the other hand, was pleased to be recognized as a hard-working uncomplaining leader. According to him, 'these people stay here, it's their job. Now elections are

around the corner. We go around with the sahabs (Asad and Akbar Owaisi), and then go to the public meetings in the evenings…run around all day and then attend the evening-meeting (poooorā din phirnā, phir sham ko jalsa attend karnā)[20]. This is our job, right? And in the meetings, we're like the Special Branch (plainclothes policemen) (apan bhī Special Branch ki hī tarah rehte)', he laughed. This was because they paid attention to the speech, what 'sahab' was saying this time that he didn't say the last time, what was the significance of it. As I recorded in my notes, 'I thought they were actually doing partly what I was—discourse analysis!' though the analogy with the police was somewhat disconcerting—if instructive. There were additional duties— scrutinizing 'the public' for reactions; they knew there were opponents (mukhālifīn; dūsri taraf ke logāñ— opponents, people from the other side) in the crowd, and they had to keep an eye on them. I asked if Majidbhai thought the public noticed these things; no, not really, he was persuaded: The public doesn't see all this. They have only one thing to do… (shout slogans).'

The contradictions in the roles ascribed to the public was part of the structure of dependence and distrust—they were too demanding (who could endure them?) but also completely willing to go along with the rhetorical performance, without paying too much attention to its finer points. But this taken-for-granted nature of the contradiction could come apart, and as illustrated by the following episode in the MIM's history, it would require a different sort of public to restore it.

[20] The evening meetings were preceded often—especially in cities outside Hyderabad— by 'walking tours' (paidal daura) of particular neighborhoods, where the leaders would meet and be greeted by residents. These were more regular and less connected with jalsas in Hyderabad itself— dauras were organized as and when needed, around the year. Their frequency would increase, of course, during election campaign season.

The ever-present Salahuddin Owaisi

The stories told about Salahuddin Owaisi's life and personality are usually in the heroic mode. Even people critical of the MIM remember him in this fashion. Lateef Mohammad Khan, who heads a prominent Civil Liberties organization in Hyderabad and is a well-known critic of the MIM, recalled seeing him for the first time during a Hindu-Muslim riot in the already notorious Yaqutpura neighborhood:

> It was '79 or '80…my aunt used to live in Yakutpura then and we had gone to visit her. Suddenly a riot started—all of a sudden, around 10 or 11 in the morning. Much confusion, people began running in all directions…we were children, really young. And then a man came in on a motorcycle, in all this confusion and went right through the mob (bhīṛ) and into the Hindu basti. And people said, 'oh Salar is here, Salar is here!' He told the Muslims to get back into their houses, and the Hindus saw him and went back into theirs. The police arrived promptly…that was the first time I saw Sultan Salahuddin Owaisi sahab. And I felt great (mujhē bahut hī acchā lagā) that there is this *daring personality*, you know…without any security guards or police this man pushed the Muslims aside and put himself right in front. And he went and stood in the Hindu neighborhood by himself...such was his authority, the awe that he inspired (itnā ra'ub aur dabdabā unkā thā). So anyway, whether it's Sultan Salahuddin Owaisi sahab or Amanullah Khan sahab, for Hyderabadis they are like characters out of legend (afsānvi shakhsiyatēñ haiñ wo).

It is not hard to see why; this description is almost cinematic. Not every story was told in this way, but they all had common elements— the lone man on an old Norton motorcycle, always first on the scene and instantly able to restore order. But he was also ordinary, alone on an old motorcycle, not a nawab but an elected leader of the common people. Munir Ahmad Khan observed at this mid-point of his long career:

> Basking in the glories of constant electoral victories, he has repeatedly defeated ministers and tough politicians. Tall, immaculately dressed, a deep husky voice and undaunted postures (sic) have made him the darling of the Muslim masses…Though he has not been gifted with the oratory (sic) in his father's fashion, he can always arouse a crowd. Identifying itself with the audience for that matter, has never been the Muslim leadership tradition Salahuddin Owaisi has overcome the weakness of the platform by cultivating his electorate, maintaining a direct link with the people and nursing his constituency. (Khan 1980, 237)

Some of these elements are old—the quality of voice, for instance, the 'immaculate dress', even the 'undaunted postures', it will be recalled, were associated with Bahadur Yar Jang. But for the rest, especially the identification with his public and the less than accomplished oratory (different from 'arousing a crowd', note)— these were qualities very much made in and required by the moment.

The other story one heard most often was of the night of his wedding, when just as the ceremony came to a close someone called to say there was a 'disturbance' in some neighborhood of the city. He rode in on the old Norton in his bright wedding sherwani, only to discover that it was a prank—but also of course a bit of a test. As tests go it was harmless and went on to become a straightforward story about Owaisi's commitment to his constituents and his community, who he would always put above his personal life and personal interest. Little wonder then, that even in one of the critical reports—accusing him of instigating a riot IN 1981— he is characterized as 'the ever-present Muslim leader Sultan Salahuddin Owaisi' ('Riots in Hyderabad', 1416).

But he was, after all, a politician and as he was to discover, political life has a complicated relationship with virtue—even though 'these were no times for a saint'.

The test of truth

The demolition of the Babri masjid on December 6, 1992 was a landmark event for many reasons in the history of independent India.[21] One of its lesser discussed ramifications was its impact on Muslim political representation in India. The shock of the demolition was felt also as a failure of

[21] On December 6, 1992 a large mob consisting of members of Hindu Right wing groups demolished a 14th century mosque in the north Indian town of Ayodhya, claiming that it was the birthplace of the Hindu god Rama and that the mosque had been built by the Mughal king after destroying a temple. The demolition was preceded and followed by anti-Muslim rhetoric and violence on a large scale.

political leadership. The credibility of contemporary Muslim leadership had already begun unraveling during the faltering negotiations with the Hindu Right before December 1992; after the demolition, the crisis became even more acute. Neither the Indian Union Muslim League of Kerala nor the MIM were strangers to dissent and defection, but in the aftermath of the demolition the delicate balance of alliances and political tactics was suddenly laid bare to moral principles as criteria for judging right and wrong: the question roughly became, it may be *beneficial* to do such and such, but is it *right*?

Salahuddin Owaisi was in Delhi when the Babri masjid was brought down; apparently he instructed his party-men in Hyderabad to *refrain* from any public demonstration or protest and concentrate instead on maintaining peace in the city. This was because Salar knew very well from long and bitter experience, I was told, that the police were merely looking for an excuse to shoot down Muslims. 'And he was right, you saw what happened in Bombay!' one Majlis supporter pointed out.[22] Amanullah Khan, his right-hand man in the party and a popular leader in his own right, defied these instructions to lead a small group of protesting Muslims in prayer at the crossroads of Abids, a stone's throw from the Legislative Assembly, the office of the *Siasat* newspaper as well as King Kothi, the erstwhile home of the seventh Nizam. The police cracked down on the protestors and criminal cases were registered, but in general the city remained riotfree (12 people died in the Old City, mostly in police firing).

Amanullah Khan's defiance was a sign of things to come: a few months later in March 1993 he publicly broke with the MIM to form the Majlis Bachao Tehreek (Save the Majlis

[22] In much of the violence following the demolition—in the city of Mumbai (Bombay) and Ahmedabad, for instance, which recorded the highest numbers—police firing into protesting Muslim crowds accounted for the highest numbers. http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/babrimasjid-bloody-aftermath-across-india/1/162906.html; http://www.pucl.org/fromarchives/Religion-communalism/bombay-riots.htm

movement; MBT), accusing his erstwhile leader and mentor Salahuddin Owaisi of trading the Babri masjid for personal gain (Babri masjid ki saudebāzi).[23] Thus, Owaisi's instructions to *not* protest against the demolition in public became evidence of his complicity rather than a concern for Muslim life.

The name of the new party is of course an index of how deeply the Muslim political imagination in Hyderabad is tied to the Majlis (aside from an echo of an earlier 'Urdu bachāo tehreek'/Save Urdu movement); Khan himself repeatedly declared that he had 'been a Majlisi all his life and will die a Majlisi', and that it was the MIM that had in fact betrayed the ideals upon which the Majlis had been founded.[24] As I have noted already, Khan was close to Owaisi and a very popular politician in his own right— he was considered honest, committed and fearless (in his dealings with the police, for instance). This combination, added to the atmosphere of grief, betrayal, anger and suspicion following the demolition provided credibility to the accusations. But more: ordinarily, charges of bribery, corruption and nepotism are taken for granted by the electorate in the field of South Asian electoral politics; today a supporter of the MIM faced with questions about corruption would simply say, 'everyone does it. Why single us out? How can you survive in this system if you don't play it? and we must survive if Muslims are to have a voice.' There is thus an element of deceit and corruption that is taken for granted in the field of politics, as long as there was a larger end to be attained that was itself not reducible to personal interest— as I argued was the case in the re-acquisition of Darussalam. The post-Babri masjid

[23] His list of charges included nepotism, the allegation that Owaisi was favouring his family over other senior leaders in the party, but these were secondary at the time.

[24] This was taken by most of my informants to be a reference to Bahadur Yar Jang, who—it will be recalled— belonged to the Mahdavi sect that Amanullah Khan also came from, and therefore an implicit kinship-related claim on the leadership position in the Majlis. But a more general reference was the welfare of Muslims and 'unity' itself.

moment actually revealed the degree to which this attitude to deception rests on the opposite expectation, of being guided by a larger principle.

To the extent that Salahuddin Owaisi was good at politics, he had to be good at making deals and negotiation; to the extent that he represented Muslims as a group under attack in 1992, he had to know where to draw the line. Had he failed to do it? was he, after all, too much of a politician to be a good leader? 'Every house was split', I was told by more than one person, in almost the exact same words, 'if the father was for MIM, the son was MBT; in others, it was brother against brother.' In the state elections that followed in December 1994 the MIM did very badly, retaining only one seat—Charminar— in the Legislature. About Charminar—scene of Salar's early election victories— it is still said that if a donkey were to stand on the MIM ticket from here it would win. Undoubtedly this was a difficult time for the MIM, and it was under these conditions that young London-returned barrister Asaduddin Owaisi made his debut in the Andhra Pradesh Legislature, the lone voice of his party in the house. The MBT, as it was now being called, did marginally better with two seats but took this as a sign that people believed the allegations leveled by Amanullah Khan.

The suspicion and uncertainty had to be dealt with; it was as if politics had quite suddenly become visible as *the* site of collective life and as such, the habitual deceptions of realpolitik could no longer be tolerated. As the MIM and MBT turf-war in the Old City of Hyderabad escalated, and insults were traded among politicians as well as 'ulama, a suggestion was made by some 'ulama to resolve the issue by conducting a *mubahala*. As an event, my understanding is that a *mubahala* is an agonistic form of resolving disputes, after all avenues of debate are closed and no resolution has been reached. It is a test of truth and falsehood and involves invoking the

curse of Allah on the party that is in the wrong.[25] In South Asia the only other instance I have been able to find is with regard to the polemics between Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (founder of the Ahmadi sect) in the late 19th century, by both Muslim and Christian clergy in colonial India. Whether the *mubahala* actually took place and who won or lost are still the subject of anti- and pro-Ahmadi polemics. This is understandable, since the temporal arc of the mubahala is unstable and uncertain— as the anti-Ahmadi polemics demonstrate, *when* the punishment would come and what form it would take was very much open to interpretation by rival groups.

Clearly it was important that there be a public settling of the controversy, and the fact that a *mubahala* was the form suggested, framed the matter as something for Muslims to worry about as religious, ethically accountable subjects—they were called upon to testify, as it were, on a political question that was not based on electoral calculation. It would not matter who had the better organization, resources, experience or muscle; here was a crisis that could only be grappled with in terms of right and wrong, the truth and falsehood, judged not by an electorate or even a *demos* but by Allah with *His* people as witnesses. But by proposing this form as a resolution in a political dispute, the reverse had surely also happened—since political futures were involved, in the end perhaps election results would decide who was in the right?

The *mubahala* did not take place, though Salahuddin Owaisi did in fact accept the proposal. However, he did offer his community—and electorate—closure in another form, and this exceptional act was what people remembered as an event.

[25] Usually translated as 'imprecation', in the Quran it is mentioned in the context of the Prophet's dispute with the Christians of Najran where the latter failed to take the challenge forward, preferring to negotiate the treaty of tolerance for the 'people of the book' instead. A more recent instance is to be found in Indonesian politics in 1999; for details, see Platzdasch 2009. I am grateful to Mohammed Ayub Khan for this reference.

Event

Every Friday of the holy month of Ramzan, one organized Muslim group is permitted to hold a 'jalsa' in the iconic 16th century mosque near the Charminar, the Mecca mosque. These are supposed to be 'religious' meetings and are often titled 'Youm-al-Quran' or Day of the Quran meetings, where local 'ulama and on designated days, political leaders speak. Speeches made by politicians invariably mix commentary on current political events with commentary on the message of the holy book and the importance of the month of Ramzan. The male Muslim audience of these speeches consists often exclusively of party supporters and activists, and loud applause, cheers and sloganeering occasionally greet the speaker, especially when he polemicizes against a political rival.

February 24, 1995 was the final Friday of the holy month, always a huge occasion when thousands of Muslims from across the state gather for *Zohar* prayers.[26] Arrangements for these prayers are still overseen by volunteers of the local political party; MIM volunteers ensure the provision of everything from sheets to pray on to a functional sound system. On this particular Friday when Salahuddin Owaisi began his speech, the atmosphere was a little subdued. Few could have predicted the note on which his speech ended. I quote from the Urdu newspaper *Siasat*'s account of the event:

> A most remarkable set of circumstances (ajīb o gharīb surat-e-ḥāl) was created in the public and political ('awāmi aur siyāsi) life of Hyderabad today, when Janab Sultan Salahuddin Owaisi, president of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehad'ul-Muslimeen, Member of Parliament and President of the Babri Masjid Action Committee, addressing thousands of Muslims on the occasion of Jummat-al-vida' in Mecca masjid, suddenly raised the Quran to his head and swore this oath that left the audience speechless, "O Allah! You are Omnipotent (jabbār) and Almighty (qahhār), I call upon You in Your omnipotence and Might : if I have traded any favors with the Central government or anyone else to allow the sacrifice (shahadat) of the Babri masjid, may my children and I be utterly and completely destroyed (mujhe aur merī aulād ko nīst-o-nābūd kar de)". Janab Owaisi was

[26] On this occasion, the number was 300,000 (3 lakh), according to the *Siasat* report.

> making a speech at the Youm-al-Quran meeting; his extraordinary step (ghair-ma'mūlī iqdām) brought tears to the eyes of thousands of his listeners. Countless worshippers (beshumār musalliyōñ ko) were seen appealing to him to not swear by the Quran, but a highly emotional (wufūr-e-jazbāt mēñ) Janab Owaisi continued to hold the Holy Quran to his head and speak. The atmosphere became so charged with emotion that the mosque was soon drowned in echoes of *Allah o Akbar*…several people rushed forward to meet Owaisi sahab resulting in a minor stampede, and the loud-speaker got disconnected. One gentleman had a heart attack and was taken to Osmania hospital in a police van; five or six people sustained mild injuries in this stampede…
>
> …in the last part of his address, Janab Owaisi referred to the proposed *mubahala* and asked the assembly, 'can any one of you claim that I have ever accepted a bribe from anyone in the 36 years of my political life? If you can, come forward and tell me to my face in this gathering (bharē majme' mēñ). I am not among those who hide and talk (chhup kar bāt karne wālōñ mēñ nahīñ hūñ). He invited people to speak up more than once, and when not a single voice was heard in response he raised the Quran to his head and declared, 'I have the Quran in my hands…'[27]

The mood of the event and its significance is captured by the animated yet restrained prose of the *Siasat* report; the individual accounts I heard during my work with the MIM twenty years later were still inflected by a certain awe of having witnessed Salar's oath. People would simply refer to it as the time 'jab Salar Quran uthaye' (when Salar raised the Quran to his head). In their accounts, they strained to remember the exact words and replicate the deep timbre of his voice; reported speech was rarely used to recall the event. The words, the place, and the occasion all came together quite felicitously; in the words of the news reporter the occasion seems almost cathartic. Further, the weeping, sloganeering and sudden rush to *prevent* the taking of the oath all seem to testify to the terror and exaltation of being witness to a singular act, one whose consequences could not be foreseen. It appears that the people who appealed to him not to swear by the holy book may have had doubts about his integrity and forgiven him if he had indeed been part of a deal; no good could come of mixing the possibilities of divine retribution with the mundane realities of realpolitik. It could also be read as an attempt to reassure him that he need

[27] *Siasat*, February 25, 1995.

not go so far; they trusted him and did not require this kind of proof. Either way, there was a dominant sense of anxiety mixed with emotion.

Already in the slogan-shouting one can see evidence of recuperating the potentially destructive energy of the oath into more familiar expressions of group solidarity in political meetings—the quintessential 'slogan shouting' public. Furthermore, there is the work of narrative that in its reporting both conveys a sense of the occasion and renders it accessible and readable— hence my choice of the newspaper report with which to describe the event. There is actually an old blurry video available on youtube[28] now that records the closing moments of the speech and showcases Salahuddin Owaisi's powerful rhetoric. In it, what comes cross is general confusion and noise, over which Salar tries to appeal to people to sit down and listen to his 'qasam', but which only increases as he begins, when people begin raising slogans and trying to stop him. The texture of the event is lost in the recording, while the evocative prose of *Siasat* conveys more of the relationship between the speaker and his audience, including those who were not present. In it, description and comment come together in a way that places the event in its proper emotional and historical frame and helps us make sense of it as an event. What future potentials it holds as a video one cannot say, only that as it stands right now it gestures at its significance rather than capture it.

In that moment, everyone agrees, Salahuddin Owaisi re-established his stature as the preeminent leader of Hyderabad's Muslims. Khan's response seemed somewhat desperate—seizing on Owaisi's invitation to his audience to come up and accuse him to his face in public, he repeated his charges in a press conference and demanded that Owaisi swear the oath in his presence. Then there could be reconciliation, though he would not withdraw the charges he had

[28] Once more grateful thanks are due to Ayub Khan for alerting me to this, uploaded in 2013: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ipkLmmSX4oQ

made, which must be duly investigated. The accusations, however, now came across as hollow and somewhat petty, dwarfed by the grandeur of the response. Mufti Khalil Ahmad, Vice Chancellor of the influential Jamia' Nizamia seminary[29], released a press statement to the local Urdu papers summing up the situation: after the oath, in search of what truth should a mubahala be held? ('qasam khāne ke b'ād kis haq ki talāsh ke liye mubahala kiya jāye?)[30] In this piece the mufti clearly sided with Salahuddin Owaisi, pointing out that he had been insulted and generally defamed on the basis of mere speculation, since no proof had ever been offered of the charges against him. Now that he had sworn an oath on a holy day of the holy month, the matter must be laid to rest because now the issue had to do with the community, not an individual; Muslims must look to their faith (ab masla' fard ka nahīñ balke millat ka ban jātā hai; musalaman apnē īmān ki hifāzat karēñ.) The question raised by Khan's demand, argued the mufti, was whether the person who swears does so because of the fear of a man or of God; more, when the stage of taking an oath because of the fear of God (khauf-e-Ilahi kī qasam ka marhalā) has passed, inviting the person to swear again amounts to condoning the false oath in God's name. And this is neither in accordance with reason (aql), nor with the shari'at. To persist in doubting the oath and look for more confirmation, Mufti Khalil Ahmad warned, would mean starting a debate about faith and belief ('aqīde o īmān) that could only make things worse, and more and more difficult to resolve.

