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Dynamics of Social Fabric of Sialkot City: the Case of Anjuman-i-Islamia since 1911.

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Abstract

Every human society as a collective whole is segregated into different sections comprising of so many contesting interest groups determining their identity-relations on ethnic, religious, sectarian, lingual, regional, professional, etc., basis. How these segregated and contesting sections of Society live in interdependent homogeneity; how the people adjust, assist and treat one another in multitude of relationships and interests; are the questions that constitute the nature of social fabric in any given society. Other than power oriented governmental structures, major part of social relations is developed voluntarily and is maintained through volunteer social organizations. In South Asia the culture of such organizations grew rapidly during the British colonialism. One popular idea of such organizations emerged t in the form of religious and sectarian organizations and associations. During the first half of twentieth century, thousands of such religious and sectarian Anjumans belonging to different religious denominations can be found functional in South Asia. Among the Muslims two popular forms of such Anjumans were Muslim Leagues and Anjuman-i- Islamia, established in different parts of South Asia independently.

The purpose of this paper is to explore the role of Anjuman-i-Islamia, Sialkot of Punjab Province of Pakistan that was established in 1911 in the social fabric of Sialkot city. How the Anjuman-i-Islamia was formed, determined its role and consummated it in the formation of social fabric of Sialkot; are the questions to be explored in this paper. Based on the archival studies, mixed method interviews, participatory observations, chronological analysis and inferential and referential methods are used to conclude the paper. The paper concludes that although the Anjuman developed a very strong social fabric of religious communal ties through social participation and welfare agenda, it developed segregation between different religious communities and the trend continued even after the formation of Pakistan.

Introduction

Every human society as a collective whole is segregated into different sections comprising of so many contesting interest groups determining their identity-relations on ethnic religious, sectarian, lingual, regional, professional, etc., bases. In that sense, society is a glued product of the associations, institutions and multitude of evolving social relations. These myriad interactions and relations are the warp and weft of the fabric of society. These warp and wefts of society hold society together and goad it to the desired ends. However, this nature of society is essentially developed and continuously complemented by human past recorded in History. How these segregated and contesting sections of society live in interdependent homogeneity; how the people adjust, assist and treat one another in multitude of relationships and interests constitute the nature of social fabric in any given society.¹ Other than power oriented governmental structures, major part of social relations is developed voluntarily and is maintained through volunteer social organizations.

Social fabric is a cementing force; a glue that holds a society together. It is an interwoven texture that supports the society to hold for long and thus includes under its umbrella all the societal

¹ R.M. Maciver and Charles H. Page, *Society: An Introductory Analysis*, 1st ed. (London: Macmillan & Company Limited, 1950), 5–8.

relationships of the individuals as well as the collective cooperative organizations such as home and family, biradari, ethnic descriptors, religion, moral code, economic, educational, training and legal systems and the state etc. The study of a social fabric enables us to understand the basic woven structure of a society so that we may at length explore the longevity, strength, consistency and the inner force of the given society. It also enables us to know the rooted differences and the corroding elements that may come to surface and demolish the edifice. Alan Wells throws light on the nature and development of economic, political, artistic institutions, marriage and kinship ties and the role of religion in a society.² The study of social institutions is a study of a unique human phenomenon. The collective behavior and relationships of individuals compose social institutions which are expressive as well as instrumental for furthering the society's demands and aspirations. These are social institutions that form the social structure. The more comprehensible and enduring relationships a society manifests, the more it stands against the heavy odds of life. Robert Bierstadt believes that geographical and biological factors affect society, and form the contents of culture.³ R.M. Maciver and Charles H. Page expand the nature of social fabric to all major social codes, including religion and morals, customs and law, fashion and custom, types of social groups, primary groups, ethnic and racial groups, great political and economic associations, social class and caste, the technological and cultural factors of social change and the reality of social evolution.⁴ The same sort of approach is adopted by Alan Wells.⁵ However formation of such intuitional fabric is always influenced by political and economic relations and interests. Social relations and institutions forming the core of the social fabric are supported and administered by political culture and administration. Although separated from functional political institutions, social institutions reflect episodic political functions or interactions through apparently non-political activities such as scientific disseminations, public welfare, professional training, religious organizations and factions and on the bases of numerous

² Alan Wells, *Social Institutions*, 1st ed. (London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd, 48 Charles Street, 1970), 1–10.

³ Robert Bierstedt, *The Social Order*, 1st ed. (London: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc, 1957), 63-65,98-100,168-169,171.

⁴ Maciver and Page, *Society: An Introductory Analysis*, 169.

