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A Tortuous Search for Justice: Notes on the Kashmir Conflict

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Very few sociological or anthropological studies have been devoted so far to the Kashmir Valley (for exceptions see Madan 1989, Sanyal 1979). Numerous publications exist, however, on its recent history and politics, with the "Kashmir conflict" being focused on from a variety of political perspectives (cf. Bose 1997, Ganguly 1997, Gauhar 1998, Qureshi 1999, Rahman 1996, Schofield 1997 for some major recent studies). The following preliminary observations seek to address this conflict by briefly considering certain aspects of public discourse and specific elements in the ideologisation and instrumentalisation of a more general search for justice in the Valley of Kashmir.

July 13 1988, often considered to mark the beginning of the Kashmir conflict, marks only the beginning of a new phase in a movement which began in the 1920s; it augured the transition from a largely peaceful movement to a rather desperate armed struggle. This movement was referred to by Chaudhari Ghulam Abbas of Jammu in his presidential address to the *Muslim Conference* party in October 1935, when he appealed to the non-Muslims of Jammu and Kashmir to join the Valley Muslims in their fight for "social justice." Since then this movement has taken many, often apparently contradictory, forms. The idioms it has been couched in by its various protagonists, as also by its opponents, have also varied. The stereotyped, though emotionally charged metaphors used have been those of "nationalism" (Kashmiri, Indian), "identity" (Kashmiri), "Muslim unity" (Kashmir and Pakistan), "Islamic fundamentalism" (Pakistani), and "secularism" (Indian). While in the name of nationalism and secularism every determined political attempt to deal with the key issue of justice has been nipped in the bud by the Indian state, there has to date never been a let-up in Pakistani propaganda in the name of Islam and the true place of Kashmiris, as Muslims, in a Muslim (e.g. Pakistani) state. For most vocal Kashmiris, the solution has been perceived as lying in "self-determination" linked to the concept of a specific identity.

Identity and Politics—The Beginnings

The concept of a distinct Kashmiri identity (*kashmiriyat*) evolved in the 1930s when a movement, explicitly involving both the Muslim and Hindu intelligentsia, began against feudal-cum-colonial rule. The idea of a discrete Kashmiri citizenship goes back even earlier to the 1920s¹, when agitating Kashmiri Hindus forced the Government to formally define "State subjects." Although a tiny minority, certain families had over the centuries come to enjoy a near monopoly in the State's administration and were highly perturbed at being increasingly eased out of these positions of power by immigrant Punjabis, familiar with Urdu, which had replaced Persian as the official language. They now raised the issue of so-called "state" (*mulki*) and "non-state" (*ghair mulki*) subjects in order to counter the (Hindu Dogra) Maharaja Hari Singh's (1925-1952) systematic favoring of Hindus and Sikhs from Jammu, Poonch, what is now Azad Kashmir and parts of pre-partition Punjab. In 1927 yet another law was passed defining "hereditary state subjects" and those not covered by this definition could neither hold public office, nor buy land. Even after this, however, most government jobs were largely filled, not by Kashmiris, but by Dogras from the Jammu area. Hari Singh's relations with Kashmiri Muslims was even worse. Although he was far from secular, he appeared at the

¹ The question of locals and non-locals was a long standing issue, and as early as 1912 the government distinguished between "local" animal husbanders, who had lived and migrated within the state's borders for at least one generation —and "foreigners" who were considered undesirable new migrants (C.S. 1914a: 1914b; 1914c); pleas from local Gujar ("Desi Gujar") notwithstanding (e.g. Imam Din 1924), selected grazing areas were closed to migratory herds owned by non-Kashmiri. By 1920 these measures were considered inadequate to curb further migration into Kashmir from the west, and a formal notification was passed prohibiting the entry of "foreigner" herders into the state's territories (C.S. 1914d).

time to have less strained relations with non-Kashmiri Muslims. Thus, for example, large numbers of soldiers were recruited from the Muslim Sandan and Sudhan communities of Mirpur and Poonch respectively—albeit under the command of Hindu Dogra officers—while no Kashmiri Muslim could legally even carry firearms. However, corporate socio-political consciousness among Kashmiri Muslims already had a tradition of roughly seventy years (e.g. Ishaq Khan 1998), with the first strikes and revolts in Srinagar against intolerable working conditions and grossly exploitative taxation dating back to 1847, just one year after the British sold the territory of Kashmir to the Dogra chieftain Gulab Singh.

The 1920s and 1930s were a period of intense political ferment in Jammu and Kashmir (for Ladakh see van Beek 1998): A movement began for the improvement of the conditions of Muslims and for greater religious and political freedom. In 1929-1930 the *Majlis-e Ahrar-e Islam-e Hind*, an organization fighting British imperialism was founded in Lahore and soon after organized demonstrations in Kashmir. Parallel to this stream of explicitly Muslim identity ran another, representing economic and non-religious identity; the latter's concerns were voiced by several organizations, such as the *Gujar-Jat Conference*,² which succeeded in 1927 in getting all sedentary Gujar in Jammu and Kashmir recognized as "state subjects". Four years later all nomadic Gujar of the area (cf. Rao and Casimir 1985, Rao 1999) also achieved this status. It was against this backdrop that in 1931 the "*Kashmir Agitation*" began with a series of demonstrations lasting several weeks. They ended in November 1931 with the Maharaja setting up the *Glancy Commission* to look into the grievances of various communities.

Although to the south of the Valley religion had always played a major role in politics, in the Valley religious sentiments, perceived of as opposed to those of *kashmiriyat*, never had much impact. Till the early 20th century there was no religious association in the Valley and when around 1925 the *Anjuman-e Ahl-e Hadith*, with *Wahabi* leanings, was set up in Srinagar it met with opposition from most local Muslims. Hari Singh's misrule coupled with the general sub-continental trend of the period towards "communalisation" had, however, encouraged affiliation along religious lines, and gradually Hindus and Muslims formed their respective associations. In an attempt to channel popular anger and discontent along more coherent, non-parochial and explicitly political lines the *Muslim Conference* was formed in 1932, with Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, a Kashmiri as President,

²Although not explicitly Islamic, all members were Muslim, since in the entire area Gujar and Jat were Muslim (some of the latter were also Ahmadiya). At the time this was also one of the few major rural-based political movements in the region. Within Jammu and Kashmir the *Gujar-Jat Conference* was formed in 1935.

