

ISLAMIST AND POST-ISLAMIST PERCEPTION OF NATIONALISM: A STUDY OF MAUDOODI AND GHAMIDI'S VIEWPOINTS

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship of Islam and nationalism by analyzing the Islamist narrative and post Islamist counter-narrative. In order to do this, the writings of Maulana Syed Abul Ala Maudoodi (Maudoodi), arguably the most influential Islamist thinker of the twentieth century, have been juxtaposed with the speeches and writings of Javed Ahmed Ghamidi (Ghamidi), a leading post Islamist scholar and a former disciple of Maudoodi. It is because while Maudoodi's Islamist interpretation and projection of Islam has left significant imprint on Pakistan's ideological horizon, Ghamidi has come up with an equally plausible rebuttal in the recent years, triggering a furor within the Pakistani intellectual elite in general, and the religious scholars in particular. In view of the changed scenarios of world politics in the last few decades, and the compelling post Islamist narrative, the traditional uncompromising Islamist hostility to nationalism needs to be revisited to reconcile it to the realities on ground and to render it more appealing for the electorate.

Key words: Islamist, Nationalism, Maudoodi, Ghamidi, Narrative'

1. Introduction

Two nation theory is the raison d'être of Pakistan. Struggle for the creation, and later national integration, of Pakistan was primarily

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underpinned by Muslim nationalism that had originated among the Muslims of British India in response to the growing disillusionment with Indian nationalism, championed by the Congress and Muslim nationalists. However, years down the road, the debate still reverberates whether the marriage of Islam and Muslim nationalism has failed and whether there is need for revisiting the conceptual foundations of Pakistan as a nation state. One of the central themes in this debate is Islam's treatment of nationalism. Broadly, there are two narratives on Islam and nationalism in the context of Pakistan: the traditional viewpoint and the liberal viewpoint. The traditional approach considers Islam as a sine qua non for Pakistan's justification to exist and flourish as a nation state. The liberal camp, however, finds this view non tenable in view of the checkered history of Pakistan, the existing predicament, and the demands of changed times.

2. Research Questions

Following are some of the specific questions that the study addresses.

- (i) What is the Islamist position on the relationship between Islam and nationalism?
- (ii) What is the post Islamist understanding of Islam and nationalism?
- (iii) Whether the Islamist or post Islamist narrative offers a relatively stronger case?

3. Methodology

This study falls within the purview of qualitative domain of social research and undertakes a desk study of the text-based scholarly works, videos, and published materials of Islamists represented chiefly by Maudoodi, and of post Islamists represented by Ghamidi, on the issue of Islam's approach to nationalism. The study includes a critical evaluation of the thoughts of Maudoodi and Ghamidi in order to see which of the narrative, the Islamist or the post Islamist, sounds more appealing to

modern mind. It borders discourse analysis and comparative analysis. Analysis of the divergent discourses covers written text and videos.

4. Theoretical perspective

Islamism is essentially a realist worldview that underpins an inevitable clash between ideologies and states. Accordingly, human existence is characterized by an endless clash of “Haq o Baatil”, the noble and the ignoble, the Islamic and the un-Islamic, the Satanic and the Divine, as a fait accompli. In this paradigm of perpetual conflict between Islam and Kufr, Muslims are ordained to wage a struggle against anything, whether an idea, a practice, an institution, an ideal, whatever, that is hostile to the Islamic system. Since Islam is not just a religion but a complete system of life¹ with its own set of ideas, ideals, institutions, culture and civilization, it cannot tolerate, what to talk of absorption, un-Islamic ideas, ideals, institutions, and cultural traits. Islamism is also partially grounded in idealism as it galvanizes its adherents to pursue the establishment of a global Islamic state and polity, modeled on Quran and Sunnah.

Post Islamism on the other hand is a functionalist narrative that envisages the world where difference is tolerated and accommodated. As a corollary, although conflicts are also a fact of life, human life is not essentially conflict-driven but by cooperation, accommodation, co-existence and tolerance. Islam is seen not as a complete system of life, or a culture or an ideology but a religion as used in common parlance, and offers certain guidelines for regulating individual and collective human life in the light of which the believers may build the kind of system tailored to the requirements of time and space.² Thus while post Islamism draws inspiration in broad principles from the divinely ordained ideals of Islam, it heavily draws on social constructivist approach in matters of statecraft and institution building. As such, contrary to the Islamist

worldview, the post Islamist paradigm is, prime facie, more open to individual perspectives, new ideas, foreign influence, fresh intake, and progress than the Islamist. Thus while some traces of modernism are discernible in Islamism, post Islamism betrays some tinge of post modernism. These nuances will be discernible to the observing eye as the study progresses.