⁵ "The Social Fabric of a Society - Organic Society - by Plinio Correa de Oliveira," accessed December 23, 2019, https://www.traditioninaction.org/OrganicSociety/A_103_Fabric.html.

points of cohesion.⁶ This process is supported by economic cohesion. The economic institutions play their active role not only in the well-being of the masses but also shape and change the political will of the people. In the developing countries caste system or sectarian relations form the core value in societal activities and social relationships. It is the basic element of social fabric that shapes the other political, ethnic and economic systems of a society.

In South Asia the culture of such organizations grew rapidly during the British colonialism. One popular idea of such organizations emerged as a trend in the form of religious and sectarian organizations and associations. During the first half of twentieth century, scores of such religious and sectarian Anjumans belonging to different religious denominations can be found functional in South Asia. Among the Muslims two popular forms of such Anjumans were Muslim Leagues and Anjuman-i- Islamia were established in different parts of South Asia independently.⁷

The purpose of this paper is to explore the role of Anjuman-i-Islamia, Sialkot of Punjab Province of Pakistan that was established in 1911. By 1911, three Muslim Anjumans were functional in Sialkot city: Anjuman Madrasst-ul-Quran, Anjuman Taid-ul-Islam and Shaban –ul-Muslimin.⁸ On 21st of November, 1911, all three Anjumans were merged into one to form a homogenous Muslim Anjuman Islamia Sialkot. How Anjuman-i- Islamia was formed; how the anjuman determined its role and what the role it played in the formation of social fabric of Sialkot are the questions to be explored in this paper. Based on the archival studies, mixed method interviews, participatory observations, chronological analysis and inferential and referential methods are used to conclude the paper. The paper concludes that although the anjuman developed a very strong social fabric of religious communal ties through social participation and welfare agenda, it developed segregation between different religious communities and the trend continued even after the formation of Pakistan.

⁶ Duncan Watts, *Pressure Groups*, Illustrated Edition. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 2–51.

⁷ Muhammad Shafique & Naumana Kiran, 'Muslims of South Asia During Colonial Period', in Khuram Qadir, ed., *Islamic History and Civilization South Asia*, IRCICA, Istanbul, 2020, pp. 353-398

⁸ Punjab Government, *Gazetteer of the Sialkot District 1920*, vol. XXIII-A (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 2005), 57.

The paradigm of this analytical study is qualitative in its nature as the non-numerical data has been used for deductions of the potential conclusions. Inductive approach is used to make deductions about the community base outcomes. The research related to the socio-religious cum political and educational role of the anjuman in the social fabric of Sialkot is an inter-disciplinary study which required primary and secondary sources on the history, society and politics of the city. This paved the way for historical method of research and analysis. With the assistance of various research tools documentary and non-documentary sources have been employed such as books, gazetteers, essays, newspapers, interviews, field visits and other relevant sources to reach the conclusions .

The first hand testimony is the book and the pamphlets published by the Anjuman-i-Islamia Sialkot that contain most of the record of important meetings of the anjuman since its inception and its several modes of activities. The old magazines and the prospectus of Jinnah Islamia College contain the record of the college to a large extent. The Darul-Shafqat situated on the other corner of the school is the orphanage that is working since more than a century has a detailed record of the orphans which are being accommodated by the anjuman. Moreover, for the well acquaintance of the demography, the socio-religious history and politics of Sialkot city the gazetteers, books, newspapers and other relevant material have been consulted from the local libraries. The semi-structured interview conducted with the old veterans of the anjuman and the senior citizens un-wrapped the old and hidden aspects related to this mother anjuman in the city.

2. Sialkot: A Promising Space or ‘City of Opportunities’.

Sialkot is a city of antiquity having a long trail of history during which it has been ruled by the Hindus, the Muslims and the Sikhs and the British ⁹ According to the census report of 1911, Sialkot was placed at second position in the province of the Punjab in terms of industrial growth.¹⁰ It had become a prominent sports articles producing city of the North-Eastern Punjab

⁹ Munshi Amin Chand, *A History of the Sialkot District*, 1st ed. (Lahore: The Central jail Press, 1874), 1–3.

¹⁰ Government, *Gazetteer of the Sialkot District 1920*, XXIII-A:27.

adjacent to the State of Jammu & Kashmir.¹¹ Although the Muslims were in majority in district Sialkot yet politically and economically the Hindus and the Sikhs led the bridles of the socio-political control of the district as per the Gazetteer of 1920. The Muslims were lagging behind in all walks of life.¹² Sialkot, being an important industrial hub of the country was called the ‘Japan of India’¹³ before independence and now it is called the ‘City of Opportunities’.¹⁴ The cataclysmic reduction in the population due to the large scale migration of the Sikhs and the Hindus who belonged to the working as well as the executive and top political brass of the city was soon filled successfully by the Muslims. After the independence the focus of conflict turned to internal elements within Muslim-fold like the inter-sectarian conflict and the question of Ahamadi community rose to prominence.