Ghulam Abbas from Jammu as General Secretary and a number of well known Kashmiri Hindus as members. Several prominent Gujar and other non-Kashmiri Muslims especially from areas south (e.g. Jammu) and west (e.g. Mirpur) of the Valley also joined. In spite of its name, this organization had secular objectives and aimed to fight the oppressive regime in Jammu and Kashmir. Soon, however, Sheikh Abdullah's stress on secularism and also certain sectarian differences led to a split, and notably to Yusuf Shah, the then *Mirwaiz* of Kashmir, leaving the organization.

In 1936, partly as a reaction to the still prevailing religious polarization but partly because Sheikh Abdullah appeared too socialistic and radical to many, a regional *Congress Party*³ was organized in Jammu and, again both Kashmiri and non-Kashmiri, Muslims and Hindus joined it.⁴ In 1936-37 the *Praja Sabha*, the first at least nominal peoples' representation, was inaugurated by the Maharaja, and in 1944 there were partial elections to this body. In the mean-time another semi-political organization, the *Anjuman-e Mushaekh*, had come up; most of its members were local or regional Muslim spiritual leaders—both Kashmiri and non-Kashmiri. In 1939 the *Muslim Conference* was turned into the *National Conference (NC)* with an explicitly secular and socialist manifesto. By this time close links had been established between the NC and the larger sub-continental struggle for independence—notably the *Indian National Congress*. This in turn led many—including Ghulam Abbas—to break away from the NC and revive the Muslim Conference in 1941. Most who left were, like Ghulam Abbas, Muslims from south of the Valley. They lived in a Hindu majority area and much more than the Muslims of the Valley, who lived in a Muslim majority area, they perhaps feared being politically swamped by the *Indian National Congress*, which they perceived as representing a Hindu India.

By 1947 there were thus various well formed streams of identity in Jammu and Kashmir as a whole. In the Valley feelings of Kashmiri identity rather than identity along religious lines dominated. This was clear when the *Muslim Conference* lost out in popularity to the NC even during Hindu feudal rule. With the decolonizing of South Asia these identities were now, logically enough, paired with the concept of self-determination. The latter, conceived of unequivocally as

³At this stage this local *Congress* was not recognised by the *Indian National Congress*.

⁴Several Gujar and Bakkarwal joined this because they felt more comfortable in a party which was not numerically dominated by Kashmiris. Similar reasons led many of them to be involved later with the *Praja Sabha*. By doing so they demonstrated their willingness to compromise and cooperate with the state, while nevertheless being part of a movement of protest. This strategy, commonly resorted to among "minorities" in many societies, remains an oft misunderstood and misinterpreted hallmark of the Gujar and Bakkarwal in Jammu and Kashmir.

independence, was brought up, first and foremost, by Hari Singh, the last Hindu Maharaja.

De-Colonization, Partition and the Conflict

In 1947 there were roughly 500 princely states in South Asia governed according to the principle of "paramountcy", i.e. the assurance that the British would defend them against all foreign invasions. With the independence of British India this principle became irrelevant and these states were given the option of acceding to either India, or Pakistan, or of remaining independent and managing their own defense. Most decided to join either Pakistan or India, but there were a few exceptions. Hyderabad's Muslim ruler and a largely Hindu population, Jodhpur's Hindu ruler and mostly Hindu subjects, Kashmir's Hindu ruler and an overwhelmingly Muslim population wanted to continue as independent rulers.⁵

Jammu and Kashmir had for many centuries entertained close trade and intellectual links with Punjab (both western and eastern, now in Pakistan and India respectively) and other areas in these two countries. Hence Hari Singh approached the future rulers of both these states-to-be with proposals that would guarantee him his throne and power. In July 1947 while the *Muslim Conference* urged him to join Pakistan, India did not respond, largely because Jawaharlal Nehru was a personal friend of the Maharaja's arch enemy Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, who had been leading the "Quit Kashmir" movement against Hari Singh since May 1946. Hari Singh now entered into a "standstill agreement" with Pakistan. Shortly thereafter, however, a number of events took place that were to drastically impinge on this agreement:

1. An armed revolt erupted in Poonch in summer 1947 primarily by local Sudhans, aided by Pashtuns from the North West Frontier Province and actively supported by officers of the new Pakistani army. This rebellion was, however, not couched in terms of religious affiliations, and indeed the commanding officer, Mohammad Zaman Kiani, had been a high ranking officer in the patently secular Indian National Army led by Subhas Chandra Bose (Bose 1997).

2. The influx south of the Valley of hundreds of thousands of Hindu and Sikh refugees fleeing the horrendous atrocities in western Punjab and the North West Frontier Province was seized upon by members of the locally well organized militant Hindu fundamentalist *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS)* to massacre just

as many local Muslims, while the Maharaja's Hindu police looked the other way.

3. On October 4th as streams of hapless Hindu, Muslim and Sikh refugees struggled to barely survive and Hari Singh's predicament grew deeper, a secular and anti-feudal group, appalled at the Maharaja's agreement with Pakistan, founded a *Provisional Peoples' Republic of Jammu and Kashmir*. This independent republic, headed by Ghulam Nabi Gilkar lasted just 20 days however, losing control to pro-Pakistani elements on October 24.

4. On 25th October several thousand Pashtun (mostly Afridi) tribesmen, organized by the Chief Minister of the North West Frontier Province and led by a few former Indian National Army officers, now integrated into the Pakistani army, and by a handful of Western mercenaries invaded the Kashmir Valley, ostensibly on a mission to free Kashmiri Muslims from "the Hindu yoke". Leaving a trail of murder, rape, plunder and arson among these very Muslims, they advanced up to about 50 km. of Srinagar.

With his small army routed, the Maharaja called for Indian help. India made Kashmir's accession to the Indian Union a condition. On 26th October 1947 Hari Singh signed the Instrument of Accession and the following day Indian troops landed in Srinagar. India and Pakistan fought their first war over Kashmir. Meanwhile the *Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF)* formed with the aim of freeing Kashmir from both Indian and Pakistani rule. When Kashmiris today speak of "regaining freedom", they refer to the rather technical freedom of 73 days (from August till October 1947), which followed on 358 years of absorption consecutively into the Mughal empire, the Afghan, Sikh and Dogra kingdoms, and finally the British empire.

