

**ZAFAR ALI KHAN:
AN ENIGMA OR NEW PRINT CULTURE**

*How long will you go on passing resolutions?
How long will the Congress grind the hand mill?
You cannot get freedom by speeches and meetings;
If at all, it can be got with a bludgeon and cudgel--*
Maulana Zafar Ali Khan

The fruition of a modern communication structure has transformed completely the issues and the tactic of those involved in the South Asian religious, social and political life in the late eighteenth and early twentieth century. The new regional leaders discovered the emerging 'new domain' of print culture with a strong sense of their class and cerebral persuasions and exploited it for 'their own ends'. Besides the traditional methods of communication, the fast growing educational institutions, telegraph, postal services and railroads gave an impetus to the flourishing print industry for those who were able to use or misuse them. The adoption of new methods of information introduced by the missionaries and publicists enabled the inhabitants' of British India to expand their influence in the public arena. Journalism was a newer occupation which became rewarding with launching of numerous newspapers, several presses and tract/pamphlet societies spread across India. It equally transformed the status and significance of the regional leaders who introduced dynamic ideological debates and institutional building up in each province of Colonial India.¹

A new spread of creativity and usage of the written tradition also showed an increasing trend in public readership. The mass level printed communications was in vernacular

languages, leaving only 20 percent of newspapers and journals circulation in English. There were almost 260 newspapers and journals in Punjab in 1905, 12 were in English, 18 bilingual, 17 in Punjabi,(Gurumukhi script), 15 in Hindi and 198 in Urdu. The newly emerged print media became a voice for particular socio-religious and economic perspectives/concerns within a certain community and expressed the political tilt/aspirations of the respective editors/publishers of those newspapers in Punjab. Later in 1930-40s British Punjab these newspapers became tools in the hands of the owners having particular place in the political space of public arenas.

The British annexed Punjab in 1849 from the Sikhs. It was the last native kingdom to be captured in Northern India. They had introduced a new structure of political and administrative rule in the province which was cherished as Punjab School of Administration. It was based on the patronage and welfare policies towards rural population. The Punjab having diverse land, culture and people became a 'unique challenge' for its rulers. The *Punjabees* stood by British army during 1857 and were rewarded for their 'steadfastness during turbulent times. The Punjabization of the Indian Army since 1870s gained quality position which proved major cause for rural stability and powerful local collaboration.² During early twentieth century, political developments in the world brought many challenges to Indian Muslims including the issue of Khilafat. In India, Muslim nobility was concerned to defend Islam wherever it was threatened and in particular the institution of the Khilafat. here they became face to face to their British masters. These defenders or supporter of Islam sought help against the British from Muslims outside India. Ideologically they supported Britain's enemies. A few actually left India in order to join other Muslims in their fight against the British. The Muslim migrants experiences in Afghanistan and Central Asia brought more cynicism. For young Muslims in India, Khilafat became a cause due to the lack of political freedom, the increasing cultural values sparked by Christian missionaries gathered support for Turks as a way of fighting back against their equally declining position in Colonial Indian society.

At this juncture, emerging Muslim middle class going through constant change and transformation. As much of the nineteenth century Indian inhabitants in towns were filled of the rhetoric of reform. The country was passing by a civilizational transition, from past glory to modernity, or a revived future through established and emerging reform organizations. All communities had set about creating their own variations and extended that to a promotion of their specific brand of culture/religion and ideology.

This paper will highlight how a print culture was evolved in British Punjab by leaders like Maulana Zafar Ali Khan among Muslim community and how it succeeded to modify the public behavior on Shahidganj dispute and tainted by its proponents. The life and role of Maulana Zafar Ali Khan³ as a literary author, specialist publicist to propagate the Muslim history, social practice and opposition to religious orthodoxy through print and oratory will be analyzed respectively.

The interest and attitude of historians towards the study of culture and religion playing the denominator role in to say, one volume narrative as an hagiographical discourse, is marked significantly. Since 1870s, the introduction of printing press in Colonial India received immediate and rapid response from the Muslim reformist leaders who had been publishing religious books and tracts along with enormous editions of Quran. They had completely conscious of the significance of the 'power of the press'.⁴ Initial opposition to printing press rooted deeply into the 'oral tradition of literacy in Islam'.

Putting a cursor on the person like Maulana Zafar Ali Khan and his responsive role during the urban Muslim politics of 1930s, an effort is made to search for the following points: Who was Zafar Ali Khan and how did he succeed to mobilize public opinion through his pen and gave it strength from pulpit? During Khilafat and Shahidganj dispute, people of Punjab responded his calls positively and showed complete resistance towards the colonial rulers, but Zafar Ali Khan never tried to sustain himself in Muslim politics. Is it inscrutable personality of Zafar Ali Khan

or ideological differences which always tore him apart from his fellow politicians in any party? In fact Maulana Zafar Ali Khan's contribution always remained as a side topic in the grand narrative of official discourse in history writing in Pakistan. Therefore wider public finds lack of substantial reading on him, except his role as a Muslim journalist which indeed proves a research gap on one of Muslim leading protagonist during early two decades of 20th Century Colonial Punjab. His political-self dominated by his political exigency due to his over-expressiveness about prominent personalities, emotionalism for Islam and prompt activism on local political issues caused him to be inconsistent despite his cosmopolitan reflections on Muslim politics and literature in twentieth Century Colonial Punjab.