5. Understanding Islamism and post Islamism

Islamism and post Islamism are two unique trends in the contemporary Muslim scholarship. The key difference between Islamist and post Islamist understanding of Islam is the overwhelmingly political, state-centered, and systemic projection of Islam by the former, and sociological and individual-focused reading of Islam by the latter.³ Islamism is more a politic-religious project whereas post Islamism is essentially a socio-religious one. Post-Islamism is an effort to blend religiosity and rights, faith and freedom, Islam and liberty; it emphasizes rights rather than duties, plurality instead of a singular authoritative voice, historicity rather than fixed scriptures, and the future instead of the past; it seeks to marry Islam with individual choice and freedom, with democracy and modernity; it does not mean the end of Islamism but the start of a qualitatively different discourse in religion and politics.⁴ Post Islamism is more willing to engage in dialogue about ideas, including religious modernity and liberalism.⁵ Justice and Development Party in Turkey and Nahdha in Tunisia offer significant cases in point of post Islamist outlook, whereas Jamat-e-Islami Pakistani and Hizb-ul-Tahreer UK pursue Islamist projects.

6. Islam and Nationalism: Maudoodi's position

Nationalist Muslims had emerged on the Indian horizon during the first half of the twentieth century. Maulana Husain Ahmed Madani (Madani) and Maulana Obaidullah Sindhi (Sindhi) were among the

leading exponents of Indian nationalism in British India. Both seemed to have found nothing inherently contradictory between Islam and nationalism. The two published their notions of Indian nationalism on different occasions. Sindhi is quoted to have said:

“If my country wants to be safe from the damage caused by the revolution around the world, and spreading by the same, it should promote nationalism on European principles”.⁶

In his autobiography Dr Javed Iqbal⁷ has referred to both the opinion of Madani and Iqbal’s critique thereon. “Maulana Madani was of the view that nations are made on the basis of countries, therefore Muslims in India are Indians by nationality and Muslims in terms of Ummah. You (Allama Muhammad Iqbal) disagreed with him and said that nation and ‘Millat’ are synonymous, and that Muslim nation is made not by country but by the commonality of faith, hence Islam alone is the Muslims’ nation and nationality.”

Iqbal and Maudoodi subjected both nationalist Muslims, and their position on the question of nationalism, to scathing criticism. As Iqbal poetically puts it thus:

عجم ہنوز نہ داند رموز دین ورنہ
زدیو بند حسین احمد ایں چه بوا العجبی ست
سرود بر سر منبر کہ ملت از وطن است
چه بے خبر ز مقام محمد عربی ست
بہ مصطفیٰ برساں خدیش راکہ دیں ہمہ اوست
اگر بہ اونہ رسیدی تمام بولہبی ست

“Non Arabs still do not know the secret (essence) of Deen, else Husain Ahmed would not have said from the pulpit that nations are made by

countries: he does not know the (elevated) position of Muhammad-e-Arabi (in this regard). Understand the Prophet's message, for that is the whole of Deen: if you failed to understand that, everything else is un-Islamic".

And again:

ان تازہ خداؤں میں بڑا سب سے وطن ہے

جو پیرہن اس کا ہے وہ مذہب کا کفن ہے

"The biggest among the new idols is country: what is dress for it is coffin for religion."

The belief that nationalism is entirely inimical to Islam, and the concept of Ummah, has been most vociferously articulated by Islamists, from Allama Iqbal to Maudoodi to Dr Israr Ahmed. According to their narrative, Islam envisages political unification of its adherents irrespective of their ethnic, linguistic, geographical or national identities. This is a unique bond of universal fraternity and unity that transcends the man-made divisions of caste, color, language, geography and ethnicity. They consider nationalism as a modern form of idolatry. Dr Israr Ahmed goes as far as to declare that saluting to national flag, and standing up in veneration to the national anthem is "Shirk", or assigning partners unto Allah⁸. But Maudoodi's famous treatise "Masla-e-Qaumiyat", a rebuttal of Husain Ahmed Madani's article in favor of Indian nationalism, is a more elaborate and well-argued case against nationalism. The substance of Maudoodi's rejoinder to Madani is now available in his equally famous book *Tahreek-e-Azaadi-e-Hind Aur Musalman*.

