



UMEÅ UNIVERSITY

The Politics of Islam, Non-Violence, and Peace

The Thought of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan in
Context

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Dissertation for PhD

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To my teachers

Abstract

This is a study of the multifaceted thought of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (b.1925–), Indian writer, public intellectual, and Muslim religious leader. Khan has been a prolific writer since at least the 1970s and is also an *ālim*, a Muslim scholar learned in religion. His reputation is based on his public presentation of Islam, non-violence, and peace – a position he has defended in his monthly journal, *al-Risāla* (Eng. version: *Spirit of Islam*), a large number of published books and pamphlets, and recently also through use of the internet and social media. Furthermore, as a religious leader and debater Khan has been active as a commentator in Indian national media and through religious dialogue meetings, for which he has received national awards and honours. Khan's religious thought may be summarised as a thorough attempt at presenting Islam, the Quran, and the example of the Prophet Muhammad as a systematic message of peace. Islam is described as a divine message calling for individual commitment and knowledge. Hence, Islam requires a setting of freedom, peace, and stability so that believers can choose its message without restriction. The Quran is regarded as highlighting non-violent patience as the most significant virtue and peace is both a divine quality as well as a requirement for salvation. The religious ideal of the Prophet Muhammad is not his political achievements. Instead, the Prophet's message is understood as peaceful negotiation and success through turning conflict into friendship as the ultimate path to end hatred, violence, and persecution. The concept of jihad is seen as essential to this type of peace-building struggle; spreading Islam only through preaching, as well as overcoming the hurdles of the self and ego, for instance anger and violent impulses. By situating Khan's thought in a context of historical and contemporary debate on the meaning of Islam, this study argues that he continues and develops the nineteenth century Indian Islamic Modernist tradition of presenting Islam, non-violence, and peace in relation to issues of the modern state and the minority situation of Indian Muslims. This type of religious position became nationally prominent from the 1920s during the Indian independence movement. In the contemporary Indian political and social situation however, Hindu nationalist and anti-Muslim rhetoric is being followed by large-scale violence. Khan's thinking aims to dissociate the rhetorical connection between Islam and violence, while supporting the democratic, pluralist, and secular trappings of the state. The analysis of Khan's thought considers Islamic Modernism and unmarked reform Sufi Islam, alongside the secularism, democratic liberalism, and reform socialism of the Indian constitution. However, these thematic and discursive structures of thought are formulated by Khan with regard to a certain historical situation, and address particular political and social issues. Studying the various connections

between Khan's thought, the ideological and religious debates, and the historical context of Indian and global society, the final analysis of this study takes on the theoretical issue of whether contemporary and globalised religion can be a force for the development of more democratic and peaceful societies.

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Part 1: Aim, Backgrounds, Method

The first part presents the aim of this study; to investigate and analyse the Indian writer, public intellectual, and Muslim religious leader Wahiduddin Khan's thought and argument regarding Islam, non-violence, and peace (Chapter 1). Two broad contexts are sketched as backgrounds, establishing and demarcating the investigative horizons of the study. First, the debate situation regarding Islam in India (Chapter 2). Second, the context of scholarly discussions considering Islam in the contemporary globalised world (Chapter 3). Part 1 closes with a chapter on methodological considerations (Chapter 4).

Introduction

This is a study of the religious and ideological thought of the contemporary ‘*ālim*, public thinker, and author Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, born 1925 in Uttar Pradesh, India. Khan’s presentation of Islam, non-violence, and peace makes up the research object of this study. His ideas are analysed in comparison to other thematically related ideas and positions in the modern debate on the meaning of Islam, especially in India.

Khan’s religious and ideological thought is available for English speaking readers through his many published writings in translation. His works of the last two decades complemented by interviews with the author between 2013 and 2016 make up the immediate primary source material. The analysis is pursued with reference to contextual factors. By using current social scientific concepts – the actual knowledge situation regarding contemporary Islam and the religious and political Islamic debate – this study analyses how Khan’s ideas on Islam, non-violence, and peace are formulated in relation to two kinds of interrelated contexts. On one hand, religious and ideological debate regarding the meaning of Islam and on the other hand, the context of global and Indian social and political issues, which together constitute the problem-setting frame and background for the debate.

Maulana Wahiduddin Khan has been a public figure since he held a speech in the 1950s, in which he opposed nuclear weapons. The political context was the build-up of India’s nuclear capacity. Since then, his reputation has grown as a spokesperson for a distinctly peaceable presentation of Islam. The use of non-violent means by restricting political and social conflict of any kind is at the heart of his position. Khan’s developments and achievements, as an ‘*ālim* and intellectual, also include the defence of a position for Islam in relation to issues such as pluralism, democracy, and the natural sciences. As a public spokesperson, Khan has made a clear case for non-violent solutions and approaches to inter-communal fighting in India. His is a position against the ideas of both state-building and violence in Islam, considering such ideas and practices to be gross misinterpretations of the Quran and the Sunna of the Prophet Muhammad. Khan has taken a clear stand against the Indian–Pakistani war over Jammu and Kashmir, and marks the Pakistan claim to the region on the basis of its Muslim character as false. Affirming and celebrating the properties of a plural and secular India, Khan thinks that Indian Muslims have a rightful and protected position within the Indian nation and the democratic state. Muslim interests are, in fact, better served by the democratic and

constitutional state of India than by Pakistan, Khan contends, with the latter's repressive and authoritarian tendencies. An outspoken and active debater, Khan has engaged in public dialogues with representatives of other world religions, but also leaders of powerful Hindu nationalist right-wing movements in order to create trust and mutual affinities. Such instances should be regarded as manifestations of what Khan perceives to be essential and ultimate Islamic virtues: patience, collaboration, peacebuilding, and friendly respectful behaviour in order to overcome adversity by developing friendship. Such behaviour is in itself a powerful medium of what Khan perceives to be the one overriding purpose of Islam – to engage more people about the true meaning of Islam.

This study contends that while Khan, as a current Islamic thinker, is addressing contemporary matters, he is at the same time building on, or is in dialogue with older, and sometimes well-known, even established, foundations of Islamic thinking, both medieval and modern, that highlights the peace-building qualities of Islam. Khan stands in a tradition of peace-building in Islam, and in that sense, he is not unique as an Islamic thinker. However, Khan's very identity and clear ideological positions in such a tradition is both highly relevant and important in relation to the global challenge and mission to encourage and support peaceable, democratic, and plurality-affirming societies and cultures. He develops important religious and ideological arguments with regard to such contemporary debates and as this study will demonstrate, a detailed and systematic non-violent presentation of Islam, regarding a number of contentious issues in Islamic reasoning, philosophy, and law.

In addition, this study aims to prove the important influence of ideological and political conditions and frameworks on the development of Khan's thinking. First, the rising political significance and eventual establishment of the Hindu Right with its accompanying anti-Muslim rhetoric and campaigns of political mobilisation. Second, the market liberalisations that have been shaping and re-shaping the foundations of the Indian economy since at least the early 1990s. Third, and last, in this study the omnipresent broad forces of globalisation are regarded as key to understanding and explaining the meaning and range of Khan's thought and argument.

1.1 Research Problem

This section aims to delineate what type of central scientific issues this study aims to investigate. Two quotations, the first from the thought of the Egyptian ideologue Sayyid Ḳuṭb (d.1966), the other by Wahiduddin Khan, will serve as appropriate points of departure. Both quotations and writers represent two fundamentally different presentations of Islam and the

Quran. However, the reader should note that both quotations touch upon the central concept of jihad in Islam, but also the place of Islam and its laws in a political order. In their respective argumentative logic, the two quotes concern the place of the legitimate use of violence, with regard to an eventual establishment of such an Islamic polity. This structural similarity, but with completely different outcomes, is, in essence, the type of research problem that this dissertation aims to study.

The first quotation is a translation from a central work written by Kutb:

Thus the true nature of Islam will also be amply reflected before us and we shall have no difficulty in understanding what Islam stands for: Freedom of man from servitude to man, submission before the teachings of God, the establishment of His Sovereignty, an end of man's arrogance and selfishness, and implementation of the Divine Sharia in human affairs. As regards [...] the narrow and limited sense of Islamic Jihad which is found in the current phraseology of 'defensive war' [...] against the aggression of the neighboring powers, they, in fact, betray that these 'benefactors' [...] did not understand the character of Islam and its role in the world [...]. It would be the height of naiveté to imagine that a message that proclaims the freedom of the entire human species inhabiting the earth would confront the [...] impediments merely with the Jihad of expression and exposition. Undoubtedly this message does strive through tongue and speech. But when? Only then when people are free to accept this message. [...] But when the [...] material influences and impediments may be ruling, there is no recourse but to remove them with force, so that when this message may appeal to the heart and reason of man, they should be free from all such shackles and bonds to pronounce their verdict open-heartedly in response.¹

The second quotation is by Khan, when interviewed by me in Delhi:

¹ Sayyid Qutb "Jihad in the Cause of Allah." Excerpt from *Milestones*, 2nd ed., translated by S. Badrul Hasan, M.A. Karachi, Pakistan: International Islamic Publishers Ltd, 1988. In *Contemporary Debates in Islam: an Anthology of Modernist and Fundamentalist Thought*, ed. Mansoor Moaddel and Kamran Talattof. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 232.

If you discover the goal of Islam, then you can easily discover the place of violence in Islam [...] the main goal of Islam, or main purpose of Islam, is to make people aware of the creation plan of God. This is the sole concern of Islam. [...] Why violence? When you try to change the people's minds, when you try to change the people's ways of thinking, when you try to change people's hearts then violence become irrelevant. So according to my study, violence has no place in Islam.²

Both quotes – being involved in religious and ideological argument – contain values, descriptions, and prescriptive statements, or, in short, ideological content.³ In the former quote, by Kutb, it is possible to end the oppression in society only by the implementation of Divine Law. This ultimate value entails a description and eventually a prescriptive statement: because man is so sinful and selfish, and the resultant impediments so grave, the use of violent jihad is compulsory to achieve the ultimate value. The latter quote, however, by Khan, is diametrically different in terms of values, descriptions, and prescriptive statements. Khan states that the ultimate goal is to make people accept the message of Islam. It is said that, to be able to influence people, you must earn their respect by being unselfishly peaceful and only oriented towards social interactions. Therefore, Khan prescribes non-violence and peace as the only acceptable methods to achieve the ultimate goal.

Clearly, these two quotations, representing two opposing lines of presentations of the Quran, contains diametrically different values, descriptions, and prescriptive statements. Less clear perhaps, is that these thinkers maintain and use the same set of sacred concepts and iconic sacred history as arguments. In fact, they hold that to be able to touch the attitudes and motivations, as well as the reason, of humans, violence is either wholly necessary or wholly forbidden. Therefore, with regard to the ideological content of these two quotations, the research problem that this study aims to investigate may be formulated as a simple question: in terms of the place and use of violence, why do different interpreters take so different ideological and religious positions?

Positions in relation to the overall significance of Islam, and concepts such as jihad are presented in many and sometimes conflicting, ways. This is true both regarding the

² Interview on 13th December 2013, 2.

³ In political science theory and research, ideological thought and arguments on politics and society are commonly conceived as consisting of three basic dimensions of thought: values, descriptions and prescriptions. These three in turn are present on two interrelated levels of thinking: the fundamental level of philosophical or religious principles, and the operative level of practical suggestions for social and political action. See, for instance, the overview in Mats Lindberg, "Qualitative Analysis of Ideas and Ideological Content" in *Analyzing Text and Discourse: Eight Approaches for the Social Sciences*, ed. Kristina Boréus & Göran Bergström (London: Sage Publications, 2017), 88.

contemporary debate and in the older traditions. Different religious and ideological understandings of how Islam is perceived supports different perceptions of actual situations, and underlie different moral or political positions and practical prescriptions. But, how can the differences in presentation of the same concepts and the same historical accounts best be analysed by the researcher? What type of factors and contexts, on one hand ideological and religious factors and on the other hand political and social factors, are significant and useable for the researcher in the analytical effort?

Since different positions regarding Islam and Islamic-Arabic concepts abound, the task of this study is to analyse a certain *oeuvre* of presentations and positions, those of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan. His position comprises an original and important theory of Islam, non-violence, and peace.

1.1.1 Historical and Religious Imagery

While numerous different positions regarding Islam and the appropriate use of violence are possible, the number of target categories of legitimate violence is in fact highly limited. It is the application of these categories to actual situations which differs between different interpreters.⁴ Therefore, religious terminology and sacred history are reified into seemingly eternal truths. Their applications are however made in certain, yet as always, historically new and unique situations.

Jan Hjärpe, doyen of the contemporary Swedish scientific study of Islam and Muslims, considers such positioning within a religious conceptual framework and sacred history as a *tool for mobilisation*.⁵ Hjärpe shows the way an historical frame of reference is utilised by both secular and religious actors. Actors involved in the use of history, sacred or not, aim to show how historically and narratively derived categories are applicable to the current situation when motivating different strategies, whether such strategies are violent or non-violent. Likening Saddam Hussein (d. 2006) to either Adolf Hitler or to Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria during the debates in America and Europe following the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 produced widely different outcomes and motivations, for either war or peace. Within the conceptual framework established so far, such different historical and rhetorical imagery contains different values, descriptions, and prescriptions. Hjärpe aims to show how conceptual

⁴ Philip Halldén, "Jihad-salafistisk koranutläggning och tillämpning: några exempel," in *Islamologi: Studiet av en religion*, ed. Otterbeck and Stenberg (Stockholm: Carlsson bokförlag 2012), 120.

⁵ Jan Hjärpe, "Legitimering av krig och av fred i muslimsk tankevärld," *Svensk teologisk kvartalsskrift*, Vol. 71 (1995:3): 104.

imagery and individuals regarding the sacred historical narratives of Islam are put to use in the different contemporary debate positions.

Whether religious or secular, historical narratives are employed, within an outlook of assumed shared references, as *arguments in themselves*. Arguments are made to appear as in themselves comprising an acute political and ideological content. This effect is produced by bringing historical semblance from the level of comparison to the level of analogy. Thus, it makes the contemporary situation seem similar to the process or situation of the imagined historical narrative. The philosopher Karl Popper (d. 1994) can be said to bring up similar issues when he classically criticises the use of alleged inescapable laws of historical destiny. Consequently, Popper makes a distinction between “the standpoint of causal explanation” and the standpoint of “the appreciation of the unique.”⁶ Perhaps what both Hjärpe and Popper aim to address is the fact that the ideologically and politically motivated usage of historical analogy hides the empirical fact: that the current situation is in fact in its entirety a new one, never encountered before. Given the new situation, therefore, the interventions made by the ideological or religious writer are accordingly also new, however much “eternal truths” are mobilised to give weight to the specific arguments and actual claims.

1.1.2 Political and Social Factors

Utilising sacred history narratives to motivate certain contemporary religious actions is something that is done by millions of believers, in all religions, in their everyday lives and rituals. Despite the prevalent image to the contrary, it is in fact far more challenging to religiously motivate violence than non-violence, especially large-scale violence. As the historian Scott Appleby points out regarding violence-motivating thought, the everyday must in fact be displaced and left behind. To achieve such an omission, violence commanded by God (or other forces) must be depicted as an exceptional state of emergency. Furthermore, all religious peace-affirming aspects such as developing the inter-human virtues of compassion, forbearance, forgiveness, and kindness to both neighbours and strangers must be done away with. It must be shown how they cannot be applicable to certain categories of people in the current situation – because of the impending threat they represent.⁷ The enemy must, in some way or another, be shorn of the shared attributes of humanness and perceived divine origin.

⁶ Karl Popper, *The Poverty of Historicism* (London: Routledge, 1969 [1957]), 147.

⁷ R. Scott Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield publishers, 2000), 88.

In contrast, when utilised to promote non-violence and peace, the religious concepts and perceived sacred history must instead show how the conceptions for upholding differences, of delineating a sacred community against other sinful and deviating communities and groups of people, are not applicable. When the religious tradition is invoked for peace-building and reconciliation, emphasis is put on the concepts and moments of sacred history in which human connection and sameness is celebrated.⁸ Violence against members of other categories is therefore not an option. Yet, a similar mode of argumentation can be seen when promoting either violence or non-violence. The sacred history is narrated in a fashion which moves the awareness of the contemporary situation to a symmetry between the unique present situation and the historical narrative. In both cases, religious legitimization of either violence or non-violence, the ideology and politics of the analogy is obscured by this mode of argumentation.

Yet, promotion of non-violent religious narratives and concepts is not primarily a cognitive-conceptual, or even a moral enterprise. In a study of the role of religious leadership in alleviating or exacerbating violent conflict, Timothy D. Sisk concludes: “It is less likely that religious leaders will, or can, articulate the justification for peace unless or until the social, political and economic conditions are permissive.” This is due to the fact that, courageous individuals apart, religious leaders are largely “reflective of the broader context in which they exist.”⁹ Therefore, societal factors shape the direction of religious mobilisation, on one hand, toward demarcated militancy and violence between communities, or, on the other hand, towards an emphasis on similarity, cooperation, non-violence, and peace. It is the broader context, as well as the aims of the actors of course, which together can explain, what kind of historical narrative can successfully be employed by the religious leader.

1.1.3 The Actor

With regards to the aims of the actor, Hjärpe also teaches a fruitful psychological perspective. In outlining the dynamics of the process of religio-political mobilisation for either peace-building *or* violence, Hjärpe sees the starting point within the individual’s esteem for the religious tradition. Within Religious Studies, such psychological esteem is often referred to as *religiosity*. Religiosity is an experiential factor which should be differentiated from matters of doctrine. Hjärpe argues that the foundation of the living tradition is not simply passing on the

⁸ Hjärpe, *Legitimizing*, 104.

⁹ Timothy D. Sisk, “Conclusion: From Terror to Tolerance to Coexistence in Deeply Divided Societies,” in *Between Terror and Tolerance: Religious Leaders, Conflict and Peacemaking*, ed. Timothy D. Sisk (Washington D.C: Georgetown University Press, 2011), 235.

doctrine, but the *individual's experiences*, which are only partially shaped by doctrine. Hjärpe thinks that, while doctrine always has a certain delimiting function, the experiential factors held in common between individuals are especially important. Hence, when the religious tradition is used for peace-building and non-violence, shared or common experience is a highly important factor. Human same- and togetherness must be highlighted.¹⁰ Doctrine might emphasise the difference, even conflict, between communities but when the religious tradition is combined with a remembrance of shared experiences, it may also celebrate and highlight human interconnectedness.

1.1.4 Conclusion

By combining these three perspectives, a productive outlook is achieved. First, it is through the use of basic concepts and sacred history that a certain presentation of Islam might be analysed. Second, religious leaders express, use, and reflect ideological and religious factors when addressing political and social issues within their present situation. Third, religiosity is expressed at the level of the actor with regards to psychological experiences of shared or demarcated relations between communities. The task, therefore, is to analyse Khan's positioning in relation to sacred historical narratives and concepts related to Islam in such a way that enables a distinction between, on one hand, other positions within an ongoing and contested ideological and religious debate on the meaning of Islam. On the other hand, however, the analysis must distinguish the ideological content, formulated by Khan as an actor, involved in the arguments addressing the issues in the actual political and social situation.

¹⁰ Hjärpe, *Legitimering*, 104. See also, Sisk, "Conclusion: From Terror to Tolerance," 235.

1.2 Aim and Research Questions

The aim of this study is to investigate and analyse the thought and argument of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan regarding Islam, non-violence, and peace. In the investigation, Khan's thought is positioned and analysed in relation to two interrelated contexts, viewed as situations of debate and contestation; (1) the conflictual context of fundamental ideological and religious debate on Islam, on a global scale as well as in India, and (2) the conflictual context of social and political issues and actors, primarily in India. A further aim of this study is to consider some of the theoretical problems and perspectives in the scholarly discussion regarding Islam, globalisation and politics today. This theoretical discussion emerges as an outcome of the analysis of Khan's thought in the two contexts mentioned.

The investigation is guided by three overarching and principal research questions which, in turn, are specified and divided into ten more concrete and pointed research questions:

- 1) What is the logical structure and ideological and religious content in Khan's thought and argument?
 - a. Which topics comprise Khan's presentation of Islam, non-violence, and peace?
 - b. What are Khan's actual positions and arguments regarding three different violent conflict situations?
- 2) What is the significant contribution of Khan's thought and argument regarding Islam, non-violence, and peace in relation to an Indian situation of ideological and religious debate?
 - a. What is Khan's thinking on Islam in India?
 - b. How can Khan's ideology be described in relation to other Indian thinkers and writers?
 - c. What is the relationship between Khan's ideology and the political and social situation in India?
- 3) What is the significant contribution of Khan's thought and argument regarding Islam, non-violence, and peace in relation to a global situation of ideological and religious debate?
 - a. What is the relationship between Khan's ideology and the global debate on Islam?
 - b. How can Khan's ideology be analysed through the application of the theoretical concept, "Political theology"?
 - c. How can Khan's ideology be analysed through the application of the theoretical concept, "the objectification of Islam"?

- d. What theoretical outcomes are generated through analysis of Khan's ideology in light of these (b and c) theoretical concepts or perspectives?

The remaining sections of this chapter, as well as Chapters 2, 3, and 4 aim to present the necessary contextual and theoretical backgrounds, as well as the methodological deliberations that make up and motivate this chosen approach to the investigation and analysis of Khan's thought and argument.

1.3 Previous Research about Wahiduddin Khan

The first traceable assessment of Khan in English academic literature was written by the theologian and Jesuit Pater Christian Troll.¹¹ Here, Troll briefly mentions Khan's view of the concept of *dīn* in comparison to those of Abu 'l-a' Lā Mawdudi (d. 1979) and Abu 'l-Ḥasan 'Alī Nadwī (d.1999). Troll's study of Khan's thinking was developed in more depth in a 1995 anthology of essays relating *Christian-Muslim Encounters*¹² and in two 1998 articles.¹³ In these articles, Troll highlights the affirmations of Islam and pluralism in Khan's thinking as well as the systematic criticism raised by Khan against Mawdudi's notion that Islam is primarily concerned with establishing the rule of God, i.e. an Islamic state. Instead, Islam is understood as principally concerned with the salvation of individuals – the ultimate end of worship. In the 1998 article "A Significant Voice of Contemporary Islam in India: Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (b. 1925)," Troll unveils an insightful study of Khan's legitimization of renewed *idjtiḥād* which is described as both historical and normative. For historical reasons, Khan rejects the notion of the "closing of the doors" of *idjtiḥād*. Muslim scholars have in fact performed *idjtiḥād* throughout times past. Therefore, the discussion of the application of Islam was never closed, and while the Prophet declared himself to be "the seal of the prophets," none of the four founders of Sunni canonical law declared any such status for themselves. Nor should they, since

¹¹ Christian Troll, "The Meaning of Din: Recent views of three eminent Indian 'Ulamā," in *Islam in India: Studies and Commentaries* Vol. 1, ed. Christian Troll (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1982).

¹² Christian Troll, "Sharing Islamically in the Pluralistic Nation-State of India: The Views of Some Contemporary Indian Muslim Leaders and Thinkers," in *Christian-Muslim Encounters*, ed. Yvonne Y.Haddad and Wadi Z. Haddad (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1995), 245.

¹³ Christian Troll, "Divine Rule and its Establishment on Earth: A Contemporary South-Asian Debate," in *Faith, Power and Violence in Islam and Christianity*, ed. J.J. Donohue & Christian W. Troll (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Orientale, 1998), 223–229. "A Significant Voice of Contemporary Islam in India: Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (b. 1925)," in *Studies in Arabic and Islam: Proceedings of the Nineteenth Congress, Union Européenne des Arabisants et Islamisants, Halle 1998*, ed. S. Leder, H. Kilpatrick, B. Martel-Thoumian, H. Schöning (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 2002), 531.

the Quran and hadith are the only criteria for Islam. Moreover, reasoning normatively, God has created time to be ever evolving and raising new questions, while endowing humans with reason as well as revelation, stating (Q 22:78) “He has chosen you and has not laid upon you in religion any hardship.” Therefore, Islam must be constantly reapplied, through *idjtiḥād*, to the changing times in order to be put into practice.

At around the same time as Troll developed more in-depth analyses of Khan’s thinking, the political scientist Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr also highlighted Khan’s criticism of Mawdudi’s state and power-centred vision of Islam in his 1996 work *Mawdudi & the Making of Islamic Revivalism*.¹⁴ While this work focusses on Mawdudi’s ideological thinking in relation to the growth of Pakistani sectarianism and state authoritarianism, its major contribution to research on Khan is the way it situates Khan’s mounting resentment and eventual falling out with Mawdudi and the *Djāmā‘at-i Islāmī* (detailed in Chapter 5 below) in a broader context of growing denunciation of Mawdudi’s thesis on Islam and state power on the part of both *Barēlwi* and Deobandi ‘*ulamā*’, on each side of the Indian-Pakistan border.¹⁵

Writing in 1997, the historian Mushirul Hasan sketches a somewhat ambiguous picture of Khan in his *Legacy of a Divided Nation*. In this work, Hasan is aiming at a description of the initial growth of Muslim separatism and what partition entailed for Indian Muslims. Hasan’s focus is on describing the eventual demise of Nehru’s brand of Indian secularism with the growth of communal politics from the 1960s and onwards. Khan is occasionally mentioned in this work, mainly with regard to his public role and message of pragmatic optimism during the communal tragedies of the early 1990s. On one hand, Khan is described as perhaps naïve when he places Indian Muslims “backwardness” on their own doorstep, while Hasan himself cites a somewhat scholarly consensus that Muslims’ relative poverty as well as lack of education and employment in India should be seen as due to “official neglect and discrimination.”¹⁶ On the other hand, Hasan clearly outlines an important public role to play for Khan, who is described as a “man of extraordinary vigour, energy and initiative.”¹⁷ The characterisation of Khan’s relative importance is set within Hasan’s general argument in the cited work. Muslim secular intellectuals must take the initiative in salvaging the wreckage of democratic secularism in India, not least when Muslim political and religious leaders have generally turned to

¹⁴ Sayyid Vali Reza Nasr, *Mawdudi and the Making of Islamic Revivalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 63.

¹⁵ Nasr, *Mawdudi*, 118–119.

¹⁶ Mushirul Hasan, “Legacy of a Divided Nation: Indian Muslims since Independence,” in *India’s Muslims: An Omnibus*, ed. Barbara Daly Metcalf, Rafiuddin Ahmed, Mushirul Hasan. (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2007), 284.

¹⁷ Hasan, “Legacy of a Divided Nation,” 323.

communalism. Khan's background as a traditionally trained *'ālim* is seen as giving him an advantage over the "secular modernists" (who are considered to have turned to a Jinnah-style of communal politics), while Khan's reforms and presentation of Islam cannot so easily be dismissed as "kāfir" business. While this highly ambiguous and generalised picture overlooks many important distinctions in Khan's presentation of Islam, and his relation to various discussions within Indian Islam, Hasan unfailingly teases out a political dimension of Khan's public role and message. This perspective on Khan is important for the purposes of this study in two ways. First, it highlights that, while the socioeconomic conditions for Indian Muslims have deteriorated since the partition of 1947, their situation has only worsened further with the rise of Hindu Nationalism. Second, Hasan's work aims to show that the Indian state may, through its policies, have made the Indian Muslim community more conservative. The tendency has been to look at Muslims as primarily a religious community, neglecting socioeconomic inequality and perhaps reiterating fears of their hidden loyalty to the Islamic neighbour, Muslim-majority Pakistan. At least partly because of looking at Muslims as primarily a religious community, the state has tended to regard religious leaders in the community as its genuine representatives, perhaps disregarding secular and liberal leaders.¹⁸ This points to the important public role to play for Khan as a reformer and religious leader, seeing that government recognition of Khan is undisputable.¹⁹

The theologian Irfan Omar also focusses on Khan's thinking in relation to that of Mawdudi in an article appearing in 1999.²⁰ This article aims at highlighting the differing conceptualisations of the "other," i.e. the "Hindu," in the ideologies of the two thinkers. This article was developed and incorporated in Omar's 2001 dissertation "Rethinking Islam: A Study of the Thought and Mission of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan."²¹ This work (hereafter "Rethinking Islam") is the most substantive study of Khan's thinking to date; therefore Omar's dissertation is an important point of departure for this study. Its advantages and shortcomings will be discussed in depth in the following in order to define in what way the current work advances our body of knowledge regarding Khan's thinking and role in Indian Islam. To begin with, one striking aspect of "Rethinking Islam" is its timely arrival. Omar is introducing the voice of Khan perhaps especially to the American academia and Religious Studies field at a time when,

¹⁸ Hasan, "Legacy of a Divided Nation," 323.

¹⁹ For instance, Khan received the Padma Bhushan, the third highest civilian award of India in 2000.

²⁰ Irfan A. Omar, "Islam and the Other: The Ideal Vision of Mawlana Wahiduddin Khan," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, Vol. 36 (Summer/Fall 1999, issue 3/4): 423.

²¹ Irfan A. Omar, "Rethinking Islam: A Study of the Thought and Mission of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan," (PhD Diss., Temple University, 2001).

while Khan was a known public Muslim non-violence spokesperson, few people outside of the Indian context knew his name.²² Therefore, it is only to be expected that “Rethinking Islam” relates Khan’s dissenting views from Mawdudi, albeit this viewpoint had already been investigated in the earlier works of Troll and Nasr. Omar argues that Khan needs to be “located in a familiar context” that the much more well-known works and ideology of Mawdudi provided in academic circles.²³

Important aspects of Omar’s dissertation are, first, that it aims to contextualise Khan’s thinking in a tradition of Indian modernists. In that regard, Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Abul Kalam Azad are mentioned. Second, it aims to study in what way Khan is addressing the growing communal discourse in India and how his presentation of Islam is shaped with the intent to solve the issue of communal conflicts. With regard to the first objective of contextualisation, while Chapter 2 of “Rethinking Islam” deals with the “Historical and Intellectual Development of Islamic Modernist Reform in India,” the categories, ideas, and problems already established in earlier presentations of Islam by certain Indian thinkers and reformers, are not set up as an analytical apparatus in order to categorise and understand Khan. One is left with the notion which concludes Chapter 2: “From the idea of ‘composite nationalism’, drawn mostly from secular principles, we arrive at Wahiduddin Khan’s ‘theology’ of pluralism and multiculturalism.”²⁴ Yet, a linkage remains hypothetical. It is hard to judge from Omar’s work whether Khan is either very original or simply a continuation of earlier, briefly outlined, presentations and thinking related to Islam. Not only is the significance of Khan’s thinking in relation to earlier presentations of Islam in the subcontinent not clearly outlined, but the significance of studying Khan at all remains unconvincing, since the dissertation lacks a definition of a research problem, as well as a clear theoretical or analytical apparatus. Hence, the analysis is presented without any clear reference, defined conceptual scheme or in-depth comparative reasoning. The section regarding “Significance and Scope” relates that Khan’s “differences with other Muslim intellectuals, specifically with Mawdudi, must be undertaken.”²⁵ This is unconvincing because such a comparison, as we saw, had already been undertaken by Nasr and Troll, and no other specific comparison with any of the unspecified “Muslim intellectuals” is attempted in Omar’s dissertation. With regard to Omar’s second aim, of contextualising Khan’s thought in relation to communal violence in India, one

²² Christian Troll was as a Jesuit and scholar based in Delhi for most of his active life. Hasan is a Delhi-based historian.

²³ Omar, “Rethinking Islam,” 130.

²⁴ Omar, “Rethinking Islam,” 67.

²⁵ Omar, “Rethinking Islam,” 6.

would expect, given that the dissertation source material is Khan's texts, that what forms the basis for Khan's sanctified claims of presenting an authentic, non-violent, and peaceable Islam, is shaped by its relation to political and social factors. Instead, one finds the attempt at contextualisation of Khan within Indian society itself sketched as a sociological one in Omar's outline of research questions: "To what extent has his interpretation of Islam as a non-violent, peaceful religion known as the *al-Risāla* approach contributed to the normalization of relations between Muslims and other communities, especially Hindus?"²⁶ This question goes fundamentally unanswered and a workable research methodology to resolve the still crucial issue of the actual social impact of Khan's efforts and ideas is not attempted in Omar's dissertation.²⁷

The extensive bibliography of "Rethinking Islam" is both notable and impressive; 43 books by Khan in English, Urdu and Arabic published between 1955 and 2000 are listed in the section on source material along with a comparable number (36) of polemical or op-ed articles by Khan appearing, almost exclusively, in various English-language Indian newspapers. In addition, the entire publication of Khan's mouthpiece, the monthly journal *al-Risāla*, from its launch in 1976 to 2000 (Urdu version) and the English version from 1984 to 2000 is itemised as primary sources.²⁸ This means that hundreds of issues, both Urdu and English, of *al-Risāla* are cited by Omar as the source material used in his study. The crucial issue here is that the 566 footnotes of "Rethinking Islam" only reference a very small number of the *al-Risāla* texts listed as primary source material. While texts appearing in Khan's *Al-Risāla* are referenced 29 times in "Rethinking Islam," these refer almost exclusively to the 1999 (mainly) and 2000 editions. Only 10 times are other volumes cited (volumes from 1996 are cited 3 times, 1997 is cited 1 time, 1998 is cited 4 times, and the March 1986 edition is cited 2 times).²⁹ Therefore, it is safe to say that the vast publication by Khan in the volumes of *al-Risāla* still goes largely unobserved in the scholarly literature, and that Omar's study only observes the *al-Risāla* publications in the late 1990s, with the notable exception of one March 1986 edition.

Besides, Omar displays a normative standpoint in "Rethinking Islam." The normative perspective can be seen from the outset in Omar's first research question: "To what extent is Wahiduddin Khan's approach and his interpretation of Islam authentic in that he is true to the

²⁶ Omar, "Rethinking Islam," 6.

²⁷ See Chapters 9 and 10 of this study for further discussions about the social impact of Khan's thought.

²⁸ Omar, "Rethinking Islam," 272–277.

²⁹ Omar, "Rethinking Islam," 16, 72, 74, 82, 83, 97, 98, 104, 121, 137, 148, 152, 153, 154, 155, 180, 211, 212, 213, 216, 224, 226, 229, 231, 233, 261, 262, 263, 265.

overall message of the Qur'an."³⁰ Understandably, this research question is left unanswered. No human or social scientific methodological apparatus to somehow resolve the question of the relation between a certain observable religious position and canonical authenticity is offered.

Furthermore, Omar's work make much of Khan's relative importance in an un-substantiated manner. For instance, Omar is saying, with regard to the publication of Khan's first published work, *Naye 'ahad ke darvāzey par* ('At the Threshold of a New Era') in 1955, that it: "was not only ahead of its time but also known to have marked a turning point in the history of Muslim scholarship."³¹ This statement lacks any reference and is impossible to assess: ahead of its time in what way, in comparison to whom, and why did it represent a "turning point"? Simply, one cannot evaluate this empirical claim declaring Khan's scholarly importance. With regard to such an *a priori* emphasis of Khan's relative importance, one could also note the claim by Omar that Khan's publication of *al-Risāla* has brought about a "movement."³² While I am not disputing the importance and influence of Khan's ideology, I am concerned that the idea of a "movement" developed around Khan's thought and what it entails is not discussed in "Rethinking Islam."

Omar has also written a chapter on Khan called "Islamic Thought in Contemporary India: The impact of Mawlana Wahiduddin Khan's Al-Risāla Movement" in the 2006 *Blackwell Companion to Contemporary Islamic Thought*. This work should best be regarded as a general introduction to the life and thought of Khan. Omar does not present in detail how Khan argues on a number of disputed Islamic doctrinal issues, yet for the purposes of this study, Omar's treatment of Khan's thinking on non-violence must be highlighted. Khan's thinking, as centred on the peace treaty at *Hudaybiyah* (see Chapter 6), is mentioned and described as "imperative." Omar writes that "the path to peace and the establishment of an Islamic society must originate from a *Hudaybiyah*-style, diplomatic, non-confrontational, non-aggressive, and ultimately non-political approach."³³ While this is an accurate representation of an important aspect of Khan's thinking, albeit without references, this important piece of data is never analysed or questioned in the text. How can the establishment of an "Islamic society" (or creating peace for that matter) be "ultimately non-political"? This lack of an analytical approach should perhaps be regarded as in disagreement with what Omar later writes in the same chapter, surveying the "current

³⁰ Omar, "Rethinking Islam," 5. A question mark is lacking in the original text.

³¹ Omar, "Rethinking Islam," 69.

³² Omar, "Rethinking Islam," 68, 123.

³³ Irfan A Omar, "Islamic Thought in Contemporary India: The Impact of Mawlana Wahiduddin Khan's Al-Risāla Movement," in *The Blackwell Companion to Contemporary Islamic Thought*, ed. Ibrahim M. Abu-Rabi' (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 80.

focus” of Khan. Omar here writes that an “analysis of his writings of the last few years reveals a slight shift in his posture. He is no longer apolitical and has begun to assume a role of a political commentator but with an orientation toward [...] nation building and social and religious harmony.”³⁴ However, in Khan’s 1994 work *Indian Muslims: The Need for A Positive Outlook*” for instance, which is an important part of Omar’s dissertation source material, Khan aims, *inter alia*, at defusing the controversies aroused by the 1992 destruction of the historical Babri Masjid in Ayodhya. Khan here seeks to influence Indian Muslims to let the destruction of the mosque slide, and suggests changing the Indian constitution in order to prevent any future destruction of holy sites. Hence, when Omar notes only a “slight shift” in Khan’s posture, it possibly reveals that Khan’s self-presentation as “apolitical” is also taken at face value by Omar. Indisputably, Khan deals with an ideological attempt at social, religious and national harmony. But what is the function of these ideological notions, and to what context are they geared?³⁵ In fact, Khan’s thinking reveals comprehensively ideological, and political notions and cannot be said to be coming from an “apolitical” stance at any time. With this identified gap in the existing literature in mind, the political aspects of Khan’s thought will be thoroughly theorised in this study in Chapters 9 and 10.

In the title of Omar’s piece itself, an assessment of “the impact” of “Khan’s Al-Risāla Movement” is suggested. In this regard Omar states: “it has gradually influenced and shaped Muslim thinking over the last 40 years, a measure of which can be found in the changing attitudes of the Indian Muslim leadership in the late 1990s.”³⁶ Hence, Omar marks a lasting and rather penetrating social importance of Khan’s thought and leadership in the vast Indian Muslim community. While I am not disputing this empirical statement, I am concerned, however, that the footnote which is supposed to validate the statement instead mentions the careers of Khan’s three children. Two of his offspring are associated with his “Centre for Peace and Spirituality” (CPS), one as a publisher and one as a translator of Khan’s works. The aforementioned reference is to a 1998 interview with Khan himself. Hence, no proof is offered regarding the stated influence of Khan on a vague and un-specified “Indian Muslim leadership.” The “impact” of Khan is also discussed under a separate heading, yet, Khan’s impact is in fact not discussed in this section either. Instead of an assessment of impact, Omar writes a general depiction of an important aspect of Khan’s thinking, the way that he sees a need to remove “those conditions

³⁴ Omar, “Islamic Thought in Contemporary India,” 84.

³⁵ As have been mentioned in this study, and will be detailed in Chapter 4, the function of descriptions and argumentative logic of values may be described as pragmatic interventions. Ideological thought prescribes and motivates action in a particular situation.

³⁶ Omar, “Islamic Thought in Contemporary India,” 76.

that allow the Hindu extremist groups to portray Muslims as alienated from their nationalistic ethos.”³⁷ Whether Khan is successful in such an ideological venture, i.e. to what degree he has a political and social impact, is not discussed.

In conclusion, Omar may not be seen to prove any actual social significance of Khan’s writings, despite making assertions both of his scholarly intent to analyse such an impact, and manifold and clear declarations of an actual observed significance of Khan’s thought and leadership. When considering Omar’s source material; interviews and Khan’s own writings, it should be immediately apparent that measuring impact and social importance is not possible from those types of materials. Instead, what I would like to point out is that Omar’s several works on Khan highlight the need for an analytical, critical, as well as a methodologically and theoretically well-grounded appraisal of Khan’s thought with regard to context, mainly the political and social issues it aims to address and resolve.

One understanding of Khan’s relative importance is presented by Muhammad Qasim Zaman, in a 2002 work, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam*. In a reflective epilogue, Zaman emphasises Khan’s internal critique of his contemporary *Ḥanafī ‘ulamā’*.³⁸ What is in focus for Zaman is the dynamics of Khan’s claim to *idjtiḥād* in both historical and religious terms. The legal-technical contextual aspects of Khan’s thinking were brought forth by Troll in the 1998 article cited above. Crucially, what Zaman adds to Troll’s perspective is the way in which Khan speaks about a sort of destructive discomfort with criticism among the *‘ulamā’* themselves. Such unease meant that, in actuality, it was not the gates of *idjtiḥād* that were closed, it was the shutting down of an intellectual climate of critical dialogue in which almost sacrosanct historical figures were raised as somehow above reproach. It meant that limited *idjtiḥād* was still accepted, as long as it did not fundamentally question the authority of leading legal scholars. Furthermore, while Zaman does not focus on Khan’s thinking concerning non-violence, he brings out Khan’s fundamental programme for *idjtiḥād*: The legal framework of earlier jurists in Sunni law was formulated at a time of Muslim political dominance. Hence, such legal reasoning cannot reasonably be applied to entirely different political circumstances, i.e. when Muslims are in a political minority. In this regard, Zaman mentions Khan’s ideas concerning capital punishment for slandering the Prophet. Both the legal reasoning itself and the legal source (the Prophet’s time at Medina) were formulated at different times of Muslim

³⁷ Omar, “Islamic Thought in Contemporary India,” 84.

³⁸ Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 182. See also footnote 8, in the cited work, for a brief explanation of Khan’s understanding of *idjtiḥād* as shaped by *Ḥanafī* paradigms and views.

political dominance. When the political climate has changed so that the contemporary conditions treasure freedom of expression as an absolute value, it is incongruous to try and uphold the legal reasoning and legal sources suited to an entirely different era. Instead, a different legal source, the Prophet's Meccan phase – when abuse and slander went unnoticed – is more analogous with the contemporary situation and should therefore be applied. Therefore, Zaman also shows a significantly optimistic nature in Khan's thinking. It is simultaneously both necessary and entirely possible to reapply the Islamic principles in accord with the political and social structures of today. Albeit an intellectually strenuous project, modernity also brings unprecedented possibilities for the application and development of *idjtiḥād*; principally freedom of conscience and expression. It should come as no surprise then, as Zaman points out, that it is an Indian religious scholar, as opposed to one from a Pakistani background, who voices such arguments. The Indian state does after all take its democratic obligations seriously – making possible the formulations of internal religious criticism. Zaman's perspectives on Khan in a context of South Asian '*ulamā*' and Deobandi madrasas are also conveniently, but briefly, summarised in a chapter in the 2007 anthology *Schooling Islam*.³⁹

In short, while Zaman do not focus directly on non-violence and peace in Khan's thinking, his emphasis on Khan as related with and in critical dialogue with a longstanding "Tradition" of Islamic legal thinking, as well as the principal and foundational rationalisation for ongoing *idjtiḥād*, the changed circumstances of medieval formulations of sharia, and the need for modern and democratic reapplications, are all important points of departure in this study.

An Indian scholar focussing on Khan is Yoginder Sikand, an academic and writer based in Bangalore. In a 2003 article, Sikand outlines Khan's biography and thinking.⁴⁰ The same article also appears as an introduction to a 2010 anthology of short essays by Khan, exemplifying his thought. The works by Khan in this collection are selected, translated and edited by Sikand for the purpose of making his "brilliant and incisive essays" more accessible.⁴¹

In Sikand's discussion, the pacifist nature of Khan's thinking is highlighted.⁴² In the context of growing Hindu-Muslim animosity in India, some Muslims are turning to militancy in the

³⁹ Muhammad Qasim Zaman, "Tradition and Authority in Deobandi Madrasas of South Asia," in *Schooling Islam: The Culture and Politics of Modern Muslim Education*, ed. Robert W. Hefner and Muhammad Qasim Zaman (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 69. These points about Khan are also briefly reiterated in Muhammad Qasim Zaman, "Pluralism, Democracy, and the '*Ulama*,'" in *Remaking Muslim Politics: Pluralism, Contestation, Democratization*, ed. Robert W. Hefner (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005) 65.

⁴⁰ Yoginder Sikand "Peace, Dialogue and Da'wā: An analysis of the writings of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan," *Islam and Christian – Muslim Relations*, Vol. 14 (2003:1): 33 – 49.

⁴¹ Yoginder Sikand, "Preface," in Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Jihad, Peace and Inter-Community Relations in Islam*, ed. Yoginder Sikand (New Delhi: Rupa Publications, 2010), ix.

⁴² Sikand, "Peace, Dialogue and Da'wā," 37.

name of jihad. This is forbidden according to Islam, Khan says, since communal interests are merely this-worldly group interests, similar to the *‘aṣabiyya* kind of tribalism which the Quran denounces. What serves as an Islamic model for the situation which Indian Muslims find themselves in is analogous to the circumstances of the Prophet and his followers while in Mecca. Here, the Muslim community was relatively insignificant and the Prophet engaged only in friendly conversation with and preaching to his neighbours. Similarly, Muslims in India must cast off all aggressive trappings and engage in mutual and friendly dialogue. They must also work to resolve the mutual problems and challenges facing the whole of society, in order for Muslims to earn trust, respect, and esteem. By becoming mutual partners and benefactors of societal development, Muslims may dispel any preconceived misunderstandings of Islam and establish a wider consideration for the consideration of the Islamic religious message. Practicing what he preaches, Khan’s engagement in dialogue even with the staunchly militant Hindu organisation RSS is brought to the fore.⁴³

Important in Sikand’s article are Khan’s re-applications of contested concepts such as jihad to one of societal uplift in education and economy, as well as, on an individual level, becoming a loving person instead of a hateful one. Furthermore, designating non-Muslims with the derogatory and hateful label *kāfir* is criticised. The latter practice goes against the Sunna of the Prophet, since his habit was to refer to non-Muslims by their own chosen designation or as “brothers,” thereby avoiding animosity and strengthening the conditions for missionary work.⁴⁴ Sikand also states that while Khan himself does not see non-violence as passive, he still does not wish for any revolutionary or otherwise violent action. Khan preaches a gradual yet steady reform, a “positive status quo-ism” or slow change without any substantial challenge to the status quo. Here, Khan’s arguments regarding *fasād*, translated as ‘strife’, is mentioned, but without going into any further detail (see Chapter 6).⁴⁵

What is more, Sikand describes Khan’s political thinking, based on the idea that Islam is the name of a personal relationship to God, not a blueprint for the establishment of a political order.⁴⁶ The four Sunni “Rightly Guided” caliphs were all chosen or designated in different manners, therefore, there is no straightforward design in Islam regarding how Muslims should decide on matters relating to the state. In this regard, Sikand also discusses at some length the eventual possibility of an “Islamic state,” based on both majority acceptance and non-

⁴³ Sikand, “Peace, Dialogue and Da‘wā,” 38.

⁴⁴ Sikand, “Peace, Dialogue and Da‘wā,” 40–44.

⁴⁵ Sikand, “Peace, Dialogue and Da‘wā,” 41.

⁴⁶ Sikand, “Peace, Dialogue and Da‘wā,” 43.

compulsion. A perhaps somewhat ambiguous image of Khan's thinking regarding an Islamic polity is sketched out. On one hand, the idea that the scope of Islam is wide enough to provide the workings of life in its entirety is affirmed. On the other hand, "the Islamists" focus on the wrong issues by making the political setup of a system into something absolutely central in Islam, while only the personal submission to the one and only God is absolute. When Muslims are allowed to guide their personal lives according to the sharia and fulfil their religious obligations, as in India, such a political system is in complete harmony with Islam. Here, Sikand's work would have been strengthened by analysing these ideological notions even further with regard to other prominent religious thinkers' debates on the same issues, while considering what freedom of religion, democracy, and secularism entails in India, both in discourse and in practice.

Sikand's work converge with my own research in the choice of source material, principally two important works by Khan, the 1999 *Islam and Peace* and the 2001 *Islam Rediscovered – Discovering Islam from its Original Sources*. These two around-the-millennium works by Khan illustrate Khan's thought as discussed later in this study. Therefore, Sikand is one scholar who has used a recent selection of primary sources when writing about Khan. Yet, his work is also limited because, first, it does not deal in detail with these sources or other major works that Khan wrote after 2001. Second, while Sikand's article, as well as in translating and editing a selection of representative works by Khan, reveals both an empathetic and deep understanding of Khan's thought, his analysis lacks a clear theoretical distinction. Sikand highlights that Khan shares the notion of individual salvation with the *Tablīghī Djamā'at* while his intellectual claim to both the authority and the need for *idjtiḥād* sets him closer to Islamism (yet with entirely different ideological outcomes).⁴⁷ As will be argued in this study, these analytical stances are entirely correct – yet insufficient.⁴⁸ Khan's intellectual context must be taken into further consideration while also focussing on the role of the Indian state and the forces of globalisation in creating the very conditions that Khan is addressing.

Jamal Malik briefly mentions Khan in his seminal 2008 *Islam in South Asia: A Short History*.⁴⁹ Using secondary sources by Troll and the 2003 article by Sikand, Malik mentions Khan's claim to absolute *idjtiḥād*, as well as his positions against an enforced sharia and for a separation between religion and politics. Malik contends that Khan, while advocating peaceful proselytising "at the same time create and recreate the notion of Muslims being a – minority

⁴⁷ The Muslim preaching organisation *Tablīghī Djamā'at* is described in Chapter 2.

⁴⁸ Sikand, "Peace, Dialogue and Da'wā," 35.

⁴⁹ Jamal Malik, *Islam in South Asia: A Short History* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 439.

and yet united – religious entity.”⁵⁰ While Malik’s work will be used for theoretical and contextual purposes, this highly generalised assessment of Khan, while it may very well be true, cannot be said to be substantiated from the very limited and brief secondary sources that Malik puts to use when presenting his analysis. Importantly, Malik’s work is set in the context of describing Aḥmad Madanī (d. 1957, see Chapter 2 below), whose *Composite Nationalism and Islam* of 1938 is said to not bring the various elements in pluralist India truly together into one nation. Instead, Madanī’s composite nationalism is regarded as a manipulation and temporary convenience for the eventual victory and dominance of Islam in India – hence an “Islamist trap.” While the tendencies in Khan’s thinking towards the eventual possibility of a voluntary and participatory Islamic polity have been mentioned, and will be discussed further in this study, it is possible that Khan’s attempt at an inward directed critique, of the Indian ‘*ulamā*’ and Muslim community – for not moving with the times and not seeing the possibilities in modernity – is coloured by Madanī’s ideology, understood as an “Islamist trap” by Malik.

The historian Ayesha Jalal briefly outlines Khan in a 2008 study aimed at describing the conceptual history of jihad in the South Asian context.⁵¹ Citing Khan’s 2002 *The True Jihad*, his thinking on jihad is sympathetically characterised as one of perfecting faith through its propagation, while striving in virtuous living by observing the religious commandments. Jalal’s brief description does not address how Khan reaches his conclusions, nor is an analysis of Khan’s thinking attempted.

The Islamic studies scholar, Jeffrey R. Halverson’s rather straightforward 2012 study of more or less contemporary defenders of Islamic non-violence, includes Khan in a separate chapter.⁵² Labelling Khan as “The Ascetic,” because of his clothing and simple lifestyle, Halverson provides a brief biography of Khan, culminating in the foundation of CPS in 2001. Using the already mentioned works by Omar, Sikand, and Nasr, as well as Khan’s own *Islam and Peace* (1999), *God Arises* (1985), and the January 1993 English edition of *al-Risāla*, along with entries from webpages associated with Khan, Halverson portrays Khan’s properties as an Islamic non-violence thinker. Khan’s ideas on the building of a peaceful society by means of education as the most urgent jihad is elucidated, along with some arguments he raises from the Quran. God is presented as peace-loving and patience is the foremost Islamic virtue, entailing only non-violence. Khan’s arguments on the principles of the *Hudaybiyya* peace treaty are also depicted.

⁵⁰ Malik, *Islam in South Asia*, 440.

⁵¹ Ayesha Jalal, *Partisans of Allah: Jihad in South Asia* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008). 266–267.

⁵² Jeffrey R. Halverson, *Searching for a King: Muslim Non-violence and the Future of Islam* (Washington D.C: Potomac Books, 2012), 101–110.

The establishment of peace, despite the stipulation of distasteful conditions meant that the energies of the Muslims were not spent in vain, enabling the eventual victory of Islam and the peaceful conquest of Mecca. Khan's role as peace-broker in the aftermath of Ayodhya 1992 is delineated, while the Muslim ire that his commitment to dialogue with radical elements in the *Hindutva* family has drawn is likened to the fates of Martin Luther King (d. 1968) and Mohandas Gandhi (d.1948).⁵³ While a thoughtful and committed engagement with Khan's thought, Halverson's work is not an attempt at thorough analysis. The ten pages dedicated to Khan are set in a context of demonstrating the potentials of Islamic non-violence and highlighting Muslim champions of non-violence. His work ultimately aims at highlighting the definitive need for a Muslim form of non-violence in order to improve the conditions for shared human life and to verify the existence of the likes of Gandhi and King in the Muslim faith. Halverson's work, therefore, is perhaps aimed at general readers, journalists, and students who may have questions concerning the image of Islam and violence. The well-versed Halverson's aim at informing about Khan as an ideologue of Islamic non-violence should perhaps best be seen as highly commendable in a situation of American and international anti-Muslim ideology, and not as a critical scholarly attempt at contextualising Khan discursively or historically.

The latest mention of Khan found in the scholarly literature is *A Nonviolent Identity: A Psychobiographical Study of an Islamic Scholar*, written by Tomas Lindgren in 2018.⁵⁴ Based on several interviews with Khan and 15 of Khan's published works in English, Lindgren's work converge with my own in terms of source material. However, Lindgren focusses on Khan's *identity* in relation to Indian culture and society. Using a psychobiographical framework developed by McAdams and Polkinghorne, Lindgren analyses Khan's ideology mainly as an expression of his culturally and linguistically embedded identity. Hence, Lindgren has a psychological analytical focus, understanding Khan through his biographical life narratives and its formative *episodes*, dividing it into life chapters, significant persons, crises, problems, and most importantly, recurring life themes. In this framework, Lindgren formulates that Khan expresses two inner voices in his own self; the political activist and the political quietist. These voices both condemn violent political activism, but the activist gives voice to a socially concerned and hence, political, non-violent Islam, while the quietist denies that his statements are inherently political. A recurrent life theme of Khan, according to Lindgren, is his striving for autonomy through spiritual perfection and self-mastery. By becoming a religious reformer,

⁵³ Halverson, *Searching for a King*, 110.

⁵⁴ Tomas Lindgren, "A Nonviolent Identity: A Psychobiographical Study of an Islamic Scholar," *Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion*, volume 29 (2018): 96–122.

Khan expresses his major ideas and experiences of accountability and individual achievement, fundamentally informed by his understanding of the basic Islamic teachings of a day of judgement.⁵⁵ In conclusion, Lindgren analyses the case of Khan's thought and life in relation to the literature on the psychological aspects of the non-violent personality, as well as the literature on civil resistance, mainly Gene Sharp. In relation to such theoretical approaches, Lindgren states that Khan stands for a principled type of "micro-level" religious non-violence that is based on self-control of emotions and violent impulses, as well as transcendental experiences of the unity of mankind and the oneness of God.⁵⁶ These ideas and experiences, it is held, are fundamentally mediated through culture and language.

Lindgren's psychobiographical approach significantly adds to the scholarly body of knowledge, especially in general terms of including Muslims in the psychobiographical cultural analytical literature, as well as in relation to the literature on the peaceful personality and the psychological aspects of civil resistance. What is more, Lindgren's study appears as one of the most empirically ambitious to date, using several interviews and some of the newest publications of Khan. Therefore, it is currently the best overview of the universal traits of Khan's recent, post-2001, ideological developments, and his aim to move away from a Muslim-oriented, to a universal human-oriented point of view highlighting *spirituality* as a motive. In this respect, and by its substantial results, the study has been highly informative for my own investigation and analysis.

However, the generally psychological focus of Lindgren's rather short study, by its very nature, underplays the political, ideological, and religiously embedded aspects of Khan's thought. This gives rise to several questions that emerge from the perspective chosen in the investigation at hand. To what degree can Khan's polarity between political activism and political quietism, rather, be understood in relation to the ideological and religious debate situation, in India as well as globally? That is, what is the relationship between Khan's need to appear as *apolitical* to the anti-Muslim ideology of Hindu nationalism, as well as after 2001, international anti-Islamic rhetoric that condemns Islam for its inherently *political* character? And what does other, comparable, Muslim scholars say about Islam and politics in the Indian context, and how does Khan's thought relate to them? That is to say, what analytical outcomes are generated if Khan's ideology is understood not in terms of psychology, but rather in terms of *tradition*, *debate*, and *contestation* in Indian reform Islam in general? Based on such questions, this study will analyse Khan as an *ālim* who aims to publically watch over the

⁵⁵ Lindgren, "A Nonviolent Identity," 114.

⁵⁶ Lindgren, "A Nonviolent Identity," 116.

authentic Islamic teachings in a time of intense upheaval, contestation, and change. As the aims of this study makes clear, by firmly placing Khan in the context of ideological and religious debate – addressing the surrounding political and social issues – even minor points in Lindgren’s study, such as the dream vision of Khan’s mother at the night of his birth, can be further analysed as a claim to religious authority formulated in the particular context of Indian Islam.

1.3.1 Conclusion

The important and crucial contributions for the study of Khan from various angles and at various depths outlined above highlight the importance of studying Khan by means of a thorough attempt at contextualisation. Such contextualisation should aim at establishing the ideological developments of Indian reform Islam and Islamic modernism in India, as well as an increasingly tense situation for Islam and Indian Muslims due to a number of historical processes. The survey of earlier research also reveals a need to focus on developments since the turn of the millennia, highlighting Khan’s ideological developments since 2001 and the founding of the Centre for Peace and Spirituality. This have been a period of extensive publishing for Khan, and in a scientific study of religious thought this must be contextually analysed with regard to current Indian developments. After Sikand’s 2003 article, citing one major work written by Khan in 2001, only Lindgren’s psychobiographical study cites primary sources by Khan written subsequently. Furthermore, while Halverson includes Khan in a varied work which highlights several international Muslim non-violence proponents, no in-depth comparison is attempted in this or any other of the cited studies. Hence, Khan may perhaps fruitfully be compared to other similar Muslim advocates of non-violence and peace in terms of both ideological content and historical, structural conditions. The aims of this study, and the principal and specific research questions, are formulated with these identified gaps in the scholarly literature in mind.

1.4 Rationale and Relevance

As the research problem delineates, Muslims present their religion and debate the appropriate and legitimate political means and ends, such as the use of violence or non-violence, in relation to an immediate context. With regard to the perspectives of Khan already developed in the literature, the survey of the relevant literature reveals a lack of scholarly engagement with

Khan's works since the turn of the millennium, and the strong need for a critical view of Khan's ideas with regard to both ideological and socio-political context. With this identified gap in the literature in mind, this study attempts to broaden the viewpoint beyond the outlook of Khan's ideology, as the following chapters will aim to do. Chapter 2 will aim to show the debate on Islam and the main socio-political context of India. It also intends to review the on-going scholarly discussion attempting to understand and explain Islam, non-violence, and peace as categories of thought and ideological content. I return to these perspectives in Chapter 8 below, in which I aim to outline some prevailing international presentations of Islam in terms of non-violence and peace in comparison to Khan's thought. Chapter 3 aims to make available a theoretical framework of how to analyse Khan's thought mainly in relation to the ideological, as well as political and social changes associated with the processes of globalisation. By analysing the findings of this study in the light of current theoretical understandings of Islam, this work also challenges certain contemporary theoretical perspectives and highlights their strengths and weaknesses. The relevance of this study, therefore, is that it also aims to contribute to the general scholarly theoretical discussion of contemporary Islam, both globally and in India.

1.4.1 Why Islam, Non-Violence, and Peace?

This study primarily deals with these categories in the thinking of Khan for two reasons. First, the titles of Khan's major works in English since the turn of the millennium clearly indicate such categories of thought. Apparently, Khan propagates the subjects, in titles such as *Islam and World Peace* (2015), *The Age of Peace* (2015), *The True Jihad: The Concepts of Peace, Tolerance and Non-Violence in Islam* (2002), *Islam and Peace* (1999), *The Ideology of Peace* (2003), *Non-Violence and Peace-Building in Islam* (2017), and *The Prophet of Peace* (2009). This study is, therefore, an investigation into what Khan means by using these categories and concepts.

Second, this study attempts to analyse Khan's thought as meaningfully addressing a number of political and social issues, or in what way the context may have influenced the development of Khan's ideas and thinking. As the Research Problem delineated, and Chapters 2 and 8 aim to make clear, other historical and contemporary Muslim debaters and writers use the same categories of thought, but with different outcomes in terms of ideological content; meaningful only in relation to their immediate contexts. Therefore, a study of Khan's use of these concepts should aim, as this work does, to analyse not only Khan's thought, but how he formulates the

content of his ideas in relation to social and political context. For analytical purposes, this may highlight not only Khan's treatment of Islam, non-violence, and peace, but may also, to some degree, increase our understanding of the workings of the increasingly globalised Indian contemporary society. This is the immediate context within which Khan's ideas aim to guide social action in a meaningful way.

To study the categories of Islam, non-violence, and peace, albeit in the sense of ideology, means perhaps to approach closer to the field of peace and conflict studies. One prominent theoretician within this field of study, Johan Galtung (b. 1930), points out the sustained effort within the field of peace and conflict studies in the search for peace by peaceful means.⁵⁷ In relation to this quest, Douglas Johnston and Brian Cox highlight "the increasing need to apply religious principles and instruments to the practical work of conflict prevention and resolution."⁵⁸ To analyse the formulations of Islam, non-violence, and peace, i.e. "religious principles," by a prominent contemporary Muslim writer can be clearly and simply motivated with reference to such perspectives and understandings.

1.4.2 Why Wahiduddin Khan?

As delineated in the research problem, while concepts and history writing relating to Islam may be perceived differently, Khan stands out in his clear presentation of Islam, non-violence, and peace. Khan has formulated such positions during the course of an active life as a prolific writer. Furthermore, Khan has for a long time been a public spokesperson in India for peace, non-violence, reconciliation, and tolerance from an Islamic perspective. He has been an active writer since the 1970s and, as Chapter 5 will reveal, he has been prominent in Indian society since at least the early 1990s.

Furthermore, Chapter 8 summarises the realities and main points of a contemporary and global development of non-violent understandings of Islam. However, among the writers which will be cited and while writing from their respective contexts, perspectives, and experiences, none reveal the range of publications and types of works which Khan has produced. It may also be mentioned that Khan, born in 1925, is, while enviably vital, a man of advanced years. Personal research interviews in line with any serious engagement with his thought were

⁵⁷ Johan Galtung, *Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization* (London: Sage, 1996).

⁵⁸ Douglas Johnston and Brian Cox, "Faith-Based Diplomacy and Preventive Engagement," in *Faith-Based Diplomacy: Trumping Realpolitik*, ed. Douglas Johnston (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2003), 15.

therefore, not only necessary in general, but also in particular, regarded as better achieved as soon as possible.

Most important for scientific purposes, the review of earlier studies revealed a lack of critical engagement with Khan's thought, especially with regard to his major works in English since the turn of the millennium. In general, this can be perceived by pointing out the lack of studies which analyse Khan's thought with reference to context. In particular, it was found that studies which treat his thought in a critical manner, during the period since the turn of the millennium, was largely missing, except Lindgren's psycho-biographical study.

Moreover, Chapters 2 and 8 reveal some prominent, historical, and contemporary examples of both global and Indian writers and religious leaders who use the categories of Islam, non-violence, and peace in their thought and practice. Chapter 2 will also aim to charter the scholarly discussions of how to grapple such developments of presenting Islam, especially in British India. Furthermore, Chapter 3 aims to establish a theoretical framework for the purpose of analysing Khan's thought in this study. However, these theoretical discussions reveal a lack of scholarly consensus, and largely differing perspectives. Hence, the theoretical perspectives of scholars analysing Muslim positions of Islam, non-violence, and peace, during both the period of British India and the contemporary global one need to be expanded upon. By studying the particular and outstanding case of Khan's thought in the light of the changing circumstances in social and political context, and analyse it with regard to conceptual and theoretical understandings, this study aims, at least to some degree, to contribute to the current scholarly discussions of Islam in India and beyond.

Lastly, studying Khan's body of thought and context can be motivated in the words of the influential theoretician and historian Marshall G.S. Hodgson. He formulated already in 1974 how the most significant understandings of Islam of the twenty-first century should be sought within the Indian context, since:

The Muslims of the Indian Union find themselves, within the bounds of one national state, in a position which all Muslims occupy in reality (if less visibly) in the world at large – for the Muslims of the world likewise form a scattered minority in a world society they cannot control.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Marshall G.S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History in a World Civilization, Volume Three, The Gunpowder Empires and Modern Times* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974), 440.

As shown in Chapter 2, the Indian Muslim minority is probably the most significant minority of any kind in the world. The importance of how Indian Muslims and the debate on Islam continue to grapple with the minority situation of Islam in India only becomes more significant considering contemporary global developments. Therefore, and as a clear departure from earlier studies, this investigation aims to describe and analyse how Khan formulates his position of Islam within a context of globalisation, and the fraught position of Muslims, in India as well as the world community.

1.5 Limitations and Clarifications

1.5.1 Notes on Languages

The aim of this study is to analyse Khan's ideas on Islam, non-violence, and peace in relation to ideological content and socio-political context. To achieve these purposes, the study will limit its main focus to English translations of Khan's works published since around the turn of the millennium. The survey of the relevant literature revealed most prominently that, while this was a period of active writing by Khan, to a large extent it goes uncommented in terms of critical and thorough analysis.

As discussed in Chapter 4, qualitative interviews with Khan is one main material used in this study. These interviews were conducted in English, a language which we both share. Although Khan himself do not make a claim to any personal proficiency in this language, his vocabulary and syntax during these interviews nevertheless reveal a deep engagement with the decisive language of India's colonial period. Apart from minor misunderstandings and repetitions familiar to any formal conversation, due to mishearing, enunciation, and pronunciation, such minor flaws could almost without exception be recuperated in the process of transcribing the interviews, which were always recorded.

As the main source materials, written texts and interviews, are limited to the English language, any further study into Khan's thought, including interviews and written material in Urdu, may reveal limitations in the understanding of Khan's ideas set out in this study. However, the analysis of Khan's thought presented here, and the crucial issue of whether the present work (in which English is the sole operational language) represents an advancement of our understanding, must be regarded in relation to previous research only.

With regard to the limitations of source material in English, I notice that the attempt by the CPS and Goodword Books to publish Khan's works in English reveals not only an effort to

broadcast his ideas beyond an audience of Indian Muslims. The use of English may, on one hand, be seen as an attempt at reaching a more global audience, perhaps appropriate for internet-users or diaspora communities all over the world. However, on the other hand, English remains a common language in India, constitutionally ruled by the three-language formula, Hindi, English, and a regional language. Hence, Urdu was legally marginalised and more and more speakers of Urdu in India turn to Hindi and English, and the number of publications in Urdu are in a general decline.⁶⁰ In this regard, some comments on the politicisation and use, or disuse, of Urdu are appropriate here. Despite the fact that Urdu was made the official common language in Pakistan, in actuality it is the mother tongue of only a very small minority, somewhere around 4%, of the total population. This minority were mainly politically and socially influential migrants from Punjab and Bihar. However, this association between Urdu and Pakistan is part and parcel of the claim by certain Hindu nationalists of Urdu-speaking Muslims as being disloyal to India. This particular claim serves as a vehicle for attempts at excluding Muslims from democratic participation, while some Indian Muslim activists campaign for minority rights, including language rights and issues. Hence, for several interested parties, mobilisation around the symbolism of Urdu, whether for its protection or detracting, is a major factor, and has been since at least Sayyid Ahmad Khan's pro-Urdu activism. Perhaps, there may be something of a political and social symbolism also regarding Khan's works being translated into English. For someone searching for Khan's works in English, it is striking how easily available these are, not only abroad, or in Europe by internet retail or download, but also in India, such as in the CPS bookshop in Delhi.

I make three suggestions for how to understand the very phenomenon of Khan's publications in English. First, Khan's thought can be understood as a thorough attempt of distinguishing what is Islam from what may be regarded as political and communal issues in Indian society. With regard to a context in which Urdu may be apprehended through a lens of political symbolism, the vast publication of Khan's works in English translation may be interpreted as part of an attempt to stand above the creation of such political and social binaries. Perhaps somewhat unexpectedly, since only 5% of India's population are fluent in English, writing in English is in fact recognised in Indian society as "national."⁶¹ This is due both to the status of the English language in connection to globalisation, as well as the place and history of English in India's colonial history. With regard to globalisation, Olivier Roy argues that the "products"

⁶⁰ Malik, *Islam in South Asia*, 289.

⁶¹ Rashmi Sadana, "Writing in English," in *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Indian Culture*, ed. Vasudha Dalmia and Rashmi Sadana (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 134.

of a global “religious market” are increasingly “standardised,” suggesting that, as an agent of globalisation, English has become the major “marketing language.”⁶²

Second, publishing in English may very well reveal the class issues and which type of educated public Khan and the CPS are aiming at reaching. English proficiency, education, and belonging to the middle to upper class remain conspicuous common denominators of Indian society.⁶³

Third, it may also, simply, reflect the marketing strategy of Khan’s publishing house, Goodword Books. When the use of Urdu and demand for Urdu writings is in general decline in India it makes good sense – in strict market terms – rather to publish in English, again, as it is regarded as a “national” language.

What is important here is that these proposals all point to the importance of analysing Khan’s writings published in English. In fact, the works by Khan which represent the latest stage of his production and ideological development reveal some major English titles, most notably *The Prophet of Peace* (2009) published by Penguin Books. This stage stretches roughly from the late 1990s to the contemporary time and represents the empirical focus of this study. Especially, the year 2001 is important. It saw the publishing of some major titles and Khan also launched the CPS. I will argue that this period represents the clearest attempt in the development of Khan’s thinking to highlight the universal tenets of Islam without communal, cultural, or national pretexts. This attempt represents a familiar development – the tendency to present Islam without local or cultural appendages, a topic to which we return in Chapter 3. Khan’s strong attempt to repudiate communal and polity-oriented positions, by highlighting the universal themes of Islam, also coincides with a large body of his major works being translated into English. The very medium of the English language is, therefore, regarded as potentially communicating some important underlying messages. Understanding the importance of the medium may perhaps be relevant in order to properly understand the contents of Khan’s message. In any case, it is argued that Khan’s English translations represent an important and vital part of his production. Any flaw in terms of understanding and analysing Khan’s ideas, as

⁶² Chapter 3 will outline that the use of the vernacular languages or English also furthers the individualisation process which distinguishes religion from the knowledge of or immersion in culture. It leads to the parting of faith communities from ethnic or national culture and identity. See Olivier Roy, *Holy Ignorance: When Religion and Culture Part Ways* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 160.

⁶³ English education has long been associated with upward social mobility in Indian society. In relation to such language- and class issues, Dalit activists, for instance Delhi-based columnist Chandrabhan Prasad have sought to challenge the exclusivity of English education by aiming at making English not only available to Dalits, but constructing it as a Dalit language. See Sadana, *Writing in English*, 137.

it is presented here by reliance solely on his written and spoken statements in English may only be revealed by future studies.

1.5.2 Notes on the Use of Khan's Quran Translation

In this study, Quranic verses will be cited from Khan's English Quran translation. Many editions and versions of Khan's *Tazkirul Quran*, a 1986 Quran translation into Urdu, have been published.⁶⁴ An Arabic edition appeared in 2009 and a Hindi version in 2008.⁶⁵ This study uses his 2011 English edition, with plentiful commentary and notes regarding each Quranic verse.⁶⁶ A general characteristic of this translation is regarding the substantial commentary which at many times exceeds by far the Quranic verse itself in length. Complete with an introduction⁶⁷ that summarily presents the main themes and points in Khan's thinking, this work is a goldmine for any study of how Khan understands and presents Islam.⁶⁸

Using Khan's Quran translation should not be seen as presenting the original Quranic meaning. This would not be accurate from either a Muslim perspective, preferring the original Arabic text, or a scholarly perspective. Instead, Khan's English Quran translation is used for understanding and analysing how Khan presents the meaning of the Quranic verses.

Another important note regarding quotations from the Quran concerns different spellings, formulations, and type of references in different works by Khan. In many writings of Khan, he refers to verses in the Quran by quoting word by word. However, and at other times he simply refers to the verse number, the Arabic name of the Sura, or, in particular during interviews, even the general theme of a certain verse. Cited translations or given verse numbers do not always match word by word or digit by digit in different works. In no way being critical of the understanding of how Khan presents an issue, when mistakes or inaccuracies are discovered these are mentioned in the footnotes. I handle the cross-references of Quranic verses and numbers in Khan's collected works and recorded statements by always referring back to the 2011 English edition Quran translation, positioning that work as a standard or reference text

⁶⁴ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Tazkirul Quran* (New Delhi: Goodword Books, 1986).

⁶⁵ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *al-Tadhkir al-Qavim fi Tafsir al-Quran al-Hakim* (New Delhi: Goodword Books, 2009). Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Tazkirul Quran* (New Delhi: Goodword Books, 2008).

⁶⁶ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *The Quran: English Translation, Commentary and Parallel Arabic Text* (New Delhi: Goodword Books, 2011).

⁶⁷ The introduction chapter is also included in the pocket-size editions of Khan's Quran translation into English that are distributed free of charge by CPS, as a means to distribute his presentation of Islam. The free edition does not include the extensive commentary by Khan. <http://www.cpsglobal.org/content/order-free-quran>. Accessed on 2015-02-04.

⁶⁸ Khan, *The Quran*, ix–xvi.

regarding Quran quotations in relation to the empirical matter. This is done for simplicity and overview, but also for the general centrality and literal weight of that particular work. The proceeding is simple, when Khan in text or conversation refers to a Quranic verse by number, or by more or less fully quoting the Arabic words or an English translation of its meaning; for clarity and legibility, I quote that particular Quranic verse as it appears in Khan's 2011 translation or I refer to that work in footnotes.

1.5.3 Notes on Transliteration

This study will follow the form of transliteration developed in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam: New Edition*. Important exceptions are words that may be regarded as wholly incorporated into the English language, such as Sufi, jihad, Islam, Muslim, Quran, hadith, Sura, Sunna, Shia, Sunni, fatwa, madrasa, and sharia. Accordingly, when these words appear in the plural form, I add an *s* to the word in the singular form; as in Sufis, madrasas, or fatwas. One exception is hadith, which may be translated as “talk” or “narrative.” This study uses the word *hadith*, as most English academic literature about Islam, in the sense of *al-ḥadīth*, a tradition of what the Prophet said or did, or his tacit approval of something said or done. Hadith is generally used in English as an innumerable word, and I follow that practice here; for instance, one hadith, two hadith (instead of two *aḥadīth*); or the hadith, those hadith. However, the plural form of transliterated non-loanwords will be marked, especially ‘*ulamā*’, singular; ‘*ālim*’.

I use the simplified English spelling, Quran, instead of the scholarly correct *al-Kur‘ān*, or the equally common “Qur’an.” Although the latter spelling indicates the glottal stop, which better represents the accurate Arabic pronunciation, my argument is simple; a loanword should be spelled grammatically correct, which, in English, generally excludes symbols within a single word. The form “al-gebra” is not immediately recognisable English, no matter if that form of spelling help us to pronounce more accurately in Arabic parts of the title of a crucial medieval mathematical treatise.

No form of transliteration is changed when a source is quoted, this also includes referring to differently transliterated Arabic Islamic terms in the titles of published works. The forms and styles of transliteration may, therefore, differ among different quotes and sources, even on the same page, for instance, the reader will find both the transliterated form, *idjtiḥād*, when individual legal reasoning is discussed by me in this study, or by Khan during an interview, and the simplified form, “*ijtiḥad*,” when quoted directly from a published source. *Da‘wa* (‘calling’ or ‘inviting;’ ‘proselytisation’) and “*dawah*” is another recurrent example.

This also applies to the way authors' names are transcribed, or how a quoted writer transliterates names, of a person, movement, or group. I will follow the form of transliteration of authors published in English, or established transliterations of names in English academic writing, for instance Sayyid Ahmad Khan or Mawdudi. Furthermore, I will not transliterate names of places that are established in general English or in the relevant academic literature; for instance, Delhi, instead of *Dihlī*, or Babri Masjid instead of *Bābur i-Masḍjid*. However, I transliterate all Arabic Islamic terms in interview transcripts, hence *masḍjid*, when the word is used by Khan during an interview (in this case also because mosque is the more generally recognised English word).

Without exception, Khan's works in English, and on webpages and digital sources, gives the form Maulana Wahiduddin Khan. I will, therefore, not attempt to change this recognised transliteration into another form, such as *Mawlānā Wāḥid ud-Dīn Khān*. This would have entailed rendering Khan's name in two different ways on the same page: a scholarly transliteration in the main text, and a simplified manner in the footnotes, adhering to the given bibliographical information. The term *Maulana*, 'my master,' is used in this study as a description of a certain claim to religious authority, and not as an explicit or implicit acknowledgement of the religious title. Because of the frequent referral to Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, to avoid a sometimes transliteration, I refrain from transliterating Maulana as *Mawlānā* when the title appears in connection with other writers. Moreover, following the general practice of referring to surnames in English academic writing, I refer to Maulana Wahiduddin Khan simply as "Khan" in the body text. However, in Chapters 2, 8, 9, and 10, I discuss and compare several different persons named Khan. For clarity, in those paragraphs, I refer to the persons by both first and last names, for instance, "Wahiduddin Khan" and "Sayyid Ahmad Khan."

Certain references in Khan's works to Arabic words or names are not mentioned in the relevant literature or the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. I use quotation marks around these words to mark that I do not know the correct transliteration, and that I use the same form of transliteration as in the quoted source. All *sub verbo* references to general matters pertaining to Islamic Arabic terms are from *Encyclopaedia of Islam: New Edition*, unless another reference is mentioned.

1.6 Outline of the Study

This study is divided into three main parts. The first part, *Aim, Background, Method* is made up of Chapters 1 to 4. Chapter 1, which ends here, charted its way through a formulation of the

research problem, analysing Khan's thought in relation to an ideological and religious debate situation shaped by the issues pertaining to a political and social situation. Therefore, Chapter 1 also sought to begin to describe this situation and how Islam, non-violence, and peace is part and parcel of it. Chapter 2 aims to describe the background of modern reform and contestation of Islam in India. Chapter 3 will aim to establish a theoretical framework for analysing and guiding the collection of material in this study. This theoretical background ranges from the objectification of Islam to the globalisation and the function of religion in relation to the political structure of the modern state. Chapter 4 outlines and motivates the main methodological choices and the type of materials used in this study.

Part 2 of this study, *Investigation of the Thought of Wahiduddin Khan* is made up of Chapters 5 to 7. Chapter 5 sketches a brief overview of Khan's life and main ideological and religious developments. The account of Khan's life is presented with regard to the historical context, ranging from British India over the post-Independence era to the current era of globalisation and digital communications. Chapter 6 and 7 itemises the observable empirical basis of this study. Chapter 6 aims to present in detail Khan's general thinking on Islam, non-violence, and peace. Chapter 7 focusses instead on three particular cases of Khan's applications of Islam, non-violence, and peace: Jammu and Kashmir, Palestine, and gender relations in married life. For purposes of clarity and disposition and to further the analysis in the ending third of the study, contextual and historical references are made throughout these chapters.

Part 3 of this study, *Analysis of the Thought of Wahiduddin Khan* is made up of Chapters 8 to 10. Chapter 8 aims to analyse the materials mainly presented in Chapters 5 to 7 with reference to an Indian situation of ideological and religious debate, and a political and social situation with its associated issues, as they are related in Chapter 2. In addition, it attempts at comparisons between Khan's thought to contemporary global Muslim positions on Islam, non-violence, and peace. The purpose of the comparisons is to highlight the unique case of Khan, as well as shared contemporary issues and ideological and religious positions. Chapter 9 aims to analyse Khan's thought by recourse to the categories and concepts established in the theoretical framework and discussing its possibilities and limits by suggesting a possible theoretical synthesis. Chapter 10 closes this study by way of summarising its empirical and theoretical contributions. Additionally, by discussing issues related to the generalisability of the analysis I propose a theoretical contribution. Last in Chapter 10, I also aim to isolate and suggest further areas of research made possible by this study.

India: Religious Debate and Conflictual Context

2.1 Analysis with Regard to Situation

Detailed descriptions and analysis of Islamic thought and practice with rigorous regard to context is, in essence, what makes the study of Islam and Muslims scientific.¹ Attention to context alongside conceptual constructs and substantial propositions, regarding the vast subject of Islam in South Asia, guides the analysis. This section will draw on the insights and scholarly discussions of a number of distinguished historians of Islam and Muslims in South Asia, especially; Aziz Ahmad, Barbara Metcalf, Francis Robinson, Jamal Malik, Marshall G.S. Hodgson, Mohammad Mujeeb, Muhammad Qasim Zaman, Mushirul Hasan, Peter Hardy, and Wilfred Cantwell Smith. I would also like to mention Ishtiaq Ahmed; while working at the Political Science department at Stockholm University during the 1980s, Ahmed was among the pioneers of the contemporary study of Islam and Muslims in Sweden, especially with regard to the South Asian context.

In line with the aims and attempts at analysing the situation of Khan, the need for background and context, can be seen in a quote by Barbara Metcalf, a leading scholar on Muslims and Islam in South Asia:

Much more than the words on the page or the words spoken is communicated. It is in the social and cultural practices surrounding each text that larger messages – a kind of informal curriculum – also need to be understood.²

As explained in Chapter 4, analysing ideological, as well as political and social, factors can be achieved by ways of moving between part (the ideological and religious thought under study) and its wider context, “the social and cultural practices.” With strict regard to the field under study here, Islam, non-violence, and peace in the thinking of Khan, historical circumstances and developments as they relate to his thinking are considered. The purpose is to delineate both an ideological and religious situation, and a political and social situation, of Khan’s thinking.

¹ Jan Hjärpe, “Perspektiv på islamologin: essentialism eller religionsantropologi?,” in Otterbeck and Stenberg, *Islamologi*, 277.

² Barbara D. Metcalf, “The Transmission of Learning: Introduction,” in *Islam in South Asia: In Practice*, ed. Barbara D. Metcalf (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 189.

The purpose is to set up an analysis of their potential relationships. Analysing the situation of Khan's thought in this manner, can be achieved by means of comparison and moving between the part, i.e. Khan's presentation of Islam, non-violence, and peace, and the whole – the general context.

2.2 The Creation of Modern Islam

A regional focus here should not be allowed to obscure the patterns of interactions that connected Islam in India with the immense coastal regions of the Indian Ocean basin and the interior mainland north-west of it. In the words of historian Marshall G.S. Hodgson: "The Islamicate tradition had always been linked with the Irano-Semitic tradition of the region from Nile to Oxus."³ Scholars moved along great merchant networks and trade routes, especially to and from Mecca and Medina. Spreading out from these central routes, scholars and missionaries moved from Arabia and India to the more distant parts of this vast area. This oceanic network of trade and communication which supported Islamic interaction, became increasingly disturbed by the European expansion from the sixteenth century and on. Subsequently, the lines of world trade became more and more shaped along European controlled routes. After the death of Mughal ruler Awrangzīb in 1707, a period of revolts turned into serious wars of succession. Muslim political and military power became even more fragmented when Afghan and Persian invaders fought for dominance with Sikh, Hindu, and Muslim rulers and military leaders. In the long run, it was a European foreign power, the East India Company, supported by the British imperial state, which came to dominate the subcontinent. Through alliances with local rulers, this European power took advantage of weaknesses among its adversaries, and effectively overturned and replaced Mughal political rule in India.⁴

The Muslim religious and cultural response to the changing political and social situation was to a significant degree shaped by the works and educational reforms of Shāh Walī Allāh al-Dihlawī (d. 1762). While much scholarly literature set up the Ḥanbali theologian Muḥammad Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb (d. 1792) as the apex of Muslim socio-moral reconstruction in general and the birth of modern Islamic reform in particular, Walī Allāh reformulates and synthesises many of the eighteenth century Islamic currents and developments, and relates them to the historical

³ Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Vol. 3, The Gunpowder Empires*, 147.

⁴ Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Vol. 3, The Gunpowder Empires*, 144–151.

situation in India.⁵ After returning from study in the Hejaz, Walī Allāh resumed control of an important Delhi madrasa inaugurated by his father. From this position he shaped the curriculum, and thus to a large degree outlined the future study of Islam in India. Walī Allāh regarded many works by earlier jurists as superfluous and instead focussed his attention on the study of hadith, a major theme of eighteenth-century Islamic reform. In what he perceived as the danger to Islam in a time of decline for the Muslim community, Walī Allāh supported *idjtiḥād*, individual legal reasoning based on the Quran and the Sunna, in order to bring the community closer to the perceived Islamic ideal. Such educational and ideological formations, along with his presentation of Sufism in general and the Sufi thought of Ibn al-‘Arabī (d. 1240) in particular, were his major contributions to dealing with Muslim disunity in India. With regard to Islamic law, Walī Allāh saw the need to staunchly uphold the sharia. In relation to his theories of the need for and characteristics of a Muslim polity, Walī Allāh invited Muslim rulers, most famously the ruler of Afghanistan, Aḥmad Shāh Abdālī (r. 1747–1772), in an attempt to achieve the political goal of redeeming the abode of Islam. Such armed jihad was not only seen by Walī Allāh as legitimate in terms of self-defence. He also regarded it as a dynamic and cleansing force. The immediate political and social situation for such ideological conceptualisations was the rise of the Marathas and the Jats, as organised political powers.⁶ Their anti-Muslim policies shaped a lasting Indian tradition of Muslim resistance to non-Muslim power.⁷

In relation to Sufism, on one hand, Walī Allāh mistrusted religious syncretism and accused the Sufis for condoning idolatry. On the other hand, he did not reject all aspects of Sufism and instead sought to unite diverse Sufi thought and practice into a largely acceptable whole. The concept of the unity of being, *waḥdat al-wudjūd*, identified with the position of Ibn al-‘Arabī, had been criticised for its association with pantheism by the important *Nakṣhabandiyya* scholar *Shaykh* Aḥmad Sirhindī (d. 1624). In a seventeenth century socio-political context in which *waḥdat al-wudjūd* was associated with the syncretistic spirit of the earlier Mughal Akbar I (r. 1556–1605) it was probably seen as coming dangerously close to monistic Vedānta philosophy, blurring orthodoxy and identity at the court itself.⁸ Sirhindī’s emphasis on the unity of the

⁵ Francis Robinson, *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000), 58. Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999), 209. Mohammad Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 2003), 277–279.

⁶ The Hindu Jat Kingdom was centred in Bharatpur, in Rajasthan in Northern India. The rule of Maharaja Suraj Mal (d. 1763) represents the height of Jat political power. The Maratha kingdom became an important political power in Western and Central India, the Deccan Plateau, when Shivaji Maharaja (d. 1680) made the Raigad hill fort his capital in 1674. The Maratha Empire was defeated by the British in 1817–18. For their occasional opposition to the Mughals and promotion of Sanskrit, the house of Shivaji and the Marathas are important in contemporary formulations of Hindu nationalism.

⁷ Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture*, 207–208.

⁸ Malik, *Islam in South Asia*, 176–179.

manifestations of God, *waḥdat al-shuhūd*, which maintained the transcendence of God, had in turn become a politicised position, associated with the more orthodox faction of the contender for the throne, Awrangzīb. Since Ibn al-‘Arabī’s thought had for centuries been closely integrated into Indian Sufism, but was questioned for its heterodox development by the neo-Sufi *Nakshbandiyya*, these politicised religious positions caused major divisions. In the context of weakening Muslim political unity in the eighteenth century, Walī Allāh saw the importance of bringing together these differing factions. He argued convincingly that Ibn al-‘Arabī’s and Sirhindī’s concepts were simply two different descriptions of the same ultimate reality. By this reconciliatory move, Walī Allāh both limited the speculations and extremes of Indian Sufi heterodoxy and integrated Sufi thought and practice along the lines of individual moral virtue.⁹

Another line of disputation was the division of Muslims into differing schools of Sunni law. While scholars of the various schools largely recognised the others, the divisions nevertheless caused disagreements. These differences were seen as a hindrance in a time of Muslim decline. Walī Allāh therefore rejected scholarship of law in favour of the direct study of the Quran and the Sunna. The idea of *taqlīd*, imitation or submission to the jurists of the authoritative schools of law, had to be subordinated to *idjtiḥād* and primarily, to a thorough study of the traditions of the Prophet himself.

In this project of *idjtiḥād* in relation to changing circumstances, Walī Allāh and his family line had an enduring influence on the future development of Islam in India. His mode of adaption beyond the established schools of law inspired widely differing Modernist intellectuals such as Sayyid Ahmad Khan (d. 1898) and Muhammad Iqbal (d. 1938), while the more traditionalist trappings of his theory of *idjtiḥād* directly influenced the dogmas taught at the hugely influential Deobandi school, as we will see.¹⁰ Another enduring ideological influence of Walī Allāh is the theme of commitment to spreading Islamic teachings beyond the immediate circles of the learned, an undertaking that can be seen in the twentieth century missionary activities of the Tablīghī Djamā‘at. This topic can also be seen in the Persian translation of the Quran by Walī Allāh. This early translation work was continued by his influential sons with the first translation into Urdu.¹¹

⁹ Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture*, 203.

¹⁰ Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture*, 205.

¹¹ Malik, *Islam in South Asia*, 255.

2.3 Indian Nineteenth-Century Islamic Revival and Reform

With the crumbling of the Mughal Empire into a number of opposing states and the continuous growth of British power, the continuous political turmoil of the first half of the nineteenth century also saw the beginnings of a highly productive ferment in Islamic thought and practice.

The reformist ideas of Sayyid Aḥmad Brēlwī (d. 1831), along with his active preaching tours and militant political ambition to restore Muslim rule in India, earned him widespread recognition. His case exemplifies a concrete result of the religio-political thought of Shāh Walī Allāh. In Delhi, 1804 Aḥmad Brēlwī became a pupil of the son and successor of Walī Allāh, Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz (d. 1824), whose largely peaceful and pragmatic fatwa legally designating India as *dār al-ḥarb*, was taken up as a call to arms, not against the British but in opposition to the more immediate Sikh rivals.¹² The bonds with Walī Allāh’s family and ideology were further strengthened by the pledge of loyalty to Aḥmad Brēlwī by Walī Allāh’s grandson Shāh Muḥammad Ismā‘īl (d. 1831). Aided by the revolutionary introduction of print technology, Aḥmad Brēlwī’s and Shāh Muḥammad Ismā‘īl’s works *Ṣirāṭ Mustakīm* (“The Straight Path”) and *Taḳwīyyat al-Īmān* (roughly ‘Fortification of God-Fearing Piety’) outlined the movement’s two-pronged aims of religious purification and political motivations.¹³ The weakening of Muslim power and affluence was believed to be due to departures from the faith. Therefore, popular religious practices of heterodox Sufi, Shia, and Hindu origins were vehemently opposed.¹⁴ Mobilising the masses by popular appeal to the old and venerable Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz’s (d. 1824) fatwa, the movement set up a caliphate that was ended in battle against the Sikhs in 1831.¹⁵ Their example nevertheless fostered later caliphate theory. The ideas of Sayyid Aḥmad Brēlwī also had a limited influence under Tītū Mīr, or Mīyan, (d. 1831) who briefly led a Bengal peasant movement against Hindu landlords and British interests before he was killed in battle by the latter power. One could speculate, as does Aziz Ahmad, on the long-term significance of the two miniature Muslim states in place, although for a brief time only, a century before the creation of Pakistan, in largely similar regions; one in the west and one in the east, respectively.

¹² The fatwa largely served the practical legal purposes of facilitating contact with the British without necessitating either *hidjra* or taking up arms in jihad. It is also discussed whether the British tacitly supported the jihad against the Sikhs in order to facilitate the colonial takeover of the Punjab that followed. See Malik, *Islam in South Asia*, 248, 252.

¹³ Robinson, *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia*, 75.

¹⁴ Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture*, 210–211.

¹⁵ Malik, *Islam in South Asia*, 254. Shāh ‘Abd al-‘Azīz was the equally illustrious son of Shāh Walī Allāh.

While the colonial authorities initiated the long-lasting designation of Aḥmad Brēlwī's movement as "Wahhabi," its ideology was in fact far more closely connected with indigenous factors. On one hand, the thought of Walī Allāh, and on the other, the intended reform and integration of the three major Sufi branches, the *Kādirīyya* ("Qadiri"), the *Čiṣṭhi*, and the *Nakṣhabandīyya*, in India.¹⁶ Therefore, unlike the Arabian eighteenth century reformers inspired by Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, Sufism was not totally rejected. Instead, Aḥmad Brēlwī's claim to religious authority was based on the notion of direct guidance from the Prophet Muhammad. Hence, his path should unite these major *ṭarā'iq* into the *Ṭarīqa-yi Muḥammadiyya*, or "Path of Muhammad." The central topic of reforming Sufism within this movement can be seen by considering both the endorsement of the study of hadith, and giving initiation into the *Ṭarīqa-yi Muḥammadiyya*. The latter stressed the tenets of the central place given to the external imitation of the law.¹⁷ This claim to religious authority was also seen as above that of *taḳlīd*, imitation or submission to the authority of established schools of law.

The competing formulations of Islamic reform and claims to religious authority not only continued and diversified further in the second half of the nineteenth century. Almost a generation of scholarship since Barbara Metcalf wrote her authoritative work on *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband 1860–1900*, has convincingly shown that competing reform movements among the Indian 'ulamā' in the late nineteenth century have in fact continued to define sectarian boundaries among Muslims in South Asia to the present day.¹⁸ Thus, a large range of 'ulamā', missionary movements, mosques, educational institutions, and political ventures in Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan continue to be known as "Deobandi," Barēlwi, or *Ahl-i ḥadīth*.

The influential Deobandi sectarian and doctrinal orientation is largely associated with a madrasa which was founded in 1867 in the north Indian town of Deoband, in what is now Uttar Pradesh and grew within ten years into a *Dār-al-'Ulūm*, an institution of higher learning. Its continuing influence can be seen in the thousands of madrasas which are today called Deobandi, albeit without formal connections to the founding school, all sharing the same doctrinal positions with emphasis placed on the study of law and hadith.¹⁹ The Deobandi orientation focusses its attention on cultural reform of prevailing forms of widespread Muslim belief and practice throughout South Asia. Therefore, Deobandis differentiate themselves not only from

¹⁶ Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture*, 210.

¹⁷ Barbara Daly Metcalf, "Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband 1860–1900," in Metcalf, Ahmed, and Hasan, *India's Muslims*, 57.

¹⁸ Metcalf, "Islamic Revival in British India," V.

¹⁹ Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam*, 11.

the Shia but also from the other major Sunni Muslim orientations (Ahl-i ḥadīth and Barēlwi). The main line of contestation is shaped along differing ideas of religious authority. The Deobandi orientation positions its authority in the revival and popularisation of scriptural study and the acceptance of law schools. In contrast, the Barēlwi, shaped by Aḥmad Riḍā Khān (d. 1921), a native of the town Bareilly, or *Barēlī*, affirm the authority of saints and holy men. Their example and insights should, along with the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, be emulated. This claim to authentic Islamic teachings can be seen in its own chosen name, *Ahl-al-Sunna wa ḍjāmi* 'at ('The people of Sunna and community').²⁰

Their beliefs and practices are deeply rooted in Indian Islam and practices such as visiting shrines and tombs, as well as the contested ritual of celebrating the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad (*mawlūd*).²¹ Against both these positions, either the Deobandi study of law or the Barēlwi type of shrine-based Islam, stand the self-styled people of hadith, *Ahl-i ḥadīth*. The latter denies any position that cannot be directly related to the Quran and hadith, which they perceive as both exclusive and accessible vehicles for authoritative guidance.²²

Despite their apparent differences, these sects and ideological orientations are united in a commitment to reform of certain existing forms of "popular" and "extreme" practices. It is the emphasis on what particular customs to reform which differs, not least with regard to Shia practices. However, along with the Shia, these Sunni orientations are united against the Ahmadis, or Aḥmadiyya, who believe that Mīrzā Ghulām Aḥmad Ḳadiyānī (d. 1908) is the final intermediary of the interpretation of Islam.²³ This is stressed to a point of associating Christian and Muslim messianic teachings, through the notion that Ghulām Aḥmad is the promised Messiah and therefore a prophet of God.²⁴ This conflicts with the teachings of the final prophet-hood of Muhammad, formulated as the seal of the chain of prophecy. Consequently, most other Muslims regard them as heretical.

To a degree aloof from these rival positions, while addressing the same issues in their own manner, the '*ulamā*' of Farangi Mahall were among the most revered for their scholarship based on Persian Islamic learned culture in the beginning of the nineteenth century. Their claims to religious authority combined elements of mysticism with a rigorous traditional curriculum of

²⁰ *Ahl-al-Sunna* is the common designation of the Sunni Muslims or Sunnites, hence the self-designation is also a claim to authentic orthodox tradition.

²¹ Metcalf, "Islamic Revival in British India," 302.

²² Metcalf, "Islamic Revival in British India," 270.

²³ Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam* (London: Ahmadiyya, Centenary Publications, 1979), 107.

²⁴ Malik, *Islam in South Asia*, 359.

logic and jurisprudence, or what is known as the rational sciences.²⁵ The Farangi Mahallis, and other ‘*ulamā*’, celebrated the introduction of the new technology of print, which made books readily available at earlier unconceived levels. However, due to the same technology, their own sanctioned chains of authorisation and oral teachings were in the long run undermined by an accumulating multitude of voices speaking for Islam during the twentieth century. In the words of Francis Robinson: “Increasingly from now on any Ahmad, Mahmud or Muhammad could claim to speak for Islam.”²⁶

2.4 Sayyid Ahmad Khan and the Aligarh Movement

When the militant Muslim revivalism of Sayyid Aḥmad Brēlwī and the so-called Sepoy rebellions of 1857 had both failed, a former employee of the East India Company, Sayyid Ahmad Khan (d. 1898) formulated highly influential ideological positions in the evolving public sphere of British India.²⁷ His was a perspective of multi-layered reconciliation; of the Indian Muslims and the British, of Western science and Islamic thought, and the shared monotheistic tenets of Christianity and Islam. Ahmad Khan’s lofty position, not only in Indian Islam as a founding figure of Islamic modernism, was due to his grasp of contemporary intellectual trends, not least the natural sciences and Darwin’s theory of evolution. His notion that Muslims must intellectually adapt to the modern sciences had many important ideological and religious implications.²⁸ Based on his famous axiom that nature, which is the work of God, can never be in breach of the Quran, which is the word of God, he resolutely criticised his Muslim community for blind adherence to legal traditions instead of the true knowledge which could only be gained by studying the divine work and word simultaneously.²⁹ While not an ‘*ālim*’ himself, Ahmad Khan developed a comprehensive religious thought and presentation of Islam. In this body of thought, he confronted aggressive Christian preaching, revived rational historic studies, and shaped Muslim political identity in India.³⁰ His approach to the future and the attempted revival of the Muslim community was based on education. For this purpose, he founded the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh. It developed into an important

²⁵ Francis Robinson, *The ‘Ulama of Farangi Mahall and Islamic Culture in South Asia* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2001), 108.