The finality of Jammu and Kashmir's accession to India was, however, unmistakably conditional to ascertaining the peoples' wishes. India took the stand that the people, not a feudal ruler, should decide, and that such a decision, irrespective of whether it was based on religious or other criteria, must be binding. In Jammu and Kashmir the peoples' wishes could not be ascertained at the time, so the ruler's wishes were accepted temporarily. India thus accepted Hari Singh's decision as tentative, to be confirmed or revised by ascertaining the wishes of the people of Kashmir through a plebiscite. Various arguments and opinions have been put forward regarding this promised plebiscite under UN auspices; it suffices here to note that it has not been held. Following the United Nations cease-fire declaration in 1949 Jammu and Kashmir were split in two parts: roughly 65% to the east and south of the cease-fire line controlled by India and roughly 35% to the west and north of it controlled by Pakistan, which later ceded a small portion to China. The portion under indirect or direct Pakistani control consists of Azad

⁵Much threatening, bargaining and blackmailing accompanied the delineation of the Indo-Pakistan boundary. Well known cases are those of Junagadh and Manavadar, both of which acceded to Pakistan, and of the Hindu Maharaja of Bikaner (with his mainly Hindu subjects) who threatened to join Pakistan rather than India were his demands not complied with.

Kashmir and Northern Areas, inhabited mostly by non-Kashmiri Sunni Muslims, with Shias in pockets. The portion under Indian control consists of three areas – (a) the Kashmir Valley, inhabited overwhelmingly by Kashmiris (largely Sunni, with Shia and Hindu minorities), but also by a variety of non-Kashmiri Sunni (Gujar, Pathan, Punjabi, etc.) and Sikhs; (b) the area to the south of it peopled by various mostly Hindu communities and many Sikhs, but also with a very strong non-Kashmiri Muslim minority (Gujar,⁶ Rajput, etc.) and pockets of Kashmiri Sunni; (c) Ladakh (cf. Rizvi 1996 for an overview).

A 'New Kashmir', Contradictions and Conflict

Between 1949 and 1953 the movement for social justice continued. With the abolition of feudal rule, land reforms were the first major step taken by the *NC* government under Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah as Prime Minister of Jammu and Kashmir. Other sweeping reforms that he undertook in trying to build a "New Kashmir" (*Naya Kashmir*) in the fields of taxation and education also went down very well with most Kashmiris, who were unspeakably poor. But they antagonized wealthy Hindus and Muslims, who found their positions of socio-economic power increasingly threatened. Especially the land reforms which vastly benefited the rural masses—mostly Muslims in the Valley and lower-caste Hindus to the south of it—generated much discontent among the rural gentry of both religions. In the towns the *NC's* popularity remained high, largely because of Abdullah's adherence to the charter of *kashmiriyat*. The articulation of opposition to Abdullah and his policies was hence limited, and could not be couched in the idiom of social justice. Since, however, Abdullah was unequivocally secular, opposition could be couched in terms of religion—be this Islam or Hinduism. As mentioned earlier, politics and religion did not traditionally mix well in the Valley, but they certainly did to the south of it. With Partition, while Islamic influence decreased, that of Hindu organizations increased. While in the Valley people waited impatiently for the promised plebiscite to finally decide the future of Jammu and Kashmir, to the south, in the name of Indian nationalism the virulently communal and socially obscurantist *Praja Parishad* and the fascist *Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS)* whipped up fear among Hindus and Sikhs about renewed atrocities by Muslims, were a plebiscite to take place. They built up a plank against self-determination for the region, equating all demands for self-determination with a demand for a Muslim state.

⁶Another allied community, the Bakkarwal, migrate annually with their herds between the Valley and the areas south of it and even go into Ladakh (Casimir and Rao 1998, Rao 1995, 1998).

Largely to pacify these elements who were gaining influence in the central government the so-called "Delhi Agreement" was signed in July 1952. It spelled out the mutual limits of authority of the Kashmiri and Indian states and reneged on the promised plebiscite. Essentially, therefore, it ignored the principles of democracy and justice and denied the ethos of *kashmiriyat*; it was never accepted by the majority of the Valley's population, and Sheikh Abdullah now started speaking more openly of "self-determination" and "full autonomy". All vestiges of democracy were finally shed in 1953 with his dismissal by the Indian government on August 8th and with his arrest and incarceration on charges of treason till 1968.

Co-opting and the Lure of Money: The 1960s and 1970s

While the new government ruled with Indian help, those who had been in favor of Abdullah joined together with many who had increasingly opposed him for his own undemocratic ways to form the *Plebiscite Front* in 1958. It is widely opined that this is when many Kashmiris first started looking to Pakistan for sympathy. With Abdullah's arrest and the threat of an intensified movement towards both social justice and self-determination looming large, India adopted a new double-pronged policy of co-opting potential opponents⁷ and their families economically while crushing dissent.

Co-option

Given its small population, the Valley had a very dense structure of cross-cutting ties between trade, officialdom, artisanship, cash crop agriculture/horticulture—and politics. Hence, not only those who favored independence, but even those who felt that Kashmir should be part of Pakistan, and these included many among the Muslim landed gentry and the urban mercantile class, were—as individuals and families—part of these networks. These opponents of the government were now co-opted into the system of economic benefits, primarily through the subsidies provided by India⁸. The result was massive corruption, to which, however, little moral opprobrium attached, since the money that flowed in was considered "Indian money". This policy led to the emergence of a middle class which could not afford to be openly anti-India, while participating in a sullen but peaceful opposition to Indian rule. How passive this opposition was is evident from the meager response in 1965, during the second Pakistan-India war, to Pakistan's call to

⁷Incidentally, Abdullah and Nehru had proceeded in this manner a few years earlier faced with the Ladakhi demand for self-determination (van Beek 1998: 39).

⁸While in 1950-51 only 3.7% of the revenue was contributed by India, by 1970-71 this had risen to over 56.29%—and was to rise further to 72% by the end of the 1980s (cf. Ganguly 1997: 74, Tab. 4.1).

Muslims not to collaborate with Indian troops⁹. It was this same middle class which played a key role in the late 1980s and early 1990s, first in electoral opposition and then in the armed struggle.

Economic gains went hand in hand with political power and this in turn was now increasingly based on community-specific sentiments. Till 1947 influential men of all communities had acted as mediators and middlemen between their respective communities and other larger units at various levels of the socio-political hierarchy. With the advent of the electoral system these middlemen gradually became leaders of "vote banks". These functioned as vertical chains of patrons and clients, integrated into networks composed of these patrons, local politicians and a variety of men who made their money from various not entirely legal activities and acted as what Srinivas and Beteille (1964:167) have in another context termed "contractors". Cutting across such localized networks the wealthy and politically ambitious and influential now increasingly formed interest groups which could, however, function on the broader platform of regional politics only by projecting themselves and being projected in terms of community allegiance. Right from the start in post-colonial South Asia, collective identity couched in "cultural" terms was blatantly used for electoral purposes. In India "... caste form[ed] an important criterion in the selection of candidates ..." (Rao and Rao 1974: 454-55), so also did religion, while in Pakistan sectarian and tribal affiliations were exploited (Orywal 1998). Inevitably then, especially from the late 1960s when politics in India came to be conceived of increasingly "... as essentially an electoral game" (Kothari 1985: 5) "... the numbers game essentially became an ethnic game" (Kothari 1985: 7). In this "game" in Jammu and Kashmir also both religious feelings and affiliations and non-religious cultural traditions were used to make and break the rules and all political parties tried to determine the players. The emergence of "vote banks" led to economic resources being converted into political resources and finally, a clear consensus being created between economic power within the community and political representation in the wider framework by using sets of cultural features to temporarily create political affiliation. All this took place in a political context in which every Muslim resident of the region was expected to "prove" his allegiance and loyalty to a state which was increasingly demanding monolithic identities and affiliations and rewarding these by greater access to a network of resources.