Siasat added its influential voice in an editorial published a week later. This was no ordinary event, it pointed out, because no politician has ever presented proof of their innocence in this way in our nation's centuries-old history (hamāre mulk ki ṣadiyōñ purānī tārīkh). The path to a resolution had been cleared by Salahuddin Owaisi, and now Janab Amanullah Khan should

[29] For a history and an insightful discussion of this institution, see Kozlowski 1995.
[30] *Siasat* March 1, 1995.

step forward to speed up a resolution, in order to support and protect Hyderabad's great traditions, going back 400 years (Hyderabad ki chār-sau sāla qadīm 'aẓīm ravāyat). But most of *Siasat*'s argument rested on political circumstances—there were elections in the offing, and it was critical that Muslims be united because divisions like these would affect not only the Old City but also cost Muslims in the state— 75% of whom lived in the districts— a political voice. It is worth noting the change in the paper's editorial stance from the optimistically republican 1950s—when it had highlighted the dangers of such unity as was being espoused by the MIM then—to the postBabri masjid 1990s, when it urged unity as a critical socio-political goal.

There were plenty of examples of dissidence and reconciliation in politics, and the editorial did not have any difficulty finding them in the notoriously faction-ridden politics of the state Congress party. That Khan had won an election showed that voters did not support his expulsion from the MIM; he must be reinstated and given his old position back. The editorial ended by invoking the weight of public opinion: 'above everything, the most important thing is the strength of public opinion (sabse baṛhkar aḥam aur afẓal rai-'āmā hai) that wants an immediate end to these differences.'

Here then was faith, tradition, history *and* the pragmatics of political action brought to bear on the conflict within the Majlis. The party appears to stand for much more than simply the mechanics of electoral representation, which are themselves much more than transactions. If Khan's accusations activated the inherent contradictions within this world, Salahuddin Owaisi's act pushed the limits of moral discourse in politics to breaking point. Both Mufti Khalil Ahmad and the editorial voice of *Siasat* are concerned to restore the balance of the contradictions between the *millat* and the public mobilized by politicians. The corrosions of distrust and suspicion invited by political discourse could be met by calling upon faith, but only at the great

risk of exposing the latter to its destructive potential. This was the risk that both were keen on avoiding by deciding, in their respective capacity as spokespersons of a Hyderabadi Muslim public, that the question of truth was resolved and it was time to move on with political negotiation.

And in some ways it was, though not in the way that the mufti, the newspaper or the anguished Hyderabadis who wrote letters from across the world that were printed in its subsequent issues, had hoped. The reconciliation did not take place, in spite of several other attempts at mediation and eventually to the MBT's cost. The MBT's winning streak, if such it can be called, was limited to the 1994 election. Not only did Salahuddin Owaisi win his Parliament seat again in 1996, his younger son Akbaruddin Owaisi would unseat Amanullah Khan in his debut election in 1999. The MBT was reduced to a single seat in the municipal corporation in Hyderabad, which it lost in the most recent elections held on February 2, 2016.

Today many people have forgotten or only half-remember the *mubahala* proposal or the process; the key thing is 'jab Salar Quran uthaye', 'uske b'ād public palaṭ gayi' (after that the public turned). Even in the memories of people it is part of an ongoing story of conflict with the MBT, a turning point, a decisive victory in a political battle. Yes, a battle between right and wrong but that had largely been decided by 'the public', as the electoral successes of the MIM and the corresponding failures of their opponents showed. The public were still participants and witnesses but squarely located in the here and now, in the exigencies of electoral politics—their participation was active and their judgment was conveyed through the ballot. However, traces of the conflict remain—in every election the MBT campaigns vigorously, and their meetings are well-attended by raucous crowds. It is as if the public had come to enjoy and depend on the electoral antagonism of the two parties, even though there was little chance that the MBT would

really seriously challenge the MIM. The election meetings I attended were full of insulting jokes, innuendo, gossip and outright abuse on both sides, and the crowds enjoyed and participated fully in every moment.

This was a Hyderabadi public that could 'turn' depending on circumstance and appeal, but who was to say where the millat or qaum ended and the public began? Were they the same as or different from the electorate? The point of these questions is not to indicate that some answer can be proposed, I have come to realize; it is that they do not arise in the ordinary course of politics. The contradictions of secularism constitute a field where a community must appear both as millat and electorate—after 1947, Ibrahim Jalis reminded us, Muslims became Muslim in a new way, just as Hindus became Hindu in a new way—and while the genealogy of this newness may reach back to the Ittehad, the rhetorics of electoral contest combine with the Day of the Quran today to produce an entirely different balance of contradictions. I now turn, finally, to instances of events that form the other side of this contradiction—election meetings and the jalsa of commemorations. Here the language of sovereignty, of friend and enemy, explicitly takes precedence over all else (as it did implicitly in the question of truth, in the form of the need for unity). It is also where the question of truth and trust is grounded in narrative memory and forms of rhetorical felicity sought to be imitated by the young competitors at Darussalam.

III

In the opening extract from Akbaruddin Owaisi's speech at the head of this chapter, he spoke of his father's insight into the ways of Muslim political existence—to insert oneself into an agenda that had no place for one. Akbar Owaisi dramatized himself as the naïve young leader, wanting to dissociate himself from the image of the party as a 'party of illiterates', being schooled by his wise father. Underscoring the importance of his inheritance and the 'real' value of the Owaisi

family name, he invoked and discredited at the same time, the snobbery of those who look down on the party and his audience at the jalsa. In doing this he was also recalling the history of the MIM and its early struggles for the benefit of his public. It is part of his appeal as a speaker that he is able to marshal so much into a single story.

After 1948 the cycle-riksha, which had only come to Hyderabad a few years before, became a ubiquitous mode of transport in the city— a study carried out in 1960 showed that most rikshadrivers were Muslim, and as many as 30% of them were erstwhile employees of the Nizam state, while the rest were Dalit agricultural laborers forced to migrate to the city from adjoining districts.[31] It is not accidental, therefore, that when the MIM was revived as a political party in 1958, one of the first issues it took up was the steep municipal tax that had to be paid by rikshadrivers and the harassment they had to undergo at the hands of the police. Some evidence of the snobbery that accompanied its rise and new membership has been presented in the last chapter, especially through the Darussalam trial. The MIM was in fact derided as the 'party of rikshadrivers' (rikshewālōñ ki jamā'at) as well as 'the party of the ignorant' (jāhilōñ ki jamā'at). In fact, the MIM made excellent use of its meagre resources to reach out to its base, as the following description of the 1967 election campaign shows:

> The campaign of the Majlis is an example on how to be successful among voters with modest financial means. Meetings of the Majlis lacked all the usual decorations: no tents, platforms, little flags. On public squares, a microphone, a green flag, a lamp and a bench were erected. The party had a pool of orators who would take turns during different meetings on the same evening. They travelled from meeting to meeting by cycles, stepped on the bench supplied there, talked and cycled on. (Khundmiri 1971, 93)

Then again:

> The party's election manifest was not mentioned at all. The majority of the audience during the meetings comprised of poor Muslims, rickshaw-drivers, small merchants and

[31] *A socio-economic survey of rickshaw drivers in Hyderabad city area*. Hyderabad: Indian Institute of Economics, 1962.

> unemployed. Distinguished Muslims stayed away from the assemblies, they preferred to remain indifferent or participate in Congress-assemblies. Yet, the election results show that their reserve should not be mistaken for a lack of trust in the Majlis. They just wanted to appear above suspicion at the outside. (ibid., 95)

In its early years then, the poor were the visible public of the party, and this remains true today. The party's election manifesto is still not mentioned in public meetings, if it exists at all. The entirely of its existence is based on 'contact with the public' through meetings, and through their office at Darussalam (as I discuss in Chapter 7). This history is regularly recounted, and it forms a major part of the party's and the family's narrative of legitimation. Another instance comes from Salahuddin Owaisi himself, when he asked his audience during one of his very last speeches at Darussalam in 2008:

> Hasn't our policy, the policy adopted by the Majlis succeeded? Did you not see this? My brothers, we said 'politics' (siasat). People laughed, made fun of us. Lots of people went to the extent of saying, 'politics is the forbidden tree for us' (shajar-e-mamnu'a). They said don't participate (ḥiṣṣa) in politics! Our late president said no, we will participate in politics. And we did, so today you can see this Engineering College building right before your eyes. Can anyone deny this? (kya is-sē inkār kar sakte haiñ?)

The incantatory quality of this extract is noteworthy—the word 'politics' is repeated in nearly every line, reminding the audience of its importance and the MIM's raison d'être. The Engineering College building referred to stands in one corner of the grounds at Darusslam, and Salar is making the connection here between politics and social mobility that many who champion 'development' at the expense of politics, ignore. As we saw, however, this also risks recalling the young Muslim man's complaint about the party—they have colleges, but they are no good to us. In a speech from a platform the rhetorical question both raises the specter of and forecloses the questioning—indeed nobody can deny that the Engineering college is an achievement of long years of political struggle, against great odds. But the rhetoric is also addressed to the doubter and acknowledges his existence— did you not see? Can you deny this

building?[32] The ability to encourage identification with the party's history and an affective complex that underlies much of it—defiance, energy, humor, making do with little and being successful—in a present where the leaders are affluent but their public still largely poor, is a characteristic quality of this rhetoric. In unexceptional times, it appears as if it is the doubt and distrust that fuels its performance.

Between Asaduddin and Akbaruddin Owaisi one has a clear choice of rhetorical style. Since their charisma is closest to what one might think of as a celebrity model—quite unlike their father's or grandfather's, 'Owaisi scent' notwithstanding—they have 'fans' and friendly partisans. Akbar, as he is informally referred to, is known for his fiery oratory and risqué references; his speeches fall in the category of 'jazbāti taqrīr' (emotional speeches), unlike his elder brother who is seen to make measured, wellargued speeches (as people put it, 'point-to-point bāt karte'—he speaks from point to point). For instance, in a late-2012 meeting Akbar told his audience:

> You who expect secularism [from us], rebuild the Babri masjid and Akbar Owaisi will consider if he should be secular or not.
> (Secularism ki tawaqqo rakhnē wālōñ, Babri masjid ko banā lo, Akbar Owaisi ghaur karegā secular honē ka yā nai honē ka).
> People will say Akbar Owaisi is communal…I don't know about pro- this or pro-that; I am only pro-Muslim!
> (Lōg bolenge Akbar Owaisi firqāparast hai…maiñ nai jānta yē-parast, wō-parast, maiñ sirf *Muslim-parast* hūñ)[33]

Referring to himself in third person, though in carefully chosen moments in the speech, is quite typical of his style. Akbar's star turn in public meetings always raises expectations of something

[32] The Darussalam College of Engineering is associated with Owaisi quite intimately, as I realized when an old man gave me directions from an unfamiliar part of the city, assuming I was a student: 'oh, you're going to Sultan Salahuddin Owaisi's college!'

[33] I have chosen to leave out controversial portions of this speech, which got Akbaruddin Owaisi into much legal trouble, though—unsurprisingly— it gave the party a political boost, as I discuss in the Conclusion. The italics indicate emphasis in the original.

politically incorrect or downright offensive being said, usually about the state, the police and/or the Hindu Right. He has a large fan-following among young boys, men, most employed in small jobs or unemployed, and young girls. Someone like my solicitous friend Saba, a convent-educated physiologist, listened raptly to Asad Owaisi's speeches and found his brother's rhetoric viscerally repulsive, 'he talks like a street thug (galī ka guṇḍā); I get really upset when I hear him speak— what is he saying?! (ye kyā bol raeiñ?) I keep thinking to myself. He has no sense of what to say when (kab, kyā bolnā kucch sense nai hai)'.

The division of labor is not always so clear, however—Asaduddin Owaisi can be as risqué as he chooses (to betray my own preferences here) and quite cutting, just as Akbar can spout statistics about the number of children admitted to the Owaisi School of Excellence—run by him— or the beds added to the Esra hospital, run on party funds etc. In Parliamentary contexts—speeches made in the Lok Sabha and the Legislative Assembly respectively—they make comparable rhetorical interventions, now increasingly accessible to the public through clips that circulate on social media via televised recordings. The circulation and reception of these images, however, also connects with the broad public expectation sited in the jalsa. Therefore, by and large it is the case that the brothers follow different styles and use this difference to the advantage of the party. When Akbar takes the stage in meetings, he is greeted by an enthusiastic crowd, an audience that has waited all night for him to speak—'now this meeting will come to life' (jān ā jāti jalse mēñ ab), I heard a young man say excitedly to his companions on one occasion as Akbaruddin Owaisi's name was announced. If his older brother, Asaduddin Owaisi is an authority figure who commands the respect and obedience of his peers and audiences, Akbar is an object of affection and of a protective instinct reserved for wayward younger sons. Thus, if he says something he 'should' not have said—which, of course, is what he does—reactions range

from ‘he told the bitter truth’, to ‘it’s Akbar, what do you expect?’ and ‘he doesn’t mean it like that, he tends to get carried away.’

But Akbaruddin Owaisi does not need indulging, though he might glory in it. I will end with instances from the 2014 election campaign, in which his ability to poetically use his newfound infamy manifested itself in one of the high points of campaign speech-making. I will reproduce extracts here from my fieldnotes, which also provide some sense of the structure of my own expectations from the brothers:

> The accent in all the speeches I have heard from Asad is on defeating Modi and ‘is mulk ke secularism ko mustahkam karnā hai; candidate ko mat dēkhiye, Asaduddin Owaisi ko bhi mat dekhiye, ijtemāiyat ke liyē vote kariye, sabse baṛī ahmiyat hai ijtem‘āiyat ki’[34]. As is his wont he cited evidence of Modi’s criminality and the BJP’s designs from various English sources… And then he quoted from history textbooks of Gujarat and Karnataka, where Mughal rule was summarized in one paragraph and dismissed while pages and pages were devoted to Hindu dynasties like the Solankis etc. This is what will happen if Modi wins, he told his audience—this is for those people who say, so what if he wins?
>
> In a later speech at Ahmadnagar [neighborhood in Banjara Hills], this is our mulk-e-aziz [beloved country], said Asad, yahāñ har pachās kilometer par ek nayi tahẕīb miltī hai; tum yaksāñ Civil Code lākar ye sab khatm kar denā chāhate ho, Shar‘iat mēñ mudākhlat karna chāhate ho—mere bhai ye na-mumkin hai, ye nahīñ ho saktā. Āj is mulk ke secularism, iskī jamhūriyat ko bachāne ka waqt hai.[35]

On the other hand, there was Akbar’s speech at Yakutpura:

> His themes are varied, but of course he’s much more colourful and aggressive than Asad— no citing from evidence etc. for him… I think we would all be disappointed if he began quoting from newspapers and translating for the audience. If Asad’s strength is prose— evidence, one point leading to another, citation and persuasion—Akbar’s is ‘poetic’ language. His rhetorical skill is considerable, from choice of words, imagery, tropes to voice modulation. The difference between him and his many imitators is that they fail to imitate the conviction he brings to his speaking—he says the most absurd

[34] We have to strengthen the secularism of this country; don’t consider the candidate, don’t even consider Asaduddin Owaisi; vote for collective organization (i.e the party, but more like the fact of being organized), that is most important.

[35] Here there is a new culture every fifty kilometers—you want to destroy all this by bringing in a
Uniform Civil Code; you want to interfere in the Shari‘at—my brother, this is impossible, it cannot be done [the addressee here are the BJP and Modi, then prime ministerial candidate]. Today we must save the secularism and democracy of this country.

things in such a way that your admiration for his skill takes you halfway down the road to credulity. Of course, the downright absurd statements are nestled unobtrusively between unassailable facts amplified by passion. So he told his audience—gesturing towards potential BJP voters— Ok, you don't like Akbar Owaisi, his style, his words…but what do you like about this Modi? What are his qualifications?

Kya wo bahut baṛā muarrikh hai? (Is he a great muarrikh?) Muarrikh kā matlab samjhē? (do you know what 'muarrikh' means?) Historian! Kya wo Tārīkh ka māhir hai? (is he an expert of History?)

'Nahīñ!' shouts the crowd

'Hisāb ka māhir hai? (Is he a Math expert?)

Crowd: nahīñ! (No!)

Geographia ka māhir hai? (Is he an expert at Geography?)

Nahīñ! (No!)

To phir kis chīz mēñ mahārat hāsil hai usē? Bastiyōñ ko jalāne mēñ, bacchōñ ko kāṭne mēñ… (what is his expertise? Burning bastis, slaughtering children…)

Referring to the case against himself, notorious for his 'anti-Hindu' speeches, Akbar played out this farcical but tremendously energetic and instructive dialogue with the crowd to highlight the hypocrisy of the Right-wing voter, and others who were lauding Narendra Modi as a prime ministerial candidate in 2014. Both brothers took aim at the national electoral battle, and only secondarily at constituency-level and neighborhood issues, but while the party president gave the crowd lessons in current affairs—as he would be expected to do—his younger brother showed them why life was unfair for them as minorities, and they must stand together because he was one of them. In other words, both brothers work with but also break the mold of the passive, 'sloganshouting' crowd—one by educating, the other by simply talking to them.

If Akbaruddin Owaisi instantiates representation by identification, much as his father did, Asaduddin Owaisi exemplifies representation by transcendence—his appeal lies precisely in his ability to be outside and 'better than' his crowd. His appeal to the crowd to 'save secularism and democracy' on the national level by voting in a small constituency in Hyderabad city recalls the legacy of both his grandfather and father, though it subtly moves on from Salar's angry denunciations of the state's indifference to Muslims. But it is not, as it turns out, in the hands of

Muslims that the fate of secularism and democracy lie. As Asaduddin Owaisi would bitterly underscore in his first Parliamentary speech after the landslide victory of the BJP in the 2014 elections:

> I want to congratulate the Honorable Prime Minister for breaking this myth of the Muslim vote-bank—you have destroyed it, I congratulate you. But what you have done in the process, you have reiterated what I have been saying…from 1950s onwards, that there's a Hindu vote-bank which you have consolidated in your favor. I *congratulate* you for that.[36]

Conclusion

This chapter has described the jalsa as a site for legitimation of a party that does not bring out manifestoes and relies, instead, on its history within the city of Hyderabad, and the modes of pleasure and dread offered by identification and dis-identification with this history. In doing this I have focused on specific forms of rhetorical performance, and demonstrated how these differ from the forms recounted in Part I. Neither Makhdum's man-about-town legend, his humor and companionship nor the awe inspired by Bahadur Yar Jang can be at home today—except as traces of a past— in a Muslim public that was formed in the poverty and violence of the post-1975 Indian city.

I further showed how Salahuddin Owaisi re-created by organizing through his work and his personality, a public that both identified with him and was animated by suspicion and distrust of his very real abilities as a politician. While this contradiction may be constitutive of democratic politics in general, it is especially so in the case of religious minorities caught in a majoritarian polity, where even apparently powerful political leaders must operate under constraints shared with their constituents. However, I also showed that the contradiction does not

[36] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8n8V0cXerMc. 2:17- 2:36; also see http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/muslims-are-not-coolies-of-secularism-it-isnot-our-cross-to-carry-alone/

necessarily need resolution, except at particular moments when it demands settling one way or another. One such moment, we saw, was the post-demolition split in the MIM party, and its resolution involved every site of publicness available. Tellingly, the ultimate arbiter was electoral politics, and this brought my demonstration back to the field of elections and public meetings where a new kind of space of performance and rhetorical form can be seen. As my introductory vignette of the taqrīrī muqābalā shows, oratory today combines the pleasures of a school competition with possible political ambition in somewhat formulaic ways. The skill, while remaining central to political life, must now operate within a distrustful-but-adoring public that must always be reactivated and addressed anew. Perhaps after all, something of the difference I sought to posit between Makhdum and Bahadur Yar Jang does, in fact, manifest in the different rhetorical style and authority of The Brothers Owaisi.