²⁶ Robinson, *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia*, 81.

²⁷ Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Modern Islam in India: A Social Analysis* (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd, 1946) 16.

²⁸ Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims*, 524–531.

²⁹ Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan 1857–1964* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), 45–55.

³⁰ Robinson, *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia*, 243.

foundation for Islamic modernist education in India. Ahmad Khan's notion of jihad as strictly defensive, combining socio-political accommodation with British rule and *idjtiḥād*, was developed by his close associate Chiragh Ali (d. 1895).³¹ The project of uplifting the Muslim community and creating a distinguished place for it in British India also led to a strengthening of Muslim political sensibilities.³² Ahmad Khan's and the Aligarh Movement's resistance to Muslims joining the Hindu-dominated independence movement was an expression of a sense of threat from spearheading Hindu dominance in education and administration. State policies in the second half of the nineteenth century, as well as the thought of Ahmad Khan, were crucial in shaping the emerging conceptualisations of a Muslim minority that needed protection from a dominant Hindu majority.³³ This discourse of "self" and "other" along with colonial efforts in "Muhammadan," as separate from "Hindu," education indirectly also opened the way to a later Muslim nationalism and communal sensibility. Albeit, it was as yet a far cry from a full-blown "two-nation theory." Such Muslim nationalism will be dealt with in a later section, but first we will investigate the roots of modern positions of Islam, non-violence, and peace in India.

2.4.1 Four Cases of Non-Violent Presentations of Islam in British India

Non-equivocal about the place of violence in Islam, the previously mentioned Moulavi Chiragh Ali defended Islam from the charge of being a religion prone to violence. Chiragh Ali writes that the wars of the Prophet Muhammad have been misunderstood and misconstrued by both Muslims and non-Muslims alike. He thinks that the wars described in the Quran were of a strictly defensive nature. Therefore, only strictly necessary wars for defence are legitimate and justifiable in Islam.³⁴ Chiragh Ali discusses Sura 2 verses 186 to 189 and Sura 8:40, and he sees the fight against *fitnah* in these verses as relating to the "torture, aggression, in short, the persecutions suffered by the Muslims from the Koreish."³⁵ In relation to these Quranic verses, Chiragh Ali makes three important points. First, the fighting is to be seen as self-defensive, since its purpose is clearly to end the torture and persecution by the forces of Mecca. Second, the fighting stops the moment the persecution ends, i.e. there will be no more hostility once the

³¹ Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism*, 50. Further detailed below; Chiragh Ali's work on jihad is "without even asking permission" warmly dedicated to Sayyid Ahmad Khan.

³² Malik, *Islam in South Asia*, 279–280, 298.

³³ Mumtaz Moin, *The Aligarh Movement: Origin and Early History* (Karachi: Salman Academy, 1976) 199.

³⁴ Moulavi Chiragh Ali, *A Critical Exposition of the Popular "Jihād" - Showing That All the Wars of Mohammad were Defensive; and that Aggressive War, or Compulsory Conversion, Is Not Allowed in the Koran* (Calcutta: Thacker, Spink and Co. 1885), Section 89.

³⁵ Chiragh Ali, *A Critical Exposition*, Section 100.

legitimate object of self-defence is met. Third, the fighting which is described in the Quran is strictly bound in time, meaning that it is not possible to make lawful “aggressive wars in the future on the authority of these verses.”³⁶ All the Quranic verses on the subject of war are considered by Chiragh Ali as relating only to the historical struggle between the Muslims and the “Pagan Arabs,” or those who assisted the latter, and cannot be extended to other historical circumstances. For Chiragh Ali, this is especially true as he thinks that these verses did not relate to any unprovoked wars or to the custom of demanding tribute and should therefore not be used to make such actions legitimate in the future.³⁷

It is important to note that Chiragh Ali was critical of contemporary and historical understandings of Islam and the development of what he referred to as Muslim “Common Law.”³⁸ Therefore, “the Muhammadan Revealed Law, i.e. the Quran,” in principle stands in opposition to the “Muhammadan Common Law.” It is the latter which must change, especially in the separate understandings of the place of violence. Chiragh Ali thinks that the “Common Law” is the result of uncertain traditions, Arab customs, and “the casuistical [sic] sophistry of the canonical legists.”³⁹ The Quran is, therefore, held to be the most authoritative source of Islamic law.

A second important non-violence case is the jurist Ameer Ali (d. 1928) who pioneered the presentation of Islam and Islamic history as the height of civil and human tolerance and self-control in the face of violence and persecution.⁴⁰ Mansoor Moaddel connects Ali to “the Calcutta School of modernity, Westernization, and loyalism” independent and separate from, but influenced by, the Aligarh school.⁴¹ The main proponents of the Calcutta school, such as Ali, were liberal Shia Muslims. However, Ali maintained the claim of the first three caliphs. The Prophet Muhammad is depicted by Ali as an outstanding and heroic agent of humanism, successfully building and transforming a society which had been torn asunder by sectarian and ethnic differences. This society was further marked by a tradition of bloodshed and clan-based blood revenge that makes the peace-building example of Muhammad even more remarkable.⁴² The struggles of the Muslims are regarded as strictly for self-defence in a situation of clan-based violence in general, and dire animosity directed against the Muslim community, in

³⁶ Chiragh Ali, *A Critical Exposition*, Section 101.

³⁷ Chiragh Ali, *A Critical Exposition*, Section 130.

³⁸ Chiragh Ali, *A Critical Exposition*, Section 130.

³⁹ Chiragh Ali, *A Critical Exposition*, Section 130.

⁴⁰ Ameer Ali, *The Spirit of Islam* (Karachi: Pakistan Publishing House, Karachi, 1984) 24.

⁴¹ Mansoor Moaddel, *Islamic Modernism, Nationalism, and Fundamentalism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 72.

⁴² Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*, 205.

particular.⁴³ Fighting was never for the expansion of Islam; indeed the latter is seen to extend a “liberty of conscience” and “freedom of worship” to everyone.⁴⁴ Ameer Ali compares the struggles of the Muslims with what he sees as the “frightful wars” that Jews, Christians and “Parsis” have fought for the expansion of their respective faiths.⁴⁵ Ameer Ali repeatedly makes references to other religions, therefore adopting a comparative framework in order to discuss Islam and the development of actual Muslim belief and practice.⁴⁶ On one hand, this comparative framework allows Ameer Ali to create a platform for tolerance, for instance by saying that authentic Islam and authentic Christianity are no different from each other, except “for the conception of [the] son-ship of Jesus.”⁴⁷ On the other hand, the comparative framework allows Ameer Ali to criticise both other religions as well as certain historical forms of Islam and Muslims, and to extol the superiority of what he perceives as authentic Islam. Ameer Ali sees Islam as the fount of civilisation and “progressive tendencies.”⁴⁸ Just as with Christians and their “ecclesiastics,” Ameer Ali thinks that the Muslims have abandoned the original “Teacher” for the explanations of the learned theologians, and the universal message for all humans has been abandoned for the particular messages of the various “*mujtahids* and *imams*.”⁴⁹ But, reform is as possible and necessary for the Muslims as it was for Christians during the times of Renaissance and Reformation.⁵⁰ This notion shows that Ameer Ali’s comparative framework is coupled with an evolutionary understanding of society. By means of evolutionary and historical comparisons, Ameer Ali turns away the contemporary criticisms levelled against Islam. Other religions and cultures have their fair share of historical experiences of cruelty, especially with regard to women. In comparison to such cruelties, the Prophet Muhammad and the Quran reformed harsh practices, yet in a pragmatic and gradual way.⁵¹ Virtuous behaviour towards women, and other crucial forms of chivalry and gallantry, are seen as Islamic virtues taught to Europeans by Muslims, by ways of the traditions of Andalusia.⁵² Ameer Ali thinks that legal rights granted to women in Europe during the twentieth century were already taught by the Prophet Muhammad in “an age when no country, no system, no community gave any right to woman.”⁵³ From his evolutionary and comparative framework

⁴³ Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*, 206.

⁴⁴ Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*, 212.

⁴⁵ Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*, 207.

⁴⁶ Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*, liii, 161, 247.

⁴⁷ Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*, 179, 200.

⁴⁸ Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*, 180.

⁴⁹ Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*, 184.

⁵⁰ Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*, 186.

⁵¹ Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*, 247–249.

⁵² Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*, 254.

⁵³ Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*, 256.

Ameer Ali launches an evolutionary reform programme of Muslims and Islam. Lastly, this study need also mention Ameer Ali's ideas of a positive relationship between philosophical and scientific enquiry with Islam.⁵⁴

Yet another crucial case of Islam and non-violence is Maulana Kalam Azad (d. 1958). He is important to note for three reasons. First, Azad was decisive for the agitation and organisation of the Khilafat movement, which was a time of Hindu-Muslim cooperation against British imperial interests.⁵⁵ Second, his position as a leader of Muslims in India developed into an influential position within the Congress Party from 1923 and onwards. During a time of growing Hindu-Muslim separatism, he became Congress President in 1940.⁵⁶ After independence, Azad became India's first Minister of Education, serving until his demise. For his involvement with the Congress Party, fighting for freedom and independence alongside Gandhi, in India he is largely remembered as a nationalist and hero of the freedom struggle. His role as a religious thinker and ardent reformer seems mainly forgotten. Third, it is important to note the way Azad formulated his political engagement with regard to Islam. For instance, by translating the Quran into Urdu, Azad as an influential Indian Muslim, sought to educate a new Muslim public during the early twentieth century. He also sought to expand a concern for Islamic teaching beyond the class of the learned by developing new forms of publications.⁵⁷

Azad's early presentations of Islam was distributed in his Urdu weekly *al-Hilal* (1912–1914). He continued to publish magazines and books to disseminate his message of what he saw as the critical relevance of Islam for India's Muslims.⁵⁸ Azad's message was that in a time of growing separatism and animosity between Hindus and Muslims, it was the duty of Muslims to work alongside Hindus in the creation of unity. Azad argued that, just as the Prophet Muhammad created one nation out of the many peoples of Medina, it is the duty of the Muslims to sincerely accept and embrace Hindus, and not to create an isolated political and social community for themselves.⁵⁹ His thinking on Islam as it relates to what were the pressing issues of his time, the adoption of non-violent methods based on non-cooperation with the state, and Hindu-Muslim unity is wide-ranging.⁶⁰ Against charges of adopting non-violence as a result of political pragmatism, Azad thought that non-violence is clearly based on the Islamic sharia.⁶¹

⁵⁴ Ali, *The Spirit of Islam*, 361.

⁵⁵ Syeda Saiyidain Hameed, *Maulana Azad, Islam and the Indian National Movement* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014), xxix.

⁵⁶ Hameed, *Maulana Azad*, 171.

⁵⁷ Hameed, *Maulana Azad*, xxvi, 74.

⁵⁸ Hameed, *Maulana Azad*, 52.

⁵⁹ Hameed, *Maulana Azad*, 95.

⁶⁰ Hameed, *Maulana Azad*, 62, 103, 130.

⁶¹ Hameed, *Maulana Azad*, 104.

It is also important to note how Azad formulated his thinking on Islam and politics with regard to how he perceived history. Influenced by the rationalist school of the Mutazilites, Azad saw his thinking on Islam as representing a return to its original teachings, with himself as the leader for the reform of the Muslim community.⁶² Furthermore, Azad believed that Islam entailed a struggle against oppression for the attainment of freedom. The ongoing fight against the British was in this sense the same struggle against oppression as the fights against despotic monarchs described in the Quran.⁶³ Islam is, therefore, viewed as an extensive liberating force of history.

The last case is the religious and political movement of the *Khudai Khitmagar*, and their leader Abdul Ghaffar Khan (d. 1988). This is the most prominent example in the history of non-violent Islam during the Indian independence movement. The anthropologist Mukulika Banerjee's *The Pathan Unarmed* (2000) describes the Khudai Khitmagar and Abdul Ghaffar Khan, as well as the movement's legacy. This work focusses on ordinary Khudai Khitmatgars ("Servants of God"), or "Red Shirts" (*Surkh Posh*), from the red uniforms this non-violent army, wore on its missions.⁶⁴ Their base was mainly in what was the North-Western frontier of British India. A work of anthropology, Banerjee relies mainly on oral narratives collected in Pakistan during the 1990s. Combining survivor memories with archival resources, Banerjee tells the story of how ordinary activists in a movement numbering perhaps 100,000 at its peak received honour and manliness through non-violent reformulations of Pathan social cultural mores and Islamic religion. Examples drawn from the life of the Prophet Muhammad and the Quran supporting non-violence, as well as the continuous, almost military-style drills are equally seen by Banerjee as necessary for the maintenance of the movement's non-violent discipline.⁶⁵

Scholar of English Literature Eknath Easwaran instead focusses on the, quite literally, towering example of Badshah (an honorific title) Abdul Ghaffar Khan himself and his relationships with the leaders of the Indian independence movement, not least Mohandas Gandhi.⁶⁶ It is worth to note Easwaran's descriptions of how Ghaffar Khan was early influenced by the writings, mainly the journal *al-Hilal*, by the aforementioned Maulana Kalam Azad. The latter's example and initial stand for Muslims allied with the Congress Party and the sake of national unity, as well as the reformulation of Islam and culture, motivated Ghaffar Khan to

⁶² Hameed, *Maulana Azad*, 21, 59, 81, 86.

⁶³ Hameed, *Maulana Azad*, 99.

⁶⁴ This designation was part of a British campaign of defamation, associating them with the Russian Bolsheviks (red) and European fascist parties (shirts) at the same time. The intended insult was embraced with appreciative humour by the Red Shirts themselves. Using the common cultural knowledge of red being the cheapest colour available, the designation arguably enhanced their popular appeal and representative character.

⁶⁵ Mukulika Banerjee, *The Pathan Unarmed* (Oxford: James Currey, 2000), 17, 51, 71, 74, 152.

⁶⁶ Eknath Easwaran, *Nonviolent Soldier of Islam: Badshah Khan, A Man to Match His Mountains* (Tomaes: Nilgiri Press, 2009), 154.

launch his own magazine, *Pushtun*, in 1928.⁶⁷ The magazine was one important vehicle for Ghaffar Khan's development and dissemination of a message and ideology incorporating Islam, reformed "Pukhtunwali" (Pathan traditional culture emphasising honour and manliness), and non-violence.

With its reformulation of Pathan values, of manliness and sacrifice in struggle, united with Islamic themes, Ghaffar Khan's movement enjoyed support from large segments of the mainly Muslim population of the North-Western territories. In the early 1930s, at the height of the Indian nationalist movement, the Khudai Khitmatgar movement officially joined the Hindu-majority Indian National Congress against the British. This move sparked distrust between the Pashtu-dominated nationalist Khitmatgar and the Muslim League over the issue of the partition of India and the founding of Pakistan as a Muslim state. Still, in the era of the partition, Ghaffar Khan supported the idea of a united India. In the words of Jeffry R. Halverson, he continued to believe "that the Muslim Pashtuns would enjoy better rights in a large, decentralized, pluralist Indian state."⁶⁸

It is worth noting Halverson's analytical remarks on why knowledge of Ghaffar Khan is not more widely disseminated, especially outside the Indian subcontinent: "The narrative of India's independence movement positioned Gandhi as the father of his nation" whereas Ghaffar Khan's post-partition pro-Pathan stance left him defamed in Pakistani history-writing.⁶⁹ In Halverson's view, this has created a surprisingly limited place for Ghaffar Khan in the respective Indian and Pakistani national writings of history. Outside of South Asia, the comparison between Ghaffar Khan and Gandhi, and his framing as "the second Gandhi" or the "Frontier Gandhi," may have inhibited the development of a more nuanced image. Ghaffar Khan should instead be recognised as an extraordinary political and religious leader of pre-partition India in his own right. Apart from Gandhi and the other non-violent heroes of the nationalist cause, Ghaffar Khan, a devout Muslim, developed intellectual, political, and religious principles of his own.

In conclusion, the brief survey of these four cases of non-violent presentations of Islam in British India reveals categories of ideological content relevant for the purposes of this study. On one hand, this survey demonstrates non-violent positions within the ideological and religious debate situation over the meaning of Islam. They all exemplify important cases of how to relate politically to the modern state in terms of Islam, non-violence, and peace. On the other hand, these four cases clearly establish how the very categories Islam, non-violence, and peace

⁶⁷ Easwaran, *Nonviolent Soldier*, 67, 204.

⁶⁸ Halverson, *Searching for a King*, 63.

⁶⁹ Halverson, *Searching for a King*, 65.

and their ideological and religious content relate to the contextual situation of political and social issues.

Lastly, the discussion of a historically ongoing Muslim debate relating to the concepts of Islam, non-violence, and peace will be continued in Chapter 8 which will outline contemporary and global examples of Muslim presentations of Islam and non-violence. The following section will consider scholarly discussions of some of the Indian cases of Islam, non-violence, and peace described in this section.

2.4.2 Scholarly Discussions on Islam, Non-Violence, and Peace in British India

With regard to the Indian Islamic modernists, Chiragh Ali and Ameer Ali, two contemporary and conflicting works are important to note. Islamic studies scholar Kecia Ali focusses on the generally changing themes and perceptions in both Muslim and non-Muslim biographies of the Prophet Muhammad. Such changes in biographical modes of writing are perceived as due to changes within the societies in question. In this regard, she notes that in the late nineteenth century, Muslim biographers in India, as well as in Egypt, toiled to defend the image of the Prophet against contemporary Cristian and Orientalist scholarly allegations of him as an aggressive war-monger.⁷⁰ Increasingly during this era it is perceived that the skirmishes that the Prophet Muhammad fought were all in self-defence, he himself never initiated any fighting but was reluctantly and seldom forced to defend himself when his society was threatened by outsiders. The limited military action in self-defence that the Prophet Muhammad took part in is now seen as legitimate in the grand scheme of realising his mission of civilisation, social betterment, and reform of his people. Kecia Ali sees this type of historiography as consonant with British categories of justified violence for the purpose of progress and advancing social development. The grandness of the Prophet Muhammad, who use measured violence for civilisation-building purposes, is analysed as indirectly legitimating British rule.

In contrast, while historian Ayesha Jalal also seeks to describe the modes of modernist Islamic reform and writings in relation to the conditions set by the British, she highlights wholly different topics than Kecia Ali.⁷¹ In Jalal's analysis of the meanings ascribed to the concept "jihad" in the intellectual history of South Asia, Jalal sees the new modes of Islamic interpretations as related to British policies of freedom of religion. The idea of defending Islam and Muslims, and the old sharia-derived categories of a region of war legally juxtaposed with

⁷⁰ Kecia Ali, *The Lives of Muhammad* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014), 84–85.

⁷¹ Jalal, *Partisans of Allah*, 167–169.

a region of Islam, were argued as redundant when the rulers allowed both the agitation and practice of Islam. Modern intellectual modes of history writing; critical and rational, influenced these writers to re-assess the Islamic legal development and earlier generations of interpreters. Furthermore, the new technology of the printing press largely underpinned the possibilities to disseminate their views, and was therefore crucial in setting the parameters of the ongoing debate. Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Chiragh Ali, and Ameer Ali, is seen as on one hand passionately defending Islam against vitriolic Christian polemics. On the other hand, they are seen as defending the notion of a noble jihad, as legitimate defensive warfare, by *de facto* fiercely criticising actual historical cases of excessive Muslim rulers, and the ‘*ulamā*’ who legitimated such rulers’ earthly wars in religious terms.⁷² The different perspectives by these two scholars is best explained by pointing out that Ayesha Jalal’s perspective is an inquiry into the potential and necessity of ethical conceptions regarding the concept of jihad. Kecia Ali however seeks to highlight the ideological usages, or, perhaps rightly, the discursive modes of knowledge production, which various images of the Prophet Muhammad has served.

Considering certain strands of non-violent Islamic reform in India during the nineteenth and twentieth century, much relevant scholarly literature is set on describing these expressions of Islam as “apologetics.” For instance, Barbara Metcalf writes in *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband 1860–1900* that after the mutiny of Indian army sepoys in 1857, which challenged the power of the British in the subcontinent, some of the British regarded Muslims with fear. Especially the reformist movement Ahl-i ḥadīth and the writer Nawwab Siddiq Hasan Khan were singled out as “heirs of the jihad tradition.” The latter did: “in some of his writings, present the classical view of jihad without the apologetic glosses that had become common.”⁷³ What is questionable here is the assumption that “the classical view of jihad” is something that is primarily polished away or smoothed over in the new presentations of Islam and hence, explained away. How does Metcalf methodologically reach the conclusion that the new and emerging non-violent presentations of jihad were not “glosses” but represented a challenge to arrive at a new understanding of Islam?⁷⁴ It seems that time-honoured, i.e. “classical,” presentations of Islam are, in this regard, somewhat favoured in terms of authenticity and legitimacy by Metcalf. The analysis of a historically ongoing Muslim debate and rivalry over

⁷² Jalal, *Partisans of Allah*, 153–159.

⁷³ Metcalf, “Islamic Revival in British India,” 279.

⁷⁴ The scholarly discussions of the new emerging paradigms of Islamic Modernism as something less than authentic, because of its deviation from medieval or classical Muslim writers’ positions, is a perspective I highlight and criticize in this study (see Chapter 10). As ideally neutral and objective historians we should not be particularly partial to any understanding of the object of our study which include our rhetorical moves and the perspectives and language we use.

the right understanding of Islam seems to be structured around a certain selection and evaluation of historical texts that is not clearly methodologically or theoretically outlined. With a focus on context, instead, it may be argued that in the light of the contemporary issues, such as the need to create a unified national society, the technological development of the printing press, the emerging Muslim public sphere, and the liberalisation of the conditions for ideological and religious debate and exchange; the changed legal and social functions of the presentations of Islam was only to be expected. Seen in this light, the emerging presentations of Islam, non-violence, and peace are not primarily “glosses” but an ideologically and religiously genuine position in a contested debate and issue on all sides; Muslim and non-Muslim.

This perspective can largely be seen in the discussions of Islamic studies scholar Muhammad Khalid Masud who regards the paradoxes and apparent “apologetics” of an emerging mode of Islamic interpretations designated “Islamic Modernism.” In his assessment, Muslim modernists admired the science and technology of Western civilisation, yet many were critical of European imperial ambitions. The development of Islamic modernism is seen to be shaped by, on one hand, discussions within Muslim societies by those representatives of Islam who in the name of tradition wanted to stay away from modernity, in the sense of science as well as technology, and the new social teachings of human rights, both seen as incompatible with Islam. On the other hand, other Muslims rejected Islamic tradition in the name of modernity. At the same time, modernity in the “West” developed more clear-cut affirmations of human rights and therefore “modernity” itself was received and perceived differently by educated Muslims. Islamic modernism was also shaped by liberation and nationalistic movements in Muslim societies which increasingly shaped perceptions on “the West.” Islamic modernists are here not primarily seen as apologetics, their discourse is regarded as directly shaped by addressing *other* Muslims in a way that affirms independence, science, and Islam at the same time. Masud therefore perceives “Islamic modernism as a movement for a new theology” thus upholding its intellectual ambitions as more deep-seated than glossed apologetics directed at outsiders.⁷⁵ In comparison to the perspectives of Ayesha Jalal and Kecia Ali respectively, Masud should be seen as closer to the former, but perhaps less involved as a religious debater.

Similar to Metcalf, the Islamic studies scholar David Cook analyses the new modes of positions and understandings of “sacred history” in the period in relation to the failures of the

⁷⁵ Muhammad Khalid Masud, “Islamic Modernism” in *Islam and Modernity: Key Issues and Debates*, ed. Muhammad Khalid Masud, Arnando Salvatore and Martin van Bruinessen (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 238.

“Indian Mutiny” of 1857–58. In his assessment of the intellectual history of jihad in South Asia, Indian Muslims:

had largely moved away from the aggressive interpretation of jihad and were gradually inching toward the nonmilitant [sic] interpretations that would become so popular with Indian Muslim apologists during the latter half of the nineteenth century.⁷⁶

In this quote, while acknowledging non-violent interpretations of jihad, his analysis of modernist South Asian presentations of jihad differs from both Kecia Ali and Ayesha Jalal. Cook’s analysis instead focusses on issues of *realpolitik*:

For Indian Muslims the idea of jihad against the British was probably unfeasible from the beginning. Not only did Indian Muslims suffer from disunity and lack of focus, but their population was scattered over the huge subcontinent and had no geographic base from which jihad operations could conceivably be launched. Faced by a mighty foe armed with technology that the Muslims lacked, surrounded by a large majority of Hindus whose experience of Muslim rule had rendered them less than sympathetic toward any prospect of its resumption, Indian Muslims could only protest.⁷⁷

Cook’s analysis of the non-violent positions of a new generation of modern educated Indian Muslims, writing in the latter quarter of the nineteenth century, suggests that violence is set aside only when subordinate military circumstances no longer favour armed operations construed as jihad. This may be true for many Indian Muslim’s reactions to British military power. It can be exemplified by the account of one informant in Banerjee’s anthropological work on the non-violent Muslim independence movement among the Pathan: “The *mullahs* used to tell us that there was no point in hitting our heads against the mountain. That is, there is no use in opposing the British.”⁷⁸ However, establishing several factors relevant to historical analysis, Banerjee links preached passivity to British colonialism; either directly, by the bankrolling of mullahs, or indirectly, by invoking Gramsci’s notion of “traditional intellectuals.” Furthermore, Cook’s historical analysis on matters of political disintegration among Hindus and Muslims seems to favour the British Colonial, and later *Hindutva*, history writing, of Hindu grievance with Muslim reign, which necessitated British or Hindu rule,

⁷⁶ David Cook, *Understanding Jihad* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 81.

⁷⁷ Cook, *Understanding Jihad*, 82.

⁷⁸ Banerjee, *The Pathan Unarmed*, 108.

respectively. A historian should not neglect the efforts by the British Raj to foment such disunity for the purposes of easing and legitimising its political dominance.⁷⁹ In relation to Cook's ideas of unrelenting Hindu-Muslim disunity and Muslim passivity in the face of British military might, the resistance to colonialism through the activism and broad political alliance-building of Kalam Azad and Abdul Ghaffar Khan, and their formulations of non-violent jihad, in the first half of the twentieth century bears, in fact, witness to wholly different historical trajectories.

Military conditions for India's Muslims during the colonial time were certainly more than strained, and this was likely one preliminary cause of new arguments and positions in the ideological and religious debate, as pointed out by Cook. But Cook does not refer to multiple factors, such as the ideological influences pointed out by Masud, nationalism, liberation, novel social teachings, and the modern education of a new generation of English-speaking Indian Muslims; lawyers, writers, and politicians. In a nuanced analysis, such factors are important in any attempt to explain why a new generation of "Islamic Modernists" publically used the language of Islam in new and innovative ways. Hence, the main challenge in Cook's historical analysis is that the representation of the changes in how Islam is presented and understood is not perceived to be influenced by reference to a multi-layered situation of historical circumstances. Instead, the analysis is limited to the perspective that military conditions does not live up to jihad, defined as a theory of religious warfare.

It may be argued that the question of how to assess the conditions set by colonialism is to a degree also at stake here, most clearly seen in the discussions of how to best explain the development of non-violent positions among the Islamic Modernists in British India. Ayesha Jalal and Muhammad Khalid Masud may be said to see some liberating aspects of the new conditions set by the state, mainly with regard to freedom of conscience and expression of ideas. A new spirit of rational enquiry and criticism of history is paired with discussions of the ideas of civil and political rights. In this intellectual milieu, earlier Muslim generations' usage and presentation of Islam became rejected, along with prejudiced Christian and European dismissals of Islam. In contrast, Kecia Ali relates the new mode of interpreting the example of the Prophet in terms of self-defence and his battles as skirmishes only to how the use of violence was legitimated by the colonial state. That is, the new presentations of Islam are analysed as shaped by notions regarding how the modern state claims the right to defend itself from its violent opponents. By developing the notion of civilisation-building, which ideally and ultimately

⁷⁹ Gould, *Religion and Conflict*, 32–33.

benefits all society, the modern state's use of violence is legitimated by the value of general development. In this new situation of political and social issues, religion also changes. Therefore, the medieval war hero images of the Prophet is replaced by a more modern image by the Muslim biographers; one of heroic restraint when he faced atrocious violence. Furthermore, when the Prophet used limited violence in strict self-defence, his purposes are seen as strictly for building and sustaining civilisation.

To conclude, while the occurrence of the historical Muslim positions and practices of Islam, non-violence, and peace is, as a phenomenon, by now accounted for in this study, the survey of the literature did not reveal a definite theoretical explanation of this occurrence. As we will see in Chapter 8, ideologically similar Muslim positions to non-violence and peace is an international contemporary phenomenon. Therefore, with regard to the aims of this study, a framework of detailed contextualisation is necessary in order to analyse the religious and ideological content and meaning of Islam, non-violence, and peace in the thought of Khan. Then, and only then, is it possible to theorise how this position was historically shaped, and thereby suggest theoretical hypotheses that can be translated to further similar studies, as we will see in Chapter 10.

What is more, based on the assessments of the strengths and weaknesses of the scholarly discussions of how to best explain the rise of late nineteenth to early twentieth century presentations of Islam, non-violence, and peace, it is noticed that scholarly regard to multiple factors is necessary in a nuanced historical analysis. Based in the literature, these are, first, that modern conditions give rise to new modes of historical consciousness and rational enquiry. Second, new possibilities arise for expression and proselytisation. Third, new necessities to debate civil and political rights develop. Fourth, new presentations of Islam and the usage of its concepts and sacred history may be shaped by a perceived need to defend the religion from the closely felt onslaught of more or less bigoted condemnation. Fifth, the rising power of the modern state has its own logic of rationalising its usage of violence, which reshapes the older religious formulations of sanctioned violence. Sixth, a new mode of relating to political authority and power is shaped by the modern state. Religious actors find themselves in a new kind of situation, which is not stable but through its developments gives rise to further new political and social issues. In Chapter 3, I will attempt to outline the theoretical assumptions of this study; how these new issues and the processes of globalisation shape the ideological and religious debate.

2.5 Islam in the First Half of Twentieth Century India: Formulating Nationalisms

With the introduction of the Indian Councils Act of 1909 the political conditions of the state changed the way the peoples of India were supposed to relate politically to the state. Popular influence on government, dismal as it was, was to be a feature of politics. Expressing sentiment and rallying political will to influence government policies was now constitutionally acknowledged in British India. A forum for Muslim political activity had already been established with the creation of the All-India Muslim League in 1906. The provisions of 1909 also created separate Muslim electorates.⁸⁰ These reforms demonstrate what the political scientist Ishtiaq Ahmed points out as an increase in ethnic tension and competition during the colonial period, when the British introduced a “system of representation” which selected and delineated cultural groups.⁸¹ Yet, from the inside perspective of these changes that the colonial period established, the issue now for the actors involved was to what purpose the “Muslim” political will would be raised? Was it for the continuance of British governance in the tradition of Sayyid Ahmad Khan, as some leading members of the Muslim League wanted? Or should independence be sought alongside non-Muslims? Should any favoured position be based on the fact of being Muslims, or one of shared experiences as subjects of the British Empire?

The positions of the ‘*ulamā*’ in these regards was already made tense by the challenge to *idjīmā*, or scholarly consensus, that Sayyid Ahmad Khan had formulated in the second half of the nineteenth century. Besides, the social dimensions of religious authority were changing after the introduction of print technology. What was at stake now was the authority of the presentation of Islam and the claims of the ‘*ulamā*’ to guide the Muslim community. In this climate, the need was felt among the ‘*ulamā*’ to actively address the contemporary political and social concerns of Indian Muslims. Or else, they feared, they would see their own understanding of true Islam, as well as their authority over it, wither away. In this sense, the first half of the twentieth century was a phase of intense social and political involvement on the part of the ‘*ulamā*’.⁸²

In this regard, the crucial example of Maulana Kalam Azad and his work to promote Muslim-Hindu cooperation in the Khilafat movement has already been mentioned. By 1924, the All-India Khilafat Committee, formed in 1919 as a cry for support for the caliph of Islam, had been

⁸⁰ Peter Hardy, *Partners in Freedom and True Muslims: The Political Thought of some Muslim Scholars in British India 1912–1947* (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 1971), 20.

⁸¹ Ishtiaq Ahmed, *State, Nation and Ethnicity in Contemporary South Asia* (London: Pinter, 1996), 2–3.

⁸² Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam*, 33, 42.

made redundant by the decision of the emerging Turkish secular rule under Mustafa Kemal (d.1938) to abolish the caliphate in Istanbul.⁸³ These events abroad put an end to the period of cooperation brought on by the Lucknow Pact, established in 1916, between the Congress Party and the Muslim League.⁸⁴ The Khilafat campaigning was the first mobilisation of Indian Muslims at a mass level, including rallies, protest marches, and public speeches. By its very organisation and use of symbols, the Khilafat facilitated an emerging socio-political identity of “Indian Muslims.”⁸⁵ However, the Congress-Khilafat alliance never seriously engaged with or broke down the partitions between communities. Leaders on both sides formulated future political visions in which religious communities played primary roles. When the strengthening of the Khilafat was no longer a shared issue, and while British colonial policies held out power to accomplish distinct political visions, both Muslim and Hindu leaders increasingly sought to mobilise followers by using separate religious symbolisms.

Muslim-Hindu cooperation never recovered and was severely damaged further by the 1928 Nehru report which abandoned the assertion of separate communal electorates in the Lucknow Pact. The Nehru report also laid out both a strong centre, depriving Muslim majority regions of autonomy, and no reserved seats in the legislature for Muslims, which exacerbated Muslim leaders’ fears of a future state dominated by Hindus only.⁸⁶

Ideas of a separate homeland for Muslims or the implementation of policies informed by Islam were not yet present. The idea of two nations in India had first been expressed in the poetry of Mohammad Iqbal (d. 1938) while the name of Pakistan was given by a group of Cambridge students, both as an acronym of conceived geographical provinces and as meaning “a land of the pure.”⁸⁷ Besides his poetry, it was in a work of prose, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, that Iqbal explained how the deteriorating Hindu-Muslim relationships and fears of further Muslim failings were to be alleviated.⁸⁸ In philosophical style, he underscores the need for a Muslim “movement” or polity in South Asia that should realise “the spirit of Muslim culture.” His mode of direct *idjtiḥād* points to the influences from *Shāh Walī Allāh* and Sayyid Ahmad Khan. However, his expositions make their way through Greek philosophy and

⁸³ The importance of the largely symbolic functions of the caliph should be seen in light of intra-Muslim, and inter-Hindu-Muslim, political disunity. The Caliph of Istanbul was framed as a guarantor of Muslim law and faith, in all places. Meanwhile, opposing the British policies in Turkey helped shape a joint Hindu-Muslim reaction to British exploitative politics and imperialism, in India as well as in former Ottoman territories.

⁸⁴ Barbara D. Metcalf and Thomas R. Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*. Second Edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 165.

⁸⁵ Metcalf and Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*, 180–181.

⁸⁶ Metcalf and Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*, 191.

⁸⁷ Malik, *Islam in South Asia*, 335–336.

⁸⁸ Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), 108–110.

shows the influence of French philosopher Henri Bergson's (d. 1941) theory of creative evolution applied to Sufi conceptualisations of the Prophet Muhammad as the Perfect Man.⁸⁹

While the poet-philosopher Iqbal's presentation of Islam eventually became hugely influential, especially at the upper levels of the Muslim League itself, his position was in fact opposed by the absolute majority of conservative 'ulamā'. Azad's position of active support for a collaborative nationalism was mirrored by the *Djāmi'at al-'Ulamā'-yi Hind* ('Council of Indian 'ulamā') and its leader, the Deobandi-educated Aḥmad Madanī.⁹⁰ The *Djāmi'at* was founded at the height of the Khilafat agitation, in November 1919, mainly based on an idea by Maulana 'Abd al-Barī of Farangi Mahall, while most of its leadership, like Madanī, was drawn from the Deobandi orientation.⁹¹ They maintained that the universalistic tenets of Islam would be bogged down by tying Islam to a particular and local form of nationalism. Instead, they proposed pragmatic political alliances in order to protect the Muslim community in India. From the vantage point of an elaborate theory of the "pious sultan" they set themselves up as the authentic guardians of the community in a "united nationalism" with non-Muslims. But as Muhammad Qasim Zaman points out, the quest for religious authority and leadership in addressing contemporary issues was also shared among the Deobandi 'ulamā'. Maulana Ṣafār Aḥmad 'Uṯmānī (d. 1974), in a twenty-one volume work defending the legal doctrines of the *Ḥanafī* school against Ahl-i ḥadīth charges of subjective opinion (*ra'y*) devotes instead a significant portion of the work to refuting Madanī's position on united nationalism.

'Uṯmānī's position is instead that the only manner in which Muslims can cooperate with non-Muslims is if Islam is the dominant religion, the only perceived accepted mark of difference according to the sharia. 'Uṯmānī angrily refuted those 'ulamā' who sought to found Muslim cooperation in the Indian struggle for independence by the use of Gandhian non-violence in the example of the peaceful proselytisation of the Prophet Muhammad in Mecca. The notion is false according to 'Uṯmānī because, if the Prophet Muhammad had intended the Muslims to endure the Meccan establishment's persecution and potentially overcome it by non-violent means, he would not have migrated to Medina where he could use force from a position of strength.⁹² In anticipation of his opponent's counter argument, he adds that, while the example of non-violence in Mecca resembles the situation of colonial India, and should

⁸⁹ Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism*, 152–153.

⁹⁰ The *djāmi'a* or *djāmi'yya* denotes a modern institution which brings together and unites, and is used in several charity, educational or political contexts, indicating an association, organisation or party. However, the term also means academic institution or university, such as Jamia Millia Islamia in Delhi.

⁹¹ Hardy, *Partners in Freedom*, 31–33.

⁹² Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam*, 42–45.

therefore be preferred, the tenets of Gandhian non-violence are an absolute prerogative at all times. Islam condones violence under certain conditions, and its sacred history is filled with the examples of military heroes and champions. If young Muslims are brought up to love and respect the peace-loving tenets of Hinduism, they would cease to have regard for an Islam allegedly founded on bloodshed, and regard the former as superior. While the need for separation from non-Muslims and for the dominance of Islam in a separate polity is not explicitly mentioned by ‘Uthmāni, writing in 1939, the thrust of his argument does point to the idea that the future of Islam and the Muslim community is incumbent upon the realisation of a separate state.⁹³

It was not until its 1940 resolution that the Muslim League, with Muhammad ‘Ali Jinnah (d.1948) as its president, expressed the desire for autonomy and independence.⁹⁴ Before the eventual 1947 partition of India, veteran soldiers began a campaign of targeted raids in Punjab.⁹⁵ The ensuing killings on all sides, resulting in hundreds of thousands dead, was followed by mass migration. 5 million Sikhs and Hindus moved from West Punjab into India while 5.5 million Muslims made their way in the opposite direction. The result was a Punjab marked by “ethnic cleansing.” Similar events, even if to a somewhat lesser degree, took place in the Eastern Bengal.

For the purposes of this study, four outcomes of the partition of 1947 are especially important. First, the ideological and political mass mobilisations around differing conceptualisations of South Asian nationalism in the first half of the twentieth century had turned into mass killings and migration surrounding partition. Such large-scale violence helped shape loyalties to the state, whether Pakistan or India, which are further described later in this chapter. Second, the politicised religious identities tensely surrounded by outbursts of violence was a motivation for launching movements of conversion and “re-conversion” already in the 1920s, such as the Tablīghī Djamā‘at. Third, the existence of a homeland for India’s Muslims soon shaped discussions and concepts regarding the role of Islam in such a polity, as can be seen in the example of the *Djāmā‘at-i Islāmī*. Fourth, as a result of the historical processes of partition, the issue of the Pakistan-India conflict over Jammu and Kashmir commenced and evolved into a serious threat to the peace and stability of the region. As seen below, this chapter will return to and discuss the latter three developments.

⁹³ Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam*, 47.

⁹⁴ Metcalf and Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*, 208.

⁹⁵ Metcalf and Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*, 221.

2.5.1 Popularisation of Islamic Teachings in the 1920s: Tablīghī Djamā‘at

By 1925, while a new class of ‘*ulamā*’ experts had emerged from schools like Deoband, people of a different educational background set up their presentations and teaching of Islam. Most distinguished are the modernists, who regarded the Western-style curricula as an alternative to training in the classic Islamic disciplines. But the role of teaching was spread beyond the classes of the educated, sometimes with support from certain ‘*ulamā*’.⁹⁶

In the 1920s, the Deobandi school supported the growth of one group of North Indian Muslims who set themselves up as teachers. One Deobandi scholar, Maulana Muḥammad Ilyās (d.1944) transformed the Deobandi program of individual reform and adherence to ritual into what would prove to become a both most vital and widespread mass movement, the Tablīghī Djamā‘at (‘Missionary Society’). At the time, there were in fact many such groups for *tablīgh* (‘delivering’, ‘preaching a message’). These and other revival movements sought to hold up Muslim identity through the introduction of popular education, with an expansion of the social range for the role as teachers.⁹⁷ While it began as a movement for strengthening individual Muslim identity in a particular time of crisis, it is highly significant in several aspects.

The Tablīghī Djamā‘at is described by Barbara Metcalf, as maybe the largest contemporary Muslim movement, although exact estimations are made difficult by its changing membership and lack of bureaucracy.⁹⁸ The Tablīghī Djamā‘at was related to several other movements of the colonial period in its aim to return to original teachings and to broaden the responsibility for religious teaching to all believers. The leaders of the Tablīghī Djamā‘at facilitated the expansion of the social role of teaching by formulating that imparting the Islamic teachings was a mandatory duty for all Muslims, *farḍ ‘ayn*. By applying the category of individual duty, teaching was not seen as mandatory only for the class of ‘*ulamā*’ on behalf of every Muslim, *farḍ kifāya*.⁹⁹ Even those without education and social status went on preaching tours together as equals, sharing assets and duties with the other participants in the tour. Carefully fulfilling

⁹⁶ Metcalf “The Transmission of Learning,” 188.

⁹⁷ Metcalf “The Transmission of Learning,” 188.

⁹⁸ Barbara D. Metcalf, “Jihad in the way of God: A Tablighi Jama‘at Account of a Mission in India,” in Metcalf, *Islam in South Asia: In Practice*, 240.

⁹⁹ A peculiarity in the discussions of *Ḥanafī* law, the category of *farḍ* is defined as a duty directly deduced from the Quran and the Sunnah, instead of the class of logically inferred duties, *wāḍi‘ib*. *Farḍ ‘ayn* are individual duties incumbent upon all able Muslims, ritual prayer, pilgrimage, fasting, etc. The duties of *farḍ kifāya* is fulfilled by a sufficient number of Muslims on behalf of the *umma*, for instance jihad as warfare. In the modern times, to build an Islamic state has been categorised as *farḍ ‘ayn* by influential ideologues like Mawdudi and Sayyid Kutb. This shows that the legal discussion of the Deobandi scholars of *Ḥanafī* law associated with the Tablīghī Djamā‘at was in many ways part of the increasingly public ideological and religious debate of Muslim politics. See Chapters 9 and 10.

Muslim ritual obligations proved to be influential, both for group members themselves and the persons who met them.¹⁰⁰

Despite similarities with other groups, the Tablīghī Djamā'at differed from other movements during the colonial era in numerous ways. Most of all it did not evolve as a politicised religious community. This was in spite of the fact that it was born in the context of Hindu–Muslim rivalry of conversion and reconversion of those seen as only nominal Muslims after the partition of 1947, with its subsequent ethnic cleansing, e.g., in the Southern Delhi area. Despite this highly charged political and social situation, Barbara Metcalf argues that the Tablīghī Djamā'at never came to openly express any concerns regarding the public order or engage in rivalry to obtain communal interests. In contrast to this view, Marc Goberieau instead argues that the Tablīghī Djamā'at and Djāmā'at-i Islāmī not only evolved in similar political and social circumstances, but that they also share the assumption of an eventual “Islamic order.”¹⁰¹ According to Goberieau, the main political difference between the two is that Mawdudi, of the Djāmā'at-i Islāmī, thought that the first priority is to capture political power and state control in order to impose Islam. Muḥammad Ilyās, leader of the Tablīghī Djamā'at, instead argued that by focussing on perfecting individual Muslims, an Islamic order will eventually come about.

The term *jihad* is used by the Tablīghī Djamā'at to describe the method of peaceful preaching, with attendant strivings for self-betterment and self-control. This striving through *jihad* is linked with the idea that the contemporary time is again the time of *djāhiliyya*, commonly understood as a time of ‘ignorance’ and excess in Arabian society before the Prophet Muhammad, and the conceptual opposite of the word Islam. Because of the active participation of women in missions and with its focus on devotion and self-improvement, the Tablīghī Djamā'at has today become a global phenomenon, engaging people beyond those of Indian or Pakistani background.¹⁰²

2.6 Sufi Islam in India: Claims to Religious Authority

Historian of Islam and South Asia, Nile Green, shows that a lasting legacy of *taṣawwuf* or Sufi Islam, in terms of doctrine, practices, and a special vocabulary continues to the present day in Muslim societies marked by its presence.¹⁰³ While earlier generations of historians perceived

¹⁰⁰ Metcalf “The Transmission of Learning,” 188.

¹⁰¹ Marc Goberieau, “South Asian Muslim Diasporas and Transnational Movements: Tablīghī Jamā'at and Jamā'at-i Islāmī,” *South African Historical Journal*, Vol. 61 (2009:1): 14.

¹⁰² Metcalf, “Jihad in the way of God,” 240–242.

¹⁰³ Nile Green, *Sufism: A Global History* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 43.

Sufi Islam as “the mysticism”; a nineteenth century category of alleged universal religious experience, of Islam, Green instead emphasises why Sufi Islam should be seen as a crucial and integrated aspect of mainstream Islam. The special vocabulary created by a generation of early Sufis, in the late ninth to tenth century Baghdad and Khorasan, using the conceptual resources of the Quran, survived because it was respectable and intelligible enough to other Muslims engaged in the production of texts and doctrine. The history of the developing tradition of Sufi Islam, its spread, and the processes whereby the original Arabic vocabulary were maintained by later generations of Sufis writing in many other languages is a far too vast subject to deal with here. Instead, important to note is certain features of this lasting vocabulary and how it is part of the contestation of different formulations of Islam, which have shaped the debate into the contemporary era.

A main point in Green’s understanding is the claim and usage, or perhaps usefulness, of respectable ideas in the development of a Sufi tradition. Certain of these ideas might be found in the discourses of Khan, in particular the concept and use of *nafs*, and the need for continuous and diligent inspection of the lower self. The purification of the self as a path towards the state of harmony with God is a central metaphor of Sufi Islam. One must pass “staying places” which begins with repentance, self-knowledge, and self-control.¹⁰⁴ With increasing knowledge comes the ability to recognise satanic influences, of staying within the legal confines of the lawful and the forbidden, and eventually such states as god-fearing, gratitude, love, and complete reliance on one’s creator. The metaphor of the path, *ṭarīqa*, have historically formed the ideological basis for the institutional aspects of Sufi Islam. But as Green points out, the method of delineating “places” in Sufi writings assumes a familiarity with such a path.¹⁰⁵ This shows both the usefulness of Sufi vocabulary, in formulating claims to religious authority, and its practical aspects. The lexicon and tradition of Sufi Islam is not only a strict form of knowledge, it also takes an applied form of how to show other people the way towards contentment and enjoyment in the reliance on God.

Also of relevance is the importance placed on dreams in the development of the tradition of Sufi Islam. The claims to linkage to past Sufi masters, and even prophets, was also made possible through dreams and visions. This “cultural technology” allowed Sufis to meet earlier messengers of God and thereby interacting with and developing traditions. The epistemological uncertainties of this form of experiential knowledge was verified by the widespread usage of the hadith in which the Prophet Muhammad had said, “Whoever has seen me has seen me

¹⁰⁴ More accurately, way stations, *manāzil*; or locations, *maqāmāt*; and situations, *aḥwāl*.

¹⁰⁵ Green, *Sufism*, 32.

truly.”¹⁰⁶ The prevailing interpretation was that Satan cannot imitate the form of the Prophet. Such was the power of this doctrine that, beginning from even earlier templates, as of the twelfth century onwards the majority of Sufis reported dreams and visions as proof of their insight and rank. One crucial example is that of the already mentioned militant reformist Aḥmad Brēlwī.¹⁰⁷ His dreams and visions of the Prophet and God, investing him with the emblems of prophecy, as well as Ali and Fatima bathing him and dressing him up in fine clothes, was an essential part of his wide-ranging claim to authentic religious authority.

With regards to Islam in India and the epistemology of dreams, Barbara Metcalf reports an instance of this lasting and important way of seeing the world and interpreting dreams among high-ranking religious leaders and Indian nationalist scholars while doing fieldwork at the Deoband seminary.¹⁰⁸ The debate among the scholars was that the confidence in the religious leaders like themselves were shaken when the foremost religious Muslim leaders of the separate national causes, both Deobandis, claimed to have had dreams of the Prophet supporting their separate views; on one hand, the earlier described Indian nationalist Husain Aḥmad Madanī (decrying the separation of India) and on the other, the leader of the smaller group supporting Pakistan, Maulana Shabbīr Aḥmad ‘Uṭhmānī (d. 1949).¹⁰⁹ Disclosing that she had made a mistake at the time, Metcalf might perhaps be said to have involuntarily engaged with the “cultural technology” of dreams and visions when she interrupted that anyone could have such a dream, in fact she herself had had a dramatic dream in which the Prophet appeared. Her blunt denial of the inner workings of this “cultural technology” was overlooked in genuine appreciation of her dream that only, she felt, undeservedly increased her status among the group of religious scholars.

Formulating an important part of the analytical framework in this study is understanding the continuing contemporary relevance of the doctrines and vocabulary of Sufi Islam. Green concludes that an effect of twentieth century anti-Sufi Muslim reform movements has meant that “the heirs of Sufi tradition do not always present themselves as ‘Sufis’.”¹¹⁰ However, for Green this also suggests that an “unmarked Sufism” have in certain aspects returned to the role

¹⁰⁶ Green, *Sufism*, 77. For more about the dream hadith, see Marion Holmes Katz, “The Prophet Muḥammad in Ritual,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Muḥammad*, ed. Jonathan E. Brockopp (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) 153.

¹⁰⁷ Jalal, *Partisans of Allah*, 71. Jalal places Sayyid Aḥmad Brēlwī’s dream experiences in the explanatory framework of Sufi Islam as mysticism and in a slightly modernist Islamic religious vein, as a claim to religious authority put forward to the “ordinary people.”

¹⁰⁸ Barbara D. Metcalf, *Islamic Contestations: Essays on Muslims in India and Pakistan* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004), 333.

¹⁰⁹ Shabbīr Aḥmad ‘Uṭhmānī was a leading Deobandi scholar who in 1945 founded the *Diāmi ‘at al-‘Ulamā’-i Islām* in support for the Muslim League’s demand for Pakistan.

¹¹⁰ Green, *Sufism*, 227.

which it earlier played, that of inherent conjunction with conventional Muslim faith. This suggests that any signs of “unmarked Sufism,” not immediately observable, should be part of the attempt to analyse the empirical matter at hand.

2.6.1 *Sufi Business?*

At the beginnings of the twentieth century the claims to religious authority were also more and more shaped along the easily and cheaply available prints and lithographic renderings which further turned the production of public religious ideology and practice away from the elite institutions of the ‘*ulamā*’. An example of the conditions which capitalist change and the printing press meant for the mode of religion was the conversion of this new socioeconomic mode and technology into a means of spreading Sufi teachings. This was certainly a capitalist venture, as seen in the case of the highly successful Hindu publisher of Sufi works, Nawal Kishore (d. 1895) and other businessmen of various backgrounds, who invested in what was in fact later to become a global market for devotional Muslim literature.¹¹¹

By 1925, Sufi Muslims in India had developed new literary genres, such as the Sufi “magazine” which also was to become a global phenomenon. Publications such as the Urdu *Anwar al-Quds* (published between 1925 and 1927) and others, spread new ideas and practices. Earlier forms of transmission of Sufi learning, on one hand personal relationships, and on the other hand expensive manuscript copying, were in a state of crisis. The new publications sought to overcome this twofold crisis. Regarding authority and the guardianship over teachings, the new publications were far cheaper than manuscripts and, therefore, more available for consumption by a new reading public. Regarding the personal bonds between master and disciple, one outcome of the printing press technique was a change towards the increasing importance of the printed image of the Sufi master.¹¹² This can be compared to a simultaneous development described by Metcalf and Metcalf. The newly available lithographs also made the representation of the Hindu gods more humanlike, as in the widely influential and popular style of painting developed by Ravi Varma (d. 1906).¹¹³ Influenced by Western figurative art and photography, in this new style of lithography the gods were not only objects of devotion but also ideal role models to live up to and therefore encouraged self-improvement.

¹¹¹ Green, *Sufism*, 195–196.

¹¹² Green, *Sufism*, 196.

¹¹³ Metcalf and Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*, 144.

Furthermore, Green writes that “the Sufis oversaw a veritable enchantment of industrial technologies” when they turned to proselytise urban, migrant labourers who sought re-enactment and linkages to tradition, while at the same time addressing what they thought of as deviant Sufi practices. These examples show that even when the colonial authorities did neither directly hamper nor support different religious groups, the larger set of economic and socio-political conditions brought by the state created significant new opportunities for religious actors. Along with the introduction of new ideas in the sprawling public sphere, the novel social conditions changed the outcome of religion in India. Chapter 8 will discuss how the case of Khan and his style of dissemination of the Islamic teachings and claim to religious authority can be analysed both with regard to the position of Sufi Islam in Indian Islam, as seen above, and in light of the development of religion as shaped by modern technology and social conditions.

2.7 Djāmā‘at-i Islāmī

Mawdudi founded the Djāmā‘at-i Islāmī in 1941.¹¹⁴ His most fundamental tenet for his “political theory of Islam” is that legislation and government, as well as the human will to rule over others, is negated by Islam. Such “right” is vested “in Allah alone.”¹¹⁵ Mawdudi thinks that humans are not allowed to order anyone anything, or pass a law on anything, except when acting as a representative of God. Hence, God is to be the only sovereign in an Islamic state.

Mawdudi’s usage of the terms *jihad* and *djāhiliyya* was fundamentally different from the earlier described views of the Tablighī Djāmā‘at. The anthropologist, Irfan Ahmad says that Mawdudi’s construction of *djāhiliyya* should be understood as a mirror image of Mawdudi’s construction of Islam. Both are “indivisible organic systems” that can never coexist. The metaphysical underpinnings of these two entities have grave political consequences in the thought of Mawdudi. According to him, Muslims are obliged to destroy *djāhiliyya* by establishing an Islamic state. In addition, Mawdudi construed the notion that establishing such a state had been the “mission” of every prophet.¹¹⁶ As Ayesha Jalal shows, Mawdudi’s construction of *jihad* had more to do with competing visions between Muslim nationalists and separatists, than Mawdudi’s anti-colonial agitation and life-long expression of anti-Western

¹¹⁴Francis Robinson dates its foundation to 1940. See Robinson, *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia*, 15. Moaddel and Talatoff, *Contemporary Debates in Islam*, 18.

¹¹⁵ Sayyid Abul A’La Mawdudi “The Political Theory of Islam” In Moaddel and Talatoff, *Contemporary Debates*, 270. Correct transliteration of his full name: Sayyid Abu ‘l-a’Lā Mawdūdī.

¹¹⁶ Irfan Ahmad “The Indian Jama‘at-i Islami reconsiders Secular Democracy,” in Metcalf, *Islam in South Asia: In Practice*, 448.

sentiment might appear. Mawdudi argued in Islamic terms for a fight that in fact was directed primarily against his immediate political Muslim rivals who wanted to separate Islam from the secular in the political order. Denigrating his opponents' Muslim identity on the basis that Islam should be the sole political and social ideology in any society, Mawdudi considered the implementation of his ideology as a stark choice between Islam and *djāhiliyya*.¹¹⁷ The idea that Mawdudi's political thought should be regarded as mainly shaped by his immediate political rivalry, rather than a critical engagement with the political thought and examples of "the West," can be seen also in Jamal Malik's work *Islam in South Asia*. Malik thinks that, above all, Mawdudi "Islamised" the political discourses of the Indian Muslim nationalists.¹¹⁸

When Mawdudi eventually left for Pakistan the majority of those who stayed behind formed the Indian branch of the political party (Djāmā'at-i Islāmī Hind) where it later developed in a largely "quietist way."¹¹⁹ Continuing a development that had begun already in the 1960s, the Indian branch had come to accommodate and adjust to the principles and proceedings of liberal, secular democracy after the parliamentary elections of 1984 and 1985.¹²⁰ This revision of its views of secular democracy should mainly be regarded as a reaction to the crisis of civil liberties caused by the Emergency imposed by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi in 1975.¹²¹ After all, liberal democracy's civil and political rights were the safeguard of the very pursuit of political influence for the party.

In conclusion, Mawdudi's ideology favours a certain political system as demanded by God. Humans may act politically within that order only when acting as a representative of God. This is the practical meaning of the notion that God is to be the only sovereign in an Islamic state. Such ideological notions raise several critical questions. Foremost, since the presentation of Islam is contested, what is the role of human agency in the interpretation of Islam? Is the consensus regarding Islamic teachings to be granted to a parliament, a particular, or non-particular, collection of scholars, or to the party leadership only? In critical terms, an apparent ideological and practical paradox may be seen in the issues regarding how the will to power itself can be both heavily criticised, and yet, political power is actively pursued by launching a

¹¹⁷ Jalal, *Partisans of Allah*, 246–249.

¹¹⁸ Malik, *Islam in South Asia*, 370.

¹¹⁹ Malik, *Islam in South Asia*, 443.

¹²⁰ Ahmad, "The Indian Jama'at-I Islami," 454.

¹²¹ Ahmad, "The Indian Jama'at-I Islami," 451.

political party involved in a situation of ideological contestation within a party political system.¹²²

Chapters 6 and 8 aim to show that Khan formulates his views regarding the category of politics in opposition to the “political” view of Islam, especially Mawdudi’s political ideology. Hence, when Khan criticises the “political interpretation” of Islam, he has a particular ideological and religious debate situation in mind. The general debate situation crucially regards the meaning of Islam at the level of the state, and Mawdudi’s allegedly fundamentally true political ideology fits rather poorly with a secular, liberal, and pluralist democratic political system (just as any other dogmatic political theory would). Meanwhile, a secular, liberal democratic political system is the type of political system that Khan upholds by the very ideological content of his presentation of Islam, non-violence, and peace.

2.8 The Partition of India’s Muslims

Serious estimations show that the Muslim community in India is the second largest in any country in the world, 176 millions, even surpassing that of Pakistan. Furthermore, by the mid-twenty-first century, due to differences in demographical growth, India will most likely be home to the single largest Muslim population, exceeding that of Indonesia, the largest contemporary Muslim population.¹²³ Therefore, the experiences of the soon perhaps most significant portion of Muslims in the world is shaped by their grand-parents’, more or less forced, decision to stay in India, whether by poverty, indifference, or as a conscious choice to remain in their ancestral home.

With regard to the particular historical experiences of partition and the political manifestation of the “two-nation theory” the Delhi historian Mushirul Hasan points out that while such an Indian Muslim “community” was created by the colonial government it was also transformed during war-time by its ally, the Muslim League, into a “nation.”¹²⁴ Reflecting on this development, Hasan paints a chaotic picture of hastened political makings of community and nation which were never fully established at a social level. The vested interests of certain elites

¹²² However, in a comparative perspective and as we know from political science: any alleged fundamentally true political ideology (i.e. value-objectivist positions) logically entails the notion of a one-party-system. Dogmatism, if not outright authoritarian rule of the party or its leadership, logically follows from such premises.

¹²³ http://www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/muslims/pf_15-04-02_projectionstable74/, Accessed on 2017-11-16. These 2010 Muslim population figures show that Indonesia houses 209 million, India 176 million, and Pakistan 167 million. In 2050 India’s Muslim population is estimated at 310 million, Pakistan at 273 million Muslims, and Indonesia’s Muslim population will be the third largest in the world by its 257 million.

¹²⁴ Hasan, “Legacy of a Divided Nation,” 98–99.

within north Indian Muslim majority regions are described by Hasan as propagating a homeland for India's Muslims for the sake of "Muslim unity." Meanwhile they largely neglected the interests of the widely dispersed Muslims all over the subcontinent. As pointed to by Wilfred Cantwell Smith: "The partition of India in 1947 involved the portioning also of its Muslim community."¹²⁵ This entails that something historically new was shaped by the partition, India's Muslims, the most significant Muslim minority in the world.

The first generation of leaders of India's Muslims were men such as the minister of education, Kalam Azad, drawn from the top echelons of the Indian National Congress, who had participated in the struggle for independence.¹²⁶ Also the third and fifth serving presidents of the republic, Zakir Hussain (d. 1969) and Fakhruddin Ali Ahmad (d. 1977) were Muslims who along with other important Muslim public figures and intellectuals also served as proof of an on-going, and ideally equal, composite nationalism. At the same time, more and more Muslims protested for a lack of popular representation and increasingly saw highly visible and prominent positions available for outstanding individual Muslims as a democratic veneer only.¹²⁷ In fact, later generations of Indian Muslim leaders have had even more difficulties to rise to prominence.

What was at stake from the very beginning was the "secularism" of the Indian constitution. Mushirul Hasan describes the constitutional conceptualisation of secularism as: "the impartiality and strict neutrality of the state in relations with the religious institutions and practices of the different communities."¹²⁸ He also outlines the prescriptive and pragmatic character of the constitutional project, to change the norms of the civil society in line with the framers of the constitution's multi-layered combination of traditions and ideas: Jawaharlal Nehru's "scientific temper," the Hindu concept of "*Sarva Dharma Sambhava*" ('unity of faiths'), Mohandas Gandhi's "concern to strengthen the moral edifice of the Indian state" and liberal-left inspirations; "from nineteenth century British liberalism, Fabian socialism and the revolutionary fervour generated by socialism and communism."¹²⁹ Therefore, the constitutional project was largely informed by the secular leadership and goals of crucial parts of the Congress Party during the freedom struggle. Yet, the leadership of the Congress was in fact itself divided by what secularism entailed and the degree of commitment to such ideals. Metcalf and Metcalf, argues, on one hand, that the colonial legacy of general disadvantageous economic and social

¹²⁵ Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Islam in Modern History* (New York: The New American Library, 1963), 257.

¹²⁶ The significance of Maulana Azad is outlined in Chapter 2.

¹²⁷ Smith, *Islam in Modern History*, 265–266.

¹²⁸ Hasan, "Legacy of a Divided Nation," 141.

¹²⁹ Hasan, "Legacy of a Divided Nation," 142.

development burdened India. On the other hand, they point out that the years after independence saw the strengthening of categories related to religion and caste as building blocks in society. They think that while the commitment to build a state based on the liberal notion of the individual was strong, there also remained strong tensions inherent in the state treatment of minorities.¹³⁰ Such tensions and contested issues rose from within the notions and practices of “Composite Nationalism” and constitutional assertions of the validity of secularism in general. For Muslims in particular, such tensions was a result of debates of the relation between composite nationalism to Islam, the dynamics of Hindu activism and militancy, as well as the apprehensiveness brought on by the continuing wars with Muslim Pakistan.

2.8.1 The Wars for Jammu and Kashmir

The Indian-Pakistan conflict over Jammu and Kashmir began after the wavering Hindu Maharaja decided to concede to India in October 1947, after an invasion by army irregulars. This started a series of wars between India and Pakistan in which much more than territory was at stake. Metcalf and Metcalf argue that the issue to be won or lost for Pakistani leaders was the fundamental perception of Pakistan as a Muslim homeland. Forfeiting the millions of Muslims who stayed in India was considered a necessary cost, while suffering the loss of the Muslim majority population of neighbouring Jammu and Kashmir was considered unbearable. For such reasons, Pakistan fought three wars with India in the quarter century after independence. Similarly, the issue of Jammu and Kashmir put pressures upon Indian conceptions of nationhood. Independent India’s first Prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru (d. 1964), and the Congress Party, considered the new state of “India” not as a Hindu homeland, or “Hindustan,” but as the rightful successor of the British Raj. This policy contained, on one hand, a rejection of the “two-nation theory,” as well as, on the other hand, a concomitant commitment to a secular state in which Muslims and other minorities, at least in principle, were equal to Hindu citizens.¹³¹ Adding the peoples of Jammu and Kashmir to India was regarded as proof for the all-embracing qualities of the new state. Yet, an early promise made by Nehru to solve the issue by a plebiscite, which is also the recommendation of the UN, has not taken place.

In 1989, insurgency broke out in Jammu and Kashmir after the inflow of veterans from the Afghanistan war to the area. These fighters had support from the Pakistani government. This situation was made even more complex when diverging power sections within the Pakistani

¹³⁰ Metcalf and Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*, 267–275.

¹³¹ Metcalf and Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*, 224–225.

state provided for militant Muslim groups that either sought union with Pakistan or strived to establish Jammu and Kashmir as a separate state. Pakistani intelligence service largely lost control over the insurgents, who independently carried out spoiler acts of terror when India and Pakistan sought accommodation in the 2000s.¹³²

The Jammu and Kashmiri people itself has largely remained in the middle between the great South Asian powers. Of two minds, Jammu and Kashmiri leaders have sometimes sought the protection of India, while at other times tacitly receiving military support from Pakistan. Despite the fact, as many observers think, that the majority of Jammu and Kashmiri people would prefer an independent state for the region, the issue remains today the most critical factor which separates India and Pakistan from each other.¹³³

2.8.2 Violence and Ideology

The political scientist Paul Brass has investigated the growth of Hindu-Muslim violence in India from the 1960s, conflicts that reached new heights between 1978 and 1993.¹³⁴ Grounded in a longstanding field work, Brass delineates what he thinks are routinised features in the production of Hindu-Muslim riots with its clear phases of ideological and political mobilisation on the Hindu-nationalist side before, during, and after violent occurrences. Most crucial is the phase of blame displacement in which the culpability of the involved actors is dissolved, and the occurring violence instead is interpreted and presented from within the self-contained Hindu-nationalist paradigmatic framework of the “communal discourse.”¹³⁵ This discourse entails the demonising and disproportionately strengthening the other, the constantly violent-prone Muslim, while emphasising Hindu weakness due to the presence of Muslims and other dissenting enemies within India. Hence, Brass sees instances of Hindu-Muslim violence not as spontaneous riots, they are planned procedures and repeated pogroms.

The largely polarised alternatives for Muslims in such a context of violence and “communal discourse” is, on one hand, the option to strengthen and support secularism in hope that the dominant Hindu group will support secularism as well, or, on the other hand, to strengthen the community by supporting Muslim communal organisations and activism. Yet, options may not be as clear-cut. Jamal Malik points out that after the ban of the Muslim League, the ‘*ulamā*’ of

¹³² Mark Juergensmeyer, *Global rebellion: Religious Challenges to the Secular State, from Christian Militia to al-Qaeda* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 91.

¹³³ Metcalf and Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*, 226.

¹³⁴ Paul Brass, *The Production of Hindu-Muslim Violence in Contemporary India* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003), 61.

¹³⁵ Brass, *The Production*, 326–327.

India once more asserted their position in attempting to guide the community, through their primary organisation, the *Djāmi‘at al-‘Ulamā-yi Hind*. Discussions and divisions within the Muslim community itself hindered this largely Deobandi and Ahl-i ḥadīth association of scholars to unite with its Shia and Barēlwi counterparts.¹³⁶ Their commitment to composite nationalism and Islam is continually shaped by the ideology of Madanī.¹³⁷ While the organisation historically always sided with the Congress Party and the freedom movement, Malik thinks that Madanī falls into “the Islamist trap” of reiterating impermeable religious boundaries and the idea of an eventually Islamised India.¹³⁸ On the other hand, after the 1960s the Islamist party, the Djāmā‘at-i Islāmī Hind have increasingly refrained from making bold communal assertions, as seen. While they uphold the role of sharia as part of the goal of salvation for the Muslim *umma*, their ideology focusses on betterment and success for the Muslim community in the far more secular here and now.

Conceptualisations of secularism and Muslim approaches to it came to the fore in the 1985 Shah Bano case, when the Supreme Court ruled that an impoverished divorced Muslim woman should receive maintenance from her former husband.¹³⁹ This was seen to threaten the limited legal autonomy provided to the Muslim minority in India. Most active to repeal the Court’s decision was the All India Muslim Personal Law Board and the *Djāmi‘at al-‘Ulamā-yi Hind* who claimed to protect Islam from the uncertainty of Hindu judges interpreting the Quran in the name of the secular state. The court decision also highlighted a need for a uniform civil code. The preservation of separate civil codes, an old colonial policy, was initially thought of as temporary only and the constitutional ambition was to change the separate civil codes into a uniform civil code. In actuality only the Hindu civil code was reformed, setting it up as the *de facto* normative law in independent India. Thus, despite that the Muslim Personal Law have an important religious significance for India’s Muslims today, it was in fact created by the British, as “Anglo-Muhammadan law.”¹⁴⁰ Part of this contemporary significance arise from the tensions between communities and the experience of being a beleaguered minority which needs special protection in order to maintain its status.¹⁴¹ The eventual intervention against the Supreme Court decision by the Congress Party government increased the perception of the opposition; that the Congress was pampering to the Muslim minority at the expense of the Hindu majority. Debates

¹³⁶ Malik, *Islam in South Asia*, 443–444.

¹³⁷ Outlined in Chapter 2, and elaborated, in relation to Khan’s thought, in Chapter 5.

¹³⁸ Malik, *Islam in South Asia*, 445.

¹³⁹ Sylvia Vatuk, “A Rallying Cry for Muslim Personal Law: The Shah Bano Case and its Aftermath,” in Metcalf, *Islam in South Asia: In Practice*, 356.

¹⁴⁰ Zaman, 2002, 23.

¹⁴¹ Metcalf & Metcalf, 2006, 262.

surrounding the court case also sharpened a focus on male Muslim misogyny. In the meantime widespread abuse and exploitation of Indian women operates largely unnoticed, thus adding to the communal discourse effectively dispersing culpability, outlined by Brass.

The decision by the government to repeal the Supreme Court verdict in the Shah Bano case may have been due to fading Muslim support for Congress after the Emergency under Indira Gandhi in 1975–77.¹⁴² In a context of rising Hindu-Muslim violence during the 1980s, a shrine in Ayodhya, the four centuries old Babri Masjid, was identified by Hindu activists as an especially holy site, the birthplace of Ram. In December 1992, mobs mobilised by *Hindutva* groups such as the BJP (*Bharatiya Janata Party*), the VHP (*Vishwa Hindu Parishad*), the RSS (*Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh*), and the Bajrang Dal, destroyed the Babri Masjid.¹⁴³ Malik states that Muslim religious leaders have generally seen the destruction of the Babri Masjid as an effort by non-Muslims to violate a Muslim sacred space, and hence to “wipe out their religious identity.”¹⁴⁴ The failure on the part of the federal government to protect the historical holy site clearly shows that the secularism of the Indian state, formulated as state impartiality to religion, was increasingly troubled at the same time as religious political mobilisation increased.

Furthermore, on February 2002, fifty-nine Hindus returning from a pilgrimage to Ayodhya arranged by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad died in a train fire at Godhra station in Gujarat. Framed as an incident planned by Muslims, it prompted revenge killings organised by the Hindu Right which resulted in between 800 to 2000 deaths. While opposing evidence for what caused the fire has been produced, it has been made clear that the Gujarat state police remained passive, hence allowing, or sometimes actively participating, in the violence that followed. The BJP-led state government of Gujarat under Narendra Modi (b. 1950), who also became Prime Minister after the 2014 general elections, was starkly criticised for the involvement of the police in the killings.¹⁴⁵

According to Gould: “the effects of violence have been evoked, reproduced and publicised to further the social dominance of those championing organisations of religious community mobilisation.”¹⁴⁶ Despite “Nehruvian secularism,” ideas of the Hindu nature of Indian citizenship have deep roots in independent India, and not only in the apparent examples of the

¹⁴² Malik, *Islam in South Asia*, 451.

¹⁴³ William Gould, *Religion and Conflict in Modern South Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2012), 21.

¹⁴⁴ Malik, *Islam in South Asia*, 454.

¹⁴⁵ Gould, *Religion and Conflict*, 269–270. Modi remains Prime Minister after the elections in 2019.

¹⁴⁶ Gould, *Religion and Conflict*, 316.

organisations of the Hindu Right. Leaders of the Congress Party have utilised high caste Hindu mobilisation while at the same time preaching religious harmony since the 1950s.¹⁴⁷ One clear example of such ambiguity was the expressed notion that Muslims would have to prove their loyalty to India now that the existence of Pakistan shaped all occurrences of communal disagreement.

Despite the longstanding Hindu mobilisation and discourse, as described by Gould, the state-sponsored Gujarat violence of 2002, according to the political scientist Christophe Jaffrelot, represents something entirely new in the history of Indian politics.¹⁴⁸ While communal violence is seen as having a long history, Jaffrelot thinks that the 2002 violence differs from earlier riots in the region. The state sponsored violence on an unprecedented and massive scale. Moreover, severe sexual cruelty and widespread gang rape revealed the excessively atrocious nature of that violence. This makes Gujarat in 2002 the scene of what Jaffrelot argues should be regarded as pogroms and “ethnic cleansing.”¹⁴⁹ This massive scale of violence is analysed as made possible by the political strategy employed by Hindu nationalists, to a large extent control over the state apparatus, most notably the police.¹⁵⁰

Jaffrelot sees a “collective psychology” as decisive for explaining the violence and he regards the 2002 pogroms as a manifestation of the “new dominant ideology,” viz. “Hindutva against Jihad.” This ideology clearly demarcates “Muslim fundamentalists” as a severe existential threat to the Hindu nation. The outlook of this ideology marks Hindus in a position of vulnerable self-defence, defending itself from Muslim militant attacks; such as the one in the Lok Sabha itself, on 13 December 2001, killing 15 people. The creation of a stigmatised and violent “Other” who, by his very strength must be countered, has been a hallmark of Hindu Nationalism since its inception. However, Jaffrelot points to the changed discourse, earlier versions of this ethnic nationalism “did not preclude community cohabitation.” Muslims could be tolerated if they adhered to majoritarian Hindu culture, by “pledging allegiance” to it while refraining from public displays of religion. Thus, in 2002, such forms of cohabitation was put down when “the nationalist Hindu discourse openly advocated elimination of the Muslims.”¹⁵¹ Besides that local riots serve quotidian purposes, they are formulated within a general legitimising framework of Muslims as inherently violent-prone rapists who have come from the outside of the nation, for invasion and plunder. Their allegiance is to Pakistan, regarded as an Islamic polity, not to India,

¹⁴⁷ Gould, *Religion and Conflict*, 216.

¹⁴⁸ Christophe Jaffrelot, *Religion, Caste and Politics in India* (London: Hurst, 2011), 377–388.

¹⁴⁹ Jaffrelot, *Religion, Caste and Politics*, 389.

¹⁵⁰ Jaffrelot, *Religion, Caste and Politics*, 386.

¹⁵¹ Jaffrelot, *Religion, Caste and Politics*, 387.

regarded as a Hindu polity. Within such explanatory frameworks, Muslims represent an existential threat which must be neutralised.

2.9 Conclusion

As shown, Shāh Walī Allāh left an important and enduring intellectual legacy of *idītiḥād*, individual reasoning based on the Quran and the Sunna. However, his ideas on the importance of a Muslim polity was initially increasingly reined in by the situation at the turn of the twentieth century. First, the idea of a separate Muslim political entity was questioned by those who sought accommodation with the British. Later, certain influential Muslims aligned with the neighbour Hindus in conceptualisations of a shared independent India. Yet, the crucial issue of Muslim statehood became again increasingly debated and fought over in differing conceptualisations and realisations. The Indian Muslim nationalism of Iqbal and the secular Jinnah was challenged by Mawdudi's notion regarding the rule of God (and his representatives). Such political theory of Islam and the means to achieve control was challenged by the Tablīghī Djamā' at who instead sought individual adherence to a voluntary code of sharia law.

Differing conceptualisations of what exactly a Muslim state should be in Pakistan crucially created the different conditions for identity and national belonging among Indian Muslims. Such interaction can be seen in how the legitimations for war and claims to dominion over the region of Jammu and Kashmir have been formulated. Against the "two-nation theory" and apparent requirements for a Muslim polity, the association of Indian '*ulamā*', *Djāmi'at al-'Ulamā-yi Hind*, meant that the universal tenets of Islam were abandoned in the establishment of a local and particular form of government and state. The interests of the Indian Muslim community were far better served by broad political compromises and alliances with its mainly Hindu neighbours, as seen in its formulations of a composite nationalism. Crucially underscoring and strengthening issues of cooperation and the strongly civilisational aspects of Islam in terms of non-violent peaceful development, four important cases of Indian Muslim proponents of Islam and non-violence was mentioned: Chiragh Ali, Ameer Ali, Kalam Azad, and Abdul Ghaffar Khan. These cases point to an important intellectual legacy of non-violent positioning within the ideological and religious debate on the meaning of Islam in India. What is more, these cases represent important Muslim political examples of cooperation and peaceable relations with fellow inhabitants of the country.

The later analysis, particularly in Chapter 8 but also Chapter 9, of the ideas of Khan will attempt to reveal that his thought is formulated, to an extent, with regard to partly similar

political and social problems, as the ideological and religious debate and developments described so far in this chapter. However, in Khan's contemporaneous time-period, the main important contextual factors are, as we saw, the problems of the rising Hindu Right, the market liberalisations in India, and the general broad forces of globalisation.

Theoretical Perspectives

The purpose of this chapter is to establish a conceptual framework for analysing Khan's ideas of Islam, non-violence, and peace. It will describe an analytical framework of "political theology" and how it is applied in this study. Furthermore, the concept of an "objectification" of Islam is presented in terms of an overall situation of globalisation, affecting the formulation and reformulation of Islam.

These analytical concepts and theoretical perspectives highlight different aspects of Khan's ideology, especially how it functions at different levels of analysis. The different forms of analysis that are generated through application of the separate theoretical concepts serve as a background for a discussion of how Khan's ideology can be theoretically understood. The concepts of "political theology" and the "objectification" of Islam respectively, are set up as two perspectives in the third section of this chapter. There, I compare, discuss, and summarise the contradictions and mutual exclusion, and therefore limited explanatory potentials of the theoretical framework. By focussing on the limits of the theoretical analytical framework, this chapter thus aims to render possible a further theoretical discussion on the study of Khan's thought with regard to multiple contextual factors. This discussion is continued in the concluding chapters of this study, highlighting the limits of our understanding, and the need for further research.

3.1 "Political Theology": Ideas and Structure

In the work *God's Century: Resurgent Politics and Global Politics* (2011), political scientists Monica Duffy Toft, Daniel Philpott and Timothy Samuel Shah have developed a generalised description regarding power relations between *religious actors* and the state.¹ As their point of departure they discuss the increase in the political influence of religion during the last four decades. This increase is mainly due to the forces of mature modernity: democratisation, globalisation and communication technologies. This development is understood as "driven by religious peoples' desire for freedom," and within this context, religious actors have benefitted

¹ Monica Duffy Toft, Daniel Philpott, and Timothy Samuel Shah, *God's Century: Resurgent Religion and Global Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2011), 9.

from individual and collective freedom to express and practice their faith; such as assembling and proselytising, as well as public displays of religious community and affiliation.²

In their own words, political theology is defined as, first: “*the set of ideas that a religious community holds about political authority and justice.*”³ Second, “the kind of politics” pursued by a religious actor is explained to a large degree by “*the mutual independence of religious authority and political authority.*”⁴

Toft, Philpott and Shah’s concept of “political theology” adds the ability to analytically differentiate between the significance of religious ideas with a political content in this study, or “political theology” for short, and the relationships between the proponents of such ideas and governments. Religious ideas with political content relate to pressing issues which religious communities at present, and in historical light, consider: How legitimate is any overlap between political and religious authority? What should be the relation of political authorities to members of different, sometimes competing faiths? Can violence be justified? In relation to such pressing matters the authors point out why even those religious actors who wish to “remain outside of politics altogether” should be categorised as political, as such religious actors still hold ideas “about political authority and justice” by the very content of their ideas.⁵

Toft, Philpott and Shah formulate a fruitful theory on how the ideal relationship between religion and state is defined by a religious actor as shaped by political theology on one hand, and the actual relationship between religion and the state on the other. Once again, the central point is the degree of “mutual independence of religious authority and political authority,” expressed in both various formulations of political theology, as well as in institutionalised political structures.⁶ The degree of mutual independence is a measure of the current level of institutional *independence* or conversely, *integration* between state and religion and can be analysed in six dimensions of interaction.⁷ The first dimension concerns the issue of whether a certain religion is ensured an established status by the state? “Monopoly and primacy” can be granted by a state constitution.⁸ High levels of pre-eminence, support, and control signify high levels of institutional integration. The second dimension of state-religion independence might be closest to what is usually referred to when speaking of religious freedom: To which degree are some or all religious actors permitted to freely express themselves in the media and in

² Toft, Philpott and Shah, *God’s Century*, 9.

³ Toft, Philpott and Shah, *God’s Century*, 9. Italics in original.

⁴ Toft, Philpott and Shah, *God’s Century*, 10. Italics in original.

⁵ Toft, Philpott and Shah, *God’s Century*, 9.

⁶ Toft, Philpott and Shah, *God’s Century*, 10.

⁷ Toft, Philpott and Shah, *God’s Century*, 37.

⁸ Toft, Philpott and Shah, *God’s Century*, 34.

proselytisation? Are they permitted to be active in civil society and allowed to carry out religious activities such as education, worship and the public use of symbols? To what degree are religious actors allowed to build and maintain places of worship?⁹ The third dimension regards the degree to which state actors appoint religious leaders or heads of office, allocating high levels of state control over religion and close integration of state and religion. The fourth dimension considers an inverse kind of state-religion integration: Do religious actors have a direct say in choosing state officials or in influencing public policies? A fifth dimension revolves around funding and financing of religious actors. Integrated financial arrangements vary. Direct funding usually signifies high levels of control. Tax exemption may be an indirect way for the state to support (some) religious actors, while denial of tax exemption suggests state disapproval and impediment. In their view, communist states have directly hindered private sponsorship of religious organisations.¹⁰ Finally, the sixth dimension regards transnational structures and the degree of international support that a religious body might enjoy. A high level of international financial and administrative support may possibly strengthen its position and independence in relation to the domestic state.¹¹ Analysing these six dimensions together makes it possible to categorise “relationships between religious and political authority” charting independence and integration, which can be either conflictual or consensual.¹² The degree and kind of different possible combinations of political and religious authority can therefore be measured in terms of the degree of *consensus* and the degree of *independence*.¹³

The details of the institutional integration of religious and political authority partially explain what kind of political action religious actors might be undertaking. Other explanatory factors can be sought in the religious ideas and traditions themselves. The explanatory framework of Toft, Philpott, and Shah thus revolves around two factors. One is structural and contextual, regarding the degree of institutional integration between religious actors and the state. The other is actor-centred, and considers the thoughts and actions of the religious bodies themselves; summarised by the concept of political theology. The interaction of these key factors is central in their explanatory framework: “the core driver of the politics of the religious in today’s world is not structure or ideology working independently of the other but structure and ideology

⁹ Toft, Philpott and Shah, *God’s Century*, 34–39.

¹⁰ Exceptions to this pattern, for instance Kerala, are not discussed by the authors.

¹¹ Toft, Philpott and Shah, *God’s Century*, 34–39. Toft, Philpott and Shah do not discuss whether a “transnational structure,” real or imagined, can weaken the position of a religious actor, making them vulnerable to attack and blame as the “enemy within.” The representation of their international ties, mainly to Pakistan, is a factor in the case of India’s Muslim minority.

¹² Toft, Philpott and Shah, *God’s Century*, 40.

¹³ Toft, Philpott and Shah, *God’s Century* 37.

interacting together.”¹⁴ Hence, the politics pursued by a religious actor is explained by Toft, Philpott and Shah using a two-sided model shaped by both varying scenarios of state-religion independence or integration, as well as the content of religious ideas and thought.

The analytical focus of political theology highlights religious ideas with political content. The kind of politics a religious actor pursues is analysed in terms of the degree of consensus and independence in the relationship between religion and the state. Applying political theology as an explanatory and theoretical concept in this study makes it possible to analyse how Khan’s thought expresses and perceives the relation between religion and the state. What degree of independence is pursued? Is the sought after degree of independence from the state either consensual or conflictual?

3.2 Globalisation and the Objectification of Islam

3.2.1 *The Objectification of Islam*

In *Muslim Politics* (1996), Dale Eickelman and James Piscatori formulates the concept of the “objectification of Islam.”¹⁵ This concept is used to describe those contemporary situations in which Islam is no longer rooted in a culture or a social practice. Their main claim is that in these situations, Islam is no longer a pre-set source of social authority. Hence, in this new situation and through a process of questioning, for the believer Islam becomes an “object.” The concepts “object” and “objectification” are used to describe a demarcation process in which the limits of Islam are made visible: Islam means this but not that. Three social factors contribute to the demarcation process. First, modern mass communications creates an ease of transportation and allows for expanding networks of young people who meet through education, conscription, and employment (and perhaps enjoyment should be included and as will be discussed shortly, migration). Second, mass higher education means that claims to religious authority are made to audiences who recognise texts and the principles of citation. Third, mass publishing, especially “Islamic books” means that inexpensive and attractively printed texts are more widely available. These texts are written in an accessible and informal style, unlike the literary works of earlier generations of text-producing Muslims. This results in a “heightened self-consciousness” and the “systematization and explicitness of religious tradition.”¹⁶

¹⁴ Toft, Philpott and Shah, *God’s Century*, 220.

¹⁵ Dale F. Eickelman and James Piscatori, *Muslim Politics* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1996), 38.

¹⁶ Eickelman and Piscatori, *Muslim Politics*, 39.

Eickelman and Piscatori point out three noteworthy facets of objectification, beginning with the mass scale of people debating their understanding of the meaning of Muslim tradition. The mass debate made possible by mass communications, mass education, and printing, necessarily involves the broader dissemination of ideas, including the possibility of discourse regarding other Muslim and non-Muslim ideas and traditions.

A second facet of objectification is that direct and broader access to the printed word leads to more and more Muslims who “take it upon themselves to interpret the textual sources, classical or modern, of Islam.” Influential religious activists are more likely to be trained in the systems of higher education than religious scholars trained in a religious seminary. Furthermore, the texts published by the likes of Sayyid ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (quoted at the beginning of this study) are seen to only influence people who have “access to analytical and exegetical texts that education provides.”¹⁷

Third, specifically related to the implications of access to the printed word, the objectification of Islam becomes integral to contemporary mass politics. In this situation, different claims to speak for Islam become central to “Muslim politics.” It is far from obvious that it should be the *‘ulamā’* who must now engage in debate with new Muslim leaders, transnational Muslim movements and religious intellectuals, all of whom contend to be the role model for the correct practice of Islam.

These theoretical perspectives allows me to analyse the material at hand in relation to the concept of objectification, the influence of a broad mass debate, and the various and politically relevant claims to religious authority. As will be seen, Chapters 9 and 10 make several attempts to contribute to the theoretical discussions of Muslim politics.

3.2.2 Globalisation and Secularisation: Culture and Religion Part Ways

Sociologist Olivier Roy develops the concept of the “objectification of Islam” by calling attention to how the process of objectification is amplified by non-Muslim pressure on Muslims, especially in times of crisis, to answer questions on what the Quran really says on violence, jihad, the veiling of women, etc. Roy also points out that the posing of such questions tends to favour conservatives and fundamentalists who can offer definite answers. This is something that “liberal,” “Sufi,” “lay” or “spiritualist” Muslims might find a lot more difficult to do in a straightforward way.¹⁸

¹⁷ Eickelman and Piscatori, *Muslim Politics*, 43.

¹⁸ Olivier Roy, *Globalised Islam: The Search for a New Ummah* (London: Hurst & Company, 2004), 154.

Roy's work, *Globalised Islam* (2004), is an extended argument as to why the uprooted-ness, migration and minority situation of Islam in the globalised world favours the spread of "neo-fundamentalism."¹⁹ The concept of neo-fundamentalism is recurrent in the works of Roy. It primarily suggests a "closed, scripturalist and conservative view of Islam."²⁰ In *The Failure of Political Islam* (1994), Roy had already contended that in relation to earlier Islamist movements, whose vision and blueprint of an Islamic state was failing because of the secularising effect of the dominance of the political over religion, the choice was either between political normalisation or a development towards neo-fundamentalism.²¹ In his following works, Roy contends that globalisation favours neo-fundamentalism, focussing on an imaginary global (non-territorial) and universal community of Muslim believers, the *umma*. This type of religious revivalism bypasses or ignores the state and it even develops as a "pseudo-ethnic" or cultural minority. In these closed communities of believers faith is privatised and individualised.²² Hence, Roy portrays what he sees as a change in religiosity shaped ("formatted") along a global template of individualism, especially the way in which the individual believer experiences religion. Feelings and personal meaning replace religion as culture, knowledge, literature, philosophy, and reflective theology. Hence, what Roy terms "ignorance" replaces the socially conventional and embedded knowledge. And since this "ignorance" occurs in networks or organisations of fundamentalist faith, Roy introduces the concept of "holy ignorance."²³

According to Roy, "Islamist" and "fundamentalist" movements share the notion of separating what is "Muslim" from what is "Islamic"; i.e. of separating Muslim culture and identity from what is presented as authentic Islamic religion. The need to "define" and hence "objectify" Islam is said to be a result of "the end of the social authority of religion" and is a cornerstone of all "revivalist Islamic movements."²⁴ The end of the social authority of religion is a "mechanical consequence of the delinking of religion and culture."²⁵ Muslim identity is seen as self-evident as long as it belonged to a cultural legacy present at birth. However, in a minority position or in a non-Muslim or Western context, a Muslim identity must be expressed explicitly and in universal terms. In such a process, Islam is delinked from any specific cultural heritage, which means not only that it could fit whatever culture. Islam can be defined as "beyond the

¹⁹ Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 2.

²⁰ Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 1.

²¹ Olivier Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam* (London, Tauris, 1994), 76–83, 196–202.

²² Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 5.

²³ Roy, *Holy Ignorance*, 29–30.

²⁴ Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 21–22.

²⁵ Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 24.

very notion of culture.” Hence, there is a quest for the formulation of a new conception of universality. This new universality is based on individualism and religiosity. The formulations of Islam are formatted so as to express what Islam means to the individual. Because of political crises such as 9/11, ordinary Muslims are compelled to explain what it means to be a Muslim. In fact, Roy thinks that to publicly state self-identity has become something of a “civic duty” for Muslims. The views of moderate or “liberal” Muslims are published in the Western press stating what Islam is and especially what it is not: “radical, violent, fanatical,” and so on.²⁶

This public role of explaining Islam in a non-Muslim majority context is comparable to Khan’s function in the Indian English speaking media, as will be seen.²⁷ However, the objectification process is a global one. Explaining and defining Islam in an explicit formulation means making choices and sorting out the contradictions and layers of religion as embedded in a given culture. Hence, it is not only political pressure and events that leads to objectification. Globalisation creates conditions of “deterritorialization” and “deculturation,” for the formulations of all religion, not only for the conditions of Islam.²⁸ The connections between religion, culture, society, and territory are blurred or even dissolved. Paradoxically this creates a thorough secularisation. And as Roy contends, religions are shaped along individual formulations, instead of being thoroughly embedded in a culture and the social authority of religion which grows naturally from within that culture. Neo-fundamentalism is both a result of and an agent for the continuation of an ongoing secularisation in society.

3.2.3 *Deterritorialisation and Deculturation*

Roy contends that the processes of deterritorialisation and deculturation are two key factors transforming religion today.²⁹ Deterritorialisation means something more than the effects caused by migratory patterns, only directly concerning a minority of the world’s population. It primarily involves what Eickelmann and Piscatori had pointed out with regard to Islam; the broad circulation of ideas, a mass debate made possible by mass communications, mass education, and printing. Roy adds that not only ideas but cultural objects, information, and modes of consumption circulate in a “non-territorial” space. Because of non-territoriality, only

²⁶ Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 24.

²⁷ One main discrepancy between Roy’s theory and the case of Khan is the latter’s claim to legitimate religious authority as a learned *ālim* and *Maulana*, publically watching over the authentic, peaceable Islamic teachings. However, Roy’s theory is built on a different minority situation for Islam and sees the development of a general Muslim civil duty as due to the lack of established and culturally respected religious authorities in Europe.

²⁸ Roy, *Holy Ignorance*, 26, 81.

²⁹ Roy, *Holy Ignorance*, 6–7.

that “religious object” that appears as universal will be grasped. The knowledge related to a specific culture must be separated from religion or it will not be understood and circulated in the religious market. A central point in Roy’s theoretical thinking is that the culture and knowledge associated with religion are taken out of the formulations of religion. What is left is the experience of faith instead of culturally transmitted discursive knowledge. Faith therefore becomes central, not the culture and cultural knowledge that the believer may share with others. Fundamentalism is the position of breaking away from culture and sharing only with others in the faith. Religion becomes the enemy of its cultural surroundings, perceived not only as secular and indifferent but as pagan and hostile. The accommodating spaces (for instance, literature and philosophy as forms of discursive knowledge shared by a culture) between religion and the secular disappear and a quest to define “religious purity” is attempted. A position of “accommodationism” however proposes that believers can share with non-believers in culture and values. We will recognise this possible position when discussing the effort of Khan to create social harmony and shape certain liberal-democratic values in society in Chapter 9.

The way that Roy formulates the concept of “deculturalisation” aims to first highlight this process. Deculturalisation suggests that both the believer and the non-believer become firmly separated in their respective spheres. They no longer share “either religious practice or common values.”³⁰ Deculturation for Roy also suggests that religions are shaped along a market-driven formatting template, which is further explored below.

A deculturation process has been and is taking place when cultures in crisis are reconstructed and westernised. The crisis of culture and westernisation “means something other than becoming Western.” It suggests the formulation of new identities, not the preservation of “a pristine identity” (hence a crisis of culture) but a reaching “back to and beyond” pristine identities “through an ahistorical model of Islam.”³¹

This means that Muslims everywhere are involved in an effort to explain and express a universal Islam. Roy points out that unquestionably, Islam in its religious content is universal. Yet, subsequent to the time of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions, Islam has always been entrenched in given cultures. Globalisation therefore creates a need to separate Islam from any cultural context and benefits presentations of an ideal Islam that could work outside the framework of different, actual cultures. Such an endeavour is definitely not new in the history of Islam, yet globalisation changes the foundational settings for the reformulation of Islam in

³⁰ Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 8.

³¹ Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 22–23.

three significant ways, all relating to the individual, individual religiosity, and cultural identity.³²

First, globalisation and the accompanying individualism reduces the content of “Islam.” Islam is increasingly thought of as a mere religion. Islam is no longer thought of as the prevailing culture, science, philosophy, literature, oral traditions and customs. Because of this, Islam becomes a separate field of action, which is also a prerequisite for general secularisation. This is a central point in the works of Roy and it describes the way Islam becomes secularised in the process of globalisation. The secularisation of Islam suggests a process in which religion becomes differentiated from other fields of human activity.³³

Second, globalisation and the accompanying individualism leading to secularisation changes the way Islam is formulated and reformulated. This can be managed in two general ways. The (religiously) “liberal” view holds that a space outside of religion is accepted. The fundamentalist outlook instead holds that Islam is “an all-encompassing system” or “Islam is a total way of life,” etc.

Third, the social authority of Islam is changed by the social conditions of globalisation and individualism. As noted, Roy differentiates between liberals who accept a sphere outside religion and fundamentalists who don’t. Despite their differences, both liberal and fundamentalist views are based on the individual never the collective, especially due to the minority situation. Roy writes:

[...] globalisation [...] can be accommodated through a liberal reformist view of Islam, a charismatic and spiritual approach [...] or a neofundamentalist stress on *sharia* (laws) and *ibadat* (rituals). All of these approaches are based on individual reformulation of personal religiosity³⁴

Furthermore, individualism is only one facet of what Roy describes as the “westernisation” of Islam. There is also a double “transversal influence,” first of Christian religiosity, and second of left-wing “political radicalisation.”³⁵ Both relate to individualism in a broader sense: The influence of Christian forms of religiosity regards how the individual appropriates his or her religion and the manner in which “intellectual and theological debates give way to the

³² Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 25–26.

³³ I.e. a religious field is defined.

³⁴ Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 26.

³⁵ Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 26.

expression of a personal relationship to faith, deity and knowledge.”³⁶ Religion based on individual religiosity grows in a common situation of modernity and modern social and cultural institutional configurations.

This also affects political radicalisation which is not only an “individual and personal” decision.³⁷ Such radicalisation and its accompanying tendency toward violence have “more to do with a Western tradition of individual and pessimistic revolt for an elusive ideal world” than with the Quranic conception of martyrdom.³⁸ Not least in relation to Cook’s notion of contemporary Muslim terrorists as acting through the same legitimising framework as medieval Muslim warriors, as seen previously, Roy’s point that contemporary violence among Muslim youth as analogous to global templates of political radicalisation amongst youth since the 1960s is a crucial one.³⁹ Contemporary radical Muslims have more in common with cases of adolescent left-wing extremism such as the Cultural Revolution, the Khmer Rouge, the Baader-Meinhof gang, and the Japanese Red Army, than with feudal holy war principles.⁴⁰

3.2.4 The Growth of “Neo-Fundamentalism”

As described, neo-fundamentalism is seen by Roy as a general and global turn from religion towards religiosity. Roy’s perspective is an attempt at a broad multi-variable analysis (or “transversal” approach) connecting sociological factors beyond categories such as religion or Islam through the lens of globalisation. Standardisation and the creation of global templates is an important topic. Related to the framework of deculturalisation, Roy points out some very broad and general social changes related to religiosity: “The simultaneous presence in the market of different ‘religious products’ results in both competition and standardisation, not of theology but of religiosity.”⁴¹ This also includes the standardisation of life-styles, norms and

³⁶ Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 28.