Economic gains had percolated down to the villages, as was evident from vast improvement in food

⁹The existence of resentment is clear from the fact that among those who did help Pakistan were the sons of certain middle class families – and that some of these very men are long back in positions of administrative power in Kashmir.

availability, clothing and communication. Yet, with population growth and few new employment opportunities in the countryside migration to urban areas continued and the number of unemployed, restive youth grew. Given the government's progressive education policy, very many of these young men had higher formal education and considered themselves to be highly qualified¹⁰. Jobs were, however, limited: there was no local industry worth the name, Indian industry could not and did not invest in Kashmir, Kashmiri Muslims did not like to leave the Valley to take up jobs elsewhere, and finally, they felt discriminated against in recruitment to the "central (Indian) services".

Crushing Dissent

While at the day to day level, corruption, inefficiency and the machinations of the governments in Srinagar and Delhi effectively placed issues of social justice on a back burner, all organized political opposition was muffled and draconian laws were promulgated to deter it. Not only was Maqbool Butt, one of the major leaders of the JKLF hanged¹¹, but local opposition parties were banned or intensely harassed, and even Indian parties opposed to Congress rule in Delhi—such as the left of center Praja Socialist Party—were prevented from putting up candidates. Most later participants in the armed insurgency of the 1990s were arrested as teenagers for demonstrating, pelting stones at Government agencies, shouting "anti-Indian" or "pro-Pakistani" slogans. Hundreds of such young mostly working-class Kashmiri Muslims used to be almost routinely arrested, manhandled and humiliated. Especially in northern Kashmir youngsters were picked up as suspected spies and tortured (pers. comm. of an Indian security officer, 1988). A later General Secretary of the JKLF recalled: "While still in school I joined *Al-Fatah*, a pro-independence group, which simply wanted to remind both India and Pakistan, peacefully, [about the plebiscite]. I was arrested for the first time in 1971. I was 18 and spent nearly six months under interrogation; we were forced to remain stark naked, while our persecutors joked about our circumcised penis" (interview published in a Srinagar newspaper, 1990). In the aftermath of the 1965 Indo-Pakistan war many Gujar and Bakkarwal living near the Indo-Pakistan cease-fire-line south of the Kashmir Valley were killed and hundreds had to flee westwards into Azad Kashmir when their huts were torched by Indian army personnel, on mere suspicion of collaboration with Pakistan (pers.

¹⁰There was a tremendous growth in literacy rates between 1961 and 1981 and an equally dramatic jump in higher education (cf. figures in Ganguly 1997: 32-34, Tab. 2.1-2.3; these figures do not, however, distinguish between the Valley and other parts of Jammu and Kashmir).

¹¹He was sentenced for murder in 1968, broke jail in 1969 and was rearrested and then hanged in 1984 largely in retaliation for the murder of an Indian diplomat by another JKLF member in Britain.

comm. of several eye-witnesses and of M.M. Khajuria, later Director General Police, Jammu and Kashmir).

By the mid 1960s the idea of Kashmiri nationalist resistance had grown with the impact of events outside South Asia, such as the successful Algerian fight against French colonialism, the Vietnam war and the Palestinian struggle. But it was above all the continued harassment, persecution and complete suppression of basic democratic rights of all Kashmiri Muslims who dared to openly air their opposition to the doings of those in power which became the driving force of this resistance.

In 1972, one year after the third Indo-Pakistan war and the formation of Bangladesh, India and Pakistan signed the "Simla Accord", thus officially retracting on the promised plebiscite and explicitly blending out the wishes of the people of Kashmir. In the same year while members of the largely secular *Plebiscite Front* were arrested and debarred from standing for elections, the orthodox *Jama'at-e Islami (JI)*¹² was ensured a victory against the *NC* in five seats by the *Congress*, which declared itself a winner in 57 of the 74 seats. Apparently the notions of *kashmiriyat* and self-determination were perceived as more dangerous to Indian rule than Islamic fundamentalism. Politically the *JI* remained weak and even in 1977, in the first and last fair and free elections in Jammu and Kashmir it won only one seat. But it was working solidly in the rural areas with the help of fundamentalist preachers brought in from Bihar and after the horrendous massacre of Muslims at Nellie, from Assam. In rural areas many parents sent their children to schools run by the *JI*, since State-run schools often existed only on paper. Banned in 1975 by Sheikh Abdullah who was once again in power by now, these schools openly inculcated fundamentalist Islam and hatred and contempt of Hindus. The emotive appeal of Islam was growing and increasingly even the *NC* thought it expedient to appeal to Islamic, and even pro-Pakistani sentiments in its election campaigns. Two major reasons for the growing political appeal of religion should be mentioned: with Sheikh Abdullah's release and re-election people had looked forward to a relief from oppression, but this was not to be. With the *Jammu and Kashmir Safety Ordinance* and the *Public Safety Bill* in 1977 and 1978 respectively the government severely curtailed press

¹²The *JI* in Kashmir is ideologically close to the pre-Partition *JI* founded in 1941 by Maulana Abul Ala Maudoodi, who advocated the idea of *Nizam-e Mustafa*—a system which he felt would be in tune with what had existed when the Prophet ruled—and held that Pakistan, though a Muslim state, is yet to become truly Islamic. The parent *JI* split in 1947: The Indian branch came under *Deobandi* influence and focussed on Muslim culture, while the Kashmir branch took on an ambivalent and opportunistic posture between Pakistan and India. Its current head himself stood for elections to the Jammu and Kashmir state assembly several times, but is now the chairman of the *APHC*.

freedom, thereby blocking just about the only remaining means of expressing disagreement. Secondly, all hopes pinned on Abdullah died, as he turned out this time to be even less democratic than before, and in addition nepotistic and corrupt. As a result, secular ideals were increasingly questioned—to many Islam offered an alternative set of ideals.