To get the answers, a discussion is arranged under following sections:

1. Early Life and Career: Under *Nizam* through *Khilafat* till *Sahafat*
2. *Shahidganj* Dispute: Islamic symbol or expression of 'Muslim Community'?
3. Public mobilization: From Pen (*Zamindar*) to (*Pulpit*) Mochigate speeches

Discussion:

Print Media and Muslim
(Islam and Printing)

Early Life and Career: Under *Nizam* through *Khilafat* till *Sahafat*

Maulana Zafar Ali Khan was born on January 27, 1873 in an agricultural family, residents of Kot Merath,⁵ District of Sialkot in British Punjab. His father Maulvi Siraj-ud-din Ahmad, a retired post master, had launched an Urdu weekly *Zamindar* in 1903 that highlighted the issues of the agricultural community to promote social and political awareness among the Muslims of the area.⁶ Primarily, *Zamindar* aimed to educate the Muslim masses.⁷ Due to its 'popular stance' during agitation against Canal Colony Act, it got a substantial circulation and earned following for Maulvi Siraj-ud-din Ahmad.

After being acquainted with Arabic and Persian by his grandfather, Zafar Ali Khan passed middle exams from Mission High School Wazirabad and later matriculated in 1792 from Mahendra Singh College Patiala. His profile remained pleasing and attention-grabbing during school days. Besides his sportiness and inclination for physical fitness at both institutions, he proved to be an 'independent soul' who dared to speak against any traditional hierarchy. He wrote extempore verses on certain teachers which earned fame among his class mates and staff including Headmaster took notice of him personally. Interestingly, the tomfoolery whatever he did was unscrupulous but it was committed through the popular genre of those times, 'poetry'. That skill of extempore parody-writing became his major skill in later years and almost all of his contemporary journalist, writers, politicians and ulama fell prey to his satiric verses through Zamindar. Anecdotes from his school days, quoted by his biographers determine the later course of his life and the role he opted as the regional leader of British Punjab during early Twentieth century and many more like these complete the pages of his life story.⁸

As a follower of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898)'s reformist movement for the social up lift of Muslims, Maulvi Siraj urged his son to be educated at Aligarh. In 1893, he was sent to Aligarh where he completed his graduation from M.A.O. College, Aligarh.⁹

Aligarh Movement was aimed to modernize the traditional Muslim educational institutions and change the intellectual, political and economic destiny of the Muslim India. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan had emphasized the use of English as the medium of instruction in his established schools and colleges. He founded Muhammadan Anglo Oriental College(MAO) on the design of Cambridge University. He also founded Scientific Societies for the introduction of western sciences among Muslims of India. The objectives of the college included, "liberalization of the ideas, broad humanism, a scientific worldview and pragmatic approach to politics. Also included the "steady increase of educated Muslims in government services".¹⁰

The intellectual atmosphere at MAO College with teachers like Professor T W Arnold (1864-1930) and Allama Shibli Nomani (1857-1914) left unending impact on young Zafar Ali. Other than competitive academic pursuits, he also became active member of *Anjuman Ikhwan ul Safa*, convened by Professor Arnold and *Lujanatul Adab*, by Allama Shibli Nomani. Main objective of the former anjuman was the promotion of English Language. Every member had to write and present a research paper on any topic in English. The later anjuman was aimed to rehearse in speech and writing in Arabic language. Zafar Ali got every chance to learn from Altaf Hussain Hali (1837-1914), Shibli Nomani, Professor Arnold and above all Sir Syed Ahmad Khan himself.¹¹ On many occasions at College he recited his verses in Persian. At numerous functions he spoke from the rostrum of Strachey Hall which helped him to become an orator and polemicist later on Lahore's scene during turbulent years of 1930s.¹² During his years at Aligarh, he had company of people like Maulana Shaukat Ali, (senior to him) Maulana Muhammad Ali Jauhar, (Junior to him). His class mates included Maulvi Abdul Haque (1870-1961), Khwaja Ghula us Saqlain, Mir Mahfooz Ali Bdayuni, Muhammad Ameen Zubairi and Sir Ziauddin. Maulana Hasrat Mohani and Aziz Mirza from the first generation of Aligarh, a close friend and a contemporary, respectively.

After graduation from Aligarh in 1895, he was so well known on the literary scene of MAO College through both the anjumans that he was recommended by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan to Nawab Muhsin ul Mulk Syed Mehdi Ali Khan (1837-1907) to serve as his private secretary. Being hateful for British Government service, Zafar Ali willingly opted to travel to Bombay where he accepted his new assignment. On the persuasion of Nawab Mohsin ul Mulk, he started translating philosophical essays and books from English to vernacular. During his one year stay at Bombay he translated numerous books from English into vernacular including Arthur Balfour's *Essays*¹³ and John William Draper's *History of the Conflict between Religion and Science* which was published in 1910 from Lahore.¹⁴ By using network of Aligarh boys, he got an

appointment under sixth Nizam Asaf Jah VI, Mir Mahbub Ali Khan(1866-1911) of Hyderabad where he joined Dar-ul-Tarjama (Translation Bureau) and later the home department of the same state i.e., Hyderabad Deccan.¹⁵