³⁷ Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 42.

³⁸ Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 43.

³⁹ Cook argues soundly that contemporary Muslims engaging in violent warfare as jihad are the inheritors of medieval normative reasoning. Certain contemporary Muslims are using the Islamic concepts and sacred history in ways that are not only similar to but also explicitly borrow from the medieval Muslim jurists’ thinking on military jihad, retribution and just war. However, Cook reaches the conclusion that: “the Qur’an does not support a completely non-violent interpretation of jihad.” This can obviously be questioned from the perspective of the empirical findings of this study. Hence, one issue concerns which Muslims to study for the analysis and Cook mainly considers authoritative Muslim medieval scholars and the contemporary military leaders who quote them. Another is to look beyond religious discourse and consider possible multiple ideological layers in the contemporary debates in relation to historical factors, such as Roy’s points that generational conflict and extreme left-wing ideology pervade contemporary Muslim radical positions. Cook, *Understanding Jihad*, 4, 33.

⁴⁰ Olivier Roy, *Jihad and Death: The Global Appeal of Islamic State* (London: Hurst & Co Publishers, 2017), 68. Oliver Roy, *Secularism Confronts Islam* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 90.

⁴¹ Roy, *Holy Ignorance*, 8.

values in what are viewed as a number of paradoxical social consequences of globalisation. Sociologically modern families (couples of a similar age and background) espouse conservative values but are indifferent to political ideology and the form of the state and only campaign to promote moral values. Modern professionals such as engineers and civil servants root their discourse in tradition. Women who are active in the professional and public arena demand a traditional gender role. However, their claim that wearing the veil is a personal choice shows the loss of the social and cultural authority of religion. Fascination with modern technology alongside an indifference to traditional art and culture. According to Roy, a universal vision of religion espoused by closed communities shows that all religiosities are structurally similar, even if their religious identities differ.

In Roy's broad analytical "transversal" perspective, the main outcome of individualism and its effects on religiosity and radicalisation in contemporary Islam is something that Islam shares with other Western religions (and as seen, forms of political radicalisation). Individualism as the experience, enjoyment, and enhancement of the self, sometimes combined with radical pessimism, has a wide impact on religion and political radicalisation. Roy writes that there is "among all religious revivalist movements of the late twentieth century a widespread anti-intellectualism." The crisis of intellectual authority gives preference to a more emotional and individual religiosity. Anti-intellectualism and the affirmation of the self, distinguish the "religious market," with a clear demand for "ready-made and easily accessible set of norms and values that might order their daily lives and define a practical and visible identity."⁴² These traits seem to favour the charismatic and spiritual tactic that shares a rejection of "any theological or philosophical dimension in favour of devotion (*ibadat*)" with the fundamentalist approach.⁴³

The disproportionate ability to meet the demands of the religious market is crucial in Roy's analysis of the fate of contemporary Muslim "liberal reformists" in relation to fundamentalists.⁴⁴ According to Roy, "the issue is not about writers but about readers."⁴⁵ When reformists challenge "the conservative theology with an interpretation of their own" they "wish to propound their academic, theological learning." For that reason, liberal reformists do not appeal to "born-again" Muslims. Roy argues that "born-again believers" are not seeking "knowledge" and an intellectual relation to "religion" for which there is only contempt. They

⁴² Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 31.

⁴³ Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 26.

⁴⁴ Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 31.

⁴⁵ Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 30.

seek an “enjoyment of faith,” “feelings” instead of knowledge, “a pleasure in belief,” and “in being in touch with God.” In Roy’s analysis, this is related to a typically modern religiosity, in which the self and the individual’s personal experience of faith as truth is in focus. The notion that personal experience and personal faith as truth should be seen as the “core of religion” is a thoroughly modern one and as seen, Roy associates it with religiosity and not with religion.⁴⁶

Roy’s perspective of a dichotomy between “liberal” reformists and “fundamentalists” fruitfully allows me to analyse, categorise and compare the thought of Khan. The theoretical framework allows me to test, in relation to the empirical evidence, the degree to which a universal “objectified” Islam also requires a “deculturalised” (and ignorant) formulation of a closed community identity unable to share with neighbours of a shared national, perhaps even global culture.

3.2.5 The Religion Market: Formatting Religion

Roy is concerned with how globalisation and secularisation change the relationship between religion and state. The turn towards privatisation, individualism and religiosity coincides with the global prominence of a civil society associated with a voluntary market of religion. Neo-fundamentalism is a consequence and an agent of these developments. Religious observance becomes individualised and it thereby not only escapes state efforts to control religion; religious neo-fundamentalism is not concerned with political power or the state.⁴⁷ The state is not the instrument or organ with which to change society, it is the individual return to belief that will create the foundations for a firmly religious society. This is unambiguously expressed in the ideology of Khan, as will be seen in Chapter 6.

But according to Roy, it is not primarily religion that shapes society, instead it is “market-driven formatting” that shapes religion. Roy writes that: “people are seeking identical things (self-affirmation, fulfilment, happiness, salvation).”⁴⁸ Hence, religions format themselves to meet these demands. Besides, in the name of freedom and equality, legal frameworks and processes also tend to consider and hence shape religions, in the same mould.

Neo-fundamentalism is analysed as well adapted to globalisation and the economic free market.⁴⁹ Economic liberalisation has expanded the global financial networks of Muslim entrepreneurs who have benefitted from free enterprise and the free market. Prevailing

⁴⁶ Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 31.

⁴⁷ Roy, *Secularism*, 68–69.

⁴⁸ Roy, *Holy Ignorance*, 8.

⁴⁹ Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 173–174.

economic policies also shape religious opinion and favour the neo-fundamentalist conservative view of distrust towards the state (and its regulations) over the revolutionary Islamist vision focussed on the state. This relationship between economic liberalisation and neo-fundamentalism develops into an ethic of capitalism. Individualist in nature, this ethic provides a religious justification of wealth, seen as a gift from God, while rejecting the flaunting of wealth by means of consumption. The development of Muslim charity NGOs also means that Muslim charity is formatted along dominant Western forms, abandoning the prevalent post-colonial state systems of collecting charity or traditional funds for religious purposes (*awqāf*).

In *Holy Ignorance* (2014), Roy expands his discussion of capitalism, globalisation and religion beyond Islam. The point of departure is how the influence of Protestantism is to be assessed and categorised (for instance in terms of theological content, religious organisation, or the scholarly and intellectual definitions of religion as a category). Furthermore, with regard also to Buddhism, Roy contends that Protestantism shaped a certain template of religion through the need for protection against the influence of its missionaries.⁵⁰ However, the most significant and long-lasting effect is instead the self-formatting of religion with regard to established templates. For instance, while contemporary scholars of religion consider the nineteenth century definition of Hinduism as a religion as based on Western templates, the Indian nationalist party, BJP reconstructs Hinduism as a national project. Particularly in terms of self-formatting, religion is shaped and defined as a moral code, especially Max Weber's explicit and influential formulations of a Protestant ethic. Weber's formulation of a certain religious ethic is seen by Roy as not exporting (or discovering the truth about) Protestantism per se, instead it created and exported an influential template of the alleged connections of authentic religion and capitalism. Hence, authenticity is guaranteed through theological references while affirming modernity and capitalism at the same time as in contemporary formulations of both Buddhism and Islam.

This theoretical perspective regarding the self-formatting of religion in relation to ethics and capitalism allows me to analyse and discuss the contents of the study material and probe how and to what degree contextual issues related to globalisation, free markets, and capitalism may have affected the formulation of religion.

⁵⁰ Roy, *Holy Ignorance*, 197.

3.2.6 Religion as a Global Function System

Further analysing Islam and other religions through the lens of globalisation, the sociologist of religion Peter Beyer describes in *Religions in Global Society* (2006) the “main question” as: “one of the restructuring and re-imagination of Islam for a different, namely globalized, context.”⁵¹ Building on the influential globalisation theories of Ronald Robertson, Beyer sets his argument in a Luhmannian framework. This means seeing the development of “religion” as a global function system besides other global function systems. Most important of these are a capitalist economic system, a political system centred on states, an empirical science system, a legal system of positive law, a mass media system, a medicalised health system, and a system of academic education. During recent centuries, the development of these systems has mainly been a result of accelerating globalisation processes.⁵² A common feature among these function systems are their respective operative binary codes. These codes are aspects of an even more fundamental nature – they are forms of communication. As communications, they can belong to and influence several function systems. Hence, the systems are both interdependent and differentiated. The boundaries between the systems are made up by the way the communications and basic codes operates and the meaningful reach of the communications and codes. Beyer defines the programmatic core code of religion in contemporary global society as: “the difference between *blessed* and *cursed*.”⁵³ The development of a separate communication system of religion is connected to processes of individualistic privatisation and general secularisation.⁵⁴ The situation is complicated by the relatively lesser degree of differentiation in earlier societies. Religion can no longer operate by the codes with which less differentiated religious communication used to be associated. True and false is determined by empirical science, enlightened or ignorant is a function of academic education, ill or healthy by modern medicine and legal or illegal by the judiciary and positive law.⁵⁵ Such binary codes operate in their respective and differentiated function systems. Religious instances and leaders may attempt to influence other differentiated spheres but their options are highly limited by the

⁵¹ Peter Beyer, *Religions in Global Society* (Oxon: Routledge, 2006), 156.

⁵² Beyer, *Religions*, 42–49.

⁵³ Beyer, *Religions*, 85. Beyer points out that the usage of these words is an effort to put the operative difference into the most appropriate English words, not to suggest that Abrahamic categories are determinative in the global religion system.

⁵⁴ Peter Beyer, *Religion and Globalisation* (London: Sage Publications, 1997), 88–89.

⁵⁵ The effective reach of modern medicine became an issue in Indian Islam and the traditions of Yūnānī tibb, Arabic-Persian medicine of Greek, “Ionic,” origins, inter alia based on the four humours doctrine associated with the second century CE Greek physician, Galen of Pergamon.

meaningful reach of the other systems. Hence, communication operating along these other codes may only function as secondary codes in religions.⁵⁶

Regarding Islam, Beyer builds on John Voll's creation of three general content categories of Islamic reform: "a distrust of conservative imitation of received tradition in favour of re-appropriation of core religious sources, an emphasis on [...] 'socio-moral reconstruction' and a particular understanding of the unity of Islam."⁵⁷

Beyer also draws on Voll's four "styles" of Islamic action since the eighteenth century: "adaptionist, conservative, fundamentalist and personal-piety."⁵⁸ What Beyer adds to Voll's schematisations of the subject matters and modes of engagement of Islamic reformers is how they relate to the programmatic core code of religion in contemporary global society (the difference between *blessed* and *cursed*). This basic binary code is an abstraction, "rather remote in the day-to-day re-production of religious communication." Secondary codes are in fact what make the more basic, core code relevant. Regarding Islam, Beyer points out secondary codes as *halal/haram*, lawful/unlawful, good/bad and just/unjust as typical for modern Islam. In his discussion on representative twentieth-century Islamic thinkers, Beyer explains: "different emphasis among secondary codes translate into different sorts of relation to other systems, above all other religions and other non-religious function systems."⁵⁹

The perspective of globalisation as formatting religion as a separate (differentiated) function system operating along a communicative code of either *blessed* or *cursed* allows me to analyse Khan's ideology through the lens of globalisation. More specifically, Beyer's theoretical framework makes it possible to analyse Khan's statements and writings as a meaningful discourse operating not only along the basic binary code. The content of the communication is shaped with regard to other function systems such as the capitalist economy, the political state, academic education, and empirical science, which are shaped along secondary codes (for instance lawful or unlawful, good or bad). The communication shaped along the core code however postulates a separate, private and individual sphere of religion, which is a feature of secularisation and differentiation.

For the purposes of this study, the theories and concepts of Roy and Beyer provide an analytical explanatory framework that allows me to categorise and discuss the subject matter at hand. These perspectives highlight both the intricate situation and the accompanying

⁵⁶ Beyer, *Religions*, 86.

⁵⁷ Beyer, *Religions*, 160.

⁵⁸ John Voll, *Islam: Continuity and Change in the Modern World* (Boulder, Westview, 1982). Beyer, *Religions*, 163.

⁵⁹ Beyer, 2006, 173.

philosophical and religio-political issues concerning the contemporary global situation of Islam. With these matters in focus and on a general note, the globalisation perspective requires attention regarding the relationship between formulations of Islam and other features of globalisation: the global capitalist system, the global political system, the global science system, the legal system, the education system and the mass media system. More specifically, the globalisation perspective outlined above allows me to analyse to what degree there is a relationship between Khan's formulations of Islam and the generalised situation set up in the theoretical framework. It allows me to test which parts of Khan's formulations can be explained with regard to this theoretical framework.

3.3 The Effect of Globalisation on Religion: *Optimism* and *Pessimism* in the Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework covers two perspectives on how to perceive the effects of globalisation on religion. To a large degree, Toft, Philpott and Shah welcome globalisation and liberalisation that has the potential to render religion a force for pluralisation and democracy. They contend that the religious influence of global politics in the last four decades is a result of the modern world, democracy, communication technology and globalisation. Their explanatory framework seeks to answer why some religious actors promote peaceful democracy and why others turn to violent measures. They explicitly seek to influence policy in the United States and beyond:

What lessons do the answers to these questions have for practical action? If, for instance makers of American foreign policy were to understand better the importance of religion and the causes of religious behaviour, how could they translate these insights into a foreign policy that would better secure America's freedom, security, and prosperity?⁶⁰

The American experience and perspective is also noticeable in their concluding effort to influence public opinion and policy makers. Rule seven of ten "for surviving God's century" is formulated as:

⁶⁰ Toft, Philpott, and Shah, *God's Century*, 37.

Acknowledge that the more governments permit religious actors to be autonomous social actors in a system of consensual independence, the more religion will serve as a ‘force multiplier’ for important social and political goods, including democratization, peacemaking, and reconciliation.⁶¹

Hence, liberal freedoms are regarded as generally fostering democracy, peace and stable societies. In the explanations of the implications of this “rule,” Toft, Philpott and Shah explicitly commends U.S. policies related to the American historical example regarding the institutional freedom of religion:

The United States offers one model for liberating God’s representatives from Caesar’s domination. Unlike the revolutionaries of the Left or the reactionaries of the Right, the republicans who founded the United States respected God without patronizing him.⁶²

The recommendations of Toft, Philpott and Shah are comparable to an aspect of American foreign policy; the aim to extend American policies of religious freedom internationally. The U.S Department of State publishes a yearly report for the purpose of highlighting and surveying international crimes against religious freedom.⁶³ These reports also feature the diplomatic actions taken on the part of American diplomats and embassy employees all over the world to promote religious freedom. Such actions include contact with religious leaders and representatives, religious dialogue meetings and hearings, as well as presentations on the state of religious freedom in the particular nation compared to abroad.⁶⁴

In contrast, Roy may be said to reflect upon a French experience and perspective, especially the policies of *Laïcité*, or the type of secularism enshrined in the French constitution. In this regard, it can be pointed out that on an annual basis, the U.S. Department of State International Religious Freedom Report condemns the French ban on veils in public schools as a serious restriction of liberal freedoms. In terms of policy recommendations, Roy’s position can perhaps be illustrated by the following quote:

⁶¹ Toft, Philpott, and Shah, *God’s Century*, 216.

⁶² Toft, Philpott, and Shah, *God’s Century*, 216.

⁶³ <https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/>, Accessed on 2018-11-09.

⁶⁴ The material reported on India for 2017 is largely of a summary and quantitative nature, mainly based on media reports of religious sectarian and “communal” violence, cow vigilantes, and hate crimes as a result of religious differences. The discourse of these media narratives is discussed in Chapter 2.

In every Western country, Islam is being integrated not following its own traditions but according to the place that each society has defined for religion, from Anglo-Saxon indulgence to Gallic suspicion, although the former needs to be less naïve and the latter less pathological.⁶⁵

Hence, in contrast to the rather *optimistic* perspectives of Toft, Philpott, and Shah, who see the global religious revival mainly as a force for democratisation and freedom, Roy is far more *pessimistic* and suspicious. Instead, Roy argues that neo-fundamentalist forms of religion are on the increase because of globalisation, liberalisation, and the weakening of the state. This has two main effects. First, religious actors do not primarily become politically active advocates for freedom and democracy, they become conservative, inward-looking closed communities that are un-concerned with the ideology or the nature of the state. Religious norms become expressed as “values” and are shared among Christian, Jewish, and Muslim fundamentalists: “chastity for women, defence of the family, [...] opposition to legalising homosexuality, pornography and sexual freedom,” while also “calling for an end to compulsory co-education, [and] fighting the teaching of Darwinism.”⁶⁶

Second, Roy contends that indeed, there is a global religious market but his intent is not to broadcast the importance of a free market of religion. Instead, he sets out to sociologically analyse the effects of this market on religion. A global religious market cannot exist if the religious markers are not disconnected from its cultural belongings. It is not the market that transforms the religious “products.” The formatting effect on religions is a result of the prominence of those who are best adapted: i.e. religions able to format themselves according to the market are strengthened. Fundamentalism rejects culture and finds a new de-territorialised space and ways to persevere in globalisation. And this process effectively destroys the links between religion and cultural knowledge, territorialisation (such as local pilgrimage) and traditional religiosity. This has a substantial secularising effect, not because it marginalises religion but because it makes the religious object independent of the surrounding culture and tradition.⁶⁷

Roy’s position can be summarised as a theoretical explanation of Muslim fundamentalism as thoroughly shaped along Western templates of religion. Along with their Jewish and Christian counterparts who have learned to live as minorities, Muslim fundamentalists have fitted in to

⁶⁵ Roy, *Secularism*, 94.

⁶⁶ Roy, *Globalised Islam*, 335–336.

⁶⁷ Roy, *Holy Ignorance*, 163.

the space allocated to religion in a world shaped by globalisation. The space in which the individual's religious identity and faith is wholly re-enacted is based on individualism, privatisation, and the separation of politics and religion. It is within this space that conservative and reactionary values can be put forth. Hence for Roy, all contemporary forms of religious revival in the private sphere, including Islam, should equally be criticised for the content of the values they espouse, despite attempts and experiences of exclusion and discrimination.⁶⁸

The explanatory reach of this varied and complex theoretical framework allows me to discuss Khan's ideology in relation to a situation of globalisation from two general perspectives. One *pessimistically* holds that when religion becomes private and individual it not only becomes conservative and un-concerned with the state, it ceases to engage with the deep-seated knowledge required to participate and be relevant in a particular and wider culture. Furthermore, state hostility to public expressions of religion, such as certain practices of French *laïcité*, only contributes to the breaking down of the "dialogical processes" that together with "confrontation" are essentially necessary to create: "a new relatively consensual equilibrium, because the actors, far from defending closed, preconceived systems, reformulate their own position in the debate with the other."⁶⁹ Hence, the result is enclosed communities and identities to the detriment of the possibilities of shared understandings through mutual and public debate among the members of a common civic polity.

The second *optimistically* holds that globalisation and legal-constitutional frameworks of religious freedom, unlike legal frameworks of prohibition, restriction, or pre-eminence, mainly foster the religious pursuit of democracy, freedom and peace, by means of the use of communication technology and processes related to the global growing strength, relative to the state, of the private and civil society spheres.

After the investigation of Khan's thought and argument, Chapter 9 will attempt to discuss and interpret his case in the light of both theoretical perspectives. At the end of that discussion, I will also suggest a possible theoretical synthesis, which aims to highlight the insights of both theoretical perspectives but adding to the theoretical discussion the findings of this study; the empirical case of Khan's ideology positioned in its context and situation.

⁶⁸ Roy, *Secularism*, 102.

⁶⁹ Roy, *Holy Ignorance*, 191.

Methodological Considerations

4.1 The Theoretical and Methodological Perspective in the Analysis of Ideological and Religious Thought

In this study, the basic theoretical view of thought and action maintains that meaningful communication can never be formulated in a social and political vacuum. This basic view is informed by social theory and the concept of “social action” and “meaningful, communicative action.” The most important founder of this general “action frame of reference,” as it also has been labelled, is the sociologist, Max Weber (d. 1920) and his *Verstehende Soziologie* project, or a social science based on the understanding of meaningful actions.¹

What Weber aimed to formulate, was the fact that actions and action-guiding thoughts make up all institutions and traditions of society. In fact, “communicative actions” (as they have been called) are the elementary molecules of social life. At the very core of this social theory was the notion that social action, interaction and language-use is “meaningful” (*Sinnvoll*) and understandable for the participant actors. Thus, the social scientific project is aimed at the corresponding understanding of the action-guiding *ideological content* involved in these communicative actions and interactions. In turn, the action-guiding *ideological content* receives its meaning through its relation to the prevailing social and political institutions, traditions and cultural conventions, and through its relationship to processes for the preservation or change of the institutions and traditions of society.²

Thus, the Weberian view of society suggests a methodological project of interpretation and understanding of the action-guiding ideological thought-content, in its relationship to the institutional and cultural configuration of society. A similar view, although from another theoretical angle, is launched by the political theorist and intellectual historian, Quentin Skinner. According to Skinner, we ought to approach political ideas or texts from the point of view of *the intentions* of an actor or author vis-à-vis practical social and political issues and situations. The political ideas of a (secular) Machiavelli or a (protestant) Thomas Hobbes shall not be studied in their relationship to some eternal truth about the best type of government but

¹ Max Weber, *Ekonomi och Samhälle: Förståendesociologins grunder 1: Sociologiska begrepp och definitioner: Ekonomi, samhällsordning och grupper*, (Lund: Argos, 1983), 3–21.

² For the concept of “ideological content,” and the relation between ideas and social action in a Weberian social theory, see Lindberg, “Qualitative analysis,” 86–121.

as interventions situated in ongoing debates in historical situations. Thus, Machiavelli's proposal of the proper actions of a Prince can be read as an intervention in an ongoing debate on the emergence of absolute monarchy; while Thomas Hobbes' theory of *Leviathan* can be regarded as an argument against the independent authority of the Catholic church and for a single authority and "power of a commonwealth ecclesiastical and civill." The methodological conclusion of this view is that the content and meaning of a text is not possible to decipher from the text in isolation. From an isolated textual reading we can interpret a literal understanding of the (assumed) meanings of words and sentences but not what the text means in the social and political situation at hand. This meaning is in fact given by the language conventions of the time and place, as well as the structure of positions on debated issues and problems in the social, cultural, and political context.³

For such a wider understanding of the social and political meaning of a text a wider approach is necessary. It entails an analysis of *the surrounding texts in the intertextual debate situation* to which the studied text belongs and in which the studied text can be regarded as an intervention. Skinner thus speaks of texts as "interventions" or explicit or implicit "arguments." Interventions are full of intended meanings by the author, but also receive their social and political meaning in the wider debate situation. In turn, this debate situation consists of upcoming themes or problems spoken of or debated in some linguistic conventions, such as established vocabularies, categories or conceptualisations. By way of summary, Skinner argues that as researchers in intellectual history, we are bound to interpret a text on at least two levels: a) the text at hand supported by accompanying texts by the author, as well as b) other texts in the "argumentative context" or the debate situation. The text is an intervention in the argumentative context to which it linguistically and meaningfully connects. As such, it can be comprehended by other actors.⁴

Following Skinner, a *contextual analysis* is an analysis of *other texts* in an ongoing discourse and debate making up *the context* of the text or the author. The argumentative context may be a philosophical or religious debate on fundamental principles, as well as a discursive argument on practical social or political issues; as when oppositional demands are brought forward in a demonstration or when a religious criticism is launched against corrupt leaders or officials. It is thus clear that *contextual interpretation*, which is the main method in this study, is an

³ In this view of text and interpretation, Skinner relies on the later Wittgenstein's view of language as "language-games" (in specific "forms of life") and J. L. Austin's theory of locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary "speech acts," as making up "a hermeneutic of exceptional value." See Quentin Skinner, *Vision of Politics. Volume I: Regarding Method* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 103–127.

⁴ Skinner, 2002, 115–116.

interpretation of the language and utterances (text or talk) as they are used in social and political action in historically specific situations.

Consequently, it will sometimes be important in this study to discern and highlight the structures and processes that as such comprise historically-specific situations; as the surrounding social and political context or the social and political issues addressed. As seen above, following Weber's social theory, such a *social and political context* consists of the prevailing institutions and cultural conventions and the processes and actions aiming at their preservation or change.

Skinner's view of the contextual interpretation of a text focusing on the speech-acts of actors in social and political situations, can be compared to the quite similar perspective of the anthropologist, Talal Asad and his influential concept "discursive tradition." Asad's perspective proposes that the social and political situation and context should always be included in the analysis of formulations and presentations of Islamic thought. But since a religion or a religious debate consists of successive debate situations regarding historical texts and a tradition of interpretations, the historical aspect is always involved. Consequently, Asad's perspective suggests that a religious author or debater is bound to be anchored in the discursive tradition but also that the motive for launching a text or debate is always the contingent, contemporaneous social or political issues. Thus, presentations and interpretations of Islam made by Muslim thinkers and debaters are always balanced between the meaning of Islam as a religion and political philosophy on one hand, and questions of its application to mundane social problems on the other.⁵ In the analysis of Khan's thought, this requires that his presentation of Islam is understood as anchored in the religious tradition, with its contested concepts and ongoing debates, as well as debate interventions addressing the contemporaneous social and political issues. In a nutshell, this is what I refer to as the ideological and religious debate situation.⁶

What Asad discusses in his seminal article originally published in 1986, is a general framework for "an anthropology of Islam." This framework admonishes the researcher to comprehend the "historical conditions" that "enable" the construction of new or changing

⁵ Talal Asad, "The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam," *Qui Parle* 17, no. 2 (Nebraska University Press, 2009): 14.

⁶ "Politico-religious theory" is suggested by Hardy, *Partners in Freedom*, 5. "Religio-political activism" and religious and political thought is preferred by Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam*, 179–180. With the use of an "ideological and religious debate situation" I want to avoid postulating a religious position as given beforehand. In fact, as this study aims to show, Khan enters an ideological and religious debate situation which is to a large and significant degree also shaped by both Hindu Nationalist and international anti-Muslim ideological positions. Hence, Khan is not only shaped by the logic and terminology of an Islamic tradition or different Muslim debate positions but a number of ideological discursive traditions, including non-Muslim actors' ideological positions and the structural secularism and liberalism inherent to the Indian constitution.

“discursive traditions.”⁷ But Asad also suggests that the “maintenance” of “specific” traditions is made possible through certain historical conditions. It follows that the analytical object is the relation between the traditions of Muslim thought and the present Islamic practice. Perspectives that make “Islam” an historical actor *ex machina* are thus repudiated in Asad’s framework – the Muslim discourse of Islam is never outside history.⁸ Instead, practitioners strive to appear understandable and valid to the public and other actors in relation to given historical circumstances. To conclude, a “discursive tradition” of Islam is defined by Asad as “a tradition of Muslim discourse that addresses itself to conceptions of the Islamic past and future, with reference to a particular Islamic practice in the present.”⁹

Asad’s framework can further be fruitfully compared to the perspectives advocated by the Islamologists, Leif Stenberg and Jonas Otterbeck. Elaborating on these perspectives, they propose three central fields of enquiry for the contemporary study of Islam and Muslims.¹⁰

First, they maintain it is important to investigate the question: How is Islam interpreted and practiced in different environments? This is opposed to normative (theological) questions of eternal religious truth as such, that is, what is “right” or “true” in religious knowledge or belief. The field of study should instead be delineated as the *de facto* appearance of Muslim thinkers, who pose and try to answer such normative questions in the name of allegedly true Islam. Hence, the research aims at a characterisation and analysis of their thought in the actual situation (the similarity to Skinner’s methodological deliberations is apparent). This perspective is also put to use in the theoretical discussions of the concluding chapter of this study, suggesting the scholarly perils of explicitly or implicitly describing a Muslim discourse in terms of apologetics or authenticity.

Second, how are such Muslim presentations and knowledge produced? How are they disseminated? What are the social conditions underlying Muslim presentations and what actual impact do they have? An understanding of the society, culture, and religion, as well as the interaction of social and political forces is important in the explanation of why Islam is construed and presented in a specific manner in certain situations. The analytical focus is thus on the productive process of presentations of Islam; “the process of interpretation.” The process of interpretation is understood as influenced by religious and ideological debates, as well as social and political context.

⁷ Asad, “The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam,” 17.

⁸ Asad, “The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam,” 17.

⁹ Asad, “The Idea of an Anthropology of Islam,” 14.

¹⁰ Jonas Otterbeck and Leif Stenberg, “Förord,” in Otterbeck and Stenberg, *Islamologi*, 8–9.

Third, and final is the power and status of and the hierarchal social relations between individuals and groups who profess certain religious interpretations, which is pointed out as an important field of enquiry. Most values and beliefs in a society, whether religious or not, are shared by many. However, it is important to note that people do not partake equally in the processes of producing religious understandings nor in religious life as such. The relational position of people vis-à-vis their own tradition, differs and varies in terms of depth, intensity, or direction. Claims to religious authority are formulated within the frameworks of such shared but socially differentiated values and beliefs.

In summary, we end up in a methodological perspective in which the study of Islamic thought and debate is carried through as a study of socially embedded, ideational “practitioners” of Islam. Jan Hjärpe argues that such a perspective represents a move away from the study of *what is verbalised as norm* and towards a study of the social situation of an ongoing interpretation process of Islam.¹¹ Hjärpe continues by stating that many religious interpreters and leaders defend themselves from such a perspective since it presumably undermines their claim to religious authority. In this study, the thought of such a religious “interpreter and leader” in Hjärpe’s terms is made the object of study, analysed as a thinker involved in argumentative and social contexts as a “practitioner” of Islamic thought. However, although Khan argues in the name of Islam, this study does not conflate Khan’s positions with Islam. Methodologically and theoretically, Khan is regarded as representing only himself and *his* proposed meaning of Islam, non-violence, and peace embedded in the contemporary Indian, as well as the global, cultural, social, and political situation.¹²

4.2 The Method of Contextual Analysis

Skinner’s view of “contextual interpretation” and Asad’s congenial concept of a “discursive tradition” will be applied in this study, making up the methodological basis for the interpretation and analysis of the material under investigation. The perspectives of Hjärpe, Otterbeck, and Stenberg are coupled to these and together they all point to the social embeddedness of religious thought and debate, not the least novel or contesting presentations and positions. The theoretical and methodological perspectives above achieve extra credibility through their affinity with the Weberian social theory of meaningful communicative actions and the subsequent analytical

¹¹ Hjärpe, “Perspektiv,” 277.

¹² Daniel Martin Varisco, *Islam Obscured: The Rhetoric of Anthropological Representation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 162.

concepts of ideas in society as “action-guiding thought” or “ideological content.” Thus, the method used in this study will be a method of *contextual analysis*. Following the theoretical and methodological considerations of the researchers above, it is possible to distil and develop a methodological framework for contextual analysis. This framework consists of three different levels of analysis, each using three different kinds of source material. On the first level, we find the *texts of the author*, the immediate object of research. On the second level are the texts involved in the surrounding intertextual *argumentative context*, or the *debate situation*. The third level is the domain of the *social and political context* of institutions, processes, actors and issues, interpreted mainly through secondary literature.

The primary intention of a contextual analysis is the interpretation of the character and meaning of a text or several texts (by an author), by situating them in relation to the intertextual *argumentative context* or the debate situation. The analysis is carried through as an analysis of similarities and differences between the position and arguments in the texts of the studied actor or author compared to the positions and arguments in the texts of other actors or authors. Following the concept of *ideological content* mentioned above, the items for comparison are generally value statements, descriptive assertions, and evaluations. These are regarded as the usage of language leading up to prescriptive statements or proposals for action, as a result of their involvement in argumentative sequences and *pro et contra* struggles.¹³

With regard to the contextual analysis of the ideology of Khan, it is possible to discern two different but interrelated intertextual *argumentative contexts* or debate situations. The first is the religious debate situation on the meaning of Islam both globally as well as in India (which were described and discussed in Chapters 2 and 3). The second is the social and political debate situation regarding more immediate issues and problems in India. The actors and positioning of these contexts were outlined in Chapter 2. In Chapters 6 and 7, more specific items and themes from the global and Indian debate on the meaning of Islam are introduced. Important examples are God’s plan with the creation, peace and patience in the Quran, reformist gradualism and status quo-ism, state-building and Islamic state-hood, jihad in war and peace, and so on. Each of these themes and topics can be compared to the views of other positions and actors, thus giving Khan’s ideology its *specific significance and meaning* in its similarities and differences to the others. Each of these positions on the themes and topics involves a value aspect, a descriptive aspect and a prescriptive aspect, thus resulting in action-guiding, ideological and religious thought related to social and political issues.

¹³ Lindberg, “Qualitative analysis,” 88–100. See also Mats Lindberg, “The VDP-Triad in Ideational Analysis: Towards A General Theory of Ideological Thought-content,” *Statsvetenskaplig Tidskrift* (2018/2): 277–359.

Accordingly, on various points the contextual analysis in this study will also involve two different *social and political contexts*; the global one and the Indian one. With regard to the social and political contexts outside the immediate text and the texts in the debate situation, the analysis does not consist of a comparison of positions but rather of discerning the factors and issues that trigger positions of debate or that are addressed by positions and arguments of the debaters.

These considerations that are relevant for any contemporary scientific study of Islam and Muslims, are informing the analysis in this study of Khan's presentation of Islam, non-violence, and peace. The focus is on his claim to authoritatively present the true tradition and Islamic teachings and analyse his construction of ideas as interventions in the global and Indian debate on the meaning of Islam. Consequently, Khan's positions regarding Islam constitutes the ideological and religious foundations in his more operative and mundane messages concerning the social and political issues of contemporary India.

Thus, the contextual analysis of this study intends to move beyond the horizons and perspectives inherent in Khan's own thought and messages.¹⁴ Instead, the study will position them in the external, analytical light of the perspectives presented in earlier chapters regarding Islam and Indian society, as well as Islam on a global scale. Such an analysis represents an attempt in Hjärpe's words, to move away from the study of "what is verbalised as norm."¹⁵ Instead, it moves towards a study of the social situation and context of an ongoing process of the use of the terminology and sacred history of Islam as action-guiding language and interventions in the debate on social and political issues. Therefore, the aim of applying a methodology of contextual analysis in this study is to generate an independent and scholarly interpretation of the character of Khan's presentation of Islam, non-violence, and peace as it is formulated as interventions in the two argumentative contexts or debate situations – the Indian and the global.

4.3 Contextual Analysis in Historical Writing

The general contextualising approach of analysing Khan's thinking in relation to a societal context can be motivated by referring to the approach of a few influential studies on Islam in

¹⁴ Ingvild Sælid Gilhus, "Hermeneutics," in *The Routledge Handbook of Research Methods in the Study of Religion*, eds. Michael Stausberg & Steven Engler (London: Routledge, 2011), 281. See also Lindberg, "The VDP-Triad," Section 14, on "object language" and "analytical language," and the accompanying "Excursus on hermeneutics."

¹⁵ Hjärpe, "Perspektiv," 277.

South Asia. Ayesha Jalal shapes her study of jihad as concept and idea in relation to shifting historical events; *Partisans of Allah: Jihad in South Asia* (2008). Hence, the ethical meaning of jihad differs in the different time periods she studies. In the pre- to early modern period, the ambiguity and shifting balances of strength between Muslim rulers and jurists shapes the debate. The formulations of jihad as armed warfare by Sayyid Aḥmad Brēlwī, jihad in the rebellions of 1857, and the use of jihad in the nationalist independence struggle against the colonial powers leading up to the *mudjāhidīn* of contemporary Pakistan, waging war in Afghanistan and Kashmir, all reflect the interplay of the religious debate and politics.¹⁶ Chapter 2 of this study attempted to outline such interplay between ideological and religious debate on the meaning of Islam in relation to Indian historical developments in more detail.

Chapter 2 was introduced by a quote from Barbara Metcalf, writing as editor of a substantial anthology of studies related to South Asian Islam, on the need to describe the background and contexts of any text and I repeat it here: “Much more than the words on the page or the words spoken is communicated. It is in the social and cultural practices surrounding each text that larger messages – a kind of informal curriculum – also need to be understood.”¹⁷

Writing in 1995 from her presidential address to the American Asian Studies association, Metcalf also formulates the need for rigorous historical writing prompted by the new questions of our own changing times.¹⁸ Such renewed scholarly attempts must avoid the pitfalls of either “too little” – ignoring South Asian Muslims and the appeal and endurance of Islam in India or “too much” – emphasising or giving precedence to the importance of Islam over and above any other understandings. Not least because of the growing interdependence of the world, the historian must charter the connections among disparate settings, mobility across space, and the similarity of institutions. She concludes that Islam and Muslims must not be studied in isolation. Instead, historians must focus “around common social and political structures, situating Muslims squarely within the complex world of opportunities and constraints, motivations, and tastes they shared with everyone else.”¹⁹ The theoretical and methodological frameworks set up in this study are an attempt at moving away from the pitfall of either “too little” – treating Islam and Muslims as ancillary to understanding contemporary formulations of non-violence and peace or “too much” – treating the analysis of Islam as prior to an understanding of how Muslims share the social and political structures, motivations, prospects, and limitations, in a

¹⁶ Jalal, *Partisans of Allah*, 24, 70, 105, 121, 225, 280. The *mudjāhidīn* are called “jihadis” in official Pakistani terminology.

¹⁷ Metcalf, “The Transmission of Learning,” 189.

¹⁸ Metcalf, *Islamic Contestations*, 209.

¹⁹ Metcalf, *Islamic Contestations*, 210.

globalising world of interdependent connections, mobility, and increasing similarity, and how such developments affect the formulations of ethical behaviour.

However, historical writing may never leave aside careful attention to nuance in the particular case. A work that demonstrates the links between the social and political ramifications and the forms and content of the ideological and religious debate, especially religious and political activism as well as claims to religious authority, is that of Muhammad Qasim Zaman in *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change* (2002). In relation to Olivier Roy's privatisation of Muslim societies thesis (Zaman prefers "grassroots activism") after the perceived "Islamist" failure to take over the state and shape society through its institutions, Zaman argues that it is wrong to see the contemporary activism on part of the '*ulamā*' as a stark choice of either top-down Islamisation or quietist positions. Instead, with regard to the contemporary '*ulamā*', especially in Pakistan they have simultaneously been drawn to positions of either top-down or grass-roots Islamisation. The latter form of activism is an effect of the Islamisation of the Pakistani state and is made possible by "a complex configuration of local as well as international factors, social and economic changes, and the possibilities created by modern technology."²⁰ The religio-political activism of '*ulamā*' in Pakistan is regarded as largely shaped around the radicalisation of the Sunni and Shia identities. From the framework of Roy's writings it could be argued that the radicalisation and politicisation of identities within a nation-state framework is indeed an aspect of the failure of Islamism, and the ultimate dominance of the political over religion (i.e. secularisation). But the important point here is how Zaman shows that the religio-political activism of contemporary '*ulamā*' reveal their links both to facets of contemporary Islamism and simultaneously quietism. Therefore, consideration to the individual case, and its political and social ramifications, may reveal both the ideological content of the actor, as well as points of activism and, simultaneously, political quietism. Hence the individual case may be situated beyond any clear cut divisions or positions postulated by sociological theory. This of course calls for the revision or reformulation of the theory. In the case of Khan, we will return to these theoretical issues in the Chapters 8–10.

As an influential historian of Islam in South Asia, the methodological choices of Francis Robinson are highly relevant to this discussion. Showing careful attention to detail, his analysis of *The 'Ulama of Farangi Mahall and Islamic Culture in South Asia* (2001) reveals that the changes of how normative Muslim behaviour or educated etiquette (*adab*) was formulated with regard to changing social circumstances.²¹ There was no longer a Muslim state that upheld an

²⁰ Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam*, 111.

²¹ Robinson, *The 'Ulama of Farangi Mahall*, 101.

Islamic order increasingly threatened by the colonial state. The ‘*ulamā*’ of Farangi Mahall took it upon themselves to show Muslims the correct Islamic way by stressing the norm of their etiquette, which also became a foundation for a public claim to religious authority and guidance. During an era of extraordinary religious change, the attack by the movement of revival and reform on all ideas and practices related to saintly intercession between humans and God, the Farangi Mahallis emphasised the benefits of visiting shrines and celebrating the birthday of saints and the Prophet.²² In comparison to the privatising trends of the Deobandi school and the Tablīghī Djamā‘at, the lives of many men from the Farangi Mahall found a new dimension as they entered public life and formed international associations to defend Islam. Using their consolidated networks based on education and their role as teachers, in 1878 they began a trend with fundraising for Ottoman Turkey in the war against Russia which was consolidated in 1913 with the launch of an association to protect the shrines of Islam in Arabia. Important developments already noted in this study, such as the Khilafat movement in 1918 and the founding of the *Djāmi‘at al-‘Ulamā-yi Hind* in 1919, were all related to Farangi Mahall and especially their prominent leader Maulana ‘Abd al-Barī. Farangi Mahallis were the first amongst the ‘*ulamā*’ to join the All-Indian Muslim league, working out a policy of non-cooperation with the British government that was joined by the Indian National Congress.²³

Of note in this discussion is how the historical writing itself teases out the relationship between the choice of religious and political activism of the learned and holy men of Farangi Mahall, and historical developments, even in distant lands, as well as in a general context of growing international awareness. But by what *method* does the meaning of these religious and political actions and discourses in relation to contextual factors become apparent? It is important to note that the historical writing in itself is the most apparent but not explicit, contextualising method and analysis – in Robinson’s study as well as other seminal studies.²⁴ When historical writing moves from attention to detail in religious actions and discourses and creates a logical and linguistic narrative of relations to contextual factors to attempt an explanation by recourse to sociological concepts and theory, the implicit method is still in the writing. For instance, when Robinson applies Weber’s concept of disenchantment (*die Entzauberung der Welt*) to his historical material of Islamic revival and reform movements on the offence against visits to shrines and saintly intercession, he finds “new strands in Muslim

²² Robinson, *The ‘Ulama of Farangi Mahall*, 109.

²³ Robinson, *The ‘Ulama of Farangi Mahall*, 75.

²⁴ Smith, *Islam in Modern History*, 288. Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism*, 258–259. Metcalf, “Islamic Revival in British India,” 348, 351.

consciousness.”²⁵ Robinson thinks that these more or less contemporary Islamic movements bear witness to an increased consciousness of the need to act in the world to gain salvation. With the knowledge that humans shape the world comes the consciousness that individuals make choices that affect their destinies. Therefore a new sense of “empowerment” and “personal autonomy” grows. The result is both an inward turn, reflecting upon the self, and simultaneously a focus on secular activity and achievement. Hence, Robinson argues some new forms of Islam can be likened to certain forms of Protestant Christianity while maintaining a content and historical origin based on Islam. The result is a religion and the contents of salvation, increasingly shaped around tangible objects, home, clothing, food, sex, and wealth. In summary, it is no surprise that Robinson reaches comparable conclusions by reading Islamic history from a Weberian approach as Olivier Roy does from his general sociological methodological perspective. The divide between theory and empirical matter appears, in fact, blurred in actual history writing, a point I will stress repeatedly in this chapter on methodological considerations.

In terms of methodological framework, from the above it is apparent that the writing process and scientific knowledge production are discursive, located in frameworks of references to other relevant academic studies. Therefore, the contextualisation approach also puts forward the contextualisation and analysis of my research in relation to other studies. The analysis generated in this way, as in the studies outlined in this section, may be said to be closest to the validation criterions of “epistemological validity,” a point I will return to later when I discuss the types of materials and the registration of data.²⁶ As described by Fangen, epistemological validity is centred in the creation and presentation of knowledge. From this perspective, a text is validated epistemologically in terms of its argued and truthful reasoning and if theoretical explanations and concepts are carefully applied and operationalised along with the level of clarity and comprehensibility of the purpose of the text. The following aims to describe how this study attempts to methodological and epistemological validation in relation to these categories.

²⁵ Robinson, *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia*, 133.

²⁶ Katrine Fangen, *Deltagande observation* (Stockholm: Liber, 2005), 265.

4.4 Selection of Empirical Objects

4.4.1 Written Sources

One main type of empirical material used in this study is Khan's published texts, with a focus on works published since around 1999 and onwards. The review of earlier research and studies on Khan revealed the importance of focussing on the latest phase of his production.

With regard to Khan's literary texts, it may be noted that anyone who approaches his works with the sincere purpose of grasping his production in its totality will soon feel overwhelmed. Khan has led a very long life of extraordinary productivity.²⁷ As can be seen in the footnotes and bibliography, around 25 published books and works by Khan form the backbone of the source material used in this study. They are well representative of the texts published by Khan since the 1990s. However, Khan has also published a significant number of pamphlets covering a wide range of topics. Such pamphlets are primarily used as source material when discussing cases of Khan's ideology as applied to concrete situations: Jammu and Kashmir, Palestine, and marriage and gender relations (see Chapter 7).

The reading of his published texts began in the autumn of 2012 at the beginning of this doctoral project. The large amount of published material made it necessary in the first reading to divide the material into pertinent or non-pertinent to the categories of Islam, non-violence, and peace. This first reading was followed by a second examination in order to make sure relevant material was not left out. In this way, three books by Khan were found to be especially useful in the study of Islam, non-violence, and peace in the thought of Khan: *Islam Rediscovered* (2001), *The True Jihad* (2002), and *The Prophet of Peace* (2009). Consequently, these three works are the most frequently cited works in this study. Other works that are worth a particular mention here are *Islam and Peace* (1999), *The Age of Peace* (2015), and *Islam and World Peace* (2015). Apart from Khan's texts applied to certain situations and cases in Chapter 7, these are commonly referenced in this study and are well representative of Khan's general ideology.

Furthermore, the reading started a process of analytical questioning that along with a need for validating my understanding of his thought, required further material that would allow for a process of source triangulation. Interviews with Khan was at this stage perceived as the best way to further the research.

²⁷ The Annex contains an abridged list of Khan's English publications. Another significant list of works by Khan can be found in Omar, "Rethinking Islam," 272–274.

4.4.2 Interviews

Interviewing Khan was conducted in order to create a distinctive and substantive source material for the purposes of this study. The contact with Wahiduddin Khan was initiated in February 2013 with a formal request for an interview.²⁸ The first contact included a presentation of my research project regarding Islam and non-violence, my supervisors, and my affiliation with Umeå University. The reply was positive and preparations began for a first interview in Delhi in December 2013.

The planned interviews further structured my reading of Khan's works and published texts. The reading of his published texts led to the accumulation of questions, due to ambiguousness, potential misunderstandings, and uncertainties. Knowing that the upcoming research interviews would allow me the opportunity to address these issues with Khan in person, these questions were noted in a document that grew into an interview guide. This guide became the advance preparations for interviews of a semi-structural type.²⁹ The same pattern of preparation beforehand was generally repeated in advance of what eventually became a string of further interviews.

During 2013 and 2016, I met Khan formally for the purposes of interviews on six different occasions. Interviews were conducted at Khan's residence in Delhi. On these occasions, Khan's family and other members of the CPS was present. Interviews were conducted in English (see Chapter 1 for a discussion on language use in this study). All interviews were recorded during the proceedings, not only by myself but also by the CPS members present (who used their own microphone and recording equipment). I used my own recording equipment, which included a separate microphone to ensure high recording quality.³⁰ Overall, the interview material consists of eighteen hours of recordings.³¹

As mentioned, the interviews were of a semi-structural nature, and concerned issues relating to Islam, non-violence, and peace in Khan's thinking. The interviews also presented the opportunity to grasp and conceptualise the process of his presentation of Islam. This was done by asking questions of a biographical nature. The interviews allowed for probing Khan's views regarding the societal situation of Islam and Muslims in India and the world and how he perceived the views of other Indian authors of Islam, non-violence, and peace.

²⁸ All e-mails and contacts between me and CPS are archived and in the possession of the author.

²⁹ Steinar Kvale, *Doing Interviews* (London: Sage Publication, 2008), 57.

³⁰ The main obstacle during the transcriptions was actually the high audio quality of the interview recordings, which also accurately captures the street sounds, for instance cars honking and vendors crying out their wares.

³¹ These recordings also contain pauses, greetings, and some disruptions.

Interview recordings were later transcribed by me, and the transcription process was in itself an important tool for the study of Khan's thought. As the purpose of interviews was to further and corroborate my understanding of the meaning of Khan's ideology, the mode of transcription sought was a detailed, verbatim description.³²

Hence, by reading Khan's published texts, through interviews, and the process of transcription and later study of transcriptions, a source triangulation regarding the content and meaning of Khan's thought was rendered possible.³³ Based on these sources, I have written descriptions regarding Islam, non-violence, and peace in Khan's thinking. These descriptions form the content of Chapters 6 and 7.

4.4.3 Participant Observation

Field studies in Delhi, in 2013, 2014, and 2016, allowed me to study Khan, both in terms of himself as a person and in terms of his ideology in his immediate context of association and home and also enabled me to study the CPS through participant observation.³⁴ The CPS members seek to disseminate Khan's message of Islam, non-violence, and peace through live internet talks with Khan describing his views on both daily and exceptional matters. These internet talks and videos broadcast via the CPS web page or Facebook can be followed by anyone.³⁵ However, interaction with Khan and the members of the CPS in this context allowed me to further grasp the class, gender, education, and the political and social issues prevalent in this milieu.

Katrine Fangen discusses the roles that a researcher in the field may assume and repeats an old truism, be yourself!³⁶ More precisely, Fangen recommends a reflective stance regarding personal and professional qualities. The choice of representation encountered by myself as a field researcher were based on my professional role and the scholarly interest I took in Khan's religious thought.³⁷ Nevertheless, I confess to making some cultural errors regarding propriety and decorum, imaginably several more than I was aware of making.³⁸ In general however, my

³² Kvale, *Doing Interviews*, 109.

³³ Mats Alvesson and Kaj Sköldbberg, *Tolkning och reflektion: Vetenskapsfilosofi och kvalitativ metod* (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2008), 179.

³⁴ Fangen, *Deltagande observation*, 31, 66.

³⁵ <http://www.cpsglobal.org/content/sunday-talk>. Accessed on 2016-07-13.

³⁶ Fangen, *Deltagande observation*, 152.

³⁷ Wade Clark Roof, "Research Design," in Stausberg and Engler, *Handbook of Research Methods*, 77.

³⁸ Most notable is that during transcriptions of the interview material, I become aware of others growing tired of the ceaseless discussions between myself and Khan. The few times I actually catch these indications regarding my lengthy visit, at all times Khan declares his intent to finish the interview. If this is foremost an indication of his stamina or his graceful manners for a visitor, I remain un-sure.

interactions with Khan and the members of CPS were shaped by my role and presence as a scholar of religion. As such, I was treated with generous hospitality and indulgence. My attendance was marked by the general awareness that I was writing a doctoral dissertation on Khan.

During these field studies, I kept notations in a field diary with entries made after interactions. However, participant observation is a subordinated source of data in this study and the analytical focus is on Khan's ideology and not the social dimensions of the individuals closely drawn to his religious leadership.³⁹ Therefore, these short notations from the field diary are cited in only one footnote in this study in Chapter 5. However, the analysis of the participant observation material is already implicit in the observations and assumptions of the field diary notations.⁴⁰

4.4.4 Internet Sources

This study refers to internet sources, such as the CPS web-page and the Facebook page, "Maulana Wahiduddin Khan," which are marked by date of retrieval in the footnotes. Because I only refer to this type of source once when discussing the meaning of its message, they are of secondary importance for analysing Khan's ideology in this study. As discussed in the concluding chapter, the contents of the messages posted on Facebook may be part of a different study, however they are not thoroughly analysed here. Instead, these internet sources are employed to highlight the type of outreach Khan and the CPS aim for and Khan's public claim to watch over the authentic Islamic teachings. In that sense, these sources are important for certain analytical statements regarding a context of globalisation, India, and religion, such as the significance of the use of English and modern forms of communication technology.

4.5 Registering, Handling, and Analysing Data

In relation to the research problem and general epistemological and methodological approach, the analytical task is to study the categories of Islam, non-violence, and peace, as the formulation of a Muslim discourse by an historical agent (Khan). It is methodologically and theoretically anticipated that this particular discourse is related to an Islamic past and imagined future, through reference to a present Islamic practice. A critique of Asad's discursive

³⁹ Fangen, *Deltagande observation*, 187.

⁴⁰ Fangen, *Deltagande observation*, 95.

framework could remark that its focus on temporal Islam might narrow the selection and understanding of data or relevant contextualisation. However, the anthropological framework of discursive Islam does not in itself nor beforehand, exclude any influences or parameters and the analytical task remains to tease out what a certain contemporary Islamic practice involves. Therefore, the analytical focus is on texts in discursive cross-reference with other texts, i.e. an ideological and religious debate situation seen as historically shaped by a political and social situation. With a focus on methodological applications, concerning texts in context and contexts in texts drawn from the academic methodological literature and general hermeneutical theory, the following will discuss the main methodological implementations of this study.

First, it is noted that texts may be “asked” to answer questions of meaning, even those questions it never intended to answer.⁴¹ The scope or horizon of the text is always larger than that of its author and vice versa. The central hermeneutic metaphor illustrates this, a circle movement between part and whole. Understanding meaning is the process of moving back and forth between part and whole; between sentences, individual words, and the various contexts of texts.⁴² Hence, the meaning of Khan’s ideology has been registered by engagement with parts of individual texts, the part in relation to the whole text and a particular text in relation to his overall text production. It is noted that in terms of methodology - transcriptions of interview material – his spoken words, are considered as texts. This type of reading resulted in a type of “first level” interpretation or analysis.⁴³ To a large degree, Chapters 6 and 7 reflects this intra-textual reading, resulting in a close view of the empirical matter, i.e. Khan’s texts. As this interpretation aims to reflect the perspectives of the texts, it may perhaps also be relevant to speak of an emic view. This will be qualified by considering the theory laden approach to data below.

Various concluding sections of the empirically-oriented Chapters 6 and 7 undertakes analytical attempts of the “second level” type, which are continued and thoroughly expanded in Chapters 8 and 9. This type of analysis aims to understand actions and action-guiding thought by considering several relevant contexts.⁴⁴ In cultural anthropology and ethnology, Clifford Geertz’s (d. 2006) concept of “thick description” is often used to describe the explanatory aim through reference to context. Therefore, this approach can be understood as a type of cultural hermeneutics, explaining Khan’s formulations of Islam, non-violence, and peace through

⁴¹ Ingvild Sælid Gilhus, “Hermeneutics,” 281.

⁴² Wilhelm Dilthey, *The Formation of the Historical World in the Human Sciences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 240.

⁴³ Fangen, *Deltafange observation*, 225.

⁴⁴ Fangen, 2005, 228.

reference to several relevant contexts or as expressed in this study, a situation of ideological and religious debate and the political and social situation. A methodological problem concerns which contexts are in fact relevant for the analysis of Khan's texts.

Indeed, exactly what constitutes "the whole" is a central issue in the hermeneutical interpretation of texts, as the metaphor has evolved through successive generalisations. Alvesson and Sköldberg point out that what was initially a method of Bible interpretation and understanding part of a text in relation to the whole canon successively came to include a focus on the author of a text. The author could be seen as part of the whole societal context and the societal context was part of the general history of that society. Lastly, the history of a particular society is bound to world history as a whole.⁴⁵ Hence, the relevant methodology literature sets no clear limit as to what constitutes a part and a whole, text and context.

This methodological problem is handled in this study by recourse to the "abduction" approach as described by Alvesson and Sköldberg. By using existing knowledge and frames of reference, a theoretical pattern or deep structures, which if they were true would explain the first, surface level of analysis.⁴⁶ Similarly, the abduction process is summarised by Jeppe Sinding Jensen as "one of making inferences and best guesses on the basis of what is known, what we may predict and what fits our models and theories best."⁴⁷ Explicit in the formulations of the abduction process is the interpretative perspective of empirical data. Hence the inferences and best guesses proposed in this study, regardless of the level of analysis, are not a condensation of data. Instead, the theoretically laden empirical matter is approached through theoretical concepts, which in turn are empirically laden by the very process of creating theoretical definitions.⁴⁸

My *perspective* on the empirical matter at hand is shaped with reference to the situation of the Indian and global ideological and religious debates, described in Chapters 2, 5, and 8. This results in the first level, or surface structure, analysis of the empirical matter. The second level, or deep structure, analysis is generated by way of the theoretical framework highlighting religion and globalisation, established in the previous chapter. Therefore, during the research process I have alternated between the study material, earlier empirical studies, and the theoretical discussion. My interpretations of these are the result of an aggregate interchange, an analysis of the parts and the whole that make up this study.

⁴⁵ Alvesson and Sköldberg, *Tolkning och reflektion*, 195.

⁴⁶ Alvesson and Sköldberg, *Tolkning och reflektion*, 57.

⁴⁷ Jeppe Sinding Jensen, "Epistemology," in Stausberg and Engler, *Handbook of Research Methods*, 48.

⁴⁸ Alvesson and Sköldberg, *Tolkning och reflektion*, 61.

4.6 Validity and Reliability

4.6.1 Validity

In general agreement with the abduction approach and the design of argued historical writings outlined above, Kvale's three validity criteria will be discussed: quality of craftsmanship, communicative forms of validation and pragmatic effects.⁴⁹ This is compared to discussions of validity criteria in the methodological literature. Points from the discussion of Michael Stausberg and Steven Engler on validity, reliability, and generalisability, will also be raised below.⁵⁰ Because this is a case study, the suggested representativity of the individual and outstanding case of Khan will be preferred to any notions of generalisability in terms of broader scope and translatability. After the presentation of the findings and analyses of this study, this is further discussed and explained in the concluding Chapter 10 and is there formulated as a suggested theoretical contribution.

Kvale's quality of craftsmanship criterion is formulated as ongoing throughout the research process. Continual checking, questioning, and theorising ideally validates the research during the course of the construction of knowledge. Checking involves the counterarguments and biased interpretations that would make research invalid. The number and span of cited sources in the current study and attempts at triangulation by citing interview material is an attempt to increase the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings. Questioning implicates the need to define *what* a study investigates and *why*. What this study aims to investigate and why is defined by the research aim and research problem. *How* is the study validated – does it analyse what it aims to analyse, i.e. Khan's presentation of Islam, non-violence, and peace in relation to its situation? Here, the dialogical criterion of hermeneutics, an interchange between me as writer and you as the reader of this text as outlined by Alvesson and Sköldberg may be compared to both the historical writing approach and to the quality of craftsmanship criterion proposed by Kvale. The dialogue involves discussing and situating arguments in the light of current scholarship (as always historical and contingent) and allowing for the interaction of theoretical aspects, method, and facts.⁵¹ The outcome should be the most probable and reasonable result, which of course also reflects the abduction approach, which is an argued view of highest probability.

⁴⁹ Kvale, *Doing Interviews*, 123.

⁵⁰ Stausberg and Engler, "Introduction," 7.

⁵¹ Alvesson and Sköldberg, *Tolkning och reflektion*, 207.

The dialogical criterion can be compared to the communicative forms of validity. Kvale suggests that “a valid observation or interpretation is ascertained in a discourse of the appropriate community” and suggest three levels of corresponding communities, understanding, and validation.⁵² These three relate to the type of audience being addressed: the interviewee, the general public, or the research community. In terms of “self-understanding” and “member validation” a draft of Chapter 6, outlining the interpretation of Khan’s ideology in this study was shown to Khan and members of the CPS during a field trip in Delhi, December 2016. This resulted in only very minor changes, mainly how Khan formulates his claim to *idjithād*. Validation was also sought through the very construction of the interview guide, in which I formulated my interpretations of Khan’s ideology and asked him to comment upon my understanding.⁵³ This study primarily strives to fulfil the communicative criteria, which is “theoretical understanding” and targets the research community. During the research process I have continuously presented my research at the Research seminar at the Department of Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies at Umeå University. Doctoral courses at Stavanger 2013 (Religious Studies) and Venice 2015 (Middle East and Islamic studies), symposiums at Umeå University in 2014 (Method in Religious Studies) and 2016 (Peace and Conflict Studies), have provided me with further opportunity to receive criticism of my research project from academic peers and seniors. Significant arenas of scholarly outreach are international research conferences. I have presented papers related to the research at IAPR, 2015 in Istanbul, MESA, 2016 in Boston, and *Strong Religion and Mainstream Culture*, 2017 at Umeå University. Most significant of the communicative validity criteria in relation to the dialogic principle is the importance of genres. This points to the current work and “the argumentation logic” inherent in the dialogical approach. My research findings are not to be validated in general (an incredible idea) but through a contribution to the dissertation genre.⁵⁴ Critical reflection and distance are seen as hallmarks of becoming proficient in a genre. This is targeted through positioning this work in relation to earlier research and studies. Inherent in Asad’s perspective on Islam, but also in Hans-Georg Gadamer’s view, the understanding of ongoing tradition is the point of departure in all interpretation and indicates both the debate on the meaning of Islam, and the scholarly discussion of how to understand and analyse this debate.⁵⁵

⁵² Kvale, *Doing Interviews*, 125.

⁵³ At a few times, as a result of the poor quality of my research skills and interview technique, this resulted in the simple answer: “Yes!”

⁵⁴ Alvesson and Sköldbberg, *Tolkning och reflektion*, 208.

⁵⁵ Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Seabury, 1975).

The pragmatic and catalytic forms of validation point to the possible applications of research results. Basing her discussion in Kvale's validity criteria, Fangen argues that it is the liberating or world-changing aspects that are sought in pragmatic and catalytic types of research, as in studies from feminist or Marxist perspectives.⁵⁶ Both Kvale and Fangen suggests that it is the participants or interviewees themselves, in terms of group belonging or as participants in the research study that are the targets of such purported transformation and emancipation as a research result. No such immediate effects are sought by this study. Therefore, in terms of epistemology, the first level analysis may be characterised by a "correspondence" criteria (truthful representation), the second level analysis suggests a significance truth strategy (revealing hidden meaning) and the concluding theoretical discussion of Chapter 9, at least to some extent, suggests a pragmatic truth claim as to how the findings may be employed.⁵⁷

Stausberg and Engler suggest a framework of questioning to assess the validity of research.⁵⁸ Two relevant points relating to validity are raised here. Beginning with the construction of data but also in terms of source relevance and specificity. Published texts and interview material are arguably the most relevant material for the study of Khan's presentation of Islam, non-violence, and peace. By focussing on these specific categories of thought it became possible to further "question" the texts for issues related to the situation of ideological and religious debate and to the situation of political and social issues.

The issue of questioning the "theoretical criteria" is important because Stausberg and Engler discuss theory in contrast to data, which calls into question the abduction approach of this study. They ask if the findings of a study may still be accepted after the application of other relevant theoretical criteria. It may be argued that the first level analysis, my interpretation of Khan's ideology described in Chapters 6 and 7 might not substantially change if other relevant theoretical criteria were applied. However, the abduction approach suggests an interchange type of research process. Therefore, the contextual framework of Chapters 2 and 8 highlighting an ongoing and historical debate on the meaning of Islam and the theoretical perspectives in Chapter 3, highlighting globalisation and Islam, have deliberately guided and influenced the construction and first level analysis of the data. Furthermore, the attempt at a second level analysis and discussion of research findings is as a rule, influenced by the theoretical framework. Hence, my work is theoretically driven, both in the collection and analysis of data. Further, the methodological approach of this study suggests that no data is uncorrupted by

⁵⁶ Fangen, *Deltaogande observation*, 264.

⁵⁷ Alvesson and Sköldbberg, *Tolkning och reflektion*, 48.

⁵⁸ Stausberg and Engler, "Introduction," 8.

theoretical pre-understanding. However, the aim in the empirically-oriented Chapters 6 and 7 is to cite sources liberally in order to validate my proper use of the sources through the communicative or dialogue logic described above. As such, I welcome a dialogical approach and a different theoretical perspective may well generate a separate analysis of the source material.

4.6.2 Reliability

The point of departure when the methodological literature discusses reliability is the thorny issue of the replication of the interpretation of sources by other researchers. As mentioned, increased reliability is aimed at through referral to multiple written sources by Khan that may be controlled by anybody.⁵⁹ Qualitative interviews however, involve the construction of a unique form of data. Reliability in this regard may be strengthened by saved copies of recorded interviews and transcription printouts. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) holds that the reliability of interviewing as a source material is part of the craftsmanship, especially avoiding leading questions if not part of a conscious interview strategy.⁶⁰ In this regard I have to acknowledge that the recordings sometimes display my lacking interview technique. In some answers, I have raised the thematic categories discussed and for this reason consider this material to be of lesser quality in relation to reporting the findings and fulfilling the research aim. In other regards, the interview material may be said to meet the criteria upheld by Kvale and Brinkmann:⁶¹ The interview answers are often rich, specific, and relevant to the topic of Islam, non-violence, and peace in Khan's thinking. As a rule, my questions are shorter than Khan's answers. In these respects, the quality of the research material may be said to be a reflection of the traits of the interviewee. As a writer, public intellectual, and known religious leader, Khan is both verbal and keen to be understood correctly. Lastly, to further validate and deepen the interview material, I have used follow-up questions to clarify and verify my ongoing interpretation of the interview content and I principally mention quotes from the interviews when I refer to them in the study.

This last point may again refer to the general abduction and historical writing logic approach of this study. Fangen argues that an indirect criterion for the reliability of research is the quality

⁵⁹ The availability of Khan's writings through the CPS web page arguably increases reliability with regard to this.

⁶⁰ Steinar Kvale and Svend Brinkmann, *Den kvalitative forskningsinterview* (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2009), 188. This is a reworked and expanded version of Kvale, *Doing Interviews*, published in Swedish.

⁶¹ Kvale and Brinkmann, *Den kvalitative forskningsinterview*, 180–181.

of how findings are presented.⁶² The aim is to disclose the process of how interpretations were generated and how observations can be understood with reference to the theoretical framework and perspectives of other studies, which falls into the communicative validation and dialogical criteria discussed above. This is important because the second level analyses of this study do not easily fall into the established categories of earlier research on Khan and no hypothesis generated from a theoretical perspective is produced at the commencement of the research. Despite its apparent lack of a hypothetic deductive approach, the abduction approach and communicative validation can nevertheless be motivated with reference to Paul Ricoeur. He relates the processes of “validation” and “invalidation” of an interpretation to “the criteria of falsifiability emphasised by Karl Popper.”⁶³ For Ricoeur, this means that an “interpretation must not only be probable, but more probable than another.” Hence, the reliability of an interpretation is not simply that everyone agrees – an intersubjective reliability – but should be measured by the quality of research and argumentation.⁶⁴

4.7 Ethical Considerations

This research study involves interactions with living persons and is therefore guided by general research ethics and the ethical framework of the Swedish Research Council.⁶⁵

Informed consent was sought using the clear declaration that the purpose of interviews is a part of a research project that will result in the publication of a dissertation. The first interview in December 2013 was preceded by a formal statement of my intent of writing a doctoral dissertation and that the study would be made available through academic channels of learning. In this regard, informed consent was expressed by Khan.

The general ethical incentive of confidentiality for participants is not applicable to historical studies of a known person in the ethical framework of the Swedish Research Council.⁶⁶ However, it would be impossible and even absurd to study the thought of a well-known writer by referring to his published works without mentioning his name. Therefore, to censor Khan’s name in a study such as this may in fact be considered un-ethical.⁶⁷ Khan has not only spent his time providing valuable information for the purposes of this study. In line with the

⁶² Fangen, *Delta gande observation*, 272.

⁶³ Paul Ricoeur, *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences: Essays on Language, Action and Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 213.

⁶⁴ Fangen, *Delta gande observation*, 274.

⁶⁵ <http://www.codex.vr.se/texts/HSFR.pdf>. Accessed on 2018-11-22.

⁶⁶ <http://www.codex.vr.se/texts/HSFR.pdf>, 12. Accessed on 2018-11-22.

⁶⁷ Kvale, *Doing Interviews*, 28.

communicative and dialogue validity criteria, the openness of argument and how interpretations have been generated is of utmost importance, also in terms of refutation. Also in line with a notion raised by Kvale, confidentiality can silence the voice of an interviewee. Khan may only contradict my analysis of his religious ideology in this study under the condition of its openness,

Another aspect of confidentiality concerns how the research material is stored. Copies of the recorded research interviews are stored on separate hard disks that are locked away, as well as being stored on the Umeå University servers, which are protected by a fire wall and data encryption drivers.

Part 2: Investigation of the Thought of Wahiduddin Khan

The second part of this study seeks to answer the first overarching and principal research question: *What is the logical structure and ideological and religious content in Khan's thinking?* The investigation is conducted using three different approaches in three different chapters. First, by describing his life and the development of his ideology in relation to the contextual situation (Chapter 5). Secondly, by creating a detailed and structured description of his ideological and religious thinking on Islam, non-violence, and peace; answering the specific research question: *Which topics make up Khan's presentation of Islam, non-violence, and peace?* (Chapter 6). Thirdly, by putting his ideology to the test – that is, probing into what Islam, non-violence, and peace mean in practice to answer the specific research question: *What are Khan's actual positions and arguments regarding three different violent conflict situations?* (Chapter 7).

Wahiduddin Khan in Context

In this chapter, I will introduce the Indian ‘*ālim*, thinker, religious leader, and prolific writer, Maulana Wahiduddin Khan. The aim of this chapter is to describe how and when he developed ideas of non-violence, peace, and Islam. Therefore, relating his life developments this chapter also aims to historically contextualise the main elements of his development as a thinker and religious leader both chronologically and thematically. The empirical focus is on how Khan himself relates to the phases and developments of his life, with the analysis continued in Chapters 8 and 9. In that sense, this chapter prepares the description and discussion of Khan’s ideas of Islam, non-violence, and peace in the following Chapter 6. This chapter introduces the main events and developments of Khan, his activities, general ideological developments, and activities during the second half of the twentieth century. In line with the method of contextual analysis applied in this study, a framework of historical contextualisation is attempted when his life developments are described. Such attempts aim to make possible a framework for later analysis.

5.1 Chapter Outline

This part of the study aims to summarise the life of Khan with regard to historical context. His life will be divided into seven chronological and thematically oriented phases, relating first to his education at a madrasa in Northern India and subsequent years. Second, his involvement with *Djāmā‘at-i Islāmī Hind* from 1948 to 1962. Third, his shaping of a public mission by interpreting Islam in relation to contemporary times and perceived challenges, especially attitudes to modern science. Fourth, his connections with the association of Indian Muslim scholars, *Djāmi‘at al-‘Ulamā-yi Hind*, and the missionary society *Tablīghī Djāmā‘at*. Fifth, Khan’s establishment of the Islamic Centre in Delhi in 1976 and the launch of his journal, the *al-Risāla*. Sixth, his recognition as a “national Maulana” during the violence of the 1990s. Seventh, developments since 2001 relating the beginnings of the CPS and new ideological as and generational directions through digital means of dissemination of teachings. The topics of global humanity and universal Islam in Khan’s most recent writings are especially highlighted.

These divisions of Khan’s life will be addressed under seven separate headings below. Each phase will be described using interview material, earlier research, and Khan’s own writings. An

attempt at contextualisation of each life phase will accompany the descriptions of his development.

5.2 Madrasa Education and After

Wahiduddin Khan was born in 1925 and grew up in the “remote village,” Badharia, near Azamgarh in the state of Uttar Pradesh, India.¹ Khan relates his childhood and youth as marked by “seclusion.”² During an interview in Delhi in 2013, he described how his sheltered background shaped him as a person: “There was no activity except going to the library and studying the books, this was my life.”³ On another occasion, Khan recounted how his widowed mother could not afford the fees for higher education.⁴ His uncle Sufi Abdul Hamid Khan safeguarded his tuition, and in 1938 Khan was enrolled in the Arabic language college, Madrasa Islāh, close to Azamgarh in what was then called the United Provinces.⁵ Here, Khan took the religious courses that to a large degree meant following a somewhat reformed Urdu version of the time-honoured syllabus of Indian Islamic education, the *Dars-i-Nizāmi*.⁶ Khan graduated as a Muslim scholar, ‘*ālim*, in 1944.

The same year he returned to his home village to stay with his family. Because of his religious education he had not received any training in the English language nor in the natural or other modern sciences. At home, Khan faced the new ideas and modes of reasoning of his brothers whose education was “modern,” i.e. English and secular. As a response, Khan set out to learn English at a local library. During an interview, Khan relates how he engaged with the atheist philosophy of Bertrand Russell in this period of his life.⁷ The new ideas of materialism and naturalism challenged him at first and he had something of a personal crisis of faith. But according to himself, through the renewed and direct study of the Quran and hadith as distinct from studying the canonical texts in the madrasa approach of the *Dars-i-Nizāmi*, he developed a new commitment to Islam. He saw the need to contend the compatibility of Islam and contemporary issues by upholding the timeless message of Islam against the onslaught of materialist atheism.

¹ Interview on 13th December 2013, 8.

² Interview on 13th December 2013, 8.

³ Interview on 13th December 2013, 8.

⁴ Interview on 6th December 2014, 21.

⁵ Interview on 13th December 2013, 5. Interview on 6th December 2014, 22.

⁶ Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims*, 408–410.

⁷ Interview on 13th December 2013, 9.

As seen, this largely personal narrative by Khan relates his early education and how he finds a mission and purpose in life. Analytically, it calls attention to certain historical processes encountered in Khan's early life. As a start, with the incorporation of English into its curriculum in 1912, Madrasa Işlāh shows how Muslim education institutions in India around the turn of the century taught subjects that prepared a new generation of Muslim students for the new economic, political, and social conditions created by the British.⁸ These changes also brought substantive changes, educationally and intellectually to Indian Islam. The curricula, *Dars-i-Nizāmi*, its alternatives and improvement, were at the heart of the discussion of Islam itself, as Barbara Metcalf and Francis Robinson have demonstrated. The latter shows that the emphasis of the curriculum with its Perso-Islamic foundations, was on the development of rationality, logic, and understanding in the student. Hence, the development of the *Dars-i-Nizāmi* in the eighteenth century made it into a curricula suited to the need of trained civil servants and bureaucrats in the increasingly complex administration of the Moghul Empire.⁹ Metcalf shows that with the decline of power in Muslim hands, the meaning and scope of religion was increasingly placed on the individual Muslim.¹⁰ Furthermore, while the Deobandi remained especially known for their emphasis on hadith studies, which also formed the basis for their popular teaching among Indian Muslims, "teachings were presented increasingly on the basis of systematic assessment against an ideal of the original sources."¹¹ A focus on the ideal of textual sources was therefore an already established part of the contemporary religious style when Khan studied the original sources and in them found a timeless ideal, with which he could compare the practices and values of his fellow Muslims.

The issue of how to respond to modern European philosophy was also preeminent in leading Deobandi circles. Issues around the teaching of modern philosophy, to refute it with reference to Islam or its inclusion in the curriculum to ensure future employment of graduates was hotly debated.¹² Correspondingly, by attempting to integrate the "old" and the "new" curriculum, the educational and reform society Nadwat al-'Ulamā', founded in Lucknow 1898 by Shiblī Nu'māni (d. 1914) and other 'ulamā', developed its Dār-al-'Ulūm into another influential institution of higher learning in Northern India.¹³ Their reform curriculum only replaced parts of the Persian *Dars-i-Nizāmi* with text books on the subjects of English, History, Geography,

⁸ <http://www.madrasaislah.org/edu.htm>. Accessed on 2015-02-04, since defunct. For an outline of these education reforms see Metcalf and Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*, 135.

⁹ Robinson, *The 'Ulama of Farangi Mahall*, 53.

¹⁰ Metcalf, "Islamic Revival in British India," 352.

¹¹ Metcalf, "Islamic Revival in British India," 100, 342.

¹² Metcalf, "Islamic Revival in British India," 101.

¹³ See Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism*, 109. For more about Nu'māni, see Chapter 6 of this study.

and Mathematics besides using Urdu as the language of instruction in their training of Muslim religious scholars.

In summary, the madrasa education that Khan received and how he relates his own studies after graduation reveal an example of the generally changed educational conditions in South Asia in the first half of the twentieth century. Likewise, it hints at the effects the general intellectual environment with its contested issues, had on the ideological and religious development of Khan himself.

5.2.1 *Djāmā‘at-i Islāmī Hind 1948–1962*

During his twenties and thirties, Khan was involved with the *Djāmā‘at-i Islāmī* movement founded in 1941 by Mawdudi.¹⁴ More well-known due to his Islamist ideology and widespread writings than his political leverage or victories, Mawdudi and the movement he founded nonetheless famously struggled for the realisation of an Islamic state and society as Mawdudi conceived it.¹⁵ Khan’s involvement with the Indian branch of the group, *Djāmā‘at-i Islāmī Hind*, began in 1948 at which time Khan was 23 years old.¹⁶ The earlier research cites several reasons why during his youth, Khan may have been associated with the main South Asian Islamist organisation. Sikand means that he was ideologically attracted to Mawdudi’s ideas of a comprehensive world-view and radical social revolution in Islam.¹⁷ Instead, Lindgren suggests that Khan’s earliest choice of Islamic organisation was a result of the influence of his revered former madrasa teacher, Maulana Iṣlāḥī, who as co-founder was its vice-president. Showing Khan the essentials of meta-cognitive and epistemological reasoning, Iṣlāḥī imparted the fundamental principle – which we will later recognise as a central tenet in Khan’s own thinking – that intellectual growth can only occur by first examining and admitting one’s own faulty basis of knowledge and logical reasoning.¹⁸ Khan himself describes this period as one of immaturity and youth and of his being in search of a Muslim organisation that could facilitate his own mission in life.

The cultural and political exclusivity and triumphalism of Mawdudi eventually came to be a catalyst for Khan. According to Khan, his involvement with the *Djāmā‘at-i Islāmī* began with an interest “in the task of Islamic *dawah*.”¹⁹ His role was of “an organizational” character “not

¹⁴ Interview on 6th December 2014. 31

¹⁵ Jalal, *Partisans of Allah*, 255.

¹⁶ Correspondence with the author, 2015-02-27, 1.

¹⁷ Sikand, “Peace, Dialogue and Da‘wā,” xii.

¹⁸ Lindgren, “A Nonviolent Identity,” 104–107.

¹⁹ Correspondence with the author, 2015-02-27, 1.

meant for the purpose of achieving a political target.”²⁰ Khan described how his realisation that the Djamā‘at-i Islāmī was not interested in “peaceful *da‘wa* work” and “was involved in political activities” was the time he quit.²¹ Irfan Omar has also written about this time in Khan’s life: “He never fully delved into the intellectual discourses of Mawdudi since he was more or less engrossed in the organisational aspects of the Jama‘at.”²² During an interview, Khan recalled an interaction with the leading Djamā‘at-i Islāmī member Maulana Iṣlāḥī during a meeting in Rampur, at a time when Khan was still attached to the organisation.²³ Khan described how Iṣlāḥī remarked that while Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328) “is the greatest name [...] in the literary history of Islam, he performed *idjtiḥād*” regarding only four things. Khan, on the other hand according to Iṣlāḥī, was someone who “performs *idjtiḥād* in everything!”²⁴ This interaction with Iṣlāḥī, who does not seem to fully appreciate Khan’s attempts to reapply the Islamic teachings or at least curb it by invoking an ancient and learned authority, may also strengthen Lindgren’s statement mentioned above, that by working for the Djamā‘at-i Islāmī, Khan sought close intellectual interactions with his teacher.²⁵

However, this quote also reveals the way Khan positions himself in relation to earlier Muslim jurists and his own teachers with a claim to an unbounded right to *idjtiḥād*. The quote may perhaps reveal the nature of the antagonism between Khan and the leadership of the Djamā‘at-i Islāmī. During an interview, I asked Khan about *idjtiḥād* and how he explains the term. With caveats discussing the lack of an English equivalent word, Khan described how he regarded *idjtiḥād* as “creative thinking” adding that “*idjtiḥād* means [...] to try to reapply the Islamic teachings in contemporary situations.”²⁶ This statement also highlights how Khan himself perceives the necessity of his own ideology and religious thinking. He describes how he eventually repudiated the Indian Djamā‘at-i Islāmī: “By following this negative group I discovered that the Quran is right and the Muslims are wrong.”²⁷ He not only separated intellectually from the Djamā‘at-i Islāmī in particular but with “Muslim movements” in general, because they had “deviated from the right path of Islam.”²⁸ Khan argues his position by

²⁰ Correspondence with the author, 2015-02-27, 1.

²¹ Correspondence with the author, 2015-02-27, 2.

²² Omar, “Islam and the Other,” 426.

²³ Interview on 6th December 2014, 31.

²⁴ Interview on 6th December 2014, 32.

²⁵ The influence of Ibn Taymiyya on 20th century Sunni Islamic fundamentalism is well-established and discussed in the literature from a number of perspectives, not least in terms of reception, selection and usage of this particular medieval authority.

²⁶ Interview on 6th December 2014, 2.

²⁷ Interview on 13th December 2013, 7.

²⁸ Interview on 13th December 2013, 7.

referring to the Quran, Sura 3:135: “you will have the upper hand, if you are believers.”²⁹ Khan said it means: “If you are a true believer you will be successful” but the Djamā‘at-i Islāmī and Muslim movements who espouse violent jihad are the opposite of successful:

Muslims are fighting since two hundred years, and presenting jihad among Muslims [...] has a long history. And, perhaps for more than two hundred years it has been in vain. No positive results. So for me there was a question: If God is with us, if God is on my side, then why are Muslims failing? The Quran is ensuring that God is always on the believers’ side, but Muslims are a total failure. So this was a great question. From this question I discovered that Muslims are deviant.³⁰

Hence, Khan became deeply critical of both Mawdudi and his movement, and subsequently developed his own understanding of peaceful jihad. Khan’s concept of jihad involved the absolute freedom of individuals to accept or reject Islamic teachings on belief, worship, and personal behaviour and formed the basis for his argument as to why Muslims are not allowed to impose Islamic law on society.³¹ Irfan Omar sets Khan’s eventual resignation from the Djamā‘at-i Islāmī as being 1962, although he had already had serious intellectual disagreements with the leadership of the organisation in 1959.³²

The discovery of the “political” nature of the Djamā‘at-i Islāmī by Khan at this time can be understood in the wider intellectual milieu and growing denunciation of Mawdudi on the part of the South Asian ‘*ulamā*’. In the late 1940s, senior Muslim scholars living on the Indian side of the border had already begun to seriously question Mawdudi’s position of the need for an Islamic state. Meanwhile, the ‘*ulamā*’ in Pakistan were largely associated with the Djamā‘at-i Islāmī. In 1951, important leaders at the influential Dār-al-‘Ulūm at Deoband had initiated a fatwa campaign against Mawdudi: “By 1952 the trickle of criticism had been converted into a flurry of fatwas.”³³ More and more religious scholars and centres for learning on both sides of the border repudiated Mawdudi and accused him of departing from both general Sunni orthodoxy and *Ḥanafī* law. When accused of hosting Aḥmadiyya and *Khāridījī* sympathies, Mawdudi reacted by declaring India *Dār al-kufr* (‘land of unbelief, blasphemy’). This meant, for instance, that Pakistanis should not marry anyone or receive inheritance from India.

²⁹ Khan, *The Quran*, 171.

³⁰ Interview on 13th December 2013, 7.

³¹ Interview on 13th December 2013, 5–6.

³² Omar, “Islam and the Other,” 429.

³³ Nasr, *Mawdudi*, 117.

Unsurprisingly, Indian Muslims and the *‘ulamā’* who had remained in their ancestral home were insulted but it also made many Pakistanis more wary towards Mawdudi.³⁴

Khan’s career in the Djamā’at-i Islāmī Hind can be compared to that of the writer and thinker Sayyid Abu ‘l-Ḥasan ‘Alī Nadwī (d. 1999). Born 1913 in a small village in Uttar Pradesh into a family of renowned religious scholars, Nadwī joined up with Mawdudi in 1940. Being tasked with organisational work in Lucknow, Nadwī left disillusioned in 1943. Subsequently he became famous for his presentations of Islam that recognised a secular polity and supported national integration. Nadwī later described his reasons for leaving the Djamā’at-i Islāmī as a lack of piety among its members. Furthermore, their attitude towards their leader was something of a “personality cult” around an infallible leader with a disdainful relationship to other *‘ulamā’*. Despite such criticism of the movement, Nadwī’s personal relationship with Mawdudi never ended while the latter was still alive.³⁵ It should be noted that, similar to his assessment of Madanī’s “Islamist trap,” as described in Chapter 2, Malik considers Nadwī’s statements as similar to the tenets of mainstream Islamism. This is despite the different political outcomes of the reasoning and positions of Mawdudi and Nadwī.³⁶ In a not too distant future, through agitation, missionary activity, and the superiority of exemplary individual Muslim lives, India would surely be Islamised; and thereby realise an Islamic polity through democratic means. Hence, according to Malik, Madanī and Nadwī shares the position of an eventual Islamic polity. However, Malik’s interpretation of Nadwī’s ideology and positions may be qualified. Nadwī completed his education at various Indian centres of higher Islamic studies and from 1932, Nadwī studied Quranic commentaries under Madanī at Deoband before becoming a teacher and rector at Nadwat al-‘Ulamā’.³⁷ While Nadwī advocated the importance of an Islamic state, he took Madanī’s position, which is based on *Ḥanafī* law that it is a religious duty for India’s Muslims to reject the “two-nation theory” and stay in India to preach Islam. Much later in 2001 and in a different situation, Khan argues a comparable position. The Islamic state is not a main goal of Islam. It can only come about as a grace of God, emerging from the consensus of a society of sincere Muslims.³⁸ The doctrinal basis of an Islamic state is, apart from monotheism, non-compulsion. An Islamic state can never be achieved through rebellion against any state,

³⁴ Nasr, *Mawdudi*, 118.

³⁵ Yoginder Sikand, “Sayyid Abul Hasan ‘Ali Nadwi and Contemporary Islamic Thought in India,” in Abu-Rabi’, *The Blackwell Companion to Contemporary Islamic Thought*, 92.

³⁶ Jamal Malik, “Madrasah in South Asia,” in Abu-Rabi’, *The Blackwell Companion to Contemporary Islamic Thought*, 109.

³⁷ Sikand, “Sayyid Abul Hasan,” 89. See also Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism*, 109. For more about Nu‘māni, see Chapter 6 of this study.

³⁸ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Islam Rediscovered: Discovering Islam from its Original Sources* (New Delhi: Goodword Books, 2001), 51.

which is unlawful. Only through negotiation, compromise and the spread of Islamic values may a collective social base for an eventual Islamic state emerge.

Hence, the general importance of the notion of an Islamic state and its emergence is reformulated by these Indian Muslim religious writers. However imminent or distant, the eventual appearance of an Islamic state is presented as based on preaching and non-involvement with the secular state of India. Therefore, the statements of Khan, Madanī, and Nadwī can be seen from the perspective of the analytical framework of Roy, as described in Chapter 3. According to Roy, state-centred Islamist discourse of the prevalence of the political is formatted into an individualised and privatised discourse. It illustrates Roy's views of the inherent failures of political Islam and "post-Islamism" moving in the direction of neo-fundamentalism. This theoretical discussion in light of the case of Khan will be continued in Chapter 9.

5.2.2 Early Writings: *Islam, Modern Society, and Science*

Khan says that "the public phase of my peace mission" began in 1955 with a public speech in Lucknow on the topic of the atomic age which perhaps no one will survive "to tell the tale of the destruction of humanity."³⁹ This speech eventually became Khan's first publication, under the title *Naye Ahd Ke Darwaze Par* ("On the Threshold of a New Era").⁴⁰ Reworking and extending that title it developed into a book, *Ilme Jadid Ka Challenge*, translated as *Islam and Modern Challenges*.⁴¹ Further reworked, this book was later published as *God Arises: Evidence of God in Nature and Science*.⁴² The book's Arabic translation *Al-islām yattaḥid* "became a best seller" and was incorporated into Arab university syllabuses.⁴³ This is the work that established Khan as a preeminent Muslim scholar and writer and it covers two main arguments. First, Khan goes into detail as to why the natural and empirical sciences are consistent with a theistic outlook in general and the teachings of the Quran and the Prophet Muhammad in particular:

³⁹ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *The Ideology of Peace: Towards a Culture of Peace* (New Delhi: Goodword Books, 2003), 8–9.

⁴⁰ Khan, *The Ideology of Peace*, 9.

⁴¹ <http://www.cpsglobal.org/mwk>. Accessed on 2016-10-28.

⁴² Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *God Arises* (New Delhi: Goodword Books, [1985] 2013).

⁴³ Sikand, "Peace, Dialogue and Da'wā," 34.

Many modern discoveries support Islamic claims made 1400 years ago that what is laid down in the Quran is the ultimate truth, and that this will be borne out by all future knowledge.⁴⁴

One example of this type of argument is how Khan perceives Sura 55:19–20: “He has let loose the two seas: they meet one another. Between them stands a barrier which they cannot overrun.”⁴⁵ Khan argues that this verse highlights different degrees of density and salinity in ocean waters and rivers, such as when the Ganges and Jamuna rivers meet one another, their streams remain distinct from each other. Also, in coastal rivers at high tide, ocean waters run upstream, yet recede again with the ebb tide. Due to the differences in salinity between the waters of the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea they form two distinct layers when they meet at the Strait of Gibraltar. Hence, for Khan the findings of empirical science only prove the timeless veracity of Islam.

Second, Khan aims to prove that not only are atheistic philosophies and ideologies, especially Leninism and Marxism, internally inconsistent and lacking a rational basis but materialism and modernity itself with its accompanying conditions of life, are lacking some very fundamental humane and divine aspects that can ultimately only be overcome by individuals turning to Islam.⁴⁶ The New Testament is also charged with inconsistency – a proof of the “human interpolations” interfering with the word of God.⁴⁷ In this early work and through a number of arguments of these two main types, Khan positions Islam as the most perfectly consistent, rational and therefore true of all religions and philosophies.

As seen in Chapter 2, in the late nineteenth century modern educated Muslim writers created a new type of curriculum of defending Islam from the charges of extremism, falsehood, and rational shortcomings by Christian writers, as well as modern ideologues and philosophers. Similar to these Islamic Modernists, as they have been called, Khan perceives Islam as providing indispensable components and basic impulses to the helpful and humane potential of modern society itself.⁴⁸ A programme of finding the compatibility between science and Islam should be seen in the light of Sayyid Ahmad Khan’s influential writings and the system of thought that was spread at his affiliated institution of learning in Aligarh. While “nature” and “rationality” are the twin central notions of this ideological system, human reason is seen not

⁴⁴ Khan, *God Arises*, 9.

⁴⁵ Khan, *God Arises*, 210.

⁴⁶ Khan, *God Arises*, 18, 39, 269, 275.

⁴⁷ Khan, *God Arises*, 202.

⁴⁸ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Islam: Creator of the Modern Age* (Delhi: Goodword Books, 1995), 33.

so much as revealing a deeper understanding, through the discovery of evidences in nature as it is with discovering the knowledge and instructions implicit in divine revelation.⁴⁹

One could argue that while the personal popularity of Sayyid Ahmad Khan with his pro-British stance, quickly diminished during the national struggle for independence, the particular understanding of Islam and science which was at the centre of the Aligarh movement have survived this foremost champion of Islamic modernism. Contemporary Indian madrasas that incorporate modern subjects also “do not challenge the fundamental cognitive style of traditionalist teaching.”⁵⁰ On one hand, vocational training in crafts, computers, engineering, or business, may be offered wholly separate to any religious courses. On the other hand, modern core subjects in both the humanities, such as history and comparative religion, as well as the natural sciences can be taught in a way that does not challenge established knowledge of Islam as it is understood or taught. For instance, the concept and teaching of comparative religion can be used to prove Islamic superiority. Meanwhile, Indian madrasa students seem to have a predisposition to regard science as what is already foretold in the Quran through a conflation of Islam and science. Instead of being regarded as an analytical and critical methodology, science may be used as a tool to inflate the status of religion in contemporary Indian religious education and discourse. Such tendencies can be found also in Khan’s texts, which maintain that scientific discoveries prove the timeless veracity of Islam. However, Khan also thinks that the scientific virtues of curiosity and discovery are in fact demanded by Islam. Therefore, Muslims should not hesitate to engage with science and technology.

In analytical terms, science and technology are not seen as fields of action that are independent from Islam. In fact, science and technology are another aspect or expression of Islam. A selection of scientific discoveries seen by Khan as predicted in the Quran therefore validates Islam and Islam validates science. These discussions, of Wahiduddin Khan in comparison to Sayyid Ahmad Khan and of analysing and theorising the totalising attempts in Wahiduddin Khan’s texts will be continued in Chapters 8 and 9.

5.2.3 *Tablīghī Djamā‘at and Djāmi‘at al-‘Ulamā-yi Hind*

In the winter of 1966, Khan writes that he first encountered the humbly clothed travelling lay preachers of the Tablīghī Djamā‘at.⁵¹ Later that year he spent two days in the Tablīghī Djamā‘at

⁴⁹ Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism*, 269.

⁵⁰ Barbara Metcalf, “Madrasas and Minorities in Secular India,” in Hefner and Zaman, *Schooling Islam*, 100.

⁵¹ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Tabligh Movement* (1986), <https://ia800806.us.archive.org/12/items/mwk-eng-book/Tabligh-Movement.pdf>. Accessed on 2019-05-14.

headquarters close to the shrine *Basti Nizām al-Dīn*, the tomb and mausoleum or *dargāh*, of Nizām al-Dīn Awliyyā' (d.1325) in Delhi. The religious discipline and focussed activities related to Muslim preaching at the Tablīghī headquarters obviously made an impression on the 40-year old Khan. In fact, Khan likens the “Bangla Wali Masjid” (also locally and worldwide referred to as Banglewali mosque or Nizamuddin Markaz Masjid) and the activities there to the humble surroundings and sincere accomplishments of the “mosque of the Prophet” or “the Masjid-e-Nabawi” (i.e. in seventh century Medina).⁵²

In *Tabligh Movement* (1986), Khan strives to express his fondness of and respect for the examples set by the founder of Tablīghī Djamā'at, Maulana Ilyās, and the latter's son and successor as leader, Maulana Yūsuf (d. 1966).⁵³ Khan relates their lives, mission and characters. This work by Khan also features a reprinted 1965 speech by Maulana Yūsuf on the importance of “Ummah-ness,” or “global Muslim unity.”⁵⁴ In this speech, the importance of Muslim unity is formulated as the means to regain divine succour, and outlines the methods of the Tablīghī Djamā'at, as well as the movement's aims to foster Muslim unity as can be seen in the following quotation:

This community should become one which worships God as is proper and is humble towards its fellowmen, which gives respect to others, is obedient to God, and whose members' lives are imbued with truth and justice. Even if people in only one small place fully devote themselves to the spreading of this message, it will in time become the order of the day. It is high time that we formed groups to visit various places and did our best to serve this cause. In this way by the grace of God, nothing could come in the way of spreading the message.⁵⁵

⁵² Khan, *Tabligh Movement*, 95, 100. During my fieldwork in Delhi, I have often visited this centre, a modern concrete several-storey building. It is, indeed, a bustling and international focal point of contemporary Muslim revivalism. Pilgrims and groups of preachers are constantly returning after a preaching tour, or are setting out on new ventures. Anthropologically speaking, in terms of their disparate language, ethnicity, and clothing these inter-gender groups provide something of an immediate overview of Asian international Islam. Further, their mission to openly call to Islam could be directly observed. As a curious visitor, its officiants were open and friendly missionaries, more than happy to talk about the de-localised and straightforward Islam of the Tablīghī Djamā'at. This can be contrasted to this foreigner's usual reception at the Basti Nizām al-Dīn, only a short walk further down the road. As the most popular site of pilgrimage on the sub-continent, except seekers of the *baraka* of Nizām al-Dīn Awliyyā', with its dwindling alleys, exquisite marble tombs, and *ḳawwālī* music every Thursday night, it also receives its fair share of tourists. Therefore, and not just for doctrinal reasons, it is only understandable that the male guardians of the *dargāh* are not as immediately eager to disseminate their localised form of Islamic teachings, perhaps somewhat literally set in stone, except after some due donations.

⁵³ Khan, *Tabligh Movement*, 4–6.

⁵⁴ Khan, *Tabligh Movement*, 78–80.

⁵⁵ Khan, *Tabligh Movement*, 93.

Throughout the speech, which was intended to motivate Muslim preaching, the need for amiable sociability and humility is stressed.⁵⁶ I will later demonstrate that this idealised style of Muslim preaching can also be seen in Khan's assessment of Islamic *da'wa* or Muslim preaching. Khan writes: "The Tabligh people believe in conveying the message by means of personal approach: through conversation, speech, meetings and so on."⁵⁷ These topics will also be recognisable when we later turn to Khan's discussion on *da'wa*.

Another theme in which Khan sees the aims of the Tablighī Djamā'at as related to his own goals is regarding "individual reform." The reform of the individual is different from the violent state-building that "so-called Islamic fundamentalism" strives towards. While Islamic fundamentalists and "their movement takes the path of violence from day one [...] Islam is [in fact] a name for a peaceful struggle."⁵⁸ According to Khan, the "large scale" success of the Tablighī Djamā'at proves that Islam is indeed a peaceful struggle set on reforming individuals. The Tablighī Djamā'at is held up by him as an example of how a contemporary Muslim movement should act, especially in comparison to the discouraging and negative examples set by "Islamic fundamentalists." The perceived similarity between the Tablighī Djamā'at centre in Nizamuddin to the original mosque of the Prophet is juxtaposed with the offices of "religious parties of modern times." While Khan considers that "there is no dearth of offices set up in the name of Islam," he argues that these are in fact dull and meaningless enterprises.⁵⁹ Khan thinks that "the history of modern parties shows that in the initial stage, they succeed in influencing people and attracting great minds but that before long their work comes to a standstill."⁶⁰ Khan contrasts the lack of enthusiasm that he thinks characterises modern religious parties (which is most probably a reference to the Djamā'at-i Islāmī) with the zeal, energy, and devotion that he feels distinguishes the Tablighī Djamā'at. According to Khan, the energy and dedicated work of the Tablighī Djamā'at increases due to their divine succour, which shows that they and not any political party are on the right track.⁶¹

Since Khan regards the Tablighī Djamā'at so highly, including its methods and its leaders, the question is why Khan, as an independent scholar came to found a movement of his own. He argues that the Tablighī Djamā'at are so successful because the passionate preachers of the Tablighī Djamā'at stir the slumbering emotions of born Muslims: "at an unconscious level, at

⁵⁶ Khan, *Tabligh Movement*, 91.