Prelude to Armed Militancy — The 1980s

The developments in the previous phase impacted different communities and sections in Kashmir differently, but they all revolved around the access to resources, the perception of which was also changing rapidly. The late 1970s and 1980s witnessed increasing migration among professional Muslims to the Gulf countries and to the West. The resulting remittance economy created a *nouveau riche* section of Kashmiri Muslims whose opulent life style was disapproved of by large sections of the conservative urban working and lower-middle classes, most of whom had at least some formal education. Many of these *nouveau riche* were employed in that section of the Srinagar tourist industry which catered to Western tourists. For this entire portion of primarily Srinagar-based, Kashmiri Muslim society, the role models were non-Indian, and contempt for things Indian increasingly and necessarily came to pair with resentment and mistrust. The ready cash available also led to a great deal of land speculation and a rapid spread of urbanization. While socio-economic disparities among Muslims and discontent grew, the Muslim middle and upper classes, firmly entrenched in positions of economic power, aspired to greater political power.

Indian reaction now changed from appropriation to open confrontation. The *Congress* in Delhi, with its intensely undemocratic and divide and rule policies towards all non-*Congress* ruled areas, encouraged local fissile tendencies and used these for electoral gains. In Jammu and Kashmir, ruled by the *NC* with a primarily Kashmiri backing, this meant emphasizing differences between the Kashmiri—linguistically the majority population in the Valley on the one hand - and all non-Kashmiri (primarily the minority-cluster of Gujar, Bakkarwal and "Pahari"—cf. Rao 1999) as well as between Muslim and non-Muslim. This inevitably implied an open attack on the concept of *kashmiriyat* which was meant to embrace all communities of the region.

Between 1933¹³ and 1986 the Valley had witnessed no communal riots, not even during the Partition of

¹³In 1932 Srinagar witnessed riots between Kashmiri Muslims and Kashmiri Hindus and "many pandit families migrated to Srinagar from the villages" (*Times of India*, September 26, 1932). During one of the hearings of the *Glancy Commission* a Gujar had testified that when he went to sell milk in a Hindu home he had been attacked; another witness said how he had seen three Gujar being dragged to a temple by Hindus and then killed (KRC 1932: 43, 46).

1947; yet, ever since the Mughal Emperor Shah Jehan's time an uneasy co-existence had characterized Muslim-Hindu relations. With his decree prohibiting intermarriage between the two communities, common till then, social intercourse was greatly reduced. Now three hundred years later in public speeches Indian politicians, including Indira Gandhi, harped on the religious differences between Kashmiri Muslims and Hindus. Increasingly thereafter Kashmiri Muslims began to be excluded from key posts in the local administration and the savage massacre of Hindus in 1986, engineered it is widely felt by the *Congress*, was probably part of this policy of driving the wedge deeper between the various communities. An overall atmosphere of great mistrust between urbanized Muslims and Hindus developed. The latter were being increasingly viewed by the former as pro-*Congress*, hence pro-India and by the same token anti-Kashmir. Unquestionably, Pakistani propaganda echoed this theme and fueled these sentiments. Educated Hindus, in their turn, began to feel threatened by Muslims and even discriminated against by the government of Jammu and Kashmir; many began to emigrate to India. The government's reaction to the growing restiveness of large sections of Kashmiri Muslims was twofold: to wish it away by interpreting it as "anti-Indian" feelings created entirely by Pakistan and to counter it by stimulating the perception of threat among Kashmiri Hindus. This process led slowly but steadily to Kashmiri identity becoming synonymous with Kashmiri Muslim identity.

Kashmiris, whatever their faith, increasingly tended to try and find solace in rather fundamentalist forms of their respective religions, and a population which was still aware of its largely joint cultural identity grew increasingly conscious of the only part of this identity which was potentially divisive—religious identity. Recalling Gellner's observation (1981), a conflict which was basically between the haves and the have-nots got channeled, not into class conflict, but into a conflict that was interpreted in "ethnic" and "religious" terms. While Islamic fundamentalist organizations, largely abetted and funded by Pakistan's *Inter Services Intelligence (ISI)*, tutored and preached orthodox and often downright fundamentalist Islam, their Hindu counterparts tried to inculcate monolithic "Hinduism". In the years that followed, the invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviets ("India's friend")¹⁴, their subsequent defeat there, the Iranian revolution, the rise of the Central Asian republics with their Muslim populations and nearer home the Sikh movement for Khalistan

¹⁴The fact that India did not condemn this invasion also had far reaching consequences for Kashmir. Condemning India for its stand, the Afghan Taleban, for example, have till recently been supporting and imparting military training to men of the *Harkat-ul Ansar* (see Note 17 below). It is rumored, however, that clan-oriented/ideological splits within the Taleban (which was never as homogenous as made out to be) are impacting this support.

encouraged Kashmiri Muslims to increasingly conceive of politics and nationalism in general and their own empowerment in particular in terms Islam. An exactly parallel movement went on, especially to the south of the Valley, where the equally obscurantist and fanatic forces of the *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* and the *Bharatiya Janata Party* instilled and incited hatred and contempt among Hindus, in the name of a new nationalism. Consciously and for political purposes, several streams of identity and affiliation were thus being rejuvenated, created, stimulated or strengthened—Kashmiri vs. non-Kashmiri, Muslim vs. Hindu, etc. In the midst of all these "cultural" issues what never got mentioned in public political discourse were the issues of growing economic stratification and of political power being increasingly perceived almost entirely as an income-generating resource for individuals and small groups who had access to it.

Increasingly the younger generation felt that the older struggle led by the *NC* had not palpably liberated the people from repressive structures and brought them social justice¹⁵. With the *NC* after Sheikh Abdullah's death giving in unabashedly to blackmail and terror by the *Congress* in Delhi, most Kashmiri Muslims looked in vain for an alternative. But armed militancy was still a far cry. As a later *JKLF* Commander recalled, "In 1982 we first distributed cassettes of Maqbool Butt together with some movies of guerrilla warfare and war in Afghanistan, but the response was very poor. Even in 1987-1988 when we again tried to contact youth ...we had just ten to fifteen guns, but [there was] no response. We were given the treatment of untouchables, nobody was sympathetic" (Interview published in a Srinagar newspaper in 1990).