Zafar Ali Khan was employed twice in Hyderabad, first from 1896-1909 and second between April 1918 to July 1918. His first period of stay proved productive as his focus mostly remained on literary works like translation publication and launching of a research journal *Deccan Review*. He travelled to Somalia and Calcutta and tried to make his space in public social arena under *Nizamat*. He was a well read translator, editor, poet and researcher and due to his early orientation in Arabic, Persian and vernacular literature nothing could stop him to be a persuasive speaker. His training by Aligarh's first generation was an early exposure to Muslim nationalism which was later transformed in to a nostalgia for Muslim Brotherhood from the literary situation prevailed in 19th century Hyderabad. During his first period of stay at Hyderabad, he joined state army as Lieutenant but later as a choice by Aziz Mirza who was himself an Aleeg, he got engaged into literary work. He was given the assignment of administrator and translator under Home Office department. Later on he was given additional charge of Registrar Legislative Council under Nizamat. He was completely erudite within scholarly atmosphere in Deccan. He started translating various English works into Urdu, including *Persia and the Persian Question* (1892) authored by George Nathaniel Curzon, (1859-1925) in 1900 as *Khayaban e Faras*.

His translation works also included George William MacArthur Reynold (1814–1879) *Mysteries of the Court of London* (1844) as 'Asraar e London and Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936)'s *The Jungle Book* (1894) into 'Jungle may Mangal'. He also translated the novel *The People of the Mist* authored by Henry Rider Haggard (1856–1925) as Sair e Zulmaat. In 1902, an Urdu weekly journal 'Afsaana' was launched from Hyderabad. Its publication lasted for a year, aimed to publish the Urdu translated episodes of *Mysteries of London*. In 1904, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan launched a monthly research journal *Deccan*

Review from Hyderabad. It was quite scholarly journal laden with the writings by people like Maulvi Abdul Haque who was regarded the champion of Urdu, Abdul Haleem Sharar (1869-1926), Shibli Nomani and their contemporaries. Besides that he wrote an opera based on the idea of Japan-Russian war in 1904 which whipped up the anti-Imperial inspiration generally in India and particularly in Zafar Ali Khan. His four act/thirty nine scenes opera was published first time in Deccan Review in 1905 and later compiled and published from Lahore in 1914. According to his biographer, the War in Asia between Japan and Russia had a deep impact on Zafar Ali Khan which evidently molded his political ideology.¹⁶ He got an off year from his assignment under Nizamat in 1906. He travelled during first half of 1906 and later stayed in Bombay to establish an import export business together with Mir Mahfooz Ali Badayuni his friend and former colleague at Hyderabad.¹⁷ He returned to Hyderabad in 1907 due to his failure in business and resumed his task.¹⁸ In the meanwhile he was given a few additional assignments by the Nizamat where he got chances to meet with Prince Mir Usman Ali Khan future Nizam VII. Both the men liked each other's company. But in October 1909 Zafar Ali Khan was fired from his job and asked to leave the State. The allegations against him included, an effort to launch an Anjuman e Tabligh e Islam in Hyderabad to cope up the Missionary activities in the state of Hyderabad. His strong opinion on various social and religious issues within Nazamat also earned British Resident's displeasure and caused his exit from Hyderabad. According to his brother, his satirical poem *Walker nama* on British Revenue Officer Mr. Walker also ignited the situation against him.¹⁹ Zafar Ali Khan later explained his position in Zamindar that he along with other three colleagues was trapped in a fake intrigue to dethrone Mir Mahboob Ali Khan Nizam VII.²⁰

In December 1909, Zafar Ali Khan took up the publication of *Zamindar* according to the will of Maulvi Sirajuudin Ahmad,²¹ his father. Initially he resumed the policy and venue of the paper as same but in May 1911 he launched it from Lahore. Zafar Ali Khan introduced drastic changes in the policy of the newspaper. His editorials appeared in the form of

verse, directly addressed to the laymen instead of intelligentsia. He gave a literary style to the themes he wished to float among Muslim community of Lahore/Punjab like Muslimness, Muslim identity and Muslim brotherhood within Indian Nationalism. He was completely successful in stimulating the public fervor rather than widening the outlook. As a result the circulation of the *Zamindar* increased from 750 in 1908²² to 5890 in 1913.²³ The paper had become 'staple political diet for the Muslim masses of Lahore. An intelligence Report says, *as soon as the copies of this newspaper are brought into the bazar, large crowds of people surround the news shops and buy the copies.*²⁴

Zafar Ali Khan as a maestro of modern times journalism²⁵ in Colonial Punjab had exercised his literary muscles under the traditional auspices of Nizamats or the Princely State of Hyderabad extended to all Muslim nobility of that times.²⁶ That was the space from where he got his sturdy training as writer/editor with a strong foundation in the art of translation. It furthered his skills as a writer and an orator on which he mobilized the Muslims of Lahore on various issues from Jallianwalla Bagh in 1919 to Masjid Shahidgunj in 1934-36.