Today no domain of public life other than electoral politics, combines the elements of ordinary life with a transcendental sense of collective belonging—whether to a class, a nation or indeed a city—for Hyderabadi Muslims. Amidst a pervasive dirge of decay, blight and 'underdevelopment', it is the domain of electoral politics or an affiliation with the MIM— a party of their city, it's past *and* present— that has kept some imagination of an active public life in which everyone, across classes has a stake, alive. But when I say 'everyone' I also gesture towards a constituency of women, which only existed in absentia before, but is today a little-acknowledged but ubiquitous presence at the MIM's other major site of political authority: Darussalam.

Chapter Seven
The Impersonal is Political: Life at Darussalam

> At the Babu Jagjivan Ram Government College, a girls' school near Golkonda Fort, Owaisi sits on stage while speeches are made. He has used MPLADS funding to make a new building, but for the students this is not enough. Young women, traditionally dressed, some with only spectacles emerging from their black head coverings, make demands into a microphone. "Respected Asaduddin Owaisi sir, we kindly request you..." And a long list follows: safe drinking water, better lighting, a second bus service, teachers for Urdu, Hindi, political science and zoology. The MP looks nonplussed. "These are girls from poor Muslim families," he says later, "so eager to learn and to come up in life. They've seen that the more educated you are, the more powerful you get. Since the 1990s, the girls here have been wanting to do civil engineering and medicine. That's what will bring change in the Muslim community. I'm of the opinion that women of all religions should be educated at primary level."[1]

The headquarters of the MIM at Darussalam until 2013 was a single-storied, green and white building with touches of gold-colored paint on the pale green pillars that held up the high ceiling. Short staircases on either side of the large visiting hall led to what looked like a dimly lit first floor (but strangely enough was not), with small windows covered in cobwebs and stacks of dusty papers and files piled against the wall. It was also called 'bāvan darwāze', I was told, because it is the building with '52 doors'. My skepticism ('no way a building this size has fifty-two doors!') resulted in a friendly bet followed by a counting exercise; on a relatively quiet morning a couple of my friends from the staff and I tried to count the doors in the building. While I did discover rooms I had not seen before, this exercise ended inconclusively, mired in unresolvable disputes about what counted as parts of 'the building' ('that house over there?

[1] http://www.hindustantimes.com/india/opportunist-or-rockstar-owaisi-recasting-muslimpolitics-in-india/story-b01NPeoH46yXRfUq5UOUSO.html
MPLADS: Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme, under which a sum of 5 crore or 50 million INR (about $750,000) is made available to the MP to fund 'development works' in their constituency.

That's part of Darussalam too') and more fundamentally, what counted as a door (is that a large window or a small door? Who says doors have to open into spaces?)

Darussalam was a place one came to for answers and certainty, but like the process of ascertaining which doors counted and why, it showed that political intervention in everyday life was far from a simple or certain affair. Everything depended on working out whether and how a reasonable problem could be framed out of an ongoing narrative and then dealt with in ways that would keep both the petitioner and the mediator happy. The problem was that both sides had a map of the structure and an argument about what should count as a door. The important thing about these processes is that contrary to claims made on both sides, neither is completely in control of these sought-after resolutions; this experience of contingency and uncertainty characterizes their interdependence. Further, I show how life at Darussalam is based on disavowing the distance between the representative and the represented, which must then be managed in different ways by both as they come face-to-face at the party office.

Daily life at Darussalam allows us to identify the trope of closeness and distance that characterizes the operation of charismatic authority in the MIM's politics, and the different modalities of its functioning with respect to the jalsa and the 'problem-solving' space of the party office. In the last chapter, I showed how the energies of the public meeting are predicated on the rhetorical performance of the MIM leadership that posits identification with their public and its concerns, simultaneously with a certain type of pedagogic and authoritative distance. In this chapter, I show how the accessibility and openness of Darussalam is offset, first by the intractability of 'personal' problems seeking the intervention of political authority for resolution and second by the asymmetries of class and gender that mark the encounter between leaders and led. Thus, just as the male public in Chapter 6 appears as simultaneously demanding and passive,

complaining yet adoring, at Darussalam the women who frequent the party office navigate the space opened up by the MIM's historically rooted authority as both unreasonably difficult claimants of welfare and intervention, as well as visible signs of the party's popularity and efficacy.

The extract from a newspaper report at the head of the chapter penned by the British writer Patrick French during the 2014 election campaign, brings all these dimensions together in one pithy description. The spectacle of burqa-wearing school students asking their MP to secure the basic necessities of school education—something he may not exercise control over but is assumed to—in a public meeting, is clearly significant for the writer, as is the MP's 'nonplussed' look in response. Asaduddin Owaisi's response to the English writer is characteristically liberal in its emphases, and clearly the description is meant to highlight his opinions and platform. What I do in this chapter, however, is ground the spectacle in the rhythms of party life and demonstrate its conditions of possibility, while also trying to understand the limited range of possible responses. It seems to me that these dynamics are inflected by a specific experience of minoritization—that draw people closer together— while being part of a larger story, that is, the imbrication of everyday life with political processes that neither representative nor represented fully understand or control.

I

During the 20-odd months of my work, the MIM party office hosted a steady stream of visitors every day, mostly Muslim women from in and around Hyderabad city. MLAs (Members of Legislative Assembly, elected once every five years) and MLCs (Members of Legislative Council or the Upper House, indirectly elected), corporators (municipal councilors of the GHMC

or Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation)[2], their secretaries and staff, party cadre and the staff in charge of managing the building formed the regular crowd at the office. There were explicit rules for them: though many MLAs meet people at home and some of the corporators have offices in their respective neighborhoods, they were expected at the party office every day between 11 am and 3 pm. When GHMC or the legislature was in session these timings were flexible, but the MLAs made sure to drive in and spend some time here. Corporators were expected to come in and sign their names in a register kept for the purpose; their names and the areas they represent were published in the *Etemaad* (Trust/Confidence; the party-sponsored Urdu daily newspaper) and could be seen on a schedule typed in English and put up in the main office at Darussalam.

But there was an important unofficial dimension too, as I describe in more detail below—people came in even when not strictly required to, just because Darussalam is a good place to catch up with colleagues, gossip, see people and be seen with one's coterie, maybe buy the resident anthropologist some tea etc. The afternoon or Zohar namaz was read in the main hall too; as the azan from surrounding mosques sounded the chairs were pushed into a corner, women stepped outside (or waited in another room) and mats were rolled out to cover the entire hall. Charminar MLA Ahmad Pasha Quadri— elderly scion of an illustrious Sufi family of sajjādanashīñ (hereditary caretakers of a Sufi dargah) with deep roots in the Deccan— usually led the namaz. Young men would often click photographs on their mobile phones at different points just before and after, which then found their way to Facebook fan sites and Whatsapp

[2] As I note in the Introduction, aside from the two state Assembly seats it recently (2014) won in Mumbai and Aurangabad in the neighboring state of Maharashtra, the MIM has seven seats in the Telangana Legislative Assembly, all from Hyderabad city, and two in the Council. The Hyderabad constituency, as already noted, is represented by Asaduddin Owaisi in the national Parliament.

groups suitably captioned. The focus of the attention was Asaduddin Owaisi (henceforth Asad/Asad Owaisi); the photos highlighted his piety, urging others (especially young men or 'naujawān') to follow his example (he is referred to as 'naqīb-e-millat' or Leader of the Community). This is yet another example of the new type of 'celebrity' aura mingled with political power that surrounds this generation of the party leadership. By about 1:30 the chairs were back and it was business as usual until 3 pm, though people began leaving after Zohar. Weekends were the time for the largest crowds—the weekly holiday is Friday while Saturday and Sunday are working days. On these days, the proportion of men and women visitors was roughly equal and the office bustled with activity.

The MIM's 'contact with the people' (see Introduction) is accomplished in a variety of ways but the most regular is the traffic at Darussalam, a live space whose energies were palpable even as they animated both expectation and despair, shades of humor as much as angry disappointment. MIM leaders were not being especially hyperbolic when declaiming from public platforms on the difference between their party office and the others in the city: 'jo raunak Darussalam mein hai, aur kahin nahin' (none has the liveliness of Darussalam), and it is worth examining the specific ways in which this 'raunak' of public life plays out.

The offices of the other parties serve mostly as an occasional base for the party activities of leaders and cadre; they do not see many visitors and are often guarded by forbidding security measures. By contrast, the MIM party office is open to the casual visitor; home as the grounds are to educational institutions and a newspaper office there are a lot of students and others not directly connected with the party about. However, the major reason for the traffic at the party office itself is the centralization of the party leadership in the MIM— Asad and Akbarudddin Owaisi (Akbar Owaisi, who we met in Chapter 6), are the ultimate decision-makers in the party.

As we shall see, most people come seeking their intervention in matters that can often be dealt with by their MLA or municipal corporator. It is rare to see the highest-level leaders at the other party-offices; often they are government ministers, chief-ministers or national level leaders that spend most of their time in New Delhi—their political authority is based in closeness to the centers of power, unlike the 'aura' of historical relationships captured by the Owaisi-MIM name. Thus, at Darussalam, one is likely to be able to see all levels of leadership at the same place at a time almost every day because the MIM is mainly a city-based party whose leaders prefer to remain outside of government cabinets.

The other side of this accessibility is that people would have to make the trip to the party office often for troubles that other parties with more efficient machines were able to resolve at lower levels of their vast hierarchy. Thus it was that Darussalam was pervaded by an atmosphere of expectation—aside from party affiliates who were at home there, others were always waiting, hoping and often anxious. The task of the staff involved both providing information and allaying doubt—will 'they' come today, what time will that be, will they listen to what I have to say? Gender was central to the dynamics of this interaction (in unpredictable ways, as I show below), since the political leadership and staff at Darussalam is largely male and the visitors predominantly women (important exceptions hold in both cases)[3].

[3] Women are often accompanied by male relatives, and of course there are several men who visit too. On the party's side there are strong women leaders who have emerged at the municipal level (aided by a law that holds 33% of all seats in local government bodies for women), who frequent Darussalam and have a public profile. From the very beginning of MIM's electoral life, they have been able to galvanize Muslim women voters; for instance, one municipal election report for 1960 in the *Rahnuma* notes the large presence of 'burqa-wearing women, holding children and seen patiently waiting in voting queues'('Majlis-e-baldiā kē intakhābāt', *Rahnuma-eDeccan*, June 27, 1960).

The phenomenon that social science literature on 'patronage' as well as 'political society' deal with—in very different ways[4]— is the depths to which political mediation (through 'the machine') reaches, so that 'mere existence' (Arendt 1972) becomes impossible without the political machine, which in turn feeds on this dependence.[5] There is a sense in which this interpenetration of life and politics is a ubiquitous phenomenon in our world, but there is a massive and qualitative difference between having one's intimate communications monitored by a shadowy state agency, for instance, and having to depend on the local strongman for a meal or shelter from the cold. The description of life at the MIM party office in this chapter is animated by the contradictions between the desire for political community and the needs of everyday life. As said above, this is of a piece with chapter 6 that discusses the party's public meetings and rhetoric, which together sketch a portrait of political life sliding between the scales of the everyday and the event. Needless to say, this is an entirely new field of action—it could not be imagined in any space-time other than postcolonial democracy, and most certainly not in the princely state of Hyderabad. The significant break between the charismatic authority exemplified by, say, Bahadur Yar Jang and even the charisma of Makhdum, our poet-politician—and the Owaisis' presence, invites us to ground the concept in historical specificity.

For starters, while men throng the venue of the jalsa or meeting in large numbers, Darussalam hosts mostly women visitors on a daily basis. Certainly women are addressees of

[4] Representative collections of essays on patronage as a form of politics include Eisenstadt and LeMarchand 1981; Roniger and Günes-Ayata 1994; Hilgers 2012; Piliavsky 2014. For political society see Chatterjee 2004 & 2010, and Gudavarthy 2012. For a third set of reflections from an ethnographic perspective, see Fuller & Benei 2001.

[5] Arendt's argument of course is that when 'existence' or the social enters the domain of the political, politics proper becomes impossible. This is because for her the social is the realm of necessity—inequality and unfreedom—while the political is the domain where men (even literally, it appears) must interact as free and equal beings. This argument runs through her political writings, but see in particular *On Revolution* (1963).

political speeches as well—they are avid watchers of these now televised events and are always included in the speakers' initial address to the audience ('…pas-e-pardā baiṭh kar sunne wāli mērī izzatdār maõñ aur behnõñ'/my honorable mothers and sisters, listening behind the pardah). Thus, there is a certain kind of public presence invoked by their physical absence at the venue. At the party office on the other hand, as we will see, it is unsurprising to run into individual or groups of women. The kin-terms of address interpellate a whole new group of middle-class and poor Muslim women—also seen at Darussalam— as opposed to the Osmania students eager to catch sight of Makhdum at a literary meeting, or the audience of the Princess Durru Shehvar's exhortations about citizenship, or indeed Bahadur Yar Jang's women steeped in superstitious practices.

Secondly, as I discussed in Chapter 6, where public rhetoric makes for enthusiastic participation in oft-repeated narratives that allow everyone the pleasure of a rousing, optimistic conclusion, life at Darussalam is about confronting and managing contingency mostly through face-to-face interactions. Public meetings offer camaraderie in a relaxed atmosphere of expectation; at Darussalam one finds friendly company by chance, often while waiting anxiously. And finally, while the MIM leadership gathers together, exhorts, educates and entertains its audience through the public meetings, the individual and small-group encounters at the party office require a different and paradoxically more impersonal mode of engagement. It is as if the distance provided by the stage is required for a renewing solidarity as a group while proximity to individual lives can only be managed through a certain authoritative distancing. However, this management is difficult and never predictable, as 'the public' at Darussalam may on occasion decide to exercise their claim on the party and its office.

In the following three sections, I will show how party workers and leadership who see themselves as heir to this history of 'struggle' inhabit Darussalam in comparison with the different ways in which the women who visit relate to the space, to each other and to the party. In their capacity as aggrieved voters, individuals with problems to be solved, party loyalists and/or simply poor people with 'nowhere else to go' Safia, Zahida apa, Rabia, Naseem, Jamila baji, Fatima baji and Iffat all brought their distinctive experiences and attitudes to Darussalam, filling it with their hopes, doubts and disappointments. This in itself can be judged as a successful fulfilment of the promise held out by the Majlis, that the party office belongs to the people ('awam) inasmuch as the party is their party. Nevertheless, as I noted above, the difficulties of the process and its unpredictability are inescapable parts of the experience of the party office that must be negotiated.

Darussalam 2012-13

> In the east of Hyderabad Railway Station is the Aghapura locality. It was named after Hazrat Agha Dawood [a 19th century Sufi saint who is buried here]. Nampalli (Nampally) area is full of religious structures: mostly the (sic) dargahs and mosques. There are many gateways to these dargahs, contributing to the historic fabric of the area. (*A Guide to the Heritage of Hyderabad*, 77)

If you happened not to miss the large gateway with wooden doors nestled amidst the series of other grand gateways, the profusion of small shops, traffic in Aghapura, you would enter a large ground and be faced with the seven-storied building of the Deccan Engineering College. The gleaming glass windows of the still very new-looking offices of Etemaad – the Urdu newspaper run by the Majlis— would invite you to look to your right. But if you were there to see a party functionary— your neighborhood ('mohalla') leader, a municipal corporator, an MLA (Member of Legislative Assembly) or 'MP sahab' himself, you would turn left and proceed towards the old whitewashed building standing on a raised platform ('chabutra'). Perhaps you would hesitate as

you approached, unsure of your place— a first-timer. You could sit or stand under the tree next to the chabutra and survey the small lawn, peer into the large hall and watch people disappearing into it, or reappearing inside, visible through the metal grille. Or perhaps you were an old hand, one of the many men who cannot conceive of their daily life and its routines without spending some time in this building with friends. Then you would promptly scale the negligible height of the chabutra and make your way down the paved path that leads into the hall, peering in as you went or casting your eye casually into the hall looking for a familiar face.

Chances are there would be an 'Assalamaleikum! khairiyat?'[6] waiting for you; closer to noon there would be several, and even a tiny cup of tea from the taciturn Raju, who apparently had been coming to Darussalam since he was a child and had a fitting response for any comment you might want to venture on his sweet, milky tea. Each tiny plastic cup cost Rs. 5, and was one of the major ways in which social relationships and conversations were both established and fostered.

At the far end of the hall was what looked like a tiny room with a table and a large, dark oil-painting on the wall, its colours making the room look even smaller. This was Haneef bhai's domain; he sat there with an old computer and a typewriter while people queued up in front of his table to get letters typed. A typed notice on the door declared that only 'MLAs and MP's letters are typed here' (not 'corporators'), but this was not strictly the case—as a favor Haneef bhai would type letters for corporators and workers as well. Growing older and ill with an auto-immune condition he was training young Abdul Rahman to take his place. Their job is both fascinating and complex—they must translate the myriad civic and other woes people bring to Darussalam into the language of an official letter addressed to a bureaucrat by a political

[6] Greeting literally meaning 'Peace be upon you! All well?'

functionary, whether a municipal representative or an MLA or even Asaduddin Owaisi (though many of his letter are typed out by Mushtaq, his energetic secretary). A lot of important work now gets done over the phone—a phone call 'from Darussalam' to a bureaucrat, a minor official in a civic department or a police functionary is often all that is needed— but paperwork is necessary in all kinds of ways and documents are hallowed objects.[7] One party worker's wife I frequently met once told me the story of her first visit to Darussalam, when she was handed a letterhead after telling Asad Owaisi her problem. She took the blank sheet to the petty bureaucrat who was holding up her file, believing that whatever 'Asad bhai' had given her was all she needed. The bureaucrat warned her that she could be arrested for stealing unless it was a typed letter, signed and bearing the MP's official seal. 'Who knew? [apan kō kyā mālum?],' she laughed, a little sheepish, 'why would I steal it? He gave it to me!' This lesson on the difference between simultaneously existing but separate regimes of value went relatively smoothly for her: by the time I met her she was advising other first-time visitors on how best to proceed with their particular problem, who to talk to etc.

Then again, some of the MLAs either could not or did not read the letters printed on their letterheads before signing them, and oftentimes neither could the person bearing the letter (all of them are typed in English). Thus the traffic in this case has to be imagined between Haneef bhai and a bureaucrat in a government office, neither of who will encounter each other. If the letter failed to do what was required of it the bearer usually made her way back to Darussalam, where the mystery of its inefficacious circulation would either be solved over the phone, back at Haneef bhai's desk, or both.

[7] Gupta 2012 and Hull 2012 discuss this and other aspects of bureaucracy in South Asia.

The interiors of this main office building were further divided into two halls; one a 'library' where the day's English and Telugu newspapers, aside from the party's own *Etemaad* were kept on a long table with chairs around it. Often workers would sit around the table and read the papers or simply look at the photographs if they were unable to read. The library was a dark, cool place even at the height of summer; it could double up as a space for an impromptu meeting, or the elocution competitions ('taqrīrī muqābalā') mentioned in Chapter 6. It could also be a place to wait, especially for women, while the main hall was used for namaz between one and one thirty pm (the time for zohar).