Maudoodi classifies nationalism into two types: political nationalism and cultural nationalism. He defines the former as a sense of being part of a polity prevailing among various nations within that polity, without requiring similarity in tastes, ideologies, feelings, moral

attributes, traditions, literature and style of living of the nations co-existing within the polity. Cultural nationality, however, demands that its adherents share a common religion, thoughts, feelings, moral characteristics, worldview, standards of rights and wrong, in short a shared mental, spiritual, moral, cultural and social cohesiveness, typified by a common national type and a national idea⁹. Maudoodi is aware that nationalism is not just a sense of attachment, and love for one's nation, but in fact hatred-driven, revenge-seeking, animosity-inspired feelings within members of a nation against members of other nations¹⁰. That is why he sees ultimate clash between one's religion and his loyalty to the prevailing state-centric nationalism. The first and foremost condition for the formation of a nation is that it should hold the country important enough to entail sacrificing Islam, Hinduism or Sikhism for it: without this, country-based nationalism is absolutely meaningless¹¹. By drawing up examples of failures in the West, Maudoodi is also critical of the conception of national democratic state as was propagated by the Congress, and supported by Madani and the like, for united India.

Democracy implies that all dwellers of the state have sovereignty but practically such sovereignty shall be exercised by the majority group. The addition of national to democracy entails negation of the existence of diverse nationalities, and declaration of all citizens as one nation. In other words, it means that in the Indian government, a person's share will not be in his capacity as Muslim or Hindu: inclusion as member of the state automatically renders it mandatory for such a person to renounce his status as Muslim or Hindu. Notwithstanding the continuance of his independent national status in practice, a person cannot demand anything from state in that capacity (as member of a particular nation): instead, he will be bound to accept decision which the majority of the populace decides through their legislative councils.¹²

Maudoodi feared that if this principle of majority-based secular democratic state is accepted for India, the resulting state would be a non Islamic state for Muslims, while the Hindus may eventually turn it into a Hindu state by dint of their numerical preponderance, a fact that was evident from many actions of the then Congress.¹³ He was equally skeptical about the constitutional guarantees and concessions in the form of fundamental rights, to secure Muslim identity and interests in a secular democratic nation state.¹⁴ He gives examples of the then American and European states where despite de facto grant of fundamental rights, minority groups are persecuted, discriminated and oppressed in many ways.¹⁵ Maudoodi is equally allergic to a secular democratic state which guarantees religious freedom to different religious communities.

Maudoodi (1972) stresses that whoever gets overjoyed by taking an (legislative) instrument of religious freedom may do so: we do not need such instrument: it is because the nature of our religion and our culture demands an active and free life, not a passive and slavish one. The demand for a permanent state of the Muslims is only because Muslims want that their government be in their own hands; they should design their own education system; they may reform their deformed system of culture and civilization with their own power. If this is not there, then it makes no difference to them whether domestic infidels rule or foreign.¹⁶

Maudoodi (1972) sees nationalism and Islam opposed to each other, both in spirit and objectives. In a clearly Pan Islamist narrative, Maudoodi¹⁷ considers the ultimate aim of Islam the establishment of a universal state rather than a nationalist state:

" اس (اسلام) کا منتہائے نظر ایک ایسا جہانی معاشرہ اور ریاست ہے جس میں نسلی اور قومی تعصبات کی زنجیریں توڑ کر تمام انسانوں کو مساوی حقوق اور مساوی مواقع ترقی کے ساتھ ایک تمدنی و سیاسی نظام میں حصہ دار بنایا جائے۔"

Maudoodi (1972) expresses his understanding of nationalism and nation-state in his usual utilitarian Urdu and emphatic style thus: nationalism means that member of each nation prefers members of his own nation over others; even if he is not an chauvinistic nationalist, the minimum that nationalism still demands of him in his cultural, political and legal capacity to make distinction between national and other than national; he should secure more and more benefits for his own people, and raise barriers of economic discriminations for national interest; he should not allow members of other nationalities to participate with him in any department of life on the basis of principles of equality; his ultimate objective is nation state, not a universal state; members of other states can enter such a nation state only as slaves, not on the basis of equal shareholders and participants. In this age of globalization, this is no more the case. Foreign nationals enjoy equality and protection of fundamental rights in the host countries.

Maudoodi considers nationalism and Islam mutually exclusive and antithetical:

"یہ دونوں مسلک (یعنی اسلام اور نیشنل ازم) ایک دوسرے کے ضد ہیں، جہاں نیشنل ازم ہے وہاں اسلام کبھی پھل پھول نہیں سکتا اور جہاں اسلام ہے وہاں نیشنل ازم کے لیے کوئی جگہ نہیں۔"

It is impossible to blend Islam and nationalism, according to Maudoodi.¹⁸

" ایک شخص ایک وقت میں ان دونوں میں سے کسی ایک ہی کی ترقی کا حامی ہو سکتا ہے۔ یہ کسی طرح ممکن نہیں کہ وہ ایک وقت دونوں کشتیوں پر سوار ہو سکے۔"

Yet again, this is no more the case now. The world has moved from narrow concept of nationalism to accommodate double nationality.