Before we discuss Zafar Ali Khan's enigmatic role in the politics of Punjab and his exploratory journalism through *Zamindar*'s editorials, we notice the psychiatric effect of war between Turkey and World powers in 1914 to 1918. Indian Muslims were severely damaged by the political events after 1910. The Ottoman empire, a symbol of Muslim Khilafat²⁷ was broken by the united forces of Great Britain, France and Italy. The loss of territory by the Turks to the European powers brought fundamental change in the mindset of Muslim community of India. It proved a major cause of 'politicization of the Indian Muslim intelligentsia and literate people'.²⁸ The nationalist feelings were increased by the unpopular policies of British government inside and outside India witnessing enormous political change within communities, higher and wider in their tone and volume. *The Zamindar* and *Al Hilal* both Urdu newspapers 'created across-the-board awareness which widened the range of discontent'.²⁹ Both the papers advocated the case of

Turks and campaigned in the favour of Khilafat. The British government justifiably construed this pro-Ottoman position as a proof of an increasingly Pan-Islamist movement in North India.³⁰ After the formation of Khilafat Central Committee and establishment of Khilafat Fund the Muslim newspapers tried to raise the public awareness on the issue by focusing on the war situation and its implications on Muslim world. Zafar Ali Khan also became very popular active Khilafatist on the issue and presided Hazro Khilafat Conference (procession). After leading a two miles long procession and an inflammatory speech against British government he was arrested and prosecuted. He was the first Khilafat member who was charged and sentenced on the basis of spreading sedition against government, "in a high recruitment in British army district of Punjab".³¹ The international war situation let him create an anti-British ambience among public in India. The Punjab was not only 'granary basket' province for the British Army during First World War but a major recruitment field for British government.³² Having flavored the Satyagraha appeal by Gandhi in 1919, the *Lahorites* had been relishing the savory language of Zafar Ali Khan through his pen and tongue when on pulpit.

Now the anti-imperialist discourse became his forte. Muslims subscribed the *Zamindar* in great number. Zafar Ali Khan, 'a born journalist, and a brilliant master of frothy oratory' as Michael O Dwyer writes had vigorously 'appealing Indian audience',³³ by issuing 20,000 copies of his paper sometimes, twice in a day, an unheard of circulation for the vernacular press. For the first time, Muslims in Northern India were awakening to a news-consciousness.³⁴ The result was obvious. He was the first to be restricted to his village, as 'first measure to be taken in the Province *after taking charge*, confessed by Lieutenant Governor of Punjab.³⁵ But the Indian middle class educated sections along with the laity readily imbibed in the disloyal propaganda that the *Zamindar* offered them. *Zamindar* changed the whole culture of print journalism by publishing lampoons, humorous skits, invectives, and satires in which the rough side of his editor's tongue was prominent. By criticizing the foreign

policy of British government along with the leaders of Punjab the circulation of Zamindar had touched unprecedented number.

Shahidganj dispute and Zafar Ali Khan

Shahidganj dispute was the most politicized and highly mobilized issue in the history of twentieth century Colonial Punjab. Right of possession of Shahidganj, became reason of contention between Sikhs and Muslims of Lahore during 1934-6. The 'obscure Shahidganj mosque' (Abdullah Khan an officer in the court of Prince Darashikoh, Shahjahan s son built this mosque) located at the periphery of old Lahore was demolished by the Sikhs of Lahore in July 1935 which caused a fury in Muslims. The mosque was occupied and converted into Gurudwara before the Ranjit Singh s rule in Punjab and remained under Sikhs until British captured Punjab. When according to Gurdwara Act of 1925, Shahidganj went into direct control of Shiromani Gurudwara Prabhandhak Committee, Muslims under Anjuman i Islamia claimed for the possession of the mosque but High Court affirmed the decision in favour of SGPC and building was handed over to its Lahore branch in March 1935.

The Muslims rallied and demonstrated vigorously against the transfer of a mosque to Gurudwara Committee and were arrested and fired by the police resulting in to more than a dozen deaths.³⁶ The agitation turned into a 'symbol of unity and commitment of an Islamic community' for the Indian Muslims. It also provided a cause to 'newly emergent class of leaders' who formed a political organization, the Majlis e Ittehad e Millat, to fight for the mosque and calling for the mobilization of the *Neeli posh* (Blue Shirts) volunteers to carry on the agitation ignited by a 'rapidly expanding Muslim press' which had become a major political force since the launching of *Paisa Akhbar* in Lahore in 1880s.³⁷ Zafar Ali Khan had already 'transformed poetry' as a symbol of Muslim glory into 'public action' on different community issues. The Muslim press in British Punjab, particularly Zamindar fought on three major issues the Khilafat, the Prophet and the mosque most passionately.³⁸ The Shahidganj issue gave impetus to Urdu journalism, which kept it on 'high level' until the formation of a particular organisation to protect

and restore the mosque. Despite the externment of the editors, the issue was kept alive by publishing extensively on the matter and by the trained hawkers who loudly announced the sensational highlights daily. Zafar Ali Khan used to speak after mid-day prayer in any mosque or outside one of the gates of old Lahore to aware the public on latest developments on the issue. His war against government and its system of justice had been fought by pen and pulpit intensively. The Punjabi rural gentry of Unionist Party, leaders of Majlis i Ahrar and the Ulama who refrained from the agitation all fell prey to his severe criticism. He blamed the Ulama as a whole for not issuing any unanimous religious decree in favor of Shahidganj mosque. In September 1935, Pir Jam'at Ali Shah,³⁹ a rural Sufi of Alipur Sayyidan, Sialkot was made the leader (Ameer e Millat) of the agitation in a conference held in Rawalpindi. Between July 1935 to December 1935, nothing concrete was done for the restoration of Mosque except holding large gatherings of Muslims in Sialkot, Lahore and the cities wherever Pir Jammata Ali Shah toured. The 'Shahidganj days' were celebrated mostly on Fridays in big cities and Ameer e Millat (September 12, 1935) Syed Jamaat Ali Shah urged the Muslims to wear black mourning badges at prayers on the protest days and organize peaceful processions.