A Decade of Armed Violence

The fraudulent elections of 1987 dealt the final blow to non-militant politics. When the *Muslim United Front (MUF)*, a conglomeration of opposition groups for which some 60% Kashmiris cast their vote was declared defeated, most Kashmiri Muslims felt that parliamentary opposition had no chance, that justice was unattainable without "self-determination" and separation from India. Waves of strikes, assassinations, bomb blasts, kidnappings and arson hit the Valley, peaking in 1990. The components of the *MUF* formed militant wings (*Al Barq, Al Fateh, Al Jihad*, etc.), with

¹⁵Hence many militant organisations tried to ban the government celebration of July 13 as Martyrs' Day, which used to commemorate all those who died in the struggle against the Dogra cum colonial regime. In recent years, the *APHC* has tried to co-opt this ritual by holding parallel celebrations. Rejection of the older struggle was also manifested in attempts to desecrate Sheikh Abdullah's grave and in threats issued to elderly Kashmiri Muslims who had participated in that movement to face the consequences if they did not return the awards and pensions they received from the government in recognition of their earlier involvement.

weapons that were, not surprisingly, funded almost entirely by Pakistan's *ISI*. Thousands of youth took up arms in order, as one of them says, to "convey to the conscience of the world, and to Indian conscience in particular, that we Kashmiri people want to be heard" (Malik 1998). The first of these grew into the armed wing of the *JKLF*, which began by recruiting four young men (the so-called *HAJY* group) as the first batch of trainees. The armed youth trained by the *ISI*, belonged to urban families who had not managed to penetrate the existing economic networks; they were potentially dangerous, not only to the Indian state, but also to the economic fabric of Kashmir. There was growing potential for a violent movement in search of not just political but also socio-economic justice, a movement based not on religious, or ethnic allegiances, but on contesting the appropriation of resources by a chosen few.

While the *ISI* trained and armed them, these young men proclaimed that the duty of every Kashmiri was to fight a *jihad* for social and political justice. This justified extortion, kidnappings, forcible entry into Muslim homes, and even torture; for if one was not ready to take up arms, or give one's son or younger brother to the armed movement, one should at least pay¹⁶. Road blocks to collect "donations" for a variety of militia (many gave receipts) or for a local mosque were the order of the day. All this led to resentment among wealthy Muslims, many of whom began to leave the Valley and stay in India or in the West. It also ultimately led to numerous factions and even gun battles within and between the militia. The overall result was an atmosphere of intense fear and a collapse of the productive part of the economy. Yet there was no shortage of cash. Apart from Indian subsidies which continued unabated, with every call by the militants for a strike—and these were very frequent—shop owners and tradesmen were compensated, as they still are, by *ISI* funds.

Aspiring to political power, the Muslim middle class had little choice but to support the insurgents, and internal socio-economic contradictions were set aside, first in the name of *kashmiriyat* and then, following the principle of *fitna*, in the name of Islam. The call for *jihad* did, very briefly, bring together Islamism and *kashmiriyat*, till then perceived as incompatible, but it also augured the death-knell of *kashmiriyat*. The call blared forth at night from numerous mosques in December 1990, coupled with some brutal killings of Kashmiri Hindus, threats at gun point to many others, and a clear Indian campaign to depict the entire issue as a Muslim-Hindu conflict terrified the vast majority of Kashmiri Hindus into accepting Indian help to flee the

¹⁶Butchers, grocers, etc. who traditionally kept monthly or even seasonal accounts of their customers' dues were favoured sources of information regarding a household's consumption patterns and hence also about its income and other features.

Valley and live in squalor and misery to the south. With their exodus—or "migration" as it is ambiguously referred to in official parlance—the concept of *kashmiriyat* died. Another reason for its demise was that Srinagar was also largely populated by wealthy Muslim Punjabis, many of whom favoured accession to Pakistan, rather than independence. To them *kashmiriyat* meant little. A third factor was that increasingly, power within the militant groups was slipping into the hands of people from outside the Valley (mostly Azad Kashmiris) who were not culturally Kashmiri; finally, for reasons of historical and political expediency all groups continued to claim to fight for the whole of Jammu and Kashmir, not just the Valley—in other words also for the non-Kashmiri populations (cf. Puri 1987: 836, Rao 1999). The culturally binding force could then only be Islam. Last, but not least, the mystically-oriented Islam typical for the Valley and part and parcel of *kashmiriyat* was frowned upon by the *ISI* and most of the other funding agencies. In 1990 this aspect of *kashmiriyat* had been used by the *JKLF* when, in the presence of some 300,000 people, their leaders vowed at the shrine of Nur-ud Din, known to Muslims as *Alamdar-e Kashmir* and to Hindus as Nand Rishi, to lead Kashmir to independence. In May 1995 this *sufi* shrine was largely destroyed in fighting between Indian troops and *Harkat-ul-Ansar*¹⁷ militants, who had placed bombs within the shrine¹⁸.

Gradually then, the term *kashmiriyat* was dropped from the official discourse of the insurgents and more militant Islamic terminology (e.g. *jihad*, *mujahid*, *shahid*, *Nizam-e Mustafa*) took its place. Conservative religious practices also increased, though attempts to compel women to veil, men to attend Friday prayers, wear beards and ban smoking failed. Numerous West Asian style mosques (as opposed to local Kashmiri styles) sprang up, women's hair dressing saloons, girls' schools and cinema houses were forcibly closed, women's colleges burned, and bands of armed young

¹⁷This pan-Islamic militant organisation was formed between 1991 and 1993 with the merging of the Pakistani *Harkat-ul-Jihad-al-Islami* (set up in 1980 by the Jama'at-e-Ulema Islami – a virulent opponent of the *Ji* – first as an aid group for Afghan refugees in Pakistan and then to recruit and train youth to fight the communist government in Afghanistan) and the *Tehrik-ul-Mujahidin*. It does not recognise territorial frontiers dividing Muslims and was officially declared a "terrorist group" by the USA due to its alleged involvement in the World Trade Centre bombings; to facilitate continuing financial transactions it has since renamed itself *Harkat-ul-Mujahidin*. In an attempt to pressurize India to release Masud Azhar*, one of its main ideologues, who was arrested in February 1994 while illegally crossing into Kashmir, one of its sub-groups, *Al-Faran*, kidnapped and held hostage six Western tourists in 1995; it is believed that most of them were killed.

¹⁸Since 1991 at least thirteen Muslim shrines in the Kashmir Valley have been attacked and even destroyed.

men combed the lanes and bye-lanes to check on proper behaviour.

From 1990 onwards, while subjecting Srinagar to more than 100 days of uninterrupted curfew, India brought in some 400,000 military and paramilitary forces, who not only engaged the militants in open battle, but shot all suspects point blank and resorted to most brutal physical and psychological repression. Armed with supreme powers these forces indulged in unspeakable atrocities and human rights violations, which have been documented by many independent Indian and international organizations, including Amnesty International (e.g. Asia Watch 1991, IPT 1997, Rao 1991). In the following years most of the Valley's 1.5 million Muslim families grieved over some member killed, tortured, or raped; thousands were detained without trial, thousands disappeared without a trace. Hundreds of houses were plundered during "search operations" and "crack downs", innumerable families faced blackmail, extortion, and humiliation.