As per the census report of 1891, the communal population followed as:

Serial No	Community	Population
1.	Muslims	6,69,612
2.	Hindus	3,71,265
3.	Sikhs	49,872
4.	Christians	11,668
5.	Jains	1,696

The Sikhs stood at 3rd position in the table as regards to their numerical value but their social, economic and general position in the district was much more powerful as compared to the majority Muslims and the Hindus. The enumeration of leading families of the district mentioned

¹¹ Ibid., XXIII-A:29.

¹² Ibid., XXIII-A:171–96.

¹³ Darbara Singh, *The Punjab Tragedy*, 1st ed. (Amritsar: Steno Press, 1949), 241.

¹⁴ “Profile – The Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry,” accessed May 3, 2024, <https://scci.com.pk/profile/>.

in the Gazetteer of 1894-95, the Sikhs are on the top of the list. All the six families mentioned belonged to the Sikh community.¹⁵

Well before the partition the commercial and business activities were mainly done in the Trunk bazar, Budhi bazar, Bara bazaar, around Samaj Chowk and Drumman-wala Chowk. The Hindus and the Sikhs owned more than 300 shops in the Bara bazar. Doctor Gurbakhsh Singh, father of Kuldip Nayar, an eminent Indian journalist practiced in the Trunk bazaar while Hakeem Lala Beli Ram ran an ayurvedic clinic in the Budhi bazar.¹⁶ The Hindus and Sikhs had captured two-thirds of Sialkot's shops and trades. They paid more than 70% of the city's urban taxes, as it is evidenced from the fact that they paid Rs. 132,870/= as sales tax against only Rs. 25,311/= paid by the Muslims. They paid income tax Rs. 115,542 against Rs. 310,000 paid by the Muslims who formed over seventy per cent population of the city.¹⁷

The first decade of the 20th century is marked with the uncertainty, insecurity, poverty and social suppression for the Sialkoti Muslims. They had no educational institution even at matric level in the city. The Christians were running educational and health care institutions. The Sikhs and the Hindus had their own high schools. The only one college in the district Murray College was administered by the Scotch Mission.¹⁸

Now, the 'city of opportunities' Sialkot, situated in the North East of Punjab bordering Indian held Jammu and Kashmir, is the third largest export center after Karachi and Lahore and 12th largest most populous city of Pakistan. It has the highest per capita income as compare to other Districts. It is an important industrial hub of the country. It has four Tehsils Sialkot, Daska, Pasrur and Sambrial. According to the census report of 2017, total population of the district is 3, 894, 938.¹⁹ Before 1993 District Narowal, tehsil Zafarwal and Shakargarh were the part of district Sialkot. The population of Sialkot is blend of migrants and natives,

¹⁵ J.R. Dunlop Smith, *Gazetteer of Teh District Sialkot 1894-95*, Revised. (Lahore: Civil and Military Gazetteer Press, 1895), 83.

¹⁶ Khalid Khalil, "Oral History of City Sialkot after Partition," July 7, 2022.

¹⁷ Ilyas Ahmad Chatha, "Partition and Its Aftermath: Violence, Migration and the Role of Refugees in the Socio-Economic Development of Gujranwala and Sialkot" (University of Southampton, 2009), 71–72.

¹⁸ Government, *Gazetteer of the Sialkot District 1920*, XXIII-A:54–61.

¹⁹ "Pakistan Bureau of Statistics," accessed June 6, 2024, <https://www.pbs.gov.pk/census-2017-district-wise/results/052>.

biradarries like Gujjars, Awans, Jats, Kashmiris, Rajputs, religious ethnic groups like the Muslims, Christians, Hindus, Sikhs, and Ahmadis, Sunni, Shia and Ahl – Hadith sects, labor and industrialists. All the groups are lending their vital role in the development of the city as well as the country. They are living in harmony and peace and intra faith tolerance exists ideally in the district. There are numerous holy shrines which are revered by all the communities.²⁰