On the other side of the iron trellised doors of this large main hall was the most important room in the building, at least as far as the people waiting in the hall were concerned. This small room had two small tables and seven or eight chairs: a table each for the president and the general secretary of the party (Pasha Quadri), but the other MLA/Cs either shared these tables or sat in white plastic chairs that lined the walls of the room. Only the president's chair was of a larger, different type, and would remain empty if he was not present. His was the only place in this small room that would not be taken by anyone else. The atmosphere in this room— somewhat forbidding to an outsider or newcomer— was informal and light-hearted. It changed somewhat in the MP's presence, but most other times there was a steady exchange of information, gossip and the odd witticism, punctuated by conversations over mobile phones. These were usually with officials of various departments or police officials in response to an appeal or complaint: 'Maiñ ----- bōl rahā hūn, MLA ----. Yē ---- ka kyā hua?' (This is ---, MLA of ----. What is happening with ---).

A similar atmosphere prevailed in the Corporators' hall right next to the small office— camaraderie, greetings and gossip all around; props include mobile phones of varied vintage and

cups of tea. The rules I mentioned before were made and enforced by the late Salahuddin Owaisi, and they require that aside from their designated days of attendance at Darussalam, the corporators must all be present on Sundays. 43 elected and 2 'co-option' members (out of 150) of the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation were from the Majlis, including the then Mayor of Hyderabad, 31-year-old Majid Hussein.[8]

The airy visitors' hall and the space between its door and the door of the office one could call young Abid's territory. Abid is 'Darussalam in-charge', a gym trainer and 'body-builder' by profession and inclination. In an earlier life Abid had a successful career as a wrestler; photographs lovingly stored on his phone testified to his local championship victories. He came to the party office as a 17-year-old because 'paṛhāi mēñ dil nai lagā' (wasn't interested in studies) and has been 'in-charge' for the last fifteen years. He is fond of mobile phones, the latest 'apps', bikes and shades. Sensing that these were not common areas of interest he would orient our conversation in different directions—are people in America different or are they the same as here? The roads must be better; definitely no power-cuts, he observed on one hot summer day as we watched the fans at Darussalam wind down and come slowly to a stop as the regulation hour-long power-cut began. Other places we would talk about were Saudi Arabia, Malaysia and Dubai: he has friends there and has himself taken a rather harrowing trip to Malaysia a few years ago, in search of a wellpaying job. He was relieved and happy to come back to his family and to Hyderabad (whatever you say, this is the best city in the world!) Hardly surprising for a man who asked me, six months into my work, if I didn't find something was missing from my life on the

[8] Mayors in India do not have the same powers or standing as their counterparts in Latin America, the US, South-East Asia or Europe. The major powers of local governance are vested in the state government and the bureaucracy. In the 2016 municipal elections the party held on to its seats in the Corporation, winning one more since the last election, to get a total of 44 seats in the 150-member GHMC. 18 of its corporators were women, in an election where 50% of the seats were reserved for women.

days I wasn't at Darussalam; he made sure to go by the grounds even on his day off, because he cannot bear to not see it every day- 'lat paṛ jāti iskī' (it is addictive).

Early on I asked Abid what kinds of problems (masail) people brought to the party office, he told me, 'har tarah ke leke ātē—shauhar biwī kō satā rā, biwī shauhar kō satā raī, sās bahū kō satā raī, bahū sās kō satā raī…' ('all kinds of problems—husbands are bothering their wives, wives their husbands; the mother-in-law is giving her daughter-in-law trouble, daughters-in-law are troubling their mothers-in-law'). I was struck by the fact that these 'domestic' problems were the first that came to him but not very surprised, because I had formed the impression after a few weeks of being at Darussalam that most of the people who came to the office came either for monetary help or to seek a resolution of domestic issues. A vast majority of these and my most frequent interlocutors were Muslim women from very poor to lower middle-class families. However, over time I came to see that in fact women come to the party office with a range of issues, most of them to do with access to welfare provisions or civic problems. The association of women with family and domestic spaces came easily to both of us, but I suspect for different reasons.

Abid's half-serious response pointed to a very real problem that I realized the party faces; firstly, these are tough issues that stand out in their intractability. While running around for official documents or chasing a police officer or bureaucrat is business-as-usual, dealing with traumatized, sometimes angry wives or heartbroken mothers is a delicate and well-nigh impossible task for the Darussalam staff. The repetition of the verb 'satānā' (to trouble, bother, annoy or upset someone) and the rhetorical form of the utterance together effect a routinization that is very difficult to achieve in conduct: one distressed wife is much the same as another, and there are a lot of them, but the singularity of each person's pain leaves its traces. Thus underlying

this cynicism is a sense, sometimes overtly expressed, that these problems should not be brought to the headquarters of a political party but they are and have to be dealt with in some way, because they also paradoxically reflect the representative stature of the Majlis among Hyderabadi Muslims. After all, not everyone would be invited to intervene in the domain of the family (often the law is a last and least desirable resort in these issues), but what would constitute a proper intervention is a far from simple question. The intermediary status of party work- neither an organ of the state nor possessor of 'religious' authority that could enable a different kind of empathy- results in a paradoxical structure where proximity and impersonality figure together. As the following sections show, its effects are ubiquitous but particularly poignant when the family is the site of conflict and women the injured party.

Safia

It was late October in 2012— already a coolness in the air easing the ride to Darussalam— but the city was tense because Eid-al-Azha was coming up and Hindu right wing organizations had begun their violent agitations against 'cow slaughter' for the festival. Already in April there had been attacks on Muslim homes and shops, prompting one of my journalist friends to say a few days before, 'the city is sitting on a pile of dynamite (shahar bārūd kē dhēr pe baiṭhā hua hai)'. The tension was palpable at the party office, where even Abid's habitual good cheer was somewhat muted. At 11.00 am there were an old woman and a younger one accompanied by a young man, all looking very hassled. As I parked my scooter and walked up I overheard some college students—two boys and two girls in beautifully embroidered hijabs and burqas— decide on gathering in the shade of the lone tree outside the building. 'If anyone asks we'll say it's to do with the party. Each one has a different problem (Ēk-ēk ka alag maslā hai so…)'. And they began a game of allocating a problem to each person, clearly having figured Darussalam out.

The family seated in the hall were from the Old City—mother, daughter and son who had never been to Darussalam before. On asking the mother told me (I am calling her Habeeb Begum) that it was about her daughter (Safia). Married for six months before, she was pregnant and her mother-in-law had apparently declared that she could not have children until next year, though the doctors had said it was too late for an abortion. But her mother-in-law was insistent—she had threatened to 'take her to the village and have some medicine given to her', or if she continued to live at her mother's, they had 'talāq ke kāgazāt' (divorce papers) prepared. Safia was very pale and looked both tired and terrified; in her shaky voice she talked about having to do all the housework three days after her wedding because the household help was fired in anticipation: 'naī mehndi kē hāthōñ mēñ chhālē paṛ gaye, baji' (my freshly hennaed hands were covered in blisters). She had been staying at her mother's when things had apparently come to a head the night before, when members of her in-laws' family had come to their house the night before and threatened them, even beating the girl. Neither family was well-to-do: they depended on small government pensions, a 'wood business' (lakṛi ka kārobār) and the fragile security of a low-priced piece of property like the mortgaged house.

Some relatives had asked them to go to Darussalam. Expecting to be asked for proof, they had photos and 'documents': photos of their home and of Safia's bruises, prescriptions written on loose sheets of paper by a *hakim* (doctor of the Unani system of medicine), a long list of items that made up her dowry and the deed of mortgage for her house in a neighborhood south of the Charminar, which paid for the wedding. The question, as always, was—would 'they' help? (aisē cases mēñ madad kartē kyā?) Repeating the Darussalam charm, I suggested they should 'wait for Asad sahab and talk to him,' see what he said. Habeeb begum was worried: 'Will he listen to us?

I have to tell him all this!' I told her there weren't many people today, so he might. She asked again if they would help—they wanted only that the husband should take responsibility and set up house separately with Safia, so she wouldn't be terrorized by the in-laws.

They met one of the MLAs after he arrived; the staff asked them to speak to him since he was present and free. They came back after a few minutes, clearly disappointed. The MLA had talked to them but also suggested they wait for Afsar Khan, then MLA of Karwan, the constituency within which the husband's house lay. They went out to get some air, where I found them after about half-an-hour. I reproduce below an extract from my field-notes of the day:

> Safia had taken the veil off her face. She was almost shaking with…fear? her mother did not see the point of going back in: they had been told she would have to go back, they couldn't do anything etc. She began talking very fast, along with her mother: 'on whose assurance should I go back, baji? They beat me inside my house, what will they do to me there? My husband is not on my side either. He [the MLA] said he could talk to them and try for reconciliation, but I told him I would only go back if he agreed to set up separately.
> "you can't expect him to leave his parents for you—we can't do that, right? How can he? You're the one that has to return." But how can I?' And she broke down in bitter tears.
> Another woman in a burqa, slightly older, was sitting next to her mother. She began 'don't cry my child; you have to go back. Don't be afraid— pray five times a day and Allah will protect you. You do have to preserve your parents' honor…you've no choice but to go to your husband's.' Habeeb begum snapped, 'her father has passed on, he's no more' (bāp ka inteqāl ho gaya, unō nai rahe) and proceeded to tell her the kind of things they had done to her. Safia and I talked to each other as she dried her tears and told me more about her punishing domestic routine, 'I am only human, not an animal (insān-ich hūn na baji, koi jānwar to nahīñ hūn)'. After a while on the other side I heard a change of tenor from the other woman, now telling the mother to go to her local *mahila mandal* (women's group), who could take the matter to the law if necessary. 'Well, if nothing happens here that's where we'll go next', said Habeeb Begum bleakly.

The staff at Darussalam did not intervene here; I could tell that they had seen it before and were sympathetic, but would not get involved. The MLA's logic was instructive—at best party leaders could assume the role of benevolent patriarch overriding, reluctantly and temporarily, the authority of the family. Even the Owaisi brothers, who they would not be able to see on that

occasion, operated within those limits though their word may carry more weight. Neither party wanted to involve the state machinery except as a last resort; even the state-backed women's group was not a greatly desirable option judging from Habeeb Begum's reaction.

A senior municipal corporator told me in an interview that he refuses to intervene in 'family problems' unless given an assurance that the matter would not go to the police or the courts: 'if they want that, why come to me?' This was unlike many other political parties—like the CPI (M), for instance—who do in fact intervene in family disputes as part of their political work, even taking pride in this recognition of legitimacy. In the case of the MIM, however, intervening in the Muslim family is fraught by its distinctive place in relation to the political field. It is perpetually under attack from majoritarian Hindu and liberal voices for illiberal familial practices, and one of the functions of a Muslim political party then *ipso facto* becomes to guarantee its integrity.[9] The public and private are thus aligned through the refracting medium of minority. Yet the family is constrained to appeal to as many authorities as they could summon, not entirely sure which would exercise the requisite amount of authority to gain their precisely conceived ends.

There was the limited consolation of a conversation with strangers, who could participate in and 'hear' the narrative. This too was possible at Darussalam, though the simultaneity of nearness and distance was evident in our conversations as well. In our case its implications were different; the old woman who offered advice on seeing her distress and changed her opinion in response to the mother's story, my own participation in their visit were instances of the kind of momentary closeness often catalyzed by encounters with strangers (Simmel 1950). Assurance

[9] References to this bind are numerous in feminist literature, but for references and detailed discussion of major controversies, see Pathak and Sunder Rajan 1989, Agnes 1995 and Metcalf 2007.

and advice we could offer, but without the guarantees and support that they were seeking, caught between institutions. During my work, I met several women in similar or worse positions who met with varying degrees of success in their attempts to request intervention. Issues involving the family were always similarly difficult for all concerned, the zones of uncertainty and pain very wide and efficacy limited.

II

Dependence and dignity: Zahida apa, Rabia, Naseem

The appearance of large groups of women at Darussalam was always occasion for a certain degree of alarm and excitement—could they be an unruly crowd ?— and these women would command instant attention in most cases. The most memorable such event I witnessed was in April 2012, a few months into my work. A large group of women came from the same basti (slum) that had a 'water problem'. So they had decided to get together, come and see whoever was there to be seen. Led by old women, there were some very young women and girls in the group, all in black burqas, most embroidered with floral patterns in a style that has become increasingly common in the city.

A young party worker tried to assume some authority and tell them what to do—'why did you all come? You should've sent some 3-4 elders (tīn chār buzurgōñ kō; implying male elders) to meet them and sort out the problem'. Now this was clearly patronizing, not least because the women he was talking to were clearly elderly as well. Already restless, they turned their wrath on the considerably younger man, 'why are you advising us? Who asked you?! (tum se kaun pūchē?)'. 'He's just trying to drive us away,' muttered one angrily. 'Ask him to shut up! (chup baiṭhō bolo)'. A couple of the younger women were clearly enjoying the scene and giggling at the young man's plight—which was, it has to be admitted, slightly comic. Here was a summarily

dismissed attempt at mediation and asserting procedure, mimicking the bureaucratic officials the young man was probably used to dealing with. In their account of the *pyraveekar* (middleman) as a permanent and prospering fixture of rural Indian society, Reddy and Haragopal cite this instance of official backing received by the middleman:

> In one case, when a group of ten villagers visited a panchayat samiti to find out the status of the loans they had applied for, the BDO [Block Development Officer] was terribly annoyed and started shouting at them, remarking: 'Why should all of you come to the Samiti, instead of sending one person for the information?' (Gudavarthy 2012)

Whether read as a crude desire for control or an unconscious fear of numbers—possibly both— the young party worker was clearly seen as attempting to assert this type of authority. But this was no bureaucrat's office, and the women had no difficulty accessing the small room where the MLAs were seated, though neither of the Owaisi brothers was present on that occasion.[10] They did not leave—and then somewhat sullenly—until their MLA had heard them out, called some officials and assured them that the problem would be taken care of; while that was being done he would have 'water tankers' bring them water.[11]

This does not mean that 'middlemen' were absent from the scene. While in this case they had relied on numbers and age to secure a hearing, on other occasions groups were led by an aspiring local woman leader of the Majlis who knew the ways of Darussalam and of course, the best way to establish her credentials. A few days before another large group of women had

[10] This was less than ten days after the 2012 communal violence in Madannapet and Saidabad (mixed Hindu-Muslim neighborhoods in the eastern parts of the city), which turned out to have been engineered by local Hindu right-wing groups. The absence of the leadership from Darussalam was attributed to their being tied up with the aftermath of the violence—with tasks like meeting with ministers, police officials, bureaucrats for relief measures, a proper investigation etc.

[11] This is becoming more and more common during the hot, dry summers—Hyderabad has always had problems with the supply of potable water, being in the rain shadow area of the Deccan plateau and almost completely dependent on rain-fed lakes and rivers. Water is a scarce commodity during summer; while the rich pay for water tankers, the poor rely on local politicians as in this case.

occupied the hall at Darussalam, led this time by Zahida apa[12], who was definitely one of the most colorful characters I got to know during my work in Hyderabad. We first met in 2011 outside the famous Mecca masjid near Charminar in the Old City of Hyderabad. It was the last Friday of Ramzan (Jumma't-al-vida')— August 26 of that year—and we sat outside the mosque on the low boundary wall listening to Asad Owaisi's voice over the loud speaker as he delivered his annual address after zohar. She described herself as 'apnī bastī ki leader' (leader of my basti) and had come especially to see 'baṛē baba' (lit. the elder child). [13]

On this occasion, almost seven months later, she had come with a group of women from her basti to Darussalam demanding 'gas connections'. The group seemed to comprise both Hindu and Muslim women, judging from appearance.[14] There was both excitement and a hint of belligerence in common with the group mentioned earlier, but certainly more of the former in contrast to them. Zahida apa had assumed the role of leader, again unlike the other group that was more amorphous. She approached the small room and returned to her friends after a while. Soon the group was approached by their MLA and the most visible, active Majlis member ('sargarm karkun') of the constituency. The women gathered around them complaining about burns resulting from the use of wood-fired stoves (lakdi ke chulhe se haathan jal jaa raein), and

[12] I addressed her as both Zahida apa and Zahida baji, as a term of familiarity and friendship. 'Apa' is the suffix for 'elder sister' though 'baji' is the more commonly used term in Hyderabad for women older than oneself, usually not more than a generation apart. Kin terms often serve to establish these relationships among strangers—examples for men would include 'bhai' or 'brother'.

[13] This is an affectionate moniker used for the brothers by many older Muslim women—Asad baba, Akbar baba, baṛē/chhōṭē (younger) baba are other variations. 'Baba' is a polyvalent term of address; depending on context it can index familial affection and closeness; used by strangers it often comes from an inferior social location, as in this case. It can also be a sarcastic comment on a person's sole qualification for a public role/office being his family connections- in this case 'baba' would signify a slightly spoilt child of an illustrious family.

[14] This is often the only criterion available and applied in Darussalam by all concerned; proper names are the other indicator of community, which of course presumes some level of verbal interaction. I discuss this in terms of my own experience in the Introduction.

how, in spite of all this there were no gas connections being offered in their area (gas connectionāñ nai de rae hamāre area mēñ).[15] Instantly the MLA was on the phone with some Civil Supplies official, while the young 'karkun' took their house and phone numbers down and promised to be in touch. It would take almost a year and a half, but they would get their gas connections eventually in September 2013—and Zahida apa would get a photograph in Etemaad with her beloved 'bare baba'.

However, all this was still very much in the future; on that warm April day she was with her group sitting on the red rug in the hall. I was sitting next to two other women, an old woman and her daughter-in-law in a burqa, only her wrinkly and tired eyes visible. The old woman— I will call her Dadibi (grandmother)—was clearly ill, and had buried her son who had died of cirrhosis of the liver resulting from alcoholism only ten days before. She was there with her daughter-in-law, two grieving women hoping to get the steep medical bills they had incurred reimbursed, not entirely sure how. 'Why didn't He take me? I'm old; why take my son?' she said, wiping her eyes. Another woman who sat close by tried to console her. During this conversation it was revealed that they were, in fact, related to Zahida apa. 'Look at her' said Dadibi bitterly, 'she's refusing to acknowledge her own aunt. I'm sure she's going to get 200-300 rupees from each of these women.' 'Oh?' 'Oh yes, she asked us for 5000 too; "give me 5000 and I'll get your work done", she said. Now why would we do that, when we can go to the office ourselves and get it done? Our house is right here!' Our other friend enjoyed receiving this piece of information about Zahida apa—and my surprise at it—and jokingly said, 'you must write about all this too (ye bhi likh lena).' Of course, I assured her solemnly, and she laughed again at

[15] Under the 'Deepam Scheme' the state government offered free (and subsequently subsidized) LPG connections to women from 'BPL (Below Poverty Line) families' that had no existing connections. Like most welfare schemes, these are administered through political parties and their networks in both rural and urban areas.

the apparent absurdity of the idea. This prompted Dadibi to launch into yet another lengthy diatribe against her niece, even bringing the shadow of a smile to her silent daughter-in-law's eyes. She had countered Zahida apa's claim of proximity to power by turning it into one of actual, physical distance. More, she had undermined the basis of her leadership of this group of women—these were not ties of comradeship, neighborly concern or even 'patronly' generosity but simply a monetary transaction.

It was almost as if Dadibi's grief and loneliness had redistributed itself into indignation, even slight enjoyment at exposing her niece— basking in a public moment of success— to sympathetic strangers. As one would expect, this respite was short-lived, but nonetheless essential for both her and her daughter-in-law. The unexpected juxtaposition of family ties with public space could be uncomfortably revelatory.