Islamic militia too were on the ascendant from 1990 onwards, when the anti-Soviet Afghan leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar called for *jihad* against India on August 14th, and by 1993 the issue of independence got further complicated with the *JKLF*, with secular claims being increasingly overshadowed both in military and financial might by groups intimately connected to Islamic fundamentalist groups. Notable among these was the *Hizb-ul Mujahidin (HM)*, the armed wing of the *Jama'at-e Islami*, which is ideologically close to Pakistan. Unlike the *JKLF* who aim at the independence of the whole of Kashmir from both India and Pakistan, when *HM* members spoke of independence they meant joining Azad Kashmir, which is nominally independent (*azad*) but de facto a part of Pakistan (e.g. Kreutzmann 1996: 243). Also unlike *JKLF* activists, who are predominantly urban, those of the *HM* are largely rural, or at least have strong rural connections. Perhaps realizing that the grip of the *JKLF* was fast slipping, Amanullah Khan, one of its founders, tried in June 1990, amidst most brutal state repression, to form a shadow cabinet for an independent state of Jammu and Kashmir. He invited not just Kashmiri, not just Muslims, but also the son of the last Dogra Maharaja to join. Within the Valley a handful of urban Hindus had also been members or sympathizers of the *JKLF*; their roughly 300,000 members in Western countries included Mirpuri, Kashmiri, Gujar and people of several other communities mainly from Azad Kashmir. Amanullah's efforts met with little positive response; instead there arose over the next few months a plethora of armed groups: *Allah Tigers*, *Al-Umar Mujahidin**, *Hizbullah*, *Ikhwan-ul Mujahidin*, *Ikhwan-ul Muslimin*, etc. With arms and money flowing in, internecine shoot outs and even mutually inflicted torture and murder in the Valley grew out of proportion. In May 1990 the *HM* shot and killed the then Mirwaiz of Kashmir, because he opposed accession to Pakistan; later in a show of strength it vied with the *JKLF* in occupying

the Hazratbal mosque, one of Srinagar's major mosques. By 1993, several non-Kashmiri Muslims from Afghanistan, Sudan, Palestine and Yemen owing allegiance to the Harkat-ul Ansar had entered the scene, and the *JKLF*—which still spoke of independence, rather than accession to Pakistan—had stopped receiving Pakistani help. Yet its members continued to refer to the portion under Pakistani control as "free Kashmir" (*Azad Kashmir*) and that under Indian control as "occupied Kashmir" (*Maqbuza Kashmir*). This terminology is still in use. By 1996 higher rates of service and compensation were being paid to the non-Kashmiri militants and their families than to Kashmiris who had largely earned themselves the reputation of being less committed fighters.

While the families of many militants—irrespective of group allegiance—fled to Pakistan, middle-class families increasingly emigrated, caught between the Indian forces and the insurgents. The less wealthy went to India, the wealthier to the West, to Cyprus, etc. With schools and colleges hardly functioning—a large percentage of the teachers had been Hindus—Kashmiri Muslim children went to study in India, and with the exodus of Hindu doctors increasingly Muslims who could afford it also went to India for treatment (and till today Yasin Malik, the *JKLF* head, is regularly attended to by a Kashmiri Hindu doctor in Delhi).

After Pakistani financial help to the *JKLF* ceased in favour of the *HM* the former became a prime target of the latter, and to survive it declared a unilateral cease-fire in 1994. This led to greater peace in the Valley, but also to yet another split within the *JKLF*, with many of its men continuing to fight under the auspices of other organizations (currently the *Harkat-ul Ansar* or the *Lashkar-e Toiba*¹⁹). Soon after, to curb militant infighting many militant and opposition groups joined to form a common platform, the *All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC)*, with the objective of pressing for a plebiscite. Whatever its popular image may be²⁰ this

¹⁹This is a wing of the *Jama'at-e Ahl-e Hadith* and is closely linked to the *Markaz-ul Dawat-ul Irshad*. The latter was founded in 1987. Funded by Pakistan, its members are trained by the *ISI* in Afghanistan (in camps near Khost), Pakistan and Azad Kashmir (in camps near Kotli and Muzaffarabad).

²⁰The *APHC* has earned itself the reputation of being extremely corrupt, and its major leaders—many of whom stood for elections in earlier years, even as Congress candidates—of having ill-gotten wealth. While most of this money comes in from Pakistan, some comes from Iran, as in the case of Abbas Ansari, a Shia leader, and a great deal comes from Kashmiri (and Azad Kashmiri) diasporas in the West and Middle East. When the first round of Indo-Pakistan talks began in 1998 and many Kashmiris demanded that their representatives be allowed to participate, Pakistan said it would speak on their behalf. Pro-independence protests in Kashmir were muffled and a complete strike prevented by the *APHC*, which in return received a large pay-off from Pakistan. While the *ISI* and other Pakistani organizations campaign for the *APHC* both

demonstrates that there are no clear lines between "fundamentalist" and "non-fundamentalist" groups—simply shades of grey, that represent varying strategies based on different aspects and degrees of faith and desperate attempts to fulfill personal commitments to principles of specifically Islamic justice. These are the very principles that are instrumentalised by a variety of organizations and institutions—the *JJ*, the *JUI*, the *ISI* – to fight their own battles.

Conclusion: The Simmering Volcano

A decade of brutal state repression, violent resistance and massive foreign interference have left a deep mark on every section of the increasingly fractured social fabric of the whole of Jammu and Kashmir. Continuing with its policy of divide and rule, the government recruited Kashmiri Hindus as translators/interpreters in interrogation cells and members of various non-Kashmiri Muslim communities either as informers or as members of armed counter-gangs (e.g. Vinayak 1994; Sidhva 1995).²¹ Individual Gujar were also recruited to help the government plan the elections of 1996 in Jammu and Kashmir, in which, it is now generally accepted, the people were physically forced to vote (e.g. Balagopal et al. 1996). But the extent to which even the seemingly united Kashmiri Muslim society in the Valley has been impacted is clear from the frequency with which Indian security forces have been called upon by individual Kashmiris to intervene, threaten and harass fellow Kashmiris with whom they have some personal score to settle. The massive deployment of 'ex-militants'²² or 'counter-insurgents' as members of the government's *Special Task Force* and *Special Operation Group* licensed to raid any house, pick up anybody for interrogation and even summarily kill anyone suspected of being anti-government is partly possible due to this social rupture and is also exacerbating it. Pakistan's role as savior has increasingly been questioned, and many young militant leaders are no longer heroes, as is

locally and internationally (e.g. through numerous internet sites), it should be noted that the *APHC* is neither homogenous, nor do all its constituents favor joining Pakistan.