It clearly shows that the Ameer, Pir Jamaat Ali Shah avoided anti-government agitation or clash between Muslims and British government. A legal recourse was also sought to get things done. 'Shaheedganj Day' was observed on September 20, 1935.⁴⁰ Complete strike was observed by the Muslims of Lahore. Over one lakh people gathered for Friday prayers at the Badshahi Mosque.⁴¹ After prayers, Jamaat Ali Shah presided over a meeting of about 60,000 people, mostly *neeliposh* mobilised by Zafar Ali Khan.⁴² In his address he announced that after visiting Ajmer and exchanging views with important Muslim leaders he would call on the Advisory Committee to draft a programme of action for the future. By the end of 1935, the movement was almost collapsed. So far as Majlis-i-Ittihad-i-Millat was concerned, it never succeeded in providing leadership to the movement. But Zafar Ali Khan showed his metal fully and successfully blamed and defamed Majlis i Ahrar and Ulama for

not opting the cause of Muslim community by agitation for Shahidganj. He wrote and spoke on the issue extensively, warned by the government when he announced to raise ten thousand neeliposh volunteer to restore the mosque.⁴³ Maulana Zafar Ali Khan was interned due to instigate the public on Shahidganj issue along with his contemporary, Syed Habib, editor of daily, *Siasat*.⁴⁴ He declared fearlessly, that 'mosque was more sacred than *jhatka*, if Sikhs wanted the freedom of religious rights, they should first return the mosque to the Muslims.⁴⁵ Earlier, on Syed Habib's initiation an 'anti-Emerson Day' was celebrated on 29 April 1938, to renounce the policies of governor of Punjab.⁴⁶ In 1937, Zafar Ali Khan had been elected as unopposed Member Legislative Assembly.⁴⁷

Zafar Ali instigated a new print culture by his career in journalism during first two decades of 20th Century Punjab. He initiated a new consciousness of religious identity among the Muslim masses of Lahore through the method of violent discourse against Christians and Hindus. The slogan like *Hinduoan ka bera gharak karnay wala* Zamindar (the paper that will destroy the Hindus) in the streets of Lahore by rogue youth was common during first two decades of 20 century. He abused firangis (Europeans) for their hypocrisy towards the Muslim countries in general, and towards Turkey in particular. All these trends proved a new public sphere and space to be set for electoral politics after 1919. As David Gilmartin points out that *'historians of Indian nationalism for decades have pointed to the emergence of 'public opinion' and an emerging 'public voice' among the English-educated middle class in India as a critical element in the emergence of Indian nationalism... Central to these efforts has been a concern to define the ways that the distinctive structure of the colonial state in India shaped distinctive forms of 'public' opinion and activity —including 'democratic' and 'nationalist' activity — in ways that distinguish Indian experience from any model shaped by the experience in Europe.*⁴⁸

So people like Maulana Zafar Ali Khan generated 'Nationalist politics' where 'educated urban classes' were focused

to come forward.. have reasons to believe that the working classes were involved to a certain limited extent in movements like the non cooperation movement.. but such participation came *under influence of Khilafat leaders* or socialists leaders as an initiative for the sake of *sectarian or class objectives*.⁴⁹ What makes Zafar Ali Khan prominent in the history of urban Muslim leaders was his violent discourse and equally resistive editorials in Zamindar to Imperial policies of British government. He remained a staunch believer at least theoretically in *politics of activism* instead of politics of negotiation. A new-fangled temper of politics was emerged as an aftermath of Jallianwalla Bagh which annoyed both the communities in Punjab against British government. People like Zafar Ali Khan provided a new style of representation as a poet, and a journalist, with generating strong opinion through his pen and speech. As in Francis Robison's view, 'writing is a vehicle which can carry words and ideas across time and space. It is a fairly mechanical process which can make an absent author present'.⁵⁰

Muslims eventually decided to opt printing as necessary weapon in defense of Islam. They had their own distinctive objectives to use printing to preserve the apparatus of their faith and in a context in which Muslims had accepted that they were a minority, about 25 per cent, in a majority Hindu population. Their new found solution 'revival of Islam' had called for renewal and expression of Din across the region. The revival procedure was also needed to face the rapid social, economic and political challenges set off by the Colonial regime. It was also an effort to reassert the meaning of Muslimness they had lost political control after six hundred years of political domination on the subcontinent.⁵¹ The tract societies were established since 1820s and thousands of books were being published at the beginning of the twentieth century. Francis Robinson opines that most vigorous *exploitation of print* was led by the ulama, who took up the task of the publication of *1200 years of oral transmission of Islamic knowledge. If Islam could no longer be supported by the swords of Muslim princes, it could now be supported by the enhanced religious understanding of Muslims themselves*.⁵²