⁵⁷ Khan, *Tabligh Movement*, 111.

⁵⁸ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 144.

⁵⁹ Khan, *Tabligh Movement*, 100–101.

⁶⁰ Khan, *Tabligh Movement*, 105.

⁶¹ Khan, *Tabligh Movement*, 101, 106.

least, the religious outlook has a firm hold upon them.” Hence, the Tablīghī Djamā‘at preachers succeed so well because they preach to born Muslims who are emotionally conditioned by a Muslim upbringing. Through regular reminders, such largely “unconscious” feelings come to “dominate” and the Muslim is “reborn.”⁶² Khan sees a parallel need in Islam for the formulation of an intellectually satisfying defence and a systematic justification of religion.⁶³ Hence, while the work of the Tablīghī Djamā‘at is the “essence” of religion; realising and submitting to God in the framework of individual reform, he ascertains a “second demand” of Islam called for by circumstance:

We have to take recourse to rational arguments when religion comes face to face with such thoughts as subvert its very basis, as has happened in the past when Muslims were exposed to Greek thought.⁶⁴

“The revival of Islam” can therefore only come about when these parallel needs of religion are satisfied together. It also makes use of and stimulates the intellectual capacities of the *umma*:

In the latter half of the twentieth century some of the issues facing us are: the restoration of the honour and dominance of the Muslims in the modern world, the compilation of Islamic law according to the needs of modern times, the preparation of a new system of education for Muslims which caters to present needs and situations, the preparation of missionary literature, keeping in view the requirements of the modern mind and challenges from modern ideologies. All these objectives call for a defence of religion on an academic level.⁶⁵

This quote highlights how Khan sees the situation of Islam in the contemporary world, which forms the background for how Khan perceives his own role: clarifying and justifying Islam in intellectual and academic terms. Thus in 1970, Khan founded an association of his own, “The Islamic Centre” in Delhi.⁶⁶ By 1975, Khan had set himself apart from the Tablīghī Djamā‘at, and in 1976 “The Islamic Centre” began to publish Khan’s writings in Urdu in their *al-Risāla* magazine. Even before this time, Irfan Omar notes that Khan was the editor of the news organ

⁶² Khan, *Tabligh Movement*, 119.

⁶³ Khan, *Tabligh Movement*, 120.

⁶⁴ Khan, *Tabligh Movement*, 121.

⁶⁵ Khan, *Tabligh Movement*, 122–123.

⁶⁶ <http://www.cpsglobal.org/mwk>. Accessed 2016-10-31.

of the *Djāmi* 'at al- 'Ulamā-yi Hind, between 1967 and 1974.⁶⁷ During this time and up until the 1980s, Khan rented his accommodation from the *Djāmi* 'at al- 'Ulamā-yi Hind. From this information, it is perhaps possible to deduce that some affiliations between Khan and the *Djāmi* 'at al- 'Ulamā-yi Hind were in place for at least a decade and a half. No more notations of this time in Khan's life are mentioned in the literature. Expanding upon what was seen in Chapter 2, an attempt at further contextualisation is offered in the following.

The *Djāmi* 'at al- 'Ulamā-yi Hind was founded in 1919, largely on the initiative of Maulana 'Abd al-Barī (d.1926) of the Farangi Mahall. Of the several other notable and influential Muslim scholars who were its leaders, Maulana Kalam Azad may be mentioned.⁶⁸ The *Djāmi* 'at al- 'Ulamā-yi Hind was formed to propagate and popularise the sharia, establish sharia courts, organise and unify the 'ulamā', strengthen ties between Indian Muslims and Muslims abroad, as well as the general uplifting of the Muslim community in India. Political and social relationships with non-Muslim Indians in the common fight against the British was sought, hence the *Djāmi* 'at al- 'Ulamā-yi Hind and its leaders came to be largely associated with the Congress Party. Therefore, the leadership of the *Djāmi* 'at was called the "nationalist" 'ulamā'. The future independent India that the association sought was, however, probably one of a comradely yet separate confederation of two distinct religious and political communities, living together as basically self-governing separate communities in political and judicial terms. The historian Peter Hardy refers to this vision of an autonomous cultural and religious community of Muslims maintained via Islamic law, education, and individual persuasion through the leadership provided by the *Djāmi* 'at al- 'Ulamā-yi Hind as "jurisprudential apartheid."⁶⁹

The ideological influence of Madanī, closely associated to the Indian National Congress Party and leader of the *Djāmi* 'at al- 'Ulamā-yi Hind was mentioned in Chapter 2. Here, it will be noted that he was chiefly responsible for formulating the values of "composite nationalism," for which he was so bitterly criticised by both Iqbal and Mawdudi. According to the former, Islam could be the only common factor in a nation of Muslims. The latter ridiculed Madanī because he could not understand that the Hindu dominance in a future free India represented a threat to Islam itself.⁷⁰ As Muhammad Qasim Zaman has shown, it may be argued that Madanī in fact miscalculated the effects of any modern nation state to shape and mould its citizens. Furthermore, the rise of Hindu Nationalism also "casts its long shadow" over the concept of

⁶⁷ Omar, *Rethinking Islam*, 3, 85.

⁶⁸ Hardy, *Partners in Freedom*, 31.

⁶⁹ Hardy, *Partners in Freedom*, 34.

⁷⁰ Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam*, 34–37.

composite nationalism. Whichever way one may interpret and analyse Madanī's positions, it is also true that his ideology and claim to religious authority was shaped by his affiliation to *Ḥanafī* law. In line with *Ḥanafīyya* law, Madanī saw that a territory that had once been in Muslim hands was still to be considered part of the *Dār al-Islām*, as long as the right to practice and proselytise Islam remained with the Muslims there. In fact, the Deobandi-trained Madanī used the logic of *Ḥanafī* law to say that it might be recommended or obligatory for Muslims to remain in such lands, so that by openly practicing Islam while calling people to the faith, the residents there might eventually become Muslims. Such was the historical trajectory of initially non-Muslim Mongol invaders in thirteenth century Baghdad.

As we will see in the following chapters, Khan continues and develops several of the basic tenets of composite nationalism and the juristic logic of *Ḥanafī* law – possible influences from the *Djāmi'at al-'Ulamā-yi Hind* – but also challenges the '*ulamā*' for not systematically applying the Islamic principles in relation to the changed political and social circumstances. In fact, these positions are fundamental to Khan's own claim to religious authority. In his public presentation of Islam to the Indian Muslim community, Khan sees a momentous necessity to practice a form of Islam, which is in every way respectable and sociable to the non-Muslim neighbours. This formulation of authentic Islam is portrayed as the way to secure a place for Muslims in India and encourage non-Muslims to consider Islam. Hence, and as will be seen in the next section, in relation to the earlier phases in Khan's production and ideological development, the 1970s saw some substantial new developments.

5.3 “The Islamic Centre” and the al-Risāla

Khan left the Tablighī Djamā'at because of their opposition to *idjtiḥād*.⁷¹ Despite the organisation's emphasis on missionary work, Khan held that modern educated Muslims, Hindus, and others needed an innovative understanding of Islam.⁷² This new presentation aimed to show the relevance of Islam in relation to changing economic and social circumstances. Khan meant to popularise what he saw as the peaceable and rational, as well as scientific qualities of Islam. Such qualities should be related in a positive and clear language to make Islam more attractive to those with higher education and others. Endorsing the twin Tablighī Djamā'at notions of staying away from factional politics and focussing on encouraging individuals to turn to Islam, he began to disseminate his views in the monthly magazine *al-Risāla*, published

⁷¹ Khan, *Tabligh Movement*, 68. Interview on 6th December 2014, 2.

⁷² Khan, *Jihad, Peace and Inter-Community Relations*, XIV.

in Urdu since 1976 and in English since 1984.⁷³ It was in the articles of *al-Risāla* that Khan's ideas of *idjtiḥād* and of presenting Islam in a contemporary idiom were publicly expressed. These articles are said by Omar to represent a "conciliatory approach" and "a model of cooperation and [...] compromise."⁷⁴ The tone in these short texts has a clear moral flavour. They begin with a short story of everyday life and human encounters, followed by relatable words of wisdom, supported by citations from the Quran or hadith.⁷⁵ According to Saniyasnain Khan, the son and publisher of Wahiduddin Khan, in the year 2000 the Urdu print run for *al-Risāla* was 6,000 copies and 1,000 copies for its English version.⁷⁶

With regards to Khan's launch of the "Islamic Centre" in 1970, Irfan Omar mentions some rumours and criticisms. Apparently, Khan's move to the residential area of Nizamuddin West aroused suspicion. For this change of address and living status, he was accused of accepting grants from the Indian or the Libyan government or both. While it was his critics that raised these issues, a former connection to a Libyan official of some kind is mentioned by Khan.⁷⁷ However, the analytical focus of this study is not on Khan as a person, but the context of Khan's writings and interventions in a debate situation, as will be seen next.

The ideological content of *al-Risāla*, with its marked emphasis on individual reform and thereby the creation of a Muslim unity, is comparable to the ideas of the Tablīghī Djamā'at. Therefore, in relation to the debate situation it developed positions largely in opposition to those of Mawdudi and the Djamā'at-i Islāmī, who saw the creation of an Islamic polity and the rule of Allah, as the main shaper of a Muslim unity. However, Khan's ideological and religious development also addresses more specific political and social issues current in Indian society.

First, the tremendous energies released with the birth of a free Indian nation were increasingly blocked by the second half of the 1970s. The rapturous promises of state, secularism, and socialism seemed perhaps tainted by such campaigns as slum clearances in Delhi and forced vasectomy programmes. Congress Party policies, largely directed by Sanjay Gandhi (d. 1980), targeted the urban poor in uneven and arbitrary ways. The levelling of the mazes of alleys and shacks in Delhi left hundreds of thousands homeless, while forced sterilisation mainly affected

⁷³ The English edition is published under the title, *Spirit of Islam*. A Hindi version was also in print for some time from 1990. See Omar, "Islam and the Other," 426.

⁷⁴ Omar, *Rethinking Islam*, 70.

⁷⁵ The *al-Risāla* magazine can currently be read online, through the well-run CPS website archives. The full Urdu catalogue from 1976 can be accessed. In English, the archive covers the years 1984–2002. The difficulties of assessing the actual level of impact for this publication have been discussed in Chapter 1. <http://cpsglobal.org/content/al-risala-1>. Accessed on 2018-03-26.

⁷⁶ Omar, *Rethinking Islam*, 72.

⁷⁷ Omar, *Rethinking Islam*, 85–86.

the underprivileged.⁷⁸ The affluent were not equally affected by state policies. Increasingly, the state was not seen as the solution but as a source of the country's problems. This was made manifest in the outcome of the 1977 elections, which produced a fragile coalition government allied against the Congress Party. The coalition was carried on a wave of resentment produced by Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's Emergency regime in 1975, and was dominated by the Hindu Right-wing Bharatiya Jana Sangh party.⁷⁹ The electoral victory of the Hindu nationalists was overturned again in 1980, placing Indira Gandhi back in office, but the vote mobilising tactics of the right were imitated by the Congress Party.

In fact, as William Gould has convincingly argued, the manipulation of ethnic and religious groups for political gain was not only something that the Congress Party initiated in the 1980s. The shedding of "secularism" by both the Congress Party and the opposition was a culmination of trends occurring since at least the mid-1960s.⁸⁰ Although the political consensus around the Congress Party and the alliances between centre and local politicians had already weakened since the late 1960s, the early 1980s saw an open and cynical exploitation of communalist politics culminating in Indira Gandhi's policies towards Punjab. Here, the established Akali Dal party had supported the Jan Sangh, and in a bid to control the state politics of Punjab, Indira Gandhi sought out the radical Sikh preacher Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale (d. 1984). Emboldened by such support from the centre, Bhindranwale's Sikh activists occupied the Golden Temple and demanded a separate Sikh Khalistan. In June 1984, Prime Minister Gandhi employed the army to oust the fighters, resulting in the death of at least 500 civilians gathered at the temple grounds and almost 100 soldiers lost their lives. In retaliation for the massacre, Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her own Sikh bodyguards, which in turn resulted in a nationwide killing of Sikhs. This claimed at least 3,000 lives while Police and certain Congress politicians looked on or actively contributed to the massacres.⁸¹

The violence and killings were later discussed and reproduced in the media using language that repeated the ethnic terms of both victims and perpetrators. This theme repeated itself in the 1984 elections when the Congress, similarly to the parties of the Hindu Right, used a rhetoric of "anti-national" ethnic denominations of its opponents. Hence, the 1980s saw a significant breaking up of Nehruvian beliefs of national consensus and an increase in both the importance

⁷⁸ Metcalf and Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*, 256.

⁷⁹ After its poor results in the 1980 general elections, the Bharatiya Jana Sangh party (short: Jan Sangh) split up and the main faction became the Bharatiya Janata Party or BJP.

⁸⁰ Gould, *Religion and Conflict*, 234–239.

⁸¹ Metcalf and Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*, 260.

and complexity of communal and ethnic politics.⁸² The Shah Bano case of 1985, outlined in Chapter 2, only played into a process of what Gould refers to as forms of “political majoritarianism” shared by both the Congress Party and the increasingly influential parties of the Hindu Right.⁸³ The issues surrounding the Shah Bano case and the ensuing countrywide debate on a uniform civil code, highlight that while the Congress Party rhetorically defined itself as the only rightly national movement, sectional interests were met when politically expedient. In turn, the *Sangh Parivar* (the “family” of Hindu Right wing organisations and parties) used such instances to decry Congress Party policies as “anti-national” while they pictured themselves as upholding “true” secularism.⁸⁴ The politics of majoritarianism discernibly meant that caste, ethnic, and religious communities could be placed outside the pale of national consensus for the purposes of political mobilisation. Hence, sectional interests were upheld when seen as electorally advantageous.

As international animosity between India and Pakistan increased, the VHP used aggressive anti-Pakistan rhetoric while anti-Muslim rioting spread throughout India in the early 1980s, creating a rhetorical connection between the enemy, Pakistan, and the Indian Muslim community.⁸⁵ The Muslim community of India had become increasingly fearful; their very identity as Indians at stake. At the same time, international economic policies at the centre were radically changed by Congress under Rajiv Gandhi (d. 1989).⁸⁶ To an extent, the Indian economy was opened up during the 1980s to the international capitalist system, from which it had been largely sheltered behind tariffs and permits since independence, an economic liberalisation process that was concluded only in the following decade. With such new economic policies came an official rhetoric that emphasised the advantages and possibilities of private entrepreneurship. An expanding middle class formed new patterns of consumption and social mobility in both Pakistan and India. Hence, while the political weight of majoritarianism increased, the development of anti-Muslim rhetoric and violence also coincided with a new emphasis on private entrepreneurship in an international environment of capitalism.

The above describes the increasing political currency for a rhetoric addressing Indian Muslims as a homogenous group with particular cultural and religious qualities, which clearly

⁸² Hasan, “Legacy of a Divided Nation,” 262–263.

⁸³ Gould, *Religion and Conflict*, 237.

⁸⁴ Khan took an active part in the debate as an outspoken defender of Muslim personal law as a formulation of the secularism of the state. Later BJP propaganda presents themselves as not only truly national but that “appeasement” of minorities is both anti-national and an affront to secularism. Facsimile in Hasan, “Legacy of a Divided Nation,” 346–347.

⁸⁵ Gould, *Religion and Conflict*, 246.

⁸⁶ Metcalf and Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*, 261.

put them outside the national consensus. The main aspects of this type of rhetoric can be summed up in the following four points: Muslims represent an anti-national betrayal when they caused the partition of India; Muslims are foreign invaders and not a part of India; Muslims are prone to violence, especially against women; Muslims are archaic and old-fashioned (“backwards”) and therefore, Islam does not contribute to the progress of the nation. These four points aim to rhetorically place Muslims outside what it means to be modern and Indian.

With this contextual environment in mind, Khan can be seen to present Islam as the essence of a peaceable religion that only addresses individuals and therefore is “non-political.” Arguing for the rights to preserve a distinct culture and religious freedom as constitutional and national values, Khan formulates secularism as non-interference by the state and thus, against any notions of a uniform civil code for the sake of national unity.⁸⁷ Likewise, as will be seen in Chapter 7, Khan presents the liberating and “natural” aspects of gender relations in the Islamic sharia.⁸⁸ Furthermore, Khan formulates Islam as encouraging thriftiness and the development of a rational-scientific, i.e. modern, outlook through education. All in all, authentic Islam is not only a part of the national mainstream but in fact because it fosters patience and tolerance of plurality, it maintains the social harmony in society.

5.3.1 The “National Maulana”

When the destruction of the mosque at Ayodha in Uttar Pradesh, in 1992 and other events were highly published but routine, media events of “communal violence” in India, Khan found a new public role as a Muslim mediator and peace propagator.⁸⁹ Even before the destruction of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya, Khan had made attempts at a public conciliatory function. On 6 January 1991, while tensions were rising from political mobilisation around the site by such *Hindutva* groups as the BJP, the VHP, and the RSS, Khan proposed through the *Hindustan Times* that negotiation and compromise were the best means to resolve the issue.⁹⁰ After the destruction of the mosque on 6 December 1992, Khan stepped even further into the national limelight by publicly proposing a conciliatory “Three-Point Formula” in various national media outlets.⁹¹ This formula begins with the proposal that the “Mandir-Masjid movement [...]”

⁸⁷ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Uniform Civil Code: A Critical Study* (New Delhi, Goodword Books, 2001 [1995]) 18, 50.

⁸⁸ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Woman in Islamic Shariah* (New Delhi: Goodword Books, 2003 [1995]), 100.

⁸⁹ Brass, *The Production*, 30. Gould, *Religion and Conflict*, 21.

⁹⁰ Gould, *Religion and Conflict*, 21. Omar, *Rethinking Islam*, 217, (footnote 468).

⁹¹ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Indian Muslims: The Need for a Positive Outlook* (New Delhi: Goodword Books, [1994] 2004), 128.

launched by Hindus,” should together with “all four Shankaracharyas” publicly express, preferably in written form, that no other mosque will be destroyed or threatened and that no change of the current status regarding “holy places of worship” will be sought by those who sign such a statement. Second, Khan suggested that the Muslims should let the issue of the destruction of the mosque rest. Khan wrote that the issue should be left “to the conscience of the nation” and no one should try to protect the Babri Masjid any longer. Third, Khan said that the Government of India should change the constitution to the effect of “maintaining the status quo as of 15 August, 1947, in order to guarantee the security of all places of worship.”⁹² In other words, the post-Ayodhya status of sacred places or structures should be granted constitutional prominence, according to Khan. It was public steps like these in a highly charged situation that gave Khan something of a standing as a “national figure” who according to Omar, was viewed favourably by the intellectual elite and by “many politicians.”⁹³ Regarding this period, on the CPS website it is highlighted how Khan joined with other religious figures and leaders, the (international Jain leader) Acharya Muni Sushil Kumar and Swami Chidanand on a peace march, or a *Shanti Yatra*, addressing gatherings around Maharashtra, which allegedly “contributed greatly to the return of peace in the country.”⁹⁴

In a situation of heightened communal tension due to political mobilisation in the first half of the 1990s, Khan outlined his thinking on Islam, non-violence, and peace. Khan thinks that Muslims in India have become perceived as a “problem community” after the launch of Muslim movements that aimed at the partition of India in the 1940s. India’s Muslims have “deviated from Islam [...] in having allowed themselves to become a problem community [...] in the eyes of their countrymen.” India’s Muslims must, therefore, once more become a “no-problem community” that represents “a return to their true religion.” Khan explains and verifies this view with regard to how he presents “relevant instances from the history of Islam.”⁹⁵ After the death of his powerful uncle Abū Ṭālib, the Prophet Muhammad sought the support of another Arab tribe. The Prophet is seen at this time to “make it very clear to them that he would not compel any of them to accept anything that was not to their liking.” The Prophet Muhammad “would remain among them” but would never cause any problems for anyone. Instead, he would be “entirely [a] no-problem person.” Furthermore, after the Prophet had begun to receive revelations, there were still 360 idols standing at Ka’ba, which were ignored by the Prophet

⁹² Khan, *Indian Muslims*, 129.

⁹³ Omar, *Rethinking Islam*, 217, (footnote 468).

⁹⁴ <http://www.cpsglobal.org/mwk>. Accessed on 2016-11-06.

⁹⁵ Khan, *Indian Muslims*, 150.

when the Muslims were in the minority in ancient Mecca. Khan holds that the important principle of this example and from the first command the Quran gave to the Muslims, namely *Iqrā* ('Read!'), is that authentic Islam places greater emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge than on the sanctified status of a mosque.⁹⁶ This means that Indian Muslims of today should focus on education instead of "seeking amends for the desecration of a place of worship." Besides, "modern Muslims" must stop using the word *kāfir* and idolaters in referring to non-Muslim communities. Muhammad never used these words or addressed "the early Meccans [...] as idolaters, or as *kafirs*." Instead, he used the word "countrymen" when he spoke to them.⁹⁷ Khan explains the word *kāfir* as etymologically signifying "the one who denies or covers" and should never be used as synonymous with "non-Muslims in general" or as a name for a community. Instead, Khan suggests that only certain individuals, never communities or peoples are called *kāfir* in the Quran. This designation was reserved only for those who rejected the Prophet Muhammad's call after a long period of thirteen years. This "Sunnah of the Prophet" is interpreted as meaning that Muslims should treat Hindus in India "as their countrymen and [...] like brothers." This is because "friction is to be avoided at all costs" and because "Islam loves peace, not confrontation."⁹⁸ Hence, the use of *kāfir* is offensive, which is forbidden in Islam.⁹⁹ Khan supports these notions by referring to the *Hudaybiyya* peace treaty. The agreement struck by the Prophet with his opponents brought all sorts of long-term "benefits," consequently, Muslims should follow their Prophet's example by "overlooking their own problems and working towards peaceful relations with their antagonists."¹⁰⁰

While Khan was aiming at reforming the practices and politics of "the problem community," i.e. Indian Muslims, the 1990s saw the further rise of anti-Muslim agitation among increasingly powerful Hindu nationalist circles.¹⁰¹ The background for this development can be traced to the mid-1980s. The Shah Bano case had infuriated many Hindu voters who interpreted the perpetuation of separate civil codes in the 1986 "Muslim Women: (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act" as pampering minorities or as the seeking of minority votes beyond ideological concerns. Therefore, in a move to improve the standing of the Congress Party with Hindu

⁹⁶ In the chronology of the revelations of the Quran to the Prophet Muhammad, the first five *āyāt* of Sura 96 are generally acknowledged as the first ones. Khan, *The Quran*, 1730. *Iqrā* means 'read!' i.e. the verb is in the imperative form

⁹⁷ Khan, *Indian Muslims*, 151.

⁹⁸ Khan, *Indian Muslims*, 152–153.

⁹⁹ Indeed, in 2009, after a VHP leader had raised the issue, the *Djāmi'at al-'Ulamā-yi Hind* proclaimed that using the word *kāfir* to refer to a Hindu should be avoided. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Hindus-cant-be-dubbed-kafir-says-Jamiat/articleshow/4179187.cms>?. Accessed on 2019-10-04.

¹⁰⁰ Khan, *Indian Muslims*, 153.

¹⁰¹ Metcalf and Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*, 290.

voters, the government under Rajiv Gandhi subsequently opened the Babri Masjid to Hindus. The Babri Masjid had been closed by court order since 1949 when a religious statue was installed at the premises, claimed as a miracle in certain Hindu nationalist circles. Skilfully using the alleged birthplace of Lord Ram (*Ram Janmbhoomi*) at Babri Masjid as a tool for political mobilisation, the BJP and its allied organisations in the *Sangh Parivar* succeeded in securing the Hindu opinion behind the party. The Muslims who refused to give away the by court order deserted mosque were presented as unreasonable troublemakers. Between 1989 and 1991, Hindu nationalists mobilised support for razing the Babri Masjid and the building of a temple dedicated to Lord Ram in its place.¹⁰² Most conspicuous were perhaps religio-political chariot processions throughout India by the future Home Minister (1998–2004) and then president of BJP, Lal Krishna Advani (b. 1927). Dressed as Lord Ram in a chariot-outfitted Toyota, the BJP staged a remarkably effective political mobilisation strategy. Travelling around the country, the party gathered bricks that would build the new temple.¹⁰³ When tens of thousands of *kar sevaks* (religious activists) destroyed the Babri Masjid in 1992 it sparked riots which killed at least two thousand, mainly Muslims, in distant Bombay. Apparently, the state police and government officials stood by as the activists razed the temple to the ground, heavily implicating the BJP-run state of Uttar Pradesh. Despite direct state acquiescence in the face of grievous violence, the political scientist Steven I. Wilkinson argues that the larger part of the blame should in fact, be placed on the Congress Party central government. First, they had accepted the BJP promises to protect the site at face value. Second, when the activists arrived, the government refused to deploy federal troops to protect the Babri Masjid. In Wilkinson's analysis, the central government's failure to act and protect a Muslim sacred site against the mobs was due to issues of *realpolitik*. The Congress Party leadership was simply unwilling to go against the majority opinion, which was for the position of the *Sangh Parivar* in regard to the Babri Masjid issue. Since the Congress Party led a fractured and weak coalition government, the party leadership was very cautious not to push away Hindu voters.¹⁰⁴

Another way to understand the anti-Muslim rhetoric is to see it as aimed at mobilising and uniting Hindus against Muslims as a group. While low-caste and other low-class citizens of India share class-based difficulties and concerns, such as poor levels of education and rates of government employment, the *Sangh Parivar* can be seen to effectively use the presence of

¹⁰² Steven I. Wilkinson, "Muslims in Post-Independence India," in *Asian Islam in the 21st Century*, ed. John L. Esposito, John O. Voll, and Osman Bakar (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 183.

¹⁰³ Metcalf and Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*, 276.

¹⁰⁴ Wilkinson, "Muslims in Post-Independence India," 183.

Muslims in two ways. First, Muslims are seen as a threat to national integrity by declaring them traitors and strangers to the nation, as well as violent-prone invaders. Second, anti-Muslim mobilisation can serve as a means to deflect an increasing political and economic competition, equally caused by economic liberalisation, and the rise of important new state-level political parties representing the interests of poor and low-caste Hindus. Although such economic and lively political competition affected everyone, the Hindu Right-wing attempt to mobilise the lower castes against Muslims put a halt to any large class-based coalition aimed at realising universal civic rights and progressive social policies toward the end of the century.¹⁰⁵

Hence, even though Muslims as a group are proportionally poorer than Hindus as a group, they share class-based interests with many low-caste and low-class Indians. Despite this, in what has been compared to the rise of European fascism in the 1930s, with its hateful rhetoric of antisemitism paired with street-level violence, Hindu-nationalists managed to designate Indian Muslims a scapegoat for the ills of society. Anti-Muslim political mobilisation effectively meant the strengthening and upholding of long-established socioeconomic differences based on class and caste. Whereas established elites stood as the winners of the 1990s economic liberalisation just as during the Green Revolution of the late 1960s, a new national identity was formulated by the Hindu Right that replaced earlier Nehruvian types of secular and socialist-reformist rhetoric. To be Indian increasingly meant to be both Hindu and economically liberal. Hence, political debate regarding distributive tendencies at the federal state level was effectively halted.

5.4 A Global Maulana?

In 2001 Khan founded the CPS, based in Delhi and the “culmination of [a] long, long process” and the creation of a supporting body in the service of his “mission.”¹⁰⁶ Khan says that this “mission” began when he was born.¹⁰⁷ During an interview, Khan stated that while his training in a madrasa enabled him to carry out his mission in fact, it was divine inspiration that pushed him to break new ground: “due to these inspirations I am able to say something new. It is my nature [...] that if I were to repeat the old ideal I would never start my mission.”¹⁰⁸

Khan describes this mission as not having changed over the years in terms of its aims and objectives. But after the founding of the CPS in 2001, his “target audience” changed, which

¹⁰⁵ Gould, *Religion and Conflict*, 274–285.

¹⁰⁶ Interview on 13th December 2013, 26. Correspondence with the author, 2015-02-27, 1.

¹⁰⁷ Interview on 13th December 2013, 26.

¹⁰⁸ Interview on 6th December 2014. 31.

earlier was “the Muslim community but is now general humanity.”¹⁰⁹ During an interview, I asked Khan who he wishes to influence: “Everyone! Every human being. I don’t differentiate between Muslim and non-Muslim. No, every human being is my audience.” Khan continued, “In the Quran, God is lord of mankind, not lord of the Muslims [only]. [because] the first verse of the Quran is: *Al-ḥamdu l-illāhi rabbi l-ālamīn*”¹¹⁰ Often, he points out the literal translation; “Lord of the Worlds,” as we will see.¹¹¹ Khan’s image of God is, therefore, one that goes beyond a Muslim or non-Muslim dichotomy. He instead thinks that the Quran addresses humanity as a whole: “If you read the Quran you will find that the Quran frequently uses [the term] *insān*: Oh, *insān*, oh, human being. The Quran uses human being without differentiation, [and] without discrimination.”¹¹² Khan’s description of God and who God addresses in the Quran explains one of his central notions. Because God is the God of humanity as a whole, it is wrong for Muslims to understand “Islam in political terms,” and thereby create a polity for Muslims only.¹¹³

Khan’s aim to reach out to a universal humanity through the CPS also coincided with the development of the technological means for global communications. Reaching a global audience is facilitated by the English CPS website with its extensive content.¹¹⁴ Through the website, articles, videos, audio clips, and magazines can be downloaded. It is also possible to download, read, or without charge, order a copy of Khan’s English Quran translation.¹¹⁵ A large selection of Khan’s works can also be accessed.¹¹⁶ Most of the website content is authored by or features Khan himself but other members of the CPS have also contributed to the website.¹¹⁷

Through the CPS website, a live “talk” or session with Khan is held in Urdu on Sunday mornings. I participated during one of these live sessions at the CPS headquarters in Delhi. While the recording was made it was also simultaneously broadcast over the internet on the

¹⁰⁹ Correspondence with the author, 2015-02-27, 1.

¹¹⁰ Interview on 13th December 2013, 18–19.

¹¹¹ In Khan’s Quran translation: “All praise is due to God, the lord of the Universe.” See, Khan, *The Quran*, 3.

¹¹² Interview on 13th December 2013, 19.

¹¹³ Interview on 6th December 2014, 4.

¹¹⁴ <http://www.cpsglobal.org/>. Accessed on 2016-11-10.

¹¹⁵ <http://cpsglobal.org/quran/free>. Accessed on 2016-11-11.

¹¹⁶ <http://www.cpsglobal.org/books/mwk>. Accessed on 2016-11-11.

¹¹⁷ <http://www.cpsglobal.org/content/dr-farida-khanam>. Accessed on 2016-11-11. The most prolific writers in terms of website display, are Khan’s own children, Dr Farida Khanam, an associate professor of Islamic Studies at the secular Jamia Millia Islamia University in Delhi, and Dr Saniyasnain Khan, publisher, author of children’s Islamic literature, and television host and producer. Through Goodword Books, Saniyasnain Khan publishes not only Wahiduddin Khan’s texts but a wide range of literature related to Islam. One important segment of Goodword Books is religious literature, games, and pedagogic material for children. Abridged and illustrated stories from the Quran and the life of the Prophet and Arabic teaching material for young learners are “bestsellers” through Goodword Books. Numerous works by Wahiduddin Khan also figure prominently as a separate category on the Goodword Books website; <http://www.goodwordbooks.com/>. Accessed on 2018-04-10.

CPS website. Khan was sitting in front of a lighted arrangement of shelves lined with books on Islamic topics. What struck me during the session was how the young and technologically savvy members of the CPS created the persona of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan. In this manner, he was broadcast as the learned and dignified elderly Muslim scholar; full of wisdom and worthy of emulation. The timeless image of the learned one surrounded by his books was juxtaposed with what could be seen only off the screen; the computers, the lighting, the cameras, and the other electronic equipment that made the broadcast possible.¹¹⁸ With a somewhat otherworldly look, conceivably renouncing shallow materialism and consumerism in his beard and robes, a man born in a small Indian village over 90 years ago was being aired over the internet, preaching patience, wisdom, peace, and Islam to a far younger and perhaps global audience, inevitably affected by materialism and consumerism. After delivering a lecture for about 40 minutes, the session was opened up to questions from viewers over the internet. Questions through e-mail, including my own, were read out loud by the CPS official who managed the computer. In this session, e-mail questions were sent by individuals from Pakistan, India, Nigeria, and the USA. After replying to these queries, Khan then addressed the issues raised by the participants in the room. Later viewings of these Sunday sessions showed that this was the general pattern of these gatherings. While this outreach was in a way a global effort, the use of Urdu actually suggests that Khan mainly attempts to address Muslims with a South Asian language background, also in diaspora settings.

Since 2013, Khan and the members of the CPS have also been making almost daily updates to the Facebook profile “Maulana Wahiduddin Khan.”¹¹⁹ The number of followers of his Facebook profile and those who watch and react to updates has increased rapidly. In November 2016 the profile had 185,000 followers, while in October 2019 it had more than 450,000 followers.¹²⁰ The Facebook updates typically contain a video, mainly featuring Khan or some other member of the CPS, relating matters pertaining to the meaning of Islam as the essence of “positivity” and non-violence and peace as the way to lead a good and long life. Typically, updates also include a shorter meme-like quote or photo, formulated as shorter words of wisdom, signed “Maulana Wahiduddin Khan.” In terms of form, these may be compared to similar memes circulating on the internet: for instance, “A man must prove his worth to have his due share of *God’s* gifts” or “A negative response arises out of hate – A positive response flows from love and compassion.” The general content of these meme-type updates may be said

¹¹⁸ Field diary, 15th December, 2013.

¹¹⁹ <https://www.facebook.com/maulanawkhan/?fref=ts>. Accessed on 2016-11-28.

¹²⁰ <https://www.facebook.com/maulanawkhan/>. Accessed on 2019-10-03.

to be education, living upright, avoiding hate, the virtues of patience, and the idea of human nature; when untainted by culture and society, as one of peace and amiability. Everything worth striving for can be achieved by patiently practicing Islam, non-violence, and peace. More often than not, quotations from the Quran are used to support these notions. Therefore, in analytical terms it may be said that the inherent logic of these messages focus on salvation. The tenets of Islam, non-violence, and peace are described as essential to attain paradise and to receive divine favour and blessings.

The memes and videos can be said to be of high quality in terms of media production, typography, and picture quality. Such social media acumen reveals the efforts of the young supporters of CPS; the “team” that manages the public promotion of Khan’s ideas and persona. During the time of writing this study, these young advocates for the CPS and Khan’s presentation of Islam have also been taking an increasingly prolific role in broadcasting and communicating messages through the Facebook profile. They can personally be seen talking in short videos, explaining the perspective of Khan’s ideas. Therefore, a new generation, some of whom are related to Khan by blood, is becoming increasingly responsible for spreading the message of Khan and the CPS. Thereby, a new kind of transmission of Islamic teachings is presented by a new generation that on the basis of the social media format forms a distinct claim to religious authority over the authentic Islamic teachings. It can be noted that the increase in followers of the Facebook profile and individuals watching and reacting to videos and memes, perhaps reflects the successful capability of this new generation to reach out to their social media peers.

In his Facebook videos and live talks, Khan sometimes confront contemporary issues, for instance a comment on the outcome of the American 2016 presidential election.¹²¹ Here, as elsewhere when Khan talks about the subject, Khan dismisses beforehand the alleged “Islamophobia” of the recently elected President Donald Trump. Instead, it is the actions of Muslims themselves that are seen as having created prejudices against them. Islam has been wrongly presented to the world, to both Muslims and non-Muslims. If Trump and other Americans were to grasp the authentic and timeless message of Islam, non-violence, and peace, no one could fear and hate Islam. And if Muslims practiced Islam, non-violence, and peace, Muslims would be highly valued in American society. While Khan uses English in this particular video post, Urdu is the preferred language when Khan appears in short videos published on Facebook. The combination of English and Urdu indicates that the intended main

¹²¹ <https://www.facebook.com/maulanawkhan/?fref=ts>. Accessed on 2016-11-11.

audience is South Asian Muslims. The use of English may suggest that attempts are made to move beyond this audience by reaching out to other Indians and global viewers. However, as noted in Chapter 1, the use of English may instead be analysed as signifying a claim to high social status and the education level of the intended Indian audience.

Significant in this regard is Khan's presence in another type of social media. Except Facebook, Khan is present as a "Master," signifying a religious or spiritual leader on the website Speakingtree.in. This social media platform is a "spiritual networking website" created by the *Times of India* and is dedicated to topics and writings related to religion, spirituality, health, religion, sexuality, relationships, education, and work.¹²² The intended main audience is English- or Hindi-speaking Indians with an interest in religion and spirituality.¹²³ The website has no particular religious affiliation but a multitude of texts, leaders, creeds, values, and sects, as well as topics and perspectives are represented. Just like with any other social media or video platform (such as YouTube.com) the publishers of the material compete on popularity, likes, views, and clicks.¹²⁴ The contents and form of the material published on this website may be compared to a multitude of other similar texts, updates and videos available through various other social media platforms. Popular topics include inspiration, motivation, health, diet, exercise, relationships, meaning, myth, religion, and how to become rich. Therefore, in terms of both the short video and blogpost formats, as well as actual contents, Khan's presence on Speakingtree.in is, perhaps, one example of what Olivier Roy calls the "formatting" characteristics caused by the processes of globalisation, especially how religion is shaped by a religious market. The multitude of religious perspectives on Speakingtree.in may also be seen as testimony to the double nature of pluralism, both as a social value and an empirical fact. Khan participates in a highly competitive religious market place marked by a multitude of perspectives and practitioners.¹²⁵ I contend that the presence of a globalised and plural ideological and religious market has created the need for Khan to develop themes, topics, and styles in both his writings, as well as web and social media platform broadcasts, which aim to prove that Khan's ideas on Islam, non-violence, and peace are relevant beyond a Muslim affiliation and should be considered by everyone.

Further aspects of this process are revealed by shifting focus to Khan's writings since the founding of the CPS in 2001. His published recent works display a general outward-looking

¹²² <http://www.speakingtree.in/maulana-wahiduddin-khan>. Accessed on 2017-03-26.

¹²³ <http://www.speakingtree.in/>. Accessed on 2017-03-26.

¹²⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbyw1IPxhJUFL0fNMxCcChA>. Accessed on 2019-02-26.

¹²⁵ To be more viable, the market metaphor should be used as differentiated as possible since Khan actually participates in several different ideological and religious market places.

tendency. As Khan himself makes clear, he strives to move beyond an audience of Indian Muslims. The translations of Khan's works into English and other languages may be interpreted as one important aspect of this development.¹²⁶ But also in terms of the content in several works, Khan reduces the level of necessary previous knowledge or commitment to Islam needed to be able to grasp his message. In his written works, *The Ideology of Peace* (2003) and *The Age of Peace* (2015), the topics of Islam, non-violence, and peace are presented as universal and rationally ascertained values rather than religious commands demanded by an all-powerful deity.¹²⁷ Similarly, in *Leading a Spiritual Life* (2016) Khan expresses his ideas of contemporary life without direct reference to the collections of hadith or the Quran.¹²⁸ For instance, Khan explains how to be "positive in every situation."¹²⁹ Besides, while Khan makes many references to an unspecified God, the Prophet Muhammad is only briefly mentioned but then as a rationally ascertained and universal role-model for young professionals. When he addresses conditions in the contemporary workplace, Khan speaks about patience as a form of worship.¹³⁰ These examples show that the text seeks to convince the reader through rational and historical examples of the veracity, timelessness, and universality of positive thinking, patience, and making the most out of every situation. The ideas are applied to modern conditions of living; in marriage, education, public life, and the workplace.¹³¹ Perhaps, in *Leading a Spiritual Life*, Khan seeks to establish himself as a relevant Muslim religious leader for young and educated middle class Muslim Indians. The intended audience is not primarily interested in reading commentaries or explanations of the Quran and hadith but is interested in the expression of religion as a set of values. In this work, Khan's frameworks of meaning only vaguely and ambiguously include Islam when he offers advice on how to better cope with contemporary life and the conditions set by capitalism and globalisation.¹³² This development highlights Roy's perspective on religion that foremost, young seekers want an enjoyable experience instead of academically challenging and discursive form of religious teachings.

The above have focussed on some important changes brought about by the new digital means of broadcasting Khan's ideas since the founding of the CPS in 2001. These examples point to

¹²⁶ Non-Muslim Indians may be the intended main audience and English is used to increase the attractiveness of this message. See Chapter 1 for a discussion of how language and language use is perceived in this study.

¹²⁷ Khan, *The Ideology of Peace*, 37. Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *The Age of Peace* (Noida: Goodword Books, 2015), 20.

¹²⁸ However, lessons of adjustment, hard work, and giving, learned from ants, bees and cows are topics related to the Qur'anic texts. Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Leading a Spiritual Life* (Noida: Goodword Books, 2016), 108, 125, 137.

¹²⁹ Khan, *Leading a Spiritual Life*, 7.

¹³⁰ Khan, *Leading a Spiritual Life*, 145.

¹³¹ Khan, *Leading a Spiritual Life*, 184.

¹³² Khan, *Leading a Spiritual Life*, 216, 298.

the formatting effects of a religious market on Khan's message and perhaps a context of globalisation and digital communications expressed through Khan's ideological development during the late 2000s. Chapter 6 will explore in detail the contents of Khan's ideology, with a focus on his texts that have been written since around the turn of the millennium.

In concluding this chapter, I will note important contextual political and social issues, and several scholarly assessments of recent structural developments in India. This contextual background forms part of the analytical discussions of Khan's texts in Chapters 8 and 9. First, underlying several developments in religious activities and digital outreach by the CPS, is the radical expansion of the Indian IT economy that had already started in the 1990s. With centres in cities such as Bangalore and Hyderabad, the IT industry of India is one of the most important sections of global high-tech businesses in research, outsourcing, software, and hardware alike.¹³³ Private capital is increasingly invested into the expanding Indian economy and financial enterprises, making technology developments and start-up companies the engine of significant economic growth.¹³⁴ To an extent, the boom in the Indian IT sectors has fuelled the development of a "double economy," in which a growing and affluent Indian middle class share the consumer-driven economic and social patterns of its counterparts in other countries. Meanwhile, large segments of the Indian population remain in poverty. Illiteracy, especially among females is still high in many states. In addition, national sample survey data shows that Muslims are more likely to be poor than Hindus. More than half of India's Muslims live below the poverty line, in comparison to a third of the overall population.¹³⁵

Second, ideological notions regarding the disputed place of Muslims in India have been increasingly shaped by international developments and interactions since 2001. However, the domestic roots of this ideological development had already begun with the Congress Party line during the 1990s anti-Muslim pogroms. For a long time the defender of the Muslim minority, and the probable choice for Muslim voters, the Congress Party tried to avoid further anti-Muslim political mobilisation and acts of violence. But the party also sought to avoid being marked as "pro-Muslim" with regard to controversial issues, for instance a temple dedicated to Lord Ram at Ayodhya, or the debate on a common civil code. This change of the political national landscape and the 1990s anti-Muslim political mobilisation worked well as a political strategy for the BJP. The 1999 coalition government led by the BJP has been described as a period of politically required moderation of BJP politics and anti-minority rhetoric. Despite

¹³³ Jaffrelot, *Religion, Caste and Politics*, 773. Metcalf and Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India*, 297.

¹³⁴ <https://www.ibef.org/economy/indian-economy-overview>. Accessed on 2019-02-25.

¹³⁵ Hasan, "Legacy of a Divided Nation," 281.

such analyses, the BJP government effectively “Hinduised” state administration and education in state-run schools and institutions.¹³⁶ For example, new school textbooks emphasised the Hindu origins of the nation and the constant presence of dangerous and foreign Muslim invaders. Police officers were allowed to display religious images in their cars and offices. In Gujarat, a long-standing BJP-stronghold, a ban was lifted on state officials joining Hindu nationalist organisations, which was in place since the assassination of Mohandas Gandhi in 1948. Furthermore, the BJP-led Gujarati government under Narendra Modi set the stage for anti-Muslim pogroms in the wake of the 2002 Godhra train station fire incident.¹³⁷ With BJP in the majority, the parliament of Karnataka passed a bill in 2010 to criminalise the slaughter of cows, as well as the consumption, sale, and promotion, of beef.¹³⁸

The state politics of Hindutva, discussions of a common civil code, and anti-Muslim pogroms, also coincided with an emerging Indian Muslim militancy. A number of important examples can be noted. In Bombay 1993, a series of bomb blasts aimed at the financial sectors and the Stock Exchange were perpetrated by a Muslim crime syndicate.¹³⁹ Another Muslim militant group, the Students Islamic Movement of India (SIMI) was banned, its leaders gone into hiding, after new bomb blasts again hit the city in 2002. The Gujarat Revenge Group was formed to avenge the violence in Gujarat in 2002. It has been established that Muslim militants in Delhi and Bombay were linked to their counterparts operating in Jammu and Kashmir, groups such as “Lashkar e-Toiba” and “Jaish e-Mohammad.” Such Indian Muslim militants have carried out bombings in Bombay and Delhi at important, crowded, and symbolic places, for instance, at the historical Lāl Qila (the Red Fort) and the 2001 Indian Parliament attack, causing devastation, fear, and the deaths of at least a hundred people. Home-grown Indian Muslim militancy has reinforced notions of Muslims as violent and through their links to Pakistan, as posing a threat to the nation at large. As mentioned, such domestic political developments were increasingly shaped in line with international developments after the September 11 terrorist attacks on United States soil.¹⁴⁰ In the wake of both domestic violence and a growing international “war on terror,” the coalition federal government led by the BJP pushed through the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) in 2002. The Act allowed the Gujarati Police to arrest and detain over a hundred people on conspiracy charges, without proof and with US impunity,

¹³⁶ Wilkinson, “Muslims in Post-Independence India,” 184–191.

¹³⁷ Gould, *Religion and Conflict*, 270.

¹³⁸ Toft, Philpott and Shah, *God’s Century*, 138.

¹³⁹ Bombay was only renamed Mumbai in late 1995 (at the insistence of the Shiv Sena Party). Therefore, to speak of Mumbai before this date is an anachronism.

¹⁴⁰ Wilkinson, “Muslims in Post-Independence India,” 185.

after the 2002 railway fire.¹⁴¹ Longstanding international criticism of the treatment of minorities by the BJP government declined as India became an important ally in the so-called war on terror. Indeed, the BJP government claimed that “the West” had finally recognised the challenge posed by Islamic fundamentalists, a threat they had been fighting for a long time.

William Gould and Paul R. Brass, point out from different perspectives, that much of the anti-Muslim violence and “riots” are anything but spontaneous. Instead, they are routine procedures caused by politicians and community leaders for local and quotidian economic purposes and for electoral purposes, only rhetorically linking acts of violence to national and international struggles. Steven I. Wilkinson reminds us of the importance of abounding stereotypes of Muslims in Indian society. He argues that it is widespread and popular, unfavourable opinion of Muslims that forms the base for any successful anti-Muslim political mobilisation.¹⁴² Wilkinson locates the origins of anti-Muslim opinion in the partition era and notes that the prevalence of such ideas increased in the decades before and after 2000; following increased hostility with Pakistan, international coverage of Islamic terrorism, and domestic disagreements over the place of Muslim personal law and the issue of a temple at Ayodhya. The 1993 statistics of such popular negative views show, for instance, that 53% of Hindus believe that all Muslims regard non-Muslims as enemies and 28% believe that Hindu and Muslim cultures are so incompatible that they cannot live side by side.¹⁴³ Wilkinson concludes that such negative perceptions have allowed the BJP government to designate Muslims as a “problem community” that must defer to Hindu authority in order to be accepted as a part of the Indian mainstream. This study will recognise this problem formulation and Khan’s response, in the following chapters that will investigate and analyse Khan’s texts.

¹⁴¹ Gould, *Religion and Conflict*, 269.

¹⁴² Gould, *Religion and Conflict*. Brass, *The Production*. Wilkinson, “Muslims in Post-Independence India,” 185.

¹⁴³ The 1993 polls may be exaggerated due to their proximity to the 1992 Babri Masjid destruction in Ayodhya. See Wilkinson, “Muslims in Post-Independence India,” 186.

Islam, Non-Violence, and Peace: Wahiduddin Khan's Thought and Argument

6.1 Introduction

The aim of this empirically oriented chapter is to describe Khan's ideas, both in terms of foundational ideas and more particular topics. Therefore, the descriptions in the following pages are primarily a close view of the content of Khan's texts, with plenty of citations and references. The highlighted ideas and topics have been chosen with regard to the aims of this study and the theoretical framework and contextual background.

6.1.1 *The Creation Plan of God*

A fundamental notion in all of Khan's thinking on the place of violence in Islam is the idea that Islam has one particular goal that overrides any other concern. In Khan's words during an interview in Delhi in 2013: "The main goal [...] or main purpose of Islam is to make people aware of the creation plan of God."¹ Khan continued that the goal of Islam is always hindered when decent human society and normal everyday life is destroyed by those who would use violence as a means to fulfil their ends: "Violence makes things abnormal. Violence destroys relationships between people."² Khan argued that only to protect the normalcy of life when attacked by outside forces may an established state take military defensive measures. We will return to this point later in this chapter.

According to Khan, speaking about and telling others about the creation plan of God is a social process. As quoted in Chapter 1, that is one fundamental reason why: "Violence has no place in Islam. When you try to change people's minds, when you try to change people's ways of thinking, when you try to change people's hearts then violence becomes irrelevant."³ Because human freedom, even to deny Islam, is part of the fabric of the creation plan, the most crucial purpose of Islam is something that takes place between persons.⁴ This social process is doubly interrupted by violence. First, the necessary condition for *da'wa*, or peacefully

¹ Interview on 13th December 2013, 2.

² Interview on 13th December 2013, 2.

³ Interview on 13th December 2013, 2.

⁴ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *The Creation Plan of God* (New Delhi: Goodword Books, [1984] 2013), 7.

propagating the word of God, is a non-threatening, i.e. trustful, atmosphere. Second, as the quotation above makes clear, the intent of *da'wa* is to transform awareness, emotions, and thoughts, which violence can never do. Arguing in this general manner, and specifically using Sura 4:128, which states that “reconciliation is best,”⁵ Khan concludes: “Peace is the greatest good. Why? Because when there is peace there are opportunities. When there is peace...Only in a peaceful atmosphere can you spread the message of Islam.”⁶

Because spreading awareness of God’s “creation plan” is so central to Khan’s ideology, this argument can be summed up in three short points: First, the goal of Islam is to make people aware of God’s creation plan. Second, the social, economic and psychological conditions necessary for spreading Islam and its message are destroyed by warfare and violence. Thus, third, violence runs counter to the most fundamental purposes of the Creator.

Hence, the main part in the creation plan of God is “to spread the message of Islam.” If people are to actually change their minds, peaceful circumstances is a necessary condition. This is why “peace is the greatest concern of Islam” and why “violence has no place in Islam.”⁷ The fulfilment of the creation plan of God also begins with the necessary peaceful conditions in which “normal” relations provide the trust and the time necessary to deliver the message of a divine creation plan and its details.

The place of violence in relation to the specific ends of Islam as a whole should be seen as the development of a wide-ranging rational form of reasoning concerning what Islam is all about, and an understanding of what Islam aims to achieve in the world. This categorisation is supported by Khan’s generally positive attitude to rational reasoning in Islamic legal thinking, i.e. its position in *idjtiḥād*. When considering Khan as a rationally oriented Muslim writer, it is worth pointing out how his renown as an Islamic scholar began with his arguments on the positive relation between Islam and rational science.⁸ Khan considers the truth claims of Islam to be strengthened by advancements in science and vice versa and Islam is believed to support a rational-empirical outlook.⁹

Overall, Khan has developed a rational argument for why violence goes against what he perceives to be the foundational intentions of Islam and the Creator. Khan strengthens this general reasoning by making more specific arguments against violence by referring to the

⁵ Khan, *The Quran*, 250.

⁶ Interview on 13th December 2013, 2.

⁷ Interview on 13th December 2013, 2.

⁸ Khan, *God Arises*.

⁹ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 259.

Quran and the Sunna.¹⁰ In Khan's own words, this line of reasoning is described by him as "discovering Islam from its original sources" and also a "scientific approach" that involve how he perceives Islam "as presented by the Prophet Muhammad" without reference or allusion to "later Muslim generations – both in theory and practice."¹¹ Such references to the Quran and the Sunna and what they involve in his ideology are the empirical focus of the remaining sections.

6.2 "Islam Believes in Peace for the Sake of Peace"

6.2.1 "God Does not Love Violence" (fasād)

Khan argues that Sura 2:205, which he translates as "God does not love corruption [...],"¹² is a divine statement regarding violence: "God does not love *fasad*, violence."¹³ Khan continues by giving a definition of *fasād* as "that action which results in disruption of the social system, causing huge losses in terms of lives and property."¹⁴ In Khan's understanding of *fasād* in Sura 2:205, the concept means the disruption of social harmony, which leads to violence. This can be seen in Khan's commentary of the verse. The person who spreads *fasād* is described as someone who can easily gain the ear of an enthusiastic audience. Some speak "of peace and reconciliation [but] act in a manner that leads to strife and conflict."¹⁵ In *Islam and World Peace*, Khan specifies that *fasād* relates to those who are only falsely seen as improvers and reformers because the end result of their activities is that "social peace" is destroyed leading to "violence and confrontation."¹⁶ Hence, any Muslim orator or debater associated with vaguely defined, ideological and religious positions is connected to *fasād* because they upset the social harmony. The disruption of social harmony is *fasād* because it destroys the economic and social order which, just like violence, leads to death and poverty.¹⁷

¹⁰ On Islam and jurisprudence, see for instance, Andrew Rippin, *Muslims: Their Religious Beliefs and Practices: Third edition* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), 93–95. Jan Hjärpe, *Sharia: Gudomlig lag i en värld i förändring* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 2005), 47–49. Joseph Schacht, "Fikḥ," in *Encyclopaedia of Islam: New Edition*, Volume II, ed. B. Lewis, CH. Pellat and J. Schacht (Leiden: Brill, 1965), 886–891.

¹¹ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 7.

¹² Khan, *The Quran*, 81.

¹³ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 99.

¹⁴ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 99–100.

¹⁵ Khan, *The Quran*, 81.

¹⁶ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Islam and World Peace* (Noida: Goodword Books, 2015), 39.

¹⁷ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 99.

Hence, Khan uses the acknowledged understanding of *fasād*, which is often interpreted as corruption or ruin, and broadens its meaning by applying it to his contextual situation.¹⁸ He holds that any action that leads to the disruption of social peace, is to be categorised as *fasād*, no matter what the reformers, activists, militants, or campaigners say they are doing. His use of *fasād* should be understood as an intervention into a debate situation of Indian Muslim politics, and that the true meaning of Islam may be used in a corrupt way in the debate. Therefore, with its focus on social peace, *fasād* may be understood as addressing how Islam is negatively perceived by Indian non-Muslims. For instance, according to Khan, “Islamic terrorism” is a contradiction in terms. The person who aims to destroy his enemies through violence and calls it “Islam” and “jihad” uses these concepts in the wrong way.¹⁹ For Khan, such actions is “*fasad* or corruption” because authentic Islam means only non-violence and peace, and the maintenance of social harmony.²⁰

6.2.2 Gentleness and Non-Violence

During an interview, Khan quoted a hadith: “God grants to non-violence what He does not grant to violence.” He continued by saying that the hadith means that: “the Prophetic mission can only be achieved in peaceful circumstances.” In fact, the Prophetic mission is “to spread the divine message to make people aware of the creation plan of God.”²¹

In *Islam and Peace* (1999), Khan discusses that same hadith. The Arabic original word is here translated as ‘gentleness’: “God grants to *rifq* (gentleness) what he does not grant to *unf* (violence).” Khan argues that these opposite Arabic terms in the hadith “convey exactly what is meant by violence and non-violence in present times.”²²

¹⁸ Muhammad Asad in his influential Quran translation, interprets *fasād* in Sura 2:205 as “corruption [...] and God does not love corruption.” In his commentary on the verse, agricultural work, or any other human labour, as well as wives and the raising of families are mentioned. However, the result of *fasād* is “widespread moral decay and consequently, moral disintegration.” *The Message of the Qur’an* (Selangor: Islamic Book Trust, 2011), 54. The Orientalist K. V. Zetterstéen in his concisely beautiful Swedish translation uses ‘ofärd’; i.e. dangerous destruction or ruin; *Koranen* (Stockholm: Wahlström & Widstrand, [1917] 2003), 41. L. Gardet discusses the concept *fasād* as belonging to the Quranic vocabulary and its various proposed meanings; “a state that is radically bad, in contrast to good. It can be rendered as (moral) ‘corruption’, occasionally as ‘état de violence’ (tr. D. Masson) or as ‘scandale’ (tr. R. Blachère).” L. Gardet, “Kawn wa-Fasād,” in *Encyclopaedia of Islam: New Edition*, ed. E. Van Donzel, B. Lewis and CH. Pellat (Leiden: Brill, 1978). Volume IV, 795. Hence, the proposed meaning of *fasād* by Khan as a sort of scandalous moral corruption or as violent conditions should not be seen as a theological departure.

¹⁹ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *The True Jihad: The Concepts of Peace, Tolerance and Non-Violence in Islam* (New Delhi: Goodword Books, [2002], 2012), 27.

²⁰ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *The Prophet of Peace: Teachings of the Prophet Muhammad* (New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 2009), 87.

²¹ Interview on 13th December 2013. 6.

²² Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Islam and Peace* (New Delhi: Goodword books, [1999] 2007), 170.

The way Khan understands the hadith is that it proves the pre-eminence of non-violent methods that have the blessing of God over violent approaches. He uses the hadith to underscore the superiority of proselytisation, as a social process based in gentle persuasion. This argument may be analysed as an intervention into a debate on whether Islam is to be realised as a polity, and how Islam and Muslims are perceived, described in Chapter 2.

6.2.3 *Patience, Non-Violence and Peace*

Patience, *ṣabr*, is related by Khan as “another name for peaceful activism, while impatience is another name for violent activism. In essence, patience is exactly what is called non-violence in modern times.”²³ Khan describes *ṣabr* as any non-violent action especially in the face of or in response to violence, because a violent action can never be considered patient. He also points out the importance of patience in the Quran. His translation of Sura 39:10, states that “those who persevere patiently will be requited without measure.”²⁴ This means for Khan that *ṣabr* is the ultimate Islamic virtue because the patient one is promised by God to receive the greatest reward.

Khan’s usage of *ṣabr*, or patience, illustrates two central characteristics of his writings. First, it demonstrates his method of applying Islam and using concepts from the Quran and the Sunna directly and without reference to other Muslim writers. Furthermore, as is obvious in this example, Khan declares their conceptual meaning in modern or contemporary times. Second, despite the fact that Khan hardly ever mentions any names, or positions of those he is in opposition to, the understanding that non-violence is or should be, the definite Muslim virtue because of its high merit, can be analysed as an intervention into a current debate on the meaning of Islam. In much Quranic exegesis, patience, or *ṣabr*, is a virtue in jihad as warfare.²⁵ Therefore, one debated issue is the possibility, or certainty, of a divine reward for those who give their lives in jihad as warfare.²⁶ Hence, the way Khan perceives patience as non-violence and the only sure way to receive divine favour in an afterlife, should be seen in relation to presentations of Islam that grant the killed martyr the highest reward. It can therefore be said that Khan generally confronts debated issues in a quite tempered or hinted at manner. For

²³ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *The Prophet Muhammad: A Simple Guide to His Life* (New Delhi: Goodword books, 2002), 192.

²⁴ Khan, *The Quran*, 1372.

²⁵ For instance Sura 47:31. See Asad, *The Message of the Qur’an*, 935.

²⁶ For instance, the Palestinian Abdullah Azzam (d. 1989), whom Gilles Kepel and Jean-Pierre Milelli calls the “preeminent theoretician of global jihad,” praises martyrdom for the sake of Islam and the special favours granted to the martyr by God. Gilles Kepel and Jean-Pierre Milelli, eds., *Al Qaeda in Its Own Words* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2008), 97, 119.

instance, this can be seen in how he perceives the topically-related Sura 4:95, in which indeed, the *mudjāhid* is promised a “reward” which is “far greater.” However, according to Khan the reward comes only through exertion in proselytisation. By declaring patient and peaceful activism as warranting the greatest divine merit, Khan actually opposes Muslim writers who present dying in jihad as an unfailing road to paradise.²⁷ Based on these remarks, the reader should take note of Khan’s application of Islamic concepts or language in “the modern times,” in the following and how the applications actually addresses the crucial issues implicit in an ongoing debate on the meaning of Islam.

6.2.4 Peace in the Quran

As a frequent theme in the Quran, Khan thinks that “peace,” his translation of the Arabic word *salām*, is essential and it has wide repercussions in his thought. Hence, “The Source of Peace” is a name of God in Sura 59:23.²⁸ For Khan, this suggests how God “abhors” violence while at the same time God “loves non-violence.”²⁹ Khan says that Sura 5:16, “God guides to the ways of peace all who seek his good pleasure,”³⁰ signifies that those who sincerely wish to please God will be guided to the “paths of peace,” which means that they will abstain from violence.³¹ Sura 89:27 is said to instruct the believer to become a “soul at peace.”³² For Khan, this means that it is man’s responsibility to be: “Unfailingly just in his treatment of other human beings [...]. His character should reflect modesty [...]. The Quran’s desire for man is to make him a complex-free soul or a soul at peace.” To become a soul at peace means to abstain from violence. This is done through introspection, a process that shapes the character to the will of God, which is non-violence and peace: “Nowhere does it [the Quran] enjoin the believer to engage in violence, leading to the destruction of fellow human beings.”³³

Khan presents the Quranic verses on paradise as establishing a firm link between paradise and peace.³⁴ He sees the description of paradise in Sura 10:25, “The home of peace,” as unfolding the atmosphere of life in paradise.³⁵ A connection between the peaceful soul and

²⁷ Khan’s commentary to Sura 4:95 highlights those who “sacrifice” themselves to “convey its message [of Islam] to other people.” Khan, *The Quran*, 236.

²⁸ Khan, *The Quran*, 1617.

²⁹ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 100.

³⁰ Khan, *The Quran*, 282.

³¹ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 100. Note the slightly different translation in the written text:

³² Khan, *The Quran*, 1721.

³³ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 16.

³⁴ Khan, *Islam and Peace*, 170.

³⁵ Khan, *The Quran*, 587.

admission to paradise is Sura 89:28–30, which Khan translates as: “O, soul at peace, return to your Lord [...] enter my paradise.”³⁶ When I asked Khan how he understands the significance of paradise described as “the home of peace,” he first recited Sura 10:25 in Arabic and then explained that:

Here, *Dār al-Salām* means paradise. [...] That is, haven of peace. So, why does the Quran calls paradise a *Dār al-Salām*? Because, only those people who are peaceful in nature can attain that level of purification which is necessary for people [to reside in] paradise. And the basic condition is *taskiyya*. *Taskiyya* means purification of the soul. But purification of the soul is possible only for those people who are living in peace. Peace means free of hate, free of revenge, and free of negative thinking.³⁷

Hence, for Khan, only those who are peaceful may gain entrance to the paradise.³⁸ He may, therefore, be said to expand on central Muslim notions that see human life as a sort of testing ground.³⁹ The trial includes abstaining from violence and only those with “compassion and love for God’s servants” will enter Paradise.⁴⁰

6.2.5 Protecting Lives

Khan presents Sura 5:32 as meaning that an individual killing rips society apart:

That was why We laid it down for the Children of Israel that whoever killed a human being – except as a punishment for murder or for spreading corruption in the land – shall be regarded as having killed all mankind, and that whoever saved a human life shall be regarded as having saved all mankind.⁴¹

His commentary points out that the killing of an individual destroys something that is most precious. All of a sudden, everyone feels threatened and endangered. For Khan, the verse means that a peaceful society must be upheld at all times because “the tradition of respect for each other’s life” requires a very long time to establish and bring to fruition. Since the convention of

³⁶ Khan, *The Quran*, 1721.

³⁷ Interview on 9th December 2014, 24.

³⁸ See more about Khan’s use of purification and jihad below.

³⁹ Göran Larsson, *Att läsa Koranen: en introduktion* (Stockholm: Verbum, 2006), 97. Also, see the commentary in Asad, *The Message of the Qur’an*, 935.

⁴⁰ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 16.

⁴¹ Khan, *The Quran*, 289.

peace and safety in society can disappear in an instant at any time, protecting a single life actually means upholding everyone's right to live.⁴² This argument can be understood as opposing violence in the name of Islam and hence in its prescriptive logic, it simultaneously expresses the need for social harmony as the social or attitudinal dimensions of the basic liberal-democratic ideal of the rule of law, ascertaining the protection of life.

6.2.6 *Returning Good for Evil*

Khan argues that the impulse to retaliate must be suppressed, feelings of a need for vengeance are actually a "satanic inducement." To support this conclusion, Khan uses Sura 41:34: "Good and evil deeds are not equal. Repel evil with what is better; then you will see that one who was once your enemy has become your dearest friend."⁴³ Khan comments that the verse means that "unilateral good behaviour" is "the greatest weapon," and it is the "duty of every believer" to seek divine protection from thoughts of revenge. Instead, one-sided good behaviour is "immensely persuasive" and a "God-given asset." Treating people well means to spend one's life in "remembrance of God," which is a form of worship. Kindness, therefore, represents an authentic focus on God. In fact, being a true Muslim involves being unilaterally kind and gentle in any situation, as called for by the authentic "preacher of God."⁴⁴

Khan connects unilateral kindness to the Quranic concepts of *nafs ammāra* in Sura 12:53 and *nafs lawwāma* in Sura 75:26. Khan presents these concepts as the ego and the conscience, respectively.⁴⁵ Hence, *nafs ammāra* and *nafs lawwāma* are cognitive "faculties" that are "mutually antipathetic." Violent actions "awaken the ego" while non-violent actions "awaken the conscience." For Khan, the concepts describe why people become affected and persuaded by one-sided good behaviour, which ultimately makes kindness so persuasive. First, kindness and "non-violent activism awakens the conscience" in that person. Second, a conscious and non-violent person awakens "in people [their ability for] introspection and self-appraisal." When people begin to reflect upon themselves, "the miraculous outcome" is that which Khan thinks Sura 41:34 describes: "He who is your enemy will become your dearest friend." Instead, violent actions "awaken the ego which necessarily results in a breakdown of social

⁴² Khan, *The Quran*, 289.

⁴³ Khan, *The Quran*, 1428.

⁴⁴ Khan, *The Quran*, 1428.

⁴⁵ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 103.

equilibrium.”⁴⁶ Clearly, kindness and non-violence have a transformative power of turning enemies into friends. Non-violence and peace are therefore superior to violent actions.

6.3 Islam, Peace, and Pragmatism

Khan describes a gradual process of the development of peace, beginning with “an end to war and violence” and leading up to “a state of peace” signified by “peace in the real sense.” Peace in the real sense enables people to engage in “positive activities,” meaning that the members of a society can shape their lives and their “social environment.” He therefore disapproves of the notions of a “negative” peace.⁴⁷ For Khan, so-called negative peace is the wrong idea that the cessation of direct violence is not enough to end the violence or war because peace should also come with justice.⁴⁸ Instead, he argues that abstaining from violence even when justice and rights are absent is justified in both Islam and in general rational terms. Khan proposes that non-violence and peace is always the way forward. Peace is the fundamental condition for constructive work towards “any task,” including the realisation of justice and the advancement of rights. In fact, “peace relates to the whole spectrum of human life. In itself it is a complete ideology.”⁴⁹ This claim may be perceived as formulated in relation to discussions in international law on the nature of peace treaties, spoiler acts of terror, and structural violence. But it can also be understood as a rational argument comparable to the ideas of Johan Galtung on conflict de-escalation through the unilateral change of behaviour by an actor, potentially transforming the dynamics of the conflict.⁵⁰ However, Khan also formulates that unilateral peaceful behaviour is demanded by Islam as he elaborated during an interview:

⁴⁶ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 103.

⁴⁷ Khan, *The Ideology of Peace*, 19.

⁴⁸ See Chapter 7 for more details how Khan applies this argument to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict.

⁴⁹ Khan, *The Ideology of Peace*, 20.

⁵⁰ Peter Wallensteen, *Understanding Conflict Resolution* (London: Sage Publications, 2012), 34–36.

There are problems in Palestine. There is violence. The Arabs say we are ready to give you peace but prior to that, you give us justice. So they believe in what they say: ‘*salām al ‘adl*,’ peace with justice. According to my study, this is wrong. It is not Islamic. Islam believes in peace for the sake of peace. Peace for the sake of justice is not an Islamic concept. Peace for the sake of justice, or peace for the sake of human rights, are not Islamic concepts. The Islamic concept is peace for the sake of peace. Why? Islam takes peace as the method; peace is the method, not the goal. Peace opens up the door to all kind of opportunities. This is the importance of peace. Where there is peace, there are opportunities. If there is no peace, there are no opportunities. So according to Islam, justice and human rights are not linked to peace. First of all, you have to establish peace; then you can attain other things by your struggle, your approach. You cannot link other things to peace.⁵¹

Khan underlines this argument by referring to the *Hudaybiyya* peace treaty. This is an occasion when, according to Khan, the Prophet Muhammad sets the example of making peace with his enemies without conditions or demands for justice:

There was a conflict between the Prophet and the opponents at *Hudaybiyya*; a very well-known event in Islamic history. At the time of the Prophet he wanted to establish peace but they presented some conditions. All those conditions were against the Prophet’s scheme. In the draft, there was mention that Muhammad is the Prophet of God. And they [the Meccan opponents] objected and said that: We don’t accept you as a Prophet. So you have to delete this word, you have to write: *Muḥammad ibn ‘Abd Allāh*, rather than *Muḥammad” rasūlu ‘llāh*. So the Prophet agreed [to this condition]. But this was only for the sole purpose to establish peace in Arabia. This example is very clear that Islam believes in peace for the sake of peace. Not in peace for the sake of justice. Because they denied him justice and even then he accepted peace.⁵²

Khan presents the *Hudaybiyya* peace treaty and its establishment of the Islamic principle of “peace for the sake of peace” as leading up to the future success of Islam. The *Hudaybiyya* peace treaty is therefore very important for Khan’s position on Islam, non-violence, and peace. Because he makes numerous references to its significance, the peace treaty will be discussed separately below. But first the central concept of “status quo-ism” in Khan’s texts is addressed.

⁵¹ Interview on 13th December 2013, 4–5.

⁵² Interview on 13th December 2013, 5.

6.3.1 Status Quo-Ism and Social Pragmatism

On the basis of the words in Sura 67:2 “He created death and life so that He might test you, and find out which of you is best in conduct,” Khan argues that God-given human freedom will always prevent the building of a perfect society.⁵³ God has deliberately given freedom “to adopt truth by his own free choice,” and that God is choosing the individuals who have used their freedom in the right way as fit for paradise.⁵⁴ In general, Khan believes that the very purpose of life itself is to bear in mind the concept of paradise and the “hereafter, the next world.”⁵⁵ Therefore, it is Khan’s view that in accordance with the creation plan of God, individuals should become ideal even though societal conditions never will be.⁵⁶ The focus on life in paradise and the creation plan of God as the building of ideal individuals, leads Khan to disapprove of all schemes that seek to change society or the state.⁵⁷ Khan refers to this as *status quo-ism*.⁵⁸ During an interview, Khan said:

⁵³ Khan, *The Quran*, 1650. Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 55.

⁵⁴ Interview on 13th December 2013, 21. See also Chapter 7 of this study for an analysis of how gender is perceived by Khan.

⁵⁵ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Muhammad: A Prophet for All Humanity* (New Delhi: Goodword Books, 2013), 122.

⁵⁶ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 57.

⁵⁷ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 60.

⁵⁸ Interview on 13th December 2013, 10.

Everyone talks of peace. But no one is able to establish peace. It is an historical fact. If you read the history of pacifism, you will find that there were so many people who were lovers of peace. But they were never able to establish peace. Even, they are not able to present an ideology of peace. [...] I discovered that the reason was in their concept. [...] They wanted to establish peace but by the wrong method. Why? When God almighty has given freedom to all, you have to manage their freedom. You cannot change their right. [...] So, freedom is everyone's birth right. You cannot abolish their freedom. So, they want to establish peace according to their own ideals. I discovered that [instead] we have to accept the creation plan of God. Then there is peace. And what is that method? That you have to differentiate between yourself and the society [and] adopt idealism regarding your personal matters. And, as for the society concerned; [one should] adopt status quo-ism. [...] This is the only formula of peace: Individual idealism and social pragmatism. I have adopted this principle, so it does not bother me whether India is ruled by the BJP, the RSS, the Congress, or the Communists. It does not bother me. Because, I am ready to accept the status quo, so I am living in peace. [And the] only formula of peace is that you have to differentiate between the individual and the society. For the individual; idealism, and for the society; pragmatism.⁵⁹

In this quote, it is possible to directly observe the Indian argumentative ideological and political context with its debated issues (see Chapter 4). Hence, the ideological content of Khan's statements is meaningful in relation to this context. In this case, it is democratic freedom as a political condition of India, with its disputed public issues and confrontational contest for political power from Right to Left. These conditions are considered as part of the divinely given and preplanned situation. Human freedom as a divine birth right is the main obstacle to peace with conditions because it makes peace according to your own ideals an impossibility, even for a pacifist. Therefore, Khan believes that "individual idealism" and "social pragmatism," as well as "status quo-ism" is fundamental to the creation plan of God, which includes the true formula for peace: peace without conditions.

In his written works, Khan makes several references to "positive status quo-ism."⁶⁰ He reasons that through his exemplary conduct, the Prophet Muhammad was guiding people to the right path and that he was an "idealist" in "personal matters" but "in social matters he staunchly upheld the status quo."⁶¹ Elsewhere, Khan writes that positive status quo-ism means to "avoid

⁵⁹ Interview on 13th December 2013, 27.

⁶⁰ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 209.

⁶¹ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 19.

confrontation” in adversities and instead, patiently wait-and-see while planning ahead. God, through the Prophet Muhammad encourages humans to uphold the status quo because it is most effective in terms of results. It also has the distinct benefit of preserving “social peace,” while possibly achieving personal objectives.⁶²

Hence, “positive status quo-ism” is an integral part of Khan’s position on Islam, non-violence, and peace. The primary rule is to avoid conflict and instead use the available non-violent possibilities, especially economic and social enterprises. Individual perfection is developed through patience and reflection. As a result, it will become possible to “spread the word of God in a peaceful and non-confrontational manner.”⁶³ Khan uses the Quran and the Sunna in a number of different ways to stress the importance of status quo-ism, and should be understood as meaningful in relation to its Indian debate context. Therefore, the following sections highlight Khan’s arguments for status quo-ism in his presentation of Islam, non-violence, and peace, which is then followed by an attempt at contextual analysis.

6.3.2 Status Quo-Isim and Polytheism

According to Khan, during the Prophet Muhammad’s early years of receiving revelations in Mecca, he kept away from the issue of the religious idols being placed in the central sanctuary of Ka’ba:

He lived in Mecca for thirteen years and he simply ignored those idols. He used to visit Ka’ba almost every day and there were gatherings and people visiting the Ka’ba to perform their rites. And all those people were idol worshippers who used to visit Ka’ba. The Prophet used to visit Ka’ba, but he never protested against the idols. He simply recited the Quran every day before those gatherings [and so] his method was the peaceful dissemination of the Quranic message. Without any protest, without any violence, without any objection. This was the prophetic message. He ignored all those issues that may lead to confrontation or violence, this was his method.⁶⁴

Hence, because the Prophet Muhammad focussed on the dissemination of the message of the Quran to the crowds of Arab pilgrims coming to Mecca, he accepted *shirk* as a social practice.⁶⁵

⁶² Khan, *Islam and World Peace*, 72.

⁶³ Khan, *Islam and World Peace*, 72.

⁶⁴ Interview on 13th December 2013, 3.

⁶⁵ To make a partner to God, or to associate God with other deities.

Based on the principle of status quo-ism, Muslims should spread the message of Islam but not “impose” it on others.⁶⁶ Muhammad did not impose the Islamic message in Mecca when his society was not ready for it. He only upheld the message in Medina when the society had fully accepted it.

Further in to the study, there is a return to how Khan’s argument regarding the idols placed in the Ka’ba can be analysed in relation to the controversies over the mosque in Ayodhya and as a general reminder to contemporary Muslims not to take issue over religious and other societal factors. Khan applies the Prophet Muhammad’s example regarding idolatry in the Ka’ba to many cases. For instance, Khan mentions the demolition of the Buddha statues by the Taliban government of Afghanistan in 2001. According to Khan, the Taliban should instead have considered how contemporary people cherish historic landmarks. The presence of pilgrims and tourists at the site was a chance “to convey the truth of monotheism to large numbers of people.”⁶⁷ By destroying these statues, the Taliban not only antagonised the world and made them more hostile towards Islam, they also missed a vital opportunity for peaceful proselytising to visitors. Thereby, they did not act on the model of the Prophet and by breaking the principle of positive status quo-ism, that is, accepting religious pluralism and focus on preaching, they acted outside Islam.

6.3.3 Status Quo-Isim and Political Institutions

Khan reasons that the Prophet Muhammad avoided the Dār al-Nadwa, described as a “tribal parliament,” a “political institution,” and a power factor in Mecca and Arabia.⁶⁸ The significance is to steer clear of conflict and confrontation, hence it shows the prophetic principle of status quo-ism. Khan mentions how Muhammad’s grandfather, ‘Abd al-Muṭṭalib had been an influential member of this political institution in Mecca and suggests that if Muhammad had followed the tribal custom, as an emerging leader he would have demanded a seat on the council.

The importance of this example is also discursive, an important point of ideological and religious debate among the ‘ulamā’. Zaman notes that Ẓafār Aḥmad ‘Uṭhmāni, in his attempt to refute Madani’s composite nationalism, he likewise refers to the historiography of the

⁶⁶ Interview on 13th December 2013, 11.

⁶⁷ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 20.

⁶⁸ The Dār al-Nadwa was a sort of town hall for meetings among the nobles of Mecca, all important decisions were made here. It was immediately situated to the north of the Ka’ba, and today is an incorporated part of the Masjīd al-Harām.

Prophet and the Meccan offer of political leadership to Muhammad. For ‘Uṭhmāni, the Prophet’s denial was based on the notion that he refused to unite in a composite nation with the pagans. As this would have made a king of a united nation out of the Prophet, he could still call people to Islam but he could not condemn or interfere in other’s religious affairs, because everyone would equally have freedom in faith and conscience. Hence, ‘Uṭhmāni holds that Muhammad’s rejection of the political leadership in Mecca is a clear proof against united nationalism.⁶⁹ Strengthening the framework in this study of the importance of dreams as a cultural technology underpinning religious authority, it should also be noted that ‘Uṭhmāni support his views in these matters through reporting a dream vision in which the Prophet promises him that Islam will soon prevail over the unbelievers. Hence, a united nation is ultimately uncalled-for.

While the political resonance of the reported example of the Prophet’s denial of an elevated position in the Dār al-Nadwa or political power in Mecca was already debated among the Muslim scholars of the independence struggle era, Khan perceives its meaning in relation to the contemporary global times. He warns “Muslim leaders and reformers” who are set on gaining political power in “Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria, Sudan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, indeed, all over the globe.”⁷⁰ Khan argues that such behaviour is in fact “deviant,” and in opposition to the example of the Prophet Muhammad.

During an interview, Khan explained that:

⁶⁹ Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam*, 46.

⁷⁰ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 20–22.

Political rule is not a goal of Islam. [...] If in the society the Muslims are a majority, and also if they're prepared to accept Islamic law, then you have right to establish the Islamic law, otherwise not. [...] In the beginning of Islam, only those laws were revealed that portend to paradise and hell and to personal belief. [Only later] it was revealed that: do not commit adultery and do not drink wine. [...] So he [the Prophet] says that, when society was prepared and when society was ready to accept those laws, then those laws were revealed. It means that there are two parts of Islam and Islamic teachings. One that is belief and worship and one that is misconduct. In the first part, everyone is free to accept it. But as far as the punishments and laws are concerned, it requires the acceptance of society. If society is not ready to accept these laws, then Muslims have no right to impose it. They have to disseminate the teachings. It means that political rule is conditioned. [...] As far as the belief system is concerned; that is eternal. In any situation, you can preach these teachings. But as far as the *rule* is concerned; that is conditional. If society is prepared then OK, otherwise not. So experience shows that the society was not prepared, not in any country, not in Iran, not in Pakistan, not in Syria, not in Iraq, not in Egypt. Nowhere was society prepared, so [then] they wanted to impose it. So, that is related to violence. The present violence is due to the violation of Islamic teachings. They wanted to impose those laws that were not acceptable to society. It is this contradiction that resulted in the violence. And Islam never taught that you have to impose it [Islamic law], no! If society is prepared then you can establish it, otherwise not.⁷¹

Therefore, according to Khan, the state in Islam was confined to the people of Medina, when society as a whole accepted the Islamic social teachings. Khan argues that Islamic rule, as well as the Islamic laws and punishments, such as prohibitions against adultery and drinking alcohol, should not be established. The religiously binding example of the Prophet Muhammad is to “disseminate the teachings” but not to impose Islamic laws and punishments. The attempts to break this prophetic example of status quo-ism is what is causing violence in a number of contemporary Muslim-majority societies. Furthermore, upholding these laws or creating a political rule in Islam were never means for reaching the ends of Islam. Instead, proselytisation is the only necessary means.

⁷¹ Interview on 6 December 2014, 5–6.

6.3.4 Status Quo-Ism through Emigration

According to Khan, an example from the life of the Prophet Muhammad that emphasises status quo-ism is the *hidjra* itself. Instead of fighting the Meccans who persecuted him, Muhammad and his followers migrated to the settlement of Yathrib. Presenting the significance of the *hidjra*, Khan writes how “the principle was established” that “believers” shall not risk “martyrdom at the hands of their enemies” but “avoid direct confrontation” and through migration find a “more suitable place for missionary action.”⁷² The *hidjra* is therefore seen as a prototypical non-violent action. Moreover, by exemplifying how Mecca ultimately became a Muslim city, Khan explains that migration and avoiding confrontation are always better options in terms of results. According to Khan, following the principles learned from the behaviour of the Prophet Muhammad will lead to certain success in the end.

Khan’s presentation of the *hidjra* may be interpreted as a counterargument to Muslim notions of taking a religious militant stand and the religious merits of dying for one’s faith. On the other hand, it also addresses the non-Muslim rhetoric of a violent Islam. Khan’s position on migration in Islam may therefore be seen as a double reversal of such ideas and perspectives.

6.3.5 Status Quo-Ism and Persecution Accounts

Khan says that once settled in Medina, the Prophet Muhammad avoided spreading descriptions of the maltreatment of himself and the Muslims in Mecca. Instead, in Medina the Prophet only preached on “the reality of the life hereafter.” This argument is explicitly directed at present-day “Islamic terrorists [...] disseminating vicious propaganda.”⁷³ Therefore, this presentation of the example by the Prophet can be understood as in opposition to the legitimisation of violence by referring to the victimisation and persecution of Islam and Muslims. Khan opposes such reasoning by saying it is un-Islamic to bring up past grievances. During an interview, Khan made a similar statement related to the issue of Muslim communalism in India: “In India, Muslims are currently living in complaint. They complain against discrimination and communal riots and these things.”⁷⁴ For Khan, Muslims should not try to build a community based on the ideas of persecution, victimisation, and abuse. As will be seen, proselytisation creates and requires a positive mind-set.

⁷² Khan, *Islam and Peace*, 63.

⁷³ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 23.

⁷⁴ Interview on 13th December 2013, 10.

6.3.6 Status Quo-Ism: *Hudaybiyya* and Peace Treaties

As mentioned, a vital part of Islamic history for Khan is the setting up of the *Hudaybiyya* peace treaty. Khan thinks that when the treaty was drafted, the Prophet Muhammad presented himself as the Messenger or Apostle of God, but the opposite party in the negotiations, the envoy of the rulers of Mecca protested. To repeat, not willing to acknowledge Muhammad's religious claim, the envoy suggested the name "*Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Allāh*, rather than *Muḥammad^{um} rasūlu 'llāh*."⁷⁵ For Khan, the most significant point is that Muhammad resigned to the Meccan conditions in the final version of the peace treaty and that eventually, the treaty was crucial for the success of Islam.

Khan often returns to this example. For him the *Hudaybiyya* agreement signifies that a foundational principle in Islam is to establish "peace for the sake of peace" and without conditions.⁷⁶ Khan holds the notion that following in the footsteps of the Prophet by making unconditional peace treaties will be constructive for both Muslims and Islam in the long run. The *Hudaybiyya* agreement was very unpopular among the Prophet's followers but it sustained the eventual long-term permanency of Islam.⁷⁷ The *Hudaybiyya* peace treaty is presented in terms of the "pragmatism" and "high principles" of Muhammad, vital to the Prophet's "extraordinary success." Therefore, pragmatism is presented in rational terms as necessary for any kind of "great success" while at the same time, Khan makes a decidedly religious call for pragmatism. Handling "delicate situations," using the same "high principles" as "the Prophet in Arabia" is the only way of dealing with "innumerable people" when "everyone enjoys [God-given] freedom."⁷⁸ As a social fact, this freedom involves a multitude of wishes and behaviours, which must be dealt with and the best way is to follow the example of the Prophet Muhammad.

When Khan wishes to establish pragmatism and "peace for the sake of peace" as Islamic virtues, his argument may be analysed in relation to what he sees as Muslims who are unwilling to compromise and reach settlements. During an interview, Khan pointed out that the *Hudaybiyya* peace treaty shows how "justice" is not an integral part of peace treaties in Islam. It is wrong to impose conditions in peace agreements and establishing "peace for the sake of peace" is the Islamic principle, as seen with a clear reference to the Palestinian side of the Arab–Israeli conflict.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Interview on 13th December 2013, 5.

⁷⁶ Interview on 13th December 2013, 5.

⁷⁷ Khan, *Islam and Peace*, 183.

⁷⁸ Khan, *Islam and Peace*, 68.

⁷⁹ Interview on 13th December 2013, 4–5.

6.3.7 Status Quo-Ism, Discrimination and Equality

As should be clear by now, Khan perceives “positive status quo-ism” as a most important Islamic ideal. In relation to a hadith relating that the Prophet Muhammad had stated that future political leaders will be selected from the Quraysh clan, Khan points out that “it was an unusual injunction, for, according to the teachings of Islam, all human beings are equal.” Yet, it was a “realistic” and “wise policy.” The Quraysh should continue their dominance, according to Khan, because the clan was an established force in Arabia: “A sudden change in this status quo would therefore have created insurmountable problems. That was why the Prophet advised the Muslims to accept the existing political system.” Khan’s position is that the Prophet’s counsel sustained “Arab unity” and “the Islamic mission [...] even after the death of the Prophet.”⁸⁰

The prediction contradicted Islamic ideals of human equality that no one “enjoys any superiority over another.” Hence, it “was a form of discrimination. But it was realistic rather than discriminatory.”⁸¹ Nonetheless, the Prophet Muhammad recommended the traditional Arab leadership and the continuation of the status quo and therefore, revolutionary ideologies are not accepted by Islam. In analytical terms, Khan creates a religious historical analogy with political meanings. The analogy obviously instructs contemporary Muslims not to disrupt the political order, especially to not try to replace the rule of the state. Even if political leaders fail to uphold Islamic ideals, such as equality or are not regarded as Muslim enough, it is unlawful to remove rulers. The rationale of the analogy is the suggestion that status quo-ism leads to Muslim unity, just as it did for the Arabs after the death of the Prophet and therefore, ultimately benefits the spread of Islam, which is the overriding aim. However, even more concretely the explicit use of “discrimination” and suppressed human “equality” suggest a current Indian Muslim context of political protests and social grievances, which opens an avenue for possible contextual analysis. Khan’s status quo-ism and its principle of patiently accepting the political leadership, despite experiences of discrimination and flawed equality may be understood as an aim not only to create Muslim unity but also to increase national, social harmony, which in the end Khan seems to suggest, will result in a better situation for the Indian Muslims and every Indian.

⁸⁰ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 212–213.

⁸¹ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 213.

6.3.8 Discussion and Contextual Analysis

As Chapter 2 showed, the “communal discourse” in India presently holds that the Muslim community is historically foreign aggressors and occupants and in contemporary times, they are enemies and a fifth column at home. The political use of the communal discourse was also indicated; discriminatory practices and political mobilisation targeting a minority are created around notions of the masculine and violent Muslim, one who is predisposed to rape, riot, and murder. Ideological representation aside, the facts remain that real-life Muslims commit violence in the name of Islam and that there are Muslim ideological positions in the contemporary debate that wish the destruction of the existing political sphere in order to build a sharia-based state.

Therefore, issues of violence – both real and imagined – continually affect Hindu-Muslim relations. The communal discourse creates tensions for Indian Muslims who may be or feel obliged to explain their positions. In this situation, Khan dissociates himself from the “political” altogether and declares his adherence to the political “status quo.” Khan’s position may, therefore, be understood as a reaction to the contemporary situation of tense discursive associations between the categories of Islam, Muslims, politics, and violence. He seeks to address and overcome the situation by proving the authentic and timeless “non-political” values of Islam. Beyond any given culture, authentic and timeless Islam never intended or sought engagement with the political in the first place. Islam was “non-political” while Muslims were in a minority situation in Mecca. Islam was political for a brief time only, when the historical conditions and every individual in the society of Medina demanded it by consensus. Accordingly, the authentic and timeless intention of Islam is in fact beyond politics.

The historical development of Muslim politics is therefore seen by Khan with reference to the sacred history of Islam and the Prophet Muhammad’s example in Medina. The successful setting up of a “city state” ruled by Muhammad, was made possible only after the preceding successful reform of the individuals who personally acknowledged the Islamic message. In Khan’s thinking they had albeit collectively, become perfect individuals. Hence, through the Prophet Muhammad’s “dissemination of teachings” there was an individualisation and privatisation of Islam, which eventually was briefly manifest in an ideal outward form. The establishment of an ideal outward form of Islam today is possible only through a similar process; of creating perfect individuals through proselytisation. In Khan’s presentation of Islam, the establishment of politics in Islam and Islam in the politics of the Medina state, is nothing beyond the unique historic period of the Prophet Muhammad in Medina. Because Khan presents

the example of the Prophet's engagement with politics in Medina as dependent on the preceding reform of individuals, revolution and political violence are not allowed in Islam. Only the reform of individuals through proselytisation is the allowed, authentic, and timeless method of the Prophet Muhammad.

However, in the political context of a democratic and pluralistic India, the Muslim community finds itself in a distrusted and weak minority position. In analytical terms, the political status quo-ism of Khan may be seen as a pledge to the national democratic functions, as well as an adherence to legitimate authority springing from fair and free majority elections. In Khan's presentation, Islam accepts the democratic order because it was always democratic in its intent for the reason that the Prophet had every individual's acceptance to lead the state in Medina. The acceptance of democracy and the pledge to the Indian secular constitution is therefore integral to Khan's conceptualisation of political status quo-ism. Khan's formulation of Islam and status quo-ism can therefore be explained as an affirmation of the immediate Indian political order. Khan's "non-political" Islam hails and reiterates a pluralist and democratic India. The concept of "status quo-ism" suggests therefore on one hand, that Islam adheres to democracy, composite nationalism, and the secular state, as well as the constitutional legal framework. In a democratic, pluralistic, and secular India, Islam and Muslims are ideally protected with a number of economic, religious, and social possibilities.

On the other hand, "status quo-ism" also suggests that Islam does not seek engagement with the powers that be. One sacred history analogy, the acceptance of the leadership of the Quraysh, points to the socially and politically dominant Hindu majority of contemporary India. The dominance of the Hindu majority should not be questioned or revolted against; hence political and social status quo-ism. By ascertaining the powers that be, by abstaining from politics, social harmony is sought between the Hindu and Muslim communities. This becomes particularly important as the communal discourse marks Muslims as violently political by seeking to establish an Islamic state or as secretly connected to Pakistan.

The historical precedence of such accommodation between Indian Islam and worldly power should also be pointed out. The Indian legists of the *Hanafiyya madhhab* took the ruling of the law school's founding father, that violence was only legitimate when used by the ruler, even further. Any political leader who was powerful enough to establish his rule could also legitimately exercise force.⁸² Hence, the political pragmatism of the dominant strand of Islamic law in the subcontinent and its accommodation with secular rule have longstanding precedents.

⁸² Jalal, *Partisans of Allah*, 30.

6.4 State Building and Islam

Khan claims that the aim to build an exclusive community, nation or state based on Islam is entirely unlawful. He thinks it illogical that the building of a nation or state based on Islam means the erection of barriers to the outside world, separating what is Islam from everything that is outside, when the Prophet Muhammad, both during his lifetime and in his legacy, had a message and served as an example for everyone, everywhere. Hence, for Khan, a separate Muslim polity goes against the universality of the timeless Islamic message, which no one in particular can lay claim to. This section will aim to clarify how Khan reaches these conclusions.

6.4.1 Muslim Separatism

Khan believes that the idea of the *umma* or “the greater religious community [...] dominates the mind-set of present-day Muslims.”⁸³ It is said that Muslims everywhere share a general inward focus on the global Muslim community and a related outward hatred towards “Western nations.” Khan traces the lineage of this thinking to the ideas and influence of the travelling journalist and political activist Djamāl al-Dīn al-Afghānī (d. 1897). al-Afghānī is seen to have “developed the concept of Islamic nationalism” leading to a global movement of “pan-Islamism.” Khan describes these ideas as “communal thinking” and the movement as “communal,” meaning both biased and narrow-minded, as well as in opposition to authentic Islam. The movement of Islamic nationalism was later given “an Islamic hue” through the development of “political Islam” and the “political interpretation of Islam.”⁸⁴ Khan discusses “political Islam” in terms of the “communalisation” of religion, meaning the creation of a nation or community of Muslims. Therefore, for Khan, political Islam is not Islamic at all, because authentic Islam is thoroughly universal in scope. Instead, the exponents of the so called political Islam restricts authentic Islam by turning both religion and the state into something reserved for the Muslims only.

Khan describes three interrelated layers of belief and practice among contemporary Muslims. The first and most fundamental layer is a deep-seated inward-looking “Muslim-oriented” tendency among Muslims: “Their sole purpose is their own community and they are indifferent to the rest of humanity.” The second and third levels are represented by “Islamists” and “suicide bombers,” respectively. But according to Khan, Muslim-oriented thinking, Islamism, and suicide bombers are all interrelated and feed off each other. In fact, they are the product of the

⁸³ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 64.

⁸⁴ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 37–40.

same “negative” communal thinking, meaning the inability to look beyond their own community. Khan claims that communal Muslim beliefs and practices are in opposition to authentic Islam by citing the Quran as saying that God “is the Lord of the Worlds” (a reference to Sura 1) and that the Prophet Muhammad is “a mercy to all mankind” in the Quran.⁸⁵ Khan’s position is that these Quranic references show that God and the Prophet Muhammad are not significant for Muslims only. Hence, looking for the benefit of the Muslim community both in general and specifically through the building of an Islamic state is not the message of the Quran.⁸⁶ Instead, the Quranic message and the example of the Prophet Muhammad are for everybody and belong to everyone, not only to the Muslims.

Hence, the three-layered description can be understood as the basis for a double-front ideological and political prescription. First, authentic Islam is a religion for non-violence and peace, thus anti-Islamic rhetoric misses its mark. Second, because it is entirely possible to enact authentic Islam in India, Muslims as a community must never compromise their political allegiance to the Indian state and society.

This can be seen when during an interview, Khan stated that it is completely wrong to “establish a separate state” even when Muslims are the majority in any country or a substantial minority in a part thereof. Mentioning the examples of Burma, the Xinjiang region of China, Philippines, and Mozambique, Khan asserts that Muslim separatist movements go against: “A very important principle in Islam. That is *qanaat*. *Qanaat* means contentment. [...] So these Muslims must accept the situation that is given to them by their government. One such example is Bosnia.”⁸⁷ The Bosnian war (1992–1995) is seen as caused by the declaration of independence by the Muslim president, Alija Izetbegović (d. 2003).⁸⁸ After the declaration of independence:

⁸⁵ Sura 21:107 in Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 64–65.

⁸⁶ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 18.

⁸⁷ Interview on 6th December 2014, 42. *Qanaat* in Urdu means to be ‘content’, or ‘contentment’.

⁸⁸ The declaration of independence was made after a referendum which was boycotted by the Serb population.

The central government of Yugoslavia attacked and there was fighting. Now, Muslims of Bosnia are living under very miserable conditions. Before this [war] they were very good, there were madrasas, there were *masājid*, [and] Muslims were living in very good conditions. But after this act, when they declared independence they became the rival to the Yugoslavian regime. So there was a rift, [and] there was fighting. This policy is quite against the Islamic teachings. You have to accept the status quo. Why do you try to build a separate state?⁸⁹

One possible analysis of this statement on the breaking up of Bosnia and the declaration of independence that indeed preceded the occupation of the Yugoslav army, is to regard it as an example of how Khan singles out Muslim separatism as a main driving force for conflict and war. One important ideological tenet of Khan's thought is to warn against the devastating effects of Muslim separatism. In its context of other global examples of multifaceted minority–majority relations involving Muslim populations, Muslim separatism is clearly pinpointed among a range of complex historical factors. However, singling out and warning against the global examples of Muslim separatism are related to the immediate political and social context. The quote above is immediately followed by statements connecting the example of Bosnia to the case of Pakistan and the partition of India:

I am against any Pakistan movement. Pakistan was a part of India. [...] So partition is against the Islamic spirit. Why the partition? [Instead] you have to do *da'wa* work. The Pakistani people were free to do *da'wa* work in the whole Indian subcontinent. Why did they want the partition? This kind of [...] Balkanisation is quite against the Islamic spirit.⁹⁰

After the breakup of Yugoslavia into smaller states in the early 1990s, the contemporary Indian debate and fear over “Balkanisation” as a concept means primarily two things. First, as in Khan's formulation, a well-known way of conceptualising the historical partition of India into separate states divided by their respective political, ethnical, linguistic, and cultural claims. Related to this formulation of an historical experience is, secondly, the fear that federal India will undergo further separatist processes, for instance accentuated by the Sikh activists' militant claim to a Khalistan in the 1980s, as seen in the previous chapter, or the rise of low caste-based regional political parties that assert their autonomy from high caste North Indian dominance

⁸⁹ Interview on 6th December 2014, 43.

⁹⁰ Interview on 6th December 2014, 43.

through re-formulations of caste in terms of a separate ethnicity.⁹¹ In addition, the conflict over Kashmir between Indian and Pakistan continues.