While Madani was seeing in Indian nationalism hope for the future of Indian Muslims, Maudoodi (1972) labels nationalism as the worst curse and danger for humanity. He attacks the Eurocentric

conceptual foundations of nationalism: the principles on which nationalism has evolved in Europe are diametrically opposed to humanity; they have degraded human being to the level of bestiality; these are principles that will spread injustice, tyranny, and bloodshed in the world, and will stop the growth of human civilization. Contrasting Islam with nationalism, Maudoodi further asserts that while Divine laws have always meant to render human being mutually cooperative by establishing moral and spiritual bonds among them, nationalism and country-based distinction cut of those bonds, and by creating animosity among them through the scissors of nationalism and country-driven distinction, turn men each others' enemies rather than collaborators.¹⁹

Within the Indian context Maudoodi mentions two types of Muslims as far as their nationalist proclivities are concerned: the Muslim nationalists and the nationalist Muslims; both of these, according to Maudoodi²⁰, are misguided.

"ہندوستان کے مسلمانوں میں اس وقت دو قسم کے نیشنلسٹ پائے جاتے ہیں۔ ایک نیشنلسٹ مسلم یعنی وہ لوگ جو مسلمان ہونے کے باوجود ہندوستان کی مشترکہ قومیت کے قائل اور اس کے پرستار ہیں۔ دوسرے مسلم نیشنلسٹ یعنی وہ لوگ جنہیں اسلام کے اصول و مقاصد سے تو کوئی دلچسپی نہیں مگر مسلمان کے نام سے جو ایک قوم یہاں بن گئی ہے اس کے سیاسی و معاشی مفاد اور اس کی انفرادیت سے محض اس بنا پر ان کو دلچسپی ہے کہ وہ اس قوم میں پیدا ہوئے ہیں۔ اسلام کے نقطہ نظر سے یہ دونوں قوم پرست یکساں گمراہ ہیں کیونکہ اسلام صرف حق پرستی کا قائل ہے اور کسی قسم کی قوم پرستی کو جائز نہیں رکھتا۔"

After this kind of a rather harsh judgment, the question arises what should the Muslims do in a state where they are in minority. To this Maudoodi²¹ comes up with the option that resembles, at least in practice, to the modern federal states. He opines that in a state inhabited by multi cultural nationalities the option for freedom and politico-economic development is neither nationalism nor national, unity but a state based

on the federal principle, where every nation's permanent status is recognized and they enter into a contract for joint action to the extent of securing collective state interests.

Perhaps Maudoodi never meant to support the idea, one can clearly ascertain features of modern pluralist states in his views on Islam's universality of nationhood:

"اسلام جس بین الاقوامیت کا عملبردار ہے اس کا منشاء ہر گز یہ نہیں کہ قوموں کی امتیازی خصوصیات کو مٹا کر انہیں خلط ملط کر دیا جائے بلکہ وہ قوموں کو ان کی قومیت اور خصوصیات کے ساتھ برقرار رکھ کر ان کے درمیان تہذیب و اخلاق اور عقائد و افکار کا ایک ایسا رشتہ پیدا کرنا چاہتا ہے جس سے بین الاقوامی کشیدگیاں، رکاوٹیں، ظلم اور تعصبات دور ہو جائیں اور ان کے درمیان تعاون و برادری کے تعلقات قائم ہوں۔"²²

It sounds all too idealistic, given the checkered history of Muslims down the ages, and today as ever, Islamic is as fragmented as before. If Muslims could not maintain their single state-based cosmopolitanism soon after the ideal caliphate, that casts serious doubts about the viability of such as pan Islamist project as envisaged by Maudoodi. Worse still, Maudoodi²³ apparently deviates from his pluralist and accommodating stance towards other nationalities with the universal Islamic state, by vehemently ruling out the possibility of multiple nationalities within the nationhood of Islam.

"جس طرح ایک سلطنت میں کئی سلطنتیں نہیں بن سکتیں، اسی طرح ایک قومیت میں کئی قومیتیں نہیں بن سکتیں۔ اسلامی قومیت کے اندر نسلی، وطنی، لسانی، اور لونی قومیتوں کا جمع ہونا قطعاً محال ہے۔ ان دونوں قسم کی قومیتوں میں سے ایک ہی قائم رہ سکتی ہے۔"

The question is what is the status of the citizens of a multi-national and federal state that Maudoodi recommends? Will members of such a state lack a national identity at the country level or will they have only one identity, viz. their respective religious, linguistic, racial, and

cease to have an over-arching country-level identity? Instead, of a plausible answer to this question, we find Maudoodi²⁴ calls it ignorance and lack of reflection on the part of those who believe that a Muslim may remain Muslim despite developing ethnic or country-based nationality.