The 'young generation' of Aligarh and people like Zafar Ali Khan had been the product of this printed Islamic tradition. They were the direct beneficiaries of this transmitted renewed Islamic tradition into print and were trained to retransmit it through pen and pulpit. Aligarh Muslim University and Hyderabad had been remained prominent centres for the revival and transmission of the Islamic knowledge. Iqbal had employed poetry to spread out the political ideals among the Muslims of Punjab and the Muslims of the world. But it became a venomous weapon in the hands of Zafar Ali Khan through print media and from there the political poem became an important genre of journalism which flogged up agitational politics among the urban classes of Colonial Punjab. The secret of Zafar Ali Khan's popularity in the public rested in the skill with which he ridiculed the leaders of the community who believed in collaboration with the rulers as the only option to promote Muslim interests. His accomplishment was made easier due to conflicting policies commenced largely by British policy towards the Muslims in India and outside India.

Being a staunch opponent of conservative Muslim leaders, mainly rural landlords, who were strongly collaborated with the British government in Punjab, he wrote in *Zamindar*, on 11 November, 1911, "*Muhammadan community is now awake and knows what sort of leaders it wants. Such leaders as play it should have their graves dug, for the time of their interment is now at hand. Mohammanadan will now be led by those who observe fasts and prayers, understand the real spirit of the Muslim brotherhood, and leave their bungalows to mix with their poor brethren and find out how it fares with them.* Now the question why masses were attracted towards orators and journalists that provoked them was rightly justified by scholars who opines, *key to understanding the underlying connections between organizations, ideology, and popular participation is the process by which participants constructed the respective 'communities' for which they acted. In this process certain shared values and behaviours were self-consciously chosen for emphasis: participants simultaneously defined their own community and crested an 'other' encompassing those outside*

the boundaries they drew. To articulate a community is constructed as an expression.⁵³ Thus what people said and did in the 'public arena' (Freitag's term following the Habermas's 'public sphere') in the colonial state was intrinsic to the process of community formation. Based on shared religious or cultural concerns, in the early decades of the twentieth century, some of these local communities mobilized around issues like cow-protection or the defense of mosques to come together on a large national stage.⁵⁴

The extravagant and sometimes excessive expression of feelings in speech or writing of Zafar Ali Khan had a genuine concern for the Muslims and a romantic commitment to Islam as a universal brotherhood. Such as conservative leaders of the community, he also found Islam in danger by the bigger education and numbers of Hindu middle classes. But at the same time he was convinced that Muslims had to fight against the British government to save their interests. The annulment of partition of Bengal, and the abolition of Khilafat created a deep abhorrence against British government. The increasing missionaries' activities also raised questions like conversion issue which ignited minority feelings. Zafar Ali Khan, entertained such a vision of British Policy which was aimed to break up Muslim empires and conversion of mosques into churches. It induced in them an insecurity of their religious places which sometimes compelled them to declare an open war against the religious bigotry of the rulers. When a sacred portion of the Cownpore mosque was demolished in the midst of guns and bayonets, Zafar Ali Khan stated in Zamindar, *In this way a funeral of that religious liberty, whose effigy has been shown as living and moaning for more than a century, was performed with full military honours. Similarly the memory of the bloody 3rd of August cannot be effaced from the page of our heart, on which day the sun appeared over the horizon of Cownpore shedding sorrowful tears over the fountain of blood, over writhing bodies, over the bleeding wounds of innocent children, and over aggrieved and helpless humanity, and which was the day on which the corpse of British justice...was at last buried on the banks of Gages.*⁵⁵

Zafar Ali addressed the ordinary sections of society and not the elite classes as he knew and believed in quick response instead of long term political compromise. He was a political leader who wished to gain power by appealing to people's emotions, instincts, and prejudices in a way that was considered manipulative and dangerous, and it all made him a popular leader. But it would be unfair to dismiss him on this basis of his ideas which he propagated as completely devoid of creativity, the values he invoked in the Zamindar and the idiom in which he evoked them, were shaped by a lack of political sophistication among the masses whose cause he stood for. The issues on which the masses were provoked had the dramatic intensity and Zafar Ali created political consciousness among classes which had refused to respond to the conservative or to the middle-class leaders. In doing so he created sometimes 'highly explosive situation in Lahore.'⁵⁶ The insecurity of this new middling-class in Punjab kept them on the path of All-Indi-Muslim-ness which shaped their ethos as traditional knowledge-capital which destined ultimately by print-capital. Armored by Urdu language, mainly journalistic writing, the entire Aligarh-graduated gentry from Punjab sought for their identity on a communitarian basis in a highly competitive national and international atmosphere. The institutions like Islamia College Lahore, Aligarh Muslim University and Nazamat all provided basis to support these young Punjabees struggling against multi-dimensional forces in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Muslim India.

Notes & References:

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- 1 See Press trends and tracts discussed in the following, N G Barrier and Paul Wallace, *The Punjab Press 1880-1905*, South Asian Series (Michigan State University, 1970), N G Barrier, *The Punjab in Nineteenth Century Tracts*, South Asia Series (Michigan State University, 1969), Eric Gustafson and Kenneth W Jones, *Sources on Punjab History* (Delhi: Manohar, 1975) Emmett Davis, *Press and Politics in British Western Punjab, 1836-1947* (New Delhi: Academic, 1983).
 - 2 Ian Talbot, *British Rule in the Punjab, 1849-1947: Characteristics and Consequences*, *The Journal of Imperial*

and Commonwealth History, (London: Routledge,1991), 19:2, 203-221.