Hence, it may be argued that the way in which Muslim separatism is formulated by Khan, for instance through reference to Bosnia and Balkanisation, serves as a framework to make an ideological point regarding the immediate political and social issues. In a debate situation in which Muslims are seen as to blame for causing the partition of India, Khan states that indeed, the Muslim “Pakistani movement” caused the partition. However, it was against the “Islamic spirit” when they did so. A general dichotomy is thereby set up between Muslim and Islam, as well as in particular, Muslim separatism in opposition to authentic Islam.

6.4.2 Islam and the State

Khan thinks that al-Afghānī’s idea that lost political power and its restitution developed into “the theory that Islam had a system covering the whole of human life and that this included politics.” This ideological development made the notion of a “political revolution” into a religious duty, “a binding obligation, like prayers and fasting.”⁹² Discrediting the religious credentials of “political Islam,” Khan writes: “The movement was the result of anti-Western rather than pro-Islam feelings.”⁹³ Hence, political Islam is “not genuinely Islamic in nature” and it “had only the community agenda in mind [and] adopted the name of Islam purely as a means of self-justification.” The Islamic message is the eternal and universal divine message directed at each individual human, hence the creation of a Muslim state or society is in opposition to true religion: “According to Islam, a truly Islamic movement arises out of feelings of benevolence for all of humanity. Its target being neither land nor power, it is always carried out through peaceful means.”⁹⁴ Therefore, creating “the ideal society or the ideal state” is not the aim of Islam.⁹⁵ Islam seeks to create perfect individuals because social harmony and tranquillity can be destroyed in an instant by anyone. Hence, constant individual reform is the genuine, timeless target of Islam.⁹⁶

Furthermore according to Khan, the concept of an ideal Islamic state has no direct precedent in the Quran and the Sunna. This makes the ideas of political revolution and state-building as binding religious duties untenable in Islam. This is because, in a slightly legal-technical

⁹¹ Jaffrelot, *Religion, Caste and Politics*, 486–512.

⁹² Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 39.

⁹³ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 41.

⁹⁴ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 41.

⁹⁵ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 141.

⁹⁶ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 143.

argument; any “basic Islamic injunction” can never be construed by “inferential argument,” which can only be used to clarify “peripheral matters.”⁹⁷ Each of the four Sunni rightful caliphs was settled upon by different procedures. Therefore, a final verdict, “a basic Islamic injunction,” on the origin and nature of an Islamic state cannot be agreed upon.⁹⁸ Khan asserts that this is not due to any fault of the Islamic revelation, instead it shows a certain truth of Islam. It proves that the goal of Islam is to call people to the one God and to encourage individual perfection. Hence, the purpose of Islam is not the creation of an ideal state that upholds its laws by force. The acceptance of Islam must be the result of an inward transformation of submission to God. State measures that uphold and enforce Islamic teachings mean not only that humans play a part that God declines; they run strictly counter to the setting of life as a testing ground. This argument is based on divinely granted human freedom as part and parcel of God’s creation plan, which was described earlier. Humans are not allowed to withhold free will since God requires free will in humans. Only in this way can God test them according to the divine creation plan.⁹⁹

Those Muslim “ideologues” who use the Islamic examples of the Medina state and the ensuing caliphates to try to create Islamic notions of an “ideal society or an ideal State have fallen prey to a fallacy.” According to Khan, the “fallacy” consists of contemporary ideologues who confuse the perfect individuals of “the early period of Islam” with the incorrect notion that they had created an ideal society and state. Erroneously, the “ideologues” instruct the Muslims to set up a perfect state. But instead, since it was not the state and society that were perfect during “the first phase of Islam,” only the example of individual perfection should be emulated.¹⁰⁰

Khan thinks that at the heart of Muslim political awareness and the “fallacy” of an Islamic state, a sense of loss can be found. A need for unity is felt to counter that loss.¹⁰¹ This creates an exclusively Muslim worldview as opposed to an Islamic worldview, because the one-sided Muslim perspective on the world is in opposition to the message from the “Lord of the Worlds” to “all mankind.” Hence, while Muslims wrongly focus on “their own community [...] problems relating to general humanity are of no interest to them.”¹⁰² Therefore, Muslim

⁹⁷ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 141.

⁹⁸ Interview on 13th December 2013, 12.

⁹⁹ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 143.

¹⁰⁰ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 140–141.

¹⁰¹ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 63.

¹⁰² Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 64–65.

“communal” sensibilities lie at the root of their “fallacy.” Instead, the Islamic message is always universal in scope according to Khan.

During an interview, Khan quoted Sura 12 to point out that the Prophet Joseph accepted a post under the non-Muslim Egyptian king.¹⁰³ For him, the example of Joseph means that the character of the state, as well as the religion of the ruler, are simply unimportant in Islam. Khan points out that Joseph “accepted” and “acknowledged” the political reign of the “idolatrous” king by serving as his minister.¹⁰⁴ Here it becomes possible to observe what this study formulates as an ideological and religious debate situation, Khan mentions that “the ideologues of political Islam” perceive Sura 12:40 “all power belongs to God alone”¹⁰⁵ as a command to all Muslims to establish a “political system.” Hence, while “the ideologues” hold “that political power on earth is the sole prerogative of God,” Khan emphasises that the context of Joseph’s statements about God and power is a “non-political” dialogue with fellow prisoners.¹⁰⁶ Joseph is strictly “conveying the message of truth” by calling his co-captives to “the unity of God,” as can be read in Khan’s Quran commentary.¹⁰⁷

This presentation of Sura 12 leads to Khan’s policy of non-interference with the rule of the state. Khan not only rejects the use of Sura 12 as an admission to build an Islamic state, he reverses this purported meaning. For Khan, the ruler must not even be Muslim for the state to be a legitimate political body in Islam, as shown by the example of the Prophet Joseph.

In the later analysis of Khan’s presentation of Sura 12 and other similar instances, I will return to what Khan perceives and labels as the “political interpretation” of Islam. Hence, while Khan states that his own position of an authentic and timeless Islam is strictly “non-political,” he can here as elsewhere, be seen to contradict the “ideologues of political Islam” and the notions of an Islamic state.¹⁰⁸ Despite Khan’s commitment to “non-political” Islam, to debate the nature of political authority, especially in a context of ideological, political, and social, conflict, should be understood as the formulation of a particular ideologically and religiously defined political position.

¹⁰³ Interview on 13th December 2013, 13.

¹⁰⁴ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 72.

¹⁰⁵ Khan, *The Quran*, 680.

¹⁰⁶ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 72. This may be a reference to Mawdudi, who, as seen, emphasise the political rule of Allah – or any Muslim following similar ideological positions.

¹⁰⁷ Khan, *The Quran*, 680.

¹⁰⁸ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 72–78.

6.4.3 Self-Reflection and the Muslim Media

Khan believes that what he refers to as the Muslim media or the Muslim press, creates and spreads the ideas of Muslims as an exclusive community; i.e. “communalism.” Criticising the one-sidedness of the “Muslim press” is a recurrent topic in Khan’s writings.¹⁰⁹ Another criticism is that the Muslim media is said to complain and lament the loss of Muslim political power, which is as seen an understanding Khan sees as reinforcing the notions of a separate Muslim community. Instead, the Muslim media and public leaders should guide Muslims to patient, pragmatic, and non-confrontational actions; what Khan perceives as authentic Islam. The first three verses of Sura 83 are used by Khan to criticise the current Muslim media and leadership: “Woe to those who give short measure, who demand of other people full measure for themselves, but when they give by measurement or weight to others, they give them less.”¹¹⁰ Khan says that Muslim leaders and journalists only describe one half of the story; the Muslim one. Therefore, using the words of Sura 83 Khan writes that these Muslims give “short measure.” This is not only “condemned in Islam,” one-sided Muslim complaints and protests are responsible for creating a psychology of “negativity” that is responsible for “violent jihad, feelings of hatred, and a desire for vengeance.”¹¹¹ Instead, Khan contends that Islam means to renounce one-sided perspectives and “communalism,” which lead to hate and violence. Muslims should therefore see their own part in any conflict or hostilities. As will be shown below, to reflect upon personal behaviour and handle conflicts peacefully are central to how Khan presents jihad as a battle with one’s own self, through awareness and introspection.

As a result, Khan advocates a general awareness of one’s own shortcomings, especially in hardships and trials. Correspondingly, Khan also presents historical occurrences, community and personal suffering, as the will of God. In Khan’s presentation of Sura 42:30 “Whatever misfortune befalls you is of your own doing,”¹¹² Islam encourages believers to be self-reflective and see their own part in any suffering.¹¹³ These notions become important when he criticises the Muslim media for abandoning the right Islamic attitude of introspection. According to Khan, earlier learned generations of Muslims sought their own shortcomings when any catastrophe happened. By citing several time-honoured Muslim scholarly responses to political disasters in Muslim history, Khan asserts a particular Islamic norm based in learned consensus,

¹⁰⁹ Khan, *Indian Muslims*, 74.

¹¹⁰ Khan, *The Quran*, 1709.

¹¹¹ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 86.

¹¹² Khan, *The Quran*, 1450.

¹¹³ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 79.

which he says the Muslims used to support.¹¹⁴ Hence, despite his declarations to present the Islamic teachings based directly on the scriptural sources and the life of the Prophet, and not by reference to later Muslim generations, Khan nonetheless sometimes strengthen the authority of his own positions by reference to *idjmā* and prestigious medieval scholars. The correct Islamic understanding is that collective tragedy is God's punishment when Muslims fail to live up to the demands of Islam. However, the practice of soul-searching has been abandoned in the contemporary era with the advent of the Muslim media and "modern journalism" that claim various forces are against Islam and Muslims.¹¹⁵

One-sided Muslim media reporting contributes to the public and intellectual abandonment of authentic Islam. According to Khan, the Muslim community regrettably looks back in history for a time of political greatness. Instead of building something new and great, which is the correct Islamic attitude reflecting its intellectual and scientific spirit, Muslims keep a close watch on every damage and insult to Islam and Muslims. In Khan's view, this makes the "Muslim media" responsible for a one-sided community feeling among Muslims and for spreading the erroneous notions of building a community, nation, or state based on Islam. For Khan, both communalism and state-building are in opposition to the universality of the Islamic message. Authentic and timeless Islam means only to patiently return good for evil and give witness to the oneness of God. These topics are part and parcel of Khan's presentation of the meaning of jihad, as will be seen below.

6.4.4 *Islam, the State, and Former Revelations*

In Khan's opinion, the "ideologues of political Islam" argue that political power is vital in Islam so that Islam can be upheld as an entire system. Khan claims that these ideologues develop their position through reference to Sura 5:3: "Today I have completed your religion for you."¹¹⁶ Here, Khan addresses the issues in the Muslim debate regarding the relation between Islam to former revelations and the idea of a totality in Islam that covers all aspects of life. Khan holds that "the ideologues of political Islam" thinks that Islam completes earlier revelations, by adding the principles on how to create and uphold a perfect society and state. But Khan writes that such notions are "totally baseless."¹¹⁷ In his description of their argument, because the "ideologues"

¹¹⁴ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 83–86.

¹¹⁵ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 83–86.

¹¹⁶ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 67. In Asad's translation: "Today I have perfected your religious law for you." Asad, *The Message of the Qur'an*, 170.

¹¹⁷ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 69.

say that “God’s religion” was completed only with the revelations sent to Prophet Muhammad, they “seek a total enforcement of the religion.” Hence, “political power” becomes essential for the Muslims.¹¹⁸

According to Khan this is wrong because Sura 5:3 means that it was the last verse revealed to Muhammad and the completion of the Quranic revelations. When these are taken all together, he maintains that they confirm the revelations of earlier prophets, quoting Sura 2:285: “We do not differentiate between any of his messengers.”¹¹⁹ Khan therefore means that the revelations to the Prophet Muhammad are one and the same as was equally revealed to the earlier prophets, also quoting Sura 42:13:

God has ordained for you the same religion which He enjoined on Noah, and which We have revealed to you, and which We enjoined upon Abraham and Moses and Jesus, so that you should remain steadfast in religion and not become divided in it.¹²⁰

Consequently, Khan uses these verses to reject the position that Islam adds further political or social teachings to earlier prophetic revelations. Instead, Khan writes that God asked the Prophet Muhammad to abide by the “previous prophets” in Sura 6:90: “They are those whom God guided aright, so you follow their guidance.”¹²¹ For Khan, Sura 6:90 means that it is impossible to conceive that the “perfect” Prophet Muhammad should follow earlier prophets if their insight had been less than perfect. In short, Islam confirms the truth of earlier revelations.¹²²

In Khan’s view, the common monotheistic teachings of calling people to worship and to develop virtues are God’s eternal messages. Islam does not add any social and political teachings to the authenticity of earlier Judaic and Christian revelations, especially not building a certain type of state or community. Therefore a state based on Islam is untenable.¹²³

This line of reasoning can be understood as formulating a platform for pluralism by putting Islam on a par with Judaism and Christianity, if these religions are properly understood. More importantly, they address the Muslim and non-Muslim positions that holds that Islam is a total and totalising system; one which always aims for a separate state and the enforcement of its religious laws. Khan therefore supports the democratic secular state in religious terms. We will

¹¹⁸ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 66.

¹¹⁹ Khan, *The Quran*, 125.

¹²⁰ Khan, *The Quran*, 1442.

¹²¹ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 68. See also Khan, *The Quran*, 369.

¹²² Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 67.

¹²³ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 70.

return to the discussion of what Islam as a total system means in the light of Khan's case in Chapter 9.

6.4.5 Contextual Analysis

As was seen in Chapters 2 and 5, after the partition, politicised religious identities became shaping forces of loyalty to the state in both India and Pakistan. As mentioned, in this situation the Indian Muslims are associated with the enemy; Pakistan, and the depictions of Islam as inherently radical and violent serve several political functions. Khan's presentation of a non-political and non-violent Islam may fruitfully be analysed as shaped by this political and social context. He states that Islam does not seek to build a state because the state-building experience of the Prophet Muhammad and the companions was built on individual consent, a historically unique factor. Authentic Islam is therefore democratic in its intent. Furthermore, Islam does not aim to build a state because Islam does not provide an authoritative and well-defined blueprint of how to build and run a state. Instead, Islam aims to create ideal individuals and the timeless message of Islam is aimed at the individual. This line of argument is obviously a debate position in opposition to the presentation of the Muslim obligation of a state in Islam. However, the tense minority-majority relations and the communal discourse that associates the Indian Muslim community with a separate state and an aggressive Islamic polity, suggest a further possible contextual analysis of Khan's positions. For instance, he highlights the example that the Prophet Joseph accepted a government post under a polytheist king. Because the examples of the prophets are central to Islam, Indian Muslims should like Joseph not hesitate to accept the political and social dominance of the Hindu majority. Authentic Islam provides examples of the legitimacy of polytheist rulers.

However, Khan's positions can also be analysed as partly acknowledging the rhetoric of Muslim "communalism." For instance, he depicts Muslims as nurturing a sense of a separate community but criticises the Muslim press for creating their narrow and prejudiced perspectives. Hence, through the media and their leaders the Muslim community is in opposition to authentic Islam, which is a universal individual message and does not aim for a separate community (or state). Therefore, Khan partially reiterates the way Muslims are depicted by the communal discourse. But what is more, he maintains that authentic and timeless Islam is in opposition to the separatist, state-centred, and violent contemporary Muslim ideologies. Consequently, Khan also partially opposes the communal discourse by saying that because Muslims misrepresent Islam, authentic Islam cannot be blamed for their actions.

Khan's ideological and religious positions may therefore be analysed as aimed at securing a well-respected and safe place for authentic Islam in Indian society and state by supporting the secular and democratic constitution.

Khan's presentation of Islam may in fact be understood as closely related to the Indian constitution, which acknowledges all religions and maintains principles of non-interference with religion by the state. Because the communal discourse associates the category of Islam with radical and violent tendencies, the secularism of the Indian state comes under pressure. Hence, the situation of successful Hindu nationalist mobilisation and its ideological anti-Islam positions strengthened by international ties since 2001, makes the conceptual safeguarding of Islam entirely necessary.

6.5 The Prophet Muhammad: Universality and Timelessness of Islam

From the start, along with the Quran Muslim intellectual traditions have been built on a foundation of continuous positioning regarding the Prophet Muhammad's actions and sayings in different situations, which makes biographies or historiographical writings of the Prophet's life and character a vital Muslim genre.¹²⁴ Khan speaks of a particular "prophetic mission" and as one title by him suggests, Muhammad is *The Prophet of Peace* (2009). This section will deal with how Khan understands the Sunna of the Prophet Muhammad as a universal model for creating peace in society.

For Khan, the "prophetic mission" is the propagation of the "creation plan of God."¹²⁵ After the final revelation and prophecy of Muhammad, the prophetic mission continues and lies on the shoulders of the Muslim *umma*. In fact, the *umma* is said to follow Islam correctly only by unceasing *da'wa*, 'proselytisation', or as Khan typically puts it, the dissemination of Islamic teachings.¹²⁶ And, as described earlier, according to Khan, the propagation of Islam requires peaceful circumstances to be successful.

The following description of Khan's presentations of the examples of the Prophet will form the necessary background for the following chapter, which describes how Khan presents the "true Jihad" as a non-violent collective duty, the peaceful propagation of Islam.

¹²⁴ Hjärpe, *Sharia*, 132.

¹²⁵ Interview on 13th December 2013, 6.

¹²⁶ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 72.

6.5.1 *The Prophet Muhammad and the War Hero Image*

With reference to Lev Tolstoy's famous pessimism regarding human revolutions, that those who seize power ultimately become oppressors, Khan argues that the original seventh century Islamic "revolution" was the rare exception.¹²⁷ Using Tolstoy's perspective as his point of departure, Khan criticises heroic militarism as a trope in history writing in general and Muslim history writing of the life of the Prophet Muhammad in particular. Instead, Khan presents human history as significant beyond battle glory and above all, he contends that Muslim chroniclers who see the Prophet Muhammad's importance in terms of a military leader are greatly mistaken.

In its place, Khan presents the battles of Muhammad as minor incidents because if taken in isolation each battle lasted only about half a day.¹²⁸ Hence, they cannot and should not be defined as wars or battles but as "skirmishes."¹²⁹ The Prophet Muhammad only led the Muslim forces in three short battles and therefore, he only spent a day and a half fighting during his entire lifetime. This leads Khan to the conclusion that: "In Islam [...], peace is the rule and war is the rare exception."¹³⁰ According to Khan, the leaders of Mecca, the Quraysh, wanted to engage the Prophet Muhammad on some eighty separate occasions, all of which Muhammad was able to avoid through "peaceful policies."¹³¹ For instance, Khan considers the battle of the trench as one of the most outstanding of the non-violent strategies set up by the Prophet Muhammad. Hence, the authentic and timeless significance of the battle of the trench is to find a way to avoid combat and prevent a war.¹³²

Khan sees the avoidance of conflict and warfare by the Prophet Muhammad at odds with "an atmosphere of militancy" in Arabic seventh century tribal society. Circumventing conflict and peaceful behaviour in such a militaristic environment should therefore be seen as even more spectacular and worthy of recognition and emulation.¹³³

Khan presents instances of militancy in the biography of the Prophet in a very consistent manner. He insists on a general non-violent depiction of the Prophet's activities. Muhammad is portrayed as a pragmatic community builder, succeeding in his mission through civil "constructive" work and charismatic preaching. This can be seen when Khan describes the time immediately after the *hidjra*:

¹²⁷ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 27.

¹²⁸ Khan, *The True Jihad*, 9.

¹²⁹ Interview on 13th December 2013, .4.

¹³⁰ Interview on 13th December 2013, 6.

¹³¹ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 200.

¹³² Khan, *The Age of Peace*, 62.

¹³³ Khan, *The True Jihad*, 9.

He immediately engaged in constructive activities in his new place of residence, for instance, the construction of a place of worship, establishing links between Makkan emigrants and Madinan Muslims; creating an environment of tolerance and mutual respect between followers of different religions, spreading the moral teachings of the Quran; and striving to build a righteous society in Madinah.¹³⁴

Notably, according to Khan the Prophet Muhammad engaged in this non-violent constructive work as an alternative to “making preparations for war against his Makkan opponents or launching a propaganda campaign against them.”¹³⁵ Hence, Khan’s presentation of the non-violent history of the Prophet Muhammad is a careful step away from depicting him as a great general and brave fighter. For instance, when Khan discusses the *maghāzī*, or accounts of “the battles fought by the Prophet,” he writes that the *maghāzī* have wrongly become the name of the whole corpus of the “Prophet’s biographies.” According to Khan, this categorisation and presentation of the significance of the Prophet’s biography are completely wrong. As we have just seen, the clashes fought by Muhammad and his companions are presented as minor occasions. Moreover, Muhammad was never the aggressor because the “skirmishes” were fought in strict self-defence and “where he simply had no option.” But instead of this authentic depiction, Muslim historians “have converted his whole life into one of confrontation and war.”¹³⁶

For Khan this is not only historically false, the religious significance of the example set by the Prophet Muhammad was completely different and far superior. The Prophet is an ideally peaceable person, as well as a peaceful community builder with a timeless religious message of the oneness of God. Thus, Khan rejects the image of the Prophet Muhammad as the military hero of the Muslims. However, the idea of Muslim historians’ preoccupation with military success was proposed by the Aligarh College member, Shiblī Nu‘mānī (d. 1914) in his modernist *Sīrat al-Nabī* (‘the way, i.e. biography, of the Prophet’).¹³⁷ In fact, Nu‘mānī was an influential person and the founder of an institution dedicated to Islamic history writing in his hometown of Azamgarh, in which he lived during his final years. One internet source indicates

¹³⁴ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 24.

¹³⁵ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 24.

¹³⁶ Khan, *The True Jihad*, 9.

¹³⁷ Moaddel, *Islamic Modernism*, 71.

that Nu‘māni was the “mentor” of the madrasa Khan attended in the Azamgarh region.¹³⁸ However uncertain the direct influence of Nu‘māni on that particular institution, the fact remains that as Education Secretary of the Nadwat al-‘Ulamā’ he promoted English as part of the curriculum, a project that was largely opposed by the other ‘ulamā’.¹³⁹ As mentioned, the Madrasa Iṣlāḥ started teaching English in 1912, which strengthens the possibility of Nu‘māni’s direct or general influence. What is more important is the direct thematic resemblances of several of Nu‘māni’s positions to Khan. At its most basic, Nu‘māni as an educator and Islamic modernist was at the beginning of his career associated with the Aligarh school and Sayyid Ahmad Khan and throughout his public life strived to introduce and combine secular subjects – English, history, and geography – with the aim of increasing the understanding of modern science among the Indian Muslims. This educational focus was ideally alongside the study of religion and was made manifest through the founding of the influential higher seminary, Dār al-‘Ulūm at Lucknow, of the Nadwat al-‘Ulamā’ in 1898.¹⁴⁰ In particular as the creator of “Islamic historiography in Urdu,” the writings of Nu‘māni reflected the contemporary European historical approaches and normative standards. Similar to Chiragh Ali, as we saw, Nu‘māni countered the charges of European authors that Islam mistreated the non-Muslims living in its territories and on the issue of slavery.¹⁴¹ Instead, Nu‘māni highlights instances of guaranteed “complete religious freedom” under Islam, such as treaties with Christians in the city of Damascus. However, Nu‘māni went further than Chiragh Ali in his creation of “a synthesis of the traditional Islamic disciplines of chronicles and hagiography and the Western discipline of objective analysis.”¹⁴² On this methodological basis, Nu‘māni suggested that Islamic history writing must go beyond the style of the early Muslim writers on the life of the Prophet. Moaddel writes that while Nu‘māni was more conservative than the other modernists, his main critique of the traditionalist history writers being their preoccupation with military success.¹⁴³ For Nu‘māni, this type of history writing was not suitable even for kings and governments and for writing about the life of the Prophet, or any prophet of Islam, it is wholly out of place. Only when war was unavoidable may the Prophet have briefly appeared as a mere conqueror or

¹³⁸ I have not been able to verify or refute this notion in the relevant literature. The statement is made without any reference and is, hence, without direct scholarly value: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Madrasatul_Islah. Accessed on 2019-10-02.

¹³⁹ Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims*, 409.

¹⁴⁰ Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims*, 523.

¹⁴¹ Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism*, 80–82.

¹⁴² Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism*, 77.

¹⁴³ In fact, Ahmad refers to Nu‘māni as a “traditionalist marginally influenced by modernism.” Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism*, 79.

commander but, in fact, his real character and vital life-time example lies in his holiness, purity, tolerance, generosity, universal sympathy, and spirit of sacrifice.¹⁴⁴

In conclusion, in the early 20th century in his role as an educator and leading Muslim intellectual in Azamgarh and indeed, through the Nadwat al-‘Ulamā’ in Uttar Pradesh as a whole, Nu‘māni had a possible indirect influence on the education Khan received. But more importantly, there is an observable corresponding emphasis on the peaceful and tolerant qualities of Muhammad’s life and example in both authors’ writings of Islamic history. Consequently, both Nu‘māni and Khan oppose military tropes and a focus on the conquests of the Prophet in earlier Muslim history writing. Because of such clear similarities that firmly connects Khan to Nu‘māni, the most influential Islamic historiographer in Urdu, it supports my view, developed further in Chapters 9 and 10, that Khan continues and develops the general intellectual programme of the Islamic modernists, as well as the particular arguments of certain authors in this tradition. Khan is therefore to be understood as one of the most notable contemporary representatives of Indian Islamic Modernism, which can be directly observed in how he characterises the biography of the Prophet Muhammad.

6.5.2 *The Universal Prophet Muhammad: a Model of Peace*

Along with his rejection of the image of the Prophet Muhammad as the powerful military leader of the Muslims, Khan criticises the idea of a certain birth right or association of any Muslim to the Prophet. Instead, he presents a universal model of Muhammad and Islam by saying that the Prophet, as the ruler of Medina, issued a declaration safeguarding the rights of the Jews of Medina. In addition to legal protection, Muhammad was personally affable. According to Khan, the Prophet never “protested” or “spoke any harsh language against the Jews.”¹⁴⁵ Similarly, Khan quotes one hadith when the Prophet honoured a passing Jewish funeral march by standing up. One follower of the Prophet had reservations and reminded him that it was actually a Jewish funeral. Muhammad answered by asserting the humanity of the deceased. Khan presents the significance of this episode in terms of the Prophet’s appreciation of all humans, whom he “regarded [...] as equal.”¹⁴⁶ In another written work, Khan comments on the same hadith: “This example set by the Prophet of Islam shows that irrespective of religion or tradition [...] human beings, all are equally honourable members of humanity at large.”¹⁴⁷ According to Khan, the

¹⁴⁴ Moaddel, *Islamic Modernism*, 71.

¹⁴⁵ Interview on 13th December 2013, 3.

¹⁴⁶ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 24.

¹⁴⁷ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Quranic Wisdom* (Noida: Goodword Books, 2015), 95.

Prophet Muhammad showed the principle of “universality,” meaning the “universal unity among all mankind,” and to “universal brotherhood” leading to the end of prejudice and discrimination.¹⁴⁸ For Khan, contemporary Muslims do not measure up to the example of the Prophet Muhammad by holding the Muslim community first and everyone else second. Likewise, the universality of the message of Islam and the example of the Prophet Muhammad are compromised by the aim of building a community or state for the Muslims only.

Instead of what Khan presents as the communalistic tendencies of his contemporary Muslims, to follow in the footsteps of the Prophet means an ideal of universal gentleness. He quotes several hadith to support this claim, for instance: “The Prophet, during his night prayer, used to say: ‘O God, I bear witness that all human beings are brothers’. (*An-Nasa’i*)”, “That one will not enter Paradise whose neighbour is not secure against his mischief (*Muslim*),” and; “‘God is gentle and loves gentleness in all things’ (*Bukhari & Muslim*).”¹⁴⁹ The selected hadith and the imperative headline, “Behaviour of a Muslim in his environment” is a clear spur for normative conduct. They seek to create a Muslim ideal of gentleness, living and working in service to other humans irrespective of race or creed, and kindness to women, animals, and nature.¹⁵⁰ Related to the latter topic, Khan mentioned during an interview how his own lifelong vegetarianism and refusal to kill animals is a manifestation of his inherently peaceable nature.¹⁵¹

For Khan, authentic and timeless Islam is based on the scriptural sources, therefore, the connection between a Muslim and Muhammad is based on the criteria of living up to the example of the Prophet. Because the Quran and hadith are presented in terms of non-violence and peace, a Muslim who fails to live up to the necessary requirements of non-violence and peace cannot make a claim to follow the Prophet Muhammad. The Prophet, therefore, does not belong to the Muslims, he is a guide to all humanity. However, Khan’s positions can be analysed in light of several contextual issues. The value of a united humanity as inherent in the Prophet’s behaviour towards the Jews of Medina is related to contemporary Muslim positions toward the Israel-Palestine conflict and the accompanying perceptions of Jews and Jewishness, while the Prophet himself never “spoke any harsh language against the Jews.” Khan’s presentation of the Palestinian’s unwillingness to sue for “peace for peace’s sake,” and appreciative descriptions of democracy and prosperity in Israel in other writings, suggests Khan’s criticism of the issues of Muslim community mobilisation, which he formulates as the opposite of the Islamic value

¹⁴⁸ Khan, *Quranic Wisdom*, 95.

¹⁴⁹ Khan, *Islam and Peace*, 24–25.

¹⁵⁰ Khan, *Islam and Peace*, 24–27.

¹⁵¹ Interview on 13th December 2013, 25.

of “universal brotherhood.” As will be seen in Chapter 7, this may also be understood as a religious legitimization of the Indian government’s foreign policy of close, strategic relations to Israel, at least since the late 1990s. Khan’s position that Islam teaches the value of universal gentleness can be related to fraught Hindu-Muslim relations in contemporary Indian society. The fundamentals of this line of analysis will be discussed in the following section, along with an analytical note on Khan’s vegetarianism.

6.5.3 Contextual Analysis

As we saw in Chapters 2 and 5, the Hindu Right employ images of the backward and violent Muslim minority. Meanwhile, Khan presents tolerance, patience, cooperation, education, thriftiness, and the ability to peacefully negotiate and manage conflicts as the epitome of Islamic values. Such traits can be fitted into a framework of liberal democracy, a pluralist society, and capitalist economic settings. This can be analysed as a reference to Hindu Right presentations of an Islam in opposition to the Indian nation and the society. Instead, Khan separates Islam from Muslim behaviour by formulating peaceful and tolerant behaviour as commanded by Islam, hence, Muslims should behave and do better in contemporary society. It is ideal religious behaviour for a Muslim to be friendly, tolerant, peaceful, cooperative, and in every manner a respectable and well-thought-of citizen. But, Muslims have failed to be open-minded, even universally minded, kind, generous, working for the common good, and therefore well thought of and respected citizens of contemporary India. Because, in Khan’s presentation, Islam demands gentleness and especially, not to be a “problem community,” he not only makes the Muslim community responsible for the tensions of Hindu-Muslim relations, the negative views of Muslims are their own fault, for failing to live up to the universal peaceful teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. It is the religious responsibility of Muslims to improve their relations with their neighbours and fellow citizens.

In closing, a few remarks regarding vegetarianism in Indian society and the case of Khan will be noted. Khan cites the importance of kindness and to be a peaceful person also with regard to animals as motivation for his vegetarianism. However, his vegetarianism may be analysed as related to social factors and the status of vegetarian diet in Indian society. Using the concept of *Sanskritisation* developed by M.N Srinivas, Christophe Jaffrelot describes certain aspects of the social consensus of high-caste practices. Jaffrelot argues that vegetarianism is one of the

most socially prestigious aspects of the Brahmin diet.¹⁵² The focus of Jaffrelot is on how the adoption of vegetarianism is related to upward social mobility among lower castes. Embracing vegetarianism reveals a type of consensus regarding social values in Indian society: “all the groups admitting the values of the upper castes as the most respectable ones.”¹⁵³ However, social mobility in terms of caste, and its associated conflicts and negotiations, should not be seen as the main aspect of Khan’s vegetarianism. Furthermore, I also argue that Khan’s vegetarian diet is not a direct reaction to cow vigilantes and BJP attempts of religious dietary state legislation. Khan was a vegetarian before such relatively recent developments. Instead, it may be argued that his vegetarianism reveals what it means to be “a non-problem person” in practice. By adhering to a generally agreed upon social practice, he enacts one core value which sustains the social system. Since the prevailing consensus of the status of high caste practices is at the core of the stability of the social system, several central ideas of Khan, such as “entering the mainstream,” the importance of “social status quo-ism,” or the ideas of not challenging political or social authority, can be interpreted as put into practice by Khan’s vegetarianism.

6.6 Jihad: a Cause of God

This section will describe Khan’s presentations of jihad and how he applies this concept in relation to Islam, non-violence, and peace. To begin with, while Khan says that jihad means ‘to struggle’ or ‘to strive’; the struggles are for the development of peaceful minds and practices. Non-violent peaceful struggles are the only type of strivings which carry the merits of God. In this sense, jihad is a form of worship, provided by Islam, which gives “divine reward.”¹⁵⁴ As such, jihad as non-violence and peace should be at the centre of the devout Muslim’s life as an integral part of a daily struggle for gaining merit with God, which may allow a person to enter into paradise.

Central to his position, Khan thinks that the development of modern weapons of mass destruction makes violent jihad an impossibility in the contemporary period. Moreover, the concept of jihad as signifying a violent cause can only be applied in wars fought in legitimate self-defence by an already established state. Therefore, he rejects that the concept of jihad in itself legitimises violent actions. For instance, the Quranic injunction in 2:193, “Fight them until there is no more *fitna*” is presented by Khan as a fight against despotism and oppression

¹⁵² Christophe Jaffrelot, “The Politics of Caste Identities,” in Dalmia and Sadana, *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Indian Culture*, 81. See also, Jaffrelot, *Religion, Caste and Politics*, 487.

¹⁵³ Jaffrelot, “The Politics of Caste Identities,” 81.

¹⁵⁴ Khan, *Islam and World Peace*, 106.

during the early stages of Islam.¹⁵⁵ The fight against *fitna* is not only historically ended, this aspect of Islamic sacred history caused an intellectually liberating force in human history. By ending despotism, Islam started a new era of intellectual and religious freedom, in other words, a type of freedom of conscience leading up to our own time.

6.6.1 *Jihad: a Peaceful Struggle*

Considering the semantic roots of jihad, Khan refuses the notions of equating the Quranic themes of jihad with fighting or warfare. He asserts that the Quranic word used to denote fighting or warfare is *kitāl*.¹⁵⁶ According to Khan, the Arabic word *jihad* should instead be seen as being equivalent to striving or struggling.¹⁵⁷ This usage can be seen in his translation of Sura 22:78:

Strive for the cause of God as it behoves you to strive for it. He has chosen you and laid on you no burden in the matter of your religion [...]. In this, as in former scriptures, He has given you the name of Muslims, so that the Messenger may be a witness over you, and so that you may be witnesses over mankind.¹⁵⁸

In his commentary on this verse, Khan's systematic emphasis on striving is apparent. The striving is to make "all communities and nations," aware of "the true and eternal religion of God."¹⁵⁹ This was the striving, jihad, carried out by the Prophet Muhammad and his companions. Contemporary Muslims as "followers" of the Prophet are correspondingly obliged to continue the striving by letting the words of the Quran be heard by everyone. This line of thinking is apparent in Khan's translation of Sura 25:52: "Strive with the utmost strenuousness by means of this [Quran, to convey its message to them]."¹⁶⁰ In his commentary on the verse, Khan develops the idea that: "The great jihad by means of the Quran means a peaceful struggle to spread the word of God [and] peaceful struggle is the real jihad – nay, the greatest jihad."¹⁶¹ During an interview, Khan recited Sura 25:52 and explained that the verse can only mean a peaceful struggle: "It means: Do great jihad with the help of the Quran. You know, the Quran

¹⁵⁵ Khan, *The Quran*, 76.

¹⁵⁶ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 94.

¹⁵⁷ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 87.

¹⁵⁸ Khan, *The Quran*, 1043.

¹⁵⁹ Khan, *The Quran*, 1043.

¹⁶⁰ Square brackets in the original quote. Khan, *The Quran*, 1111.

¹⁶¹ . Khan, *The Quran*, 1111.

is a book, not a sword.”¹⁶² In light-hearted spirit, Khan puts forward the nonsensicality of people who misinterpret that striving with a book means warfare with actual weapons, you cannot fight with a text in hand but you can attempt to convince others. Also, in his work *Islam and Peace* (1999), Khan writes that jihad with the Quran means an ideological struggle to win “the hearts and minds” to the superior non-violence philosophy that is Islam.¹⁶³

When interviewed in Delhi, Khan explained that true believers will always have the blessing of God, citing verse 23:1: “Successful indeed are the believers.”¹⁶⁴ After reciting this verse, he said that the verse means that:

If you are a true believer, you will be successful. So I find that Muslims are fighting since two hundred years and presenting [violent] Jihad among Muslims has a long history and, perhaps, for more than two hundred years it has been in vain, and with no positive results. So for me this was the question: If God is with us, if God is on my side, then why are the Muslims failing? The Quran is ensuring that God is always on the believers’ side, but the Muslims’ [cause of violent jihad] is a total failure.¹⁶⁵

The two centuries of violent jihad in vain is likely a reference to the early nineteenth century campaigns of Sayyid Aḥmad Brēlwī, but the central point is Khan’s description of the failures, of the Muslim community. The Muslim community is not currently blessed by God: “They’re following a wrong track, and then they cannot hope for divine help.”¹⁶⁶ Instead, the only way to success is to “abandon the militant course” and thereby regain divine favour for the Muslims.¹⁶⁷

In fact, the peaceful struggle to disseminate the authentic teachings of Islam is so central to Khan’s general argument that one of the foremost things he said during the first interview in Delhi was, as seen in Chapter 1: “When you try to change people’s minds, when you try to change people’s ways of thinking, when you try to change people’s hearts, then violence becomes irrelevant.”¹⁶⁸ In essence, this quote demonstrates how he presents the concept of jihad, which is at the core of his thinking on Islam, non-violence, and peace.

¹⁶² Interview on 13th December 2013, 6.

¹⁶³ Khan, *Islam and Peace*, 171.

¹⁶⁴ Khan, *The Quran*, 1044.

¹⁶⁵ Interview on 13th December 2013, 7.

¹⁶⁶ Interview on 13th December 2013, 7.

¹⁶⁷ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 55.

¹⁶⁸ Interview on 13th December 2013, 2.

6.6.2 Righteousness in War

According to Khan, Islam provides rules of conduct in war, such as separating fighters from non-fighters – and never hurting an innocent – which means that the development of modern war technology or “explosive weapons which do widespread damage” clearly makes modern warfare illegal in Islam.¹⁶⁹ Simply, Khan sees wholly different characteristics of war in “the agricultural age,” and the “industrial age.”¹⁷⁰ Armies equipped with bows, arrows, and spears could focus their devastation on the soldiers on the battlefield while modern warfare “cannot do otherwise than kill a large number of non-combatants along with the combatants.”¹⁷¹ Hence, the absolute Islamic ruling to avoid harm to non-fighters makes war with weapons of mass destruction a crime.¹⁷² As will be explored in Chapter 8, Chaiwat-Satha Anand reaches similar conclusions. This ideological and religious similarity will be analysed and theorised in the concluding chapters of this study.

For Khan, if a situation arises during a time of war in which civilians cannot be distinguished from the attacking aggressor, to “avoid war” is a lesser evil than the “greater evil” which is “to kill non-combatants in a war.” Such moral prioritising is what “reason” and the “Islamic Sharia” both demand.¹⁷³ As is obvious, Khan thinks that in the context of modern weaponry, earlier Muslim juristic rulings of engagement in violence need to be reconsidered in favour of non-violence and peace.

However, this theme is also related to another, far more wide-ranging feature of Khan’s ideology – that with the modern period there are so many other possibilities than violence. Khan believes that the modern era not only makes non-violent options available. As seen, the strivings of Muslims who wish to further the cause of Islam through peaceful means also have the blessings of God, hence Islam and modern conditions are fundamentally harmonious. This line of Khan’s reasoning is touched upon throughout this study. It sustains his claim to *idjtiḥād* and can be analysed as a sort of religious legitimisation or perhaps “re-enchantment” of modern conditions and its new possibilities and constraints in relation to earlier, Muslim juristic social and political conditions.

¹⁶⁹ Khan, *The Ideology of Peace*, 23. Khan, *The True Jihad*, 37–38.

¹⁷⁰ Khan, *The Ideology of Peace*, 23.

¹⁷¹ Khan, *The True Jihad*, 11. Khan, *The Ideology of Peace*, 23.

¹⁷² Khan, *The Ideology of Peace*, 23.

¹⁷³ Khan, *Islam and World Peace*, 111.

6.6.3 Righteousness of War

The Muslim debate on the difference in character, chronology, and content of the revelations from the Meccan and the Medina period date back at least to the eighth century.¹⁷⁴ For Khan, the Prophet Muhammad's defensive military actions as head of the "city state" of Medina should be compared with the peaceful activities in Mecca when the Prophet also faced hostilities. This difference leads Khan to say: "Islam allows us to go on the defence, if [the aggression] is against the state." Hence, Khan sees a defensive war by an established state as lawful in Islam because "in Medina, there was aggression against an established state."¹⁷⁵

In fact, Khan also states that defensive warfare is upheld by the Quran, by using Sura 22:39: "Permission to fight is granted to those who are attacked, because they have been wronged."¹⁷⁶ In his commentary, Khan repeats how this verse relates to wars that are "defensive, never aggressive."¹⁷⁷ Furthermore, Khan cites Sura 2:190 "And fight in God's cause against those who wage war against you, but do not commit aggression,"¹⁷⁸ and Sura 9:13 "They were the first to attack you,"¹⁷⁹ which, for Khan, displays that defensive wars are not only allowed in Islam but that, in fact, Muslims are obliged to resist an attack. However, such verses are also used by Khan to say that all non-violent means of solving the conflict must have been first attempted.¹⁸⁰ Even a defensive war is strictly regulated for the fighting to be approved according to Islamic criteria. According to Khan, the stringently defensive nature of jihad as fighting involves, as seen, the rules of not harming non-combatants.¹⁸¹

Khan argues that jihad can mean fighting, while it always and necessarily involves an already established state taking defensive measures to protect its citizens. This has two important implications in his general thought; the illegality of Muslim terrorist groups and the international community basis for what counts as an established state.

Khan writes that: "According to Islam, the use of arms is the prerogative of the state. No NGO is allowed to use arms." Warfare by "the common man" or by any "individual organizations," is, therefore, forbidden in Islam.¹⁸² Khan makes this argument by using Sura 4:83: "Any news [...] of peace or of something fearful [...] spread it [...] to the Messenger and to the men in

¹⁷⁴ Michael Cook, *The Koran: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 130.

¹⁷⁵ Interview on 13th December 2013, 4.

¹⁷⁶ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 109, Khan, *The Quran*, 1027.

¹⁷⁷ Khan, *The Quran*, 1027.

¹⁷⁸ Khan, *The Quran*, 76.

¹⁷⁹ Khan, *The Quran*, 518.

¹⁸⁰ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 110.

¹⁸¹ Khan, *The True Jihad*, 37.

¹⁸² Khan, *The True Jihad*, 36–37.

charge.”¹⁸³ The Prophet Muhammad and the “men in charge” means the proper and established government, hence, individual military action, even in the face of an attack, is not allowed in Islam. Khan claims that the believer must first inform the state authorities and then abide by the lawful government’s course of action. Only if the state answers the attack, by openly declaring war, can individuals and organisations join in the war in support of the state.¹⁸⁴

Hence, the open announcement of state warfare is of great significance, an argument that Khan supports by quoting Sura 8:58: “If you learn of treachery, throw their treaty back at them.”¹⁸⁵ He holds that Sura 8:58 implies that “proxy war” is illegal in Islamic terms.¹⁸⁶ By “proxy war” he means “undeclared war” or “secret war,” both of which are “unlawful” in Islam.¹⁸⁷ In a contextual analysis, this argument should be understood as related to the recurrent attacks on the Indian army in Jammu and Kashmir by Muslim insurgents with links to Pakistan’s intelligence services. These individuals and organisations are acting against what is formulated by Khan as a fundamental principle in Islam. Likewise, the argument implies the Pakistani government who does not openly declare war but engage in a covert war with Indian troops. In that sense, Khan may be said to reject any claim of Islamic principles behind Pakistan’s military policies and, perhaps, in favour of India’s right to defend itself (see Chapter 7).

The dual importance that only an *attacked state* that *openly declares* war can be considered legal in Islam made me ask Khan during an interview, what characteristics the state must have to engage in warfare. I wanted to know if the nature of the state, i.e. if the state is secular, Muslim, or Islamic, changed the legal status of warfare. Khan answered that in fact, any “established” state can legally defend itself. He also added that “according to the present concept, a state is one that is established, but also one that is recognised by the United Nations.”¹⁸⁸ What is considered an established state, which is an important Muslim legal discussion relating to proper authority, levying of taxes, upholding the law, and warfare is thus formulated by Khan with reference to the modern development of the United Nations. The topic of international norms and the international community is an important and repeated topic in Khan’s thinking and is therefore dealt with separately below.

¹⁸³ Khan, *The Quran*, 230.

¹⁸⁴ Khan, *The True Jihad*, 36–37.

¹⁸⁵ Khan, *The Quran*, 506. The importance attached to the public declaration of warfare can be said to be in line with much Muslim exegesis of this particular verse. See Asad, *The Message of the Qur’an*, 298–299.

¹⁸⁶ Khan, *The True Jihad*, 37. See also: Interview on 9 December 2014, 5.

¹⁸⁷ Interview on 9 December 2014, 6–7.

¹⁸⁸ Interview on 9 December 2014, 8.

6.6.4 Uprisings and Alternatives

Khan thinks that there are regulations against insurgency versus the state in Islam. He quotes a hadith, even when rulers become tyrannical; “Muslims should not wield their swords against them.” Instead they shall “move to the mountains with their goats and camels.” The descriptions of livestock and migration, Khan holds, mean that there are always pursuable “non-political” prospects that become apparent only “by ignoring the political problem.”¹⁸⁹ On one hand, this argument demonstrates the general emphasis Khan places on “peace for the sake of peace,” i.e., that peace is the necessary “method” whereby “you can attain other things by your struggle, your approach.”¹⁹⁰ On the other hand, it is an example of how the new conditions of the modern era are formulated by Khan; Muslims have access to a range of peaceful actions for fulfilling the alleged purposes of Islam. When there are peaceful alternatives, they must be pursued, according to Khan’s presentation of Islam.¹⁹¹

Khan also quotes two different hadith: “Any one of you who finds in his ruler something which he dislikes ought to remain patient,” and: “Give the rulers the right due to them and ask God for your rights.”¹⁹² Khan claims that the meaning of these hadith are similar to the words by Jesus, “Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” from Luke 20:25. Their similar meaning are proof for the veracity of what Khan perceives as shared Christian and Muslim teachings against rebellion.¹⁹³

Supporting the idea of peaceful options to rebellion, Khan presents a lesson from Muslim history. Instead of fighting against “oppressive rulers” during the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates, “traditionists, jurists, *ulama*, sufis, and other great religious scholars” concentrated on the development of *fiqh*, collecting and evaluating hadith, and spreading the Islamic faith. Khan suggests that had these early scholars of Islam opted for rebellion against despotic rulers, all of this “constructive work” would never have been completed.¹⁹⁴

This can be interpreted as an argument directed at contemporary Muslims; non-violent alternatives to armed rebellion are far superior ways of spreading and maintaining Islam. Thus, Muslims should always avoid fighting rulers, both Muslim and others. Instead, there are other avenues of peaceful actions which furthers Islam. Avoiding engagement with a corrupt state

¹⁸⁹ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 107–108.

¹⁹⁰ Interview on 13th December 2013, 5.

¹⁹¹ Khan, *The Age of Peace*, 62.

¹⁹² Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 101. In fact, Khan builds on established Sunni Muslim legal traditions to avoid rebellions and coup d’états, see, for instance, William E. Shepard, *Introducing Islam: Second Edition* (London: Routledge, 2014), 130.

¹⁹³ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 102.

¹⁹⁴ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 106–109.

secures the “social institutions” that upholds Islam.¹⁹⁵ Hence, Khan’s position of Islam, non-violence, and peace addresses both the debated ideological and religious issues, and the political and social situation. This can be seen when Khan says that as soon as a campaign is launched against the state in the name of Islam, the government or ruler will suppress “Islamic activities.” Hence, Muslims will lose important opportunities for furthering the causes of Islam. I argue that this argument should be interpreted in the light of how Muslim radical politics are rhetorically presented in contemporary Indian politics, and how this threatens to limit the religious freedom of Muslim actors, like Khan and the CPS, in terms of debate and proselytisation. In addition, Khan states that the general conditions of war preparations benefit the state, which can easily and openly get its defences ready. Insurgents, however, must prepare their rebellion in secret. As a consequence, the state will use its superior strength against insurgents, unavoidably leading to the “loss of life and property.”¹⁹⁶ Rebellion is then, all things considered, ultimately fruitless according to Khan. Hence, contemporary Indian Muslim insurgents, for instance in Jammu and Kashmir or in Mumbai must avoid violence because the loss of life and property is, as previously seen, Khan’s definition of *fasād*, which is disliked by God and must be avoided. And because rebellion is ultimately fruitless, these Muslims must instead acquire a non-violent approach if they want to further Islam.

6.6.5 Martyrdom and Terror

Martyrdom operations are denounced by Khan because “according to Islam we can become martyrs, but we cannot court a martyr’s death deliberately.”¹⁹⁷ He supports his own position on the debated Sura 8: 60: “Prepare any strength you can muster against them, and any cavalry with which you can overawe God’s enemy and your own enemy.” In Khan’s commentary, he elaborates that Sura 8:60 only shows the responsibility to prepare deterrent military defences as a “demonstration of force.”¹⁹⁸ Enemy aggression is avoided by “striking terror” and “awe” through defence “preparations.” In Khan’s words, “the verse offers us a peaceful strategy to counter the enemy.”¹⁹⁹ For this reason, Khan thinks that Sura 8:60 only means building a strong defence to deter warfare and attacks. He, therefore, explicitly refutes those “Muslim religious scholars” who use Sura 8:60 to legitimise suicide attacks.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁵ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 109.

¹⁹⁶ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 103. Also note a reference to Khan’s definition of *fasād*, as we saw.

¹⁹⁷ Khan, *The True Jihad*, 38.

¹⁹⁸ Khan, *The Quran*, 507.

¹⁹⁹ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 94.

²⁰⁰ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 93.

Thus, at one stroke Khan formulates two different ideas. One is a type of constraining military theory of defence in Islam and the other involves opposition to suicide bombing in Islam. Regarding the first idea, the building of a powerful state army is not only important for maintaining the peace, it is an Islamic injunction of correct policy to avoid war by preparing defences. The necessity of a “demonstration of force” as a “peaceful strategy” also reveals something of what Khan means when he refers to “peace” and “peaceful.” His position is not a complete pacifist denunciation of military might and weaponry; the powerful defence of an established state is both lawful and necessary.²⁰¹

Regarding the second idea, Khan also directly refutes the usage of sacred history to make suicide operations legal in Islam and mentions the debated examples of the solo attack on enemy fortifications by the soldier al-Barā’ ibn Mālik, during the rule of Abū Bakr, and the example of the soldier “Quzmanuz Zufra,” who fought alongside the Prophet. Khan argues that al-Barā’ ibn Mālik, climbing an enclosure and facing numerous enemies before he was killed, was a soldier “taking risks.”²⁰² Such dangerous military strategies are in no way comparable with suicide bombings, when the “bomber [...] decides in advance that he must die.”²⁰³ Furthermore, the Prophet Muhammad is reported to have said that the soldier “Quzmanuz Zufra” would go to hell because he ended his own life on the battlefield after becoming, in Khan’s presentation, “gravely wounded.”²⁰⁴ Muhammad’s rebuke of the soldier’s suicide is used by Khan to mean that suicide is always and in every circumstance, including warfare, “totally forbidden (*haram*) in Islam.”²⁰⁵

6.6.6 Fight against Unbelievers: Kāfir

As we saw in Chapter 5, Khan’s position regarding the unlawfulness of *takfir*, ‘to declare someone a *kāfir*,’ was formulated against the backdrop of Hindu-Muslim violence in Indian society in the 1990s. After that period, Khan has presented several arguments about the unlawfulness of *takfir*. The base structure of Khan’s argument is a presentation of Sura 109:

²⁰¹ The importance of analysing civil resistance, as separate, yet interconnected to armed force, and the historical necessity of restraining military defences for upholding regional peace, have been pointed out by Adam Roberts, see the “Introduction” in *Civil Resistance and Power Politics: The Experience of Non-Violent Action from Gandhi to the Present*, ed. Adam Roberts and Timothy Garton Ash (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 12.

²⁰² I have not been able to find any mention of “Quzmanuz Zufra,” nor any of its similar transliterations in the literature or the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*. Therefore, I quote Khan’s transliteration.

²⁰³ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 96.

²⁰⁴ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 97.

²⁰⁵ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 96.

Say, 'You who deny the truth, I do not worship what you worship. You do not worship what I worship. I will never worship what you worship. You will never worship what I worship. You have your religion and I have mine.'²⁰⁶

As can be seen in Khan's commentary, his understanding of the word *kāfir*, is that God refers to the specific people in Mecca "whom the Prophet had addressed [...] as deniers." Since God is speaking in the verse, it suggests that: "No human being enjoys the right to declare anyone a deniar [sic]."²⁰⁷ In another work, Khan develops this line of thinking: "hardly anyone but God can claim to know a person well enough to make such a pronouncement."²⁰⁸ Hence, the pronouncement of calling someone a *kāfir* is God's own privilege, which Muslims may not contradict. Especially, Muslims may not call someone a *kāfir* and then fight them at will. According to Khan as seen, the only fighting which is legitimate in Islam is in defence of the state.

For Khan, Sura 109 instead advises Muslims "to practice tolerance towards non-Muslims and [the chapter] tells us to treat them with respect." This presentation is based on seeing the verse in its historical setting and the chronology of revelations. Since Sura 109 is from the late Meccan period, God refers to certain Meccan individuals as *kāfir*. This is because, after thirteen years of "spreading the message of God to everyone, without imposing it upon anyone," they still rejected the Prophet Muhammad.²⁰⁹ The implications are, first, that there is nothing to suggest the legality of killing a *kāfir* in Islam. The *kāfir* described in the Quran may be an enemy, but an enemy may not legally be killed, only an attacker or aggressor may be killed in strict defence.²¹⁰ Second, the Quranic use of *kāfir* is strictly limited: "The word *kāfir* is not synonymous with non-Muslim" and is not applied to "unbelievers" or "infidels." Instead, Khan says that the main Quranic term used for addressing non-Muslim people is "human beings (*insaan*)."²¹¹ Or, Khan says, the pattern of the Quran is that groups are referred to by their own national designation. Therefore, addressing people should only be done "by the name it has adopted for itself."²¹¹ In other words, Khan describes the idea of designating people *kāfir*, which is as an aspect of religious inter-group conflict in Indian society, as unlawful in Islam. It upsets the peace and falsely legitimates Muslim violence. Instead, non-Muslims should only respectfully be referred to as fellow human beings, or by its own community name.

²⁰⁶ Khan, *The Quran*, 1745.

²⁰⁷ Khan, *The Quran*, 1745.

²⁰⁸ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 107.

²⁰⁹ Khan, *The Quran*, 1745.

²¹⁰ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 104.

²¹¹ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 105.

Khan continues in the same vein by criticising violent presentations of Sura 9:12: “fight these leaders of unbelief.”²¹² For Sura 9:12 refers only to the Quraysh, who at the time of revelation held the leadership of Arabia, he holds. He describes, therefore, how it is not the *kufṛ* designation, as such, that is the reason for warfare.²¹³ The *kufṛ* in Sura 9:12 is also an aggressor and attacker. Lawful self-defence is the legal reason why the *kufṛ* must be fought against. Khan declares that a “war in Islam is not against deniers per se, but against the aggressors.”²¹⁴

As we can see in these examples, Khan’s consistent position is that the sole *ratio legis*, or ‘illa in Islamic jurisprudence, for legitimate warfare is when there is an aggressive attack on an established state.²¹⁵ No other type of violence is legal in Islam.

6.6.7 Fitna is No More: the Progress of Freedom

In his Quran translation, Khan formulates *fitna* as meaning ‘religious persecution’. This section will aim to highlight how Khan describes the concept of *fitna* as a form of historical persecution, an ancient systematic oppression of people, their faith, and their practices that were abolished only because of Islam. In Sura 2:190–193, and Sura 8:39, respectively, the word *fitna* occurs. In Khan’s translations:

And fight in God’s cause against those who wage war against you, but do not commit aggression, for surely, God does not love aggressors. Slay them wherever you find them [those who fight against you]; drive them out of the places from which they drove you for [religious] persecution is worse than killing. [...] Fight them until there is no more *fitna* [religious persecution] and religion belongs to God alone.²¹⁶

Fight them until there is no more [religious] persecution, and religion belongs wholly to God.²¹⁷

In Khan’s commentary, he makes two main points in his presentations of verses 2:190 to 2:193. First, the injunction to fight is not general, but strictly related to the Prophet’s defensive battles against the Quraysh armies of Mecca. Sura 2:190 describes a specific time and place during the

²¹² Khan, *The Quran*, 518.

²¹³ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 106.

²¹⁴ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 107.

²¹⁵ Wael B. Hallaq, *A History of Islamic Legal Theories: An Introduction to Sunnī uṣūl al-fiqh* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 23.

²¹⁶ Khan, *The Quran*, 76.

²¹⁷ Khan, *The Quran*, 499.

life of the Prophet Muhammad and cannot be applied to any other time, that is, any current situation. Khan's view is supported by referring to "Abdullah ibn Umar, a senior companion of the Prophet" who, Khan thinks, said that "this verse referred to the coercive religious system that prevailed in the ancient world."²¹⁸ Ibn Umar argued against the views of some of his contemporary Muslims, who after the death of the Prophet Muhammad wanted to go to war and supported their view by referring to *fitna*. Therefore, in Khan's presentation, the Quranic verses regarding *fitna* cannot be used to legitimise violence in Islam.

Second, Khan uses ibn Umar's statements to say that Islam ended a form of ancient oppression, and therefore, Islam initiated a new era of intellectual freedom in human history which eventually culminates in the contemporary era: "In the wake of the Islamic revolution [i.e. the time of the Prophet Muhammad], religious persecution was replaced by intellectual freedom."²¹⁹ In this way, Islam and the completed fight against *fitna* had far-reaching consequences for the development of freedom.

When I asked Khan during an interview about his views of *fitna*, he explained that *fitna* in the Quran refers strictly to the battles fought by the Prophet and his companions to "remove religious persecution."²²⁰ Since "the war against *fitna*" was both "temporary" and of "limited duration," it was "to be engaged in, only until its specific purpose had been served."²²¹ Khan states that it is impossible to use these verses to legitimate fighting in Islamic terms, because: "according to my study, there is no question to revive that *fitna*. *Fitna* is no more. Now, all these wars are unwanted wars. But, you cannot use the verse of *fitna*."²²²

In conclusion, with regard to both *kāfir* and *fitna*, the structure of Khan's arguments is similar. These examples reveal that calls to violence in the Quran are seen by Khan as strictly limited to the exact situation the particular verse refers to. Therefore, he presents the Quranic calls for violence as having their place only in the Prophet's space and time. However, Khan regards the Quranic themes of patience, peace, non-violence, and respect for shared humanity, as the general, eternal, and universal Islamic message.

As seen, the end of *fitna*, in the situation of jihad-as-fighting during the time of the Prophet, meant important steps for advancing intellectual freedom: Islam set progressive forces in

²¹⁸ Khan, *The Quran*, 76. Note how ibn Umar's statements are quoted from the *Fath al-bārī*, a voluminous and influential medieval treatise on the *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī* hadith collection, written by Ibn Hajar (d. 1449). This work had been prepared for publication and widely disseminated even far beyond India by the Ahl-i ḥadīth affiliated scholar and husband of the ruler of Bhopal, Siddiq Hasan Khan (d. 1890). See also, Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam*, 40.

²¹⁹ Khan, *The Quran*, 76.

²²⁰ Interview on 6 December 2014, 50.

²²¹ Khan, *The Quran*, 76.

²²² Interview on 6 December 2014, 53.

motion, leading up to the liberating aspects of modern society.²²³ Since this aspect of the fight against religious oppression is not a direct part of Khan's thinking regarding jihad, it will be dealt with in the section on Khan's ideas regarding Islam in modern and global society below.

6.6.8 *Islam, Aggressors, and Enemies*

An important topic in Khan's arguments is an entirely theistic cosmos – God directs everything. Hence, Islam is perceived to continue the Abrahamic tradition of God intervening in history to direct, punish, and warn his people. God sends “oppressors” as words of warning to the Muslims when “perversion” sets in.²²⁴ However, the “Muslims” fail to heed the divine warnings and instead they have developed ideas and practices which legitimate “hatred and violence” against their alleged enemies. But, warnings sent by God in the form of political events are actually exhortations for “self-reform,” according to Khan.²²⁵ Muslims should therefore examine their own actions and notice God's warnings by developing their ability for introspection and self-criticism.

Muslims, and especially Muslim leaders, are seen as gravely mistaken when they treat oppression as legitimating the use of violence. According to Khan, the Muslim sense of threat and victimisation is at the core of violence in the name of Islam: A “defeatist [...] besieged mentality” creates a dual image of “oppressed and [...] oppressors.” It results in an urgent sense of having an *enemy* which Khan refers to as a kind of “negative psychology.” He writes that such people “are willing to engage in any activity whatsoever, no matter how damaging to humanity or contrary to religion it might be.”²²⁶ However, the presence of an enemy “does not give them the right to attack [...]”.²²⁷ To repeat, the only form of legal fighting in Islam is the turning away of an *aggressor* by an established state. Therefore, it is crucial to differentiate between an “enemy” and an “aggressor.”²²⁸ Khan says that the Quran 41:33–34 shows how Muslims should deal with an enemy:

²²³ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 233.

²²⁴ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 82.

²²⁵ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 82.

²²⁶ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 152.

²²⁷ Khan, *The True Jihad*, 40.

²²⁸ Khan, *The True Jihad*, 39.

Who speaks better than one who calls to God and does good works and says, “I am surely of those who submit?” Good and evil deeds are not equal. Repel evil with what is better; then you will see that one who was once your enemy has become your dearest friend, but no one will be granted such goodness except those who exercise patience and self-restraint.²²⁹

For Khan, the “preacher of God,” “the preacher of Truth,” and “caller to Truth,” should not only “invite people to God.” Such a person’s “greatest weapon” is the ability to “treat other people well” and “he should adopt the policy of avoidance in the face of provocation [...] and exercise patience under trying circumstances.” It is God who “has made it possible for unilateral good behaviour to be immensely persuasive.” The “urge to retaliate” must be put down, it is in fact “the duty of every believer [...] to seek the protection of God from such feelings instead of acting upon them,” even when a deterrent strike might “prevent the enemy from becoming as bold as to commit even greater excesses.”²³⁰ As is clear, for Khan, Islam urges Muslims to return good for evil. The purposes of one-sided good behaviour should be seen as its importance in the social processes of proselytisation. Furthermore, violence, and the urge to strike are seen as psychological phenomena, which are understood by Khan as something wholly other than, and in opposition to Islam. In fact, Islam seeks to counteract negative psychology and violent urges.

6.6.9 *Jihad and Purification*

Khan writes that “the true Islamic jihad as it relates to the individual is a positive and continuous process which is at work throughout the entire life of a believer.”²³¹ Therefore, jihad is a main Islamic practice: “*Jihad* is a continuous action which is at the core of the believer’s life day in and day out. It is an ongoing process.”²³² This is referred to as “*jihad-e-nafs*,” defined as the struggle to be able to “control one’s negative and undesirable feelings within oneself and to persevere in the life of God’s choice in all circumstances.”²³³ Khan states that jihad means the daily struggle with the negative and undesirable “within oneself”:

²²⁹ Khan, *The Quran*, 1428.

²³⁰ Khan, *The Quran*, 1428.

²³¹ Khan, *The True Jihad*, 27–28.

²³² Khan, *The True Jihad*, 14.

²³³ Khan, *The True Jihad*, 28.

The desires of the self, the urge to serve one's own interests, the compulsion of social traditions, the need for compromises, ego problems, greed for wealth [...]. Overcoming all such hurdles and persevering in obeying God's commands are the real *jihad*.²³⁴

“God's choice,” or “God's commands,” are, according to Khan, to live a life of growth, learning, and reflection, as important means to find ways to manage conflict and problems through “suppressing [...] anger and vengefulness.” The believer must be content with actual possibilities, and avoid greed, un-justice and deceit “in order to be a principled character.”²³⁵

Taskiyya, or the “purification of the soul” is the process in which a person becomes “free of negative thinking.”²³⁶ In fact, Khan concludes that individuals must develop peaceful qualities in this life in order to receive the rewards of the next life, by referring to Sura 20:76: “He will abide forever in the Gardens of eternity, through which rivers flow. That is the recompense for those who purify themselves.”²³⁷

Taskiyya is also an important theme in Sura 2:129: “Our Lord, send forth to them a messenger of their own to recite Your revelations to them, to teach them the scripture and wisdom and purify them.”²³⁸ In his extrapolation of the verse, Khan sees purification as “one of the duties of the Prophet vis-à-vis his contemporaries.”²³⁹ Therefore, to take part in *taskiyya* means to follow the path of the Prophet Muhammad and every other prophet in Islam. In his commentary on Sura 2:129, Khan writes about the meaning of *taskiyya* and purification: “To free something from unfavourable elements [and] purify [...] all negative influences resulting from their conditioning.”²⁴⁰ Conditioning is framed as the cultural and social influences as the results of upbringing, which authentic and true Islam aims to improve and refine. Also, during an interview when I asked Khan to explain his thinking on *taskiyya*, he said: “Purification of the soul is possible only for those people who are living in peace. Peace means free of hate, free of revenge.”²⁴¹ Hence, Khan sees the peaceful qualities associated with Islam and *taskiyya* in opposition to the social forces of conditioning and the resulting incapability to deal with problems non-violently. On one hand, *taskiyya* is therefore seen as a process of “purification” and “de-conditioning” from social influences and becoming more truly “Islamic,” viz. peaceful.

²³⁴ Khan, *The True Jihad*, 14.

²³⁵ Khan, *The True Jihad*, 15.

²³⁶ Interview on 9th December 2014, 24.

²³⁷ Khan, *The Quran*, 956.

²³⁸ Khan, *The Quran*, 48.

²³⁹ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Tazkiyah: Purification of the Soul* (New Delhi: Goodword Books, 2013), 7.

²⁴⁰ Khan, *The Quran*, 48.

²⁴¹ Interview on 9th December 2014, 24.

On the other hand, *taskiyya* is construed by Khan as an intellectual process of personal growth, defined as receiving spiritual nourishment. It is the: “aim of a Prophet [...] to fashion such souls [...] that are free from all complexes; that derive their spiritual nourishment from the world around them.”²⁴² The idea of spiritual nourishment is based on Sura 20:131:

Do not regard with envy the worldly benefits We have given some of them, for with these We seek only to test them. The provision of your lord is better and more lasting.²⁴³

Khan also cites Sura 3:37, in which Mary receives provisions from God while living in the house of Zachariah:

Every time Zachariah visited her in her chamber he found some provision with her. He asked, ‘Mary, where did this provision come from?’ She replied, ‘This is from God. God provides for whoever He wills without measure.’²⁴⁴

The meaning of receiving “spiritual nourishment,” is, for Khan, to learn from events, failures, and mishaps, and thereby grow as a “spiritual person,” when confronted with the difficulties of life.²⁴⁵ The “contented soul” or “soul at peace” mentioned in Sura 89:27, which is able to “return to your Lord,”²⁴⁶ is also construed by Khan to mean “a complex free soul.”²⁴⁷ Therefore, the importance of becoming free from one’s complexes is an important topic in Khan’s thought and argumentation. During an interview, Khan explained the relation between becoming free of one’s complexes and managing one’s problems:

Every problem is manageable. Every external factor is manageable. [...] It is your complex that creates problem. If you are objective, if you have a free mind, if you have an open mind – then, there is no problem. It is your complex that creates problems, and your bias that creates problems.²⁴⁸

Khan sees a relation between failing to deal with problems and “your complex.” According to Khan, the removal of complexes through receiving spiritual nourishment from God, i.e.

²⁴² Khan, *The Quran*, 48.

²⁴³ Khan, *The Quran*, 973.

²⁴⁴ Khan, *The Quran*, 141.

²⁴⁵ Khan, *Quranic Wisdom*, 307.

²⁴⁶ Khan, *The Quran*, 1721.

²⁴⁷ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 16.

²⁴⁸ Interview on the 13th of December 2013, 21–22.

personal growth by learning from one's mistakes, is an essential part of becoming a soul at peace. In his Quran commentary, Khan presents the Arabic *nafs al-muṭma'inna*, 'tranquil soul,' in Khan's translation; "contented soul," as a person who can receive "spiritual nourishment" by learning "lessons" and who "receives guidance from historical events" as well as being able to ponder "God's signs in the universe."²⁴⁹

Reflecting etymologically on the root of the word *taskiyya*, Khan thinks that it indicates intellectual growth. Therefore, *taskiyya* is purification through a process of learning and growth in Khan's thinking and by means of "contemplation," purification can be achieved.²⁵⁰ With a reference to the term's importance in Sufi Islam, Khan sees the Sufi form of *taskiyya* mainly as meditation and other practices that he considers to be both literally mind- and useless. He explicitly refutes Sufi practices, for instance, meditation, as a means towards *taskiyya*. His own presentation of purification as an intellectual process of gaining insight is both more effective and a more authentic application of the Islamic teachings.

Therefore, Khan is aware that he uses concepts that are central in Sufi lexicons and practices and in general, maintains a distance from Sufi Islam. As seen in Chapter 2, the main sects and schools of Sunni Islam in India generally do not outright reject Sufi teachings. Instead, they seek to constrain and purify what are considered extreme and bizarre manifestations of Sufism, thought of as accretions beyond the pale of Islam. Khan may be said to be in dialogue with Sufi lexical concepts such as the "*jihad-e-nafs*," commonly construed as the individual greater jihad, an effort upon oneself for the attainment of moral and religious perfection, when he writes: "*Tazkiyah* is the result of a struggle on the part of the individual."²⁵¹ It may, therefore, be said that Khan is tacitly using and defining Sufi tenets, but, importantly, they are not marked as Sufi Islamic. Instead, his usage aims to be modern and rational. The "*jihad-e-nafs*," i.e. the struggle with one's self, is presented as a process of learning about oneself and one's social background in order to deal more efficiently and peacefully with obstacles and difficulties. It is a process of the rational mind, whereas Sufi practices are construed as obscurant ideas about purifying the literal heart. The aim of the personal and rational struggle of contemplation and purification is first to become peaceful in the here and now, and therefore be able to receive the divine blessing of life in paradise.

²⁴⁹ Khan, *The Quran*, 1721.

²⁵⁰ Khan, *Tazkiyah*, 7.

²⁵¹ Khan, *Tazkiyah*, 7.

6.6.10 Jihad through Introspection

The idea of struggling with oneself through purification and learning is said by Khan to include introspection; the removal of biases and delusions. His position is supported by Sura 3:139: “And do not become faint of heart, nor grieve – you will have the upper hand, if you are believers.”²⁵² He also quotes 3:120: “If you persevere and fear God, their designs will never harm you in the least.”²⁵³

For Khan, these verses suggest that: “The actual problem for believers is not the hatching of plots against them by their enemies, but their own lack of patience and their own failure to remain God-fearing.”²⁵⁴ During an interview, Khan discussed these themes, and Sura 3:120, both broadly and in depth: “This verse says that it is not a conspiracy that is the problem – it is your lack of patience that is the problem. A lack of management, in other words.”²⁵⁵ Khan relates the idea of managing problems to the creation plan of God. Since people have a free will, everyone will face “evils.”²⁵⁶ Khan illustrates established Sunni Muslim notions²⁵⁷ that, in Khan’s words; “the whole Universe is functioning under the compulsive laws [...] But not man.”²⁵⁸ Hence, for Khan, Islam teaches the believer to become at peace, by accepting the willed laws of God, which is also a return to their true nature. In fact, humans have to struggle through introspection to return to their true nature.²⁵⁹ When I asked Khan what true human nature is, he said:

Human nature is divine nature. God Almighty created me and he created my nature. So, by nature I am a great believer in God. By nature, I am a great believer in peace. By nature, I am a great believer in Paradise. It is interwoven in my nature. The concept of God, the concept of Paradise, the concept of truth. All these things are inculcated in my nature.²⁶⁰

During several interviews, Khan developed how he perceives the subjects of introspection and self-criticism. These are the proper tools to remove from the mind the “conditioning points” of culture. Khan describes how cultural conditioning sets in and becomes firm because of social

²⁵² Khan, *The Quran*, 171.

²⁵³ Khan, *The Quran*, 166.

²⁵⁴ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 80.

²⁵⁵ Interview on 13th December 2013, 23.

²⁵⁶ Interview on 13th December 2013, 21.

²⁵⁷ Shepard, *Introducing Islam*, 9.

²⁵⁸ Interview on 13th December 2013, 20.

²⁵⁹ Interview on 13th December 2013, 20–21.

²⁶⁰ Interview on 13th December 2013, 20.

conditions, to the degree when a person do not even understand how removed one is from their true nature. Therefore, introspection and the continuous removal of cultural conditioning is a lifelong “very hard” struggle of “persistent introspection.”²⁶¹

In sum, introspection is, for Khan, commanded by Islam. While humans “complain” and are dissatisfied, in fact, Islam always extol the search for one’s own part in misgivings. He quotes the Quran as saying: “Whatever misfortune befalls you is your own doing (42:30).”²⁶² For him, this means that thinking about others as the cause of hardships is wrong in Islam, one must immediately see one’s own faults. Through introspection, and seeing your own part in the growth of enmity, the outcome is an opportunity to avoid animosity and therefore possibilities for a better practical outcome of the situation. Vitally, the removal of cultural conditioning through introspection means the development of the true human nature, which is peace-loving and mainly concerned about God and the afterlife. Just as in the case of *taskiyya*, the juxtaposition between conditioning, which is cultural and social, and Islam, which is natural and true, is obvious in this line of reasoning. In the creation of such binary opposites, Khan also formulates, on one hand, an association between conditioning, anger, vindictiveness, and violence – and on the other hand, Islam, introspection, and peaceful problem management, which are aspects of the realisation of true human nature. These presentations should be interpreted in the light of the contextual issues of Muslim conspiracy theories, which whether true or false create a sense of enraged victimisation as a community. A central part of the communal discourse in India, it sustains rhetorical notions of the raging and violent Muslim. Khan can be interpreted as associating the bitter rage of Muslim communal issues in India and its representation with cultural and social points of “conditioning.” Instead, for Khan, true and authentic Islam teaches the avoidance of politics, conspiracy theories, and to develop the true peaceful self, by seeing one’s own fault in the development of conflict situations. However, Khan reserves to Muslims the search for own faults through introspection.

6.6.11 Jihad and Positivity

In support of Islam, non-violence, and peace, Khan often makes references to the importance of a “positive” mind-set and practice. For instance, Khan states that Muhammad always “reacted positively and peacefully.”²⁶³ He writes in *The Ideology of Peace* that: “Whenever the

²⁶¹ Interview on 6th December 2014, 20. Interview on 13th December 2013, 20.

²⁶² Khan, *Islam and World Peace*, 78.

²⁶³ Interview on 13th December 2013, 3.

state of peace prevails in a society in the real sense, its members will necessarily engage themselves in positive activities.”²⁶⁴ What positivity means can be seen in Khan’s commentary of Sura 7:68: “I am conveying my Lord’s messages to you and I am your sincere and honest adviser.” For Khan, Sura 7:68 means that the “honest adviser,” i.e., the Prophet Muhammad was a “well-wisher” of his listeners.²⁶⁵ To be positive, therefore, means to wish others well. Because Khan sees a prophetic mission in *da‘wa*, he formulates a “positive mentality” that only authentic Muslim proselytisers can develop.²⁶⁶ For Khan, Sura 7:68 is about the proper attitude and behaviour of *da‘wa*: “The call-giver [*dā‘ī*] should be such that he should have nothing in his heart except good wishes for his addressees.”²⁶⁷ Proselytising is not rivalry or competition, instead, delivering the message is giving away what already belongs to the recipient. According to Khan, just as the Prophet Muhammad, devout Muslims shall develop a “positive mentality” through and when inviting people to Islam. And, just as the Prophet was a well-wisher of mankind, calling people to Islam means in practice to wish those persons well. Therefore, well-wishing and trust should distinguish the interaction “till the last moment.”²⁶⁸

As we saw, Khan formulates, inter alia, jihad as struggling in *da‘wa*. “Positivity” and well-wishing in proselytisation is, thus, formulated by Khan as the authentic example of the Prophet Muhammad. Khan uses this line of reasoning to support his view that the two correct divisions of the geographical and social world in Islamic jurisprudence is *Dār al-Islām* and *Dār al-Da‘wa*. He argues that the Muslim juridical term *Dār al-ḥarb* is a result of the “errors of *ijtihad*.”²⁶⁹ The interaction between the only correct divisions, the house of Islam and the house of proselytisation, should be positivity and well-wishing and never hostility and warfare which is illegitimate in Islam. Khan, therefore, opposes the Muslim invocation of opposition between Islam and *Dār al-ḥarb* as such categories are invoked to legitimate violence and warfare.

6.6.12 Conclusion

As seen in Chapter 2, while warfare between India and Pakistan over Jammu and Kashmir have from the time of partition been marked by army irregulars, the 1990s saw a civil war emerging when veterans from the Afghanistan war poured into the area. Different armed Islamic groups, sometimes with conflicting political aims, have received support from Pakistani intelligence

²⁶⁴ Khan, *The Ideology of Peace*, 19.

²⁶⁵ Khan, *The Quran*, 434.

²⁶⁶ Khan, *Islam and Peace*, 191.

²⁶⁷ Khan, *The Quran*, 434.

²⁶⁸ Khan, *The Quran*, 434.

²⁶⁹ Khan, *Islam and World Peace*, 152.

agencies. From the 2000s, Pakistan largely lost control over several groups who carried out spoiler acts of terror in the name of Islam and jihad, and therefore impeding any rapprochement between the two powers. While the ongoing conflict between India and Pakistan remains one of the main obstacles to peace and stability in the region, the ideas and representations of Islam and jihad plays an important role. Khan's thought can fruitfully be analysed as interventions in this situation of ideological and religious debate. For instance, he says that only a clearly called out war in defence of an established state is legitimate. Since only an established state can wage war, proxy war and irregular warfare is prohibited in Islam. As debate interventions, I interpret Khan's presentations as concerning the covert Pakistani support to armed Muslim groups. However, it may be argued that the representation of Islam and jihad is even more politically significant, especially with regard to the domestic Indian context. The Indian Muslim minority and Islam is not only associated with the enemy, Pakistan, but with guerrilla warfare against Indian government troops in Kashmir and suicide terror bombings in major Indian cities. Khan's presentations of the true jihad can be interpreted as discursively clearing the name of Islam from its alleged guilt. In true and authentic Islam, warfare is only defensive, and the true jihad means to proselytise, become positive-minded, wishing others well, as well as to be successful in terms of education, science, and business. I argue that Khan's formulations – of strictly defensive warfare, freedom of religion; for instance, proselytisation and debating, and fruitful enterprise – all point to constitutional democracy and modern capitalism, hence affirming the values and stability of contemporary India. Furthermore, while the representation of jihad is a debate of ideology and rhetoric, Khan's interventions addresses a particular and highly volatile situation of how Islam and jihad is perceived and represented, which palpably affects the Indian Muslim minority.

Other aspects of Khan's ideas of jihad relates to the individual self. Jihad is a method of introspection, of seeing one's own part in any situation or misgiving and taking personal responsibility by creating something positive and worthwhile. Such aspects of the "true jihad" can be interpreted in at least two ways.

First, it can be suggested that Khan's presentation of jihad addresses the alleged communalism of the Indian Muslim community. Muslims must lose their sense of discrimination, persecution, victimisation, and looking to past grandeurs, by taking up the non-violent possibilities of the more and more globally connected society of contemporary India. Hence, introspection means seeing one's own faults, instead of blaming others. Furthermore, group solidarity and upbringing is the motivation for bitter vengefulness and violence in the Muslim community. Jihad as individual introspection and purification is a method for becoming

free from the hate, which is conditioned by culture, prejudice, and upbringing. One returns to Islam and true human nature by becoming deconditioned from culture, group solidarity, and prejudice. In terms of ideology, Islam is thereby dissociated from the rhetoric of Islam and communalism and notions of Muslim one-sidedness. Instead, authentic Islam and the true jihad means to let go of cultural communal feelings by becoming a true individual Muslim; the true human nature. Khan, it can be said, presents the inability to deal with problems as a result of social conditioning and biases, which lies outside Islam. In fact, one of the central aims of Islam is to purify people from social conditioning. By a struggle for purification from conditioning, people are said to be better able to deal with negative feelings and thoughts and react more peacefully. Hence, Islam on one hand, and social and cultural conditioning, on the other, are opposites.

Second, Khan's presentations of jihad can be understood in relation to the traditions of Sufi Islam. Khan can, in this regard, be said to follow the mainstream tendency of the great South Asian Sunni schools of thought, as seen in Chapter 2. For instance, Khan uses the important Sufi concept of the great jihad with oneself and formulates it as an individual struggle for purification. The latter is also an important Sufi concept and practice, but the meaning and use in Sufi Islam that suggests a purification of the heart – similar to the angelic cleansing of the Prophet Muhammad's heart in many biographies – is dismissed by Khan. Therefore, Sufi Islam and its associated lexicon is not wholly discarded by him as in several other modern reform traditions but appears in a modern language that is “unmarked” and without direct reference to Sufism.

My interpretation is strengthened by pointing to other Sufi influences on Khan, mainly the dream medium as part of his claim to charismatic religious authority and positive evaluations of peaceful Sufi Islamic culture in Kashmir. During an interview, members of the CPS related that Khan's mother had an unusual dream during the night of his birth. In the dream, she saw a white elephant who took her child into the jungle. When I asked Khan what he thought the dream meant, he related that he thinks that God had a special purpose for him. Because the Muslims have become so severely conditioned by culture and upbringing, God wanted to educate and train Khan “in nature,” meaning true and authentic Islam, which is positioned as “outside the Umma.”²⁷⁰ Thereby, it may be said that his role as an exceptional and charismatic teacher is authenticated. It may also be argued that the religious significance of the elephant is a widespread South Asian phenomenon. White elephants are generally considered especially

²⁷⁰ Interview on 6th December 2014. 25.

auspicious and are associated with rulers and exceptional persons. But the topic of elephants may also be found in the Quran and is based on Sura 105, titled *The Elephant*.²⁷¹ Khan's commentary reads that a mighty army using elephants attacking Mecca in the year 570 CE, the year the Prophet Muhammad was born, is turned away only after divine intervention. The elephants refused to move while vast flocks of birds pebbled the army who caught a strange disease. As creatures of nature, the elephants refused to oppose the Prophet's mission and attack Mecca. Because these events happened when the Prophet Muhammad was born, elephants, controlled by divine power, may also be symbolically connected with the spectacular events and stories surrounding the birth of the Prophet Muhammad, who was born in the year of the elephant. It may be in this symbolical light the divinely instructed elephant of the dream vision of Khan's mother can be understood, discursively associating the birth of Khan to the Quranic narratives of the birth of the Prophet. In sum, the possible cultural interpretations of the elephant in the dream can focus, mainly, either on the white elephant as a prevalent South Asian religious representation, or related to the symbolical power of the narratives of the birth of the Prophet, customary especially in Sufi Islam. However, I contend instead that the main significant aspect of Khan's mother's dream is the dream medium and visions itself as an essential part of claims to religious authority, as seen in Chapter 2. This cultural technology of Sufi origins endures to a significant degree in Indian Islam and it is in this light the importance of the dream medium should be understood: as an indispensable part of Khan's claim to charismatic religious authority. But true to his modern and rational approach, it is not himself but his mother who was the recipient of the divine dream message.

Khan's modern and rational approach can also be seen in the structure of Khan's formulations of important concepts in the Sufi lexicon, which are formulated with strict reference to the textual sources while traditional Sufi Islam is dismissed as inferior to his own rational arguments of scriptural interpretation. In general, Khan's presentations of individual and inward jihad is in line with the principles of modern individualism and formulated around the self, reflection, and personal growth. However, Sufi Islam still matters conceptually and discursively, as a matter of developing a peaceful self and culture. The latter topic is elaborated in Khan's writings dealing directly with peace in Kashmir, as will be described in Chapter 7.

²⁷¹ Khan, *The Quran*, 1741.

6.7 Islam, Non-Violence, and Peace: Modern and Global Society

6.7.1 Fight Against Fitna: Freedom and Opportunities

As seen, Khan presents *fitna* as a form of religious oppression generally prevailing in the ancient world and historically upheld by monarchies and empires. The fight against *fitna* was strictly bound to the time of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions. However, this successful fight against *fitna* brought repercussions which echoes through the centuries. In *Islam Rediscovered* (2001) Khan describes how “after the period of the pious Caliphate” when there was infighting among Muslim leaders, the aforementioned “Abdullah ibn Umar ibn Khattab,” “did not approve of these wars.” He was pressed to take a stand in the conflict and the Quranic verses “to fight against *fitna*” was recited to him. Khan cites “Umar’s” response to be authoritative:

The command of the Qur’an to fight against *fitna* is not what you hold to be *fitna*. *Fitna* meant religious persecution and we have already fought and put an end to this *fitna* (*qad fa’alna*).²⁷²

The point is repeated in Khan’s commentary of Sura 8:39:

Abdullah ibn Umar replied that *‘fitna* as mentioned in the Quran did not refer to political infighting, but rather to the religious coercive system, that had already been put an end to by them.’²⁷³

What the “coercive system” means can be seen in *The True Jihad* (2002); Khan deliberates on the meaning of the Companions’ removal of:

That coercive system which had reached the extremes of religious persecution. In ancient times this coercive political system prevailed all over the world. This absolutism had closed all the doors of progress, both spiritual and material. At that time God commanded the believers to break this coercive system in order to usher in freedom.²⁷⁴

²⁷² Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 97.

²⁷³ Khan, *The Quran*, 499.

²⁷⁴ Khan, *The True Jihad*, 62–63.

The Byzantine and Sassanid empires were upholders of the “coercive system which had been established for centuries,” while the establishment of the caliphate began a process of progressive freedom in the history of mankind.²⁷⁵ The significance of this historical event was that: “Islam succeeded in breaking the historical continuity of this ancient coercive system in the 7th century.”²⁷⁶ In Khan’s presentation of the long-term effects of the fight against *fitna*, Islam set in motion a historical progression towards human freedom. The process culminates in the twentieth century when political power is no longer necessary to influence people.²⁷⁷ Religion can influence society without a political structure directly supporting it:

This change has reduced the status of political power to the point where it is no longer necessary for believers to wage a war for its acquisition, as it is no longer needed to secure the desired benefits. Non-political institutions serve this purpose equally well.²⁷⁸

Hence the “fight until *fitna* is no more,” means that a process of freedom climaxing in a modern society has made the Quranic words “religion as wholly for Allah” come true.²⁷⁹ Freedom brings new religious possibilities, when believers can freely educate and train new generations, by “creating an intellectual atmosphere” and exchange ideas through print, electronic media, and books. Believers can freely educate children in the religion and through industry acquire the finances for “opening more mosques and schools.”²⁸⁰ Hence, Khan states that “religion as belonging to God only” means that religious actors, separate from the state, and hence without direct political power, now have countless opportunities to further the causes of Islam.

Khan also thinks that the modern society brings numerous ways to achieve economic success, which should be utilised for religious purposes, making full use of modern technology. Important in this regard, he presents a hadith stating there would come a time “when God’s word would enter all the homes in the world.”²⁸¹ For Khan, this is a prediction regarding “modern communications” which will bring “improved means of propagating Islam.”²⁸²

In analytical terms, Khan’s position can be understood as a legitimization of the place and function of religion in a free-enterprise economic system and a liberal-democratic society. The verses of “religion as wholly for Allah” is said to mean that religion has become autonomous

²⁷⁵ Khan, *The True Jihad*, 63.

²⁷⁶ Khan, *The True Jihad*, 64.

²⁷⁷ Khan, *The True Jihad*, 65.

²⁷⁸ Khan, *The True Jihad*, 66.

²⁷⁹ Khan, *The True Jihad*, 66.

²⁸⁰ Khan, *The True Jihad*, 64–65.

²⁸¹ Khan, *Islam and Peace*, 185. Khan, *The True Jihad*, 78.

²⁸² Khan, *Islam and Peace*, 185

from the restraints of being part and parcel of a political establishment. Therefore, the function of religion “only for God,” is only to proselytise and educate, as well as to maintain places of worship, which should be understood as the function of religion in a secular and liberal state. This reasoning is used by Khan to strengthen the notions of non-violence and peace in Islam. The freedom of religious actors means, for him, the necessity to act strictly without resort to violence, nor without trying to acquire political power: “Only then can the message of Islam be conveyed in a propitious atmosphere.”²⁸³

Hence, Khan’s presentation of Islam is adjusted to democracy and the liberal freedoms of the Indian secular state; for instance the rights to freedom of speech, conscience, and proselytisation, as well as the freedom of worship and assembly. Khan says that Islam had an important part to play in the development of such freedoms, and that the development of a free society and modern means of communication was divinely ordained. Therefore, it may also be argued that Khan’s positions represents a kind of “re-enchantment,” both of secular democracy as well as the development and use of information technology.

6.7.2 *Islam and International Norms*

Khan relates a hadith in which the Prophet Muhammad received messengers from Musaylima al-Kadhāb (‘Musaylima the liar’), a man of Banū Hanīfa who demanded that the Prophet Muhammad recognised his own claim of being a prophet. The Prophet Muhammad is said to have ended this meeting by declaring that had it not been an international practice not to kill envoys, the messengers would have been executed. Khan argues that the integrity of diplomats and envoys are a part of “international norms,” which shows that Islam adheres to and adjusts to all international regulations, except things that are “explicitly declared unlawful” by Islam.²⁸⁴ During an interview, Khan explained why this hadith is a model in the field of foreign policy:

The wording is general and the sense was that it is an international law that envoys will not be killed. So here he [the Prophet Muhammad] refers to international law and the wording is general, so, we will apply it to all the international affairs.²⁸⁵

²⁸³ Khan, *The True Jihad*, 79.

²⁸⁴ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 91.

²⁸⁵ Interview on 6th December 2014. 14.

According to Khan, Islam observes international norms and that means in the current era to accept the decrees of the United Nations and following the same values as those endorsed by other nations. Significantly, he sees this as entirely regulating the relations between states, including hostile ones. The legality of the US-led operations on Iraq, for instance, should be judged by the UN, not by any non-state actor claiming to speak for Islam.²⁸⁶ Khan also perceives Huntington's well-known Clash of Civilisations thesis, in which Islam is seen as incompatible with certain Judeo-Christian civilisational values, as entirely groundless. The Islamic ideal is to follow international norms and to cooperate with foreign powers. As seen, extra government warfare is illicit, according to Khan. Furthermore, inter-government relations, such as warfare, should abide by UN rulings according to this logic. Hence, according to Khan, there is no clash between the West and Islam when it comes to matters of warfare and international dealings.²⁸⁷ This presentation of general adjustment in international dealings is balanced by Khan's assertion of a differing line between "internal" and "international" matters and norms.²⁸⁸ For Khan, the latter field is conducted through national constitutions, while "Islam advocates enforcing its own laws in internal matters."²⁸⁹ When I asked during an interview what "enforcing" means in this context, Khan said that: "enforcement doesn't mean imposition. No, it means simply applying, and to apply." Applying Islamic laws should be understood with regard to how he understands the Medina state during the time of the Prophet Muhammad. As mentioned, Khan says that the whole society of Medina was ready to accept the Islamic norms, hence applying, or enforcing, the laws was straightforward and built on consent. During the interview, he explained that the kind of international norms that Islam cannot adjust to is eating pork, or drinking wine, both explicitly forbidden in Islam.

However, on the subject of international norms, I asked Khan how he perceives the international discussion, and mainly affirmation, of gay rights, and how growing international norms of acceptance of homosexuality stands in relation to Islam. He answered that since "the majority never accepted it as a human right," gay rights cannot be perceived as a field of international accommodation.²⁹⁰ In another interview, I asked him how he perceives the discussion within the UN and that the Human rights council in 2011 narrowly passed a resolution for universal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people. I added that, since 2011, 94 countries have signed the resolution, while 54 countries have signed a statement

²⁸⁶ I interpret this statement as a reference to al-Qaeda.

²⁸⁷ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 90.

²⁸⁸ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 91.

²⁸⁹ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 91.

²⁹⁰ Interview on 6th December 2014. 15.

opposing the rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, of which the bulk are Muslim majority countries. Khan's position with regard to the issue is twofold. On one hand, Khan answered that "Islam is against this practice [homosexuality] and it will [continue to] be against it."²⁹¹ On the other hand, Khan also said that: "every human being is free. Either he choose, either he opt for paradise or for hell."²⁹² Khan may be said to, at least minimally, tolerate homosexuality by saying that there is no compulsion in Islam, hence no one can be forced to live by its laws. What is clear is that while he encourages the accommodation between Islam and international norms, he does not perceive this principle as applicable with regard to rights for homosexuals. He does not think that acceptance of homosexuality is a genuinely international norm, it is endorsed only by political leaders of certain countries. Khan said that the gay rights bill, signed by 94 UN member countries, is merely signed by "that person who was in the position of prime minister at that time," and: "according to my knowledge, the majority of the people are against this thing." He also said that: "You have to survey on the level of the peoples."²⁹³ According to Khan, contested international norms, such as gay rights, can therefore not be seen as demanding an immediate international accommodation between Islam and the values espoused by the majority of UN countries. Besides, it can be said that the pragmatism and "status quo-ism" of Khan, with regard to both state policies and the nature of the state, is not applied in the case of homosexuality. In that case, it is not the elite policies of governments which matters, but only the will of the people, and the will of the people is not heard in this matter by their leaders. Instead, he claims to have an intimate knowledge of the attitudes of the people of the world in relation to homosexuality.

6.7.3 *Islam and Western Civilisation*

In *The Age of Peace* (2015), Khan writes that the Quran contains many predictions of world events. Sura 41:53 is important in this regard: "We shall show them Our signs in the universe and within themselves, until it becomes clear to them that this is the truth." Khan argues that this verse "clearly foretells" the development of science and technology in "the West." Khan also presents a hadith, Al-Bukhari, hadith no. 3062, quoted by Khan as saying: "God will certainly support His religion with the *fajir* or non-believer."²⁹⁴ For Khan, *fāḍḍir* here means secular person and is a prediction regarding the development of "Western civilization" which

²⁹¹ Interview on the 9th of December 2014. 29.

²⁹² Interview on the 9th of December 2014. 29.

²⁹³ Interview on the 9th of December 2014. 27.

²⁹⁴ Khan, *The Age of Peace*, 27.

is both “pro-human” because it “benefit[s] all of mankind,” and, Western civilisation also benefits Islam (“the divine religion”).²⁹⁵ He says that science and technology does not belong to anyone and should therefore be measured only by its usefulness. Western civilisation, science, and technology is highly beneficial, not the least for “the proponents of the religion of Islam.” The beneficial aspects of “western civilisation” was, for instance, the evolution of democracy, which replaced monarchy. As seen, also important for Khan is the development of “modern means of communications,” which has turned the whole world into “a global village,” furthering the possibilities to call people to Islam.²⁹⁶

A more critical stance towards Western civilisation can be found in Khan’s works dealing with the topic of the position of women in Islam with regard to modern society.²⁹⁷ Here, he states that, in contradiction to notions that Islam “degrades” women, instead, women find dignity and true freedom to develop their own feminine nature in Islam.²⁹⁸ The natural, and hence Islamic, position for women is taking “charge of tasks within the home.”²⁹⁹ Hence, there are several cases, caused by the “women’s liberation movement,” demonstrating “the baneful consequences of Western civilization’s deviation from nature.”³⁰⁰ In contrast to the positive evaluations of science and technology, which should be judged by their usefulness, this quote shows a tendency of a more polarised construction of, on one hand, “Islam,” and, on the other hand, “western civilisation.” What this entails for the position of women in relation to Islam, non-violence, and peace is described in more detail in Chapter 7.

6.7.4 Islam, Non-Violence, and Peace, in a Globalised World

In relation to a contemporary era of globalisation, Khan thinks that earlier phases in world history was marked by warfare, when everything had to be settled on the battlefield. The present era is instead called “the age of peace” because now humans can achieve great things without resort to violence.³⁰¹ The development of this age of peace was the result of the acts and planning of “the Creator.” Slowly, but deliberately, God removed the shackles of war from mankind. When the divine age of peace has come at last, those who chose “the strategy of guns and bombs” only manifest their ignorance. Khan applies Sura 2:85 to them: “Those of you who

²⁹⁵ Khan, *The Age of Peace*, 27.

²⁹⁶ Khan, *The Age of Peace*, 28.

²⁹⁷ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Woman: Between Islam and Western Society* (New Delhi: Goodword Books, 2014 [1995]). Khan, *Woman in Islamic Shariah*.

²⁹⁸ Khan, *Woman: Between Islam and Western Society*, 47, 86, 91.

²⁹⁹ Khan, *Woman: Between Islam and Western Society*, 31.

³⁰⁰ Khan, *Woman: Between Islam and Western Society*, 81.

³⁰¹ Khan, *The Age of Peace*, 28.

act thus shall be rewarded with disgrace in this world and with a severe punishment on the Day of Resurrection.”³⁰² Hence, Khan’s position is that the use of violence will be punished by God in the afterlife, since violence has finally been made historically unnecessary due to the divine planning.