The political scenario of post partition Sialkot is marked with the long lasting impacts of pre-partition political affinities of the prominent Muslim personalities. Pakistan Muslim League remained as the dominant party. Majlis-i-Ahrar tried to gain grounds on the basis of Khatam-i-Nabuwat Movement but its impacts did not last long. The political factions led by Abdul Ghani Ghumman (Republican Party) Khawaja Muhammad Safdar, Mureed Hussain Shah, Muhammad Sarfraz Goraya (Muslim League), Nasir Din (Awami Muslim League), Mian Masood Akhtar (Pakistan Peoples' Party), Faiz-ul-Hassan Shah (Majlis-i-Ahrar) and Chaudhry Akhtar Vario had tremendous impacts on the city as well as the district political scenario. The religio-ethnic factor led by the religious scholars like Hafiz Muhammad Alim (Brelvi sect), Muhammad Ali Kandhalvi (Deobandi sect) and Muhammad Ali Janbaz and Ibrahim Mir (Ahl-e-Hadith sect) had their own voice. Hafiz Muhammad Alim contested general elections as well as for the Jammu & Kashmir migrants' seats in Azad Jammu & Kashmir govt. The biradari politics during and after party-less elections of 1985 ultimately with the dexterous adjustment of the biradarries led to the resurrection of PML after the Bhutto magic waned.

Before the partition the Hindus and the Sikhs had strong hold in all affairs of the city life. The cataclysmic reduction of other communities than the Muslims changed the whole dynamics and parameters of politics in Sialkot. The Muslims of the city had been divided in three political parties; the Muslim League, the Majlis-i-Ahrar and the Unionist Party. The Deobandi were active members of the Majlis-i-Ahrar and this city was called, "Bald-ul-Ahrar" (The city of Ahrars). During and after partition the prominent socio-political leaders of district Sialkot were: Khawaja Hakim Din, Agha Ghulam Haider, Khawaja Muhammad Safdar, Mureed Hussain Shah

²⁰ Shamas Ali, "Religious Ethnicity in Pakistan: A Case Study of Sialkot" (University of Gujrat, 2017), 78.

Abdul Ghani Ghumman, Faiz-ul-Hassan Shah, Chaudhry Sarfraz Goraya and Chaudhry Nasar Din. Anjuman-i-Islamia was the main social anjuman and politically the Muslims were divided in Pakistan Muslim League and Majlis-i-Ahrar. The Majlis-i-Ahrar had opposed the creation of Pakistan and they were deadly against the Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Ahraris like Maulana Manzoor Ahmad and Qari Abdul Rahman mouthed filth on Muhammad Ali Jinnah.²¹ After the partition they had lost the political grounds for future political activities. During the first phase of Tehreek-i-Khatam-i-Nabuwwat in 1953 the religious segment of society especially the Ahraris tried to gain political footing too but it proved to be temporary phase. They even insulted blatantly Khawaja Muhammad Safdar. The background was political rather than religious.²²

Moreover, the flood of the immigrants from Jammu and Kashmir and the large scale migration of the Hindus and the Sikh communities to India created a great vacuum in all the spheres of urban as well as the rural life of the region especially Sialkot city.²³ The focus of the actively working political party Muslim League and officials of newly formed government was to settle the issue of migrants. The contention of ‘agreed’ and ‘non-agreed’ migrants created by the provincial govt. under Mamdot led to grave uncertainty.²⁴ Within the city Anjuman-i-Islamia the only Muslim organization was active at that time. On 25th September, 1949 the Deputy Commissioner Rehabilitation wrote a letter to the anjuman to nominate the representatives of the city and after detailed discussion a sub committee was formed comprising Khan Asmat-ullah-Khan, Muhammad Jamil Usmani and Ghulam Mustafa Amratsari. Khawaja Muhammad Safdar of Kashmiri biradari opposed the use of the anjuman for political activity but the President Khawaja Hakim Din gave his ruling in favor of representation of the anjuman for a welfare cause of the migrants.²⁵ These internal conflicts gradually rose. Shaikh Karamat Ali who belonged to

²¹ Munir Ahmad Munir, *Un-kahi Siyasat* (Lahore: Mahnaama Aatish Fishan, 2016), 19.

²² *Munir Inquiry Report* (Lahore: Naya Zamana Publications, 14 -B, Temple Road, 2010), 264.

²³ Ilyas Ahmad Chattha, “Partition and Its Aftermath: Violence, Migration and the Role of Refugees in the Socio-Economic Development of Gujranwala and Sialkot Cities, 1947-1961” (2009): 160–161.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 232–33.

²⁵ M.Yousaf Qamar, *Tareekh-e-Anjuman-e-Islamia Sialkot*, 1st ed. (Sialkot: Shoba Nashr-o-Ashaat Anjuman-e-Islamia, 1966), 76.

Narowal and practiced law in Shaikhupura became the member of the First Constituent Assembly of Pakistan representing the North Eastern Towns of the Punjab province in the Central elections of United India in 1945.²⁶ However Anjuman remained nonpolitical during the elections.