It would turn out, though, that Zahida apa's mercenary ways were not really a secret. For this reason she prompted amused annoyance from most of the staff, most of who looked for ways to avoid her when she came in, not keen on discovering what kind of transaction they would be drawn into. She even appeared to enjoy this, making it a point to seek them out, 'what is this? You are ignoring me!' to which the sheepish response was, 'I didn't see you, really…' She was known to be quite a resourceful person and presented herself as such, frequently boasting of her access to 'baṛē baba' and her ability to get work done in her area. Much of this was greatly exaggerated, but nobody took it very seriously in any case. For instance, she claimed that her youngest daughter's education was being paid for by Asad Owaisi, and he took a special interest in her 'report-card'. Zahida apa herself cannot read or write; she is completely blind in one eye and her education was never really taken seriously by her family, but she has made sure to send her youngest to a relatively expensive private English-medium school. Others at Darussalam had

tried to advise her to spend within her means—there were plenty of 'good government schools' in the area, they pointed out, or private Urdu medium schools where the fees were much lower. But she was quite adamant, 'if she studies English my daughter will go places (bacchi kucch banti).' Like everyone else I met she set great store by 'education', but I did not fully understand its import for her until the following incident.

One pleasant Saturday in June we happened to find ourselves in the company of a distraught young woman in a burqa; once again, a matter of hospital bills for her sick husband's treatment at Esra. She had briefly spoken to Akbar Owaisi at the hospital itself, but having failed to get a positive response she was here to try her luck again, this time with the requisite medical reports. She was terribly nervous about approaching him, 'what if he says: "why're you pestering me like this?"' I tried to mitigate her nervousness by suggesting perhaps he would not remember— after all, he was approached by so many people every day. But she responded by telling me a story about an earlier occasion when she had talked to him about something else, and he had remembered her from then. Now here was a case where access could become a problem!

She was also nervous about the crowd in the small office—it was a Saturday, and she was hesitant to 'go and stand with the men' in the office; her obvious discomfort held me back, but Zahida apa wasn't having any of it, 'Why won't you go?! Go now- they'll talk to you!' she said forcefully, 'show them the reports, ask them—there's nothing to it! Go on!' As the woman made her way towards the office, it was my turn to be told off, 'You've been coming here for so long, you should tell her what to do! If educated (paṛhē-likhē) people behave like this…' I tried to protest and say it had only been a few months since I began coming to Darussalam, but she was unmoved, 'but you're educated!' This seemed to give her a new idea. 'Why don't you stand for [municipal] elections?' she asked, only half-joking, 'all that education (parhna-likhna; lit.

reading-writing), when will you use it? What a team we'd make, you and I (kyā joṛī rehti apni)! we would be great (zabardast)!' I had no doubt she would do fine on her own, I told her, while I stuck to my parhna-likhna.

The association of education with authority is not surprising, but since Zahida apa was always so self-assured that I had no real sense of how much *she* valued it. Authority with knowhow— getting things done, striking deals— was her formula for success in politics. She knew how 'things' worked, but that would not gain her much respect. In order to be taken seriously she imagined she would have to be educated; conversely, education in itself was quite without value unless harnessed to public success. Outside of the orbit of power, Zahida apa was only a step ahead of a person like Rabia, who she despised.

When I met Rabia it struck me that she was adept at creating avenues for financial help as well, but did not experience or express her resourcefulness with the same pride and sense of achievement as Zahida apa. On the contrary, she was somewhat shamefaced and defensive. Mother of three young children, Rabia would present herself at Darussalam at least once every couple of months for the time that I was there. More than once she had been shouted at and thrown out for 'lying' about her troubles and being a general nuisance 'whose own family will not speak to her'[16]. On these occasions, she would wail and complain to all and sundry about the treatment meted out to her, threatening to 'go to Ruby channel [a popular local Urdu television channel] and tell the world that these people just say they work for the poor, but don't do anything for them!' She would come back again in some weeks and the cycle would begin all over again.

[16] Words of a local worker, but Rabia confirmed this was true. According to her it was because her husband suffered from a mental illness (she said he was 'pāgal'/crazy) and the family refused to help her. She had to apply for financial help wherever she could aside from trying to keep a job as household help.

She was not shy about asking for help from various political parties, even those opposed to the Majlis. She had told me on our very first meeting at Darussalam about how she had got help from 'everyone', that is to say, the TDP (Telugu Desam Party/ Party of the Telugu Nation) and the Congress, and of course from the MIM. 'What can we do, we're in need? (hamāri ẓarūrat hai na, to hum kyā karna?)', she asked. 'Got to take help from whoever's willing to give it, right? (Jo madad karte unse madad lenā na.)' The last time I saw her—in mid-2013—she showed me a check that she had received from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund, in order to pay the rent of her house, she claimed, but with which she had repaid her considerable debts. This was a great triumph; Zahida apa was present on the occasion and questioned her closely about how she had managed this and even the MLA of her area complimented her on her resourcefulness. I congratulated her too, and noticed how she told the story—in hushed tones, happy but somewhat embarrassed and with a touch of nervousness, as if talking too much about her good fortune would invite bad luck. I asked how she managed it, and she said she had gone straight to the Chief Minister's office and met with him—

> …I went to him [unke: respectful] and said, 'I don't have any money. You said you would give us houses, but that didn't happen so I want money for rent—I don't even have money for rent.' He said, 'I'll give you some, it will be sent to you.' (lit. it will reach your house) …maiñ gaī un kane aur bolī, 'paisē nai haiñ mere kane. Āp ghar dilāte bole na, so wo bhi nai hua, to mereko kirāe kē paisē hōnā—kirāe ke paisē bhī nai haiñ apnē pās.' To uno bole 'main detaun, āpke ghar tak pahuñch jātā.'

And sure enough, her check arrived in the mail a few weeks later.

Rabia was somewhat in awe of the CM as she was of the Majlis leadership, but had succeeded in working through it by 'being' the needy recipient of welfare. Zahida apa, on the other hand, did not speak this language or inhabit this position. The position of 'the poor' or 'the needy' is such that it both requires and undercuts abjectness, transforming it into something of a claim on the powerful while retaining it as an affect proper to an indigent social inferior. But

there is a significant range of subject positions possible here that makes all the difference to one's experience of the world and expectations of it. Rabia managed through sheer persistence and occasional defiance, relying on a public discourse of welfare as well as charity. She had a claim as a poor 'minority' woman with no other means of support. The worst part was that none of the means that she managed to create after all her effort was going to be sufficient for very long, and it would at best be a few months before she would have to do the same things again- a little like the 'woman from Malda or Murshidabad'. She was acutely conscious of her precarious position as someone who had to make the best of a bad situation, but her persistence was really all she had; her position in the symbolic order of power was secure as dogged petitioner for help, even would-be troublemaker. Zahida apa on the other hand cultivated her image of being a party insider and shrewd manager of situations, a public role that she clearly wanted to build on. While most people treated Rabia with indifference or contempt, Zahida apa received semi-affectionate derision. She was one of Darussalam's own at the end of the day, and she knew it. The difference between them is analogous, perhaps, to the difference between the position of Muslims as a minority with political representation they could call their own, and without one—the method advocated by the *Rahnuma* and *Siasat* in 1949.

However, the largest number of women I met were complete outsiders, often newcomers to Darussalam. I met Naseem on a busy summer day when Darussalam was full of women, most of them older and sharing their stories with each other. She stood out because she was relatively younger and outspoken, unlike the others who were more subdued, weighed down by their troubles. For instance, she listened to her older neighbor's story [about her daughter's greedy inlaws, who were also related to the family as in cross-cousin marriage and who wanted impossible amounts of money from her] and warned her that 'such people' would never stop at

one demand: 'relatives are the worst! At least outsiders have some fear, these people…they sit right here…'[17] she tapped the top of her head. She was very expressive in her gestures too—her hands moved a lot when she talked, and the tattered sleeve of her burqa danced with the movements.[18] Like many others, this was the woman's first time at the party office and she was nervous. She also tried to enlist my help in order to take her request to the small office: 'Please do something if you can— couldn't you talk to them for me? You'll be blessed by the prayers of the poor (gharibon ki dua lagti tumko).' Before I could respond, Naseem came to my rescue: '…and what will she say if they ask her "how do you know these things?" You have to go talk to them yourself.' The woman was, like her, employed as cook and domestic help in a home that had recently thrown her out after 8 years of work. Naseem's blunt appraisal of her situation came wrapped in existential wisdom: 'you're stupid, woman; we work for our bellies but we should use our heads to do it. If you give them love both ways, they'll kick you and say, "here's our love".' (tumko akkal nai hai ji…pēṭ kē liyē kām kartē apan lekin dimāgh se kām karna; dōnō taraf mohabbat lagāye tum tō uno bōlte, 'ye lo hamārī mohabbat' aur lāt mārte tumko).

Her own problem was less personal but still difficult. She began by complaining about her 'mohalle ka leader' (neighborhood leader)—she had first approached him after losing her rationcard and being told that she could no longer use the temporary replacement, which meant

[17] 'Sar pe chaṛhānā' (literally 'letting someone sit on your head') is an Urdu idiom meaning to indulge or spoil someone, allowing them to take undue advantage of one.

[18] 'Burqa' is shorthand for a whole range of veiling practices, from the niqab that covers all of the face except the eyes and the hijab, where the head is covered but not the face. The black tunic covering the body is common to all: women who do not wear this but cover their heads or faces are not 'wearing the burqa'. Most of the women who came to Darussalam wore inexpensive, locally made and embroidered burqas, often showing signs of long use and wear. The fabric, design and style of wearing the burqa' are of course the most visible and obvious indices of class. Thus during a discussion with my friends at the party office- I was seeking advice about what kind of burqa' to buy since I was thinking of getting one- I was told, '*you* should get one of those new denim (jeans ka kapṛā) ones. They're light and very nice (halke rehte; acche rehte woh burqe).'

spending Rs. 20/kg on rice, which at a PDS (Public Distribution System) shop would be Rs.1/-. He apparently agreed to meet her at the concerned government office on a particular day and help with the process. She had to take an entire day off for this and wait at the office from 11.00 am to 4.00 pm; he neither came nor picked up her calls. So she gave him a piece of her mind and told him she would go 'directly' to Darussalam— she would not settle for anyone other than Akbar Owaisi, not even her MLA, who sat in the little room by himself for half an hour while Naseem was telling her story. No, she didn't trust 'these people'— 'These MLAs and neighbourhood-level leaders? I've seen what they can do. Now I'll go straight to them. If they get it done, I'll cast not one but 4 votes for them. If they don't let them come and ask for my vote, I'll show them!' she said, laughing at her own bravado.

Some fifteen minutes later she was thirsty, and in her cynical way she said 'they've built such a huge office, and didn't think to have a small pot of water (itna baṛā daftar banā liye, ēk pāni ki surāhi nai rakhē).' I told her there was a water-cooler inside from which cold water could be had, but it took some convincing before she would agree to come with me and risk her pride— never mind, she said, 'their people' (inkē logāñ) will shout at us, throw us out (bātāñ karte, nikāl dete). I cannot adequately write about her fear of being humiliated that seemed, strangely enough, to go together with her feistiness. We did manage to get a drink of water, and at the water-cooler I saw how thirsty she had been. She had been willing to go thirsty rather than risk her hard-won place of respect in the world; it was easily lost, all it would take was for her to go into what almost seemed like alien territory— the inaccessible inner reaches of a building housing powerful people. In the hall, she was where she was supposed to be; she was certain venturing inside would invite violating some unwritten spatial code of power. But she took it in her stride, probably adding it to her wisdom about the world in some way. I caught myself

hoping her opinion of Darussalam had improved a little, revealing to me the investments I had developed in the place and the relations that people established with it, however temporary.

In the end Naseem seemed untouched by the populist promise of Darussalam. She interacted easily with the women in the hall, including me; she would not be the indigent recipient of welfare but the defiant voter that exchanged votes for service (but generous with her side of the bargain!) However, this also meant that she was hyper-aware of the asymmetries of power in the party office. It was not an enabling power, but something that had to be approached with caution because it had the potential to destroy the dignity and self-reliance she had put together. Her willingness to forego a much-needed drink of water rather than risk public humiliation—being told off, thrown out—stand in contrast to Rabia's incorporation of it into her neediness and Zahida apa's easy disregard of it. She also stands out in my memory as an exceptional person, not only because of her own qualities but because most of the other women I met who had similar issues articulated a more ambivalent sense of attachment and expectation with respect to the Majlis and its leadership.

III

While Rabia and Zahida apa had found a place for themselves in Darussalam, most women came in order to resolve a current crisis and be able to go back to their lives that did not centrally involve the Majlis or their office. Often they were caught between rival systems of power and hoped that speaking to the leadership at Darussalam would resolve the situation for good. This hope was grounded variously in the established representative status of the Majlis, its political structure, the accessibility of the top leadership and in past experiences (of the efficacy of these factors), freely shared with other hopeful visitors. Accessibility, then, and some sense of accountability resulting from this closeness was thus a major part of their expectation. One could

think of this as belonging to the same constellation of experience as Rabia's consciousness that a statement to a local Urdu channel could discredit the party. Whether the threat was realistic or practicable or not, the imagination of a local public that could/would be receptive to a complaint about the Majlis is the important.

Badnāmī: politicians and publics

Jamila baji was on her first visit; we exchanged pleasantries and she was initially reticent about her reasons for coming. After eliciting some information from me about my research and regular visits to the party office, she told me she had a piece of land in the old city that had been encroached upon by a local man who claimed to be affiliated with the Majlis. He had built a three-story building covering about half of it, having removed the fencing and bribed the local people to keep quiet about it. Jamila baji had a daughter to marry off and had thought the land would come in handy for wedding expenses; she was supposed to have got married a month later, but in view of the situation, they had conducted an engagement and postponed the wedding. She had come to see Asad Owaisi and ask him to intervene. I did not ask, but she went on to say that she had only voted once and that was for the Majlis. She told me, as many others had:

> This is one party that is ours, their presence is important. If we have a problem, there's a place you can go to—you know what I mean? Then there's security because of them…else you saw what they did in Gujarat, to women, children…and now they're picking up these young men at random.[19] There has to be someone to speak for us.
> (ye apni ēk jamā'at hai, inka hona zaroori hai na. Ab dekho kisī *problem* meñ paṛē to, ek jagah hai, ēk rehtā hai na…ā sakte idhar. Inki wajah se *security* hai…nahīñ to Gujarat mein kyā kyā kare, dekhe na aap…ladies ko, bacchōñ ko…aur ab ye naujawān bacchon ko utha ke leke ja raein. To koi to rehna hamāri bāt karne wālā.)

Here she had articulated nicely the three main points that MIM discourse itself advertises as its achievements: problem-solving, security, and 'speaking for'. Far from being impatient with the

[19] This is a reference to the widely reported cases of the city police's illegal detention and torture of young Muslim men on charges of involvement in terrorist activities.

hour-long wait at Darussalam, Jamila baji was very excited to see the MLAs, corporators and mayor arrive in their large SUVs one after the other: 'this has been a really lucky day; I'm actually getting to see in person the people I see on TV!' she laughed (āj din bhot acchā jā raha; jo TV pe dikhte the wo *real* mēñ dikh rae!'). She was talking about the local Urdu channels (like Ruby channel) that make it a point to broadcast the party's public activities on a daily basis; they each had a reporter deputed to Darussalam, just as each party-office in the city has reporters assigned to it. The interesting thing about this is that Telugu and English news reporters only came to the Majlis office on particular occasions, but the smallest and newest Urdu channel—even if it only had an online presence and basically consisted of a single reporter—made sure that Darussalam was part of the 'beat'.

As I noted in the opening section, Jamila baji's opinions and sentiments matched 'the party line', echoed in different public fora—you could indeed walk into Darussalam and see all those people you had only seen on television, even if it was from a channel run by your next-door neighbor. This is far from an anonymous, stranger-mediated public sphere though its effects (the glamor produced by distance, for example) appear to be similar. Jamila baji considered herself part of the 'we' that the party speaks for, so that she did not consider the man who had so callously encroached on her much-needed land as a representative of the party. On the contrary, she was certain that the Owaisis did not know about this kind of activity and once they had been told, they would 'punish' the offender.[20] She did not go to the police or approach the courts; she came to Darussalam confident that the matter 'would be taken care of', as many others did. Why involve the police and 'outsiders', as another woman with an identical problem would tell me

[20] This attitude, also exhibited by Naseem and Zahida apa to different degrees, is strikingly reminiscent of the affective discourse attaching to the figure of the infallible sovereign, who could be misled but never wrong. It is also perfectly in keeping with the leadership cult of India's major political parties, all of whose leaders are seen in this light by members and supporters.

later, especially when 'they' are always looking to malign the party in any case? We could solve this problem 'internally' (āpas mēñ hi masla *solve* ho jāegā).

Of course, the problem was often not resolved internally, leaving no option but the law—as we saw in Habeeb Begum's case. Often people like Jamila baji would make repeated trips, receive assurances and then have to come back when those assurances proved false. At other times everything would work out and some kind of deal made—these outcomes depended on a level of shadow negotiations and internal wheeling-dealing that Jamila baji and I had limited access to, though we hoped they were influenced by the possibility of negative publicity and a consequent decline in support for the Majlis. Her hopes did not only rest on the 'identity claim' of the Majlis— that they would do right by her as a Muslim, because of course her adversary was one too, and a party member to boot—but mostly the importance of local support for the party, where word-ofmouth publicity could be damaging.

Further, Jamila baji's fear of being complicit in maligning the party indicates this hyperawareness of a hostile 'them' who would use the smallest dispute give the party a 'bad name' (badnām karnā). Rabia's freely vocalized threat to tell all on the local channel also points to her sense that such an 'exposé' would have consequences. In fact, this was a sense that was shared by many on the official side of Darussalam as well: it was often insinuated, for instance, that poor people who came expecting monetary help had been sent 'by our opponents (mukhālifīn) to give us a bad name (party ku badnām karne ke vāste)'. There could not be a declared policy about this because charity, or the discourse of 'helping the poor' is central to the politician's legitimacy across party lines (as Rabia well knew). There is a decisive shift in the old practice of patronage and 'big man' politics, and the party's dilemma is evidence of this. Appeals for money were handled on an individual basis; often people were told to approach the Owaisis

'at home' where they may help them. Sometimes they gave out small sums of money at Darussalam but without drawing attention, which is unheard of in a political culture where even government schemes are presented as bounty from local parties. Here again was a zone of uncertainty surrounding these appeals for money— even when they were turned away, people waited to see Akbar Owaisi in particular because he is known to be generous. There was thus a more than usual sense of discretionary power—as we saw, most people came to see the Owaisis for their troubles in any case, but expectations of money were especially tricky. When such people were turned away ('this is a political party office, we can't help you with money') and someone in the know wanted to suggest a charity, NGO or individual they could approach instead, they did it *sotto voce*, and outside the building, anxious not to be overheard.

While it is true that many local organizations are critical of the MIM and/or run by individuals who are known to be opposed to the Owaisis, it is hard to understand this paranoia unless we consider the 'public effect' that both Rabia and Jamila baji refer to. In a context where there is ceaseless traffic between print and gossip, it is not too far-fetched to imagine that individual disappointments will circulate and undermine the leadership's authority. Party leaders in a tangible sense are part of the society they represent, and tied to social obligations that they affirm and embrace from public platforms, but which require unlimited resources to maintain. Thus one MLA told me in an early interview what a chore it was to attend weddings—often several in one night— but he could not turn down invitations because 'people feel bad (bura maante)'. When I suggested jokingly that his chore sounded like fun (all that biriyani!) he smiled a wry smile and offered to let me accompany him to see how much fun it was, adding somewhat

wistfully, ‘this is not really our job; our job is to legislate, we are law-makers. But people don’t understand…what can you do?’[21]

I discuss the demands of this unreasonable public elsewhere in more detail. What needs underscoring here is the dense materiality of social relations that define the political ties between the Majlis and its public. This sense of being scrutinized and open to public disaffection pervades the hierarchy of the party and its relations with the ‘‘awam’. It rests on its own public profile as well as on the wider experience of segregated publics and state practices of distancing Muslims routinely encounter.