بعض لوگ اس خیال میں مبتلا ہیں کہ وطنی یا نسلی قومیت کے احساسات پیدا ہونے کے بعد بھی اسلامی قومیت کا رشتہ مسلمانوں کے درمیان باقی رہ سکتا ہے، اس لیئے وہ اپنے نفس کو یہ کہہ کر دھوکہ دیتے ہیں کہ یہ دونوں قسم کی قومیتیں ساتھ ساتھ چلیں گی۔۔۔۔۔ لیکن یہ محض جہل اور قلت فکر کا کرشمہ ہے۔ جس طرح خدا نے ایک سینے میں دو قلب جمع نہیں رکھے، اسی طرح ایک قلب میں دو قومیتوں کے متضاد اور متضاد جذبہ کو جمع کرنے کی گنجائش بھی نہیں رکھی ہے۔"

Such strong rejectionist notions about the birth of national consciousness among Muslims reverberate not only in Maudoodi's literature but also other Islamist thinkers and reformers, such as Israr Ahmed (2015) and Amin Ahsan Islahi (2006).

Maudoodi's derision of the Western concept of nationalism aside, his claim that in an Islamic cosmopolitan statehood and Ummah, Muslims across different regions, ethnicities, and languages, and races, enjoy mutual cooperation, sharing, and loyalty is also subject to interrogation. He claims that an Indian Muslim can become as much a loyal citizen of Egypt as he is of India. In the words of Maudoodi.²⁵

"آج مغربی قوموں سے سبق سیکھ کر ہر جگہ کے مسلمان نسلیت اور وطنیت کے راگ الاپ رہے ہیں۔۔۔۔۔ ان کو خبر نہیں کہ جو چیز مغربی قومیت کے لیے آب حیات ہے وہی چیز اسلامی قومیت کے لیے زہر ہے۔ مغربی قومیتوں کی بنیاد نسل و وطن اور زبان و رنگ کی وحدت پر قائم ہوتی ہے۔۔۔ وہاں ایک قوم کا آدمی دوسری قوم کا سچا وفادار نہیں ہو سکتا۔ ایک ملک کا باشندہ دوسرے ملک کا سچا خادم نہیں بن سکتا۔۔۔۔۔ مگر اسلامی قومیت کا معاملہ اس کے بالکل برعکس ہے۔ یہاں قومیت کی بنیاد نسل و وطن کی بجائے اعتقاد و عمل پر رکھی گئی ہے۔ تمام دنیا کے مسلمان ہر جنسی امتیاز کے بغیر ایک دوسرے کے شریک حال اور معاون ہیں۔ ایک ہندی مسلمان مصر کا ویسا ہی وفادار شہری بن

سکتا ہے جیسا کہ وہ خود ہندوستان کا ہے۔ ایک افغانی مسلمان شام کی حفاظت کے لیے اسی جاں بازی کے ساتھ لڑ سکتا ہے جس کے ساتھ وہ خود افغانستان کے لیے لڑتا ہے۔ اس لیے ایک ملک کے مسلمان اور دوسرے ملک کے مسلمان میں جغرافیائی یا نسلی تفریق کی کوئی وجہ نہیں۔"

Notwithstanding these claims of Maudoodi and other Islamist scholars, the world has continued to witness that loyalty, and for that matter disloyalty, to one's country transcends religious, ethnic, linguistic, or other identities. Whether a Pakistani can become a loyal Syrian citizen, as Maudoodi would have us believe, remains to be seen, but experience so far has shown that certainly a Pakistani can become as loyal a citizen of the USA as he can be of Pakistan. While the multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual countries of the Western world are generously granting nationality to immigrant Muslims, few, if any Muslim countries would either grant citizenship rights to Muslims from other Muslim countries. Not only is the Muslim world badly divided at the level of the states, but within each country itself societies are fragmented into multiple identities, often the cause of friction and conflict than brotherhood and harmony.

7. Islam and Nationalism: Ghamidi's Counter Narrative

Ghamidi's grooming and intellectual trajectory owes much to his mentors Islahi and Maudoodi whose party Ghamidi served until his termination from the party in 1977.²⁶ Over the years, however, he has evolved an entirely different paradigm of Islamic faith that has called into question Maudoodi's Islamist project, on the one hand, and developed fresh interpretations and underpinnings of Islam, on the other hand. No doubt this has attracted as much polemical attack and criticism as appreciation from across a wide spectrum of Pakistani intelligentsia, academia, religious scholars, and indeed the man in the street. Ghamidi is the leading post Islamist thinker in Pakistan today but his audience is not

limited to Pakistan alone, as his work is gradually spreading across the world, especially in the wake of his stay in Malaysia and tours of Australia, USA and the UK.