- 3 For the life history of Maulana Zafar Ali Khan see Delhi, Al Jamiat, Ist February, 1936 and the following, Inayatullah Nasim, Zafar Ali khan aur un ka Ehad (Lahore, 1982), Agha Abdul Karim Shorish, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan (Lahore, 1957), Ghulam Hussain Zulfikar, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: Hayat-Khidmat wa Aasar (Lahore: Sang e Meel, 1993. Also see *Chanab*, Zafar Ali Khan Number, Government Degree College Wazirabad, 1984, *Naqoosh*, Aap Beeti Number, Lahore, *Murghzar* Zafar Ali Khan Number, Government Degree College Sheikhpura, 1981. Since no objective study on Maulana Zafar Ali Khan is available in English, his own publications in Urdu provide sufficient material for a researcher on his life and times.
- 4 Francis Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims: The Politics of the United Provinces 'Muslims 1860-1923* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1974), pp. 77-8.
- 5 Khudadad, as newly born called, was later given the name Zafar Ali Khan, according to the Arabic numerical by his grandfather Maulvi Karam Illahi, who was an expert in identifying historical names. The Family had originally migrated in eighteenth century from Jhelum valley in search of better economic opportunities. Maulvi Karam Illahi purchased a substantial tract of land renamed it as Karamabad, He himself taught his son Maulvi Siraj ud Din Persian, Arabic and vernacular knowledge. He hired a Bengali teacher for his English courses. After this home education and training Maulvi Siraj ud Din joined postal services in British India. After retirement he launched Zamindar which was devoted for the issues of agriculture classes of Muslim Punjab. He died in 1909 in Karamabad. The family history showed the early strife of rural *ashrafiya* of eighteenth century Muslim India. See biography Ghulam Hussain Zulfikar, *Maulana Zafar Ali Khan: Hayat-Khidmat wa Aasar*(Lahore: Sang e meel Publishers, 1993), pp. 10-12.
- 6 Then Chief Secretary Punjab, C A Barron, called him 'from a lower class Muslim family aspirant for promotion in social status' in his letter to Punjab government dated 16 December, 1913,H&P, 127/137 March, 1914, cited in Ravinder Kumar,

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- Essays in the Social History of Modern India*(Delhi:Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 182.
- 7 *Al Jamia't* Delhi, 3 February 1936.
- 8 According to his biographer, he wrote a verse on a teacher who slapped him over the issue of not writing beautifully. Teacher belonged to a family of musician which considered to be a low caste in British Punjab. Zafar wrote a parody on his teacher with a special emphasis on his profession and physical attire. The class recited the parody together in rhythm when teacher entered the class. The headmaster called him and after polite warning made him to apologized. In Patiala, he again wrote a sarcastic verse in praise of a Hindu teacher, Sukhan Laal, who used to take 'opium' as bribe from students. After being a victim of Zafar Ali s stinging verses all around singing by students, the teacher stopped attending the school. Inayatullah Naseem, *Zafar Ali Khan aur un ka Ehad* (Lahore, 1982), p. 24, cited in Zulfikar, *Hayat-Khidmat o Aasar*, p.15.
- 9 Ibid, p.15. Zulfikar also writes that, before leaving for Aligarh, Zafar Ali had a short time recruitment in the same post office at Gulmarg under the administration of State of Jammu and Kashmir where his father worked. But there he had developed conflict with an English Army man and later on with another officer in the same post office. His father sent him back and he decided to join MAO College Aligarh for higher education, p. 18.
- 10 Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan 1857-1964* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 37.
- 11 On one occasion Sir Syed Ahmad Khan embraced him overwhelmingly when he eulogized his services for the Muslims of India. Aligarh *Magazine*, *Aligarh Number*, No. 55, 1954, p. 59, cited in Zulfikar, *Yahat-Khidmat*, p. 28.
- 12 In a joint function of both the anjumans on 19 January, 1894, he recited his Persian poem in praise of Allama Shibli Nomani when he was bestowed the title of Shams ul Ulema. Syed Sulaiman Nadvi in *Hayat e Shibli* writes that his poetry was appreciated by all. Zulfikar, *Hayat-Khidmat wa AAsar*, p. 27.
- 13 see, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur_Balfour