²¹Two major such outfits are composed of Gujar. One, the *Taliban* (not to be confused with those of Afghanistan), originally formed by a major Gujar politician to protect himself and his family from attacks by anti-India militants and living off smuggling timber, operates mainly in tandem with the *Rashtriya Rifles*, an unit of the Indian security forces. The second such outfit, the *Muslim Liberation Army*, is known to be close to the *Congress*. Both groups are very active in identifying and suppressing all anti-government activities.

²²These ex-militants subscribe to no particular ideology and had either surrendered or deserted their respective groups because of pecuniary considerations or prolonged inter-group fighting. Many Kashmiris also say that some of these men are members of the *NC*, who were recruited by Indian Intelligence agencies to penetrate militant networks and even sent to Pakistan for military training.

evident from the problems they are having in finding suitable wives. However, all this does not mean that any section of the population of Jammu and Kashmir merges its identity with that of the Indian state; India is hated, as perhaps never before.

As of writing, the Indo-Pakistan war in Kargil is over and fresh elections are due in September 1999, with the *National Conference*, the *Congress*, a new party the *Peoples' Democratic Party* and other smaller parties joining the fray; the *APHC* has, predictably, called for a boycott, though there are strong rumours that there is much disagreement about this within their ranks (there were certainly many in the *JKLF* who wanted to participate in the 1998 elections but were overruled by the leadership). In the last elections in Jammu and Kashmir in 1998, where people voted much more voluntarily than in 1996, the official battle lines were drawn between the *National Conference* on the one hand and various other parties on the other. Electoral tactics seemed a complex mixture of attempts at access to resources, preservation of identity and basic survival. A Kashmiri Muslim, Abdul Rashid Kabli, contested from Srinagar as a candidate of the *Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)* which openly represents communalist Hindu sentiments, while another Kashmiri Muslim, Deen Mohammad Cheeta, formerly of the *National Conference*, who left the Valley a few years ago for Jammu was also the *BJP's* candidate from Baramulla. In other parallel developments the *BJP* had successfully recruited ex-militant Kashmiri Muslims in the Valley who, it is said, were refused tickets by the *National Conference* because of their unusually brutal past²³; the *JKLF* also claimed to have received in its folds a couple of ex-*BJP* members in the Jammu region.

There are few open battles now in the Valley, but draconian laws (e.g. Ronga 1999), indiscriminate killings, torture and rape continue, as do attacks by militants (roughly 60% pan-Islamic and non-Kashmiri) on military and other government installations and cash flows and propaganda from Pakistan. India and Pakistan are apparently still not convinced that there can be no military solution to 'the Kashmir Problem'. In India, even those who condemn human rights violations by the state rarely conceive of the Valley's separation from India, and especially after the Kargil war few are critical of the Indian forces, not only for their brutality, but also for their massive corruption (timber trade, pay offs for supplies, rumored sale of ammunition, etc., to militants, etc.). The legal system has practically collapsed and very few of those incarcerated for years have been put on trial; even those who have been tried

²³These are men who first belonged to the militant outfit *Ikhwan-ul Muslimin* under the leadership of the dreaded Yusuf ("Kuka") Parray and were then recruited by the government as "counter gangs" (e.g. Sidhva 1995) or "counter insurgents"; they have now formed the *Awami League* which was supported by the *BJP* in the elections of 1998.

and found innocent have been rearrested on fresh charges. The Kashmir Government claims that "normalcy" has been largely restored, and indeed, on the surface it has—this time with the active and brutal help of rural ex-militants and with enormous sums of cash doled out by India as pay-offs to powerful individuals, groups and even entire villages.

In Kashmir there is a growing sense of betrayal by Pakistan, especially after the Kargil withdrawal, and to maintain credibility Pakistan must keep up the pressure. Most Kashmiris still speak of their dreams of "self-determination" and the establishment of a society that is "in keeping with Islamic values". The definitions of both terms defy political expediency and regional and global economic and power networks. Terminologically they symbolize the near impossibility of reconciling the various idioms that have marked the struggle in Kashmir: Islamic values, Kashmiri identity and justice. Justice in Kashmir can not be attained along religious categories, especially if the whole of Jammu and Kashmir is considered. *Kashmiriyat* and Islam apparently also do not pair well, nor can a specific Kashmiri identity be valid for all the communities in the area²⁴. Till Kashmiri leaders of various political persuasions have the maturity and honesty to come to terms with these contradictions and stop simultaneously blackmailing India and Pakistan while playing into their hands for short-term benefits, "self-determination" will for those who have known only injustice and humiliation remain a diffuse, though increasingly violent longing for a more equitable world.

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²⁴Several international (e.g. the Dixon Plan) and local plans (e.g. the recent "autonomy" plans) have been put forward to grapple with these cultural differences and aspirations; most try and find a solution in various kinds of partition of Jammu and Kashmir. According to one plan, which is said to be favoured by the United States but rejected by China, the Kashmir Valley should become independent, while Jammu and Ladakh continue to be part of India and Azad Kashmir and the Northern Territories part of Pakistan.

C.S. 1914a Letter from the Revenue Minister, His Highness, the Maharaja Sahib Bahadur, Jammu and Kashmir State, Srinagar to the Chief Minister, Jammu and Kashmir State, Srinagar, dated, the 10th of September, 1914 (Liability of Bakarwals crossing over to Gilgit to sell sheep and goats to the Supply and Transport Dept., Gilgit). Jammu: Jammu Archives, C.S. Old Records, File No. 221/A-9 of 1914.

C.S. 1914b Letter from the Revenue Minister, Jammu and Kashmir State, Jammu to the Chief Minister Jammu and Kashmir State, Jammu, dated, the 21st June, 1916 (Exclusion of Foreign Bakarwals from Frontier Districts). Jammu: Jammu Archives, C.S. Old Records, File No. 221/A-9 of 1914.

C.S. 1914c Copy of a Letter No. 306, dated Jammu, the 21st January, 1916, from the Settlement Commissioner Jammu and Kashmir State to the Revenue Minister, Jammu and Kashmir State (Bakarwals). Jammu: Jammu Archives, C.S. Old Records, File No. 221/A-9 of 1914.

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AUTHOR'S POST SCRIPT: *The founder of this group, Mushtaq Ahmad Zargar, along with Masud Azhar and another man were released by India in exchange for the hostages held on the hijacked Indian Airlines plane in December 1999.