On the issue of nationalism, Ghamidi has taken a stance, diametrically opposed to Iqbal, Maudoodi and even his teacher Islahi. He finds nothing wrong with national and cultural affiliations. To a question, whether being a Pakistani and having Pakistani culture can co-exist with being a Muslim and did people still stick to some of their cultural traditions during the Prophet's life, Ghamidi replied thus:

“Nationalism or cultural affiliations are a natural phenomenon. Every one tends to have a sense of belongingness with the people of his society, his country, his region, his language, even his city. There is nothing wrong with this. Nevertheless, when one's affiliation with some culture, or region creates a bias and prejudice in him that hinders in one's submission to the Truth or when such bias or prejudice can influence one to leave a just stand and opt for injustice, such bias and prejudice become wrong and even condemnable. In my opinion, this is what the saying of the Prophet (PBUH) means. Nationalism and cultural and even political affiliations, if kept within limits, have nothing un-Islamic about them. However, a true Muslim can never hold to the view: ‘My country, right or wrong’. On the other hand, Islam teaches us to be just and truthful, be it against our own advantages, our country's advantages or the advantages of our loved ones”²⁷

In his famous “counter narrative” Ghamidi made significant observations, such as the following, contrary to the common belief and practice among Muslims. His views clearly contradict those of Maudoodi on the issue of nationalism:

"یہ خیال بالکل بے بنیاد ہے کہ ریاست کا بھی کوئی مذہب ہوتا ہے اور اُس کو بھی کسی قرارداد مقاصد کے ذریعے سے مسلمان کرنے اور آئینی طور پر اس کا پابند بنانے کی ضرورت ہوتی ہے کہ اُس میں کوئی قانون قرآن و سنت کے خلاف نہیں بنایا جائے گا۔ یہ خیال جن لوگوں نے پیش کیا اور اسے منوانے میں کامیابی حاصل کی ہے، انہوں نے اس زمانے کی قومی ریاستوں میں مستقل تفرقے کی بنیاد رکھ دی اور ان میں بسنے والے غیر مسلموں کو یہ پیغام دیا ہے کہ وہ درحقیقت دوسرے درجے کے شہری ہیں جن کی حیثیت زیادہ سے زیادہ ایک محفوظ اقلیت (Protected Minority) کی ہے اور ریاست کے اصل مالکوں سے وہ اگر کسی حق کا مطالبہ کر سکتے ہیں تو اسی حیثیت سے کر سکتے ہیں۔"

This, indeed, goes directly against the Islamic provisions of the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan, particularly the Objectives Resolution, that now constitutes Article 2A of the constitution, and principles of policy. Understandably, Ghamidi's counter narrative generated a considerable debate in Pakistan on a number of issues, particularly the ideology of Pakistan that hinges on two nation theory and Muslim nationalism.

Contrary to the Pan Islamist and Islamist narrative, dreaming of a global Islamic state as a divinely ordained duty, Ghamidi (2015) strongly asserts that although the utility and desirability of such a dream is understandable, it is not a religious duty at all:

جن ملکوں میں مسلمانوں کی اکثریت ہے، وہ اپنی ایک ریاست ہائے متحدہ قائم کر لیں۔ یہ ہم میں سے ہر شخص کا خواب ہو سکتا ہے اور ہم اس کو شرمندہ تعبیر کرنے کی جدوجہد بھی کر سکتے ہیں، لیکن اس خیال کی کوئی بنیاد نہیں ہے کہ یہ اسلامی شریعت کا کوئی حکم ہے۔"

On the question of nationalism, he has squarely rebutted Maudoodi's Islamist musings. He dismisses the idea that Muslims are a nation: their mutual bond is not that of nationhood but of brotherhood.