The prevalent and continued use of violence also shows that there is something lacking in “modern civilization.”³⁰³ The modern civilisation must, therefore, learn to “settle differences peacefully.”³⁰⁴ According to Khan, this makes Islam, non-violence, and peace truly unavoidable.³⁰⁵

The presentation of earlier phases in world history as marked by violence, and that the current one finally promises peace, is also linked to Khan’s ideas regarding the uselessness of political power in the contemporary world. The field of politics is mainly seen as the field of competition for power through the use of violence. However, Khan writes in *Islam Rediscovered* (2001) that the superiority of Islam lies in intellectual matters and ideology, not in political superiority or dominance.³⁰⁶ He employs Sura 9:32: “They want to extinguish God’s light with their mouths, but God seeks only to perfect His light, no matter how those who deny the truth may abhor it.”³⁰⁷ This Sura, in Khan’s presentation, expresses the timeless “ideological superiority” of Islam, not any notions of “temporary” dominance.³⁰⁸ He quotes a hadith (from Musnad Aḥmad, no. 7160) in which the angel Gabriel asks the Prophet Muhammad if he wants to become a “messenger-prophet” or a “king-prophet,” only to encourage him to “adopt the way of modesty for the sake of your Lord.” The Prophet Muhammad answers the angel that he wants to become a “messenger-prophet.” Khan thinks that this hadith relates that Muhammad’s mind was “prophetic,” which implies that Muhammad was not politically oriented. The Prophet did not want to conquer the world or “establish his rule,” he only wanted to “convey to people a non-political message.”³⁰⁹ Even when Muhammad was embroiled in war and battles: “it was out of compulsion, because his opponents had launched an offensive.” The Prophet Muhammad “continually tried to avoid war.”³¹⁰

The notion of “political” in Khan’s writings is linked to “political Islam,” which he sees as essentially violent. In *Islam and World Peace* (2015), he writes that the “so-called Islamic

³⁰² Khan, *The Age of Peace*, 29.

³⁰³ Khan, *The Age of Peace*, 35.

³⁰⁴ Khan, *The Age of Peace*, 36.

³⁰⁵ Khan, *The Age of Peace*, 173.

³⁰⁶ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 115.

³⁰⁷ Khan, *The Quran*, 527.

³⁰⁸ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 114. Khan, *The Quran*, 527.

³⁰⁹ Khan, *The Age of Peace*, 170.

³¹⁰ Khan, *The Age of Peace*, 171.

thinkers” should be blamed for creating the contemporary hatred and violence. These have invented “a completely false, political interpretation of Islam” in the name of “Islamic revolution.” Accordingly, it is the thinkers and their political ideas that are ultimately to blame for the violence in the name of Islam, carried out by the naive Muslim youths.³¹¹ However, true and authentic Islam means to only proselytise peacefully, while confrontation and enmity is “political” and wrongly associated with Islam. Khan writes:

The method of Islam is the method of *dawah*. The opposite of this is the method of politics. The method of *dawah* is based on peace. The method of politics is based on confrontation. The two methods are entirely opposed to each other. Based on their particular mentality, people who chose the political method consider others as their enemies. The result of this has been that Islamic movements have turned into political movements. And then, all those wrong things that are linked to politics and political movements have come to be wrongly associated with Islam.³¹²

Khan thinks that “political agitation produces a hate culture.”³¹³ The solution to the politicisation of Islam, and the hate and violence that this ideology creates, “is to help Muslims advance in [...] non-political spheres.”³¹⁴ The progress of the non-political spheres means the advancement of education, science, technology, and business. In this regard, contemporary Muslim states are, while politically independent, still “dependent on Western countries” for scientific and technological development. No matter if they have “witnessed an Islamic revolution,” so-called Islamic states are in just as bad a situation as “secular Muslim states” are, because of their “backwardness” in intellectual and economic terms.³¹⁵ Hence, their need is for development in these “non-political” domains.

The correct attitude towards politics in Islam is “political status quo-ism,” which is “the result of the greatest wisdom.” In political matters, one must be result-oriented and not “look to your own political desires” and the “pro status quo-formula” is far better than the “pro-change formula.”³¹⁶ The latter, Khan associates with “the method of political confrontation” meaning that all your time and energy will be spent fighting your rivals instead of achieving something

³¹¹ Khan, *Islam and World Peace*, 103.

³¹² Khan, *Islam and World Peace*, 103.

³¹³ Khan, *Islam and World Peace*, 103.

³¹⁴ Khan, *Islam and World Peace*, 105.

³¹⁵ Khan, *Islam and World Peace*, 104–105.

³¹⁶ Khan, *Quranic Wisdom*, 124.

of your own.³¹⁷ Instead, Khan thinks that Islam teaches that: “Politics is not the only important field of human activity. There are many other vital spheres of work, like education, business, industry, social reform, academic learning, scientific research etc.”³¹⁸ Hence, the principle of “political status quo-ism,” means the opposite to a politics of change, or at least radical change or revolution. Another principle is the avoidance of “political movements” and, instead, a pragmatic focus on education, science, and business.

6.7.5 Globalisation and Discrimination of Muslims

During an interview, Khan explained that all Muslims must actively and openly take a stand against violence, and against “evil” being done in the name of Islam. I suggested that he was asking for very much from every Muslim and asked why Muslims, who have never taken part in any acts of violence, should exonerate themselves. Khan replied by quoting a hadith in which the Prophet had said that he who sees an evil, but fail to condemn it, is like a “dumb *shayṭān*.”³¹⁹ In Khan’s presentation of the hadith, it means: “you are not allowed to keep silent.” Hence, he sees a moral obligation resting with the “whole community” to oppose violent Muslims by speaking out against them. Or else, the Muslims are involved in “passive violence,” because the whole Muslim community is morally “responsible” for violence carried out by Muslims in the name of Islam.³²⁰

In fact, in his writings, Khan explains that because Muslims use violence on the alleged authority of Islam, it is no more than understandable that they are generally suspected as a community. Only when Muslims “understand that their violent version of Islam is not the true one” and choose instead the “path of non-violent Islam” will things change for the worldwide Muslim community.³²¹ However, by embracing true and authentic peaceable Islam, they will be able to join the “universal mainstream brotherhood.”³²² Until then, full participation, equality, and justice will be denied to Muslims worldwide “because of the extremist and violent attitude of Muslims.”³²³

The idea that Muslims, as a community, are obliged to speak out against evil and violence might be seen as in contradiction to the importance of silence in one written work. Khan writes

³¹⁷ Khan, *Quranic Wisdom*, 125.

³¹⁸ Khan, *Quranic Wisdom*, 125.

³¹⁹ Here it is hard to hear on the recording if Khan uses the English ‘Satan’ or the Arabic *shayṭān*. The reference to a proverbial devil is yet clear. *Shayṭān* means ‘demon,’ or someone removed from divine mercy.

³²⁰ Interview on 13th December 2013. 16.

³²¹ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 127.

³²² Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 127.

³²³ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 128.

that ignoring “falsehood [...] by remaining silent” puts an end to falsehood and lets truth live on.³²⁴ He suggests that truth will eventually prosper, but “falsehood” will only be encouraged by mentioning it. I interpret this line of Khan’s reasoning in the light of that Muslims should not complain and spread persecution accounts, as we saw. However, at the same time, Muslims must clearly speak out and condemn violence in the name of Islam. Hence, Khan’s position is that Muslims and the Muslim community may be criticised for the violence carried out on its behalf but seemingly, Muslims may not complain about or criticise others.

In analytical terms, therefore, in certain ways the “Muslims” are construed by Khan as a faith community, a people defined by religion, and not as individuals – despite his formulation of Islam as an individual matter. He makes no distinction between Muslims who are justifiably deprived of their rights, after committing violent acts, and Muslims who, indeed, are already on “the path of non-violent Islam” and yet are denied full participation when they are not “welcome [...] in every field.”³²⁵ My interpretation of Khan’s thought may be compared to Jamal Malik’s understanding of Khan, as we saw in Chapter 1. Malik interprets Khan as reiterating, and thereby reinforcing, the boundaries of a “Muslim” community. Malik argues that Khan’s reiteration of a Muslim community, defined by collective duties and properties, is an obstacle for Muslims to participate as individuals at the level of the liberal national state. Malik’s argument is seemingly supported by what we saw in this section, that only when Muslims as a collective embrace true and authentic Islam, non-violence, and peace will they be able to join in the universal mainstream brotherhood.

However, it is equally possible to argue that, at present, a global discourse of Islam, Muslims, and violence already objectifies and reiterates Muslims as a homogenous group. The Hindu-nationalist discourse and mobilisation, strengthened by global anti-Muslim agitation after 2001, set the conditions for the debate in which Khan presents a reversal of the allegations raised against Islam. Furthermore, Khan criticises Muslims for not living up to the religious standards set by true and authentic Islam, non-violence, and peace. Meanwhile, he conceptually defends the integrity of Islam, hence, anti-Muslim discourse may be right about Muslims, but it is wholly wrong about true Islam, as are too many Muslims. At the level of the Indian state, therefore, Khan aims to uphold Islam’s protected and independent status as a national religion, by maintaining the constitutional status quo, democratic secularism, and freedom of religion. Hence, in sum, the ideological notion of joining with the universal mainstream is too strong with Khan to simply say that he creates difficulties for the participation of individual Muslims

³²⁴ Khan, *Islam and World Peace*, 71.

³²⁵ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 127.

as citizens of the liberal-democratic state. Instead, it is the prevalence of the communal discourse and the anti-Muslim ideological tropes of a religious Muslim collective defined by an Islamic essence prone to violence, which makes the foundations for Khan's criticism of Muslims and their faults as a community as already given by the nature of the debate situation.

Therefore, I argue that the essence of his critique of Muslims should be analysed as oriented towards the pragmatic political and public side of Islam. Khan's view can be understood as lamenting that honourable, peaceful, and liberal-democratic Muslims are far too absent as concerns the public side of Muslim politics, in India and the world at large. Instead, Muslims have themselves let the public face of Islam be dominated by the violent Muslim ideologues, military leaders, or, especially in India, the dynamics of community mobilisation. The reactive nature of Muslim demonstrations that Khan condemns, and his criticism of the Muslim media, can be analysed as the part these play in broadcasting and re-creating the foundations of the communal discourse. Hence, the familiar cycles of effective blame displacement in relation to riots, in effect, confirms the image of a backward and aggressive Islam. As mentioned, Khan blames Muslims for their part, and for not acting non-violent and non-confrontational in the first instance.

Therefore, Khan's demands on Muslims to be non-violent and peaceful as a community can be compared to that of Martin Luther King and other leaders of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and 1960s. In the situation of the prevailing racist anti-black ideology and its associated negative stereotypes, activists were trained to patiently confront and non-violently expose these bigotries, as well as the violence that fundamentally underpinned the social exclusion and discrimination of black Americans.³²⁶ By ways of behaviour, comportment, dress, speech and also, as in the campus town, Nashville lunch-counter sit-ins of 1960, utilising compelling symbols such as bringing refined literature and science books to non-violent confrontations, activists successfully managed to increase public support when their exemplary civic and public behaviour was met with brute force by white counter-activists or local police.³²⁷

In this regard, while the American Civil Rights Movement was profoundly influenced by the practical tactics of Gandhian non-violence, Khan does not formulate any fundamental political strategical alternative to Muslim communal mobilisation. Instead, political status quo-ism relies not on non-violent tactics and civil resistance, but on the workings of the established democratic

³²⁶ Amanda D. Clark and Patrick G. Coy, "Civil Rights and Domestic Policy," in *Understanding Nonviolence*, ed. Maia Carter Hallward and Julie M. Norman (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015), 136–147.

³²⁷ In general civil resistance theory, this is commonly referred to as the "paradox of repression."

state's rule by law, the ideal independence and strength of its courts as well as by petitioning the government.

The analysis of the public and civic debate aspects of Khan's thought, and its eventual potential to further democracy, will be continued in Chapters 8 to 10. Here ends the empirically oriented Chapter 6. The next chapter will aim to describe and partly analyse three applications of Khan's presentations of Islam, non-violence, and peace.

Khan's Thought and Positions in Three Conflict Situations

7.1 Islam, Non-Violence, and Peace: Jammu and Kashmir

The issue of the regional status of Jammu and Kashmir is important to Khan. He begins one of his two English tractates on the subject by pointing out that he wrote on this subject already in 1968, in the *Djāmi 'at al- 'Ulamā-yi Hind* weekly, and that his basic analysis have not changed since.¹ In his writings, three direct actors in the conflict can be perceived; Kashmir Islamic Militants, and the Pakistani and Indian governments with their respective armies. Two indirect actors are also important, ordinary Kashmiri Muslims, and tourists and others travelling to Kashmir. Behind these actors, the cosmic forces of God and Iblīs the *Shaytān* are acting upon the warring parties and affecting the potential outcomes of the conflict. In fact, due to its media coverage, the conflict over Jammu and Kashmir is seen by Khan as a stage set by God to show the world that authentic Islam is a force for peace aimed to undo the global association of Islam, Muslims, and violence.

He supports his position by calling on Sura 10:25: "God calls man to the home of peace,"² and Sura 3:83:

Do they seek a religion other than the religion of God, when everything in the heavens and the earth have submitted to Him, willingly or unwillingly? To him they shall all return.³

To Khan, these verses imply that God calls mankind to join with the rest of the universe in peace – the aim of Islam is to foster a "peace culture" which will bring about "a full range of positive activities [...]." Based on this general framework, Khan's thinking about the particular case of Jammu and Kashmir can be summarised in five points: (1) Global jihad activities, including those in Jammu and Kashmir, and their media exposure have resulted in the spreading of a false image of Islam. (2) The association of Islam with "hatred and violence" is a catastrophe for Islam itself and its goals.⁴ (3) Such an awful and widespread image must be

¹ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *Peace in Kashmir* (New Delhi: Goodword Books, 2011), 4.

² Khan, *The Quran*, 587.

³ Khan, *The Quran*, 155.

⁴ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir* (New Delhi: Goodword Books, 2012), 10.

reverted so that Islam will be universally seen for its true nature; “as a religion of peace and mercy.”⁵ (4) Muslims who strive and succeed in this cause will be divinely rewarded.⁶ (5) Due to the conflict, Jammu and Kashmir are already in the media public eye, hence Kashmiri Muslims are in a unique position to influence the “image building of Islam.”⁷ Thus, Khan sees Jammu and Kashmir as a kind of stage, and the focus is on how Islam is perceived by others, perhaps a world audience.

7.1.1 Warfare

In Khan’s presentation, the character and manner of the fighting in Kashmir-Jammu makes it impossible to classify the insurgency as a jihad in Islamic terms. Hence, those who call themselves *mudjāhidīn* in Jammu and Kashmir are “self-styled,” because an “Islamic jihad” in the sense of a defensive war must be openly declared by an established state. It must have a person in charge, it must have a territorial base and it cannot serve other purposes than “to establish God’s word.”⁸ While Khan’s presentation of jihad highlights its non-violent nature, Khan does not rule out the possibility of a lawful jihad as warfare or *qitāl*, ‘fighting.’⁹ He writes that:

in its extended sense, qitāl can also be called jihad. But as Islam sets certain conditions for the proper performance of all actions, similarly, there are necessary conditions for defensive war. For instance, it is an established principle in Islam that war can be waged only by a properly established government. Individuals and non-government organizations are definitely not permitted to wage an armed struggle. To them, Islam allows only peaceful struggle.¹⁰

Khan’s refutation of Muslim warfare in Jammu and Kashmir represents, therefore, a special case of Khan’s general refutation of violence, and specified criteria for warfare in Islam. The Jammu and Kashmiri insurgency should be categorised as a guerrilla war, which is “un-Islamic” since war is the “task of an established ruler, not of the common man.”¹¹ While Khan avoids mentioning Pakistan’s involvement in the fighting, he states that the conflict could also be

⁵ Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 10.

⁶ Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 11.

⁷ Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 10.

⁸ Khan, *Peace in Kashmir*, 26.

⁹ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 88.

¹⁰ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 88.

¹¹ Khan, *Peace in Kashmir*, 26.

labelled as a “proxy war.”¹² Proxy warfare is “prohibited in Islam” because a government must publicly announce its intents in a legitimate “Islamic war.”¹³

In conclusion, perhaps due to his alleged non-political stance, Khan carefully avoids mentioning Pakistan’s involvement in the fighting labelled as “proxy war,” which together with other criteria makes the fighting “un-Islamic.” Hence, the Jammu and Kashmir wars are not jihad, in fact, the fighting is outside Islam. As we saw in Chapter 2, what is further at stake in the war between India and Pakistan over Jammu and Kashmir is the political nature of the state. It also involves the political and social representation of Islam in India, in which Islam and Muslims are linked to the creation of Pakistan and the wars for the region of Jammu and Kashmir in Hindu nationalist rhetoric. The representation of Islam and Muslims as beyond the pale of the Indian nation have been strengthened by Pakistani claims to religiously sanctioned military policies and support to Muslim warriors fighting a jihad in Jammu and Kashmir. Therefore, the representation of Islam and Muslims in relation to the Indian national community is not only rhetorically significant, discrimination and persecution of Muslims are made possible by such rhetorical framing. Khan’s logic addresses directly the would-be *mudjāhidīn* and religious state policies of Pakistan with regard to Jammu and Kashmir, by refuting their presentations and use of Islam. Therefore, Khan’s line of reasoning oppose the ideological conceptions that associate Islam with the legitimization of warfare, as well as Pakistani claims to the region of Jammu and Kashmir by references to Islam and a separate Muslim national state. The aim of Khan’s viewpoints could be seen as aiming to safeguard Islam from harmful framing, by safely placing Islam outside of both the actual conflict and its rhetorical legitimization on the authority of Islam.

7.1.2 *Islam and International Norms*

As seen above, one consequence of “Islam and international norms” is that Khan thinks that “jihad (in the sense of war or *qital*) can be rightly defined as such military activities as are internationally accepted.” Khan further argues that, in modern times the United Nations serve as the upholder of these international norms: “all member-nations [...] will be bound by the decisions of that organization.”¹⁴

¹² Khan, *Peace in Kashmir*, 26.

¹³ Khan, *Peace in Kashmir*, 26.

¹⁴ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 91.

Two important issues, for the international society, related to Jammu and Kashmir are the obstructed UN decision of a regional referendum deciding on the state's future, as well as the conditions, shaped by civil war and continued acts of terror, for holding a referendum.¹⁵ Under the heading, "Not a case of Non-fulfilment of a Promise," Khan argues that promises "related to political and social life" can and sometimes have to be changed in Islam. The Islamic precedent, according to Khan, is an event during the political and social conflicts between different groups after the death of the Prophet. The *Anṣār*, 'helpers,' i.e. the original inhabitants of Medina and the earliest allies of Muhammad, were promised an advisory function to the newly instituted position of caliph, while the office itself would be held by one of the *muhājirūn*, or 'emigrants,' i.e. the followers of the Prophet Muhammad in the *hidjra* from Mecca. Since this promise was never fulfilled, Khan thinks that fulfilling promises is an ideal in Islam but only legally binding to individuals. Political and social matters are in a flux and, hence, promises of a public kind may have to be changed. He writes: "social matters are always governed by practical wisdom rather than ideal wisdom. This is the demand of Islam as well as the demand of reason."¹⁶ Another argument presented by him is that even UN decisions are dependent on one's own "strength." No power will execute UN resolutions for you and the weaker party must accept that any resolution may not be carried out.¹⁷

In conclusion, it is possible to point out two ambiguities in Khan's presentation of what Islam and peace in Jammu and Kashmir entails, in comparison to his more general reasoning. First, the use of "social matters" and "practical wisdom," as well as the pragmatic acceptance of *realpolitik* issues regarding strength in foreign relations, bring to mind the importance he attaches to social pragmatism or "status quo-ism." This suggests that upholding the status quo, to not question the Indian claim to supremacy over Jammu and Kashmir, is more important when these principles are in conflict with the claim to uphold international norms and adhering to UN decisions. Or at least the UN decision of a referendum on the future of Jammu and Kashmir should not and cannot be implemented.¹⁸

Second, the argumentation of why changing political circumstances sometimes force the prevention of earlier promises made by political rulers in Islam, is built on examples from the generation of Muslim leaders after the death of the Prophet Muhammad. However, during an

¹⁵ UN resolutions and other UN material related to UNMOGIP can be found at the UN webpage: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unmogip/documents.shtml>. Accessed 2014-09-01

¹⁶ Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 56.

¹⁷ Khan, *Peace in Kashmir*, 25.

¹⁸ Khan, *Peace in Kashmir*, 25.

interview when talking about the Prophet's battles, I asked Khan about other role-models in Islam, except the Prophet himself, both during and after his life-time, Khan replied:

The Prophet is the role model. All other, including the companions of the Prophet will be judged according to the prophet of Islam. [...] The Quran refers only to the Prophet. All other models, including the companions will be judged according to the Prophet's example.

In this statement, Khan presents the sole legal importance of the example of the Prophet himself. While this statement regards issues related to war and peace, its basic logic is nevertheless overturned when Khan presents Islam in a manner which supports the Indian claim to supremacy over Jammu and Kashmir, instead of a UN referendum based in the international community ideas of the people's right to autonomy and self-determination.¹⁹

7.1.3 Islam and "Political Activism"

Khan appeals to Jammu and Kashmiri Muslims to "abandon political activism and opt for engaging in peaceful *dawah* work."²⁰ He writes about a conversation with a Kashmiri Muslim, when Khan said that peace should not be conditional to justice, but as a necessary condition for the pursuit of justice.²¹ Therefore, he applies some of his central ideas also to the case of Jammu and Kashmir. For instance, Muslims should not demand rights and voice complaints:

There are two kinds of social movements – the positive and the negative. A positive movement is one which is based on duty. Such a movement has definitive virtues. A negative movement is based on the demand for rights and the voicing of protests. Such a movement has no virtue whatsoever.²²

This argument can be interpreted in light of what Khan referred to during an interview as the discovery or the realisation of God and Islam through *ma'rifa*.²³ Complaints and negative thinking are obstacles on the path of discovery and realisation.²⁴ An important part of this

¹⁹ In case of a referendum, many observers hold that the population of Jammu and Kashmir would actually vote for independence instead of adhering to either India or Pakistan.

²⁰ Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 16.

²¹ Khan, *Peace in Kashmir*, 24–25.

²² Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 24.

²³ Interview on 13th December 2013. 9.

²⁴ Interview on 13th December 2013. 10.

realisation is that even “oppression and atrocities” should be regarded as “a law of nature” and “part of God’s creation plan.”²⁵ Muslim journalists should, therefore, avoid voicing protests and raising Muslim “national issues” so as to present only the universal Islamic message.²⁶ For Khan, Islam is instead “sent for all humanity” and if Muslims understood this they would develop a sense of universal “benevolence” and “Muslims would strive for the preservation and prosperity of humanity.”²⁷ Khan supports his argument by applying Sura 41:34–35:

Good and evil deeds are not equal. Repel evil with what is better; then you will see that one who was once your enemy has become your dearest friend,³⁵ but no one will be granted such goodness except those who exercise patience and self-restraint – no one is granted it save those who are truly fortunate.²⁸

In his commentary of Sura 41:34–35, Khan explains that patient “unilateral good behaviour” merits divine blessings and is “immensely persuasive.” The urge to retaliate, even if to stop an enemy from committing “excessive” instances of “oppression” comes from Satan.²⁹ The subject of an almighty God ultimately ruling all occurrences and Satan continually leading people astray is especially prevalent in Khan’s writings on Jammu and Kashmir, a topic explored in the next section.

In conclusion, I note that Khan’s idea “to abandon political activism” points to the centrality of social harmony by managing conflict, instead of resolving it.

7.1.4 Divine Peace and Satanic Violence

The trope of God and Satan involved in historical processes is noticeable in Khan’s texts on Jammu and Kashmir. Jammu and Kashmir has been “selected” by God as the place from where the genuine peaceful message of Islam can be heard. Since God has chosen Jammu and Kashmir and its people in a very special way, this historical role must be realised and completed. In fact, this is the key to “success and progress for the people of Kashmir.”³⁰ One part in this exceptional role is to deliver the message of Islam to “tourists [...], Hindu pilgrims, [and] Indian soldiers.”³¹

²⁵ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 14.

²⁶ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *The Moral Vision: Islamic Ethics for Success in Life* (New Delhi: Goodword Books, 1999), 182.

²⁷ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 14.

²⁸ Khan, *The Quran*, 1428.

²⁹ Khan, *The Quran*, 1428.

³⁰ Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 64.

³¹ Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 63.

Any visitor to Kashmir is *al-madʿū*, a ‘recipient of proselytisation’ and a potential ‘neophyte,’ “sent [...] by God.”³² Kashmiri Muslims, “who are suffering from intellectual discontent regarding Islam, due to their exposure to modern thought,” is in need to “rediscover” Islam, therefore, God has “sent to Kashmir *madus* from all over the world in order that the Kashmiris may secure the paradise of the next world by performing *dawah* work.”³³ Furthermore, with peace in Jammu and Kashmir, tourism will increase and more potential converts will visit.³⁴ All this suggests how *daʿwa*, as well as the divine rewards for missionary work are reasons for establishing peace.

Warfare between India and Pakistan for Jammu and Kashmir is, along with the independence movement of the region, not due to historical circumstances. In fact, it was “the verdict of God” behind which there was “great divine planning.”³⁵ To all appearances a desperate situation, Khan reminds of the importance of “positive thinking”³⁶ and of focusing on “secular and religious [...] opportunities.” Secular opportunities here refer to education and “economic uplift” and the available religious opportunity is *daʿwa* work.³⁷ In fact, focussing on opportunities is a practical application of a religious duty, to be aware of and to be thankful to God for the opportunities and thereby nurture a “culture of gratefulness.”³⁸

In Khan’s presentation of the religious dimensions of the Jammu and Kashmir conflict, Satan, or Iblīs, works to corrupt human societies. Dwelling on the creation story of Adam in Sura 7, in which God commands the angels to bow down before Adam. Khan presents Iblīs as blessed by God, as the leader of the *djinn*. However, Iblīs is “ungrateful” to God and refuses to bow down before Adam, not accepting his lack of “supremacy over man.”³⁹ Khan quotes Sura 7:17; that Iblīs vows that he will make humans ungrateful. In Khan’s commentary, all human feelings of “jealousy and pride” signifies a failure to acknowledge that anyone’s “superiority” or “endowment” ultimately has its origin in God.⁴⁰ With regard to Jammu and Kashmir, Khan describes that Muslims have developed an “excessive sensitivity” due to their loss and “political grudge.”⁴¹ This sense of loss and un-gratitude dominates the mind of a person who fails to appreciate what opportunities are left, and be rightfully thankful to God for those gifts.⁴² In fact,

³² Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 63.

³³ Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 55.

³⁴ Khan, *Peace in Kashmir*, 45.

³⁵ Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 13.

³⁶ Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 15.

³⁷ Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 13.

³⁸ Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 18.

³⁹ Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 18.

⁴⁰ Khan, *The Quran*, 413.

⁴¹ Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 19.

⁴² Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 18.

this is the “influence of Satan” in a society.⁴³ Satanic influence works by first creating discontent and then presenting “wrong act[s]” in “beautiful words.”⁴⁴ For Khan, this is the meaning of Sura 15:39: “I shall make the path of error seem alluring to them on the earth and shall mislead them all.”⁴⁵ In his commentary, Khan presents this verse as relating how Satan blames God for his own mistakes. From this time forth, Satan will influence people to blame others for their own mistakes or weaknesses.⁴⁶ However, in his writings on Jammu and Kashmir, Khan gives Sura 15:39 a more specific meaning. Here, violence is described as “the path of error.” Muslims involved in fighting in the name of Islam in Jammu and Kashmir carry the “false conviction” that they are doing “acts of pious jihad” that will lead them to heaven. This is due to “the influence of satanic beautification [...] they are in error but Satan tells them that they are working in the right direction.”⁴⁷ As can be seen in this quote, Khan suggests that Muslims involved in fighting in the name of Islam in Jammu and Kashmir are in fact lead by Iblīs the Shayṭān.

In conclusion, by invoking the powerful symbol of Satan and satanic influence, Khan creates a substantial dichotomy: Poles apart are, on one hand, “political activism,” signifying Muslim jihad in Jammu and Kashmir and on the other hand, true and authentic Islam, which means to engage in “non-political” economic and missionary work only. True and authentic Islam also teaches to put an end to complaints, despite grievances, and focus on possibilities. These possibilities – economic, social, and religious – are provided by divine providence, for which the Muslims ought to be grateful. However, in analytical terms, the possibilities for tourism, education, private enterprise, and proselytisation (pointing to the conditions of freedom of religion), should be seen as potentially made available by the Indian government. Therefore, the logic of the argument can be understood as a religious legitimization for Indian supremacy over Jammu and Kashmir.

7.1.5 Jammu and Kashmir: a Part of India?

The advantages for the Muslim community of Jammu and Kashmir to be a part of India is described by Khan largely in economic and social terms. For instance, India is a larger and freer market than Pakistan, the Indian Muslim community is more prosperous than the Muslims of

⁴³ Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 18.

⁴⁴ Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 19.

⁴⁵ Khan, *The Quran*, 761.

⁴⁶ Khan, *The Quran*, 761.

⁴⁷ Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 19.

either Bangladesh or Pakistan, and Kashmiri Muslims could have access to Indian education. There are also political possibilities if the Jammu and Kashmiri issue were settled in favour of India. Kashmiri Muslims can be a part of the Indian democracy and run for political offices, including the highest one of Prime Minister.⁴⁸ All in all, India is a more developed and progressive country than Pakistan, therefore, India is “the best choice for the Kashmiris.”⁴⁹

Another important topic for Khan is the renewal of tourism in Jammu and Kashmir; the tourism industry is today destroyed by “militancy.” Stabilising the political situation will renew tourism, which would lead to economic benefits and prosperity and the possibility to spread the word of God to large numbers of people.⁵⁰

Furthermore, Khan says that abandoning the violent struggle and “whole-heartedly [...] become a part of India”⁵¹ means the “return of Kashmiriat,” i.e. authentic regional culture. He sees Kashmiri culture as equivalent to Sufi Islamic culture, because Kashmir is “perhaps the only place in the world in which Islam was spread only through the Sufis.” Furthermore, he describes Sufism as “a culture of peace and love,” meaning “peace with all.” Therefore, the fundamental but forsaken Sufism of the Kashmiris is needed again to create bonds between Muslims and Hindus. In fact, it was un-nationalistic, foreign influences, and “external elements,” who “misled” and caused the Kashmiri Muslims to “deviate” and hence “took away” their own Sufi culture, “a symbol of Kashmir” and, hence, their principles of “peace, love and social harmony.”⁵²

Against such foreign influences, Khan instead highlights the historical figure of “Noruddin Noorani” (d. 1438). A mystic, poet, and Sufi, “Noorani” is the most well-known of all the Jammu and Kashmiri *awliyā* (sing. *walī*, ‘friend’ of God) or Sufi ‘saints’, and is remembered by both Muslims and Hindus for his piety and poetry. Khan sees “Noorani” as symbolising “the true Kashmiriat” by his emphasis on amiable Hindu-Muslim relations and changing swords into sickles.⁵³

7.1.6 Conclusion

Khan looks to the future and sees Jammu and Kashmir Muslims as better prepared to deal with economic conditions set by globalisation by unreservedly accepting the economic, political,

⁴⁸ Khan, *Peace in Kashmir*, 5–6.

⁴⁹ Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 26.

⁵⁰ Khan, *Peace in Kashmir*, 45. Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 50.

⁵¹ Khan, *Peace in Kashmir*, 5.

⁵² Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 25.

⁵³ Khan, *The Dawn over Kashmir*, 25.

and social conditions of the Indian federal state. These conditions are described as better access to and quality of education and markets, as well as a better political democratic system and the development of more authentic religious activities through proselytisation.⁵⁴

Therefore, in my interpretation, Khan argues in both strict goal-rational and in religious, value-rational, terms that Jammu and Kashmir are best suited as a part of the Indian federation. His ideas could be seen as the denial of Jammu and Kashmiri nationalistic aspirations and struggle for independence. However, to the contrary, Khan sees historical amiable relations between Hindus and Muslims informed by historical Sufi Islam as the authentic expression of Jammu and Kashmir's national spirit and culture. Therefore, a union between these groups can only mean an expression of the authentic spirit of the region, because the ideas of Islam and warfare was not introduced by the Muslims of the region themselves; it was spread to them by harmful foreign influences. It is obvious, therefore, that hostility and warfare in the region is not a development related to the conditions of Jammu and Kashmir, or a result of the actions of the Indian federal army. While the harmful ideological foreign influences point to the Pakistan intelligence services and the influx of veterans from the Afghanistan war, what is unclear is how such malign and foreign ideas can take root when the political and social conditions are not conducive to those influences? Instead of addressing these conditions, the prevalent militancy in the region is described as a result of the encouragement of Satan.

7.2 Islam, Non-Violence, and Peace: Palestine

7.2.1 *"To Fill the Earth With Justice"*

Khan addresses the issue of Palestine in several of his major written works.⁵⁵ On the CPS website there is also a published speech Khan held in 2008 at the Peres Centre for Peace in Tel Aviv, Israel, in which he explains his thoughts on how to establish peace in "the Holy land," and solve the conflict, in ten-points.⁵⁶ In the introduction, he writes that he hesitated to come to Israel, but then he had a dream in which he addressed a large audience saying:

⁵⁴ Khan, *Islam and World Peace*, 162.

⁵⁵ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 175. Khan, *Islam and Peace*, 81. Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 126.

⁵⁶ Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, *How to Establish Peace in the Holy Land*, 4. Text published on the CPS webpage: <http://www.cpsglobal.org/books/how-establish-peace-holy-land>. Accessed on 2017-03-29.

The Arabs and the Jews both must know that they cannot go on fighting forever. In life, peace is the rule and war is the exception. War is costlier than any other course of action, so both parties must try to find some practical formula for the establishment of peace. Let me just say that the Arabs must accept Israel as a legitimate state by totally abandoning violence against Israel, and Israel must agree to make such territorial adjustment as is acceptable to the Arabs. Thus, by accepting the formula of give and take, they can establish peace in the Holy Land. In other words, it is a win/win situation for both.⁵⁷

The importance of this dream is presented by Khan with regards to a hadith “quoted by Abdur Rahman Ibn Khaldun with reference to Al-Tabarani:”

The Prophet predicted that a person from the Muslim Ummah would appear and would speak with reference to his Sunnah (tradition). He would fill the earth with justice, at a time when the earth would have been filled with injustice. He would travel to Bait-al Maqdis.⁵⁸

Khan presents this hadith as a prediction by the Prophet Muhammad, that a time will come when “Bait al-Maqdis,” which refers to Palestine, will be filled with injustice, meaning violence. A Muslim, learned in the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad, will then travel to Palestine, during a time of violence, “and will tell people of the Prophet’s peace formula.” Khan reaches this conclusion after presenting the word “justice,” in the hadith, to signify “peace.” Khan explains that this person will tell the people in the region of “the Prophet’s peace formula,” a well-used phrase in Khan’s texts. Furthermore, he writes: “This tradition of the Prophet guided me in my attempt to discover the prophetic formula of peace by perusing the Quran and Sunnah.”⁵⁹

In my interpretation, Khan identifies himself as the learned Muslim who travels to Palestine and teaches peace. Since the event is said by Khan to be predicted by the Prophet Muhammad, it is in many ways a very important role to play. The textual argument of identification can be explained in at least four ways. First, the dream of himself addressing a crowd on the Israeli-Palestine conflict, is believed by Khan to be a “miracle,” marking out a divine intervention, an important event. Second, Khan connects his own travels to the area with the prediction of the

⁵⁷ Khan, *How to Establish Peace*, 4–5.

⁵⁸ Khan, *How to Establish Peace*, 4–5.

⁵⁹ Khan, *How to Establish Peace*, 4–5.

Prophet Muhammad, and that it guides him to find the formula for peace in Palestine. Third, Khan sees a connection between himself, and his manner of ideas, and the learned Muslim who travels to Palestine only after first discovering a form of “guidance on the subject of Palestine in the light of Prophet’s teachings, and that he would impart [the Prophet Muhammad’s peace formula] to others.” Fourth, in the introduction of himself in the speech, Khan defines with what type of religious authority he speaks on the topic of peace in Palestine and Israel, by presenting a dream and a hadith. Khan says that, while he was first reluctant to go, he reaches the decision that it is important that he should come, because he brings an important and authentic religious message.⁶⁰

While not explicitly identifying himself with the learned Muslim in the Prophet Muhammad’s prediction, but by raising these very notions, Khan should be understood as constructing a special historical role and personal claim to religious authority. His presentation of the dream confirms the, in fact, divine preparations for the importance of his appearance at the conference. Furthermore, this particular dream is another example of the importance of the dream medium as a kind of “cultural technology,” supporting Muslim claims to charismatic religious authority, as we saw.

7.2.2 The Islamic Ten-Point Peace Formula

Khan formulates two ideas at the outset of his speech, delineating the Islamic peace formula. On one hand, Islam takes into consideration that ideal situations will never come about, but Islam aims to solve actual problems by considering what works best. Therefore, Khan says: “the central idea of Islamic planning is that it is based on opportunities rather than on problems.” On the other hand, he says that although Islam has been invoked in the Israel–Palestine conflict many times, the authentic Islamic teachings, which constitutes the Islamic peace formula, have never been applied.⁶¹ Khan then sets out his ten-point program on how he thinks that peace in Palestine can be achieved.

First, he thinks that the familiar *Hudaybiyya* treaty is most important when addressing “the Arab-Israel problem in the Holy Land.” For Khan, the aim for the Prophet Muhammad when entering the agreement “was to open the door to opportunities.” The opportunities that was opened up by the peace agreement made “the prophetic mission” of the Prophet Muhammad successful enough to be referred in Sura 48:1, as “a clear victory.” Khan admonishes the Arab

⁶⁰ Khan, *How to Establish Peace*, 4–5.

⁶¹ Khan, *How to Establish Peace*, 6.

leaders for not following the “sunnah of the Prophet,” which means that Arab leaders should not make demands in treaties, but unilaterally make sure that peace can and will happen.⁶² For Khan, treaties without conditions both create “opportunities” and represents the authentic example set by the Prophet Muhammad. One note regarding this line of reasoning is that the Arab leadership is identified as Muslim, while not considering Christian or secular Arab leadership.

Second, Khan discusses the Jewish claim to the disputed territory. Referring to Sura 5:21, in which Moses says to the children of Israel: “O my people! Enter the Holy Land which God has assigned to you,” which in Khan’s presentation means that the Quran asserts a biblical claim to a promised land for the Jewish people. When discussing this topic during an interview in Delhi, Khan said that in the “Bible it is mentioned that Palestine is the Promised Land” for Jews and that it is the “same in the Quran.” He explained that, just as he has accepted and managed God’s assignment of the land to the Jewish people, the Arabs must also accept this view. Therefore, Khan explained: “the Balfour verdict [...] was quite in accordance with the Quranic teachings.”⁶³

In *How to Establish Peace in the Holy Land*, Khan presents the Quranic phrase “assigned to you” as, in fact, expressing “a law of nature”; something universally true. He thinks that this verse expresses the right for “a community in diaspora [...] to return to its original home.”⁶⁴ In *The Prophet of Peace* (2009), Khan repeats the divine assignment of land and develops it further by adding that “due to the purity of this race, in direct line from its ancestors, Isaac and Jacob” no matter where Jews reside in the world, Palestine is “the common land of all Jews.” He thinks that the purity of the Jewish race is upheld by the lack of conversion to Judaism. Khan thinks that it was “by the command of God” that Ishmael, the ancestor of the Arab people, instead settled in Arabia, suggesting, therefore, that “Arabia came to be the homeland of the Ishmaelites.”⁶⁵

Regarding the position that the Quran strengthens the Jewish religious claim to the region of Palestine, it is important to note some tensions in Khan’s thinking regarding race. He writes in *Islam and Peace* (1999) that racial inequality and racism has been scientifically proven to be false, something which Khan takes as contemporary evidence for the timeless veracity of Islam, because he sees Islam as both the champion and epitome of human equality.⁶⁶ Yet, regarding

⁶² Khan, *How to Establish Peace*, 7.

⁶³ Interview on 13th December 2013. 22.

⁶⁴ Khan, *How to Establish Peace*, 8.

⁶⁵ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 176.

⁶⁶ Khan, *Islam and Peace*, 139.

the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis, Khan here seems to argue for a divinely ordained separation of peoples based on blood line or race. What is clear is the religious sanction for the contemporary Israeli claim to Palestine and that the purity of the Jewish race strengthens this sanction. While he thinks that Jewish purity, in terms of race or religion, is upheld by the lack of conversion to Judaism, the notion that there can be no conversion to Judaism is obviously untrue.⁶⁷ The divine separation of peoples based on blood line and religion also means for Khan that Arabs should settle in a different piece of land, to which Arabs have an authentic divine claim. Arabs should instead move to “the homeland of the Ishmaelites,” regarded as territories separate from Palestine.

Furthermore, Khan presents the Quranic phrase “assigned to you” as expressing the right for “a community in diaspora [...] to return to its original home.” as “a law of nature.” While the presentation states a general principle, in fact, it includes only the Jewish diaspora community as lawfully authorised to “return” home. Khan’s invocation of the Balfour declaration ascertains that the Jewish return to Palestine takes precedent over the universal right for a community to return to its original home, which of course could include Palestinian refugees. It suggests the religious importance of the notion of “original home,” i.e. Israel for Jews only, and “Arabia [...] the homeland of the Ishmaelites,” for Arabs only.

Third, Khan applies his presentation of Sura 4:128 “reconciliation is best” to the Israel-Palestine conflict.⁶⁸ He thinks that the verse implies that the “Arab leaders have to adopt a peaceful rather than a violent course of action.”⁶⁹ Because the Arabs could have chosen non-violent and peaceful methods during the course of the conflict, the failure to do so represents a clear “violation of Islamic principle.” Instead, the Prophet Muhammad has explained that violence represents a harder, more difficult and troublesome, option while peaceful methods represent an easier, more straightforward or less strenuous, “course of action.”⁷⁰

Fourth, Arab leaders “justify their violent movement” by thinking that the Jews are their enemies. But Khan says that those arguments are against the teachings of the Quran, which do not permit fighting enemies, only *aggressors* can be fought against. Instead, Khan thinks that enemies are prospective friends. This position is based on Sura 41:34: “Good and evil deeds are not equal. Repel evil with what is better; then you will see that one who was once your enemy has become your dearest friend.”⁷¹ He applies this argument to the conflict:

⁶⁷ Bente Groth, *Judendomen: Kultur, historia, tradition* (Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 2000), 34.

⁶⁸ Khan, *The Quran*, 250.

⁶⁹ Khan, *How to Establish Peace*, 8.

⁷⁰ Khan, *How to Establish Peace*, 8. See Chapter 6 of this study for a detailed description of the general argument.

⁷¹ Khan, *The Quran*, 1428. Also, see Chapter 6.

According to this verse of the Quran, our enemy is our potential friend. That is why, according to Islamic teaching, what we should do is to turn the potential into the actual through dialogue or peaceful effort, rather than destroy all positive opportunities by unnecessarily waging war.⁷²

In this quote, the use of the word “effort” can be seen as an application of what Khan means by peaceful jihad, i.e. ‘striving’ or ‘effort’, in Khan’s translation. A “peaceful effort” suggests dialogue and the word “positive” is relative to peaceful opportunities and what Khan sees as constructive work, education, and proselytising, as previously seen.

Fifth, Arab leaders should refrain from making demands for justice but seek a peace treaty in any form. This is the *Hudaybiyya* principle that Khan thinks that the Prophet Muhammad followed “throughout his life.” To neglect this principle is “unrealistic,” because peace does not bring about justice: “Peace only opens the door to opportunities, and the desired justice is achieved only by availing of those opportunities.”⁷³ While certainly an application of Khan’s presentation of the peace treaty at *Hudaybiyya*, what is unclear about this argument is when peace treaties diminish possibilities. Obviously, warring parties await the signing of a peace treaty for the simple purpose of wishing for better terms, i.e. possibilities. With regard to the Palestinian case, Khan attempts to answer such questions in his following argument.

Sixth, Khan thinks that “ideally, Islamic action is result oriented action.” The Prophet Muhammad had said that: “A true Muslim is one who abandons such actions as yield no result.” For Khan, this saying by the Prophet Muhammad means in the Palestinian case that for sixty years “huge sacrifices” have been made by the “Arab movement” which has been ultimately “fruitless.” In fact, the Palestinian cause has been damaged by not living up to this result-oriented principle and it is crucial that the “Arab movement” think again “in a purely realistic way.”⁷⁴ Justice could have been reached by the Palestinians much earlier, Khan argues.

One note on Khan’s presentation of Islam, as allowing only “result oriented actions,” regards the universal human complication of knowing in advance what actions will yield the wished for outcomes. He, seemingly, reserves the category of the true and authentic “Muslim” to Muslims who skilfully avoid the traps of future errors, who constantly learn from past mistakes, and through determined reflection improve both their outlook and actions. Hence, it seems that the

⁷² Khan, *How to Establish Peace*, 9.

⁷³ Khan, *How to Establish Peace*, 9.

⁷⁴ Khan, *How to Establish Peace*, 9–10.

perfect “Muslim” is goal-oriented and rational, even in their self-scrutiny. The way this notion is expressed by Khan could fruitfully be analysed as performative, that is, Muslims should be goal-oriented and rational by and when skilfully applying non-violent principles and actions.

Seventh, Khan condemns the use of suicide bombing. He repeats the Quran as saying “the killing of one person is like killing all mankind,” and states that the killing of innocents is “a heinous crime” in the eyes of God. As seen, this is an application of Khan’s general arguments concerning Sura 5:32: “the Palestinian movement [...] has so totally deviated from the path of Islam that it can never be held deserving of divine succour.” He, therefore, associates the disasters of “the Palestinian movement” with the lack of blessings from God, due to the killing and maiming of innocent people in suicide bombings. I analyse Khan’s line of thinking as constructing and perceiving a uniform Palestinian movement. Therefore, God apparently punishes or at least withholds success from the whole Palestinian people for the acts of suicide killings carried out by a very small fraction of Palestinians. Every Palestinian is equally guilty in the eyes of God, it seems.

Eighth, Khan quotes Sura 3:64: “Say: O People of the Book, come to a word (*kalimah*) which is common between us and you, that we shall worship none but God.” In his presentation, Muslims should find a “common ground” with others in matters of religion.⁷⁵ Historically, Muslims used to be more judicious, when a cooperative attitude was prevalent in “secular” matters; “medicine, philosophy and scientific research,” in places such as Baghdad, Cairo, and Spain. Khan thinks that “interaction” and “finding common ground” can very well be established “between Muslims and Jews” in Palestine, which “could yield great positive results.”⁷⁶ What remains unclear in this line of thinking, in my interpretation, is that, on one hand, Islam demands cooperation in Palestine. However, it is paradoxical that an exhortation for cooperation directed to a uniform “Palestinian movement” should apply to Christian or secular Palestinians. In line with Khan’s thinking in matters pertaining to the implementation of sharia, as we saw, these non-Muslims should not be forced to follow Islamic principles. On the other hand, Islam demands that Muslim Arabs, as the ancestors of Ishmael, should give up their claim to this piece of land. As we saw, the land of Israel is sanctioned by the Quran to belong only to the racially pure Jews, as Israelites. In other words, it is unclear if Jews and Muslims should live and cooperate together in Palestine, or if Muslims should accept the divine assignment of Palestine to the Jewish people. The following argument by Khan suggests that Jews and Muslims living together in cooperation is the preferred option.

⁷⁵ Khan, *How to Establish Peace*, 10.

⁷⁶ Khan, *How to Establish Peace*, 11.

Ninth, Khan thinks that unlike in earlier “monarchical times” with the “age of modern democracy” it is now possible to share power. This means that the Palestinian Arabs can share power even without any “independent rule of their own.” The Quranic account of Joseph in Sura 12, in which Joseph “accepted a ministerial post” under the king (Pharaoh), who was an idolater, is presented by Khan as an Islamic precedent and example for power sharing. Democracy is esteemed by Khan, who says: “With this new concept, it should be entirely possible for the Arab leaders to participate in the political system on the principle of democratic sharing.”⁷⁷ In sum, Khan is saying that there is no need for Palestinian political independence due to the modern development of democracy. Also, just like the Prophet Joseph, it is possible for Muslims to cooperate and share power under the authority of non-Muslims. In my interpretation, Khan seems to suggest a democratic one-state, or federal union type, solution for the resolution of the Israel-Palestine conflict. However, the argument of joint power sharing seems to take for granted that the Knesset would pass a democratic one-state solution and also bypasses Israeli claims to a Jewish state for the Jewish people.

Tenth, Khan says that it is against Islamic principles to “stage protests and lodge complaints against the opposition.” He applies Sura 42:30: “And whatever affliction happens to you, it is because of what your hands have earned.” This is an application of Khan’s general arguments for Islam, non-violence, and peace, as part of the individual’s striving, jihad, to act peacefully, as previously mentioned. Khan states: “According to this teaching of the Quran, the right way for us is to reassess our problems in an unbiased and unemotional way.” He explains this by saying that “constructive work” is the “secret of success in life” while protests are futile. But, “the prophetic formula” means to “ignore the problems and avail the opportunities.”⁷⁸ Accordingly, Khan thinks that Palestinians should make peace with their Israeli counterparts and this will open up opportunities for them. Protests, not to mention warfare and terrorism, is not only destructive, such approaches are against the will of God.

Khan concludes his speech by saying that the “Arab leaders” must abandon violence and accept the state of Israel. In return, Israel must make some territorial compensations to “the Arabs.”⁷⁹ What is remarkable about this concluding sentence is that in one fell stroke he, on one hand, calls into question his adherence to the Islamic principle of entering peace treaties without conditions, as well as, on the other hand, his position that Muslims must “accept” that

⁷⁷ Khan, *How to Establish Peace*, 11.

⁷⁸ Khan, *How to Establish Peace*, 12.

⁷⁹ Khan, *How to Establish Peace*, 13.

the land of Palestine is designated by God to belong to the racially undiluted Jewish people for all time and that the “Ishamelites” belong elsewhere.

7.2.3 *Palestine and Status Quo-Ism*

In *The Prophet of Peace* (2009), Khan writes that the Palestinian leaders should have applied a status quo-ism principle already in 1948 and 1967, respectively.⁸⁰ Status quo-ism here means, “acceptance of the current situation as it is,” while the Palestinian aim to return to the borders of pre-1948, and 1967, represents a failure to apply this principle. He says that there will not be a third chance for the Palestinians to accept the situation as it is. Therefore, the Palestinians must now accept the current status quo and make the most of the situation. In contrast to this rather bleak notion, Khan optimistically writes about Palestinian possibilities in the global society. He thinks that the struggle over territory and land is “anachronistic” since “modern communications” have made all possibilities in the world available to anyone. Creativity is the most important asset for any group or nation and more important than ever in the contemporary era. While hatred and violence erases the creativity of a society, only peaceful activities enhances its creative forces. In other words, creativity makes groups and societies successful, but violent societies spend their energies in vain and are destined for failure.

This is the reasoning leading to Khan’s directive that the Palestinians must give up acts of terror. In return, Israel must give “Palestinian Arabs (residing in Palestine) the same rights as are enjoyed by other residents under the constitution.”⁸¹ After describing the differences in the level of development and vegetation in “the two parts of Palestine,” “Arab” and “Jewish” respectively, Khan says that to solve the conflict, the notion of peace for land must be substituted for a notion of “rights for peace.”⁸²

I interpret this argument as a demand for a liberal democratic one-state solution to the conflict over land and nation. The call is for a democratic Israel-Palestine, governed by a constitution which provides equal opportunities to Palestinian Arabs, and all other citizens, without asking individuals for religious or ethnic credentials. I perceive this particular argument as a manifestation of Khan’s liberal-democratic secular constitutionalism and universalism, in general opposition to religious nationalism and communalism. He carefully balances this demand so as not to appear as overly demanding of Israel to take its democratic trappings

⁸⁰ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 175–178.

⁸¹ Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 184–186.

⁸² Khan, *The Prophet of Peace*, 184–186.

seriously. This balance act both affirms the Jewish claim to the land and simultaneously aims to recover the public face of authentic Islam – by highlighting reconciliation and social harmony as the true Islamic teachings and, thus, rejecting conflict and terror on the authority of Islam.

Khan's ideological positions that the Palestinians must immediately cease any claim to justice as well as unilaterally make peace with Israel can be contextually understood. Taken together with his approving descriptions of Israel's democracy and socioeconomic standards, as well as his very invitation to speak at a 2008 conference at the Peres Centre for Peace in Israel points to some significant international developments.

Alongside the pro-American ideological and economic motivations of the Indian middle class and diaspora, state actions have paved the way for the current strategic relation between Delhi and Washington. The market liberalisation and growth of the Indian economy starting in the early 1990s coincided with a change in India's foreign policy goals. Now close relations to the U.S. and Israel were sought. Beginning in 1991 under the Congress Party government with the exchange of embassies between Israel and India, a new accord between the two countries is by now well developed. In 2003, Ariel Sharon visited New Delhi, and in 2008 the two countries' Special Forces began joint counter-terrorism exercises.⁸³ In fact, the closing relations between Israel and India are part of a greater economic and strategic coming together between India and the U.S. From the perspective of the Indian government, the initiating diplomatic warm up toward Israel in 1991 was part of creating more close relations to the American government.

Meanwhile, from the American point of view, while Pakistan was a tactical partner in the global war against terror, their policies seemed increasingly ambiguous. This made India even more important as a strategic partner in South Asia, while also sharing several structural traits with the U.S., in particular democracy, ideally independent courts, pluralism, and forms of secularism that accommodates religion in the public sphere.

Therefore, even before the global war on terror, an India-Israel conciliation was already underway, which was quickly developed after 2001 into an India-U.S. partnership. The need for this triad of "natural allies" was expressed by Brajesh Mishra, National Security Advisor under the first BJP Prime Minister Vajpayee, in a 2003 address to the American Jewish Committee:

Such an alliance [of The U.S., India, and Israel] would have the political will and moral authority to take bold decisions in extreme cases of terrorist provocation. It would not get

⁸³ Jaffrelot, *Religion, Caste and Politics*, 768.

bogged down in definitional and causal arguments about terrorism. Blocking financial supplies, disrupting networks, sharing intelligence, simplifying extradition procedures – these are preventive measures which can only be effective through international cooperation based on trust and shared values.⁸⁴

Hence, there is a coincident of both private and state economic, ideological and military strategical interests between India, Israel, and the U.S. In this close partnership, a rhetoric focussed on fighting Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism appears to be a fundamental part. This contention is also supported by the stated purposes of the U.S. Senate India Caucus.⁸⁵

In conclusion, as we saw, after 2001, India has become a more and more important strategic partner in the U.S. led international “war on terror.” Therefore, Khan’s position of Islam, non-violence, and peace as applied to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in terms of the acceptance of status quo-ism can be understood as in line with the Indian government’s foreign policy goals of close relations to Israel and the U.S.

7.3 Islam, Non-Violence, and Peace: Gender

7.3.1 *Islam, Non-Violence, and Peace in Marriage*

As seen in Chapter 6, Khan presents Islam as prescribing separate spheres of action for men and women: “Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because God has made some of them to excel others, and because they support them from their means.” This quoted verse, Sura 4:34, is presented as meaning that “man’s capacities for management” makes him the “organizer” or the “supervisor” of the family in Islam. His role and obligation is that of providing for his family in the world outside the home.⁸⁶ The task of “guardian” belongs to the male because of his inherent physical strength and “additional, masculine quality of protectiveness.”⁸⁷

With regards to female roles, the “greatest ornament” for women is “proficiency in domestic matters.”⁸⁸ Being a mother is the most honourable role any human being can play.⁸⁹ Such

⁸⁴ Speech available at:

<https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/4526/Address+by+Shri+Brajesh+Mishra+National+Security+Advisor+at+the+American+Jewish+Committee+Annual+Dinner>. Accessed on 2019-10-07.

⁸⁵ <https://www.nbr.org/program/u-s-senate-india-caucus-publications>. Accessed on 2019-10-07.

⁸⁶ Khan, *Woman: Between Islam and Western Society*, 175–176.

⁸⁷ Khan, *Woman: Between Islam and Western Society*, 147.

⁸⁸ Khan, *Woman: Between Islam and Western Society*, 180.

⁸⁹ Khan, *Woman: Between Islam and Western Society*, 142.

differences between men and females are seen as natural traits, and it is therefore that Islam, being the religion of nature, verify and reinforce natural differences.⁹⁰

While it is emphasised that these roles are complementary, and that domestic work is not in any way “inferior” it appears that it is primarily women who destroy the natural social balance and labour division. Khan writes that:

Another domestic imperative is that the woman who is both wife and mother should organize her own and her family’s lives in such a way that they are free of problems. She herself should never create difficulties for her husband and children. In many cases, knowing “what not to do” is more important than knowing “what to do.” In such matters, women are liable to err because they are more emotional by nature. By creating unnecessary problems for their husbands and children, they destroy the peace and quiet of home life. [...] Regardless of whatever else a woman does, if she can simply refrain from creating problems of this nature, she will to large extent have succeeded in creating a wholesome, domestic atmosphere and a happy family circle.⁹¹

He also writes:

After facing the hardship of the outside world the man comes back home. Now the best wife is one who can bring him comfort and cheer. [...] Even when, on occasion, he asks her to do something without explaining all the pros and cons, she should – if she is a successful life partner – create no trouble over this at home.⁹²

Hence women should be obedient to their husbands. This is presented by Khan as an application of an even more fundamental principle in Islam: Accomplish duty, and not demand rights. A focus on duty makes the other party “serious-minded”:

⁹⁰ Khan, *Woman: Between Islam and Western Society*, 175.

⁹¹ Khan, *Woman: Between Islam and Western Society*, 130.

⁹² Khan, *Woman: Between Islam and Western Society*, 181.

He feels compelled to fulfil his responsibilities in like manner. This is the Islamic way. If one party is weaker, Islam enjoins him to remain patient, while exhorting the other party, the stronger, to tread the path of justice and fair play. The guidance of Islam regarding the relationship between husband and wife, is, in some respects, based on this principle. From the physiological standpoint, the woman is the weaker and the man the stronger party. That is why in its guidelines Islam keeps this difference in mind, so that more harmony and cooperation may build up between the two, the task of home building may proceed smoothly and without any hindrance. While Islam enjoins women to become obedient to their husbands, the Qur'an says that virtuous women are already obedient to their husbands.⁹³

Since Khan's view that female obedience to male authority is an application of the central notion that Islam teaches obedience and patience in the face of strength, this line of presentation of gender relationships in Islam may be fruitfully compared to Khan's mid-1990s advice to the Indian Muslim community, as they are described in Chapter 5.

7.3.2 Islam, Non-Violence, and Peace in Marriage and Muslim Minority India

In this section, an analytical comparison is attempted between Khan's guidance to Muslim wives, and to the Muslim community of India. In both cases, Khan says that Islam instructs only one of the involved parties. The presentation of the dictates of Islam, in both cases, does not address the stronger party, either the Muslim husband, or the Hindu majority. Instead, Islam is formulated as the responsibility of the weaker party to act in a manner so as not to bring about any wrath, slander, or violence. With regards to Muslim wives, Khan writes: "An obedient wife wins the heart of her husband and thus gains the upper hand. Hers is the highest place at home."⁹⁴ He also writes: "The success or failure of married life depends entirely upon the bride's willingness or unwillingness to adapt."⁹⁵ Comparably, with regards to the Muslim community of India, Khan states that Islam teaches Muslims to avoid being seen as a "trouble community." It is the Muslim community's own actions which is the source of their own difficult situation. Muslims themselves have caused the generally prevalent negative view of them, therefore Muslims may be seen as *ultimately responsible* for violence committed against them.⁹⁶

⁹³ Khan, *Woman: Between Islam and Western Society*, 182–183.

⁹⁴ Khan, *Woman: Between Islam and Western Society*, 183.

⁹⁵ Khan, *Woman: Between Islam and Western Society*, 235.

⁹⁶ Khan, *Indian Muslims*, 76.

Hence, “on a unilateral basis,” Khan writes, Muslims should “take the initiative in putting an end [...] to all mutual discord.” Muslims shall refrain from asking Hindus to change any form of action, nor should they protest issues such as low levels of government employment, language issues, or access to higher education. Outward protest is not tolerated in Islam, which teaches “unilateral patience.” Instead, Muslim movements shall focus only on “sound internal construction.”⁹⁷ With regards to the Muslim community after the partition of 1947, in opposition to the claim that Muslims had been “thwarted by prejudice and injustice” and therefore developed a “defensive” psychology of “insecurity,” and the reason for their failure to play a “creative role” in the reconstruction of the country, in fact: “Whatever the Muslims complained of was, in actual fact, the price they had to pay for living in this country.”⁹⁸ Had Muslims remembered the teachings of patience in Islam, they had been more successful and a vital part of the leadership of the nation. By adopting unilateral patience, Muslims will earn their place as a trusted part of the nation, working in joint cooperation for national betterment, while earning their trust and recognition. Khan advises his Muslim compatriots to be patient, and not cause any problems for their countrymen, so as not to be seen as a “problem community.” Khan emphasises self-restraint, patience, cooperation, and harmony, by not voicing any complaints nor creating any difficulties for anyone else. In this regard, the only type of acceptable striving for political change, or perhaps voicing social concerns, for Khan, mentioned during an interview in juxtaposition to “street activism” that is seen to create tension:

Tension creates hate. Hate creates violence. So, [...] street activism is a negative activism. Because in every street activism there are slogans, and there are protests. Then there is hate, then there is conflict, and then there is violence. So I am against street activism, and I believe in that practice by the Fabian society, the method of petitioning [the government] is very good.⁹⁹

The mentioning of the Fabian Society and British reformist socialism in the context of “street activism” points to two immediate political and social issues. First, that demonstrations and religious activism creates real tensions for Muslims in Indian society. The communal discourse marks Indian Muslims as bad-tempered and violent, and their loyalties are only to their own community, or elsewhere; with Pakistan or an imagined Islamic state. Second, reformist and

⁹⁷ Khan, *Indian Muslims*, 21.

⁹⁸ Khan, *Indian Muslims*, 25.

⁹⁹ Interview on 6th December 2014, 44.

democratic socialism in general also became part of the multi-faceted and complex Indian constitution, through the influence of the Fabian Society ideals on the leadership of the Congress Party, especially Jawaharlal Nehru, as seen in Chapter 2. By connecting these two issues, Khan maintains that Islam demands social harmony in Indian society by avoiding contentious activism, and the accommodation of conflicts through suggestions to the rightful authority, i.e. the federal government. Political and social change may be sought only by democratic reform through petitioning the government, as in the formulations of British socialist reformism and parliamentarism.

In a comparable manner, Khan writes with regards to marriage that: “A disobedient wife, [...] keeps quarrelling with her husband so that her whole life in consequence is marred with bitterness.” However, the obedience of the wife: “will result in a positive and constructive atmosphere at home rather than one of confrontation and discord.”¹⁰⁰ Any of the problems of married women, in their new homes and living amongst in-laws, is seen as caused by the wife’s failure to adjust properly to her new setting.¹⁰¹ A woman cannot count on being accepted in her new home, or met with “care and affection,” as in her childhood home.¹⁰² A place in her husband’s home and family, in terms of affectionate relationships, must be earned: “They have to be worked for, and she has to show herself deserving.”¹⁰³ A married woman who fails in such regards have not understood “the hard facts of life,” and therefore: “it is the girl herself who has to pay the price. [...] she will be fortunate indeed if her afflictions are only psychological.”¹⁰⁴ While the violent nature of such further afflictions is only hinted at by Khan, it is clear that it is the wife herself who is *ultimately responsible* for any hardships caused by her own negligence.

In conclusion, regarding marriage, Khan does not address Muslim husbands. In a similar manner, regarding Hindu and Muslim relations in Indian society at large, he does not address Hindu anti-Muslim parties or ideology. In both cases, it is the dictates of patience in Islam, central to Khan’s formulation of Islam as we saw in Chapter 6, that the one, weaker, party should take full responsibility for the situation and work constructively and persistently for earning a secure place in “the new home,” so to speak. The alternative to such forbearance and patience in Khan’s view is:

¹⁰⁰ Khan, *Woman: Between Islam and Western Society*, 183.

¹⁰¹ Khan, *Woman: Between Islam and Western Society*, 221.

¹⁰² Khan, *Woman: Between Islam and Western Society*, 222.

¹⁰³ Khan, *Woman: Between Islam and Western Society*, 221.

¹⁰⁴ Khan, *Woman: Between Islam and Western Society*, 222.

Attaining one's objectives in an aggressive, confrontational way – means being anti-social and creating disharmony on a variety of fronts, all of which is inconsistent with the ideals of social order.¹⁰⁵

This quote shows that a fundamental aspect of Khan's thinking of Islam, non-violence, and peace, is an emphasis on social harmony and accommodating conflict by avoiding matters of contestation.

7.3.3 Discussion: Western Civilisation and International Norms

As seen in Chapter 6, Khan aims to dislodge any hostility in the both Muslim and non-Muslim constructions of essential differences between "Islam" and "the West." Hence, there is no need for Muslim apprehensiveness about the influences of American and European culture, nor the spread of modern science and technology. They are all part of the divine plan, and ultimately for the benefit of Islam. Correspondingly, authentic Islam aims to be a part of the universal mainstream and adapting to the international norms, hence, non-Muslims should not see any conflict as an expression of something like a clash of civilisations. True Islam is fundamentally different from the violence of Muslims who act on the alleged authority of Islam.

However, as regards women's liberation, the influences of "Western civilisation" are seen as "baneful."¹⁰⁶ Similarly, as also seen in Chapter 6, concerning the gay rights policies of the UN, certain international norms are contested by Khan. These formulations can be analysed as an attempt by Khan to define and limit "western civilisation" as involving mainly "useful" science and technology. Female and gay liberation, meanwhile, are unwanted aspects of such civilisational and ideological impulses. Therefore, I interpret Khan's aim to remove essential differences between what he presents as true and authentic Islam, and what he presents as "Western civilisation," "international norms" and the "universal mainstream," as limited and, therefore, ultimately subjective. This somewhat degree of subjectivity and personal views are, at the same time, truly tempered. As we have seen in this chapter, Khan's views are situated in the context of Indian domestic and foreign policies, the global debate on Islam and Muslim solidarity, the Muslim minority situation, and the social situation of marriage, such as women living with in-laws. The situated-ness of Khan, therefore, also calls to mind the theoretical and methodological perspectives stated at the start of this study. Khan, as an historically situated

¹⁰⁵ Khan, *Indian Muslims*, 103.

¹⁰⁶ See Section 6.7.3.

actor confronts and expresses the political and social issues in a way that is, while personal, also structured by the general ideological and religious debate on Islam in India and indeed, all over the world, but also defined by Islam and Muslim discourse as a tradition. Fundamentally, Khan's claim to religious authority must be understood as publically watching over the authentic Islamic teachings in the contemporary changing situations, as an *ālim* in the world.

Part 3: Analysis of the Thought of Wahiduddin Khan

The third part of this study analyses Khan's thought in relation to two interrelated contexts, as described primarily in Chapters 2, 3, and 5. On one hand, there is the conflictual context of fundamental ideological and religious debate over Islam, on a global scale as well as in India. And on the other hand, the conflictual context of social and political issues and actors, foremost in India. Consequently, Part 3 of this study seeks to answer the second overarching and principal research question of this study: *What is the significant contribution of Khan's thought and argument regarding Islam, non-violence, and peace in relation to an Indian situation of ideological and religious debate?* Connected to this second overarching research question are three more specific questions: *What is Khan's thinking about Islam in India? How can Khan's ideology be described in relation to other Indian thinkers and writers? What is the relationship between Khan's ideology and the political and social situation in India?*

As formulated in Chapter 1, there is also an additional aim of this study; to discuss some of the theoretical problems and perspectives in the scholarly discussion regarding Islam, globalisation, and politics today. This theoretical discussion emerges as an outcome of the analysis of Khan's thought in the two contexts mentioned. Thus, Part 3 also seeks to answer the third overarching and principal research question of this study: *What is the significant contribution of Khan's thought and argument regarding Islam, non-violence, and peace in relation to a global situation of ideological and religious debate?* The questions identified as connected to this third overarching research question are: *What is the relationship between Khan's ideology and the global debate on Islam? How can Khan's thinking be analysed through the application of the theoretical concept, "Political theology"? How can Khan's ideology be analysed through the application of the theoretical concept, "the objectification of Islam"? What theoretical outcomes are generated through analysis of Khan's thinking in light of these two theoretical concepts or perspectives?*

Answers to these questions will be attempted in the following Chapters 8, 9, and 10.

Khan's thought in the Context of Indian and Global Islam

8.1 Khan and the Political and Social Situation of India

The long-term effect of the partition of India – and as pointed out by Wilfred Cantwell Smith the partitioning of India's Muslim community – was that the geographically scattered Muslims across the subcontinent developed into an economically, politically, and socially disempowered minority in relation to the Hindu majority. The increasing importance of religion and caste for purposes of political mobilisation only accentuated this development. The dynamics of majority-minority relations in India were particularly affected by the growth of Hindu activism and militancy, and the social impact of the continuing wars with Muslim Pakistan. Within this general context, violence between groups of Hindus and Muslims has occurred repeatedly. This social phenomenon has been thoroughly analysed in the dedicated academic literature. The literature analyses this violence from various perspectives, ranging from the quotidian, local and territorial rivalries for business and economic gain, to purposes of political mobilisation, such as winning elections and votes at district and national levels. Irrespective of analytical angle or level, a common factor is the importance of the “communal discourse” as a general legitimising framework for violence against Muslims.

This study argues that in terms of ideological content, Khan's texts should be analysed in relation to this longstanding general debate situation. In fact, high caste Hindu mobilisation employed by Congress Party leaders was already a feature of Indian national politics in the 1950s. Especially prominent in the oldest rhetorical roots of this mobilisation was the lingering notion that Muslims would have to prove their loyalty to the Indian republic, since the very presence of Pakistan now affected each and every single incidence of communal dispute. What the overview of the literature also reveals is that at least since the late 1970s, the occurrence of Hindu-Muslim violence has become a routinised feature of Indian society. Notable increases in and instances of violence occurred in the 1990s and early 2000s. These periods also correlate with periods of intense ideological activity and productivity on Khan's side, as well as major shifts in his thinking.

There seem to be two primary principally polarised options for India's Muslims in the situation of both actual violence and the ideological pressures of the “communal discourse.” The first is to support the constitutional project of democratic secularism in the hope that the

dominant Hindu group will support secularism as well. The second is to reinforce the Muslim community by supporting communal organisations and political activism. However, the Muslim community of India has never been united in terms of either religious outlook – for instance in terms of doctrine and sect – nor as regards language, class, ethnicity, or culture. Consequently, without a strong and cohesive social basis, political options were never so clear-cut. Based on this summary overview and context, the following sections will argue that Khan’s thinking may be fruitfully analysed as being targeted towards popularising a form of Indian Muslim unity based on his notions of Islam, non-violence, and peace. Consequently, Khan’s starting point is a positive relation between a somewhat reformulated composite nationalism and Islam. This accommodation may be regarded as partly acquiescing to the “communal discourse,” while at the same time separating Islam from discursive culpable entanglement. Khan holds that Muslims are, indeed, to be blamed for communalism and political activism, whereas undiluted and authentic Islam suggests only non-violence, peace, and maintaining the political status quo. Therefore, Khan’s thinking may be categorised as being associated with the first of the two polarised options – to support the constitutional project of democratic secularism in the hope that the dominant Hindu group will support secularism as well. However, the aim of Khan’s thinking is also geared towards creating a sense of Muslim unity based on his notions of Islam, non-violence, and peace. This way of thinking is presented by Khan as the only viable option in a situation of anti-Muslim ideology and violence. It is also central in his claim to religious authority.

8.1.1 Muslim Unity?

This study has analysed Khan’s texts as an allocution to the Indian Muslim community on the necessity to practice a form of Islam, which is in every way convivial and respectable to non-Muslim neighbours. By countering the ideological content of the communal discourse in this way, Khan’s message may be regarded as aiming at securing a place for Muslims in India. In particular, Khan’s maxims on the ideal amiable behaviour of Muslims, and the rational universalism of Islam, may be regarded as encouragement for non-Muslims to think better of Islam in general, or even consider conversion. However, popularising Islamic teachings is a general topic of modern reform in Indian Islam and as we have seen, Khan has clearly expressed his appreciation for the single largest Muslim revival movement in the contemporary world, Tablīghī Djamā‘at. As a result, the need for Muslim unity may be regarded as more significant

in Khan's thought than the possibility of non-Muslim religious conversion or a change of attitude.

In terms of ideological content, Khan's thinking can be analysed as maintaining the claim that Muslims must unite in an Islam that is invulnerable to ideological assault from the communal discourse. This position is constructed through the categories of non-violence, peace, and political status quo-ism. It is important to note that this ideological and religious thought should not be perceived as the philosophical exercise of an aloof intellectual. The increasing violence against Muslims in the 1990s was followed by an even more hostile ideological Hindu nationalist discourse. Earlier ideological formulations of Hindu Nationalism did not preclude co-existence; Muslims could be tolerated if they adhered to the majoritarian Hindu culture by pledging allegiance to Hindu India while refraining from public displays of religion. From 2002, some Hindu nationalists openly advocated elimination of the Muslims. Within this type of debate and the associated political and social situation, Khan formulates his claim to religious authority and leadership. In relation to these instances, the Muslim community must make the teachings on Islam, non-violence, and peace their central concern. This is the essence of Khan's message.

However, Khan navigates a situation of both social individualism and the ideological tenets of the communal discourse reiterating the image of Muslims as a collective with certain permanent characteristics. He turns to Muslims as individuals but he also reminds his readers how Islam and Muslims are generally perceived in a negative light both nationally and internationally. Therefore, Muslims have a responsibility as a collective to live up to the ideals of Islam, non-violence, and peace. In fact, it is an existential matter, determining the future position of Islam and Muslims in India and the world. This responsibility of Muslims as a collective is of course hard to realise, especially given the actual divisions among Muslims along both religious as well as ethnical and socioeconomic cleavages. And in Khan's thought there is a blind spot regarding these divisions, especially the social and economic ones. As seen in Chapter 6, Khan's teachings of Islam, non-violence, and peace involve upholding a political and social status quo-ism – maintaining the existing state of affairs. We have seen that Khan supports the constitutional project of democratic secularism, perhaps in the hope that the dominant Hindu group will support secularism as well. However, Khan does not interlink the support for democratic secularism with a demand for distributive policies; the access to education and wealth should not be supported or organised at the federal state level. This position is very different from how constitutional democratic secularism was initially ideologically defined. Earlier Congress Party ideology combined democratic secularism with

the distribution of wealth. These two were to be the main driving forces behind increasing individualism and freedom, as well as national progress. The contemporary neo-liberal economic policies in India were, in fact, also supported by later Congress governments. However, the Hindu Right have combined this socioeconomic, individualistic ideological element with issues of Hindu Nationalism and anti-Muslim agitation. Khan's ideology may be regarded as supporting socially harmonious relations with the majority community, while at the same time expressing consent to the current individualistic socioeconomic ideology.

In Chapter 6, we also saw that during the nineteenth century Islamic revival, with the decline of power in Muslim hands, the meaning and scope of Islamic teachings were already being increasingly placed on individual Muslims as a moral and cultural life-style. Consequently, in Khan's thought, a neo-liberal individualism in social and economic matters is intertwined with an individualistic Islam. This study has shown that since the 1990s, neo-liberal economic and social policies have nurtured an increasing double economy; described in terms of both middle class consumption, and simultaneous poverty, illiteracy, and severe work conditions for a large number of Indians. As Muslims are disproportionately poorer and less educated, with higher rates of illiteracy and un-employment in relation to the Hindu majority, by focusing on Islam as individual moral and virtues, Khan's ideology may be analysed as not being aimed at breaking down the social divisions of India's Muslim community. In fact, his double individualist starting points make up a structural grid that makes the socioeconomic situation and interests of the majority of India's Muslims invisible, or at least not investigated and questioned. Instead, Khan's thinking may be analysed as expressing the view that Islam should not at all be associated with the allegations of the communal discourse and its associated socioeconomic theme: the perceived "backwardness" of Muslims. Similar to the communal discourse, Muslims as a cultural collective are blamed for their own relative "backwardness" in Khan's ideology. Instead, authentic Islam emphasises opportunities: success in education, entrepreneurship, and business. Therefore, the political aspects of his thought dismisses any grounds for a class-based, collectively organised, national movement for a large majority of India's Muslims, who shares the need for increased access to education, culture, and economic as well as social capital with other marginalised groups and communities.

Khan's hopeful message for Muslim unity through a widespread concern for the teachings on Islam, non-violence, and peace, thus stumbles on the actual divisions among Muslims, and is further hampered by the double individualism inherent in his ideology.

8.1.2 Composite Nationalism and Islam

In the twentieth century, Aḥmad Madanī, the leading figure of the *Djāmi‘at al-‘Ulamā-yi Hind*, was a key contributor to discussions among the top echelons of the Indian ‘*ulamā*’ of how to relate to the Hindu community and to the emerging independent state(s). Of particular importance was his *Composite Nationalism and Islam* of 1938. The academic literature describes Madanī’s thought in different ways. Irfan Omar states that: “From the idea of ‘composite nationalism,’ drawn mostly from secular principles, we arrive at Wahiduddin Khan’s ‘theology’ of pluralism and multiculturalism.”¹ The argument that the idea of composite nationalism is derived from “secular principles” is opposed by two other perspectives on Madanī’s thinking, both highlighting the religious aspects of this important concept albeit in different ways.

As we saw in Chapter 2, Jamal Malik briefly discusses Khan in relation to Madanī and argues that Madanī’s “Composite Nationalism” does not bring the various elements in pluralist India together into one nation. Instead, Madanī’s composite nationalism is analysed as a manipulation and temporary convenience for the eventual victory and dominance of Islam in India. From this perspective, Madanī’s idea would latently and consequentially involve a tendency to Islamic hegemony: hence an “Islamist trap,” in Malik’s words.

Another, comparable perspective on Madanī that highlights the religious dimensions of his ideology was discussed in Chapter 5. Zaman argues that Madanī miscalculated the power of the emerging modern nation state to shape the mould of its citizens and that in practice, the rise of Hindu Nationalism has overshadowed the concept of composite nationalism. Like Malik and Peter Hardy, Zaman notes that Madanī expected a sort of cultural and religious autonomy for Islam after independence. However, Zaman points out that Madanī’s ideology and claim to religious authority were shaped by his affiliation with *Ḥanafī* law. Madanī used *Ḥanafī* law and logic to conclude that a territory that had once been in Muslim hands was still to be considered part of the vital religio-legal and socio-political geographic category, *Dār al-Islām*, as long as the right to practice Islam remained with the Muslims there. The Deobandi-trained Madanī argued that it might be either legally recommended or obligatory for Muslims to remain in such lands. They should also openly practice Islam and call people to the faith with the ultimate goal that other residents might eventually become Muslims, thus a kind of hegemonic Islamic vision.

In relation to Malik’s concept of composite nationalism as an “Islamist trap,” one important starting point for the analysis is Khan’s formulation of the eventual dominance and victory of

¹ Omar, *Rethinking Islam*, 67.

Islam in India. Under the circumstances in which every member of society is ready to “accept” Islam, a state with Islam as the dominant jurisdiction might emerge but only by democratic, even consensus rule. One should therefore analyse Khan’s thinking as partially influenced by Madanī’s important ideological legacy. Khan’s involvement with the *Djāmi‘at al-‘Ulamā-yi Hind* in the 1970s – a movement that has constantly based its ideology on Madanī’s concept – corroborates this theory. However, it is less tenable to analyse Khan’s thinking of Islam, non-violence, and peace in terms of an outright “Islamist trap.” Instead, as Zaman shows, the legal collective duties stipulated by *Ḥanafī* law represents a more relevant framework for the analysis of Khan’s thinking. But as we can see, this point of collective duties is reasonably and slightly at odds with Khan’s individualistic approach to Islamic law. The structural similarity of Khan’s nationalist arguments to those of Madanī, the most influential and leading of the Indian nationalist ‘*ulamā*’, must therefore be nuanced.

Within the framework of Madanī’s formulations of *Ḥanafī* law, Muslims are seen as recommended or even obliged to spread Islam by making both ideological and practical impressions on the resident non-Muslims. However, in Khan’s thinking this is clearly to be done in a mode of intellectual conversation, by means of rational argument. In one argument, Khan appeals to Muslims by using the example of the successful Mongol attack on Baghdad in 1258 and the eventual conversion of these conquerors.² Khan moreover sets this argument within the parameters of the importance of freedom, especially religious freedom. The freedom of all is the prerequisite for life as a test set by God. Only then can those who are fit for paradise actually be tested and confirmed. In analytical terms, this provides a religious legitimization of pluralism, as well as a religious explanation for the predominance of non-Muslims in Indian society, especially the Hindu religion. In addition, to succeed the test the faithful Muslim should non-violently abide by the tenets of freedom for all commanded by God; hence to abstain from violence and only use peaceable means of persuasion. The eventual dominance and victory of Islam, therefore, are positioned as very distant goals, almost as visionary, non-realizable values. Instead we ought to observe the immediate political and social issues that his thinking addresses. The foremost duty of Muslims, as presented by Khan, is the continued proliferation of Islam. On this point he is on the same track as Madanī. This ideological tenet is a key factor in his thought, but as we will see it goes beyond Madanī’s horizon and prospects. To Khan this tenet creates a religious duty for Muslims to participate in and continually renew their prospects in everyday Indian life. As seen in Chapter 6, the duty for proselytisation involves social

² Khan, *Islam and Peace*, 147.

relationships, institutions, trade, education, investment, and labour. In fact, all non-violent and peaceable ways to lead a religious Muslim life in contemporary India are thoroughly legitimised by this one ideological tenet. Khan's descriptions, value declarations, and prescriptive statements may be summed up in the importance placed on this kind of proselytisation. In addition, the religious ideology of proselytisation should also be analysed as supporting a democratic version of secularism as a national and constitutional value in India.

The concept of secularism and what it entailed has been debated from the time of the independence. The Shah Bano case of 1985 made it clear that "political majoritarianism" shared by both the Congress Party and the increasingly influential parties of the Hindu Right was to be a factor of Indian political and social life, as we saw in Chapters 2 and 5. The Congress Party rhetorically defined itself as the rightly and only national movement. However, sectional interests were met by the party when considered politically expedient. Meanwhile, the *Sangh Parivar* used such instances to denounce Congress policies as anti-national while they pictured themselves as upholding true secularism. The politics of majoritarianism discernibly meant that caste, ethnic, and religious communities could be placed outside the pale of the national consensus for the purposes of political mobilisation, while sectional interests were upheld when it was regarded as electorally advantageous. As a national and constitutional value, the Hindu Right has successfully challenged what secularism entails and transformed its meaning into political majoritarianism. For the Hindu Right, being secular and democratic means that the majority should rule, the special needs of minorities and other marginalised groups should not be "pampered" to.

Khan's thinking is crucially shaped by this situation of ideological and religious debate, addressing a situation of political and social issues. Khan pleads for harmonious social relations by inverting the communal discourse. Islam is not violent, separatist, or foreign in intent or origin. Islam is non-violent and nationalist; at the least authentic Islam means the maintenance of the political and social status quo and is wholly adjusted to prevailing formulations of liberal socioeconomic ideology as part of the national identity. For instance, Khan repeatedly emphasises that education and thrifty entrepreneurship is encouraged by Islam. It is a formulation of Islam that upholds the pluralism and tolerance for religious differences inherent in the constitutional value of secularism. Therefore, Khan's ideology is a support for the constitutional project of democratic secularism, including national unity in difference. However, the communal discourse is only questioned at the level of abstract religion: a timeless and authentic Islam should not be the target of anti-Muslim agitation. Therefore, the hope that the dominant Hindu group will support this formulation of secularism might work to create

harmonious relations between the anti-Muslim Hindu Right and Khan's own ideology. Khan's thinking does not fundamentally question Indian anti-Muslim rhetoric nor its international counterpart. The ideological image of a Muslim monolith community provided with collective interminable traits is left untouched. Therefore, Khan's ideology demands a democratic space of tolerance and coexistence for his formulation of a timeless and authentic Islam but flesh and blood Muslims, as a community or individuals, are not necessarily part of this democratic political space if they fail to live up to the demands of authentic Islam. Therefore, Khan's thinking does not support or propagate the fundamental tenets of political individualism characteristic of democratic secularism. In this sense, nor does it support or propagate the democratic value of human rights, especially freedom from discrimination. On these points Khan's thought is diffuse or falls short in the face of the demanding issues of the political situation.

8.2 Khan and Indian Islam

8.2.1 Khan in Comparison to *Shāh Walī Allāh*

As we saw in Chapter 2, the eighteenth century writings of *Shāh Walī Allāh* represent a lasting influence on the development of Islam on the subcontinent. Khan's approach can fruitfully be compared to the reforms suggested by *Walī Allāh*. His writings share some basic traits with the older reformer, most importantly that at a time of Muslim decline and alleged danger to Islam, individual *id̥t̥ihād* is called upon in order to bring the Muslim community closer to the perceived Islamic ideal. Another similarity is that both writers present Islam without reference to the works of earlier Muslim jurists and instead base their reasoning directly on the Quran and the Sunna. *Walī Allāh* related his presentation of Islam to the issues of his own time and context. Similarly, Khan relates his presentation of Islam to contemporary political and social issues, for instance the political success of Gandhi or the economic achievements of a non-militarised and peaceable Japan.

Also comparable to *Walī Allāh* is the relation to Sufi Islam in times of Muslim doctrinal disunity. In Khan's contemporary times, the primary conflicts are those between various Sunni and Shia sects and traditions, as well as conflicting views on the relation of Islam and the state and more generally, conflicting views on shrine worship and therefore specifically, Sufi Islam. As we saw in Chapter 2, many modern reform orientations criticise Sufi Islam and other traditions of worship of holy places and figures for condoning idolatry and thus blurring the

purity of faith and the Muslim identity and unity. In the face of all these divisions, Khan may be regarded as addressing the disunity by reformulating Sufi concepts with strict reference to conceptualisations that are palatable both to the reform orientations and to Muslims with a modern education. It is not too daring to state that Khan tries to reconcile the widespread socio-cultural currents of Indian Sufi Islam with the tenets and conceptualisations of modern Islamic reform. The Sufi quest for purification as a timeless Islamic struggle to realise the authentic human nature (the divinely created soul), is reformulated by Khan through distinguishing and highlighting the conditioning points of upbringing and culture. With such a reconciliatory move based on direct scriptural application, Khan addresses crucial social and religious lines of division within the Indian Muslim community, much as Walī Allāh limited Indian Sufi heterodoxy through the integration of the concepts of *waḥdat al-wudjūd* ('the unity of being') commonly identified with Ibn al-'Arabī, and Sirhindī's *waḥdat al-shuhūd* ('unity of the manifestations of God') in a time when these positions had become politicised and caused Muslim disunity.

Therefore, in form and structure, Khan's argument is quite similar to the lasting example of Walī Allāh. Both writers see the necessity of upholding the sharia and sharia-based conduct as their starting point. But from this point their paths differ, especially regarding the definition of the content of the sharia and the relation to politics, law, and the state. In the political and social situation of Walī Allāh, rising Hindu states sought to establish forms of Hindu legislature and pursued anti-Muslim policies. Therefore, in a time of declining Muslim rule, armed jihad was necessary to accomplish the defence of Islam because Walī Allāh saw a separate Muslim polity and rule as necessary to uphold the sharia and ideal Muslim conduct. However, Khan does not perceive a separate Muslim polity as necessary to achieving the fundamental aim of Islam, which is to propagate its message. Armed jihad is forbidden, and warfare is only legitimate for the strict defence of the already established state. In the political and social situation of Khan, the pursuit of sharia conduct is closely connected to the prevailing social factors of individualism. Accordingly, it is an individual and voluntary code of sharia that Khan pursues. The Indian federal state does not aim to interfere in the religious behaviour of its citizens, such as raising buildings for religious purposes, ritual activities, proselytisation, religious education, or individual codes of conduct (such as those shaped by the sharia). However, through its constitution the state upholds an established codification of sharia, the "Anglo-Muhammadan" law. Thereby, the state and its judges also pass judgement on non-individual, "family" aspects of the law such as divorce, marriage, inheritance, maintenance, and custody.

Hence, in comparison, the political and ideological differences between Walī Allāh and Khan can to a large degree be explained by their widely different historical, social, and political situations. Nevertheless, they both share the crucial, basic idea of the necessity for Muslims to conform to the sharia, however differently understood. But the perceived role of the state in upholding the sharia differs. Walī Allāh invited a Muslim ruler from neighbouring Afghanistan to achieve Muslim rule and uphold the sharia. The purpose was to achieve Muslim unity and uphold ideal conduct through state policy and law. In sharp contrast to the idea of a separate Muslim rule, Khan, as we saw, propagates a policy of political “status quo-ism.” Thereby, Khan legitimates and supports the principles of the Indian secular and democratic constitution, which do not interfere with the individual voluntary pursuit of the sharia, while at the same time upholding vital social aspects of a certain codification of sharia law in the name of state secularism. In a political and social situation of capitalism and individualism, interfering with practical state policies is only a distraction from making the Muslim community conform to the Islamic ideal, best attainable through non-violent means, dissemination of teachings, and allegiance to the prevailing nation and state.

8.2.2 Khan, Sufi Islam and Religious Authority

In terms of ideological content, Khan clearly differs from the foremost modern example of armed jihad on the subcontinent, that of Sayyid Aḥmad Brēlwī, whose claim to the caliphate, as seen earlier, was ended by Sikh army forces in 1831. However, Aḥmad Brēlwī’s ideology also articulated several recurrent topics of modern Islamic reform, especially the idea that the weakness of the Muslims was due to their departure from faith. Khan likewise reiterates this familiar theme, but his ideas regarding how Muslim affluence and power should be restored are very different. Khan argues that Islam demands education, research, trade, and industry, and the application of these authentic teachings will make the Muslim community great again. According to him, intellectual, religious, and scientific achievements were, in fact, central to the historical greatness of Islam and Muslim civilisation, not the vain glories of political power. Correspondingly, Khan thoroughly opposes the “political interpretation” of Islam, that is, the idea of setting up a Muslim polity imposing sharia law. For him, this “political interpretation” is the foremost of the main contemporary departures from authentic Islam, as we saw.

Aḥmad Brēlwī was directly opposed to popular and heterodox Sufi, Shia, and Hindu practices connected to the worship of shrines or sacred figures. As has been pointed out, this is a feature that is also shared by the main modern Sunni sectarian and doctrinal orientations. However,

concerning Sufism, modern Indian Islamic reform does not wholly condemn Sufism. This characteristic can be found also in the case of Aḥmad Brēlwī, who condemned the Muslim disunity caused by differences in allegiances to different Sufī *tarā'iq* but instead sought to unite Muslims into his own *Ṭarīqa-yi Muḥammadiyya*. Aḥmad Brēlwī's claim to religious authority, thus, included the assertion that he had received guidance directly from the Prophet Muhammad. In comparison, in an interview Khan cited a hadith about the "true believer" who, "in terms of whispers is able to have contact with God."³ This may serve to illustrate that part of Khan's claim to religious authority is a certain contact with God on a daily basis, namely that of receiving "inspiration" from God through a sort of whispering conversation, which is carefully pointed out as being different to receiving revelations. However, this daily contact bestows on Khan a unique charismatic quality that allows him to formulate new, relevant insights. As previously highlighted, Khan's mother saw a white elephant in a dream that took a newborn Khan into the jungle. Khan thinks that the dream meant that God had a special purpose for him. Dreams and visions are described in Chapter 2 as a "cultural technology" and an essential part of claims to religious authority in the traditions associated with Sufi Islam. Direct visions of the Prophet himself are the most valued ones because of the prevalent use of a hadith that relates that Satan cannot impersonate the Prophet Muhammad. Thus, the dream medium itself is important in claims to religious authority in Indian Islam. Furthermore, when Khan recounts his childhood a period of shepherding animals is mentioned. In mainstream Islam, shepherding is generally associated with prophets. In addition, during an interview, the members of CPS asserted that Khan constantly seeks seclusion and contemplation, reminiscent of the Prophet Muhammad who sought solitude in a cave at Mount Hira.⁴ Due to such charismatic qualities, Khan's claim to religious authority and the specificity of his message is highlighted as different from other contemporary presentations of Islam, and its authenticity and urgency is emphasised.

Hence, as seen, while Khan disapproves of Sufism for its alleged anti-intellectualism, Khan also formulates his own claim to religious authority within frameworks that can nevertheless be analytically associated with Sufi Islam in India, especially the dream medium that designates his difference and importance. As we saw in Chapter 7, a dream related to a foretelling by the Prophet Muhammad was decisive for Khan when he took on the role of the learned man who "fills" the land with "justice" by teaching peace in Israel and Palestine. The dream medium facilitates a certain claim to outstanding religious authority based on both charisma and

³ Interview on 6th December 2014. 28.

⁴ Interview on 6th December 2014. 26.

scriptural interpretations of sayings of the Prophet Muhammad. Moreover, the members of the CPS asserted that God's intent was to train Khan "outside the *Umma*," which means that along with his continuing reception of divine "inspiration" through whispers, unlike other Muslim teachers and interpreters, he is able to convey something that is always both "new" and "positive."⁵ Therefore, one important feature of Khan's claim to religious authority lies clearly outside the strict modes of scriptural interpretation and is more in line with Sufi traditions of exceptional divine contact, including being at God's calling for a special mission, communicated through dreams and visions. As described in Chapter 2, Nile Green points out that such claims should in fact be considered vital to mainstream Islam. However, Green maintains that contemporary Sufi idioms can be expected to be formulated tacitly and "unmarked" because of the wide-spread and global anti-Sufi rhetoric of modern Islamic movements. I argue that this ambiguity may also be seen with Khan. On one hand he dissociates himself from Sufis for their traditional beliefs and lack of modern knowledge, but on the other hand states that the Sufis' historical non-violent examples should be followed. It may also be said that Khan continues to develop established and particular modern forms of the re-enactment of personal bonds between Sufi master and disciple.

As seen in Chapter 6, Khan includes the Sufis in the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphates as among the "great religious scholars" of Islam. They tolerated oppressive rulers in a non-violent manner and were among those who made lasting contributions to Islam by constructing its literature and spreading the faith. Today their example of avoiding rebellion should be followed – a tenet that is more important than ever. This shows that Khan does not wholly reject Sufism, but sees an important place in Islam for Sufis. With that in mind, his particular claim to religious authority may be discussed by highlighting the relative importance of the images and photos of Khan himself, in the publications of the CPS and Goodword Books. Chapter 2 demonstrated how the Sufi bonds of master and disciple were changed and re-enacted by the increasing importance of the printed image of the Sufi master during the first quarter of the twentieth century. According to Green, Indian Sufis watched over a "veritable enchantment" of industrial technologies, most importantly the printing press and chromatic lithography. The mutual spread and reform of Sufi teachings was facilitated not only by the introduction of new technologies to India but also of the new general socioeconomic modes of social behaviour generated by free enterprise, urbanisation, and modern market relations. The Sufi magazine was born, a precursor of what was later to become a global market for devotional Muslim literature, which in itself is

⁵ Interview on 6th December 2014. 24.

a significant capitalist venture.⁶ This aspect of Khan's easily available writings, his publication strategy, as well as the importance of his visual representation may be illustrated by two iconic images used by the CPS when publicising Khan in print or through digital means (one is found on the cover).

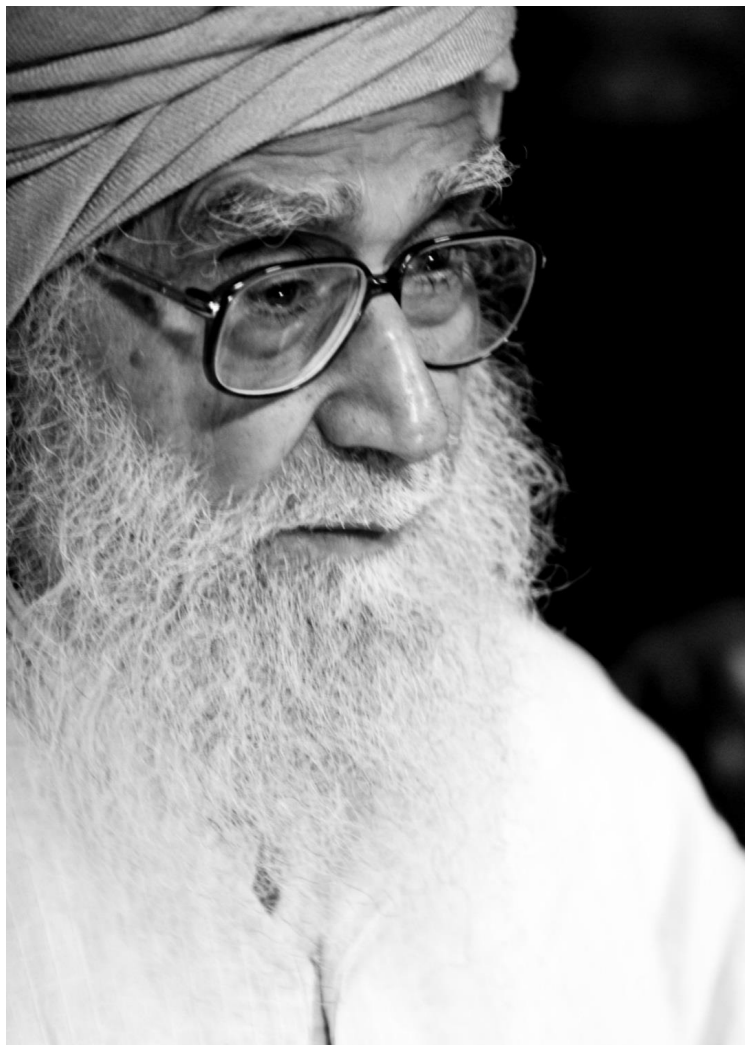


Figure 1. Maulana Wahiduddin Khan. Published with the kind permission of CPS International.

⁶ Goodword Books is an international publisher of Muslim devotional literature and is one significant part of the contemporary global market. Goodword Books publishes Khan's works and is run by Khan's son Saniyasnain Khan.