Sameness and difference: back to bureaucracy

On a hot June morning in 201, I met Fatima baji and her sister at Darussalam; they must have been in their early to mid-forties and were sitting and waiting to see Asad Owaisi. They had come to Darussalam earlier and on that occasion he had been here since about 10 am; now it was 11.30.

We soon found out that he wasn’t coming in, though everyone said he would. Unwilling to give up, they sat and waited—they had another place, their sister’s to go to, and they had decided to come here and then go because anyway ‘it takes two minutes for things to get done here (do *minute* mēñ kām ho jāta yahāñ par)’. They were from a predominantly Shia’ neighborhood, and had come to ask financial help to get their daughter admitted into a Commerce course at college; her government-sanctioned scholarship was delayed and it was admission time (she would get a letter to the concerned department instead). We got talking

[21] These weddings were lavish affairs usually held in expensive ‘marriage halls’, so there was possibly the promise of monetary contributions being affected if the invitations were refused; I have chosen to go with the MLA’s own rationalization here. Many of these people would pay to get photographs with an MLA or MP published in *Etemaad*, a tiny source of revenue for the paper.

about bureaucratic delays—seemingly small things—that wreak havoc on people's lives; she told me two stories about her experience of Majlis intervention that straightened things out for her. Her daughter's 'inter' (high school) fees had run into trouble as well— 'She was to get a scholarship…I wore myself out (mere ghuṭnē ghis gaē; literally, my knees wore out) doing the rounds of Haj House [where the AP State Minorities Finance Corporation is housed]—I can't tell you what it was like. Then Asad sahab came around to our area and I spoke to him; he gave me his number. I came here, he gave me a letter; I went to the office and that was it, I got the money. It had arrived two months before; for no reason at all they'd ask me to come again and again. I had his signature and seal—and the job was done in a second.'

We shook our heads over the bureaucracy for a while—it's their job, that's why they're sitting there but look at the way they behave… she recalled a bit of a contrasting story, but also one of success. Her old mother had gone and yelled at the local Majlis municipal corporator when their ration card[22] was suddenly rendered invalid after a government 'survey.' Her parents participated in this survey: 'We've been in Hyderabad for fifty years and we've had a ration card since then; suddenly they stopped it—go on, no more ration for you (achanak band kar diye, jao nahin hota). So my mother went and yelled at him [the corporator]—"am I dead?! Why won't they give me rations? I get a pension, how can they discontinue my rations?!" Fatima baji laughed at the memory of the poor corporator's vain attempts at pacifying an angry old woman yelling in front of a bemused audience. He assured her he would make the requisite calls and her ration-card and gas connection were restored. Thus, her experience of the party's accessibility

[22] State-sanctioned cards provided to families from lower economic strata that entitle them to buy certain basic food items—grain, pulses, oil, nuts—cheaply through the Public Distribution System. Income levels are indicated by the color of the card; the lowest is the BPL or 'white card'.

and promise had played out at all levels, familial relations complementing public authority seamlessly.

How had this happened though, I asked her, why did they discontinue the card? She did not know, but speculated—'maybe because we don't live with them anymore; but we all live close by, and the card is for all of us. Then of course they make mistakes with names; they don't know/get (ma'ālūm) our names. We say something, they write something else.' Shouldn't they send people who know? 'Nah, they always send people like this; these people haven't a clue.' She did not specify but we both knew that we were talking about Telugu-speaking Hindu government employees. As I had discovered by this time, misapprehension of names is a major way in which religious differences are lived and expressed— depending on where one came from, certain names could be completely alien and would be tailored to the requirements of a given interaction. For example, many of the people I talked to decided that my name was 'Shifa Ali' and complimented me suitably ('shifa' means healing). It would also considerably complicate the question of identity where names and appearances usually reveal religion and caste immediately. While in such informal interaction this created opportunities for conversation and discussion, in an official context where the value of documents far exceeds that of people's lives such misapprehension could have serious consequences.

As it happened, later that day I also ran into Iffat, who lived in a neighborhood very close to Darussalam. She had run into trouble with her name in all the identification documents she had—they each had a different spelling, or a different combination of her name (like Iffat Rahim begum/Begum Rahim/Iffat Begum/ Ifat Raheem). Now that she had to get the death certificate of her husband in order to claim her paltry (then 200 rupees/month, now increased to Rs. 1000—from $3 to $15) widow's pension, she was being made to run around to standardize her name on

an official document as it showed on her ration card. This was an almost impossible task, as Iffat was discovering; one would think putting it all online would make it simpler—all that has to be done is delete and re-enter. But at the Collector's office she was told that they could not 'just change her name once it was on the computer'. The ease of the technology appeared to have made the process more rigid, almost as if it had been incorporated into an existing social hierarchy: the computer was the 'big man' with respect to the typewriter or the pen and therefore deserving of some kind of deference due to its superior status. Was it about money, after all? Here was another problem for Iffat: not only did she not have any to distribute to all the officers she would have to bribe, there was a more fundamental problem—she was not sure how to ask if it was about money, and how much.

There were helpful souls in Darussalam who could guide her on the latter, but she came repeatedly in the hope that the kind of magic that Asad Owaisi had worked in Fatima's case would somehow work for her as well. So far she had not succeeded in obtaining the letter, though she had been coming for a couple of weeks. Her case is 'pēchīdā' (knotty) said the people at the party office who were talking to her about it: it will take time, someone will have to get on it and follow it up regularly. How can you have five different versions of your name in different documents? they asked, unable to hide their annoyance. That was bound to raise suspicion. She should have done something about this much earlier…Iffat nodded morosely as she listened. Eventually one of the party workers gave her a name and number to call and assured her it would all be taken care of 'Insh'allah' (if Allah wills). I could see she was not convinced; she looked longingly towards the small office where Asad Owaisi's table was and ventured to suggest that perhaps she could talk to him or Akbar for a quicker solution. But the worker suggested, quite reasonably from his point of view, that if they could take care of it there was no need to 'bother

sadar sahab' with it. Iffat agreed reluctantly, looking towards me for confirmation that this was the right decision. The young partyworker also decided to get me on his side—hai na, Madam? (right, madam?) I wriggled out of the dilemma by saying of course 'we' should try everything; if it didn't work she could always come back and see sadar sahab. He wasn't going anywhere, after all.

Conclusion

In this final chapter, I have tried to assemble a thick description of Darussalam from different points of view: from the place it occupies in the lives of people who work and spend their days there, but most importantly for the people who visit vesting their hopes and expectations in what the place stands for. The Majlis office embodies the party's deep roots in Hyderabad city and its representative status, a crucial site for the daily affirmation of its legitimacy as an efficacious political institution. But this affirmation involves contradictory processes of negotiation characterized by both impersonality and closeness, or rather an impersonality predicated on closeness. If the closeness is grounded in a shared space (the city), language and idiom (Hyderabadi Urdu), religious identity and ready access to the top leadership, distance is introduced in actual interaction where hierarchies of power become manifest and tangible. The everyday life of politics then is fraught with uncertainty, where everything and nothing may be presumed at the same time.

But clearly not for everyone in equal measure. Historically excluded from 'public' activity like politics, women inhabit these spaces of uncertainty differently from men. What the daily routine of Darussalam shows is that the penetration of politics into all aspects of everyday life has had the effect of making the domestic and the 'private' public in particular ways. Violence within marriage and the untimely death of a loved one jostles with demands for better

stoves and children's school fees, as more and more women are drawn into this conjunction of the public and private. This is an entirely unintended, unnoticed but for my part one of the most important effects of the MIM's political ascendancy in Hyderabad. It provides a place and a space for these diverse practices of public presence to become visible and encounter each other.

For some, like Zahida apa, Jamila and Fatima baji, perhaps also the group of women who established their authority over the young MIM worker, this is an enabling experience; for others like Safia and her mother, Naseem, Iffat and Rabia it was to a greater or lesser degree frightening. It may be tempting to think of this in terms of individual strengths or failings, or an entirely accidental set of circumstances. My discussion in this chapter has been oriented, however, towards describing the ways in which political mediation structures spaces and individual experiences.

Thus, Darussalam is *both* an enabling place to gather and partake of some measure of power, as well as a place of fear and uncertainty. This duality is a central feature of the MIM's functioning— the space of sovereign representation is claimed in terms of intimacy and identity (we/us/our party), but its effects are played out most successfully through impersonal governmental procedures. This relay is not seamless; it has to be managed constantly both from the public stage and across the table at Darussalam. It is also not entirely predictable, leaving spaces both for party leaders to assert their authority and constituents to vent their disappointments even as they nurture hopes of recapturing the dynamic of proximity.

Darussalam is now a two-storied building of gleaming white walls, the elaborately carved wooden doors giving off the sheen of fresh polish. People now walk into the large hall to be immediately confronted by a long table, behind which party leaders are seated. The barrier of the small room no longer exists, neither does the relative autonomy of the visitors' hall. In other

words, the structure of presence has moved closer to proximity with the gaze of the leaders—for this reason it was described as a 'daily durbar' by a journalist in a 2016 article, where one steps straight into a space organized by the leaders' power, rather than wait among other similarly afflicted peers and chat.[23] It is probable, therefore, that many of the conversations and interactions I have described here would now be either impossible or unrecognizably changed. But what is unlikely to have changed is the underlying dynamic of the dense, gendered relations between representative and constituent that I have detailed in this chapter.

[23] http://www.deccanchronicle.com/151216/nation-current-affairs/article/durbar-behind-mimpopularity

Conclusion: Present futures of the MIM

The title of this dissertation emphasizes democracy and minority in relation to each other. I have chosen the metaphor of the 'minor note' less for its musical allusion and more for the metaphorical field of references it opens up. To be sure there is the suggestion that the choice of scale makes all the difference to how we play and hear a piece of music, much like democracy appears and operates differently within majoritarian conceptions and minority aspirations. But there is more, as I have tried to show in this study of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehad'ul Muslimin, the Muslim political party that has mobilized and represented Muslims in the southern Indian—Deccani—city of Hyderabad, since 1958. Faced with the sweeping tide of majoritarian aggression in India, the Muslims of the city have managed to sustain this small political party—its city rivals call it, pejoratively, the local party or muqāmī jamā'at— of a single Member of Parliament and 7 state legislators. And indeed, it is of minor significance at the national level, even taking into account its recent rise to public consciousness nationally.

As a persecuted religious minority, Hyderabadi Muslims have built on the legacy of a nearly-forgotten princely past as a ruling class with strong roots in the city, which was until 1948 the capital of the princely state of Hyderabad. The career of this state, which I trace in Part I of the dissertation, allowed for a Muslim middle class to develop and separate itself from the monarchy and the aristocracy that ruled the state. This modernizing middle class was the driving force behind the rise of the Mamlikati Majlis-e-Ittehad'ul Muslimin in 1938, which organization is the ancestor of the MIM. The strong regional roots of the Ittehad resulted in its localization to Hyderabad state, and while it had strong links to the All-India Muslim League, which led the movement for Pakistan, it remained stubbornly Hyderabad-focused.

But they have also managed to sustain a discomfort and suspicion of the party's power, which may not appear to count for much in the face of consecutive electoral victories, but the energy with which these have to be sought, I have tried to convey in Part II of my dissertation. This too, is one of the referents of the minor note of democracy— to outsiders the Old City of Hyderabad looks like the 'pocket borough' of the MIM, but the amount of political work it takes to keep the discontent and publicly voiced complaints at bay while simultaneously using them to fuel attachment to the party, makes for a continuously active and visible public life. The party's meetings and office are sites where these gendered publics appear and demand accountability— even if at the end of the day they vote for 'their party' regardless.

In concluding the story of the MIM in Hyderabad I want to gesture towards possible future publics of the party, while looking back on its 'home base' shaped through the vicissitudes of twentieth century South Asian politics of making religious majorities and minorities. In November 2012, the MIM withdrew support from the ruling Congress government in the state, citing as its reason the ongoing tension in Charminar over a temple attached to the monument, which has grown in size over the last few decades.[1] In December party leaders toured the state of AP, addressing meetings against the government; in a series of meetings, Akbaruddin Owaisi made speeches that by December 24—he spoke at Nirmal, Adilabad on Saturday, December 22— began to be circulated on Twitter and Facebook, and led to the filing of police complaints against him. Nobody had taken notice of these speeches before this; Akbar had left for London for a spell of treatment that he has to regularly undergo after a life-threatening attack on him in

[1] http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/Tension-in-Hyderabad-Old-City-overBhagyalakshmi-temple-pandal-MIM-MLAs-arrested/articleshow/17186406.cms

2011 (the year before)[2], when the storm broke. The two events were connected in frenzied media reports—Akbaruddin Owaisi had fled the law, he may never come back etc. He returned to a hero's welcome at Hyderabad airport on January 5, 2013 and was arrested three days later.

Subsequent to the arrest I was at a gloomy and tense Darussalam; from the other MLAs who had gathered in the small office to casual visitors seeking reassurance, everyone looked worried. In a conversation one of the MLAs asked, 'but how can they film our *private* meetings?' I was struck by this characterization of a jalsa—a public meeting—as a private one. On pointing out that it was, in fact, a public meeting he said in frustration, 'but it was our party meeting.' What he meant, of course, was that the MIM's public was a particular one, where their discourse circulated in a way that mass publicity over social media had completely changed the context of. As it turned out, even the local police had not recorded the speeches; the only sources of the videos were audiences, journalists in attendance and 4TV, the party's television channel.[3] The videos had been uploaded to social media sites by fans, but had quickly found possibly unintended audiences. It was fitting that their circulation and Akbar's resultant month-long imprisonment also brought unintended political benefit—here was 'sher-e-Deccan' (the Lion of the Deccan) who had dared to speak out against Hindus in the face of Hindutva, and paid the price for it (while they walked free and unbothered by the law). Darussalam was flooded, in the months that followed, with small groups of people from other states who came to request that the MIM start a branch there— Maharashtra, Bihar, UP. The party's electoral victories in 2013 and 2014 owed a debt to Akbaruddin's notoriety as much as his brother's daily battles on hostile English primetime television.

---

[2] http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/Akbaruddin-shot-at-in-clash-with-rivalsover-land-dispute/articleshow/8125290.cms

[3] http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Cops-in-a-fix-over-Akbaruddin-Owaisi-hatespeech/articleshow/17917791.cms

It is safe to say that this moment marks a significant point of transformation in the party's career—its national-level profile has never been this high, but their public in Hyderabad continues to be its anchor. This is the 'private public' that populates the street-corners and mosques, the markets and neighborhoods that the party calls home; in the district towns of Telangana too— Nizamabad, Nirmal, Sangareddi— to the extent that the capital remains a point of reference, and the Urdu-reading public is incorporated into the fold of MIM rhetoric. It is certainly the case, as an activist friend from the districts warned me, that 'not all Muslims support the MIM', and for good reason. As I have demonstrated in Part II, the party thrives in a field of antagonism, where the project of 'ittehad' or unity must be continually re-emphasized and legitimated in the face of external and internal challenges. Part I provides a genealogy of the public as it grew within the contradictions of the past and potential futures of princely Hyderabad, and forms a contrast to the contemporary realities of Muslim minoritization, where the past is frozen into either glory or injury, and the horizon of future becoming, rapidly receding.

It is in this present, then, that through its vibrant, distrustful yet adoring, Muslim publics— in their collective and everyday lives—that the MIM lives as a political force. In order to discern the particular logics of temporality that govern our political present, I have tried to argue, we must appreciate the historical work that seemingly neutral concepts such as secularism do, in shaping the conflicts and pessimism that characterize the times we collectively inhabit (Mahmood 2016). This means, perhaps, to look more closely at minority as a site of political action, a place of constraint but also of constant struggle.

Appendix: The Program of the MIM, 1958

The Twelve-point program of the Majlis-e-Ittehad'ul Muslimin , 1958, divided into 'Religious, Economic and Political' objectives (as listed in Khan 1971, 788-89; Khan 1980, 205-206):

Religious

1. To prompt Indian Muslims to 'intelligently read the Quran', propagate its message and act according to it.
2. To obligate Muslims in general and members of the Majlis in particular to follow the Shari'at and avoid non-Shari'at action, especially in customs relating to gaiety and sorrow.
3. Through the Assembly and Parliament, to try for the application of Islamic laws to Muslims and to urge the government to make religious instruction compulsory in public educational institutions.
4. To organize the collection of 'zakat' (religious tax; sic) and the establishment of 'Baitul Mal' (religious treasury) and through these and the waqf (religious endowment) property to satisfy rightful demands under Waqf laws.
5. To improve the 'moral standard of non-Muslim compatriots' in order to help them become good citizens of India.

Economic

1. To protect and perpetuate, under the Constitution of India, all the 'interests' (mafādāt) which accrue to the Muslims either by inheritance or by fact, and in the fulfilment of this object to procure subsidy from the Government.
2. To remove economic backwardness and unemployment among the Muslims and to procure for them jobs from the Government in consonance with the Muslim proportion in the population and in keeping with their talents and merits and find ways and means of getting other employments for them and to protect their rights.
3. To help the needy non-Muslims out of the savings of the Zakat.

Political

1. To procure and protect, with loyalty to the Government of India, those rights which are given to Muslims of India by the Constitution.
2. To attempt that the Muslims of India, while observing Islamic tenets, should maintain friendly relations with non-Muslims.
3. To participate in elections and nominations to the Parliament, Assemblies and Municipalities; to put up Majlis candidates, irrespective of caste or creed. Such candidates will execute agreements which will be different for Muslims and for nonMuslims. The form of agreement for Muslims would be in consonance with the Constitution of India, Islamic tenets and the general well-being of the people, while those

for the non-Muslims will be in keeping with the Constitution of India and the general well-being of the people.

4. To try to unite Muslims religiously, socially, economically and for matters of common concern, irrespective of their sectional and denominational beliefs in keeping with the principles of general peace and morality.

References

Abdullah, Mohammad, and Mohammad Amin. 2013. *The Blazing Chinar: An Autobiography*. Srinagar: Gulshan Books.

Adcock, C.S. 2013. *The Limits of Tolerance: Indian Secularism and the Politics of Religious Freedom*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Agnes, Flavia. 1995. "Hindu Men, Monogamy, and the Uniform Civil Code." *Economic and Political Weekly* 30, no. 50: 3238- 3244.

Agrama, Hussein Ali. 2012. *Questioning Secularism: Islam, Sovereignty and the Rule of Law in Modern Egypt*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Ahmad, Aziz. 1941. *Nasl aur Saltanat: tarikh aur siyasiyat mein nasl ka tasavvur*. Delhi: Anjuman-e-taraqqi-e-Urdu.
---. (1947) 1980. *Aisī Bulandī, Aisī Pastī*. Lahore: Qausīn.

---. 1971. *The Shore and the Wave*. Trans. Ralph Russell. London: Allen and Unwin.

Ahmad, Naziruddin ed. 1979. *Bahadur Yar Jang: mashāhīr-e-Deccan kī naẓar mēñ*. Hyderabad: Qaid-e-millat Academy.

Ahmad, Naziruddin. 1979. *Bahadur Yar Jang: Ahl-e- Dānish ki naẓar mēñ*. Hyderabad: Qaide-millat Academy.

---. 1981. *Bahadur Yar Jang ki Siyasi taqarir*. Hyderabad: Bahadur Yar Jang Academy.

---. 2006-07. *Savānih-e-Bahadur Yar Jang*, Volumes I- III. 2nd ed. Hyderabad: Bahadur Yar Jang Academy. http://bahaduryarjung.org/biographies.php Last accessed March 24, 2017.

Ahmed, Zahir. 1945. *Life's Yesterdays: Glimpses of Sir Nizamat Jung and His Times*. Bombay: Thacker.