There is no religious obligation that all Muslims must live in a single state or discourage nationalist identities. To quote Ghamidi's own words:

اسلام میں قومیت کی بنیاد اسلام نہیں ہے، جس طرح کے عام طور پر سمجھا جاتا ہے۔ قرآن و حدیث میں کسی جگہ یہ نہیں کہا گیا کہ مسلمان ایک قوم ہیں یا انھیں ایک ہی قوم ہونا چاہیے، بلکہ یہ کہا گیا ہے کہ اِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ اِخْوَةٌ (مسلمان آپس میں بھائی بھائی ہیں)۔ قرآن کی رو سے مسلمانوں کا باہمی رشتہ قومیت کا نہیں، بلکہ اخوت کا ہے۔ وہ دسیوں اقوام، ممالک اور ریاستوں میں تقسیم ہونے کے باوجود ایمان کے رشتے سے ایک دوسرے کے بھائی ہیں۔ اس لیے یہ تقاضا تو ان سے کیا جاسکتا ہے اور کرنا چاہیے کہ وہ اپنے بھائیوں کے حالات کی خبر رکھیں، ان کی مصیبتوں اور تکلیفوں میں ان کے کام آئیں، وہ مظلوم ہوں تو ان کی مدد کریں، معاشی اور معاشرتی روابط کے لیے ان کو ترجیح دیں اور ان پر اپنے دروازے کسی حال میں بند نہ کریں، مگر یہ تقاضا نہیں کیا جاسکتا کہ اپنی قومی ریاستوں اور قومی شناخت سے دست بردار ہو کر لازماً ایک ہی قوم اور ایک ہی ریاست بن جائیں۔ وہ جس طرح اپنی الگ الگ قومی ریاستیں قائم کر سکتے ہیں، اسی طرح دین و شریعت پر عمل کی آزادی ہو تو غیر مسلم ریاستوں میں شہری کی حیثیت سے اور وطن کی بنیاد پر ایک قوم بن کر بھی رہ سکتے ہیں۔ ان میں سے کوئی چیز قرآن و حدیث کی رو سے ناجائز نہیں ہے۔"

Explaining this point, Ghamidi rejects Iqbal's and Maudoodi's postulation of Islamic nationalism that precludes the comingling of national identities such as ethnic, linguistic, geographic. He asserts that a Muslim can remain a Muslim, hence part of the Ummah, yet concurrently retain his national identity and sense of belonging to his ethnicity, language, country and other identity denomination: Islam is not inimical to the retention, and indeed promotion, of individual national identities as these are natural urges and cannot be eliminated, nor has Islam declared Muslims as one nation; Muslims remain brothers as believers despite belonging to different states and nations²⁸. On the other hand, Maudoodi²⁹ proclaims that the emergence of feelings of Turkism, Arabism, Iranism or Indianism leads to the shattering of Islamic unity

and Islamic nationality, and Iqbal advises to shatter the idols of color and blood to merge in 'Millat':

بتان رنگ و خوں کو توڑ کر ملت میں گم ہو جا
نہ توراتی رہے باقی، نہ ایرانی، نہ افغانی

One of the consequences of post Islamist interpretation is that non Muslims will enjoy equal status, rights and obligations in a Muslim state. Drawing on the Charter of Madina, Ghamidi ³⁰ concludes that non Muslims will have the same rights as those of the Muslims. He clarifies that verse 9:29 was specific to the time and context of the Prophet, and does not relate to any non Muslim in any part of the world today.³¹ Ghamidi's interpretation has been subjected to severe criticism not only by the traditional Ulema, Islamist writers but also at least one of his former close disciples.³² Others, such as Bilal (2015) have received Ghamidi's views on nationalism well.³³

8. Critical Appraisal

It would be simplistic, and therefore misleading, to conclude that Islamist's aversion to nationalism is either the product of their historical context characterized by rejectionist approach to Western civilization: the seeds of their anti nationalist rhetoric are traceable to the body of Islam's basic sources of inspiration, the Holy Quran and Sunnah. It would be equally wrong to judge that the post Islamist understanding of nationalism is a pacifist one, divorced from the Divine injunctions and Prophetic traditions. Both the Islamist and the post Islamist narratives on nationalism draw inspiration from the same sources, thus the difference is primarily one of hermeneutics. For instance, the verse 49:13 when interpreted Islamist and post Islamist narratives can be used to draw conclusions that are poles apart. For the Islamists, this verse is negation of nationalism, and coupled with other verses such as 49:10, 03:110,

2:143, and 21:92, naming just a few, the message that comes out clear enough is that Muslims are a distinct Ummah, a juridical term in Islam that is much broader than unlike nationalism represents a community the membership of which transcends geography, ethnicity, language, and color. But for the post Islamists, such verses only reinforce the sense of cohesiveness, collective consciousness, and fraternity among the believers in being adherents of the same faith: it does not in any way negate the possibility of maintaining and promoting individual nationalities and unique identities emanating from ethnic, linguistic or geographical origins. A Muslim can concurrently be a Muslim, a Pakistani, a Pakhtun, a Yousafzai, and so on, for the purpose of identity sanctioned by the Quranic verse 49:13. After all, 49:13 clearly sanctifies rather than discourage the concept of identity. What this verse and others Quranic and Prophetic traditions do is to dismiss the sense of superiority and inferiority that may creep into people's minds. 49:13 basically dismisses such false sense of superiority and inferiority, not ethnic, tribal and linguistic identities.