These examples demonstrate not only the importance of the printed image of Khan himself but also illustrates that in the same manner as the growth of the Sufi magazines, and Muslim devotional literature in general, the printed image of the master is a very specific feature. As early as the twentieth century, direct personal bonds between the master and disciple were not possible for a mass audience. Reproduction of Khan's image creates an important means by which to re-enact a time-honoured mode of personal devotion and contact. Arguably, these portraits of Khan also highlight his claim to religious authority in terms of an ideal role model worthy of emulation. As such, these images may be said to artistically emphasise one central message of Khan; self-improvement through self-reflection. As outlined in Chapters 2 and 4, the religious message expressed in these portraits of Khan may be understood as shaped by general historical conditions of a modern conceptualisation of the self and related to the awareness that individuals shape their own destinies. In light of such prevalent conditions, the occurrence and importance of portraits of Khan may be compared to the common Indian depictions of Hindu gods and goddesses regularly found in advertisement, calendars, printed posters, and religious pamphlets and other texts that disseminate popular religious teachings. As shown in Chapter 2, starting around 1900 these printed images became not only an object of devotion but increasingly also expressed human ideals and therefore served as role models for self-improvement. Important to note in this discussion, the comparison is not made in terms of content, i.e. religious syncretism. Instead, the comparison involves what Roy terms the broad, formatting effect of the religious market. In terms of religious content, the substance and function of the portraits of Khan can be understood in historical light of Sufi formulations of a path of repentance and purification that increases knowledge and devotion. The lexicon and tradition of Sufi Islam is not only a strict form of knowledge, it also takes an applied form. Khan's contemporary formulation of purification, to be "free of hate and negative thinking" implies familiarity with self-reflection as a path leading to contentment, in Khans terms *qanaat*, in the proximity to the divine. Clearly, Khan asserts a message of self-improvement and discovering God through contemplation and cerebral self-reflection. My argument is, simply, that the portraits and images of Khan highlights this message and hints at a possible path to religious contentment and his intimate knowledge of the way towards enjoyment in the reliance on God. Therefore, this implicit message of the image of Khan can be analysed as crucial to his claim to religious authority.

Furthermore, the growth in Sufi and other Muslim devotional literature during the first half of the twentieth century made possible by print technology ensured reformed Sufi teachings were available cheaply to a new reading public. In terms of Khan's texts, while there is still a

high level of use of print, the new digital modes of distribution are both arguably more effective and cheaper than print technology ever was. Hence, Khan's claims to religious authority and guardianship of Islamic teachings are both favoured and formed by new digital technologies and the new modes of popularisation. Perhaps Khan's presentation of the religious importance of the era of digital communications (when the message of Islam can be heard in every home) should be considered an "enchantment" of new technologies. In such a case there is a clear similarity to the development of earlier new forms of technology, especially print, which allowed for the broader dissemination of Islamic teachings. Clearly, Khan and the CPS use the internet and social media platforms when seeking to proselytise amongst those who are looking for links to heritage and tradition or new forms of spirituality. The reproduced image of the master in early Sufi devotional literature is increasingly being replaced by short videos, which are suitable for publication on Facebook and in which Khan delivers a message on a certain topic. Such digitalisation should be regarded as yet an additional new phase in the transformation of the time-honoured forms of transmission of Islamic teachings, i.e. the personal relationships and expensive manuscript copying. In modern times, this transformation process was initiated by Sufi devotional literature, which was shaped by print technology and adjusted to the requirements of a mass market. In contemporary times, Khan's claim to religious authority and responsibility of Islamic teachings is increasingly as a digital Master.

As seen previously, the dissemination and popularisation of Islamic teachings is a generic trait of Indian reform Islam, and is discussed further in the following section.

8.2.3 Khan's Thought in Comparison to some Distinguished Indian Sunni Orientations

Chapter 2 demonstrated that a large range of 'ulamā', missionary movements, mosques, educational institutions, and political ventures in the South Asian region continue to be known as "Deobandi," Barēlwi or Ahl-i ḥadīth. Comparison to either of these influential doctrinal and sectarian primary Sunni orientations may contribute to the attempt to categorise Khan's ideology. This theme will be followed in brief notes here. In addition, in the next section there will be an in-depth comparison of Wahiduddin Khan to the influential example of the educator, rector, and doyen of Islamic Modernism, Sayyid Ahmad Khan, and his "Aligarh movement".

With the Deobandi orientation, Khan shares the importance placed on the popularisation of Islamic teachings. For instance, Khan's translations of the Quran may be ordered or

downloaded for free through the CPS website, along with several other written pieces.⁷ Through easily accessible translations, digital means of disseminating texts, and an active personal presence on Facebook and digital media, Khan and the CPS are clearly aiming at expanding concern for Islamic teachings beyond the class of the religiously learned. The call for the popularisation of Islamic teachings can also be seen in Khan's positive appraisal of the Deobandi-affiliated Tablighī Djamā'at. As has been described, Khan believes that the Tablighī Djamā'at is most successful when preaching among those born Muslim, whose unconscious frame of mind and religious socialisation are seen as important factors in their effective revival of the Muslim faith. Khan's own claim to religious authority is instead based on the popularisation of Islam in the form of arguments and logic, by seeking to persuade those with a "modern" education as well as non-Muslims. Class issues regarding access to education and intended audience are evident, but arguably may also be noted in Khan's description of a slumbering and unconscious religiosity among Tablighī Djamā'at proselytes, which is in sharp contrast to the cool-headed intellectualism Khan indirectly ascribes to his own reader, who have presumably been exposed to "modern" thought.

Khan's position is that of a champion of a timeless and authentic non-violent Islam. Therefore, dissimilar to the Deobandi orientation that is largely centred in *Ḥanafī* law, Khan does not propagate adherence to a particular school of law. This also reminds us of an important aspect of Khan's claim to religious authority that was first met above. It is as an individual debater and religious leader that Khan presents Islam, not as part of a certain tradition or school. Through such a claim to unbounded *idjtiḥād*, Khan may be compared to the general orientation of the Ahl-i ḥadīth. Khan shares with this orientation the importance of directly relating a presentation of Islamic teachings to the Quran and hadith. However, far removed from the Ahl-i ḥadīth, Khan also make references in his writings to philosophy, history, and natural science. Given the nature of such foundational epistemological assertions as the following section aims to prove, Khan's type of presentation of Islam should be seen as a lot closer to that of Sayyid Ahmad Khan and his followers.

In comparison to the Barēlwi orientation of shrine-based Islam, Khan does not make an obvious claim to the status of or affiliation with holy men and saints. Yet as seen, Khan's claim to religious authority is at least partially shaped within charismatic frameworks of exceptionalism and exemplarity as distinct from modes of strict textual interpretation. As indicated, his mother's dream and assertions of a withdrawn and contemplating character reveal

⁷ <http://cpsglobal.org/quran/free>. Accessed on 2018-09-12.

that the presentation of himself as an extraordinary religious leader is influenced on one hand by Sufi Islamic culture and on the other hand, by wide-spread popular perceptions of the Prophet Muhammad himself.

During an interview it was claimed by members of the CPS that Khan's vegetarianism was proof of his deeply peaceable and socially different nature. Khan himself added that as a child, he would not even eat an egg. This study has contended that Khan's lifelong vegetarianism should not be seen as a case of otherworldly asceticism, in the manner that Jeffrey Halverson introduces Khan, which connects him to a well-received tradition of "holy men" in the "religious climate" of the sub-continent.⁸ Nor should it be seen as a general religious Hindu influence, which is the orthodox charge commonly raised against Sufi Muslims and followers of the Barēlwi orientation, who are criticised for religious syncretism and the adoption of Hindu practices. Instead, Khan's vegetarian diet has been analysed in Chapter 6 as related to a broad social consensus on high caste practices in Indian society. Therefore, his vegetarianism may further be analysed as part of the general importance that Khan places on social harmony and his strategies of finding acceptance and high status for himself, Islam, and the Muslim community in both political and social situations that are dominated by the Hindu majority. The social values of the Hindu majority have been analysed in this study as being shaped by the forces of "sanskritisation." In particular, the slaughter of cows, consumption of beef, and violent "cow vigilantes" are tangible and conflictual issues in contemporary Indian society. In the pursuit of social harmony, Khan's vegetarian practices strategically seeks to avoid this contested issue between Muslims and the Hindu majority. It highlights the importance Khan places on avoiding conflict at all costs and not causing distress to others by not being a "problem" person. Therefore, Wahiduddin Khan may fruitfully be compared to Sayyid Ahmad Khan who also sought to increase the status of Muslims and Islam in India but in settings that were structured through the dominance of British political rule. Detailed comparisons with Sayyid Ahmad Khan and his ideology placing Khan firmly in a continuing debate on Islam in India is the subject of the following section.

⁸ Halverson, *Searching for a King*, 101.

8.3 The Indian Debate Regarding Islam, Non-Violence, and Peace

8.3.1 Sayyid Ahmad Khan and the Politics of Reconciliation

The similarities between Wahiduddin Khan and Sayyid Ahmad Khan can be primarily highlighted by their respective projects of uplifting the Muslim community through education.⁹ The nineteenth century reformer saw education as the means forward for the Muslim community within the new conditions set by the British. The Muslim community was rhetorically and socially weakened after the failed uprisings of 1857, claimed to be caused by obscurant Muslims prone to violence. The contemporary Wahiduddin Khan instead presents Islam in a context in which Muslims are represented as outside the nation, either as violent “foreigners” (adhering to Pakistan), or as educationally and socially “backward,” that is, not part of modern society and common national life. Also for him, the elevation of the socioeconomic position of Muslims come about through education. This is presented as necessary with reference to timeless Islam but the actual sought after economic and educational success is attuned to the immediate economic context. It is within a globalised capitalist economy and through modern means that Muslims must prosper. Such a presentation of Islam is an adjustment to the Indian economic policies that have been in place since at least the 1990s. It may be analysed with reference to the political and social values of individualism and free enterprise, and that to be Indian increasingly means to be both Hindu and economically liberal.¹⁰

The two thinkers also share the importance placed on the study of nature. Therefore, the general mode of presenting the relation between Islam and modern science of Wahiduddin Khan can be interpreted as a continuation of the logic of Sayyid Ahmad Khan’s influential idea that nature, which is the work of God, can never be in breach of the Quran, which is the word of God. Just as Sayyid Ahmad Khan before him, Wahiduddin Khan criticises the Muslim community for its blind adherence to tradition instead of the simultaneous study of the divine work and word. But the place of science in the thought of Wahiduddin Khan is not as simple as the reinterpretation of the word of God when the two seem to clash. Instead, the significance of science and technology is presented in light of the word of God, perhaps thereby even “re-enchanting” the social value and meaning of science and technology. Wahiduddin Khan regards

⁹ To reiterate, for the sake of clarity, the names of Wahiduddin Khan and Sayyid Ahmad Khan are spelled out in full whenever I compare the two. This is repeated when I later in this chapter briefly compare Khan to the historic example of Badshah Ghaffar Khan. To avoid confusion, I refer to Badshah Ghaffar Khan by both surname and title when he is discussed in the context of Wahiduddin Khan.

¹⁰ Except economical liberalism, the social meaning ascribed to what it means to be Indian is shaped by Hindu Right-wing nationalist ideas about the importance of being Hindu, including some faiths but excluding others – particularly Islam.

science and technology as verifying his presentation of Islam. For instance, the inferential argument necessary to explain radiation and energy fields demonstrates that observations of an “intangible cause” in scientific theory are structurally similar to the older religious “indirect argument” of a “meaningful Cause that is God.”¹¹ In particular, digital means of communication are discussed with respect to this, the present era is seen as predicted in the Quran, a time at which the word of God will be heard in every home.

When comparing Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Wahiduddin Khan, the importance of the very concept of “nature” in the thought of both writers must be highlighted. Sayyid Ahmad Khan’s position was once scorned by his opponents as a *nechari* (‘naturalist’) or allegedly worldly or non-religious form of presenting Islam.¹² Meanwhile, nature is one of the most frequent words used in the writings of Wahiduddin Khan. Islam is the religion of nature and the only religion in harmony with true human nature. And vice versa, true human nature is regarded as being in harmony with true religion, i.e. Islam. Faith in God and paradise as well as abhorrence to violence are intrinsic aspects of human nature. Islam guides the individual to connect with such a true human nature, hence the discovery of Islam is, in fact, parallel to the discovery of true human nature and the authentic or natural self. These characteristics of the presentation of Islam of Wahiduddin Khan provides a partial explanation of the relative distance Khan maintains to the Muslim community of believers, the *umma*. From his position of an authentic and timeless Islam, he sees a need for the “de-conditioning” of the traditions and results of upbringing and culture. Culture and social mores are simply obstacles to the realisation of Islam as the religion of nature, i.e. the timeless truth. Therefore, in conclusion, Wahiduddin Khan is an important example of the long-lasting importance of *nature* as a fundamental concept in modern Indian presentations of Islam. Indeed, the classic Sayyid Ahmad Khan of 150 years ago first launched and established the influential presentation of Islam as the most rational and therefore most useful religion and the one most in harmony with the natural sciences as well as the human character and its sensibilities.

Along with the divide and rule policies of the British Raj, the idea of uplifting the Muslim community in the ideologies of Sayyid Ahmad Khan and the Aligarh movement also led to a strengthening of Muslim political sensibilities in the long-term. This lasting effect was caused by the creation of an awareness of a separate Muslim community in need of separate education for success and a Muslim-only uplift on one hand and on the other, a separate Muslim educational institution and programme motivated by the dangers inherent in the eventual

¹¹ Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 30.

¹² Jalal, *Partisans of Allah*, 169.

dominance of the Hindu majority, especially in the fields of training and competition for administration posts. However, in contemporary times, Wahiduddin Khan faces a different situation in terms of majority-minority relations and political power, especially the ideological and political positions of the Hindu Right. In the context of an ongoing war between Pakistan and India, Indian Muslims are regarded as foreigners prone to violence. Their domestic position is also weakened by notions of Muslims as a pampered and protected minority, who should instead come out of their ghettos and contribute to the common good. Consequently and in contrast to the importance of the Muslim-only uplift, Wahiduddin Khan formulates the notion that Muslims should be cooperative, benefit the wider community and become part of the national “mainstream.” As previously seen, one of Wahiduddin Khan’s arguments for the cooperation and co-existence between Muslims and non-Muslims is based on the example of the Prophet Joseph who served under the polytheist pharaoh. However, this same argument of Joseph’s loyal service to a non-Muslim ruler was first made by Sayyid Ahmad Khan. It underpinned loyalty to the British authority, who despite being Christian granted religious freedom and justice as well as maintained peace while respecting “individuality and property.”¹³ Hence, the similarities between the ideas and positions of Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Wahiduddin Khan concern both general and specific issues.

A thorny issue that is related to a certain degree is brought up by Jamal Malik, as seen in Chapter 1. Malik thinks that while advocating peaceful proselytising Wahiduddin Khan is “at the same time creating and recreating the notion of Muslims being a – minority and yet united – religious entity.”¹⁴ I argue that this can be topically related to the actual long-term influence of Sayyid Ahmad Khan on the imagination and creation of a separate Muslim community. Therefore, in the following I will attempt a discussion of the social and political implications of the ideological positions of Wahiduddin Khan in light of both Malik’s assessment of Wahiduddin Khan’s thought and Sayyid Ahmad Khan’s actual effect in the creation and imagination of a separate Muslim community.

Reiteration of the notion of a Muslim community with a collective responsibility to both refute violence and making progress in socioeconomic terms, may well have the long-term effect of furthering a sense of Muslims as a separate community, as Malik seems to suggest. However, in relation to Malik’s critique, I argue that furthering a sense of a separate Muslim religious entity is not the only possible interpretation of the ideology of Wahiduddin Khan. Through its focus on individualism and adjustment to economic neo-liberal policies, his

¹³ Jalal, *Partisans of Allah*, 150.

¹⁴ Malik, *Islam in South Asia*, 440.

ideology avoids the issues of economic diversification, as well as the issues of poverty and class-based interests that a large proportion of Muslims share with poor non-Muslims. Therefore, Wahiduddin Khan's ideology may not actually bring together any segments of the population at all, however urgent the need for education and opportunity. As the economic neo-liberal policies add to the growth of an Indian double economy with its readily available cheap labour and domestic servants, Wahiduddin Khan's emphasis on individualism is not likely to create a Muslim religious entity, at least not beyond an educated and therefore, largely middle class audience.

As a result, another possible interpretation is that with regard to the ruling Hindu majority, Wahiduddin Khan's position is very close to that of Sayyid Ahmad Khan in terms of the situation of British rule; in the sense that both writers argue for politics of multi-layered reconciliation. To repeat, both writers share an emphasis on the reconciliation of modern science with Islamic thought. But Sayyid Ahmad Khan also challenged British ideas that sought to define Islam and Muslims as being outside the pale of its modern political and social order due to the alleged irrationality and violent tendencies of Islam and Muslims. The contemporary ideology of Wahiduddin Khan is primarily concerned with the reconciliation of Islam with a globalised capitalist economy, as well as what it means to be Indian. In particular, in terms of reconciling Islam with the political and social values of individualism and free enterprise it both adjusts to and delicately challenges the Hindu Right idea of India as a Hindu-only nation that champions liberal economic policies and economic growth. Furthermore, as shown in this study Wahiduddin Khan emphasises the shared religious duties of Muslims, including national cooperation and contribution to the common good by entering the national "mainstream" through economic enterprise and education, alongside the creation of health care facilities and institutions that will benefit all Indians, and not just the Muslims. He thoroughly lambasts the Indian Muslims for their failure to serve communities other than their own, which along with their backwardness, communal riots, and violence have put Muslims and Islam in a criticised position. Muslims have become a "problem" community, which is against the principles of Islam and the example of the Prophet Muhammad. However, alongside Wahiduddin Khan's presentation of a Muslim cooperative duty, his non-violent and peaceable Islam can be analysed as meaning allegiance with the nation and prevalent state. Hence, his ideology is also a claim of loyalty to the pluralist and secular values of the Indian constitution. In this sense, the assessment of Malik of a strengthening of religious Muslim minority community borders through Wahiduddin Khan's definition of their shared Islamic duties can be questioned. With its emphasis on individualism, pluralism, and political and social harmony, Wahiduddin Khan's

ideology can hardly be said to systematically cement any Muslim community borders. However, as a religious leader Wahiduddin Khan turns to Muslims through the language of Islam by presenting what Islam requires in the current minority situation. This of course reiterates Muslims as a separate religious entity but the use of religious language must foremost be analysed as a claim to religious authority. Nevertheless, it remains a thorny issue because as seen previously the very content of his ideas contain some very strong elements of individualism, not only in economic terms but also in its voluntary and individualistic approach to the authentic Islamic teachings. However, as demanded by Islam, Muslims do share the collective religious duties to be a productive part of modern society, contribute to economic, cultural and intellectual growth while always non-violently upholding political and social harmony. This tension in the thought of Wahiduddin Khan's thought can be expressed as a movement back and forth from economic and political individualism to Muslim collective religious duties. Hence, it paradoxically includes the communal religious Muslim duty to uphold individualism in Islam. It can be argued that this tension and apparent paradox may be the reason behind Malik's assessment of Khan's ideology.

In summary, Malik's statement that Wahiduddin Khan reiterates a religious Muslim minority can be nuanced on the basis of the topics that have been central to the texts of Khan since the turn of the millennium. These express that Muslims worldwide must adjust to individualism and free enterprise in a globalised capitalist economy. Muslims must accept the pluralism and their minority position in the world at large by giving up any special Muslim territorial claims, for instance in Kashmir and Palestine. Thereby, Muslims free themselves to pursue the non-violent, economic, and intellectual pursuits that Islam always demanded of them. However, since the role of Muslims is to accept any prevailing political and social situation through hard work and focusing on peaceful possibilities, it is a minority position once again defined by religion that seemingly support Malik's theory on Khan's ideology. However, as this represents a thoroughly individualistic approach, it is doubtful that his ideas will effectively create a united religious entity or community.

Lastly, whatever the essence of Wahiduddin Khan's ideas may be, whether to join with the mainstream community in the quest for social mobility, acceptance, and status or to maintain a sense of distinction and community identity is not a Muslim, Islamic, or even Indian dilemma. Rather it may be argued, that this fundamental problem has been the existential situation for any minority group since the birth of the modern nation state. Therefore it must be said, that Khan's thought addresses this fundamental, existential situation for Muslims as a minority, in India and the world at large through its intention to maintain Muslim religious unity through an

individualistic and voluntary approach. Muslims share a collective duty to be non-violent, industrious, and educated and thereby uphold political and social harmony.

8.3.2 Moulavi Chiragh Ali: *Jihad as Non-Violence and Peace*

It was within the influential circles surrounding Sayyid Ahmad Khan that modern conceptualisations of jihad as strictly defensive were first presented. As we saw in Chapter 2, Moulavi Chiragh Ali continued the development of challenging the consensus of learned debate launched by his mentor, by presenting the battles of the Prophet Muhammad as cases of non-aggression; the Muslims were wrongly attacked and only sought to defend themselves. One important aspect of Chiragh Ali's presentation of jihad as a concept that does not permit aggressive warfare, was the defence of Islam in a context in which Muslims were charged as being prone to violence and aggression. However, Chiragh Ali also disapproved of Muslim understandings of jihad as legitimating forced conversions or any acts of violence, as true Islam does not condone violence or aggression of any kind. Such a critique of common Muslim presentations of the Prophet Muhammad as a war hero and a great military commander is also repeated by Khan, as seen in Chapter 6. Based on such understandings of jihad, both Chiragh Ali and Khan conclude that the battles of the Prophet Muhammad and the Quranic scriptural injunctions to the believers to engage in battle, was contextually limited in scope. The command to go to battle was directed only to the Prophet Muhammad and the first community of Muslims in that specific situation. Thus, such verses cannot be applied to any future situations of aggressive warfare. Islam only allows for war in self-defence.

By virtue of the very content of their assessments of other Muslim presentations of Islam, a clear claim to unbounded scriptural interpretation, *idjtihād*, can be seen, with both Chiragh Ali and Khan. By postulating the Quran as the most authoritative source of Islam, centuries of scriptural interpretation are bypassed. As described by Roy, in the process, a timeless and authentic Islam undiluted by human understandings is constructed. In both cases, Muslims and non-Muslims alike are charged with misunderstanding and misrepresenting this timeless and authentic, peaceable, Islam. Therefore, in summary, Khan repeats and expands upon the topics of non-violence and peace established more than a century ago by this prolific writer of modern Indian Islam.

8.3.3 Ameer Ali: Peaceable and Civilisation-Building Islam

Perhaps the topic of a timeless peaceable Islam is nowhere more apparent than in the case of the jurist and writer, Ameer Ali. His *Spirit of Islam* was first published in 1891 and became quite influential, especially among an English-speaking audience. It was later published in several expanded editions, most notably in 1922 and 1953. In this work, Ali develops the idea that Christians forgot the message of their original “Teacher” through centuries of theological development and generations of clergymen. However, Christians rediscovered their religious founts during the times of the Renaissance and the Reformation, as the Muslims must do in contemporary times. Hence, when Muslims discover the deep civilisational and socially progressive tendencies of true and authentic Islam, they will abandon the historically developed messages and interpretations of the various “*mujtahids* and *imams*.” Furthermore, topics central to Ali are his assertions that authentic Islam was never cruel or oppressive to women and that it was deeply civilised in its approach, through its expansion of the freedom of conscience and worship in a situation of oppression, bloodshed, and violence.

The idea that violence in Islam was never for the purposes of expansion but only for liberal principles, including protection from persecution and the defence of the freedoms of conscience and worship, may indeed be analysed within the framework proposed by Kecia Ali, discussed in Chapter 2. In Kecia Ali’s framework, the legitimization of violence in Islam is set through the ideological currents of the British rulers. Hence, the use of violence in the defence of freedom and civilisation becomes a relevant mode of presenting Islam and jihad. Khan brings forth the same argumentation. As shown in Chapter 6, he repeatedly maintains that the battles of the Prophet Muhammad and his followers were fights for freedom from persecution and religious oppression. Moreover, the fight against *fitna* described in the Quran was a struggle against tyranny and religious oppression, which set in historical motion the Islamic principles of freedom of conscience and freedom of religion in the world at large. Therefore, two important similarities between Ameer Ali and Khan may be highlighted. On one hand, both writers construe the degeneration of the lofty, peaceable principles upheld by the Prophet Muhammad, while the importance of such authentic principles remains eternally true and universal. On the other hand, the historic and evolutionary perspectives of the two writers point to the religious significance of their respective times. Through scriptural interpretation, the eternal and universal Islamic principles can be redeemed and Muslim customs and society reformed. One example from Ali, is the argument that legal rights granted to women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Europe, was already being taught by the Prophet Muhammad. From

Khan, one prominent example is the idea that political power was never the goal of Islam. Therefore, when striving to realise the goals of Islam in contemporary times, freedom from persecution makes political power and the use of violence to obtain it, wholly unnecessary. The goal of Islam is instead proselytisation and, therefore, finding means through commerce and education for missionary work and building mosques and other Islamic institutions become central. However, just as Ali connects legal rights to women and other aspects of European liberal reform with the Prophet Muhammad, Khan connects the freedom from prosecution and religious freedom, ideally granted by the modern, liberal state, with Islam and the Prophet Muhammad. Therefore, it may be said that both writers envisage something of a “re-enchantment” of their respective times by connecting their own societies to the principles of an authentic and timeless Islam. More precisely, the writers religiously legitimate the prevalent political and social changes and establishments. In the case of Ali, the legal rights ideally granted to women by British rulers are legitimated through reference to an authentic and timeless Islam. According to Ali, the authentic Islam had, in fact, always sustained women’s rights, it was only the historical interpretations of the “*mujtahids* and *imams*” that had distorted this timeless message. In comparison, Khan presents the position and function of religion in a democratic and secular state as being consistent with the authentic and timeless Islam. The timeless message of authentic Islam was always directed towards the individual through its voluntary code of sharia.

Lastly, the presentations of Islam and Islamic history as the height of civil and human tolerance and the Prophet Muhammad as the image of self-control in the face of violence and persecution clearly connect the two writers. However, it was Ali who pioneered the modern presentation of the lasting importance of the outstanding example of the Prophet Muhammad in terms of humanistic civilisation-building. As seen in Chapter 6, Khan clearly agrees with such presentations. Therefore, Khan may be said to be the foremost contemporary champion of the ideological and religious positions that Moulavi Cheragh Ali and Ameer Ali established in India in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

8.3.4 *Maulana Kalam Azad, Liberation, and Khan’s Political Status Quo-Is*

Both Moulavi Cheragh Ali and Ameer Ali were religious intellectuals and writers, hence they assumed social and public roles that are similar to that of Khan himself. In particular Moulavi Cheragh Ali and Khan can be compared, both in their roles as public religious intellectuals and in their respective claims to religious authority. In relation to Maulana Kalam Azad, a more

complex image appears due to Azad's political status and prominence. Azad was both a religious reformer and writer as well as a powerful Congress Party politician, who struggled for independence alongside the towering political leaders, Gandhi and Nehru. Nevertheless, we find important similarities between Azad and Khan. One is the two writers' shared view on non-violence in Islam. Azad was crucial in popularising the idea that the non-violent methods that the Congress Party was pioneering in the struggle against the British, were grounded in the Islamic sharia. This is a position also taken up by Khan, as seen earlier. Another position that Khan shares with Azad is the emphasis on national unity and cooperation between Muslims and Hindus. However, on this point there are differences between them. In the ideology of Azad, the idea that Muslims must never politically and socially isolate themselves is joined to the idea that Muslims must take an active stand against oppression to demonstrate the universal message of Islam, amongst other reasons. Instead, Khan's notion of "political status quo-ism" means that Muslims should not aim for political power nor seek to topple any government. Therefore, with regard to British rule in India, as seen above, Khan is closer to the ideological position of Sayyid Ahmad Khan, who instead sought ideological, political, and social accommodation with the British.

This position of Khan may need closer examination. Khan sees "the West" as a benefactor of Islam, especially because of its development of science and technology. Consequently, in Khan's ideology, the political struggle against colonialism was right in its methods but wrong in its goals to end the occupation and make the British "quit" India. Instead of revolution, the exercise of patience and acceptance of the status quo facilitate both learning from the political situation and utilising any opportunities that arise. For Azad, Islam should be regarded as a liberating force in history because Islam always demands the fight against cruel tyrants and oppression. On these grounds, Azad mobilised support for the independence movement by interpreting the struggles against the British as analogous to the fight against despotic monarchs described in the Quran. In comparison, Khan presents what he sees as the liberating aspects of Islam in a wholly different way. Based on the verse *fitna* being no more, Khan means that the fight against oppression had already been finished during the time of the Prophet Muhammad; the ancient forms of religious persecution that prevailed during those times have since disappeared. This already-finished fight has left a lasting legacy, as after the historic victory, Islam has established the principle of freedom from religious persecution. Khan maintains that the fight against religious persecution has thus already finished. This description creates the crucial ideological space and necessity for his "political status quo-ism."

Khan's political status quo-ism can fruitfully be analysed in relation to the national and international debate situation and the political and social situation in India. Since its strengthening in the 1980s, the Hindu Right have increasingly been presenting Muslims as potential terrorists and menaces. These positions have gained increased traction and support since 2001 through the powerful international discourse of the "war on terror." Such presentations of Islam and Muslims presuppose the idea of their essential propensity for political violence, and their commanding enthusiasm for an Islamic state. Therefore, in analytical terms, the ideological content of Khan's presentation of Islam, vis-à-vis this debate situation can be interpreted as being shaped by the need to create counter-arguments that reject any notions of a political, not to say rebellious, Islam. This negative position serves two important purposes. On one hand, Khan's thought and argumentation are an outward defence against charges of political extremism in Islam. On the other hand, Khan seeks to convince Indian Muslims of the importance of political status quo-ism, that is, loyalty to the Indian federal republic and its principles and thus maintaining peaceful and cooperative relations with the dominant Hindu majority. By ultimately crediting the principles of the liberal secular state as a long-term result of the actions of the Prophet Muhammad, it may be said that Khan seeks a reconciliation between Islam and the liberal secular state.¹⁵ In conclusion, it is in light of the differing contexts of Azad and Khan and their differing political roles and claims to religious authority that makes it possible to understand the different presentations of what the fight against persecution in Islam ultimately means to both writers. In addition, Khan's claim of an authentic and timeless "political status quo-ism" in Islam should not hide from view that this in itself is a political position, especially in the national, Indian, and international political situation. This is significantly overlooked in Khan's writings. However, my focus on historic factors outside the actor should not conceal the powerful dynamism of Islamic discourse and ideas, and as written by Zaman: "the political resonance of the Islamic religious tradition."¹⁶ Following Zaman's insights in both cases, the respective claims to civic roles of the historic Azad and the contemporary Khan is based on their public positions as authoritative representatives of an ongoing, allegedly authentic Islamic tradition. The differing ideological and political outcomes and practices between the two only highlights the continued public and, sometimes, even eminent civic roles for the '*ulamā*'.

¹⁵ Freedom from religious persecution in India could instead be regarded as a result of the political struggles of the national movement and the lasting ideological heritage of its leaders, codified in the democratic and secular Indian constitution.

¹⁶ Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam*, 180.

8.3.5 *Badshah Khan and Wahiduddin Khan: Politics and Culture*

To a certain extent, a comparison between Wahiduddin Khan and Badshah Abdul Ghaffar Khan generates a similar picture as the comparison between Khan and Azad above. In short, like Azad, Badshah Khan was a political leader who, based in his Pathan background was a freedom fighter against the British occupation. As an Indian nationalist, he believed that the interests of his people would be best served in a democratic, pluralistic, and united India. Influenced by Azad's writings in his journal, Badshah Khan launched his own magazine. He thereby became part of the development of popularising Islamic teachings through the new print media. He was especially crucial in popularising the ideas of non-violence in Islam and the need to reform traditional culture. At its peak, this movement was 100,000 people strong and by far the single largest example of non-violent Islam during the struggle for independence. Thereby, Badshah Khan ended up both as a significant cultural and religious reformer, as well as a political leader.¹⁷

During an interview in Delhi, I specifically asked Wahiduddin Khan how he, in the aftermath, regards Badshah Khan:

He was a pacifist. In this sense, I do agree with his method. Otherwise he was a political leader. I have no interest in politics. I have nothing against the British. These people [Badshah Khan and Khudai Khitmatgar] were against the British. But I am not, I was never against the British. I am not a politician. I never wanted to fight against the British. Badsha Khan and his ideology was based on political change. [...] but I want political status quo-ism. So there is a difference [between us]. But I like his method, because he was a pacifist.¹⁸

This quote highlights and reiterates the theme of staying away from politics, while recognising the value of pacifism and non-violent methods. The ideological position of “political status quo-ism,” while of course political in itself, may be analysed as being geared towards the inward and outward argumentative need to separate Islam and Muslims from the category of politics

¹⁷ Banerjee argues that disregard for Badshah Khan in the current national histories of India and Pakistan respectively, is due, on one hand, to the need to elevate the “Indian” heroes of the independence movement, especially Gandhi as the father of the nation. In the case of the history writing of Pakistan on the other hand, until his death in 1988, Badshah Khan remained something of an Indian nationalist; convinced that the partition of India and the creation of Pakistan was a mistake.

¹⁸ Interview on 13th December 2013, 24.

altogether. As we saw, Khan's insistence to steer clear of politics is directed towards two frontiers of debate. It is directed both against the charge of Muslim political extremism and Muslim political ambitions, as well as acts of violence in the situations of both internal social conflict and ongoing war with the neighbouring Muslim country.

Lastly, it can be noted that Badshah Khan was involved in the reform and reformulation of Pathan traditional cultural values. The cultural ideals of manliness, honour, and sacrifice were re-presented in a context of Islam, non-violent struggle, and the nationalist cause. Thereby, reformed culture was placed somewhat on par with reformed Islam, mutually reinforcing each other. In comparison, Wahiduddin Khan presents authentic Islam as wholly outside what he considers to be social tradition and culture; a timeless, eternal peaceable religion. In fact, traditions and culture, and the very idea of a Muslim community, Khan sees as contradictory to authentic Islam. This aspect of Khan's thinking is best analysed through Roy's theoretical framework regarding the "objectification" of Islam, which will be discussed in the following Chapter 9.

8.3.6 Khan's Political Status Quo-Ism and Hindu-Muslim National Unity

To summarise the topics in this section, it is important for analytical purposes to highlight that Chiragh Ali and Ameer Ali leave a vital intellectual and religious legacy of non-violence and peace in Indian Islam, while Azad and Badshah Khan are primarily responsible for popularising such notions during the time of the national struggle for independence. Wahiduddin Khan also aims to popularise Islam, non-violence, and peace but he presents these categories of thought as signifying political status-quo-ism. The ideological content of these different presentations of Islam, non-violence, and peace may therefore be analysed and categorised by virtue of their different conceptualisations of how to politically relate to the state. Hence, the analysis of Khan's presentation of Islam must therefore consider the situation of the partition, the ensuing wars for Jammu and Kashmir, and the ideological presentation of Islam and Muslims for various purposes of political mobilisation. These are the themes we now turn to.

Hindu-Muslim cooperation might never have seriously broken down the differences separating the two groups, not even during the shared undertakings at the height of the early 1920s Khilafat movement. Nevertheless, Islam and Muslims were sometimes prominent at least rhetorically, as a part of the national movement for independence.¹⁹ However, Muslim

¹⁹ As seen in Chapter 2, Wilfred Cantwell Smith points out that after independence, while prominent nationalist Muslims became part of the top echelons of the new state, including the Muslim presidents of post-independence

participation in the future life of the Indian nation was increasingly weakened by the Muslim League's goal of a separate state, as seen in Chapter 2. In fact, the political mass mobilisations around differing conceptualisations of South Asian nationalisms resulted in the tragic and violent partition of India, marred by mass migration and mass killing and even ethnic cleansing. The violence contributed to the attitudes and cultures of how the citizens were supposed to politically relate to the respective states. Therefore, the popularisation of religious teachings and religious movements of conversion and re-conversion became a part of the respective politicised religious identities. The development that had already begun in the 1920s escalated following independence and from the 1950s onward. The wars between the new independent states, especially the wars for dominance over Jammu and Kashmir increased the representations of Muslims in India as being outside the pale of the nation. Fundamental conceptions of the nature of the state were at stake and consequently, how citizens were supposed to relate to them on a political level. On one hand was the idea of a "homeland" for the Muslims of South Asia and on the other, the conception of a secular and pluralistic state ideally uniting several ethnic, linguistic, and religious communities.²⁰ Hence, the political parties of Pakistan debated what a Muslim state would look like and increasingly, what role Islam should have in the constitution. On the Indian side of the border, the perception of "Muslim" also grew as a politicised identity. Islam was increasingly presented as a political force resulting in partition, a view that was strengthened by several incidences of conflict. Firstly, the late twentieth century arrival of veterans from the Afghanistan war resulted in the descent into civil war in Jammu and Kashmir, sparked by the respective national-religious identities. Secondly, acts of terror within India were committed by perpetrators acting in the name of Islam, and in some cases it seemed that these acts also had ties to Pakistani intelligence agencies. In this situation, the Hindu Right accomplished a successful political mobilisation based on both nationalism and anti-Muslim sentiments, which inter alia, opened up avenues to increased influence and power. To all this comes the presentation of Indian Muslims as backward in terms of employment and education. Especially after the liberalisation and internationalisation of the Indian economy that has taken place since the 1990s, this depiction has gained increased traction. This leads to a new argument from the Hindu Right. Distributive

federal India, many Muslims saw their own weak position in relation to these successful individual examples as serving a rhetoric of equal opportunity; a thin veneer hiding discrimination of Muslims and Hindu dominance in the new state with opportunities reserved only for the elite.

²⁰ The rhetorical presentation of such a Muslim community of (British) India was in itself an ideological intervention. As pointed out by Wilfred Cantwell Smith and others, there were countless Muslim communities spread over the vast subcontinent, separated by elements such as geography, language, sect, and custom.

tendencies at the federal level were successfully framed as being against the national spirit. The argument claimed that the distribution of wealth only served to pamper minorities, who instead should take responsibility for their own welfare and thus contribute to the common good.

This long-term situation of conflict and reiterated difference really poses a both moral and political problem for Muslim thinkers and ideologues. As seen above, during the struggle for independence, Maulana Azad and Badshah Khan presented Islam as a base for political and social unity between Muslims and Hindus. Both pointed to the peaceful nature of Islam, and held it for an important contribution to the shared non-violent methods deemed essential in the struggle against British rule. In contrast, Wahiduddin Khan enters into a different situation of debate on Islam, related to different ideological, political, and social issues, in particular with regard to how national unity and progress may be achieved. Within this debate situation it is not only Muslims that are framed as a politically divisive force but the image of Islam itself is at stake. Islam is presented by the Hindu Right as a constant politically aggressive and subversive force. Such presentations were further strengthened after 2001 through the rhetoric of the global “war on terror.” Furthermore, Islam is still presented as “backward,” which is a rhetorical claim formulated as the stylistic anti-thesis of “modern.”²¹ As maintained by the Hindu Right, it is the religion Islam that creates the conditions for the relative discrimination and backwardness that the Muslims of India must face. It is not discrimination, poverty, and a lack of education that must cease, it is the corroding influence of Islam.

Khan participates in this debate situation by presenting Islam as being separate to Muslim political violence. Authentic Islam is a non-violent, peaceable, and non-political message directed exclusively to the individual. In its essence, this message is undiluted by time. By way of such presentations, Khan aims to defend Islam from charges of political subversion and extremism and thus minimise the impact of anti-Islamic ideology. Because Islam is seen as embracing democratic values in all its basic principles, Islam should also be protected by the democratic state. In the ongoing debate in India over what the constitutional and national values really should imply, Khan’s Islam, non-violence, and peace makes the case for a secure place for religion as part of the freedoms of democracy, as well as the principle of secularism defined as state indifference to religious truth claims. Therefore, while Khan himself seriously criticises Muslims for their political extremism and backwardness, authentic and true Islam deserves a lofty sense of respect and recognition.

²¹ These oppositional concepts could also be analysed as related to the meaning of “useful.” Useful and modern education were established as motivations for the educational reforms during the colonial era, in contrast to religious education and curricula in both Hindu and Muslim traditional schools.

Furthermore according to Khan, Islam embraces not only the need for education but also entrepreneurial thriftiness and success. In stark contrast to charges of “backwardness,” Islam is conducive not only to modern science but also to the contemporary global economic system and its requirements for specialised training and education. Hindus and Muslims should unite in the non-violent individual behaviour demanded by and made possible by the global capitalist system, a system in which India is a vital part. In Khan’s presentation, Islam is not an obstacle on the road to national economic progress and success but a partner that is conducive to ideal market behaviour associated to liberal economic policies, as well as contemporary global finance and enterprise. Authentic Islam is, therefore, “useful,” a commanding ideological category introduced by the British in relation to the Indian systems of knowledge and religions. As we saw, the useful rationality of Islam was also crucial in Sayyid Ahmad Khan’s presentation of Islam and programme of political and social integration, as well as Muslim uplift in the late 19th century.

Therefore, in conclusion, the “political status quo-ism” of Khan may be analysed as essentially a plea for the urgent need and possibility for cooperation, peace, and national unity, especially between Muslims and Hindus. With his strong presentation of and claim to authentic representation of a non-violent and peaceful Islam, Khan offers arguments to hold back the Hindu Right allegations of Islam as aggressive and inimical to Indian national and constitutional principles. Furthermore, with his emphasis on economic thriftiness and entrepreneurial success as basic Islamic values, he hopes to present a “re-enchanted,” so to speak, social platform for peaceful cooperation between Muslims and Hindus in the market relations of the capitalist economy.

8.4 A Global Debate Situation of Islam, Non-Violence, and Peace

The following sections aim to highlight and analyse important ideological and religious issues in Khan’s body of thought by comparing it to certain similar thematic positions in the contemporary global Muslim debate. Included are an overview of relevant works on the topics of the non-violent or peacebuilding potentials of Islam, mostly published from around the turn of the millennium. Through this overview a framework is developed that illuminates a coherence between non-violence and peacebuilding as contemporary political tools and categories of thought in relation to Islam; in terms of values, concepts, and the use of “sacred history.” This framework is in turn put into the perspective of the global and globalising forces

that comprise the context and deeply influence, the contemporary ideological and religious debate on the meaning of Islam.

This section not only seeks to compare Khan's thinking to the relevant positions and themes of this debate. It also aims to analyse what key political and social issues Khan's ideology addresses. As seen in Chapter 2, Muslim positions on the categories of Islam, non-violence, and peace, have a history related to and framed by the respective political and social contexts or historical situations of the authors. Comparing Khan's thought to contemporary and global Muslim debate positions serves the objective of bringing additional light to bear on his particular positions while adding its relationship to the wider, global context and debate situation.

In addition and as part of the rationale of this study (see Chapter 1) the overview seeks to establish the existence of Islam, non-violence, and peace as categories of thought with specific ideological content in the increasingly global, ideological and religious debate. Furthermore, the brief descriptions and comparisons will at least hint at the more immediate historical contexts and factors. Therefore, the limited purpose here is to describe five relevant cases of contemporary Muslim positions of Islam, non-violence, and peace in comparison to Khan. Because the focus of this study is on understanding Khan's thought – and not to delineate all contemporary Muslim positions on non-violence – I aim to draw attention to a contemporary phenomenon, and certain worldwide presentations, related to Islam, non-violence, and peace as categories of thought. Despite its somewhat diverse character, the importance of this section is that, in the comparative light, these contemporary Muslim positions reveal additional aspects of Khan's thought. Hence, through comparisons I aim to highlight his unique case and add to the theoretical discussions in the following concluding two chapters of this study.

Moreover, the presentations of Islam by these contemporary Muslim writers can also be related to the knowledge field of academic works and scholarly discussion of the same issues and categories of thought. These scholarly discussions partially allow and sustain the theoretical discussions and suggested contributions and categories of this study. Therefore, taken together with Chapters 2 and 3, the examples given here of a contemporary ideological and religious debate and positioning over the meaning of Islam in terms of non-violence and peace, are involved in the construction of a framework for analysing the thought of Khan in terms of its ideological and religious content, as well as its context.

8.4.1 Pluralism and National Struggle

In a 1997 work, South African activist and Islamic studies scholar, Farid Esack (b. 1959) claims that the Quran supports both pluralism and liberation. Based on his own experiences of political struggle against apartheid and the societal challenges of the post-apartheid era, as well as having witnessed Christian activists fighting alongside other South Africans to effect positive change, Esack could no longer accept exclusivism among his fellow Muslims. This background forms the context of his development of a “theology for pluralism.” Pluralism is not seen by Esack as a total parity between different sets of ideas, clearly some ideas are more ethically and ideologically true and valuable than others. Rather, he proposes that pluralism in the Quran is an inherently superior value to exclusivism. In practice, pluralism is seen by Esack as the difference between a democratic and a fascist state, in which Islamic values decidedly prefer the former.²² The notion of pluralism is wedded by Esack to a particular idea of solidarity with the oppressed and exploited, regardless of religion or creed and even with those who would deny Islam. Esack’s formulation of solidarity is based on the story of the Exodus.²³ The solidarity of pluralism and “liberative” aspects of Esack’s reading of the Quran is at the centre of his discussion of how the formulation of Islam was contested during the larger struggle against apartheid.²⁴ In recognition of how several groups and constituencies of South African society shared the brunt of oppression, liberation for a pluralistic society also meant a renunciation of violence.

In summary, because Esack sees pluralism as a value inherent in the Quran, Islam prefers not only democracy, but also solidarity with the oppressed. From his own experiences, Esack shares with several communities and groups the oppression of the apartheid state and the political struggle against this state. Therefore, Islam has a place in the non-violent struggle for freedom and in the vision for the emerging free and pluralistic society. Since Islam requires liberation for all, as well as political and religious pluralism, both violence in Islam and Muslim exclusivism must be rejected. Therefore, Esack’s ideological and religious positions may be said to be grounded in the particular political and social situation of a national but manifold, non-violent struggle to overcome the oppression of the apartheid state.

In comparison to Esack’s thinking, Khan shares an affirmation of pluralism. In Khan’s presentations of Islam, non-violence, and peace, as seen in Chapter 6 he often expresses this value in terms of “acceptance” for a multitude of differences in society or the importance of

²² Farid Esack, *Qur’an, Liberation and Pluralism* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 1997), 175.

²³ Esack, *Qur’an*, 184.

²⁴ Esack, *Qur’an*, 237–238.

“tolerance.” The two writers also affirm that the democratic state should uphold the values of pluralism. But in contrast to Esack’s expression of the ideological value of a liberating yet non-violent struggle against state oppression, Khan instead formulates the tenets of political status quo-ism. Relevant to this discussion, as we saw in Chapter 2, during the Indian struggle for independence, Badshah Khan and Maulana Kalam Azad reached similar conclusions to the principles presented by Esack, that Islam involves a non-violent political struggle against unjust rule. In comparison, Khan is coping with the contemporary Indian political and social situation related to the ideological representations of Muslim violence, separatism, and aspirations for political power. In contrast to Esack, Badshah Khan, and Kalam Azad, Wahiduddin Khan sees no value in a national non-violent struggle against a non-democratic state. In the context of anti-Muslim agitation from the Hindu Right, Khan instead formulates his views on Islam, non-violence, and peace as meaning a rejection of any political struggle. Thereby, he affirms the established, constitutional values of the democratic state while aiming to destabilise the ideological condemnation of Islam and Muslims, as formulated by the most powerful political and social forces in India today.

8.4.2 Universalism

Not wholly dissimilar to Esack’s affirmation of pluralism as a value inherent in the Quran is the 2001 study by Islamic studies scholar, Abdulaziz Sachedina’s (b. 1942), *The Islamic Roots of Democratic Pluralism*. At the centre of Sachedina’s presentation of Islam is Sura 5:48:

For every one of you [Jews, Christians, Muslims], We have appointed a path and a way. If God had willed, He would have made you but one community; but that [He has not done in order that] He may try you in what has come to you. So compete with one another in good works.²⁵

For Sachedina, this verse implies that pluralism and not mere plurality, is a divinely ordained system and that to compete in good works means the implication of a rationally grounded and universal code of ethics and morals. This leads him to reject earlier Muslim jurists and exegetes who have proclaimed a restricted partiality towards Islam based on the notion of Muslims superseding all other revealed religion. On the basis of his own “theology of interreligious

²⁵ Abdulaziz Sachedina, *The Islamic Roots of Democratic Pluralism*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), “Compete with One Another in Good Works.” Oxford Scholarship Online, 2011. doi: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195139914.003.0003.

relations in Islam,” Sachedina ascertains that not only has earlier juristic decisions regarding the treatment of non-Muslim minorities become irrelevant “in the context of pluralism that pervades international relations today,” he also asserts that the provisions from the Quran are far more universal in scope than allowed for by earlier exegetes.²⁶ This can be seen in Sachedina’s perception of jihad as a great, perpetual, and universal battle to change from a perspective of self-absorption to one of ultimately realising the equality and equal value of all humans.

Similar to Khan, Sachedina rejects the earlier Muslim jurist decisions on how Islam and Muslims relate to minorities. Sachedina reaches this conclusion within the situation of globalisation, which rearranges the whole issue. The pluralism of an emerging world society makes Muslim partiality and triumphalism in Islam irrelevant as juristic or political categories. Such rulings cannot simply be upheld in peaceful international relations. Instead, on a global basis, Islam must become related only to the individual and not to any specific polity or community. Consequently, Sachedina presents jihad as signifying a struggle within every individual to realise the fundamental liberal-democratic values of human equality and equal value.

Therefore, it can be argued that there is a high degree of similarity between Sachedina and Khan in terms of how and why they formulate their respective views on the topics of democracy and universalism. Khan’s position is that Islam demands attitudes and practices of peaceful tolerance and acceptance for social diversity. As previously seen, Khan also perceives peaceful international relations as important, with the United Nations affirmed as the most significant broker of international norms, relations, and treaties.²⁷ As seen in Chapter 6, similar to Sachedina, Khan formulates jihad as the battle with one’s own self to let go of hatred and violence and thereby becoming an accepting, loving, and positive person. In Khan’s presentation, this notion expresses the universalism of Islam. However, Khan has been writing on these topics more extensively for a different type of audience and for a longer period of time than the 17-years-younger Sachedina.²⁸ Therefore, to a high degree, Khan exemplifies the point of Marshall G.S. Hodgson that was raised in Chapter 1; as the Muslims of India find themselves

²⁶ Sachedina, *The Islamic Roots*, “Epilogue.”

²⁷ Questions were raised about the congruence of this ideological statement, especially with regard to the Indian claim to the region of Jammu and Kashmir.

²⁸ The argument regarding audience is based on Sachedina’s type of academic writing, published by Oxford University Press in 2000. Perhaps Sachedina exemplifies to a higher degree than Khan the “liberal” type of contemporary Muslim writer outlined by Roy. In Roy’s view, such writers are not widely read outside academic, intellectual and university settings. As we will see in Chapter 10, Aaron W. Hughes makes a similar statement in his 2015 work.

in the same type of minority position as Muslims find themselves in the world at large, one should look to India for the most significant twenty-first century presentations of Islam.²⁹ Writing in 1974, what Hodgson could not reasonably foresee were the three factors of the rise of international Muslim extremist ideology and strategies, the global “war on terror,” and the effective anti-Muslim agitation of the Hindu Right-wing mobilisation. Instead, such issues are important parts of the situation in which Khan presents Islam as strictly “non-political.” Therefore, his thinking on Islam, non-violence, and peace, may be analysed as aiming to secure a place for Islam and Muslims in a time when their presence is questioned, both within the Indian democratic settings and in the context of international relations.

8.4.3 *Socialism or Capitalism and Differing Claims to Religious Authority*

The Sudanese civil engineer, nationalist, and Quran exegete Mahmoud Mohamed Taha (d. 1985) and his *The Second Message of Islam*, originally published as early as 1967, clearly shows how he prioritises the Quranic revelations dating from the Meccan period. This prioritisation allows him to define what he sees as the definite, universal, and timeless articulation of Islam.³⁰ The original message of Islam is the preaching and pious example of the Prophet Muhammad and the early Muslims of Mecca. They accommodated pluralism while bearing the suffering of persecution for the monotheistic message they preached. As the Meccan period preceded the Muslim state project of the Medina period, the second phase of revelation in Islam is, for Taha, mainly a descent into the realities of the aggression that the Muslim community of Medina faced. In a lawless situation full of violence, the use of the sword was the only means by which to protect freedom from those who would misuse their God-given freedom by not acknowledging “the sanctity of life and property.”³¹ Simply, for Taha the bigoted dumbness and violence of a critical mass of people during the time of revelation prevented the realisation of true Islam. But with the coming of the modern age, through education and scientific and technological development, humanity has matured enough to once again turn to the peaceable qualities of early Islam. There is no longer any need to uphold only the minimum of Islam, namely its laws, by force. The time has come to free the universal

²⁹ In fact, while born in Tanzania Sachedina’s ethnic background is Indian, which may or may not (there is no need to stress this point) illustrate both Hodgson’s point and Sachedina’s position on these issues.

³⁰ Several Muslim liberal perspectives can be found in an anthology or sourcebook of original texts edited by the sociologist, Charles Kurzman. This anthology contains 32 different Muslim source texts covering a range of liberal perspectives on Islam conducive to non-violence, democracy, the rights of women and non-Muslims, freedom of thought, general progress, as well as opposition to theocracy. Charles Kurzman, ed., *Liberal Islam: A Sourcebook* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

³¹ Mahmoud Mohamed Taha, “The Second Message of Islam,” in Kurzman, *Liberal Islam*, 275.

potential of Islam as a force for power-sharing and social solidarity through the application of democracy and socialism.³² Taha clearly formulates his vision of Islam in relation to the political and ideological issues of his Sudanese context, which he means can be solved only if people become true submitters, true Muslims. A nation of Muslims has not appeared yet but it must come about as Western civilisation and other alternatives are all fundamentally flawed. Only true, universal, free, and non-violent Islam can liberate humanity and bring about political and social equality. For his views and ideological challenge to the increasingly authoritarian Sudanese regime, Taha was executed by the state in 1985.

Clearly similar to Khan, the verses of the Quran dating from the period of revelations during the Prophet Muhammad's time in Mecca serve important purposes for Taha, who draws far-reaching conclusions when discussing the two separate main periods of revelations in the Quran. Taha sees the early, Meccan verses as most clearly expressing the universal and timeless message of Islam: pluralism and non-violence while preaching the monotheistic message. In particular, the Medina period included an embroilment with prevalent un-enlightened violence during this time. Military defence became necessary only to defend freedom, property, and life from violent attacks; i.e. fundamental liberal-democratic values. The contemporary era is presented by Taha as once again permitting the eternal and universal message of Islam to be heard. It is no longer necessary to defend or uphold Islam by force. Islamic principles for power-sharing can be applied through democracy and Islamic principles of solidarity through socialism.

In a similar, but more limited vein and arguably more in terms of the general logic of the Sunni *uṣūl al-fīkh* (theoretical foundations of Islamic jurisprudence), Khan reaches the conclusion that the peaceful political, religious, and social examples of the Prophet during his time in Mecca, when the Muslims were in a minority situation, should be applied to the contemporary Muslim minority situation of India. Based on situations of political Muslim dominance, earlier jurist decisions used the revelations of the Medina period as the main source of law while also expressing the idea of abrogation; that chronologically later revelations rendered the earlier revelations irrelevant from a legal perspective. Therefore, Khan asserts that these medieval treatises and juristic corpuses of law cannot be applied to the contemporary situation. Instead, the similar minority situation for Muslims in the current times – as in the Mecca period – makes it necessary to apply the principles of patient, non-violent proselytising in the face of persecution; expressed in the revelations from the earlier period. Hence, Khan in

³² Taha, "The Second Message of Islam," 281.

effect rejects the idea of abrogation while maintaining his claim as an *ālim* to authoritatively represent the authentic Islamic tradition in the contemporary era.

In contrast to Khan's clearly juristic-oriented thought, but in many other ways comparable to Khan, Taha sees modern society as an instrument and resource to voice the message of Islam anew. Modern society only confirms the authentic message of Islam through its re-discovery of the Islamic timeless values of freedom, equality, and pluralism. However, modern society must develop along the lines of this non-violent and universal Islam, which, in fact, means that all humans become true Muslims. All other options are regarded by Taha as essentially flawed. The idea that the "Western civilisation" is imperfect in comparison to a non-violent and timeless Islam is similar to Khan's positions, especially in his early writings on science. Also similar are the two writer's views that through modern education humans may also discover the eternal veracities of Islam. However, dissimilar is that Taha views the timeless and authentic, non-violent Islam in terms of social solidarity, even the application of socialism. In Khan's presentation of Islam, as seen, "political status quo-ism" rather means the acceptance of social differences; to be a true Muslim demands the avoidance of any political struggle to change the status quo. In order to change one's position in life, Khan highlights the importance of thriftiness, entrepreneurship, and hard work in Islam. Furthermore, he presents this type of economic order as "natural" and Islam as teaching the acceptance of this natural order.

As the Hindu Right has successfully substituted the earlier socialist rhetoric of the Congress Party with a widespread ideology of market liberalisation, to be Indian now means to be both Hindu and economically liberal. Therefore, Khan's thinking may be analysed as both an expression of and consensus with, the prevalent ideology of market liberalisation. It is through the market, and not the state, that the political and social divisions in Indian society will be reduced.

8.4.4 Modern Warfare and Justice

In his eight theses on "Muslim nonviolent action" originally published in 1990, Thai Muslim scholar and political scientist Chaiwat Satha-Anand (b. 1955) describes Muslim non-violence as:

A challenge for Muslims and others who seek to reaffirm the original vision of Islam so that the true meaning of peace – the absence of both structural as well as personal violence – can be obtained.³³

Based on an immediate context of grievances, both intragroup conflicts among Muslims in Southern Thailand and discrimination against Muslims by the Thai state, Satha-Anand formulates an argued view of how Islam supports non-violent conflict resolution techniques, protest, and action amongst Thai Muslims. Satha-Anand's eight theses begin with the formulation that original Islam perceived violence as a fundamental human moral issue and that if used by Muslims, the violence must be guided by the Quran and the reports of the Prophet Muhammad. The rules laid out in these scriptures are presented as making an absolute discrimination between fighters and non-fighters compulsory. With the coming of a "modern technology of destruction," such absolute discrimination cannot be upheld any longer. Therefore, Muslims cannot use violence in the modern world, because they must uphold the Islamic principle of safeguarding the sacredness of life. Yet the permanent concept of jihad compels Muslims to take firm action against injustice. In the current situation, on one hand Satha-Anand ascertains that Muslims must engage in non-violent action in order to remain as true Muslims. On the other hand, Islam is seen as providing believers with a number of tools conducive to non-violent action such as perseverance, solidarity, and discipline.³⁴ Here, jihad is clearly seen as a legitimate ideological instrument against oppression and cruelty, yet jihad only allows for and upholds non-violent measures.

In conclusion, Satha-Anand formulates how authentic Islam supports nonviolent action and a timeless struggle against injustice. Satha-Anand presents the conditions of war related to the Quran and the Sunna of the Prophet Muhammad as imperative to the fundamental separation between fighters and non-fighters. However, this crucial separation is dissolved by the advent of modern weapons of mass destruction and as authentic Islam strictly forbids the killing of civilians, modern warfare is not allowed. This argument is essentially the same as what Khan says on these topics, as seen in Chapter 6. However, for Satha-Anand the true meaning of peace is the absence of both structural and personal violence. Therefore, Satha-Anand's formulations of Islam are close to the perspectives of the theoretician of peace and conflict studies,

³³ Chaiwat Satha-Anand, "The Non-violent Crescent: Eight Theses on Muslim Non-violent Actions," in *Peace and Conflict Resolution in Islam: Precept and Practice*, ed. Abdul Aziz Said, Nathan C. Funk and Ayse S. Kadayifci. (Lanham: Oxford University Press of America, 2001), 209.

³⁴ Satha-Anand "The Non-violent Crescent," 209.

sociologist Johan Galtung, who is generally associated with the concept of “structural violence.” On this conceptual base, jihad is seen by Satha-Anand as an eternal command to fight injustice. Therefore, Muslims must confront injustice and structural violence while only using non-violent methods.

Satha-Anand’s presentations diverges from how Khan constructs Islam, non-violence, and peace. Peace is regarded by Khan as fundamental to any other purpose, and justice is explicitly mentioned in this argument. Justice and other purposes may come about only after the necessary establishment of peace. Therefore, in Khan’s presentation of Islam, peace treaties should be made without any conditions as soon as possible. Khan is unequivocally critical about Muslim legitimations of violence with reference to injustice. He expresses that this is the wrong method which not only damages humanity but also Islam itself as it cements the perceptions of Islam as a religion of violence. Establishing peace without conditions creates not only the necessary circumstances for proselytising and making people more favourable in their attitude towards Islam, it is the true and authentic Islamic principle, which when applied will make every other economic or political goal slowly workable, including the pursuit of justice. Hence, as seen in Chapter 6, Khan’s position is more comparable to another of Johan Galtung’s influential ideas, the potentials of conflict de-escalation by the commencement of peaceful behaviour by one conflict actor. Clearly, Khan seeks to transform the dynamics of the conflict by the unilateral change of behaviour by the Muslim actor involved. Hence, what Khan calls the *Hudaybiyya* principle may be analysed as the ‘*illa*, ‘the juristic reason’, as the basis for a unilateral conflict de-escalation in Islam. It is a religious duty for Muslims, in Khan’s oft-repeated words, to establish peace for the sake of peace.

Leaving behind the comparisons to Satha-Anand’s ideology, another way to analyse Khan’s positions on injustice, justice, and the political is to view them in a contextual light. As seen in Chapter 7, since the 1990s, the Indian government has sought close economic and military strategic cooperation with Israel and, in particular, the U.S. Hence, after 2001 the communal discourse in India which associates Muslims and Islam with political separatism and extremist violence became strengthened by the international rhetoric of the so-called war on terror, which highlights Islam in terms of fundamentalism and terror.

Clearly, Khan aims to detach any association of Islam with political struggles, especially violent ones, as in the case of the Israel-Palestine conflict and the war for Jammu and Kashmir. Instead, Islam is presented only in terms of non-violence, peace, and a “non-political,” i.e. a social, cultural, and economic striving for social harmony. This study has mentioned that Khan sees the Palestinian struggle as aiming for peace based on justice, which is “un-Islamic,” and

that the realisation of the Indian federal government claim to Jammu and Kashmir means a return to the true and authentic Sufi culture of peaceable Hindu-Muslim relations in the region. In both cases, as Muslims, the violent actors must establish peace for the sake of peace.

These positions can be analysed as a result of the combination of the ideological pressures of the Hindu Right-Wing anti-Islamic ideology and its international counterparts. However, they can be further analysed as religious legitimations of two of the Indian government's foreign policies; the close strategical relationship to Israel and the U.S. and the Indian claim to Jammu and Kashmir.

8.4.5 Majority or Minority: the Value of Culture?

In the 2003 study, *Non-violence and Peace Building in Islam: Theory and Practice*, international relations scholar, Mohammed Abu-Nimer (b. 1962) takes both an intertextual and sociocultural approach to the subject of Islam, peace building, and non-violence. Abu-Nimer is conspicuous for the noticeable way in which he claims that “non-violence and conflict resolution in Islam cannot be limited to the holy book (the Qur’an) or the Prophet’s tradition.”³⁵ Abu-Nimer asserts that Muslim experiences of real life cultural and social strategies for solving conflict in non-violent ways are as important as the interpretation of sacred scriptures. Such real life practices and socially upheld values are seen as the shared foundations for the inclusion of non-Muslims in Muslim majority societies.

In dealing with the textual resources, Abu-Nimer thoroughly emphasises the non-violent and peace-affirming essence of the sacred scriptures. However, the description of sociocultural mores is somewhat schematic when Abu-Nimer highlights what he regards as non-violent and peacebuilding cultural and social practices, strategies and values.³⁶ This highlighting of Muslim non-violent practices and socio-cultural values is motivated with reference to common biased knowledge and information. The author sees such biases as being a result of, inter alia, selective media reporting, a lack of academic research, and a colonial legacy.³⁷ Yet the alleged non-violent and peacebuilding examples of “lived religion” are presented in a largely de-contextualised way. The political and social issues in which the significance of stories, the appointment of judges and other religious leaders, together with the domineering influence of clans, is not wholly and thoroughly discussed and analysed. However, further into this work

³⁵ Mohammed Abu-Nimer, *Non-violence and Peace Building in Islam: Theory and Practice* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003), 20.

³⁶ Abu-Nimer, *Non-violence*, 91–109.

³⁷ Abu-Nimer, *Non-violence*, 2.

there is a more critical discussion of the obstacles to non-violent conflict resolution and acknowledgement of the “powerlessness” felt by minorities, mainly Christians in Arab societies, who are not being regarded as “full-fledged members of the community.”³⁸ This acknowledgement places doubt on Abu-Nimer’s approving account of the inherent non-violent values of the cultural customs of Arab society that are allegedly shared by both Muslims and non-Muslims. Nevertheless, here Abu-Nimer critically discusses the failures of Muslim states and societies and points out that the co-opting of the religious establishment under various regimes, patriarchy, hierarchy, and a general lack of reflexivity and self-scrutiny, are all major hindrances to the realisation of the non-violent and peacebuilding qualities of Islam. According to Abu-Nimer, despite such difficulties, established cultural mores and Islamic textual resources should be further highlighted in support of non-violent peace-building and development.

Overall, Abu-Nimer maintains that Islam emphasises non-violence and peace. However, actual Muslim experiences of cultural and social strategies for non-violent conflict resolution are as important as the peaceful reading of sacred scriptures. Such practices and socially upheld values are seen as the shared foundations for the inclusion of non-Muslims in Muslim majority Arab societies. Abu-Nimer aims to highlight what he perceives as the non-violent and peace-building cultural and social practices, as well as the values of the Muslim majority culture in Arab societies. For the most part, the prevalent and inherently non-violent values are also regarded as shared by non-Muslim minorities and together they make up the basis of local and regional peace and non-violent conflict transformation.

What is regarded as the inherent non-violent values of the cultural customs of Arab society in Abu-Nimer’s framework may fruitfully be compared to Khan’s ideology. As seen in Chapter 6, Khan sees jihad as a struggle to purify oneself from cultural upbringing and social traditions. Khan’s presentation may be analysed as addressing issues raised in the “communal discourse” related to the Indian Muslim community. Muslims must detach themselves from their sense of being victims and looking back to past imperial power. Instead they should thrive and achieve anew in the increasingly connected global market society. Group solidarity and upbringing are regarded by Khan as the driving forces for vengefulness and violence. Jihad as individual introspection and purification is a method for releasing the hate and dissatisfaction, which is learned through culture, prejudice, and upbringing. Instead, the productive path is to return to Islam and thus to the true and natural self of one’s birth. Becoming one’s true self, therefore, means to let go of cultural belonging, bigoted group solidarity, and prejudice towards other

³⁸ Abu-Nimer, *Non-violence*, 110.

individuals, groups, and communities. True and authentic Islam is thereby dissociated from the rhetoric of Muslim communalism and its notions of Muslim one-sidedness or exclusivism. Instead, authentic Islam and the true jihad means letting go of cultural communal feelings and becoming a truly universal human being.

Hence, Khan does not see culture or social mores as important. On the contrary, cultural conditioning is generally seen as an obstacle on the path to realising or “discovering” true Islam. However, a contradiction in Khan’s ideology may be pointed out, in two main examples in which Khan express positive evaluations of cultural traits, which can be compared to the positive evaluations of admirable Arab cultural traits with the framework of Abu-Nimer. Firstly, Muslim culture in South India is presented favourably by Khan as generally peaceful, because the perceived social basis of South Indian Islamic culture is based on trade and trading communities. In contrast, Khan criticises the legacy of the North Indian Muslim culture, which is based on the historical institutions of the court and military. Secondly, authentic and time-honoured Sufi Muslim culture in Kashmir is regarded as admirable because it expresses the peaceful Sufi religious notions of love for everyone. These two peaceful Indian Muslim cultures are presented by Khan as positive examples of amiable and neighbourly relations among Hindus and Muslims. As they are peaceable cultures, they are also more authentic and time-honoured expressions of Islam, lasting for several centuries or even a millennium. Hence, it may be argued that Khan’s thinking on an authentic Islam may be analysed in the context of an historical North Indian situation. Analysing Khan’s focus on purification from cultural conditioning makes it possible to highlight several important aspects of his thinking. North Indian culture is presented by Khan as looking to the past grandeurs of the Muslim empires with awe and a sense of loss. The sense of loss of political and social status is perceived as creating a sense of victimisation, i.e. an injury that must be corrected and repaired. Khan sees this sense of collective victimisation as creating an inward-looking Muslim community, not willing to engage with the problems and possibilities of their contemporary society. This kind of Muslim culture is shaped around bringing up past grievances, which motivates vengeance and violence. Khan’s declaration that Islam does not allow spreading tales of persecution follows this analysis.

It can be pointed out that the partition of India affected the northern regions the most and its Muslim population and their institutions of political and social influence declined. Class was also an issue, educated and wealthy Muslims left for Pakistan to a higher degree than poor and rural groups. After the independence, four decades of Congress Party governments failed to break down the social divisions across Indian society, despite the party’s secular democratic

and social progressive rhetoric. Muslims are still underrepresented in governance, finance, and higher education, while overrepresented in unemployment and illiteracy. Meanwhile, the contemporary era of economic growth, initially mainly in the IT sector but through large-scale national and international investment, the economy is quickly becoming more and more diverse and has created a kind of double economy. The Indian middle classes lead life styles that resemble those of their international counterparts while the lower classes struggle in ways reminiscent of earlier designations of India as a “developing,” “Third World” economy and country. Since Muslims are over-represented in this latter socioeconomic group, Khan’s thinking on Muslim culture may be analysed with regard to such social and political issues. As discussed in Chapter 2, a long-term effect of the partition was a wide-spread experience among the Muslims of India of belonging to a beleaguered minority. Within the cultural, psychological, and socioeconomic situation of the contemporary double economy, the Indian Muslim community culture must be reformed or “deconditioned.” Muslims must reject their communalism and instead through means of education and thriftiness participate in the project of developing business and finance both globally as well as domestically.

The views on Islam, non-violence, and peace in the ideology of Khan is explicitly aimed at the educated classes. It may therefore be analysed on one hand as being partly shaped by the increasing globalisation of Indian finance, trade, and labour markets, and on the other hand, the effects of class divisions within the Indian Muslim community. Arguably, socioeconomic aspirations among the Muslim middle classes is sustained by Khan’s ideology of political status quo-ism, highlighting the possibilities of the “non-political” economic and social fields. Furthermore, Khan creates a religious platform for the necessity of education and entrepreneurship in Islam. An authentic and timeless Islam, non-violent and peaceful, is presented as entirely separate from Muslim communalism, culture and class issues. In relation to the rhetorical and real-life weak minority situation of the Muslim minority, in Khan’s status quo-ism and his views on Islam, non-violence, and peace, middle class Muslims may find a link to religion and tradition without having to identify themselves with the unreformed “backwardness” of the Muslim community. As part of a middle class socioeconomic aspiration, the primary representation to avoid is the politicised “communalism” of Islam and Muslims that is constantly reiterated by the Hindu Right organisations as an existential threat to the peace of the Indian (read Hindu) nation: backward, foreign, seditious, and violent. Authentic Islam stands apart from this cultural and historical situation: timeless, a-politically peaceable, and non-violent.

Analysis of Khan's Thought in Light of the Theoretical Discussion

9.1 Khan's Ideology as Political Theology

In Chapter 3 of this study, the concept of “Political theology” was discussed and how the notion of religious actors being shaped by their relationships to the state. Political theology, as theorised by Toft, Philpott and Shah is framed by the increase in the political influence of religion during the last four decades. They contend that this increase is mainly caused by the forces of mature modernity: democratisation, globalisation, and communication technologies. As seen, political theology is defined as: “*the set of ideas that a religious community holds about political authority and justice.*”¹ Such sets of ideas are not shaped in a vacuum, “the kind of politics” pursued by a religious actor are explained to “a great deal” by “*the mutual independence of religious authority and political authority.*”² Political situations of mutual independence between religious and political authority are predicted as the most likely factor to result in political theologies that aims to uphold the situation of independence. Khan's presentation of Islam can be analysed as expressing a kind of consensual independence from the state framed by the democratic political setting of India.

Details of the tensions of Indian democracy, secularism, and what freedom of religion means within that political situation were highlighted in Chapter 2. The constitutional project included secularism, which was formulated as state indifference to religion along with the liberal ideal of political individualism. Therefore, the religions and religious adherence should be treated similarly in the eyes of the law. However, the history of colonial law that was mixed with religion, the “Anglo-Muhammadan law,” as well as the increasing importance of caste and religious identity in effect eventually made the ideal of individualism less valid. Therefore, in practice, the secular state identified a distinct cultural and religious Muslim community. The tensions between this state-defined community and the simultaneous encroachments of the state upon their cultural and religious autonomy are typically illustrated in relevant literature through the 1985 Shah Bano case, in which the Supreme Court decision also highlighted a need for a uniform civil code. However, separate civil codes were preserved and in consequence, the

¹ Toft, Philpott and Shah, *God's Century*, 9. Italics in original.

² Toft, Philpott and Shah, *God's Century*, 10. Italics in original.

Muslim Personal Law is continually significant in religious and social terms for the Muslims of India.

One important point of departure in the analysis of Khan's presentation of Islam as a type of political theology, is that his ideology frames political power as being no longer necessary for religious proselytisation. Within a framework of "freedom," it is now possible to influence people in terms of religion in a multitude of other ways. One important method is the use of information technology and digital communication. It is important to note that for Khan, Islam is presented as essentially introducing such developments and principles of freedom. It was the fight against religious and ideological persecution by the Prophet Muhammad and the companions that eventually led to the contemporary historical phase of freedom in which religion is a personal matter and religious actors can bring about the aims of religion without using the state. Furthermore, as we saw, Khan repeatedly highlights that the era of digital communications is foretold in the Quran. Hence, Muslims should participate socially in the era of freedom and make use of new technology to broadcast Islam. Clearly, this is what the CPS and Khan are doing. However, in Khan's view the development of the era of freedom (in India) is a result of the ideal actions of the Prophet Muhammad. Freedom is seen as universal, and caused by the planning of God; hence it is not a limited and contested result of human action. The global prevalence of authoritarianism and religious persecution however, (in states like China, Russia, and Saudi Arabia) are overlooked. The actual fact that Islam has not universally resulted in freedom goes unmentioned and is not explained within Khan's universal presentation of Islam.

This omission points to how the immediate context of India may have influenced Khan's presentation of Islam. The democratic structure of India aims to uphold the freedom of religion, making peaceful proselytisation possible. Therefore, Khan's position may fruitfully be analysed as a form of religious legitimisation of the established relationships of mutual independence of religious authority and political authority in India. Consequently, Khan's thinking is a kind of "political theology" that reflects a high degree of "consensus," to use the terminology of Toft, Philpott, and Shah. Thus, basically Khan's political theology is framed by the Indian constitution. However, substantially his political theology may be analysed as being shaped by the situation of ideological and religious debate, as seen on one hand, and on the other, a situation of specific social and political issues.

These additional aspects of Khan's presentation of Islam as a type of political theology can be further analysed in light of the overarching theories of the current global situation of Islam, which is presented in Part 1 of this study, Chapter 3 in particular.

9.2 Islam and Political Issues

9.2.1 *The “Deculturation” Thesis*

Chapter 3 described how Roy perceives a general “deculturation” process when Muslim thinkers globally seek to explain and express a universal Islam beyond any specific cultural heritage. Generally, Muslim thinkers reach back in time to an ahistorical model of an allegedly authentic Islam, which in turn are used to construct new Muslim identities in the present. As such, Roy thinks, these new cultural identity models are made to fit any given culture, as they are delinked from any particular version of Islam that was always historically embedded in a given cultural and historical context. According to Roy, the processes of globalisation benefit those who separate Islam from any traditional, pre-given Muslim cultural context. In what follows, I will attempt to discuss Khan’s presentation of Islam from this perspective by highlighting four examples.

Khan’s presentation of Islam as a type of “political theology” can be analysed as a form of “deculturation,” i.e. of de-linking Islam from an immediate cultural context. For instance, as seen in Chapter 6, freedom is regarded by Khan as an inherent and universal result of Islam, freedom is beyond human action, culture, and politics. This presentation is made possible by or presupposes reaching back to an ahistorical model of Islam. Khan uses this universal model to create a particular ideology and identity, namely that the political, social and economic “status quo” (of India and also Palestine) contain infinite opportunities for Muslims, which when used properly, also benefit Islam as a religion. Muslims should, therefore, use this freedom and the accompanying means of technology, which was ushered in by the actions of the Prophet Muhammad and foretold in the words of the Quran.

Another example is Khan’s notion of purification, a generally important concept in Islam, especially in the Sufi lexicon. As seen, Khan reconstructs and reconsiders purification in a modern idiom using universal categories and concepts such as the self, personal growth, and self-reflection, coupled with notions of individual religious growth through contemplation. Khan thereby presents the practice of purification of the self as a fundamental part of authentic Islam and a method invented by the Prophet. In order to make people more peaceful, the Prophet Muhammad and all other prophets, taught their followers to leave their culture and social upbringing behind by fully embracing Islam. A more clear-cut example of “de-culturation” in Roy’s terms may be hard to find. In Khan’s thought, actual or discursive Muslim communalism (as referred to analytically), is the motivation for the need for purification. Thereby, the continuing importance of Sufi concepts and culture in Indian Muslim religious life is implicit

in Khan's presentation of authentic Islam. Khan's positions are lifted out of the immediate Muslim cultural context and can therefore, in principle, be more easily fitted into any contemporary culture.

A third example, also from Chapter 6, is Khan's presentation of the Quranic verses regarding the relation between Joseph and the Egyptian Pharaoh. Joseph, as a prophet of Islam accepted a cabinet post in the ministry of the Pharaoh, meaning the religious status of the ruler should not be of any concern to the contemporary Muslim. By reaching back to an ahistorical and essentialist past a new identity is created, one that is accommodated in the context of the Indian society in which Muslims are in the minority and definitely not political rulers. The important everyday life issues for this minority such as accepting a government post in a political structure dominated by Hindus (even Hindu Nationalists), or perhaps simply having a Hindu manager or even co-workers, should be accepted as natural and must not be criticised with reference to Islam. According to Khan's message, a Muslim must embrace cooperation and co-existence and Muslims must not try to maintain any strict boundaries for the Muslim community. More importantly, the ideological reason for Khan to present this argument can also be compared to a point raised by the Deobandi scholar, Maulana Zafar Ahmad 'Uthmāni. As seen in Chapter 2, 'Uthmāni criticised the ideological notions of united or composite nationalism by upholding that the only circumstances in which Muslims could cooperate with non-Muslims is when Islam is the dominant force in society.³ Khan challenges such positions by presenting his argument for acceptance of a non-Muslim and polytheist political rule based on the example mentioned of Joseph in Egypt. With regard to this, Khan formulates ideological and religious legitimations for the principles of cooperation and accommodating to pluralism in society, even in situations in which Muslims do not have the upper hand. Chapter 5 above illustrated the juridical precedents in the Indian discussions of *Hanafi* law pertaining to cooperation and non-rebellion with rulers and remaining in lands once considered the abode of Islam. The principle of the need to cooperate with non-Muslims can clearly also be made to fit other contemporary cultures. As pointed out by Wilfred Cantwell Smith, Muslims are after all a minority in India as well as the world at large. Khan's principle is thus valid around the globe due to the mechanism of "deculturation," which is involved in the reconstructive presentation of a timeless, universal, and individual authentic Islam.

³ Zafar Ahmad 'Uthmāni (d. 1974) one of the founders the *Djāmi'at al-'Ulamā'-i Islām* in 1945 is not to be confused with Shabbir Ahmad 'Uthmāni (d. 1949), the main founder of that organisation. Hence, the political pro-Pakistan positions of both famous scholars named 'Uthmāni could, therefore, be contrasted with Khan's pragmatic and international views; his focus goes beyond even the tenets of united or composite nationalism.

A fourth example will suffice to illustrate the importance of the deculturation thesis to the analysis of Khan's ideology. Chapter 6 demonstrated how Khan presents the events when the Prophet Muhammad reacted towards the Arab, polytheist temple of Mecca. While Muslims were a minority in Mecca, the Prophet Muhammad unexpectedly ignored the presence of polytheist idols, despite the fact that the site was built as the original and most important monotheist place of worship. This account reveals a certain perspective, it is directed towards Muslims in their minority situation in Hindu India. More specifically, the analogy is applied to the destruction of the Babri Masjid. As the argument is presented by Khan, it suggests that Muslims should follow this particular example from the life of the Prophet Muhammad and ignore polytheist (Hindu) temples, even when these were once or should be considered, Muslim sites of worship. Therefore, Khan's mode of argumentation may be analysed as a typical example of what Hjärpe terms an analogy to an event in "sacred history." Combined with Roy's deculturation perspective, it becomes clear that the analogies of events in the sacred history presented are constructed in order to create new Muslim identities and ideological positions in the present. As Hjärpe shows, the usage of sacred history also makes familiar or perhaps even rhetorically hides from view, the specific traits of the new situation; the contemporary destruction of a mosque by throngs of Hindu activists. Hence, the events of the sacred history in the religious framework and language are used to support a certain position in the contemporary debate, that of the avoidance of Muslims of bringing forth any further conflict or more societal discord through mobilisation on the basis of the demolished mosque. On this issue, the significant ideological content of Khan's rulings is that in accommodating both pluralism and the general lack of political and social influence, instead of intensifying Muslim mobilisation around the issue, the Indian Muslim community should turn to the judicial powers of the state for the protection of their interests. In particular, Indian Muslims ought to accept the lack of power to change the transformed religious status of an important holy site. Instead, Muslims should look to the democratic and juridical proceedings of the democratic and secular state to prevent any further change of destruction of contemporary holy sites in India. From the position of an authentic and timeless Islam and from selected events in the sacred history of Islam, Khan constructs a tenable religious argument for a particular position in a turbulent and violent political and social issue.

Lastly, from Roy's perspective and framework it is evident how Khan's presentations and positioning of Islam are connected to and at least partially shaped by the processes of globalisation. Central to Roy's theorising is the notion that privatised and de-cultured formulations of Islam benefit from globalisation through the withering away of closed, local,

national, or regional cultural contexts and the emergence of the new types of communication technologies that allows them to circulate. Significantly, Khan's presentations of Islam emphasises that Muslims should not concern themselves with the issue of national or local political dominance but instead seek possibilities for progression and proselytisation in a private, civil society sphere. Certainly, globalisation and the accompanying cultural and religious pluralism in which Muslims self-evidently are a minority, suggests a situation in which Khan's religious ideology may find resonance. His thought fits not only the situation in increasingly globalised India but also that in other cultures and societies.

9.2.2 Liberal or Fundamentalist Islam: a "Political" Sphere outside Religion?

In this section, it will be argued that the political and ideological aspects of Khan's ideology do not fit the well-known categories of either "liberal" or "fundamentalist" Islam and even that these categories in themselves have limitations. At the very least, they seem too blunt and condensed to fully understand the intricacies of Khan's thought.

In Chapter 3 and above, we met Roy's contention that in the processes of globalisation, Islam and indeed all religion becomes secularised, i.e. institutionally differentiated from other social and cultural fields of human activity. According to Roy, Muslims can handle that differentiation in two general ways. On one hand, the "liberal" view holds that a space outside of religion should be accepted. Hence, liberal Islam defines the rules of religion as a private business, while leaving the public matters of the state and the economy aside. On the other hand, the "fundamentalist" outlook instead supports the notion that Islam is a comprehensive "all-encompassing system" that should dominate both the state and the market, as well as the intimate private sphere.

At first glance, Khan's wide-ranging thinking on Islam, non-violence, and peace seems to fit into Roy's "liberal" category. As we saw, Khan eschews the field of "politics" or the "political" sphere. Indeed, "politics" is something wholly negative and the multifarious Muslim positions in the direction of "political Islam" are to blame for "war and violence" and "revolution" in the name of Islam. In the eyes of Khan therefore, the field of politics is something alien or outside authentic Islam. In addition, "politics" is construed by Khan as a field of action in opposition not only to religion but also to education, business, science, social reform, and the development of technology – all of which are fields of action considered by Khan as rightful and proper and recommended by Islam. Therefore, politics should not be regulated by Islam. "Political Islam" is logically untenable as a category in his ideology as in its intent and essence, Islam was and

is “non-political.” With this in mind, it seems not only possible but quite natural to label Khan’s ideas as “liberal,” in light of Roy’s concepts.

The logic of Roy’s concepts implies that the opposite of “liberal,” namely “fundamentalist Islam” is “all-encompassing,” that is it involves prescriptions for rules or preferable policies for the state and the function of the market, as well as culture, family, education, and science. However, on closer examination of this vibrant point, Khan appears to be not at all purely “liberal.” As seen earlier, Khan’s ideology both directly and indirectly prescribes constitutional rules and preferable state policies, the pluralism and tolerance of liberal democracy. It also makes assertions for the organisation of the market and civil society that is, arguing for a liberal freedom for education, entrepreneurship, and social and economic success. Those statements are based on an elaborate presentation of an authentic and timeless Islam. So, what are the implied aspects in Roy’s notion of a comprehensive or “all-encompassing” Islam? I will attempt to demonstrate that either Khan’s thought is too broad and transcends the logical borders of Roy’s concepts or Roy’s concepts are too narrow for Khan.

To begin with, Khan’s whole ambition of constructing an authentic and timeless Islam is laden with ideological and political content put forward in the Indian historical situation of political and cultural conflict between the Hindu and the Muslim populations; the historic partition of the country and more recently the continued internal strife and mutual violence. Thus, as seen earlier, Khan’s construction of the essential peacefulness of authentic Islam has direct political implications. His ideology envisages quite a different path as the true Islamic way against the “political” violence-prone Muslims, aiming at Muslim power or a separate state or closed community-building. Islam does not demand political power, instead Islam demands education, freedom, and open paths to prosperity. Khan’s ideology attempts to disarm the argument of the hostile Hindu Right, that Islam is essentially violent or separatist, by pointing to its authentic and timeless peaceful essence. Thus, for him, all expressions of a “political Islam” are due to flawed interpretations or misguided political movements. So, his argument that religion is inherently a private business and that no religion should try to exert power over the state and thus essentially be “non-political,” in this situation is a political statement in itself.

It is against this background that a more close investigation of Khan’s “political status-quoism” and his notion of “politics” reveals its relation to the political aspect of society. Khan associates the category of politics with elements of confrontation and the violent dominance over the enemy. In particular, the development of Muslim communal views and the formation of Muslim states is regarded as the essence of what is “political” in Islam. Instead, what Khan formulates as pursuing the “non-political” way, is success in education, business, wealth, and

especially in missionary work. Such success can only come about through well-functioning constructive relations with neighbours. This presumes an affirmation of the principles of tolerance and pluralism in both political and religious life. Therefore, his ideology points to a democratic and pluralistic constitution. Thus, there is no need for Muslim political rule or Muslim separatism in India. Muslims have their share of representation and are guaranteed religious and civic liberties and even a separate civil code under the constitution. Within this polity, Muslims should affirm the shared democratic, constitutional values of non-violence, pluralism, and tolerance and thereby secure a due place for Islam and Muslims. So, Khan's ideology not only legitimates the secular state and the liberal, pluralistic constitution of India, it also at least implicitly, or in its logical consequences, affirms and argues for pluralist democracy as the preferred constitutional type. As seen, his argument emerges from both a practical and a principled side, from the practical situation of Muslims in the Indian and global society and from the basic principles of authentic Islam. This means that his presentation of Islam also includes a notion of the normatively preferable or logically necessary constitutional type and state form.

A similar analysis can be made regarding the market and civil society. In Khan's ideology, Islam does not demand political power. Instead, for all Muslims and all citizens of India, Islam demands possibilities to thrive and prosper through moral and religious purification, schools and education, science, technological advancement and business activity. Such calls for advancement out of ignorance and poverty and towards progress are not considered "political" by him, not even "political" in an ideological and democratic sense. In his writings, these fields represent the "non-political" sphere, since the term "political" always refers to violence, political dominance, or war. As seen, Khan is positive to free markets and thus to the neo-liberal economic reforms of the 1990s. In this he not only legitimates the neo-liberal reforms but explicitly and by implication elaborates the argument for a free market civil society sphere, close to the neo-liberal vision. Khan explicitly supports the intellectual aspects related to the new global markets, setting the conditions regarding education, employment, and enterprise on a new footing. Grit and God, and never guns, are the "non-political" ways out of poverty and social stigma. This "non-political" field is the place in which the abundance and possibilities of the global, modern world can be obtained. Therefore, a privatised notion of religion is connected to a privatised notion of economic possibility and success. This means that Khan's ideology not only includes a notion of the secular, pluralist democratic state, it also includes a notion of the preferable organisation of the economy and the civil society sphere, in the direction of a continuing free market and process of globalisation.

In summary, Khan's presentation of Islam emphasises the ideological and religious values of social harmony and the avoidance of conflict, the values of the secular state and pluralist, liberal democracy, and moreover, a free enterprise type of economic policy. The bottom line is that Khan's argument in favour of the secular, democratic state type and the globalised, free-market organisation of the economy is not only compatible with but also logically derived, from the principles of authentic Islam. He thus brings about a religious legitimisation or normative argument for the modern democratic state and the modern capitalist world economy. This position when placed under consideration, casts doubt on what Roy's conceptual dichotomy of either "liberal" or "fundamentalist" Islam actually entails.

For Roy, the definition of "liberal" means any version of Islam that leaves politics and economics outside the boundaries of religion. As seen, in Khan's ideology there is a specific state-form as well as a specific organisation of the economy that is not only compatible with but also logically necessary to the principles of Islam. The form and function of state and market are not at all indifferent to or separate from religion rather, they are part of the religious argument and the presentation of an authentic and timeless Islam. So, what does it mean that a sphere is "outside the boundaries of religion" if it is in fact logically incorporated into the religious system? Furthermore, doubt is cast on the definition of "fundamentalist" Islam as a comprehensive or "all-encompassing" system of thought vis-à-vis the ideology of Khan. As seen, his ideology can supposed to be "liberal," and thus not "fundamentalist" and "all-encompassing." However, inconsistently, Khans ideology includes direct recommendations for both the type of state and the type of economic organisation. In this way his ideology is as "all-encompassing" as it can be. And if it is a hallmark of "fundamentalism" to base the argument directly on the Quran to create an all-embracing vision of an authentic and timeless Islam, Khan is really a "fundamentalist."⁴

This leads to the conclusion that from an empirical and actual perspective, Khan's ideology seems to be too broad and transcends the conceptual content of Roy's categories or when considered from the other side, that Roy's categories seem to be too narrow or too blunt for the specific characteristics of Khan's ideology. To engage into a closer criticism or suggest a new

⁴ Khan himself may be said to permit this general interpretation. In a discussion about the scholarly creation of the category of "Muslim fundamentalism" or "Islamic fundamentalism" in relation to early 20th century Christian fundamentalism, Khan nevertheless uses the category to say that violence is the product of "Islamic fundamentalism" but in fact, "Islam is a name for peaceful struggle." Claiming its religious authority for himself, he continues: "If we are to put 'fundamentalism' in the correct perspective, we should be clear [about] what really constitutes the fundamental principles of Islam." These fundamentals are the five pillars of Islam, and through freedom and conviction the individual Muslim must follow them with the right intention and understanding of its "inner spirit." Khan, *Islam Rediscovered*, 144.

conceptual, classification scheme for types of Islamic political thought is a step too far as such schemes exist more or less in preliminary and differently nuanced forms.⁵ I will settle here with this preliminary casting of doubt over the fruitfulness of Roy's categories. However, since established conceptual schemes appear insufficient with regard to the political thought of Khan, Chapter 10 aims to create the theoretical domain for the politics of Islam, non-violence, and peace.

Furthermore, the example of Khan also casts doubt on the conceptually non-satisfactory category of "political Islam" that commonly only incorporates "fundamentalist" types of political-ideological thought.⁶ In analytical terms, Khan's positions are political and ideological or at least leads to political and ideological consequences. Khan's reiteration of Islam as condoning liberal economic policies and a secular and pluralist democracy is certainly *a kind of political Islam*, even if rhetorically and in its self-perception it shuns all "politics" or a "political" interpretation of Islam (in the narrow meaning of violence, separatism, community building or state formation). In Khan's terminology, his own "non-political" Islam instead prescribes a secular, pluralist, and liberal state.

From an analytical perspective therefore, his concept of politics seems rather narrow. This is perhaps due to three diverse discursive traditions. The first is represented by the prevailing Muslim political theories in South Asia, from the Islamist thought of Mawdudi to the influential idea of the *ʿālim* Sayyid Abu 'l-Ḥasan 'Alī Nadwī that Muslim political mobilisation was necessary to protect their cultural and religious ways of life, as seen in Chapters 2 and 5 respectively. The second is the pressing rhetoric and propagandistic structures in the contemporary debate situation both globally as well as in India, over issues concerning Islam,

⁵ Mansoor Moaddel's four-field model charts the "discursive field of target"; either pluralistic or monolithic and the "location of target," either civil society or the state. Moaddel differentiates between Islamic modernism (pluralistic, civil society); Liberal nationalism (pluralistic, the state); Sectarian ideological movements (monolithic, civil society); and Islamic fundamentalism (monolithic, the state). Moaddel, *Islamic Modernism, Nationalism, and Fundamentalism*, 18. As seen, John Volls conceptual scheme of "adaptionist," "conservative," "fundamentalist," or "personal-piety" is one influential attempt. Voll, *Islam: Continuity and Change*, 388–389. Ishtiaq Ahmed made an early attempt regarding South Asian political ideologues. He primarily differentiates between *absolutists*, on one hand and *modernists*, on the other, while also discussing several individual cases that do not fit either category. Ishtiaq Ahmed, "The Concept of an Islamic State: An Analysis of the Ideological Controversy in Pakistan" (PhD Diss., University of Stockholm, 1985) 204–205. These overarching attempts at classification can be compared to the detailed historical approaches in the literature, which focusses on individual cases and specific contexts. See Hardy, *Partners in Freedom*, 31–33, 37. Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam*, 52. As seen, Eickelman and Piscatori develop a framework that aims to understand "Muslim politics" from the perspective of a wide range of actors who employ Islamic symbols in public and civic life instead of limiting the understanding of Islam and politics on beforehand. Eickelman and Piscatori, *Muslim Politics*, 26–45, 48–79, 142–148.

⁶ Roy describes a political reading of the Quran in light of Marxism and Western political science as the "conceptual matrix" of "the Islamists." Roy, *The Failure of Political Islam*, 39. Similarly, Jamal Malik equates "political Islam" and "Islamic Fundamentalism." Malik, *Islam in South Asia*, 395–401. Mohammad Fazlhashemi also equates political Islam, Islamism, and fundamentalism. Mohammad Fazlhashemi, *Vems islam: De kontrastrika muslimerna* (Stockholm: Norstedts, 2008) 119–120.

violence, and peace. Thirdly, as seen in this section, Khan discusses “Political Islam” in a manner similar to influential scholars like Olivier Roy and Jamal Malik, equating it to “Islamic Fundamentalism,” and hence war and radical political violence. On the conceptual basis of academic categorisations and discussion, this prevailing and pre-defined notion of political Islam is also arguably prevalent in the language of debaters, editorial writers, and politicians in both Europe and India. As a result, this narrow and predefined notion of what is and what is not political about Islam is a part of the civic and public discourse and general political “wisdom.”⁷ As Eickelman and Piscatori argues, this only serves to confuse the understanding of Muslim politics and exaggerates its uniqueness. In addition, it unintentionally continues the assumption that religious politics, especially Muslim politics, is not guided by rational calculations, because of the orientalist trope of the emotionality and irrationality of religion – Islam in particular. Most damning from an empirical perspective, because of its narrow theoretical starting points the assumption of a particular union between religion and politics in Islam hides from view the empirical reality that Muslim politics is not a seamless web or monolithic.⁸ From a wider and more open analytical concept of politics, Khan’s thought is “political” just as much as the liberal, democratic state is “political” or the “anti-political” ideology of neo-liberalism is “political.”⁹

Therefore, with Zaman’s important insights in mind, as scholars we must rethink Muslim politics.¹⁰ By highlighting the religiopolitical activism of some prominent contemporary ‘*ulamā*’, Zaman argues that the continuously emerging and widening Muslim public sphere also includes ‘*ulamā*’ of different ideological and religious positions and at different levels of activism. Hence, in conceptual terms we should prefer “Muslim politics,” as an eclectic and widespread contemporary phenomenon and category, instead of re-iterating a narrow understanding of “political Islam” as only including the ideology and practices of the fundamentalist “Islamists.” Zaman points to that the ‘*ulamā*’ may be found to be at odds both

⁷ Robert W. Hefner, “Modernity and the Remaking of Muslim Politics,” in Hefner, *Remaking Muslim Politics*, 4–28.

⁸ Eickelman and Piscatori, *Muslim Politics*, 56–57.

⁹ It can be noted that similar discussions on the “political” nature of “anti-political” ideologies has been held in Western political theory over both the Western liberal, democratic state, and the political theory of -neo-liberalism. See Talal Asad, “Thinking about Religion, Belief, and Politics,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Religious Studies*, ed. Robert A Orsi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 41. Furthermore, Jürgen Habermas discusses the ethical, pre-political, and political conditions necessary for the emergence and constant re-production of the values and solidarity necessary for the “constitutional” and “proceduralist” liberal, democratic state. Civil privatisation is strengthened only “because democratic opinion- and will-formation, discouragingly, fails to function properly.” Jürgen Habermas, “The Secular Liberal State and Religion,” in *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World*, eds. Hent de Vries and Lawrence E. Sullivan (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006) 252–255.

¹⁰ Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam*, 178.

among each other and with the Islamists in the public and political spheres, as we have also seen in this study. However, in other settings, the *'ulamā'* collaborates among themselves or with Islamists to strengthen their own position against their governments. In this light, Khan's opposition to Islamism, "political Islam," and Muslim communalism, and his ensuing religious legitimization of the Indian state and pluralistic society can be at least partly understood as what has earned him great government approval and recognition, for instance the distinguished Padma Bhushan civilian award in 2000, as seen in Chapter 1. My point is that Khan's type of public and civic role is one crucial aspect of Muslim politics in the contemporary world.

To conclude, the differing claims to religious authenticity and authority among Islamists and *'ulamā'*, and the broad religio-political activism of the latter, only shows the continuance of a general and wide "political resonance of the Islamic religious tradition," especially in a time of general increased importance of claims to cultural authenticity, identity, and religion in the public sphere.¹¹ The case of Khan also shows that generalisations about the *'ulamā'* in contemporary Islam generally fail to acknowledge their increased prominence and wide-ranging role in society as custodians of change and authentic tradition. Hence, their actual activism must be part and parcel of any attempted conceptualisation of Muslim politics.

9.2.3 *Islam, Pessimism, Revolt*

Khan's suspicions and expressions of distrust regarding the category of politics is of course a reaction to the rhetoric in the prevailing debate situation both globally and in India, in which a militant and "political" Islam is formulated in different quarters. Roy points out another aspect of this, the prevailing influence of pessimistic and individual revolt for some elusive ideal world or desired values in contemporary Muslim formulations of Islam.