Akbar, S. Ali ed. 1970. *Nawab Mehdi Nawaz Jung Memorial Volume*. Hyderabad: Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Oriental Research Institute.

Alam, Jayanti ed. 2010. *Remembering Makhdum*. New Delhi: SAHMAT.

Alam, S. Manzoor. 1965. *Hyderabad-Secunderabad, Twin Cities: A Study in Urban Geography*. Bombay, New York: Allied Publishers.

Ali, Mir Laik. 1962. *Tragedy of Hyderabad*. Karachi: Pakistan Co-operative Book Society.

Al-Qadri, Muhammad Ali Khan Mujaddidi Naqshbandi. 1986. *Qaid-e- millat: Panch aḥam Taqārīr* [Five Important Speeches]. Hyderabad. http://bahaduryarjung.org/PDF_Books/Speeches&Essays/Panch_Eham_Taqareer_BYJ.pdf

Amin, Shahid. 2005. “Representing the Musalman: Then and Now, Now and Then.” In Shail Mayaram, M.S.S Pandian and Ajay Skaria eds. *Muslims, Dalits and the Fabrications of History*. Delhi: Permanent Black. 1- 35.

Amir Ali, H. 1929. “Social Change in the Hyderabad State in India as Affected by the Influence of Western Culture.” PhD Diss., Cornell University.

---. 1960. *Then and Now, 1933-1958: A Study of Socio-Economic Structure and Change in Some Villages Near Visva-Bharati University of Bengal*. Indian Statistical Series No. 10. London and Calcutta: Asia Publishing House and Statistical Publishing Society.

---. 1961. *The Student’s Quran: An Introduction*. Bombay: Asia Publishing House.

---. 1974. *The Message of the Quran Presented in Perspective*. Rutland: C.E Tuttle and Co.

---. 1947. *Facts and Fancies: A Book of Essays*. Hyderabad: Dominion Book Concern.

Ansari, K. 1986. ‘Pan-Islam and the Making of the Early Indian Muslim Socialists’. *Modern Asian Studies, 20*(3), 509-537. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/312535

Ansari, Tayyab. 1977. *Yārān-e-shahr: Adabi khākon ka dūsrā majmū‘a*. Hyderabad: Idara-e adabiyat-e-Urdū.

Ansari, Tayyab. 1980. *Hyderabad meñ Urdu Ṣaḥāfat: 1857 Tā 1959*. Hyderabad: Idārah-e-Adabiyāt-i Urdū.

Arendt, Hannah. 1963. *On Revolution*. New York: Viking Press.

---. 1972. *Crises of the Republic*. New York: Harcourt Jovanovich.

Asdar Ali, Kamran. 2015. *Surkh Salam: Communist Politics and Class Activism in Pakistan 1947-1972*. Karachi: Oxford University Press.

Askari, Hasan. “Aisī Bulandī, Aisī Pastī.” *Saughat* 4 (1993): 70-75.

Austin, Ian. 1992. *City of legends: The story of Hyderabad*. New Delhi; New York, USA: Penguin.

Bacchetta, Paola. 2002. ‘Hindu Nationalist Women Imagine Spatialities/Imagine Themselves: Reflections on Gender-supplemental Agency’. In *Right-wing women: From Conservatives to Extremists Around the World*, eds. Paola Bacchetta, Margaret Power. NY & London: Routledge.

Bacchetta, Paola. 2004. *Gender in the Hindu Nation: RSS women as ideologues*. New Delhi: Women Unlimited.

Balagopal, K. 2011. *Ear to the Ground: Selected Writings On Class and Caste*. New Delhi: Navayana.

Ballantyne, Tony. 2002. *Orientalism and Race: Aryanism in the British Empire*. New York: Palgrave Mcmillan.

Banerjee, Sumanta. 1980. *In the Wake of Naxalbari: A History of the Naxalite Movement in India*. Calcutta: Subarnarekha.

Banerjee, Sumanta. 1984. *India's Simmering Revolution: The Naxalite Uprising*. London : Totowa, N.J: Zed Books.

Bannister, Robert C. 1987. *Sociology and Scientism: The American Quest for Objectivity, 1880- 1940*. Chapel Hill: UNC Press.

Bano, Jilani. 1984. *Bārish-e-Sang*. Karachi: Daniyal Publishers.

Bate, Bernard. 2009. *Tamil Oratory and the Dravidian Aesthetic: Democratic Practice in South India*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Bawa, V.K. 1986. *The Nizam Between Mughals and British: Hyderabad Under Salar Jang I*. New Delhi: S. Chand and Co.

---. 1992. *The Last Nizam: The Life and Times of Mir Osman Ali Khan*. New Delhi, N.Y: Viking.

Bedi, Tarini. 2011. 'Violence, Aggression, and Militancy: Reexamining Gender, and Nonliberal Politics. In *A Companion to the Anthropology of India*, edited by Isabelle ClarkDecès. Sussex: Blackwell Publishing.

Benichou, Lucien. 2000. *From Autocracy to Integration: political developments in Hyderabad state, 1938- 1948*. Chennai: Orient Longman.

Benjamin, Walter, Michael William Jennings, Brigid Doherty, Thomas Y. Levin, and E. F. N. Jephcott eds. 2008. *The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility, and Other Writings on Media*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Berlant, Lauren. 2011. *Cruel Optimism*. Durham, N.C: Duke University Press.

Bernstorff, Dagmar and Hugh Gray. 1998. *The Kingmakers: Politicians and Politics in Andhra Pradesh*. New Delhi: Har Anand Publications.

Beverley, Eric. 2015. *Hyderabad, British India, and the world: Muslim networks and minor sovereignty, c. 1850-1950*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bhukya, Bhangya. 2010. *Subjugated Nomads: the Lambadas under the rule of the Nizams*. New Delhi: Orient Blackswan.

Bilgrami, Syed Hussein and C. Wilmott. 1883-84. *Historical and Descriptive Sketch of His Highness the Nizam's Dominions*. 2 vols. Bombay: Times of India Steam Press.

Chakrabarty, Dipesh. 2002. *Habitations of Modernity: Essays in the Wake of Subaltern Studies*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Chakraborty, Madhurima, & Umme Al-wazedi. 2016. *Postcolonial urban outcasts: City margins in South Asian literature*. New York: Routledge.

Chandar, Krishan. 1964. *Paude*. Jalandhar: Dipak publishers.

Chander, Sunil. 1987. *Pre-Colonial Order to a Princely State: Hyderabad in Transition, 17481865*. PhD Diss., University of Cambridge.

Chandra, Bipan. 1984. *Communalism in Modern India*. Delhi: Vikas Publications.

Chandra, Kanchan. 2004. *Why Ethnic Parties Succeed: Patronage and Ethnic Headcounts in India*. Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press.

Chandra, Kanchan, ed. 2016. *Democratic Dynasties: State, Party, and Family in Contemporary Indian Politics*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Charsley, Simon. 2002. "Evaluating Dalit Leadership: P.R Venkataswamy and the Hyderabad Example." Economic and Political Weekly 37 (52): 5237- 5243.

Chatterjee, Partha. 1993. *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

---. 2004. *The Politics of the Governed: Reflections on Popular Politics in Most of the World*. New York: Columbia University Press.

---. 2010. *Lineages of Political Society: Studies in Postcolonial Democracy*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Chehabi, H.E. 2004. "Dress Codes for Men in Turkey and Iran." In Touraj Atabaki and Eric Zürcher, eds. *Men of Order: Authoritarian Modernization under Atatürk and Reza Shah*. London and NY: I.B Tauris. 209- 237.

Chhabra, Hari Sharan ed. 1954. *Hyderabad Personalities: A Unique, Authentic and Comprehensive Biographical Directory of Hyderabad and its People*. Delhi: New Publishers.

Chiriyankandath, James. 2014. 'Parties and political change in South Asia'. *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 52:1, 1-6, DOI: 10.1080/14662043.2013.867686

Chittick, William. 1994. 'Rumi and wahdat al-wujud'. In *Poetry and Mysticism in Islam: the Heritage of Rumi*. Eds. Amin Banani, Richard Hovannisian and Georges Sabagh, 70- 111. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cody, Francis. 2015. "Populist Publics: Print Capitalism and Crowd Violence beyond Liberal Frameworks." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 35, no. 1: 50-65.

Cohen, Benjamin B. 2007. *Kingship and Colonialism in India's Deccan: 1850-1948*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Collingwood, R.G. 1939. *An Autobiography*. London, New York: Oxford University Press.

Copland, Ian. 1985. "Congress Paternalism: The "High Command" and the Struggle for Freedom in Princely India, 1920- 1940." *South Asia* 8 (1-2): 121- 140.

Coppola, Carlo ed. 1974. *Marxist Influences and South Asian Literature*. East Lansing: Asian Studies Center, Michigan State University.

Dalrymple, William. 1999. *The Age of Kali: Indian Travels & Encounters*. London: Flamingo.

Das, Veena. 2007. *Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Desai, A.R. 1969. *Rural Sociology in India*. Bombay.

Devji, Faisal. 2013. *Muslim Zion: Pakistan as a Political Idea*. Cambridge, Massachussetts: Harvard University Press.

Dhanagare, D. N. 1983. *Peasant Movements in India, 1920-1950*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Dumont, Louis. 1964. "Nationalism and Communalism." *Contributions to Indian Sociology* VII: 30- 70.

Eckert, Julia. 2003. *The Charisma of Direct Action: Power, Politics and the Shiv Sena*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Eisenstadt, S. N. and René Lemarchand eds. 1981. *Political Clientelism, Patronage, and Development*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

El-Edroos, S. A., and Naik, L. R. 1994. *Hyderabad of "The Seven Loaves"*. Hyderabad: Laser Prints.

Elliott, Carolyn. 1974. "Decline of a Patrimonial Regime: The Telangana Rebellion in India, 1946- 51." *Journal of Asian Studies* 34, no. 1: 27- 47.

Engineer, Asghar Ali, ed. 1984. *Communal Violence in Post-Independence India*. Hyderabad: Sangam Books.

Farooqui, Mehr. 2012. *Urdu Literary Culture: Vernacular Modernity in the Writings of Muhammad Hasan Askari*. Us: Palgrave Mcmillan.

Farouqi, Abu Rashid. 1977. *Iqbal aur Maududi*. Lahore: Maktab-e-T 'amir-e-insaniyat.

Faruqui, Munis D. 2013. "At Empire's End: The Nizam, Hyderabad and Eighteenth-Century India." In Richard Eaton, Munis Faruqui, David Gilmartin and Sunil Sharma eds. *Expanding Frontiers in South Asian and World History: Essays in Honour of John F. Richards*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Friedmann, Yohanan. 1989. *Prophecy continuous: Aspects of Aḥmadī religious thought and its medieval background*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Fuller, C. J. and Véronique Bénéï eds. 2000. *The Everyday State and Society in Modern India*. New Delhi: Social Science Press.

Gayer, Laurent and Christophe Jaffrelot. 2012. *Muslims in Indian Cities: Trajectories of Marginalization*. New York: Hurst and Co.

Gour, Raj Bahadur. 1973. 'Hyderabad People's Revolt Against Nizam's Autocracy: A Diary of the Struggle.' In *Glorious Telengana Armed Struggle*, 1-125. New Delhi: CPI.

Green, Nile. 2012. *Sufism: A Global History*. Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.

---. 2014. *Terrains of Exchange: Religious Economies in Global Islam*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Gribble, J.D.B. 1910. *History of Freemasonry in Hyderabad (Deccan)*. Madras: Higginbothams.

Gudavarthy, Ajay ed. 2012. *Re-framing Democracy and Agency in India: Interrogating Political Society*. London, New York: Anthem Press.

Guha, Ranajit. 1997. *Dominance Without Hegemony: History and Power in Colonial India*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Gumperz, John J and Robert Wilson. 1971. "Convergence and creolization: A case from the Indo-Aryan/Dravidian border in India." In Dell Hymes, ed., *Pidginization and Creolization of Languages*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 151-167.

Gupta, Akhil. 2012. *Red Tape: Bureaucracy, Structural Violence and Poverty in India*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Gutas, Dimitri. 1998. *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture: The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early 'Abbasid Society (2nd-4th/5th-10th C.)*. London: Routledge. *eBook Academic Collection* EBSCO*host.* Accessed April 28, 2017.

Haidar, Qurratulain. 2011. 'Kucch Aziz Ahmad ke bārē mēñ.' In *Aziz Ahmad: Fikr, fann aur shakhsiyat, jild avval*. Ed. Azam Rahi. Delhi: Educational Publishing House. 64- 74.

Haksar, Nandita. 2005. "Human Rights Lawyering: A Feminist Perspective." In Mala Khullar ed. *Writing the Women's Movement: A Reader*. New Delhi: Zubaan Books. 131- 151.

Harrison, Selig S. 1960. *India: The Most Dangerous Decades*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Hasan, Mushirul ed. 2009. *Islam in South Asia, Vol V: Negotiating Diversities*. New Delhi: Manohar Hasan, Sibte. 1994 (1967). *Shahar-e-nigārān*. Hyderabad: Hussami Book Depot.

Hasan, Mushirul. 1979. *Nationalism and communal politics in India, 1916-1928*. New Delhi: Manohar.

Hasan, Zafarul. 1971. *Zikr-e-yār chale*. Karachi: Pak Publishers.

---. 1978. *Umr-e-guzashta ki kitab: Faiz Ahmad Faiz aur Makhdum Muhiuddin ki zindagi aur takhliqāt ka tazkira*. Hyderabad: Hussami Book Depot.

Hashmi, Syed Ali. 2017. *Hyderabad 1948: An Avoidable Invasion*. New Delhi: Pharos Media & Publishing.

Hilgers, Tina ed. 2012. *Clientelism in Everyday Latin American Politics*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hirschkind, Charles. 2006. *The Ethical Soundscape: Cassette Sermons and Islamic Counterpublics*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Hull, Matthew. 2012. *Government of Paper: The Materiality of Bureaucracy in Urban Pakistan*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Human Rights Watch. 1992. *Human Rights in India: Police Killings and Rural Violence in Andhra Pradesh*.

Hyder, Ghulam. 1973. 'Anti-Nizam Struggle: Participation of Muslims'. In *Glorious Telengana Armed Struggle*. New Delhi: CPI. 136-152.

Hyder, Mohammad. 2012. *October Coup: A Memoir of the Struggle for Hyderabad*. New Delhi: Roli Books.

Hyderabad, Pingle Jaganmohan Reddy, and India. Home Department. 1953. *Report: Inquiry Relating to the Firing in the City of Hyderabad on the 3rd and 4th September 1952: Instituted by Home Dept. Notification No. Spl/Pol/29/52, Dated the 9th September, 1952*. Hyderabad: Govt. Press.

Idara-i-Muhibban-e-Deccan. 1978. *Mamlukat-i Āṣafiyyah: Muslim Hind Ke 'ilmī, Fikrī, Siyāsī Aur Saqāfatī Irtiqā' Mein Haidarābād Dakkan Kā Kirdār*. Karachi: Idara-i Muhibban-e-Deccan.

Ikramullah, Shaista Suhrawardy. 2006 (1945). *A Critical Survey of the Development of the Urdu Novel and Short Story*. Karachi: Oxford University Press.

Imam, Mir Hasan Ali. 1995. *Bahadur Yar Jang: Ek tahqīqi mutāl'a*. Karachi: Bahadur Yar Jung Academy.

India (Dominion). 1948. *White Paper on Hyderabad, 1948*.

Jafar, Rafiq ed. 2008. *Urdu adab ke Teen Bhai: Mahbub Hussain Jigar, Ibrahim Jalis, Mujtaba Hussain*. Pune: Haji Ghulam Muhammad Educational Trust.

Jaffrelot, Christophe ed. 2007. *Hindu Nationalism: A Reader*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Jaffrelot, Christophe. 2011. *Religion, Caste and Politics in India*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Jafri, Ali Sardar. 1987. *Taraqqīpasand Adab*. New Delhi: Anjuman-e-Taraqqi-e-Urdu.

Jalal, Ayesha. 2002. *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam Since 1850*. New York: Routledge.

Jalil, Rakhshanda. 2014. *Liking Progress, Loving Change: Literary History of the Progressive Writers' Movement in Urdu*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Jalis, Ibrahim, and Imtiaz Baloc. 2006. *Fukāhāt-i Jalīs: Ibrāhīm Jalīs ke fukāhiyah kālam, maẕāmīn aur maktūbāt*.

Jalis, Ibrahim. 1948. *Do Mulk, Ēk Kahāni*. Hyderabad: Ḥalqa-'e- 'Ilm va Adab.

---. 1946. *Bhūkā hai Bangāl*. Hyderabad: Nafis Academy.

Javed, Siddiq ed. 2008. *Kulliyāt-i naṣr ʻAzīz Aḥmad*. Lahore: Maghribi Pakistan Urdu Academy.

Jeffrey, Robin ed. 1978. *People, Princes and Paramount Power: Society and Politics in the Indian Princely States*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Jones, Kenneth W. 1976. *Arya Dharm: Hindu Consciousness in 19th-century Punjab*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Kakar, Sudhir. 1996. *The Colors of Violence: Cultural Identities, Religion and Conflict*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Kamal, Rahimuddin. 1941. *Khitābiyāt*. Hyderabad: Idara-e-Adabiyat-e-Urdu.

Kannabiran, K. G. 2004. *The Wages of Impunity: Power, Justice, and Human Rights*. New Delhi: Orient Longman.

Kannabiran, Kalpana. 1996. "Rape and the Construction of Communal Identity." In Kumari Jayawardene and Malathi de Alwis eds. *Embodied Violence: Communalising Women's Sexuality in South Asia*. 32- 41.

Katzenstein, Mary. 1979. *Ethnicity and Equality: The Shiv Sena and Preferential Policies in Bombay*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Khalidi, Omar, and Muinuddin Aqil eds. 1998. *Suqūṭ-i Ḥaidarābād: Chashm Dīd Aur Muʻāṣir Taḥrīroṉ Par Mushtamil: Manẓar Aur Pesh Manẓar*. Hyderabad: Kul Hind Majlis-i Taʻmīr-i Millat.

Khalidi, Omar. 1988. *Hyderabad, After the Fall*. Wichita, Kan., U.S.A.: Hyderabad Historical Society.

---. 1991. *Memoirs of Cyril Jones: People, Society, and Railways in Hyderabad*. New Delhi: Manohar Publications.

---. 1993. "Muslims in Indian Political Process: Group Goals and Alternative Strategies." *Economic and Political Weekly* 28, no 1-2 (January 2, 1993): 43- 54.

---. 2001. "Gosha Mahal Baradari and the Freemasons' Lodge," *Channel 6: The Twin Cities Magazine* 11 (8): 23-25.

---. 2005. *British Residency in Hyderabad: An Outpost of the Raj, 1779-1948*. London: British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia (BACSA).

---. 2006. *Muslims in the Deccan: A Historical Survey*. New Delhi: Global Media Publications.

Khan, Abid Ali. 1980. Untitled. *Fann aur Shakhṣiyat*, 'Āpbītī number' 4:7. Bombay: Sakar Publishers. Pp 453- 457.

Khan, Mahmud Nawaz. 1932. *Report, Majlis-e-Itteḥād'ul Muslimīn: min ibteda'i 11 Ardibehesht, 1338 Fasli li-g āyat 21 Aban 1340 Fasli*. http://bahaduryarjung.org/PDF_Books/MIM/Report_MIM.pdf. Last accessed March 24, 2017.

Khan, Masood Ali. 1995. *The History of Urdu Press: A Case Study of Hyderabad*. New Delhi: Classical Pub. Co.