There is no dearth of evidence beaoning to the fact that Islam has no inherent hostility to foreign influences, provided they do not clash with Islam's basic tenets. For instance, Sayuti lists numerous Quranic words borrowed from foreign languages.³⁴ Nomani identifies a number of instances where the Prophet and his companions adopted local and foreign cultural practices and ideas.³⁵ Maudoodi (1972) also cites examples when the Prophet or his companions borrowed foreign ideas and cultural products. The question of nationalism, therefore, needs to be approached in terms of whether it clashes with Islamic tenets, and if so, to what extent. Whether one takes Islam for a "complete system" of life as the Islamists believe, or simply a religion that lays down basic

principles for man's private and public life, the crucial aspect is whether Islam and nationalism are mutually exclusive or can co-exist.³⁶

Nationalism has no single definition. There is a wide array of definitions. At the very basic level, nationalism connotes patriotism. But at more sinister shapes, it entails chauvinism, aggression, racism, hatred, hostility and conflict. The first half of the twentieth century witnessed two world wars that imposed unprecedented catastrophe upon humanity, mainly due to such draconian shapes of nationalism. As far as simple patriotic sentiments are concerned, it is permissible in Islam. Voices of Muslim scholars are in abundance favoring nationalism or at least a middle way between loyalty to Islamic faith and loyalty to one's national identity just as there are opposing voices.³⁷ As Islahi (2006) rightly points out, it is a natural urge for every nation to consider its country a collective realm, which in turn generates a sense of patriotism, binding the nation together for the protection and development of that collective wealth. There is nothing wrong about that. But when this sense of belonging goes further and entail commission of all sorts of injustices against other countries or their nationals, it becomes an evil. Today, the world does not comprise just countries and states but very vocal and proactive societies as well. When a country does something wrong, civil society, both within the delinquent country and beyond, protests against it. Today loyalty is not just confined to this or that country, state or nationality: it is also to higher values and ideals, such as freedom, democracy, equality, accountability, transparency, rule of law, tolerance, and justice. Nationalism today is far from being the specter-like phenomenon that plunged the world into two bloody world wars. It is been reduced to a benign sense of patriotism, without necessarily entailing hatred and animosity against "others". The world is now more of a global village, sharing much in common, than ever before, and

shedding much of the former prejudices and divisive ideals, including jingoistic nationalism. In fact the world is witnessing unprecedented integration, not only at the regional level such as the EU, but also at the global level. It is in this globalized world that while their co-religionists are killing them, making them flee from their country, the Syrian refugees are being provided shelter and support by the European countries. It is this new world that millions of people throng the streets of western countries protesting against the policies of their governments towards different conflicts in the world, while the people of the conflict zones are often either voiceless under duress or ally with the aggressive party in the conflict. It is amazing that, barring rare exceptions, Muslim states, deny grant of citizenship to fellow Muslims from other Muslim states, even if they stay for decades in the host states but the Western countries have been absorbing foreign immigrants in huge numbers, including millions of Muslims, irrespective of their religion, color, language, race or country of origin. This trend of global citizenry and human fraternity has transformed people's perception of the classical nationalism.³⁸

In view of the experience thus far as well as the realities on ground, the post Islamist understanding and approach to nationalism appears more logical and appealing; it is equally in line with the teachings of Islam and spirit of our time. Therefore it would be useful to revisit Islamist interpretation of nationalism in Islam, to render it more in tune with the spirit of Islam on the one hand and the realities on ground on the other hand.

9. Conclusion

Nationalism is a western construct, just as democracy is. Rejecting nationalism in totality as something entirely evil and un-Islamic is unlikely to impress modern Muslim mind a great deal, just as

voices against democracy as western innovation have arguably failed to appeal to the educated Muslims on a wide scale. Many of Islamist anti nationalism arguments have obviously lost their relevance in the 21st century globalized world wherein the ideals of freedom of expression, justice, equality, and peace are cherished more than jingoistic nationalism. There is no categorically absolute rejection of nationalism in Islam per se but Islam is equally inimical to the kind of excessive nationalism that ends up in mutual hatred, animosity, injustice or chauvinism. For Islam to continue its impressive inroads into modern mind, and particularly for Islamists narrative to appear plausible enough in the twenty first century, some of the Islamist notions, including its hostility to nationalism, need to be revisited.

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