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- 14 **John William Draper** (1811-1882) was a scientist, philosopher, physician, chemist, historian and photographer. He is credited with producing the first clear photograph of a female face (1839–40) and the first detailed photograph of the Moon (1840). He was also the first president of the American Chemical Society (1876–77) and a founder of the New York University School of Medicine. One of Draper's books, *History of the Conflict between Religion and Science*, received worldwide recognition and was translated into several languages, but was banned by the Catholic Church.
- 15 Zulfikar, *Hayat-Khidmat*, p. 37. See Syed Dawood Ashraf, *Bairooni Mashahir e Adab aur Hyderabad*(Deccan:1990) p. 50.
- 16 Zulfikar, *Hayat-Khidmat*, p. 55.
- 17 Both travelled together to attend All India Muslim League s inaugural session in Dacca in December 1906. They established a. Oriental & Occidental Company Commercial Agency which worked for some time but failed. Ibid, p.58.
- 18 *Deccan Review*, vol. 1, no. (5 March, 1907), p. 56 cited in Zulfikar, *Hayat-Khidmat*, p. 76.
- 19 *Chanab Magazine, Special Issue on Zafar Ali Khan*, 1984, p. 278.
- 20 Lahore, *Zamindar*, 14 July 1924.
- 21 Karamabad, *Zamindar*, Ist January 1910, p.1.
- 22 IOR, L/K/5/190, vol. xxil, no.1.
- 23 IOR, L/K5/194, vol.xxvl, no.5.
- 24 N.A.I, Intelligence Report dated 28 January 1916: H&P., no. 173, May 1916.
- 25 Abdul Salam Khurshid, (1989) *Dastan-i-Sahafat* (Lahore Maktaba e Carvaan, 1989).
- 26 Abdul Majeed Salik, *Sarguzasht* (Lahore: Alwaqar, 1993), Syed Dawood Ashraf, *Bairooni Mashahir e Adab aur Hyderabad*(Deccan:1990) p. 51.

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- 27 For a detailed study on Khilafat see Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982).
- 28 P Hardy, *The Muslims of British India*, (Cambridge: CPU, 1972), pp.175-82 and I H Qureshi, *Ulema in Politics*, (Karachi: Maaref, 1974), pp. 229-32.
- 29 Usha Sanyal, *Devotional Islam and Politics in British India: Ahmad Riza Khan Bareilwi and his Movement 1870-1920* (Delhi:OUP, 1996), p. 279.
- 30 Sir Micheal O'Dwyer, *India as I knew it 1885-1925*, (London: Constable & Company, 1926), p. 177-8.
- 31 Lahore, *Zamindar*, 16 October 1920.
- 32 *Punjabization of the Indian Army resulted from the thorough overhaul of military organization after 1857. A preference for Punjabi recruits was not only encouraged by the region's loyalty but also stemmed from the belief that they were ideally suited for fighting on the frontiers.* Ian Talbot (1991): *British rule in the Punjab, 1849–1947: Characteristics and consequences*, *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 19:2, 207.
- 33 Sir Micheal O'Dwyer, *India as I knew it 1885-1925*, (London: Constable & Company, 1926), p. 173.
- 34 W C Smith, *Modern Islam in India*, (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1943, 46,(Rep. London, 1963), p. 218-19.
- 35 Sir Micheal O'Dwyer, *India as I knew it 1885-1925*, p. 174.
- 36 The mosque was built in 1750s and was in use under Muslim administration in Lahore. After Lahore was captured by Sikh, Shahidganj was seized and became a sacred symbol for the new rulers due to the brutal executions of Sikh gurus by the hands of Mughal governer, a remembrance of their *martyrs for faith*. It was closed off for Muslim prayers in 1762 which remained unchanged until nineteenth century after even the British occupation of the province. David Gilmartin, *The Shahidganj Mosque Incident: A Prelude to Pakistan* in Edmund Burke, III and Ira M. Lapidus (eds.) *Islam, Politics and Social Movements*, (California: University of California Press, 1988), 147-8.

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- 37 Ibid.
- 38 Ibid.
- 39 Arthur F Buehler, *Currents of Sufism in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Indo-Pakistan: An Overview in **The Muslim World*** Buehler, 87: 299–314. doi: 10.1111/j.1478-1913.1997.tb03641.x.
- 40 These 'special days' were celebrated to alive the issue from 1935-37 according the government records. IOR, L/PJ/5/236, p. 133.
- 41 Muhammad Khurshid, Akbar Malik, *Shahidganj Mosque Issue and the Muslims Response: 1935-1936, **Pakistan Vision*** vol. 12, no. 1, p. 128.
- 42 Ibid, 131.
- 43 *Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore, July 16, 1935.
- 44 Muhammad Khurshid, Akbar Malik, *Shahidganj Mosque Issue and the Muslims Response*, p. 129.
- 45 On 8 July 1937, Shahidganj 's second anniversary, IOR, L/PJ/5/236, p. 145.
- 46 IOR, L/PJ/5/236, p.2.
- 47 Ibid, p. 158.
- 48 David Gilmartin (1991): *Democracy, nationalism and the public: A speculation on colonial Muslim politics, **South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies***, 14:1, 123.
- 49 Occasional Papers on History and Society: The Role of Urban Society in Nationalist Politics by Ravinder Kumar, No. XLIII, (540):308,19, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, 1987.p.19.
- 50 Francis Robinson *Technology and Religious Change: Islam and the Impact of Print. Modern Asian Studies*,(Cambridge:CUP,1993), p. 236.
- 51 Ibid, p. 239.
- 52 Ibid, p, 241-42.

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- 53 Usha Sanyal, *Devotional Islam and Politics in British India: Ahmad Riza Khan Barelwi and his Movement, 1870-1920* (Delhi: OUP, 1996), p, 13
- 54 Usha Sanyal, *Devotional Islam and Politics in British India: Ahmad Riza Khan Barelwi and his Movement, 1870-1920* (Delhi: OUP, 1996), pp. 2-3.
- 55 Zamindar, 20 April, 1913
- 56 Ravinder Kumar, *Essays in the Social History of Modern India*, p. 18.