A facet of what Roy describes as the current global influence of individualism is with regard to a Western, pessimistic, and individual revolt for an elusive, ideal world. Making comparisons from a global perspective, he asserts that the left-wing political radicalisation of the 1960s has been contributing to the shaping of contemporary, politically radical formulations of Islam, especially among youth and therefore, also expresses a conflict between generations. Such individualistic revolt for an ideal social and political order have obviously influenced the formation of Khan's ideology, as it attempts to formulate a viable and valid alternative. As

¹¹ The Islamists often pit their own position against the *'ulamā'* because the latter are either regarded as government collaborators or as stuck in obsolete institutions and ways of thinking about Islam. See Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam*, 180.

described in Chapter 6, Khan is very persistent in the view that the ideal world, the ideal society, or the ideal form of state can never be reached. In fact, Khan holds that God wants people to be free to act as they please so that accordingly, God can test humans as to who is most piously peaceable and therefore suited for paradise. Therefore, Khan's presentation of Islam may be regarded as a repudiation of the radical pessimism, especially when coached in Islamist terminology.¹² As has already been described, the admonition to his readers is to look to anything but "the political" struggle, that is education, business opportunities, and emigration, as well as peaceful proselytisation, calling people to Islam. Contrary to pessimistic idealism, the essence of Islam, non-violence, and peace is to patiently confront evil by returning only good. The purpose is to alleviate conflict, maintain and restore social harmony, while patiently looking to the future and the better outcomes that are sure to come. In fact, these are divinely promised to effectively turn enemies into friends. Therefore, this authentic Islam and method of the Prophet is regarded as superior for improving both the individuals and the world. The application of this method of the Prophet will eventually make people more favourable toward Islam. On one hand this position is a repudiation of the radical Muslim pessimism with its ultimately violent prospects. On the other hand, the "evils" of the world should not be confronted with violent revolt but with patience and forbearance and if not with kindness at least with in-difference through "ignoring the problem."

Therefore, Khan's "non-political" Islam or "political status quo-ism" can be analysed with reference to what Roy describes as non-Muslim pressure on Muslims to declare their positions on issues related to democracy and violence, especially in a minority situation. This latter trend is augmented by globalisation and the global "war on terror," exposing Muslims to a world-wide discourse on the political and religious violence associated with Islam. Hence, it is within the Indian majority-minority relationship, partially shaped by global discourse that the ideological and religious debate on the meaning of Islam takes place. Thus, Khan's explicit repudiation of radical idealism is addressing several layers of national, regional, and international ideological and religious debate on the contemporary meaning of Islam. His thoroughly argued message is that at its very essence, Islam teaches only the "non-political" or the "non-violent" way.

¹² Which Roy considers as the application of Quranic terminology to concepts from Marxist and Leninist political theory, as well as to borrowings from Western political science.

9.3 Theoretical Discussion: Shaping Liberal-Democratic Values?

The theoretical framework of Chapter 3 presents two main perspectives in the discussion on how to perceive the effects of globalisation on religion and the place of religion in contemporary society. Beyond the immediate intricacies of these different theoretical perspectives it is possible to observe normative discussions concerning the secular aspect of the liberal state and hence, different approaches to *secularism*. Simply put, the theoretical framework discusses and problematises but also acknowledges the virtues of either two variants of secularism. Toft, Philpott, and Shah clearly promotes a Jeffersonian type of democracy; “a wall of separation between church and state” while Roy bases his discussion on reflections on the quite different French version of secularism; *laïcité*. The theoreticians not only discuss the preferred and unwanted social effects of these two variants of institutional practice, but also the largely different psychological reactions to which these give rise, and to a certain extent also express.

In this section, I will initially aim to tease out the different, inherently political and ideological aspects of the different theoretical perspectives. Based on these descriptions, I will then aim to discuss how the different theoretical approaches propose fundamental views on how religion can or cannot contribute to the formation of a constitutional and liberal political body – a political community adhering to liberal values, shaped by liberal democracy as a set of practices and democracy as a state system. Secondly, I will attempt to introduce Khan into the discussion by suggesting how his ideology both supposes a certain type of state secularism but also aims for a certain political vision: that of a plural and democratic Indian political community, one that is united yet in which Muslims may maintain some distinct cultural and religious characteristics. Thirdly, this analysis of the ideology of Khan suggests a possible theoretical synthesis concerning how Khan or any other religious actor, might actually play a significant role for democracy and peace by becoming involved in public civic debates on fundamental principles and shared issues and thereby contributing to and shaping liberal democratic values.

9.3.1 Promoting Secularism

The perspective of Toft, Philpott and Shah can be labelled *optimistic* because to a large degree it welcomes globalisation and liberalisation, which they consider have the potential to turn religion into a force for pluralisation and democracy. In their view, globalisation and legal-constitutional frameworks for religious freedom furthers the religious pursuit of democracy, freedom, and peace. By means of communication technology usage and globalised processes, the private and civil society spheres grow in strength in relation to the state, especially in

relation to the oppressive character of integrated state-religion legal frameworks of either prohibition, restriction, or pre-eminence of any or a particular religion. In this optimistic light, the authors expect a future of co-equal and democratically influential religious groups. Their work also contains explicit normative and practical suggestions directed towards public opinion and policy makers. In these suggestions the American experience and perspective is noticeable. Their general policy proposal regarding state and religion on a global basis is to highlight and ultimately create ideal American conditions. Instead of sectarian, militant violence they maintain that religious groups should promote and have the possibility to promote, mutual tolerance, peaceful pluralist democracy, and freedom of religion. Hence, Toft, Philpott, and Shah use their empirical descriptions to develop explicit normative reasoning and policy recommendations.

In contention of a weakening of the state in religious matters, Roy is close to Toft, Philpott, and Shah. However, unlike those authors, he asserts that the emergence of a global religious market has quite another effect than the strengthening of mutual tolerance and pluralist democracy. Instead, Roy perceives a formatting process of religion that is inherent in the processes of globalisation. Based on reflections of the French policies of secularism, *laïcité*, Roy maintains that globalisation and liberalisation are not only followed by the weakening of the state. Additionally, the effects of a global religious market formats religion into conservative and inward-looking closed communities that are un-concerned with the ideology or the nature of the state. This process also effectively destroys the links between religion and wider cultural knowledge. Religion becomes separate from society when it becomes increasingly autonomous compared to the surrounding culture and traditions. Instead it retreats into a private and virtual space. No longer embedded in a given culture, religion loses its social authority and therefore its ability to shape any civic values amongst a substantial number of people.

It is important to point out that Roy is primarily a critical observer aiming for descriptions and sociological analysis of certain situations of religion and globalisation. He is not as explicitly normative as Toft, Philpott, and Shah, nor does Roy formulate any clear general policy recommendations. However, he does contend that American and British institutionalised practices of freedom of religion are too indulgent and indeed naïve, as seen in Chapter 3. In the discussions that follow in this section, I will aim to tease out what possible implications can be drawn from Roy's descriptions of the current situation for religion. These implications will be made clear in the suggestion of a possible theoretical synthesis which concludes this chapter.

To begin with, as I understand Roy's viewpoint Islam and religion in general, especially in a minority position due to its largely indifferent, private, and virtual character, does not

significantly contribute to the political integration of a national, pluralist society – citizens bound by their mutual relationship to a constitutional, liberal democratic state. Instead, Roy *pessimistically* contends that Muslim and other religious neo-fundamentalists have fitted in and thrived in the space allocated to religion in a world shaped by globalisation. Moulded by Western templates of religion, the space in which the individual's religious identity and faith is re-enacted is based on privatisation and the separation of politics and religion. In this privatised sphere, fundamentalist or sectarian views are safely protected from critical engagement and dialogue with an outside, allegedly hostile or at least indifferent world. Conservative and reactionary values are therefore reconstructed in the private space of home, family, or association.

Furthermore, because state legislation equally formats a global template of religion defined as private belief and practices, in Roy's analysis privatised religion becomes a minority issue similar to cultural and ethnic minorities. This leads to a situation in which religious minorities claim a legal right to be at variance with the surrounding culture or the policies of the state. In summary, according to Roy when religion becomes private and individual, it not only becomes conservative but also un-concerned with the surrounding society and public policy. It no longer keeps contact with the deep-seated cultural knowledge required to participate and to be relevant in a particular society and to maintain the democratic values upon which their sheltered position depends. The expression of religion becomes a minority position outside the larger web of social life, especially in terms of what it means to be a citizen amongst others who must share and reproduce the liberal and egalitarian values alongside the joint moral obligations (*fraternité*) of the constitutional state in the interests of maintenance of democracy, both as democratic practices and as motivational preconditions for the liberal state.

As an alternative to the sheltered and private space created for religion by the processes of globalisation, Roy contends that all contemporary forms of religious revival including Islam, should equally be criticised for the content of the values they espouse. As I attempt to apply Roy's perspective here, he confronts the issue of how, to what degree and type Islam as a minority religion contributes to or shapes the shared belonging in a culture of liberal democratic emotional responses. Or perhaps in the words of Talal Asad: shared political understandings among citizens based in *democratic sensibility as an ethos*.¹³ Roy proposes that the degree of mutual relevance between a particular religion in a society and the surrounding mainstream culture can only be measured in terms of societal and cultural interaction. Therefore, Roy

¹³ Asad, "Thinking about Religion, Belief, and Politics," 56.

contends that it is only if Islam, and religion in general, express and include a deep-seated knowledge and learning and interact with the fields of literature, philosophy, and science, that religion can successfully make claims to social authority and therefore contribute to liberal democratic culture and participate in the debate on constitutional values. The alternative, which following globalisation is the historical trend of today, is cultural ignorance and self-contained modes of reasoning, creating a situation in which religion increasingly becomes socially and culturally irrelevant, as described in Chapter 3.

9.3.2 Khan's Ideology and State Secularism

In many aspects, Khan's body of thought seems to adhere quite closely to the perspective and recommendations of Toft, Philpott and Shah. As seen in the analysis above, they hold that a political theology that endorses mutual independence with the state will function as an agent of peace and democracy. We have also seen that Khan's political theology formulates such a mutual independence. Khan asserts that the Indian state shall allow and defend freedom of religion and moreover, be neutral to the various religious traditions and expressions, including Islam. However, in some fundamental aspects the secularism that Khan upholds is different from American Jeffersonian secularism or the French *laïcité*. As seen in Chapter 5, it means no interference in the field of religion by the state through the maintenance of a separate civil code, and therefore, the right to preserve a distinct Muslim culture and set of religious laws. Hence, Khan argues for religious freedom as a fundamental part of the shared democratic constitutional and national values and against notions of a uniform civil code for the sake of national unity. In his view, "secularism and a uniform civil code are at opposite poles."¹⁴ He then proceeds by involving "Hindu ideology [*sarva dharma sambhava*]," which he means asserts that all religions are equally fundamentally true and that reality only appears manifold but is in fact one and the same in its "inner essence."¹⁵ Therefore, it goes against fundamental Hindu belief to enforce a single, uniform civil code in India. Clearly, Khan engages in the debate on the meaning of cultural knowledge and religious concepts to formulate a political position in relation to an issue that concerns every citizen: National political unity should instead be created through adherence to the pluralistic aspects of shared liberal democratic values of the constitution and mutual acceptance of diversity. For its part, Islam should be content to prevail

¹⁴ Khan, *Uniform Civil Code*, 51.

¹⁵ As seen in Chapter 2, the Hindu concept "*Sarva Dharma Sambhava*," 'Unity of Faiths'; is an essential part of the prescriptive and pragmatic character of the Indian constitution and alongside left-liberal considerations, reflects the framework of the constitution's multi-layered and complex combination of traditions and ideas.

in the private and civil spheres of business, education, family, and peaceful proselytisation. As seen previously, from Khan's perspective Islam should settle with this cultural and legal autonomy and not interfere with direct political action nor any (other) actual policies of the state.

In the following, instead of simply settling with the close resemblance of Khan's political theology and the predictions of Toft, Philpott, and Shah, I will discuss Khan's ideology in the theoretical light of Roy's alternative "pessimistic" perspective. The purpose of this exercise is to prepare the ground for a possible theoretical modification and synthesis. Based on Roy's descriptions of the secularising effects of the processes of globalisation, it implies that all religions become relevant to the society only if they are embedded in the national culture and participate in the debate on the ideology and policies of the state. In the event this line of thought is followed, instead of separating itself from national political life, Islam ought to engage with and be involved in the wider, national, political, cultural, and social currents in order to be relevant.

As seen in Chapter 3, Roy's hypothesis is that globalisation and the use of digital communications lead to a situation in which religion is separated from the social and political spheres and becomes confined in an entirely private and virtual space. This means that the community of believers becomes fragmented, virtual, and imagined and therefore, largely powerless. Moreover, Roy predicts that when religion retracts from the pervasive atmosphere of the surrounding culture, its adherents become inward-looking and self-contained and religion itself becomes formatted into the structure of conservative values and views.¹⁶ As seen in Chapter 5, after 2000 and in a generalised situation of globalisation and social media, the object of Khan's message of Islam, non-violence, and peace is everyone, the individuals who make up the whole universal humanity, which in practice is no particular one, at least in terms of a cultural and civic community.

Given this, it is possible to introduce another analysis of Khan's ideology and his separation of Islam from politics. Following Roy, Khan's separation of Islam and politics should perhaps be regarded as a typical trait of neo-fundamentalism, the lack of concern with practical public policies or the constitutional principles of the state. Therefore, while "political status quo-ism" in the thought of Khan provides a basis for peace and democracy, by applying Roy's terms it may also be interpreted as an absence of engagement with the wider concerns of state and

¹⁶ This study showed the opposition to legalising homosexuality and sexual freedom in the ideology of Khan. Chapter 7 revealed the strict gender norms especially those applied to women, in the formulation of their loyal and submissive roles as wives and mothers.

society. Hence, a new dimension of an old theoretical discussion emerges. Can globalised religion play a significant role for democracy and peace, as Toft, Philpott, and Shah thinks? Or are the forces of de-culturation inherent in globalisation bound to render religion insular, conservative, and inward-looking, as Roy maintains and therefore, become irrelevant to both mainstream society and to the continuing debate on constitutional values and the reproduction of the “pre-political” motivations and attitudes that sustains liberal democracy?¹⁷

The analyses of Roy are mainly concerned with Islam and Muslims, especially in the minority position in Europe and France. For their part, Toft, Philpott, and Shah aim to create a wider explanatory framework of the relationship between religion and politics. Like Roy, they support the notion that the alignment of religion to the national culture and identity strengthens the religious actors. However, they explicitly propose that the “relationship of a religious actor to a state’s national identity” represents a “complex influence.”¹⁸ That is, they assert that the ideological content and political direction in different cases can be of any kind depending on the circumstances. They cite two polarised possibilities and examples. On one hand, the Polish Catholic Church acted as a democratising force in the 1980s when it portrayed the authoritarian regime as contrary to the nation and aligned itself with the movement for democracy. On the other hand and contrary to the Polish example, Sri Lankan Buddhists and Hindu nationalist organisations in India have instead aligned themselves with and reconstructed the mainstream national identity in favour of authoritarianism and in opposition to democracy and pluralism. Therefore, adding to Roy’s perspective in which the social authority of religion, that is Islam, is successively weakened, the theoretical perspectives of Toft, Philpott, and Shah seemingly suggest another possibility. If a religious actor, even a Muslim minority, develops strong links to the national identity and at the same time makes itself relevant to the actual political and civic debates on constitutional values, and therefore participates in the culturally specific formulations of liberal democracy in society, this will strengthen the political influence of the religious actor – whether Islamic or not.

How does Khan and his movement fare given either of these two, the “optimistic” or “pessimistic” perspectives on religion in the age of globalisation? Roy contends that as far as Islam is concerned, it retreats into a sheltered private sphere in which it becomes largely irrelevant. Even when connected through digital communications on an international scale, the virtual community of believers only turns out to be an imagined, largely powerless network of private, isolated individuals. Toft, Philpott, and Shah instead argue that the political and social

¹⁷ Habermas, “The Secular Liberal State and Religion,” 254.

¹⁸ Toft, Philpott and Shah, *God’s Century*, 46.

influence of religion is strengthened by globalisation and secularisation. The global development of the middle classes, world-wide immigration, and the new communication technologies facilitate the awareness of an international religious community.

9.3.3 A Theoretical Synthesis: Promoting Civic Values

Instead of rather clear support for the perspective of Toft, Philpott, and Shah, it is possible to argue that the results of the analysis of Khan's complex ideology in this study points to a possible theoretical synthesis. By combining Roy's rather "pessimistic" perspective, and Toft, Philpott and Shah's relatively "optimistic" expectations, it modifies both theoretical frameworks. What this theoretical synthesis aims to add to the theoretical discussion is that structural independence between religion and state is not enough. Moreover, it is not enough for a religious actor to participate in the mainstream culture and national identity of the society for it to have a fundamental democratising function. The implications of Roy's deculturation and objectification perspectives point to the fact that the religious actor must also participate in and significantly contribute to, the public and civic debate on fundamental values. The suggested synthesis takes as its starting point the fact that this is made possible through state liberalisation, which relaxes control over communicative freedoms. But the relaxing of controls over communicative freedoms is also made possible through the processes of globalisation and development of communication technologies, as Toft, Philpott, and Shah point out. Thus, it is increasingly possible to both raise international awareness and participate in the debate on the issues that concern all citizens. In this democratic process, a "common bond" may be created through participation in the debate on how to correctly understand and apply the constitution and civic solidarity.¹⁹ Hence, the "pessimistic" perspectives of Roy are not entirely applicable to all cases, but the harmful trends among Muslim and other religious minorities for privatisation, neo-fundamentalism, and political indifference signify that the "optimism" of Toft, Philpott and Shah must be addressed and corrected. Liberal democracy is not achieved and maintained merely through the American-sponsored spread of *democracy as a state system*, i.e. the institutionalisation of a "wall of separation between church and state." The religious actor must also cultivate sensibilities "attuned to mutual care within the community."²⁰ Furthermore, as Asad points out, religious faith as a matter of private belief has little to do with whether the religious actor successfully promotes the democratic ethos amongst a significant

¹⁹ Habermas, "The Secular Liberal State and Religion," 254.

²⁰ Asad, "Thinking about Religion, Belief, and Politics," 56.

number of people. All of this can be clearly seen in the following analysis of Khan's ideology and public claim to authoritatively watch over the authentic Islamic teachings.

Despite his "political status-quo-ism" and his repeated proclamations to stay away from politics, as seen Khan is not without concern for the national debate on fundamental constitutional values or the nature of the Indian state. The whole of Khan's "political theology" in fact reveals strong links to the Indian democratic constitution and thus the proclaimed national identity and political tradition. Khan's ideological and religious values of social harmony, as well as the idea of avoiding conflict involve the successful adjustment to life set by the Indian state and therefore to the values of liberal democracy and free enterprise economic policies. So far, the case of Khan largely supports the perspective of Toft, Philpott, and Shah. Khan's ideology is formatted to be politically relevant in the age of globalisation. It relies on the internet, digital communication technologies, and a global religious community, and it addresses an educated and well-to-do middle class both in India and around the world. However, for the reasons that Khan does not easily fit in to Roy's characterisation of "neo-fundamentalism," i.e. ignorant in-difference to the issues that concerns the general society, it shows that even religious actors in a minority situation may preserve a degree of "social authority" by interacting with mainstream society through culturally relevant modes of knowledge – and thereby also adding to the creation of a common bond among the citizens of the state. For these reasons, Roy's theoretical thinking about the effects of globalisation, the necessity of interaction in wide culturally relevant spheres and the tendencies for individualisation and privatisation, can be seen as indications of how to improve Toft, Philpott and Shah's theory: The religious actor must also consciously cultivate the democratic sensibilities of mutual care and understanding. This is primarily done through sensitivity to an immediate cultural context in which the translation of the religious position makes it understandable and relevant through usage and manipulation of culturally specific meaningful symbols, which requires wide intellectual and literary knowledge. Hence, the opposite of "holy ignorance" and self-contained modes of reasoning are necessary if religious actors are to effectively contribute to the civic debate on shared issues.

This can be seen in Khan's general strategy to avoid conflict, which necessarily also means accommodating the rise of Hindu nationalism and the accompanying anti-Muslim ideology. In this respect as well, Khan addresses an educated middle class with its associated economic and social expectations. Khan's ideology seemingly strives to make possible a Muslim identity and life-style in political unity with Hindus and other Indians, under the double pressures of Hindu nationalism and Muslim communalism. In an equal manner, Khan's ideology consists of a kind

of double-front ideology, suggesting a double-front Muslim identity and mentality. On one hand, he teaches that the Hindu nationalist rhetoric and its global counterpart misses its target. Islam is in essence a religion for non-violence and peace, a religious essence that becomes a reality if all Muslims really act in non-violent and peaceful ways. On the other hand, he teaches a strategy of conflict avoidance and instead trying to achieve accommodation and compromise. It is possible for Muslims to both maintain their cultural and religious autonomy and identity as well as to live peacefully side by side with adherents of other religions within the framework of the Indian democratic constitution and the free market. Hence, I argue that Khan deliberately aims to nurture a democratic ethos among Indian Muslims. Given the background of Indian Muslim politics outlined in Chapter 2, with its polarised options of either communalism or democratic secularism, my best guess is that Khan hopes that the Hindu majority will also participate in the democratic ethos of a liberal, civic polity. What is clear is that Muslims share a joint moral responsibility to unite with other Indians under the political auspices of the democratic state. Consequently, as seen in Chapter 6, Khan succinctly asserts that Muslims must think more of their moral duties as citizens, not of their rights and freedoms to be at odds with the surrounding mainstream society.²¹ According to Khan, in the contemporary times Muslims should support and defend the democratic constitution and the institutions of the free market. Thus, Khan's ideological strategy is a strategy of avoidance, but not the resolution of the age-old conflicts and the ongoing contested issues.

To get a better understanding of Khan's ideological strategy and the proposed identity and mentality for Muslims and for all Indians, his ideology can fruitfully be compared to the most distinct and pre-eminent example of non-violence in Indian political thought – that of Mohandas Gandhi. The structural resemblances are remarkable but perhaps not surprising. On the CPS website, the presentation of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan states that he is “known for his Gandhian views” because he “considers non-violence as the only method to achieve success.”²²

In an explication on *The Social and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi* (2006), the political scientist Bidyut Chakrabarty claims that: “*Ahimsa* was [...] not merely a non-violent political action; it also denoted a well-crafted ideologically meaningful strategy to ensure

²¹ The ideal public behaviour of Muslims is a vital aspect in Khan's presentation of the public side of Islam. Khan's notion that it is religious behaviour for an ideal Muslim to be friendly, tolerant, peaceful, cooperative, and in every manner a respectable and well-thought-of citizen can also be put into historical perspective. Khan may be said to continue and to expand an example of shaping public life by reference to Islamic etiquette (*adab*) set by the learned and holy men of Farangi Mahall in the 1920s, as seen in Chapter 4. Similarly, their example was also an intervention into the then new and emerging, public sphere of politicised religion and identity.

²² <https://www.cpsglobal.org/mwk>. Accessed on 2019-09-20.

conflict accommodation rather than conflict resolution through class struggles.”²³ Similarly, and as previously seen, Khan’s ideology may be analysed as geared towards conflict accommodation instead of conflict resolution, by means of avoiding and ignoring substantial areas of political and social disagreements in contemporary Indian and global society. The individualistic and civil society charter of Khan’s ideology makes the individual solely responsible for his or her “salvation.” Unequal access to education, capital, and Indian and global instances of political discrimination must be accepted. These are the political fields, regarded by Khan as forbidden in Islam.²⁴

The ideological strategy of conflict accommodation instead of conflict resolution in the thought of Gandhi served important functions by imagining and galvanising a nation during the process of building a modern nation-state. The relevance and interaction between religion and wider society in Gandhi’s thought and leadership, based on deep-seated cultural and discursive knowledge such as literature, religion, law, and philosophy is well-known. Similar in structure, if to a lesser degree and legend, Khan’s move into the national limelight occurred during the struggles for and against the *Babri Masjid*, in Ayodhya, 1992. In the wake of the destruction of the mosque, Khan formulated a religious and political position of conflict accommodation: The issue of the destroyed place of worship should be abandoned by the outraged and scared Indian Muslim community. In return, the federal government should use its legislative powers to guarantee the safety of “all” places of worship, when in truth only Muslim sacred sites were in danger. This conciliatory move, of conflict accommodation rather than conflict resolution primarily addressed the nation at a time in which its social fabric and unity was in a state of upheaval. It may be argued that perhaps the well-received common sense value of Khan’s message was the recognised and familiar ideological strategy of conflict accommodation, based on the notion that in the Indian context “Gandhism” remains “one of the major forms of nationalist articulation.”²⁵ Because the object of Khan’s message was the nation as a whole, its formulation of Islam had to be recognisable to the wider society.

Hence, in the situation of Ayodhya in 1992, Khan’s message was relevant because it engaged with the cultural knowledge necessary not only for an individualised, privatised, or in-different

²³ Bidyut Chakrabarty, *The Social and Political Thought of Mahatma Gandhi* (Oxon: Routledge, 2006), 173.

²⁴ It should be noted that Khan himself is even critical of the non-violent nationalist struggles of opposing British colonial rule or any powers that be. By ignoring the “political situation,” the sole focus should have been on learning from the success of the British examples and making the most of economic and religious possibilities. This “political status quo-ism” is regarded as eventually more fruitful than ousting political power. In a light-hearted moment during an interview, Khan juxtaposes the 1942 independence movement campaign slogan of “Quit India!,” and the 2014 BJP federal government invitations to global capital investments: “Make [in] India!”

²⁵ Chakrabarty, *The Social and Political Thought*, 115.

type of religion but for a religious message to be relevant to the wider society. Khan's personal qualities as a religious leader may also be considered in this light. His vegetarianism and very appearance display a profound link to mainstream Indian culture and marks his social authority when speaking for and of the life of a fundamentally diverse and plural society. In general, Khan's ideology may be analysed as being formulated to accommodate conflict within the continuing and progressing life of a composite Indian nation, politically united through mutual adherence to its constitution. In all this, Khan resembles Gandhi, but his ideology starts from the contemporary minority Muslim position and not Gandhi's situation of imagining and fashioning a diverse Indian nation before the independence and partition.

In conclusion, the theoretical synthesis proposed in this discussion involves adapting the optimistic perspective of Toft, Philpot, and Shah, which if un-modified would propose that Khan's ideological legacy and religious movement the CPS, will likely have a positive influence on the secular, constitutional democracy, religious pluralism and civil peace, because of the protected, private, and virtual space it has come to occupy through democratisation and globalisation. However, the synthesis also considers the perspective of Roy, with his tenets of secularisation and an "objectification" of Islam, in which the formulation of Islam becomes a set of privatised values and neo-fundamentalism thrives as a response to the diminished social authority of religion. Roy's framework seems to postulate that any significant contribution of a religious discourse to a "relatively consensual equilibrium" is based on the cultural engagement and social authority of religion, which becomes severed by the general secularisation, virtualisation, and de-culturation of Islam.

The theoretical synthesis can also be formulated as a kind of dilemma because the two main theoretical perspectives together seemingly formulate a predicament for any individualistic religious message adjusted to the formats of digital media and structural globalisation. Crucially, how the state reacts to and recognises or denies public expressions of religion are at least as important as the strictly religious debate on theology and dogma.²⁶ The actual influence and impact of Khan's thought might therefore be a function of how Khan and the CPS will handle this dilemma and continually manage the changed parameters for religion set by the forces of globalisation, as well as the forces of internal conflict in India. More specifically, Khan and the CPS will be widely relevant to the degree that they successfully promote a common civic bond by engaging in the debate on the meaning and application of the

²⁶ Roy, *Holy Ignorance*, 190–191.

constitutional values and thereby encourage democratic sensibilities among a substantial number of people.²⁷

²⁷ This dilemma may also be formulated as a research question that could be adapted to other similar studies; see the following Chapter 10.

Discussion

10.1 An ‘*Ālim* in the World: Summarising the Thought of Khan

10.1.1 Political and Religious

The fundamental argument in this study is that Khan’s ideological and religious positions – in his presentation of an authentic and timeless Islam – are not shaped in a vacuum. Khan’s ideology is instead shaped by two interrelated contexts, on one hand, the context of ideological and religious debate on the meaning and role of Islam on a global scale and in India, and on the other hand, the conflictual context of social and political issues and actors, primarily in India. Hence, the investigative method of this study has been to place and interpret Khan’s texts in the context of such debates and issues.

By way of introduction, the ideological and religious debate, as seen, involves such pressing issues as the need for an exclusive Islamic state, the partition of India, the question of the legitimate use of violence as a political strategy for Muslims, and the relationship of Muslims to the political order. Ideological and religious aspects also involves questions such as the view on jihad, the use of the Sufi lexicon, proselytisation, and the concept of justice. I will return to the interrelatedness of the ideological and religious debates and the actual historical contexts in the theoretical conclusions of this chapter. The following aims to lay bare these interrelated aspects by summarising the findings of this study.

10.1.2 Ideological and Religious Debate: Social and Political Context

With regard to the pressing political issues, this study have demonstrated that Khan systematically opposes the necessity of an Islamic state or a Muslim polity – in India as well as the world. By employing analogies from the “sacred history” and lexicon of Islam, Khan instead supports a state that is constitutionally based on pluralism and secularism. Moreover, he maintains that only an established state recognised by the UN may legitimately wield arms. Hence, the monopoly of the lawful use of force or violence by an internationally recognised, and therefore legitimate state – a feature of juridical, political and social theory and practice

since the sixteenth century – is seen as upheld by Islam.¹ In connection with Khan's emphasis on individual freedom as a principle of Islam and the view of personal morality as a matter between the Creator God and the individual person, his political formulation of Islam comes close to mainstream liberal political thought. Through his many references to international conventions and the policies of the UN, Khan may be said to comply with the type of political liberalism that is expressed in the basic ideas of the International Community.²

In relation to Muslim separatism and the ideas of an Islamic state, Khan systematically argues against this kind or in fact, any kind, of Muslim or Islamic politics. Muslim politics is presented by Khan solely as matters of state power and violence, while his own position is formulated as "status quo-ism." This position means that widely defined, political violence or activism may never be considered sanctioned in moral or religious terms on the authority of Islam. Even demonstrations and street activism are considered to stir up tensions and conflict and must therefore be avoided. Political and social "status quo-ism" in Khan's ideology may be analysed with reference to what Olivier Roy termed the "radical pessimism" – associated with adolescent left-wing radicalism since the 1960s and increasingly, Muslim radicalism. Khan creates a political alternative and systematic religious denunciation of Muslim radical politics. However, he refrains from calling his position a type of political position. This study has analysed this feature of Khan's ideology as an attempt to conceptually defend Islam from its association with communalistic and radical politics, Pakistan as a Muslim or Islamic nation state, terrorism and warfare, mainly in the political discourses of the Hindu Right, supported by the international rhetoric of the "war on terror" post-2001.

However, in light of the class issues and the radical political culture present in Muslim communalist thought and practise in India, it would be easy to interpret Khan's political and social "status quo-ism" as a type of right-wing conservatism. This conclusion though, is hasty and misleading. Instead, as shown in this study, Khan persistently aim to accommodate conflict and maintain social harmony.³ This may be understood as associated with a Gandhian type of formulation of Indian nationalism, which remains as a powerful form of ideological nationalism in Indian society. Moreover, as seen Khan explicitly condones the method of petitioning the

¹ The French philosopher Jean Bodin (d. 1596), the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes (d. 1679), and Max Weber, are all associated with developing this feature of modern law and politics.

² For the concept of "political liberalism," as distinct from "economic" and "comprehensive" liberalism respectively, see John Rawls, *Political Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), or Amartya Sen, *The Idea of Justice* (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009). For the subsequent view of an international order based on the principles of political liberalism, see John Rawls, *The Law of Peoples* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

³ In Europe, class-harmonic positions are common in social conservatism or catholic social doctrine and sometimes in social liberalism or reformist socialism.

legal government of late nineteenth century British reformist socialism and the Fabian Society. As also pointed out in this study, these ideas are also associated with the Congress Party leadership during the independence struggle, especially the political thought of Jawaharlal Nehru. Khan's presentation of an authentic and timeless Islam is thus not alien to certain prominent ideological currents and formulations of mid-twentieth century Congress Party policies. Status quo-ism aims at national harmony and an integration of Islam and Muslims in the formulation of the Indian nation.

Even Khan's adaption to market-liberal economic policies may be analysed in light of this general ideological pattern. The liberalisation and privatisation of the Indian economy was successfully incorporated into an integral aspect of the national culture and identity by the Hindu Right. Khan adapts to the prevalence of this ideological situation and thereby attempts to maintain the national and social bonds between the Hindu and Muslim communities. Importantly, in this manner Muslims as a collective and Islam in particular are thereby inscribed as an integral part of the national life and not as an allegedly "backward" force outside the grain of the social mainstream and economic growth.

The accommodation of liberal economic policies in Khan's ideology has a further aspect. As seen, global liberalisation and marketisation have also created a global market for Muslim devotional literature, which Khan, the CPS, and Goodword Books certainly are part of. Digital communications and new media are benefitting and supporting Khan's ambitions of "disseminating" the teachings of Islam. The liberalised market economy is thus not an enemy but an ally in his larger project. While certainly taking advantage of these developments, and by successfully adjusting to the conditions set by globalisation, Khan's commitment to liberal economic policies can be analysed not as a basic tenet but as a means, and thus a subordinated part of his wider ideological project. Accommodating conflict and maintaining social harmony by upholding the status quo ideally makes Muslims and Islam integral and not an oppositional part – in India as well as the globalised world – may therefore be regarded as the main tenet in Khan's ideology and in his formulation of Islam, non-violence, and peace

Furthermore, Khan's formulation of a timeless and authentic Islam is part of and framed by a historical and ongoing debate on the meaning of Islam, in both India and the world at large. His presentation of jihad as a personal struggle for the purification of the self is an important feature of his writings. This has been interpreted in this study as being associated with both themes and vocabularies of the historically-developed lexicon of Sufi Islam. However, the relationship to Sufi Islam is not explicit in the writings and statements of Khan. Based on a discussion of contemporary Sufi Islam by Nile Green, examined in Chapter 2, this study has argued that

Khan's relative ambiguity may be a cautious attitude towards the prevalence of the anti-Sufi views, which are a common feature of modern Islam reform movements and writings. The interpretation of a positive but not explicit, relationship between Khan and Sufi Islam is strengthened by his statements regarding Sufi Islamic culture in Kashmir, which as seen in Chapter 7, Khan perceives as a more authentic expression of Islam than violent separatism or the political ideas of a Muslim or an Islamic state. Hence, the aim to reform and adapt and not wholly discard Sufi Islam, a predominant characteristic of Indian mainstream Sunni orientations since the eighteenth century, is a characteristic also shared by Khan. This tacit accommodation of Sufi Islam in Indian Islam in general, and in the case of Khan in particular, must be contrasted against the explicit rejection of Sufism in several other modern Islamic reform movements around the world.

Another important aspect of Khan's formulation of jihad is his presentation of a struggle in proselytisation. Missionary work by inviting to Islam or *da'wa*, is one of the most recurrent topics in Khan's writings. It is presented as a social process of reciprocal interaction based on kindness, respect, and respectability. The prospects of *da'wa* are centrally placed in Khan's deep-seated scepticism towards any political and social conflict, which as seen previously should be avoided at all costs – in what he refers to as status quo-ism. By placing Khan's formulations of *da'wa* in context, it may be compared to the Deobandi orientation and its emphasis on the popularisation of Islamic teachings since the nineteenth century. The Deobandi-affiliated popular movement Tablīghī Djamā'at, the roots of which stretch back to the religious movements for conversion and re-conversion of the 1920s, is most famously associated with this idea of striving in missionary work. While extending the social role of religious teacher and missionary beyond the class of the learned, its members are encouraged to go on preaching tours. As a consequence of their proselytisation efforts, this movement is perhaps the single largest contemporary Muslim movement in the world. As seen in Chapters 5 and 6, Khan was briefly affiliated to the Tablīghī Djamā'at in the late 1960s and just like them, he sees proselytisation as a “non-political” and social method. What distinguishes Khan is that he maintains that conversion is an intellectual transformation that needs to be firmly based on rational arguments.

However, as this study has pointed out, the nature of religious identity is inherently political in the context of state and society in South Asia. *Da'wa* and conversion must therefore be regarded in its political and ideological context. During certain historical occurrences, religious identity has become exceptionally politically charged, which is demonstrated in the political instability of the 1940s leading up to the partition of India. In structural terms, religious identity

is involved in the way citizens relate politically to the state, as in the respective cases of an ideal pluralist and secular India and an ideal Muslim Pakistan. Therefore, proselytisation as advocated and practiced by Khan – and the legislation regulating it – should not be analysed as something inherently non-political but as a political *and* religious activity that is adjusted to the constitutional framework of the Indian liberal democratic state. In general therefore, Khan’s formulations of Islam, non-violence, and peace are interventions in an ongoing thoroughly contextual debate on the meaning of Islam and its associated lexicon, history, and social role.

More specifically, this study has attempted to show that Khan’s ideology can be fruitfully analysed as a continuation and development of late nineteenth century “Modernist” formulations of Islam in India. The connections and parallels to the writings of Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Moulavi Chiragh Ali, as the intellectual foundations of the Aligarh school of Islamic Modernism are manifold and palpable in Khan’s thought. One is the importance of *nature* as a centrally positioned concept and the related topic of adapting Islam to rational and empirical *science*. Another is the view of *accommodation* of the prevailing political and social order as it is set up and upheld by the established *political rule* that upholds freedom of religion. A third is the important point of strengthening the Muslim community through *modern education*. And finally, permeating Khan’s works are the ideological and religious topics of *non-violence* and *peace*, particularly prominent and systematised in the writings of Chiragh Ali. The importance of these ideas and ways of thinking can be further compared to the ideology of the prominent Calcutta jurist and modernist, Ameer Ali in his *The Spirit of Islam* (first edition 1891). As shown above, the basic ideas in Khan’s formulations of an authentic and timeless Islam are close to the central tenets in Ali’s earlier ideology. It has been shown that Ali positioned Islam as the fount of an egalitarian and gender-accommodating civilisation, as well as of modern liberalism and peaceful pragmatism. Thereby, similar to Khan in the contemporary era, Ali – in a context of colonialism and orientalist modes of writing about Islam and Muslims – defended Islam from the contemporaneous, widespread criticism as being a religion prone to violence and the degradation of women.

10.1.4 An Ālim in the World

To conclude the summary of the findings of this study, several distinctive characteristics of Khan and his ideology will be highlighted in relation to the current and global debate on non-violence and peace in Islam. First, Khan’s age and permanency as a writer and debater of Islam, non-violence, and peace, and his wide-ranging production and type of work, makes his ideology

indispensable to understanding the central issues and lines of conflict of this grand and far-reaching debate. At the same time, the issues and lines of conflict of this debate are framing the interventions and are consequently formative for the development of Khan's positions.

Second, albeit not explicit in Khan's writings and as already noted, Khan's type of ideology should be related to the pioneering Indian Modernist formulations of Islam. Through this association, Khan may be said to be connected to an already established and time-honoured way of presenting Islam in the context of modern Islamic reform. Thereby, Khan is possibly the foremost contemporary propagator and creator of Indian modernist Islamic thought. This connection between Khan and a recognised line of Indian Muslim writers reaching back over a century, makes him part of a lasting intellectual legacy despite his approach and style as an individual writer, apparently without affiliation to any religious law school or tradition of thought. This also differentiates Khan from other contemporary writers on Islam, non-violence, and peace mentioned in this study, who at present most often write in a modern Western university context of formulating and constructing Islam. One notable exception is the Sudanese religious thinker Mahmoud Mohamed Taha with his pioneering ideas of *The Second Message of Islam* (1967) and other works. However, the case of Taha, as a modern educated writer and trained as a civil engineer only serves to illustrate that Khan, as an 'ālim trained in a madrasa and certainly not in a modern university, is quite outstanding in terms of training and affiliation among the global writers on Islam, non-violence, and peace.

Third, Khan is also outstanding and unique in another respect. He shares the characteristics with Taha of being an influential thinker, with the explicit intention and goal of reforming Islam, reaching out to people and changing the outlook of Muslims around the world. This arguably distinguishes him from contemporary academic writers in the intellectual disciplinary traditions of modern universities. In his incisive *Islam and the Tyranny of Authenticity*, Aaron W. Hughes launches a critique of this academic type of writer and its representatives. Hughes suggests that this group of Muslim theologians in secular universities, making up a field he refers to as "Islamic Religious Studies," primarily writes only for each other.⁴ This picture is quite close to Roy's formulation of the "liberal" exegetist of Islam who mainly wishes to expound his or her academic learning and therefore, is largely socially insignificant because of a lack of public readership. Khan is thus exceptional in terms of vocation and discursive setting, as well as his attempted and actual outreach. Through lasting engagement and address of Indian society in a variety of manners, including media appearances and newspaper editorials, along

⁴ Aaron W. Hughes, *Islam and the Tyranny of Authenticity* (Sheffield: Equinox, 2015), 125.

with current attempts to reach a conceivably young audience through social media platforms, Khan is clearly a religious thinker, leader, and teacher intent on a widespread ideological and religious impact. He is certainly not an academic professor in a secular university using the scholarly and seemingly objective language of “Islamic Religious Studies” to construct a presentation of an authentic and timeless non-violent Islam.

Fourth, among the writers on Islam, non-violence, and peace mentioned in this study, Khan is also exceptional regarding a central substantial question, how to approach justice as an ideal in Islam. Khan’s position is that justice can only be attained as a long-term effect of peaceable actions resulting in conflict de-escalation. He often uses the example of the *Hudaybiyya* treaty of Muhammad in 628 in his general argument, as well as in specific situations. Following this example, Khan holds that making peace treaties, peace for the sake of peace is prioritised to more immediate claims for justice in Islam. Only when peace is established may other important goals and struggles in Islam begin, for proselytisation, education, prosperity, or justice. In his own view, only these “non-political” fields are lawful and in accordance with the principles of Islam. As we saw in the works of other contemporary writers, non-violent political action motivated by Islam may instead be aimed at creating equality and justice. In contrast, Khan’s ideology is interpreted in this study as aimed at upholding social harmony and in resemblance to the political and social ideology of Gandhi – of accommodating conflict instead of resolving it.

Fifth, the lingering issues of the ideological and religious debates can be seen most clearly when Khan emphasises pluralistic social relations between various elements of Indian society, in particular the maintenance and cooperation between the Hindu majority and the Muslim minority communities. As repeatedly seen above, Khan decries the Muslim separatism and nationalism as the cause of the partition of India and the creation of Pakistan. This position is close to the pro-Indian ideology of the *Djāmi‘at al-‘Ulamā-yi Hind*, an organisation with which Khan was affiliated during the 1970s. The commitment of this organisation to composite nationalism and Islam has been shaped by their most influential leader, the Deobandi-educated Husain Aḥmad Madanī. Madanī’s formulation in 1938 of a united or composite nationalism was also shaped by the juristic logic of the *Ḥanafī* school of law as asserted by the Deobandi orientation. Madanī claimed that Muslims should remain in the lands that had once been considered a socio-political reality of Islam (*dār al-Islām*) as a result of the benefits of focussing on proselytisation and social approval for Muslims and Islam. Similar to this *Ḥanafī* juristic logic, Khan sees the conversion to Islam of the Mongol invaders of Baghdad in the thirteenth century as a successful example of his own formulation of Islam as status quo-ism, as well as

an example of the necessity and “power” of contemporary *da‘wa* – instead of a separate Muslim polity. As was highlighted in Chapter 9, this is one example of the significance of what Zaman points to regarding the political activism of the contemporary ‘*ulamā*’, their claim to “authoritatively represent an ‘authentic’ Islamic tradition in its richness, depth, and continuity that may have become the most significant basis of their new prominence in the public sphere.”⁵

Sixth, another example that demonstrates the interrelatedness of the ideological and religious debates on contextual political and social issues, is the case of Maulana Kalam Azad and his leadership within the Congress Party. Dissimilar in its attitudes towards British colonial rule, Khan’s ideology nevertheless shows similarities to that of Azad, in particular with regard to the Muslim community and the question of composite nationalism in the Indian state following the partition. As a writer, Azad formulated a reform programme of Islam after launching his own magazine in the early twentieth century. During the independence struggles, Azad formulated Islam as committed to Gandhian non-violence as a political method, thereby popularising the notion of the compatibility of non-violence and Islam. As an Indian nationalist politician, Azad sought to realise the ideological programme of composite nationalism through the Congress Party and thereby counter the influence of the Two Nation Theory associated with the Muslim Pakistan movement. However, following partition, the meaning of composite nationalism changed and the widespread notion of Muslims as traitors who caused the partition, which was at the centre of the Hindu mobilisation became a main strain for India’s Muslims. Comparable to Azad’s position, Khan dissociates his presentation of authentic Islam from notions of Muslim separatism, but Khan even presents true Islam as non-political in the maintenance of social harmony. This ideological *and* religious position creates a solid platform in attempts to ideologically counteract the Hindu Nationalist mobilisation against Islam and the Indian Muslim minority.

These examples show how Khan’s ideology is not shaped in a time-less vacuum. His ideological and religious themes and positions are interrelated and deeply involved in the social, cultural, political, and religious context of issues and debates regarding the meaning of Islam in Indian society. The very nature of these continuing debates, as well as the content and characteristics of Khan’s ideology in itself reveals the impossibility of singling out an independent sphere of religion, as opposed to a political sphere despite the fact that Khan himself claims such a “non-political” stance as a deep, inherent, logical feature of Islam as a religion and consequently the only righteous and lawful road for Muslims to follow.

⁵ Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam*, 180.

10.2 Globalisation and Islam: Summarising the Theoretical Discussion

The concept of the close interrelation of historical factors and the ideological and religious debates were stated at the outset of study by the theoretical works informing this study. Hence, with the goal of contextualising Khan's thought, this study have named and emphasised an ideological and religious debate. However, it is not the intention that the use of these categories reiterate or maintain a firm boundary between something like the secular and the religious or even more questionable, a profane and a sacred sphere. Quite the opposite, the intention was to show the reader the interdependence of publicly-debated political and social issues and the possible ideological *and* religious positions within the debates. Correspondingly, by way of its contextualising framework, the findings of this empirical study cast doubt on a firm conceptualised boundary between politics and religion as separate spheres of thought and action.

Roy's "transversal" methodology seeks to highlight structural changes inherent in globalisation causing secularisation and the ensuing formatting of religious ideas and practices. Amongst a number of important factors, Roy primarily discusses the forces of globalisation accelerating the rise of privatised neo-fundamentalism, Protestantism as a type of structural religious format, and the structural similarities between different forms of radicalism, whether based on Marxism or Islam. Moreover, Toft, Philpott, and Shah's theoretical framework is built around the two main factors, "political theology" and "the independence of religious authority and political authority." This certainly demonstrates the precariousness of the very concepts of politics and religion, at least in terms of a meaningful polarity. However, the conceptual and theoretical fluidity imbued in their theoretical framework is essentially used by them in a pragmatic and prescriptive argument. In their view, secularisation, the global growth of an educated modern middle class, and globalisation, immigration, and communication have actually strengthened the independent social power of religion, and they maintain there has emerged: "a quantum leap in religion's capacity for political influence."⁶ Hence, the presence of religious actors must be acknowledged, at least by American policy-makers. But in terms of conceptual and theoretical (un-)clarity, their work *God's Century* can be read in two different ways. Either, the two main factors, *political theology* and *the independence of religion and state*, can be interpreted as independent, or they can be interpreted as interdependent. The

⁶ Toft, Philpott and Shah, *God's Century*, 209.

authors remain vague on this point by suggesting that “political theology and the independence of religious and political authority will evolve and even shape one another in complex ways.” And they add, “It is very difficult to generalize about these pathways.”⁷

As seen in Chapter 3, the works of Roy and Toft, Philpott, and Shah were the main pillars of the theoretical starting points for this study. The understanding and analysis of Khan’s ideology has significantly been informed by both these perspectives. They respectively signal an interdependence and intertwining of politics and religion in two different ways. This study has employed Roy’s abstract and general but nevertheless clearly “transversal” sociological multi-factor approach to study contemporary Islam, which claims that digital communications and state legislation formats religion into a totally private sphere. Pessimistically, he asserts that individualisation and virtualisation create closed communities in which self-contained modes of reasoning create indifference to wider society and the policies of the state. Hence, the secularising effects of globalisation formats religion into “neo-fundamentalism,” which thrives under these conditions.

But, the study has also benefitted from the more optimistic views suggested by Toft, Philpott, and Shah regarding the possibility of political theology and the independence of religion and state as shapers of one another, which they maintain that on the whole benefit liberty and democracy. Therefore, the ideological content of Khan’s texts should be regarded as partially shaped by the secularism of the Indian state. The independence of religious authority and political authority is one of his most prominent tenets.

The two perspectives of the theoretical framework of this study suggest a dilemma: how will religion be able to retain a degree of social authority, to contribute to democracy and peace in the situation in which globalisation and pluralism make every religious perspective into a minority issue amongst others and relevant only to believers in private?⁸ This dilemma was formulated as an outcome of a theoretical synthesis proposed by this study on the largely “pessimistic” views of Roy and the more “optimistic” predictions of Toft, Philpott, and Shah. The synthesis asserts that Khan and the CPS and perhaps even other religious actors, must not only engage with the new communication technologies or maintain links to mainstream society and culture. Nor is structural separation between religion and state or the institutionalisation of procedural democracy as a state system enough for religion to have a positive contribution to democracy and peaceful relations. As religious actors, Khan and the CPS must also find ways to translate their religious positions in the public debate on general issues that concern all

⁷ Toft, Philpott and Shah, *God’s Century*, 45.

⁸ See Chapters 3 and 9.

citizens. It is maintained that through this contribution, it is possible for religious actors to contribute to civic values, democracy, and peaceful social bonds amongst the members of society.

But Khan faces an even more serious dilemma – the Hindu nationalist mobilisation against Islam and Muslims that is emboldened by the international discourse on the “war on terror.” Hindu nationalism puts pressure on the delicate secular and democratic characteristics of the Indian state and on secularism as a political and social value as such. It may be said that Khan’s interventions in the debate are partly a reaction to this threat to the secular nature of the Indian state, which has the potential to lower the degree of independence of religious and political authority by creating a scenario of conflictual integration for Islam.⁹ Hence, Khan’s ideology as a kind of political theology, seeks to practically influence the nature of the state, in particular by safeguarding the independence of religious and political authority. Moreover, Khan seeks to influence public opinion regarding Islam. To Muslims, Khan warns against Muslim anti-secularism activism and policies, which he refers to as “the political interpretation of Islam.” To non-Muslims, Khan wishes to influence public opinion by making a distinction between cultural and communal Muslim violence and authentic Islam with its allegedly true message of non-violence and peace. Therefore, one main thread in Khan’s texts is the recurrent juxtaposition of Muslim separatism and violent political activism on one hand and his timeless image of the true and authentic, peaceable nature of Islam on the other. In the context of contemporary India, “political status quo-ism” essentially means defending the secular and pluralist state. Moreover, this political and ideological value is presented by Khan as a value in Islam. Regardless of his audience, as a religious leader and individual debater, Khan uses the religious language of Islam to substantiate his positions. In its essential message, Islam is not a threat as such against the democratic state and the society. Therefore, a protected and independent place for Islam in India should be maintained, which is an argument for a secular and pluralist state. This position is argued from his presentation of authentic Islam and from his claim to authoritatively represent the Islamic teachings in the public debate.

As seen above, the scholarly act of categorising Khan’s ideology is based on both the conceptual assumption and the interpretative-empirical result that politics and religion are inseparable in the final analysis. The religio-political positions apparent in Khan’s ideology seem to corroborate Toft, Philpott and Shah’s thesis that modernisation creates both the impetus and the ideological conditions for the involvement of religion with politics, including support

⁹ Hinduism would rather be largely consensually integrated. See Toft, Philpott and Shah, *God’s Century*, 45

for the mutual independence of religious and political authority. However, their reluctance to theorise the complex pathways through which political theology and the independence of religious and political authority shape one another, seem un-differentiated. One possible way out of this lack of explanatory power in their theory could be to break down “political theology” – as a general theoretical category – into smaller and differentiated domains on the basis of empirical studies such as this one focussed on ideological content. Starting in the following section, this study aims to begin this work by constructing a certain sub-category of political theology: the theoretical domain of the politics of Islam, non-violence, and peace. The intention is that the interrelatedness of politics and religion in this subcategory, as laid bare above regarding Khan’s ideology, should be possible to translate to further studies.

Before starting this theoretical work, I will conclude the theoretical discussion here by pointing to the limitations for this study, of Roy’s contentions that the relevance of religion is weakened when its concerns are no longer shared in a society. First, this study could not substantiate Roy’s contention that religion necessarily becomes a totally private and virtual affair with the processes of globalisation. Khan’s ideology clearly plays a public role and it engages a truly political phenomenon, i.e. the threat to liberal-democratic secularism posed by the Hindu Nationalist parties and organisations. It is also involved in a truly political paradoxical dialectic. As has been seen, the Hindu Nationalist ideology and rhetoric label Islam and Muslims as a threat to the secularist state because of their alleged inherent political and violent nature. Khan contests these allegations by highlighting non-violence and peace as the essence of Islam and by formulating Islam as non-political and indeed, he develops the notion of “political status quo-ism.” On the surface, this ideological stance appears similar to Roy’s theoretical assumption that the position of neo-fundamentalism is the separation from the surrounding culture, to share the views only with others in the faith. However, Khan is intensively involved in the cultural, political, and social developments of his society. He only balances this engagement so as not to appear overtly political and therefore, yet another external Muslim threat to the Hindu nation of India. After all, his basic tenet is to maintain positive relations with one’s neighbour and to love one’s enemy. Therefore, the claim of this study is that Khan’s formulation of Islam *has not developed separately at all* from the particular political and social context and situation.

Second, this study partly challenges Roy’s theoretical postulation that with globalisation, the object of a Muslim presentation of Islam becomes the virtual association or imagined global *umma*, consisting only of the individuals attracted to a particular message. Roy’s asserted prediction that individualisation and privatisation lead to a lack of relevance of Islam for the

culture in specific societies and even to unconcerned, self-contained modes of reasoning, seems uncertain from the perspective of the findings of this study. Instead, as seen in Chapters 5 and 6, Khan aims to publicly defend his position by means of dialogue and rational argument with his ideological adversaries in a socially relevant and ongoing debate.

Therefore, the result of this case study on Khan's ideology in India, indicates that empirical investigations into other thinkers from other parts of the world are necessary to either verify, refute, or modify Roy's theses, which given this seem rather abstract in relation to the possible variations of empirical reality. Since this study focussed on analysing the ideological and religious content of Khan's ideology in relation to its context and did not seek to address the level of political and social impact, at least two main questions raised by the theoretical framework remain unanswered.¹⁰ Firstly, to what degree are the formulations of Khan's values relevant only to the individual and the imagined, entirely private virtual religious community? In less theoretically-charged terms, the second pair of similar questions are: What kind of impact does his thinking actually have? Do Khan and the CPS significantly contribute to democracy and peaceful relations in India and beyond?

Therefore, in conclusion this study instead finds supports for Toft, Philpott, and Shah's thesis that globalisation creates conditions in which the involvement of religion with politics is strengthened, including Khan's position for a pluralist, mutual, and consensual independence from the state. But as the proposed theoretical synthesis in Chapter 9 asserts, Roy's perspectives on ideological in-difference and neo-fundamentalism demonstrates that religious actors must retain a degree of social authority to contribute to the civic debate on shared issues. Furthermore, as suggested above, their unsatisfactorily wide and general category of political theology could be developed by dividing it into several, more narrowly defined theoretical domains. The purpose would be the generation of more precise hypotheses on the complex interplay of different domains of political theology and the degree of independence between religious and political authority. Considering their own concepts, as was shown, Toft, Philpott, and Shah point to the difficulties in generalising about these mutual influences. Based on the findings of this study, the following section suggests a more precise and narrowly defined theoretical domain, as one potential sub-category of political theology: the politics of Islam, non-violence, and peace. The creation of this sub-category will hypothetically hold up the body of Khan's ideology as a representative case, which may perhaps be translated to investigations of other cases.

¹⁰ These especially concern Roy's theoretical assumptions of privatisation and individualisation.

10.3 A Proposed Theoretical Contribution

10.3.1 Representativity, Theorising, and the Abductive Approach

The attempt to create a subcategory of political theology is stimulated by a general methodological and theoretical discussion by Alvesson and Sköldberg. Postulated as a general rule for validating an interpretation of any empirical material, a narrower category is preferred to a wider one.¹¹ As mentioned in Chapter 3, Toft, Philpott, and Shah declined to hypothesise how their wide category of political theology in general shapes and is shaped by the independence of religious and political authority. Because their theory unsuccessfully explains the relationship between what they set up as their two main factors, the following aims to develop their general category of political theology by proposing that it may be deconstructed to smaller, more precise and consequently different, theoretical domains. A theoretical domain is defined here as the aggregate of empirical observables to which the theory can at most be applicable.¹² In principle, many subcategories of political theology may be proposed regarding different kinds of political theology in different parts of the world, based on other empirical and analytical studies. This study proposes the theoretical domain of the politics of Islam, non-violence, and peace as a sub-category of political theology. Before suggesting the characteristics of this proposed theoretical domain, I will provide support for the attempt by discussing the concept of generalisation.

As a case study, the findings of this study can only be used to hypothesise about other similar cases. The case of Khan's ideology reasonably contains some exceptional or specific characteristics, not to be found in the works of other writers. However, the abduction approach of this study, generally defined, aims to find the deep structures of ideological content behind the surface of directly observable manifest formulations. The case of Khan's ideology may thus be assumed to be representative of a larger category of thinkers who share the same deep structure.

As this study has argued, the general context of globalisation creates specific contextual and ideational conditions for contemporary Islamic thought. These conditions frame all Islamic thought and patterns both problem-formulations and possible positions and hence install certain deep thematic and discursive structures. In Khan's ideology these were: (1) liberalism and the notion of the secular state (as it is institutionalised in India); (2) reformist socialism (as of the mid-twentieth century Congress Party and British Fabian socialism); (3) an unmarked Sufism

¹¹ Alvesson and Sköldberg, *Tolkning och reflektion*, 209.

¹² Alvesson and Sköldberg, *Tolkning och reflektion*, 53.

concerning religion as a personal matter; (4) and the legacy of Islamic modernism (Indian or otherwise). These four structural characteristics may in turn be hypothesised as the base for a suggested sub-category of political theology, the narrower and more precisely defined theoretical domain of the politics of Islam, non-violence, and peace.

Thus, the abductive hypothesis is that should also be possible to find this fourfold ideological structure, behind the surface in other directly observable cases belonging to the same *domain*, i.e., other contemporary Muslim thinkers or movements arguing for Islam, non-violence, and peace. Simply put, instead of attempting to generalise the findings of this study, I propose a discussion of the representativity of Khan as an outstanding example of a pattern that is hardly directly observable. Therefore, the aim is to contribute to the theoretical and scholarly discussions by proposing a theoretical domain that may be translated to and used in other empirical studies of writers or movements representing Islam, non-violence, and peace. The possible fruitfulness of the theoretical contribution may therefore only be demonstrated by further studies, whether case-wise or comparative studies.

10.3.2 The Proposed Theoretical Domain of the Politics of Islam, Non-Violence, and Peace

On the basis of the abduction approach, setting up a subcategory of political theology as a more precise and narrowly defined theoretical domain was attempted based on the empirical analysis of this study, together with the secondary literature on Khan, other studies on Islamic religio-political thought, Muslim political positions, and theoretical perspectives on Islam and globalisation, as described in Chapters 2, 3, and 8.

Four wide and general thematic and discursive structures of thought were said to be present in Khan's texts – liberalism, reformist socialism, Sufism, and Islamic Modernism. These four were theoretically postulated as shaping the basic structure of the theoretical domain of the politics of Islam, non-violence, and peace, as basic categories of thought and ideological content. It is assumed that this pattern can be translated to other empirical studies in the same domain. However, it is also assumed that the observable surface level cases will be expressed as interventions in debate situations related to specific political and social contexts. The case of Khan reveals that his ideology, however specific and outstanding is influenced by or structured by, these four more or less abstract thematic and discursive structures. First and second, it is primarily the type of democratic liberalism and reformist socialism associated with the Indian constitution and certain leaders of the Congress Party that shaped some of Khan's arguments

and positions, alongside the political liberalism that is expressed in the basic ideas of the International Community. Third, his position in the debate on Sufi Islam is shaped by factors such as what purifying the self means in a context of discursive and actual communalism. The peaceable Sufi Islam and Sufi saints of authentic Kashmir national culture are seen as more authentic expressions of true Islam than contemporary violent Muslim separatism. Fourth, Khan's texts were analysed as a development of the ideological content of writings by core Indian Islamic Modernists.

Support for the use of these four thematic and discursive structures in the construction of the domain of the politics of Islam, non-violence, and peace, may also be found by comparing Khan to other similar cases mentioned in this study.

With regard to the liberal-democratic state, several contemporary writers mentioned in Chapter 8 may be said to uphold certain aspects of liberal political thought. As seen, Farid Esack presents pluralism not only as an ideological value in the struggle against the authoritarian apartheid state, it is also seen as a value inherent in Islam. Similarly, Abdulaziz Sachedina sees the Islamic roots of democratic pluralism as the historical basis for his position of "interreligious relations in Islam." Earlier Muslim jurists have neglected democratic pluralism as an authentic and timeless value of Islam in favour of religious exclusivism. Consistently, universalism and human equality are formulated as inherent in Islam and compulsory in an emerging globalised world society of international relations. Chaiwat Satha-Anand shares with Khan the idea that Islam cannot tolerate modern warfare because a distinction between fighters and civilians cannot be made. Both writers see their positions as an expression of an authentic and timeless Islam. However, at a structural level this is also part of the ideological values of the UN and the International Community, in particular the definitions of legitimate warfare and the debates on what it means to shelter civilians from undue harm.

Second, with regard to reformist socialism, the debate positions on what justice involved included the notions that a timeless Islam means solidarity with the poor. Satha-Anand sees in jihad an Islamic constant struggle against injustice through non-violent means. Based on the Exodus story, Esack presents Islamic solidarity with all oppressed and exploited people. Sachedina's understanding of jihad as a change from within, from self-centredness to a position of human equality and equal value, might perhaps be seen in this light. Mahmoud Mohamed Taha suggests that the purported Islamic values of power-sharing and solidarity can finally be realised in the modern era through democracy and socialism. Khan also recommended a strand of socialist thought, the reformist socialism of the British Fabian Society. By petitioning the legitimate government, social grievances may be addressed without Muslims appearing as

causing trouble and making political demands outside the established parliamentary system of governance.

Third, with regard to Sufi Islam, the investigation revealed an unspoken but nevertheless present and reformed Sufism. Sachedina's understanding of jihad as a change within the individual self so as to let go of self-centredness is obviously comparable to the Sufi Islamic lexicon of jihad as a great battle within oneself. This is repeated by Abu-Nimer in his creation of a framework of "Islamic principles of non-violence and peace building." In this "framework" of both Quranic quotations as well as historical and contemporary authors and examples, Abu-Nimer states that "various Islamic sects have argued that there are several levels of jihad and that the jihad against self-desires, temptations, and selfishness is the most difficult to achieve."¹³ That this apparently refers to certain, yet un-marked Sufi views of jihad is probable as Abu-Nimer in the same work also presents the allegedly authentic Sufi belief of justice: "Divine justice is not to be gained in the hereafter, but in the present through contemplation of light, beauty, and love of God."¹⁴ Sufi influences, as in formulating jihad as a struggle with one's own self yet without referring to this use of religious language as shaped by certain Sufi writers, corroborates Nile Green's hypothesis that tacit and unspoken Sufi Islam may shape contemporary formulations of Islam. According to Green, tacit Sufi Islam should be understood as a contemporary return of the role of Sufi Islam as part and parcel of differing forms of mainstream Islam. In particular, this can be seen in Khan's notions of peaceable culture and jihad as introspection.

Fourth, with regard to Islamic modernism, contemporary writers of Islam, non-violence, and peace, share two fundamental traits with nineteenth century Islamic Modernism. The first is structural, well-known in the literature and concerns the practice of individual debate on the meaning of the Quran and the Sunna. Not bounded by the generations of earlier jurists, ideological and religious positions are formulated using the language of Islam. This structural programme of individually using a Muslim discourse was pioneered by Sayyid Ahmad Khan, and all those who were influenced by his example. Sayyid Ahmad Khan challenged the *idjma* of the learned '*ulamā*' when he debated the meaning of Islam outside their circles and faced a new and modern educated public. Wahiduddin Khan may be categorised as structurally similar to the example of Islamic Modernism. He turns directly to Muslims with a modern education and through the use of various print and digital media, he bypasses the formalities of learned debate among the '*ulamā*' in his aim to popularise his presentation of Islam. The second,

¹³ Abu-Nimer, *Non-violence*, 62.

¹⁴ Abu-Nimer, *Non-violence*, 52.

perhaps more important characteristic is the similarity in terms of ideological content and how the presentations of Islam are shaped as interventions in a contemporary debate on the meaning of Islam. This was a feature of the debate of the nineteenth century, when accusations and criticisms levied against Islam were turned on its head.¹⁵ Hence, when Islam is presented as a religion of war and violence, its timeless non-violent and peaceable qualities are formulated. When Islam is pictured as degrading women, authentic gender egalitarianism in Islam is formulated. When Islam and religious knowledge is condemned as obscurant and of no use, the rational qualities of Islam and its positive relation to science are held up as role models for all other religions and systems of thought to follow. Hence, the seminal writers of the Aligarh School, Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Moulavi Chiragh Ali, along with Ameer Ali and several others, shaped the debate on Islam, non-violence, and peace in the Indian context. Contemporary positions on Islam, non-violence, and peace may be said to follow the example of such innovative modern writers, in terms of both structure and ideological content. Seemingly, the mode of presenting authentic Islam as the mirror image of whatever more or less biased critics contend has found a contemporary lease of life in North American university settings.¹⁶

¹⁵ While much literature defines this trait as apologetics aimed at outsiders, this study criticised the lack of methodological verification for the general application of this concept on the proponents of new positions and forms of literature and publications on Islam and modernity in the second half of nineteenth century British India. As was seen, Muhammad Khalid Masud argues that Islamic Modernism was part of a new modern, educated, reading Muslim public, participating in pluralistic ideological debates and religious contestations shaped by other, Muslim and non-Muslim participants. More importantly, since defining “religion” in contrast to a natural and secular sphere of politics is an essential trait of modern state power it may be argued that each particular type of modern religious position is in defence of religion in an ongoing debate. Hence, the term “apologetics” is a tautology at best, which says very little about the contents of a certain category of religious positions. At worst, the allegedly objective scholarly use of “apologetics” may associate religious authenticity to contemporary fundamentalist, or medieval Muslim jurists’ formulations of true normative Islam without the “apologetic glosses” that became common in the second half of the nineteenth century (see the following footnote for a discussion of the reverse scholarly pitfall). However, Ameer Ali’s works was certainly aimed at a non-Muslim European audience, *The Spirit of Islam* and *A Short History of the Saracens* ran to nine and thirteen editions, respectively, in the UK. The issue at stake is how the scholar implicitly or explicitly assesses the religious authenticity of such ideological and religious presentations. In a debate situation when Islam was censured by powerful forces in Europe and India, evangelical missionaries and rationalists, Mansoor Moaddel makes Ameer Ali into the “leader of the pan-Islamic intellectual movement for the defence of Islam in the West” by “championing the cause of Islam in terms of the ethical standards of modernity” (Moaddel, *Islamic Modernism*, 72). Because the debate situation is shaped by the actors’ positions and issues, for instance over evolution and civilisation, the social position of women, and religiously motivated violence, general changes in this ideological debate and religious contention must be understood as the underlying factors of change in religious discourse and theology. If the researcher fails to clarify these contextual “processes” shaping religious presentations, one is at scholarly risk of postulating a certain time-honoured position as more religiously authentic and another, modern religious position as merely apologetic. The issue of slavery in historical and modern Christianity, Islam, and Judaism can be discussed in this perspective.

¹⁶ Aaron W. Hughes uses the term “apologetical” stringently when he criticises what he thinks is the unwarranted defence of religious positions in secular university settings. The use of the seemingly objective academic language of Islamic religious studies makes the defence of a particular position of Islam into “apologetical scholarship.” Hughes, *Islam and the Tyranny*, 92.

This study contends that Khan is not only one main contemporary representative of this type of modern Muslim thought on the subcontinent. Khan should be regarded as an outstanding example of this legacy for the reasons of his religious leadership credentials, longevity as a public debater, sheer quantity of writings, as well as his direct contact with the Indian intellectual milieu that shaped the positions of Islamic Modernism. In contrast to academic scholars defending this particular mode of religious positioning, Khan is a religious leader who uses his freedom as a writer to defend Islam from an un-democratic onslaught. At his disposal are other societal and cultural values that corroborate his ideological and religious positions. Hence, he employs positions and language relatable to the liberalism of the Indian constitution, petitioning the government as in British reformist socialism, individualistic but largely un-marked Sufi Islam, and the general and specific claims of Indian Islamic Modernism. Therefore, in terms of translating the proposed domain to other studies, the contextual expressions of and debate on liberal democratic values, reformist socialism, Sufism, and Islamic Modernism should be theoretically anticipated as the main shapers of other formulations of Islam, non-violence, and peace.

10.3.3 The Independence of Religious and Political Authority

Toft, Philpott, and Shah argues that the increase in the political influence of religion in the last four decades is a result of an increased sphere of independence for religion caused by a number of factors, including democratisation and globalisation. The relationship between the proposed domain of the politics of Islam, non-violence, and peace, and the degree of independence between religion and the state should therefore be seen in this light.

Khan writes from a position of independence from state political actors. For instance, through the power of the Indian constitution, he enjoys freedom of religion, expression, assembly, and proselytisation. As suggested by the theoretical framework of Toft, Philpott, and Shah, globalisation strengthens religious actors like Khan and the CPS. They are part of a global network through the internet, digital social media, and stakeholders in a global market for Muslim devotional literature and disseminations of Islamic teachings. The main threat to Khan's position of independence as a Muslim religious leader, comes through Hindu nationalist organisations and parties and global ideological and political influences that mobilise their forces by means of a rhetoric opposing Islam. Because of this threat, Khan also seeks to minimise the political and social conflicts regarded as caused by Muslims. As analysed in this study, Khan defends a position of a secular state in Islam. This "non-political" position of

mutual and consensual independence between religion and state is related to the debate on the meaning of national identity, democratic secularism, and minority-majority relations. Khan uses his independence and freedom to defend Islam from a number of allegations raised in the debate by stating that one must separate what certain Muslims do from what authentic Islam teaches. Simultaneously, he opposes rival Muslim formulations of Islam, especially separatist and violent positions, which directly or indirectly serve to substantiate the charges raised against Islam as a religion of violence.

Similarly, the nineteenth century Indian Islamic Modernists used new print technology and a situation of increasing freedom of expression to defend Islam from non-Muslim critics, as well as oppose rival Muslim formulations of Islam. Therefore, their positions served a number of religious, political, and ideological purposes. Contemporary writers within the proposed domain of the politics of Islam, non-violence, and peace likewise write from a manifest situation of freedom and independence for religion. However, their situation of independence and freedom may be threatened by the state or civil society actors. They are exposed to an inimical rhetoric and political actions that aim to limit the civil freedoms of Muslims and undermine the social position of Islam. Toft, Philpott, and Shah, hypothesise that when pro-democratic religious actors fail to make any substantial democratic progress, “the problem is the highly repressive regimes they have challenged.”¹⁷ The case of the execution of Mahmoud Mohamed Taha by the Sudanese state in 1985 may serve to illustrate this phenomenon. Roy, supported by Hughes, instead contend that liberal academic Muslim writers fail to have an impact because of a lack of public readership, a state of affairs which render them irrelevant.

Based on these observations, especially of Khan as a representative case, it is likely that the domain of the politics of Islam, non-violence, and peace is framed and shaped by a democratising or democratic political situation with a substantial degree of independence between religious and political actors. However, the position of Islam, non-violence, and peace as a sub-category of political theology, is also framed and shaped by contextually and globally formulated pressures against this relative independence. In the case of India’s political situation, the pressure largely comes from Hindu Nationalism, which today is both an organised civil society phenomenon and an institutionalised state phenomenon. The BJP celebrated victories in the general elections of 2014 both at the level of regional states and national parliament, the Lok Sabha, and was even more successful in 2019. In the past, it was largely at the regional state level that the BJP had successfully integrated political and religious actors. For instance,

¹⁷ Toft, Philpott and Shah, *God’s Century*, 105.

the BJP-controlled Karnataka passed a bill in 2010 not only to criminalise the slaughter of cows but also the consumption, sale, and promotion of beef. However, the pressure on the independence between religious and political actors comes from violent Muslim actors as well, and the wide-spread, ideological representation of these Muslim actors as one, or the most essential, expression of true Islam.

Hence, there are three historical factors that explain the occurrence of Islam, non-violence, and peace as a sub-category of political theology. First, a democratising or democratic political situation with substantial levels of independence between religious and political actors. Second, contextually and globally formulated pressures on this relative independence by both social and state actors. Third, the presence and representation of violent Muslim activism.

Inversely, how does the proposed sub-category of Islam, non-violence, and peace reciprocally shape the degree and kind of independence between religion and state? Toft, Philpott, and Shah hypothesises that a religious actor with a democratic political theology will most likely act as a democratising force in a situation involving the conflictual integration of religion. This may be true but their evaluation method consists of observing changes in the Freedom House Index and then charting the qualitative influences of religious actors in failed or successful democratisation processes. Such correlations are ambiguous in the case of the vast confederation of India; local or regional pressures on the degree of independence might not be revealed as actual changes in the nationally based Freedom House Index. While Indian controlled Kashmir is analysed separately, and reported only as “Partly Free,” by the Freedom House, the academic literature however, points to the recurrence of anti-Muslim violence in certain Indian states and cities and not others.¹⁸ Based on their method, therefore, at which level of analysis should the alleged democratisation changes and the qualitative processual influences of religious actors be charted? Hence, it remains difficult to generalise what influence a religious actor with a political theology of Islam, non-violence, and peace might have on the degree and type of religion-state independence.

However, Roy’s general theoretical framework may provide some clues. As noted earlier, Roy and Hughes both state that while Islam can be formulated as perfectly compatible with democratic secularism, it is not for the Islamologist to consider the question of the acceptability of such a reading of Islam. Therefore, in terms of influence on the relations between religion and state, university scholars who construct an authentic liberal-democratic Islam without a public audience may perhaps be considered as of minor importance. Instead, Roy writes: “A

¹⁸ <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2019/indian-kashmir>. Accessed on 2019-03-18.

religious reformation makes sense only if it turns on cultural, social, and political issues by those involved.”¹⁹ He therefore suggests that reformers have an influence *ex post facto*. They provide a religious language to think about changes that have occurred for other reasons. As noted earlier, certain aspects of Roy’s theoretical perspectives appear rather abstract and devoid of empirical support. The notion that Muslim religious reformers mainly have a kind of delayed, or perhaps indirect influence, therefore needs to be further empirically validated.

Nevertheless, based on the empirical analysis of this study, the proposed subcategory Islam, non-violence, and peace as a political theology may therefore influence and support the independence between religion and state, primarily in retrospect. Therefore, this study hypothesises that religious actors with a political theology of Islam, non-violence, and peace will not play a democratising role without the direct or indirect support of state and other social actors. A structural liberal-democratic political and social situation may be supported but not created, by the political proponents of Islam, non-violence, and peace.

10.4 Suggested Further Study

Four aspects of this study may serve to make other studies possible or eligible, in terms of contributions to both methodological and theoretical scholarly discussions. First, the attempt to propose a sub-category of political theology can be directly translated to other studies. As mentioned, any number of sub-categories could be proposed in other empirical studies. These attempts may improve our theoretical understanding of how various idea-based actors influence and are influenced by other actors and structural factors. The suggestion here that additional sub-categories of political theology ought to be created is, therefore, a call to further define what conceptual and classificatory schemes we should use as scholars. As Roy argues that the class of “Political Islam” is a failure in ideological and structural terms, one relevant theoretical issue is to delineate the sub-categories of political theology that may yield real political influence and create substantial changes, whether in the processes of increased democratisation or authoritarianism.

Second, as has been seen, this study has employed a methodology that analysed Khan’s texts in relation to two interrelated conflictual contexts; the conflictual context of fundamental ideological and religious debate on Islam on a global scale as well as in India, and the conflictual context of social and political issues and actors, primarily in India. Hence, an analysis of *the*

¹⁹ Roy, *Secularism*, 48–49.

surrounding texts in the intertextual debate situations was sought. Therefore, the main method of this study, *contextual interpretation*, is an interpretation of texts as they are used as interventions in social and political action in historically specific situations. This methodological stance may perhaps serve as a contribution to the ongoing methodological discussions within Islamic or Religious Studies. Based on Weberian social theory, Quentin Skinner's intellectual history approach, and the theoretical and methodological contributions of scholars in the field of Islam, in particular Talal Asad, Jan Hjärpe, Leif Stenberg, and Jonas Otterbeck, it is possible to connect the methodology of this study to other disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. I contend, with Aaron W. Hughes, that we:

do not need to reinvent the wheel in our own subfields, but it does mean that, as scholars of religion, we have to be aware of the larger debates that drive our discipline.²⁰

Through connecting to other disciplines and by aiming for studies that are critical, scientific, or historical, Islamic studies avoid insularity and any overly normative concern with the internal reform of the religion. My hopeful intention is that the methodology used in this study should in some degree contribute to the relevance of the scientific study of Islam in other disciplines in the humanities and social sciences or to the methodological discussions within our own subfield.

Third, the proposed sub-category of the politics of Islam, non-violence, and peace may be translated to other investigations in Islamic studies, Religious Studies, or to other disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. To reiterate, it is suggested that the sub-category consists of four main ideological and religious thematic and discursive structures; liberal political thought; socialist reformism; reformed, un-marked Sufism; and Islamic Modernism. The hypothesis also suggests that a consensual kind of independence between political actors and religious actors largely shapes a political theology of Islam, non-violence, and peace. Hence, Islam, non-violence, and peace supports liberal-democratic secularism – it does not create its ramifications in a meaningful sense. The contents and structure of the proposed sub-category could be verified, modified, or refuted through further case-wise or comparative empirical studies. This study suggests that Muslim writers of Islam, non-violence, and peace should be interpreted in context and in light of the proposed sub-category with its associated thematic and discursive properties. Important contemporary Muslim writers were mentioned in Chapter 8; the

²⁰ Hughes, *Islam and the Tyranny*, 95.

ideologies and presentations of Islam of Farid Esack, Abdulaziz Sachedina, Chaiwat Satha-Anand, and Mohammed Abu-Nimer could all be studied from this perspective. This would not only put the sub-category of the politics of Islam, non-violence, and peace to the test but the perspectives of Roy and especially Hughes – of academic, liberal Muslim reformers as irrelevant because of a lack of public readership – should also be interrogated. The anticipated outcome of the possible studies is that these writers' formulations of Islam, non-violence, and peace will be ideologically and religiously structured by liberal political thought, socialist reformism, reformed, un-marked Sufism, and Islamic Modernism. Moreover, it is hypothesised that their presentations will be shaped as interventions in a general contemporary debate on the meaning of Islam, while addressing a particular political and social situation. This proposed research should particularly focus on the assumed presence of ideological and religious thematic and discursive structures, and the categorisation and classification of these. This serves the purpose of adding to or retracting from the properties of the proposed sub-category and thereby verifying, modifying, or refuting it. The contextual empirical analyses should also question the democratising role of these religious actors. Are their positions supported by state or other social actors? What type of structural democratic influence do the proponents of Islam, non-violence, and peace hold over the particular political and social situation?

Fourth, therefore, I suggest a further empirical study of Khan with a focus on political and social impact and what type of structural support Khan and the CPS receives. As has been seen, Khan and the CPS receives a significant amount of attention on social media and Facebook, assumedly from relatively young middle-class people. But how should this attention be analysed? To what degree does a religious leadership on Facebook turn into political and social impact? In which practical situations are the followers of Khan involved? Are they mainly Muslims and Indians? In this manner, it would be possible to address the question of whether Khan is an influential and truly global, contemporary religious leader.

Moreover, similar to the analytical efforts of this study, a further empirical study of Khan and the CPS should investigate the type of claims to religious authority of the young CPS members that feature in their public and social media broadcasts, updates, and videos. Through applying the method of contextual interpretation, such a study could analyse how the formulations of Islam, non-violence, and peace, as the ideological legacy of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, are continually shaped and re-shaped by the ever-evolving debate situation and its associated political and social issues, including, but not limited to; climate change, gender issues, the meaning of liberal-democratic values, and Indian as well as global right-wing nationalist

mobilisation based on anti-Muslim ideology. Issues which concern every Indian and global citizen.

Sammanfattning på svenska

Den föreliggande avhandlingen kan på svenska kallas *Islam, ickevåld och fred som politik: Maulana Wahiduddin Khans ideologiska kontext*. Precis som titeln antyder handlar denna studie om den indiska ickevåldsförespråkaren Maulana Wahiduddin Khan, en betydelsefull nutida författare, religiös ledare och tänkare. Hans argument för och tänkande avseende islam, fred och ickevåld är avhandlingens fokus vid sidan av hans gärning som en religiös ledare som verkar för försoning, fred och religionsdialog i en samtida indisk kontext av växande spänningar mellan å ena sidan hindunationalistiska politiska rörelser och å andra sidan islamistiska organisationer. I studien använder jag mig av Khans många publicerade texter och mina egna fältstudier i Delhi mellan 2013 och 2016. Khans anspråk att som *ālim*, en muslimsk religiöst lärdd, värna om och presentera en förment sann och tidlös islamtolkning i den indiska och internationella offentligheten analyseras genomgripande. Vidare har Khans ideologiska positioner analyserats i avhandlingen i ljuset av en betydelsefull tradition av islamtolkning i Indien som hanterar islams och muslimers minoritetssituation på ett fredligt och tolerant vis.

Med bakgrund i den religionshistoriska kontexten och samtida politiska och sociala frågor i Indien söker min studie att analysera hur Khans presentation av sann islam påverkas av den hindunationalistiska antimuslimska mobiliseringen. Medan den indiska konstitutionen är både demokratisk och sekulär så hotas Indiens sekulära politiska traditioner av hindunationalismens växande politiska makt, både på delstats- och federal nivå.

Den relevanta akademiska litteraturen, till exempel Paul Brass, *The Production of Hindu-Muslim Violence in Contemporary India* (2003) och William Gould, *Religion and Conflict in Modern South Asia* (2012) pekar på betydelsen av "the communal discourse" (ung. 'diskursen om samhällsgrupper') i legitimerandet av våld mot minoriteter i det samtida Indien. Den tydligaste jämförelsen av betydelsen av denna slags ideologi är med den framväxande fascismen i Europas 1930-tal, då växande politisk makt förenades med gatuvåld mot minoriteter och oliktankande. Ett tydligt indiskt exempel på det senare är de upplopp, eller pogromer, då uppemot två tusen muslimer dödades efter en tågbrand som dödade 59 hinduer i delstaten Gujarat i februari 2002. Branden sades vara anlagd av muslimer som arbetade på perrongen, och våldet presenterades som hämndaktioner för vad "muslimerna" hade gjort mot "hinduerna". Det största hindunationalistiska partiet, BJP, styrde då delstaten Gujarat och möjliggjorde indirekt hämndaktionerna mot muslimer, genom att inte låta delstatspolisen ingripa mot

gatuvaldet. Den politiska mobiliseringen av aktivister under våldsaktionerna leddes av ett flertal militanta hindunationalistiska rörelser och organisationer. BJP är idag sittande regeringsparti under premiärministern Narendra Modi (f. 1950) efter stora segrar i parlamentsvalen både 2014 och 2019.

Hindunationalismen står för en antimuslimsk ideologi som på olika sätt pekar ut muslimer som icke hemmahörande i Indien och hetsar mot islam och muslimer genom att säga att det i själva verket är islam som till sin natur är politiskt radikal och våldsam. Men de tar inte sina påståenden om islam och muslimer helt ur luften. Sedan delningen av det brittiska Indien 1947 har Indien och Pakistan utkämpat tre krig, främst om regionen Jammu och Kashmir. Eftersom grannlandet Pakistan grundades som ett hemland för Indiens muslimer har hindunationalismens retorik framgångsrikt kunnat sammankoppla Indiens muslimska befolkning med ärkefienden Pakistan. Hindunationalistisk retorik och ideologi har bara ökat i styrka och trovärdighet när Pakistan kom att utveckla allt mer auktoritära tendenser efter att en rad militärdiktaturer återopade islamiskt styre. Dessutom har militanta muslimska grupperingar genomfört terrordåd i storstäderna Mumbai och Delhi och till och med angripit själva parlamentet med sammanlagt hundratals döda som följd. Terrorgrupperna, med kopplingar till Kashmir och till den pakistanska underrättelsetjänsten, återopar islam och profeten Muhammed som ideologiska och religiösa motiveringar. Terrorism, krig och våld komprometterar därmed hela den indiska muslimska befolkningen om ca 180 miljoner människor utspridda över den vidsträckta subkontinenten. Världens största minoritet, i världens största demokrati, anklagas framgångsrikt för att vara femtekolonnare och spänningarna växer inom landet när de båda kärnvapenmakterna spänner de militära musklerna.

Min studie analyserar Khans positioner som debattinlägg i den pågående situationen. Han presenterar islam som helt opolitisk, strikt fredlig och menar att endast ickevåld är tillåtet i islam. Samtidigt är han djupt kritisk mot Indiens muslimska befolkning, som han menar är alltför trångsynt och fördomsfull. Muslimerna deltar i alltför liten utsträckning i den indiska nationens gemensamma liv, menar Khan. Eftersom de inte tillräckligt tar avstånd från den muslimska terrorismen och Pakistan har de endast sig själva att skylla när de blir anklagade och ifrågasatta av andra indier. Därmed kan man säga att Khan återupprepar delar av den antimuslimska hindunationalistiska ideologin eller diskursen om samhällsgrupper. Men i själva verket vill Khan skilja mellan sin egen presentation av autentisk och tidlös islam, och hur muslimer och ”det politiska islams ideologer” presenterar islam. Khans positioner tillåter endast ickevåld och genom olika religiöst grundade argument, som analyseras i min studie, menar han att islam stödjer den demokratiska och sekulära staten. Därmed analyseras Khans presentation

av islam, ickevåld och fred som ett stöd för den indiska sekulära demokratin. Just nu pågår en politisk strid på högsta nivå i Indien där demokrati och statens sekulära karaktär ifrågasätts av den allt starkare hindunationalismens partier och organisationer. I själva verket är det Indiens demokratiska institutioner som har varit den främsta garanten för muslimers och andra minoriteters säkerhet i landet. Den liberaldemokratiska och pluralistiska sekularismen har varit som ett ideologiskt lapptäcke som idealt har syftat till att koppla samman landets mycket olikartade befolkningar, skilda åt genom geografi, språk, religion, kultur och etnicitet. Khans försvar för ett fredligt islam syftar därmed till att dämpa hindunationalismens angrepp mot islam som ideologiskt begrepp. Khans presentation av islam som ickevåld innefattar också ett försvar för vetenskap och entreprenörskap, viktiga värden i det indiska samhället när landet tar allt mer plats inom internationell forskning och teknologi samt globalt finansväsende. Khan förespråkar också lojalitet gentemot den rådande politiska strukturen – vilket ju i den indiska kontexten betyder den hinduiska majoritetens politiska och sociala dominans. Khans ideologiska positioner kan därför tolkas som ett konsekvent eftersträvande av samhällelig harmoni, vilket i sin tur kan förstås som ett ideologiskt arv efter Mahatma Gandhi (d. 1948). Gandhis politiska och sociala tänkande kvarstår nämligen som en av de främsta formuleringarna av indisk nationalism, vitt skild från den allt starkare hindunationalismen. Den hinduiska nationalismen förespråkar istället ett slags majoritetsstyre, på engelska *political majoritarianism*, som förordar att det är rätt att den största gruppens, hinduernas, kultur och värden ska dominera i samhället och staten. På så sätt hotas demokratin när olika minoriteters rättigheter sätts på undantag och Indiens sekulära statsförfattning ifrågasätts genom försök att införa allmängiltiga hinduiska religiösa lagar och kostregler. Detta sker särskilt på delstatsnivå som tillåter större juridiskt svängrum än på den federala statsbildningens nivå, där den konstitutionella demokratin vaktas av Högsta domstolen.

Förutom den inrikespolitiska situationen har Indien allt sedan 1990-talet spelat en allt större internationell roll genom närmanden till Israel och USA. Efter terrordåden 2001 inledde Indien och USA ett omfattande ekonomiskt och strategiskt samarbete där motståndet mot islamisk fundamentalism och terror är centralt, möjliggjort genom det internationella ”kriget mot terrorismen”. Tidigare internationell kritik av Indiens brott mot mänskliga rättigheter och övergrepp mot minoriteter tystnade, vilket blev tydligt gällande de ovan nämnda pogromerna av indiska muslimer 2002. BJP:s ledare å sin sida hävdade att västvärlden äntligen hade insett allvaret i det hot som hindunationalism bekämpat hela tiden, nämligen islams fundamentalism och terror. På detta sätt analyseras i avhandlingen hur globala processer och global antimuslimsk ideologisk retorik, särskilt efter 2001, har påverkat Khans islamtolkning. Studien

tecknar också en bild av hur internet och Facebook har kommit att spela en allt större roll för Khans organisation *Centre for Peace and Spirituality* (CPS), inte minst i dess försök att skapa motbilder gentemot global antimuslimsk mobilisering på nätet. Därmed ställer studien Khans tänkande om islam, ickevåld och fred i relation till både den indiska och den globala antimuslimska politiska mobiliseringen.

Förutom den beskrivna politiska och sociala kontextens betydelse för utvecklingen av Khans positioner analyserar jag i avhandlingen en idéhistorisk utveckling av ideologiska och religiösa presentationer av islam och den moderna staten i den indiska kontexten. Å ena sidan befinner sig Khan i skarp motsatsställning till ”politisk islams ideologer”, som han menar framför teologiskt grundlösa idéer om att muslimer ska bygga en islamisk stat, med våld om nödvändigt. Å andra sidan, vad som inte är direkt och märkbart i hans egna texter, men som genom närmare analys görs tydligt i studien, är att Khan i själva verket bygger på några indiska pionjärs utveckling av den islamiska modernismens idétraditioner. Redan under andra halvan av 1800-talet formulerade Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan (d.1898) politiskt pragmatiska positioner och islams kompatibilitet med den moderna tidens idéer och vetenskap. Moulavi Chiragh Ali (d. 1895) och Ameer Ali (d. 1928) var inflytelserika indiska muslimska författare och debattörer inom den islamiska modernismen och den framväxande muslimska publika sfären. De formulerade islam som en strikt pacifistisk ideologi redan decennier innan Gandhi och skrev för en ny generation modernt utbildade och engelsktalande indiska muslimer (såsom advokater, journalister, tjänstemän och lärare). Längre fram under 1900-talets gång fanns ett flertal viktiga indiska muslimska ideologer och politiska ledare som populariserade islam och ickevåldsmetoder, särskilt Badshah Khan (d. 1988), Maulana Husayn Ahmad Madanī (d. 1957) och Maulana Kalam Azad (d. 1958). Dessa var samtliga associerade med det indiska Kongresspartiet, Gandhis och Jawaharlal Nehrus (d. 1964) parti.

I och med detta analyserar studien Khans författarskap som direkt kopplat till denna redan etablerade idétradition av islamisk modernism, ickevåld och fred. Studien argumenterar också för att kopplingarna till den indiska demokratiska konstitutionen, globaliseringens ideologiska påverkan och det indiska Kongresspartiets ideologiska positioner utgör viktiga beståndsdelar av Khans formuleringar av islam, ickevåld och fred. I termer av ideologiskt och religiöst innehåll så delar studien upp Khans vittomfattande författarskap och inlägg i samhällsdebatten i fyra breda influenser och analytiskt sett distinkta idétraditioner. Dessa fyra utgör: en modern och reformerad islamisk andlighet, sufism, som framhåller religionen som ett verktyg för att växa som människa; demokratisk liberalism, som den är etablerad i den indiska konstitutionen och inom det internationella samfundet och FN; brittisk reformsocialism, särskilt *The Fabian*

Society som ideologiskt påverkade Kongresspartiets ledarskap och därmed indirekt Indiens parlamentariska tradition; samt slutligen, den redan nämnda indiska islamiska modernismens nästan hundrafemtioåriga historia.

Genom intervjuer med Khan i Delhi mellan 2013 och 2016, ett stort antal av hans publicerade verk författade under hans mycket långa och produktiva liv och genom jämförelser med andra samtida internationella författare som intar liknande positioner avslutas min studie genom att konstruera ”islam, ickevåld och fred som politik”, det vill säga *the politics of Islam, non-violence, and peace*, som en teoretisk domän och en distinkt samtida muslimsk ideologisk idétradition. Khan är exceptionell inom denna kategori och idétradition, på grund av sitt tydliga anspråk på auktoritet och religiöst ledarskap i offentligheten, samt sin höga ålder och mycket omfattande författarskap. Därför konstruerar jag islam, ickevåld och fred som politik som en teoretiskt formulerad underkategori av Toft, Philpott & Shahs begrepp *politisk teologi*, med tydliga ideologiska positioner till förmån för den demokratiska och sekulära staten (2011). Kategorins idéinnehåll av demokratisk liberalism, reformsocialism, outtalad eller tillbakahållen reform-sufism och islamisk modernism teoretiseras på ett sätt som kan appliceras i andra studier av andra liknande modernistiska muslimska författare. Min studie möjliggör därför andra studier av samtida muslimska prodemokratiska krafter – vilka hypotetiskt också omfattas av det nämnda idéinnehållet – och pekar ut liknande samtida internationella författare, som till skillnad från Khan idag främst verkar inom sekulära västerländska universitet. Det vidare syftet med att på detta sätt bidra till den teoretiska diskussionen om globaliserad religion och demokratisering är också att möjliggöra analyser av dessa modernistiska muslimers faktiska förmåga att kunna värna demokratin i sina respektive samhällen.

Appendix: An Abridged List of English Publications by Maulana Wahiduddin Khan*

- Khan, Maulana Wahiduddin. *A Treasury of the Qur'an: Book 1: The Good Life*. New Delhi: Goodword Books. 2005.
- Khan, Maulana Wahiduddin. *An Islamic Treasury of Virtues*. New Delhi: Goodword Books. 2013.
- Khan, Maulana Wahiduddin. *Concerning Divorce*. New Delhi: Goodword Books. 2008.
- Khan, Maulana Wahiduddin. *Conversion: An Intellectual Transformation*. New Delhi: Goodword Books. 2010.
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- Khan, Maulana Wahiduddin. *God Arises*. New Delhi: Goodword Books. 2013.
- Khan, Maulana Wahiduddin. *Hijab in Islam*. New Delhi: Goodword Books. 2013.
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- Khan, Maulana Wahiduddin. *In Search of God*. New Delhi: Goodword Books. 2012.
- Khan, Maulana Wahiduddin. *Indian Muslims: The Need for a Positive Outlook*. New Delhi: Goodword Books, 1994.
- Khan, Maulana Wahiduddin. *Introducing Islam: A Simple Introduction to Islam*. New Delhi: Goodword Books. 2010.
- Khan, Maulana Wahiduddin. *Islam and Peace*. New Delhi: Goodword books, 1999.
- Khan, Maulana Wahiduddin. *Islam and the Modern Man*. New Delhi: Goodword Books. 2013.
- Khan, Maulana Wahiduddin. *Islam and World Peace*. Noida: Goodword Books, 2015.
- Khan, Maulana Wahiduddin. *Islam As It Is*. New Delhi: Goodword Books. 2013.

* The list has been construed from my own collection of published works by Khan in English. Khan's works may be purchased through the CPS bookstore in Nizamuddin, Delhi and through the main online bookstores on the internet. The Umeå University library also carries a few titles by Khan. As mentioned, there are also a number of Khan's works available in digital format through the CPS webpage. This Annex is abridged in the sense that its completeness is not wholly guaranteed, due to Khan's vast publication strategy and possible un-known and out of print works. Furthermore, a substantial number of Khan's works are chapters of his books published as offprints or separate pamphlets by Goodword Books. The aim of this list is to avoid directing the reader to the same text by Khan twice. Hence, pamphlets that are known to be published as a chapter in a published book have been left out of this list. As seen in Chapter 4, a significant list of works by Khan can also be found in Omar, "Rethinking Islam," 272–274. Printed works by Khan, including translations into several languages, can be bought through <http://www.goodwordbooks.com/subcat/books-maulana-wahiduddin-khan?page=3>, accessed on 2019-09-25. The English titles available through the Goodword Books webpage are included in this Annex. Despite that this list may prove insufficient, not least due to the substantial overlap in Khan's numerous publications, it catalogues all English texts and titles by Khan known by me.

Khan, Maulana Wahiduddin. *Islam in History*. New Delhi: Goodword Books. 2013.

Khan, Maulana Wahiduddin. *Islam Rediscovered: Discovering Islam from its Original Sources*. New Delhi: Goodword Books, 2001.

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This is a study of the multifaceted thought of Maulana Wahiduddin Khan (b.1925–), Indian writer, public intellectual, and Muslim religious leader. Khan has been a prolific writer since at least the 1970s and his reputation is based on his public presentation of Islam, non-violence, and peace – a position he has defended in his monthly journal, a large number of published works and recently also through use of the internet and social media. Furthermore, as a religious leader and debater Khan has been active as a commentator in Indian national media and through religious dialogue meetings, for which he has received national awards and honours. Khan's religious thought may be summarised as a thorough attempt at presenting Islam, the Quran, and the example of the Prophet Muhammad as a systematic message of peace. By situating Khan's thought in a context of historical and contemporary debate on the meaning of Islam, this study argues that he continues and develops the nineteenth century Indian Islamic Modernist tradition of presenting Islam, non-violence, and peace in relation to issues of the modern state and the minority situation of Indian Muslims. In the contemporary Indian political and social situation however, Hindu nationalist and anti-Muslim rhetoric is being followed by large-scale violence. Studying the various connections between Khan's thought, the ideological and religious debates, and the historical context of Indian and global society, the final analysis of this study takes on the theoretical issue of whether contemporary and globalised religion can be a force for the development of more democratic and peaceful societies.