Khan, Muhammad Ahmad and Majid Ahmad eds. 1987. *Taqarir o nigarishat: Lisanulummat, Qa'id-i Millat Bahadur Yar Jang*. Karachi: Bahadur Yar Jang Academy.

Khan, Muhammad Ahmad. n.d. *Hamārā Qāid* (Our Leader). Hyderabad: Bahadur Yar Jang Academy http://bahaduryarjung.org/PDF_Books/Biographies/Hamara_Qaid_Md_AhmedKhan.pdf. Last accessed March 24, 2017.

Khan, Muhammad Fathulla. 1935. *A History of Administrative Reforms in Hyderabad State*. Secunderabad, Deccan: New Hyderabad Press.

Khan, Munir Ahmed. 1980. "Muslim Politics in Hyderabad." PhD Diss., Osmania University.

Khan, Naveeda Ahmed. 2012. *Muslim Becoming: Aspiration and Skepticism in Pakistan*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Khan, Rashiduddin. 1971. "Muslim Leadership and Electoral Politics in Hyderabad: A Pattern of Minority Articulation- I & II." *Economic and Political Weekly* 6, no. 15-16: 783- 794, 833-840.

Khundmiri, Alam. 1971. 'Säkularismus und Kommunalismus: Die überwiegend muslimschen Wahlkreise Haiderabads (Charminar, Yakutpura, Asifnagar)'. In Dagmar Bernstorff and Hugh Gray eds. *Wahlkampf in Indien: Untersuchung Der Allgemeinen Wahlen 1967 Und 1971 in Andhra Pradesh*. Düsseldorf: Bertelsmann Universitätsverlag. 86- 110.

---. 1994. 'Makhdum ki sha'iri aur shakhsiyat'. In *Mazamin-e-Alam Khundmiri: intikhab*. Hyderabad: Urdu Academy, Andhra Pradesh. 161- 172.

Kooiman, Dick. 2002. *Communalism and Indian Princely States: Travancore, Baroda and Hyderabad in the 1930s*. New Delhi: Manohar.

Kozlowski, Greogry. 1995. 'Loyalty, Locality and Authority in Several Opinions (Fatāwā) Delivered by the Muftī of the Jami'ah Niẓāmiyyah Madrasah, Hyderabad, India'. *Modern Asian Studies*, 29: 4. 893-927.

Kumar, Radha. (1993) 2006. *The History of Doing: An Illustrated Account of Movements for Women's Rights and Feminism in India 1800-1990*. New Delhi: Zubaan Books.

Lal, K. Sajun. 1964. *A Short History of Urdu Newspapers*. Hyderabad: Institute of Indo-Middle East Cultural Studies.

Lavan, Spencer. 1974. *The Ahmadiyah Movement: A History and Perspective*. Delhi: Manohar Book Service.

Leonard, Karen. 2007. *Locating Home: India's Hyderabadis Abroad*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

---. 2014. *Hyderabad and Hyderabadis*. New Delhi: Manohar Publishers & Distributors.

Lothian, Arthur Cunningham. 1951. *Kingdoms of Yesterday*. London: John Murray.

Lynton, Harriet Ronkin and Mohini Rajan. 1974. *The Days of the Beloved*. Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 1987.

Mahendra, K. L. 2006. *Recollections and Reflections*. Hyderabad: Prachee Publications.

Mahmood, Saba. 2016. *Religious Difference in a Secular Age: A Minority Report*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Makhdum. 1976. *Bisāt-e-raqs*. Second edition. Hyderabad: Adabi Trust.

Mann, Harold H. 1917. *Land and Labour in a Deccan Village*. Bombay: University of Bombay.

Mantena, Rama Sundari. 2013. "Vernacular Publics and Political Modernity: Language and Progress in Colonial South India." *Modern Asian Studies* 47 (5): 1678- 1705.

---. 2014. "The Andhra Movement, Hyderabad State and the Historical Origins of the Telangana Demand: Public Life and Political Aspirations in India, 1900-1956." *India Review* 13, no. 4: 337-357.

Massignon, L., and Gardet, L. 'Al-Ḥallād̲ j̲ '. In *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Second Edition, edited by P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, W.P. Heinrichs, P.J. Bearman (Volumes X, XI, XII), Th. Bianquis (Volumes X, XI, XII), et al. Accessed April 29, 2017. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_0256.

Masuzawa, Tomoko. 2005. *The Invention of World Religions, or How European Universalism was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Mazzarella, William T.S. 2013. *Censorium: Cinema and the Open Edge of Mass Publicity*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

McIntyre, W. David. 1999. 'The strange death of dominion status'. *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History,* 27:2, 193-212.

Meenakshi Mukherjee, ed. 2002. *Early Novels in India*. New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi.

Menon, V. P. 1956. *The Story of the Integration of the Indian States*. Calcutta: Orient Longmans.

Metcalf, Barbara. 2007. "Imrana: Rape, Islam and Law in India." *Islamic Studies* 45, no. 3: 389- 412.

Michelutti, Lucia. 2008. *The Vernacularisation of Democracy: Politics, Caste and Religion in India*. New Delhi: Routledge.

Minault, Gail. 1982. *The Khilafat movement: Religious symbolism and political mobilization in India*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Mirza, Fareed. 1976. *Pre- and Post-Police Action Days in the Erstwhile Hyderabad State: What I Saw, Felt and Did*. Hyderabad.

Moid, M.A. 2011. 'Muslim Perceptions and Responses in Post-Police Action Contexts in Hyderabad.' In *Frontiers of Embedded Muslim Communities in India* ed. Vinod K. Jairath. London, New York: Routledge. 220-241.

Mommsen, Wolfgang J. 1984. *Max Weber and German Politics: 1890- 1920*. Trans. Michael S. Steinberg. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Morgan, Edmund. 1988. *Inventing the People: The Rise of Popular Sovereignty in England and America*. New York: Norton.

Muhammad, Ghulam. 1974. *Hayāt-e-Bahadur Yar Jang*. Karachi.

Muhammad, Shan. 1981. *Successors of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan: Their Role in the Growth of Muslim Political Consciousness in India*. Delhi: Idarah-i-Adabiyat-i-Delhi.

Muhiuddin, Makhdum. 1980. *Baggi ke Picche Chhokra: Makhdum Muhiuddin ke mazamin ka intekhab*. Hyderabad: Silisila-e-Matbu'at-e- Siyasat.

Mukherjee, Mithi. 2010. *India in the Shadows of Empire: A Legal and Political History, 1774-1950*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Munshi, K. M. 1957. *The End of an Era: Hyderabad Memories*. Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan.

Murray, Paul. 1991. *T.S. Eliot and mysticism: The secret history of Four quartets*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Naidu, Ratna. 1990. *Old City, New Predicaments: a Study of Hyderabad*. New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Naim, C.M. 1999. *Ambiguities of Heritage: Fictions and Polemics*. Karachi: City Press.

---. 1999. *Zikr-e-Mir: The Autobiography of the Eighteenth Century Mughal Poet Mir Muhammad Taqi 'Mir'*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

---. 2004. *Urdu Texts and Contexts: The Selected Essays*. Delhi: Permanent Black.

---. 2012. 'Interrogating "the East", "Culture" and "Loss" in Abdul Halim Sharar's *Guzashta Lakhna'u*'. In Eds. Alka Patel and Karen Leonard, *Indo-Muslim Cultures in Transition*. Leiden: Brill. 189- 204.

---. 2013. *The Muslim League in Barabanki: Essays/Polemics*. Karachi: City Press.

Naqvi, Farah. 2010. 'This Thing Called Justice: Engaging with Laws on Violence Against Women in India.' In Bishakha Datta ed. *Nine Degrees of Justice: New Perspectives on Violence Against Women in India*. New Delhi: Zubaan. Kindle e-book.

Narayana, Badri. 2011. *The Making of the Dalit Public in North India: Uttar Pradesh, 1950 to the present*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

---. 2014. *Kanshiram: Leader of the Dalits*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India.

Noorani, A.G. 2001. "Of a Massacre Untold." *Frontline* magazine. http://www.frontline.in/static/html/fl1805/18051130.htm. Last Accessed March 15, 2017.

Noorani, A.G. 2013. *The Destruction of Hyderabad*. New Delhi: Tulika Books.

Oesterheld, Christina. 2001. "Nazir Ahmad and the Early Urdu Novel: Some Observations." *The Annual of Urdu Studies* 16: 27- 42.

Omvedt, Gail. 1993. *Dalits and the Democratic Revolution: Dr. Ambedkar and the Dalit Movement in Colonial India*. New Delhi: Sage.

Osmania University. 1968. *Golden Jubilee Souvenir, 1918-1968*. Hyderabad: English Souvenir Committee, Osmania University Golden Jubilee.

Owen, Nicholas. 2002. 'The Cripps mission of 1942: A reinterpretation'. *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 30, no.1: 61-98.

Pandey, Gyanendra. 1990. *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*. Delhi, NY: Oxford University Press.

Pathak, Zakia and Rajeshwari Sunder Rajan. 1989. "Shahbano." *Signs* 14, no. 3: 558-582.

Pavier, Barry. 1981. *The Telangana Movement, 1944-1951*. New Delhi: Vikas Publications.

Perkins, C Ryan. 2011. "Partitioning history: The creation of an *Islāmī pablik* in late colonial India, c. 1880–1920." PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania.

---. 'From the Mehfil to the printed word: Public debate and discourse in late colonial India'. *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 50, 1 (2013): 47- 76. LA, London, New Delhi et al: Sage.

Pernau, Margrit. 2000. *The Passing of Patrimonialism: Politics and Political Culture in Hyderabad 1911- 1948*. New Delhi: Manohar.

Piliavsky, Anastasia ed. 2014. *Patronage as politics in South Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Platzdasch, Bernhardt. 2009. *Islamism in Indonesia: Politics in the Emerging Democracy*. Singapore: ISEAS.

Prasad, Dharmendra. 1986. *The Social and Cultural Geography of Hyderabad City: A Historical Perspective*. Inter-India Publications.

Prasad, M. Madhava. 2014. *Cine-politics: Film Stars and Political Existence in South India*. Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan.

Prasad, P.S.N. 'The Police and Rameeza Bee: Muktadar Commission's Findings.' *Economic and Political Weekly* Vol. 13, No. 35: 1497-1499.

Prasad, S.N. 1972. *Operation Polo: The Police Action Against Hyderabad, 1948*. Historical Section, Ministry of Defence, Government of India.

Rahi, Azam ed. 2011. *Aziz Ahmed: fikr-o-fan aur shakhsiyat*. 4 vols. Delhi: Educational Publishing House.

Rahman, Ataur. 1988. *Makhdum Muhiuddin: Hayat aur Shairi*. Bihar.

Rai, Mridu. 2004. *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects: Islam, Rights, and the History of Kashmir*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

Raj, Sheela. 1987. *From Medievalism to Modernism: Socio-Economic and Cultural History of Hyderabad, 1869- 1911*. Bombay: Popular Prakashan.

Rajeswara Rao, C. 1971. *The Historic Telengana Struggle: Some useful lessons from its rich experience*. New Delhi: Communist Party of India.

Ramusack, Barbara N. 2004. *The Indian Princes and Their States*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rao, D.Venkaṭesvara. 1982. *Telangana armed struggle and the path of Indian revolution: A critique of 'Telangana people's struggle and its lessons' written by P. Sundarayya and of 'Postscript' to the book 'The great heroic Telangana struggle' written by Chandra Pulla Reddy*. Hyderabad: Proletarian Line Publications.

Ray, Bharati. 1989. *Hyderabad and British Paramountcy: 1858- 1883*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Raza, Ali and Franziska Roy. 2015. 'Paramilitary Organisations in Interwar India.' *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 38, 4: 671-689.

Razvi, S.M. Jawad. 1985. *Political awakening in Hyderabad: role of youth and students 19381956*. Hyderabad: Visalandhra.

Reddy, Arutla Ramchandra. 1984. *Telangana Struggle: Memoirs*. Trans. B. Narsing Rao. New Delhi: People's Publishing House.

Reddy, Ravi Narayan. 1973. *Heroic Telengana: Reminiscences & Experiences*. New Delhi: Communist Party of India.

Regani, Sarojini. 1963. *Nizam-British Relations, 1724- 1857*. Hyderabad, India.

Richards, F.J. 1929. "Cultural Regions in India." *Geography* 15 (1): 20- 29.

Richman, Paula ed. 1991. *Many Ramayanas: The Diversity of a Narrative Tradition in South Asia*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Roniger, Luis and Ayṣe Güneṣ-Ayata eds. 1994. *Democracy, Clientelism, and Civil Society*. Boulder, Colo.: L. Rienner Publishers.

Roosa, John. 1998. "The Quandary of the *Qaum*: Indian Nationalism in a Muslim State, Hyderabad 1850- 1948." PhD Diss. Madison, University of Wisconsin.

Rosenthal, F., Marmorstein, E., & Marmorstein, J. 1975. *The classical heritage in Islam*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Rudra, Ashok. 1996. *Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis: A Biography*. Delhi, New York: Oxford University Press.

Russell, Ralph and Khurshidul Islam. 1968. *Three Mughal Poets: Mir, Sauda, Mir Hasan*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.

Russell, Ralph. 1971. "The Development of the Modern Novel in Urdu." In T.W. Clark, ed. *The Novel in India*. London: Allen & Unwin.

---. 1983. 'Aziz Ahmad, South Asia, Islam and Urdu'. In *Islamic Society and Culture: Essays in Honour of Professor Aziz Ahmad*. Eds. Milton Israel and N.K Wagle. New Delhi: Manohar. 59-68.

Santner, Eric L. 2011. *The Royal Remains: The People's Two Bodies and the Endgames of Sovereignty*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Sarkar, Benoy Kumar. 1920. "The Theory of Property, Law, and Social Order in Hindu Political Philosophy." *International Journal of Ethics* 30, 3: 311-25.

Sarkar, Tanika and Urvashi Butalia eds. 1995. *Women and the Hindu Right*. New Delhi: Women Unlimited.

Savarkar, Vinayak Damodar, S. S. Savarkar, and G. M. Joshi. 1967. *Historic Statements*. Bombay: Popular Prakashan.

Schuster, Aaron. 2016. *The Trouble with Pleasure: Deleuze and Psychoanalysis*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Scott, David. 1999. *Re-fashioning Futures: Criticism After Postcoloniality*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

---. 2004. *Conscripts of Modernity: The Tragedy of Colonial Enlightenment*. Durham: Duke University Press.

---. 2014. *Omens of Adversity: Tragedy, Time, Memory, Justice*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Shah, Alison Mackenzie. 2008. 'Nineteenth-Century Hyderabad: Re-Scripting Urban Heritage'. In *The City in the Islamic World* 2 vols. pp. 589-614. DOI: 10.1163/ej.9789004162402.i-1500.156 Brill. Last Accessed March 20, 2017.

Sherman, Taylor C. 2015. *Muslim Belonging in Secular India: Negotiating Citizenship in Postcolonial Hyderabad*. New York: Cambridge University PressSherman. 2010. *State Violence and Punishment in India*. London and New York: Routledge.

Sherwani, Haroon Khan. 1940. "The Evolution of the Legislature in Hyderabad." *Indian Journal of Political Science* I: 424- 438.

---. 1953. *The Bahmanis of the Deccan: An Objective Study*. Hyderabad: Manager of Publications, Saood Manzil.

Shikayb, Badar.1964. *Ḥaidarābād kā ʻurūj o zavāl*. Karachi: Osmania Academy.

Siddiqui, Syed. N.d. *Lisan-ul-ummat*. Hyderabad Deccan. http://bahaduryarjung.org/PDF_Books/Biographies/Lisanul_Ummat_Syeed_Siddiqui.pdf. Last Accessed January 20, 2017.

Sinha, Mrinalini. 2006. *Specters of Mother India: The Global Restructuring of an Empire*. Durham, US: Duke University Press Books. Accessed March 31, 2017. ProQuest ebrary.

Srikishen, C. 1952. *45 Years a Rebel*. Hyderabad: Deccan Printing Press.

Stocking Jr., George. 1987. *Victorian Anthropology*. New York: The Free Press.

Subba Rao, C. V. 1986. 'Story of a Judicial Enquiry'. *Economic and Political Weekly* 21, No. 7: 284-286.

Sukhochev, A. S., and Muḥammad Usama Faruqi. 1993. *Maḵ ḥ dūm Muḥīuddīn: Rūsī se tarjumah*. Ḥyderabad: Idāra-e- She'r o Ḥikmat.

Sundarayya, Puchalapalli, and Harindranath Chattopadhyaya. 1972. *Telangana People's Struggle and Its Lessons*. Calcutta: Communist Party of India (Marxist).

Tambiah, Stanley J. 1996. *Leveling Crowds: Ethnonationalist Conflicts and Collective Violence in South Asia*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Tamkanat, Shaz. 1986. *Makhdum Muhiuddin: hayāt aur kārnāme*. Hyderabad: Maktab-eShi'r o Hikmat.

Tārīkh-e-Majlis-e-Itteḥād-ul-Muslimīn Mamlikat-e-Āṣafiyā-Islāmia. 1941. Dar-ul-asha't Siyasiyya, Majlis-e-Ittehad'ul-Muslimeen, Hyderabad Deccan. http://bahaduryarjung.org/PDF_Books/MIM/Tareeq1928_1940_MIM.pdf. Last Accessed March 24, 2017.

Tejani, Shabnum. 2007. *Indian Secularism: A Social and Intellectual History, 1890- 1950*. Ranikhet: Permanent Black.

Thachil, Tariq. 2014. *Elite Parties, Poor Voters: How Social Services Win Votes in India*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Thirumali, Inukonda. 2003. *Against Dora and Nizam: People's Movement in Telangana, 1939-1948*. New Delhi: Kanishka.

Tirtha, Swami Ramananda. 1967. *Memoirs of Hyderabad freedom struggle*. Bombay: Popular Prakashan.

Tomasi, Luigi, ed. 1998. *The Tradition of the Chicago School of Sociology*. London: Routledge.

Vaidya, K.S. 1946. *The Hyderabad State Congress*. Hyderabad Deccan (Self-published).

Valentine, Simon Ross. 2008. *Islam and the Ahmadiyya Jama'at: History, Belief, Practice*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Varshney, Ashutosh. 2002. *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Venkatswamy, P. R. 1955. *Our Struggle for Emancipation*. 2 vols. Secunderabad: Universal Art Printers.

Viraja. 1994. *Nizāmśāhī Para Pahalī Choṭa: Hyderabad Ārya Satyāgraha Kī Āpa-bītī.* Dillī: Hemagaṅgā Prakashan.

Warner, Michael. 2005. *Publics and Counterpublics*. New York: Zone Books.

Weber, Max, Guenther Roth, and Claus Wittich. 1978. *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Wilson, Jon E. 2016. *The Chaos of Empire: The British Raj and the Conquest of India*. New York: Public Affairs.

Wright Jr., Theodore. 1963. "Revival of the Majlis-e-Ittihad-ul-Muslimin of Hyderabad." *The Muslim World* 53, no. 3: 234- 243.

---. 1966. 'National Integration and Modern Judicial Procedure in India: The Dar-Us-Salam Case'. *Asian Survey* 6: 12. 675-682.

Yazdani, Zubaida. 1976. *Hyderabad During the Residency of Henry Russell, 1811-1820: A Case Study of the Subsidiary Alliance System*. Hyderabad, India.

Yazdani. 1985. *The Seventh Nizam: the fallen empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Zaman, Muhammad Qasim. 2012. *Modern Islamic Thought in a Radical Age: Religious Authority and Internal Criticism*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.

Zubrzycki, John. 2006. *The Last Nizam: The Rise and Fall of India's Greatest Princely State*. India: Picador.