In the political arena of the city, the rival leadership of Anjuman-i-Islamia could not gain much political power although Khawaja Hakim Din (President of the anjuman from 1944-1968) had a strong hold on the anjuman but the Anjuman was dominated by the Ahraris. The political field was dominated by the Muslim League. The differences between Khawaja Muhammad Safdar and Khawaja Hakim Din widened with the passage of time and ultimately Khawaja Safdar abandoned Anjuman-i-Islamia and patronized Anjuman-i-Iqbal which in turn established Allama Iqbal College at Hakim Khadim Ali Road, the 2nd Muslim college in Sialkot city after Jinnah Islamia College which had been established in 1951 by the Anjuman-i-Islamia under Khawaja Hakim Din.²⁷ Anjuman-i-Iqbal also established Qaumi High School in the city on self-help basis as the Anjuman-i-Islamia had already established Islamia High School Sialkot in 1915. Khawaja Hakim Din did not take part in active politics on provincial or National level.

2. Anjuman-i-Islamia Sialkot

Anjuman-i-Islamia is a unique Muslim Anjuman of Sialkot. Its efficacious endeavors and cardinal role in strengthening the Muslim Community since its inception at the start of the 2nd decade of the 20th century is undeniably important. Its multi-faceted services including the education of the Muslim males and females, Muslim social coherence, strong advocacy of the Muslim cause before partition during the tight political and economic control of the Sikh and Hindu communities are highly commendable. The Anjuman-i-Islamia established the first Muslim High School, the first Muslim College in Sialkot and first organized Muslim Orphanage which is still working since more than one hundred years. The Anjuman-i-Islamia played pivotal role in gluing and strengthening the social fabric of the city. This analytical study has used mixed

²⁶ "1st Constituent Assembly.Pdf," n.d., accessed May 3, 2024, <https://na.gov.pk/uploads/former-members/1st%20Constituent%20Assembly.pdf>.

²⁷ Qamar, *Tareekh-e-Anjuman-e-Islamia Sialkot*.

method approach to explore the vital role of the local anjuman for the Muslim inhabitants of Sialkot on the critical juncture of their history. Several new platforms emerged from this mother anjuman like the Anjuman-i-Iqbal, the Anjuman-i-Sheikhan and played their role in the development of the present social fabric of Sialkot city.

In 1911 three Muslim anjumans were working in the Sialkot city: Anjuman Madrasst-ul-Quran, Anjuman Taid-ul-Islam and Shaban –ul-Muslimin.²⁸ On 21th of November, 1911, at the wake of political turmoil in British India and Muslim dissatisfaction over Annulment of partition of Bengal, a new anjuman with the amalgamation of the three Anjumans Anjuman Islamia Sialkot was established. In its first administrative committee, there were forty members. Agha Muhammad Safdar, a political activist, played a key role in the formation of the anjuman.²⁹ He was chosen as the first General Secretary of the Anjuman-i-Islamia Sialkot. The first meeting of the anjuman was held on 3rd of December 1911.³⁰ It was basically a social welfare volunteer body. The Anjuman declared that *‘the Muslims of the district Sialkot are informed that for the education of the Muslims, for care of orphans, for other useful matters and security and protection of the nation this anjuman has been established.’*.The Anjuman set its objectives very diversly with an aim to make it’s a more influential body among the Muslims. Its objectives were :

1. To arrange the affiliation of already established anjumans and create new ones in the district Sialkot for the establishment of male/female schools and training of the Muslims.
2. The central office of the ajuman will be in city Sialkot and other anjumans will be established as per need arises. Any already established anjuman can become its branch on the condition that this anjuman accepts its affiliation and its objectives are not against this anjumans’ objectives.
3. To Exert utmost effort for the care of the poor and the orphans

²⁸ Government, *Gazetteer of the Sialkot District 1920*, XXIII-A:57.

²⁹ Ashfaq Ahmad Niaz, *Tarikh-e-Sialkot*, 3rd ed. (Sialkot: Niaz Academy, 2003), 518–20.

³⁰ Qamar, *Tareekh-e-Anjuman-e-Islamia Sialkot*, 19.

4. To reform and do welfare of the nation: to reform the bad traditions, preaching and spread of Islamic education, protection of the women and the poor, interfaith harmony and security of the Muslim Auqaf.³¹

The Role of Anjuman-i-Islamia in Sialkot

The Anjuman as a communal body played its role in various terms. This role can be divided into different phases. Although the major task was community services in social, cultural, economic, educational and political terms, yet, first phase seems to be dominated by Aligarh legacy focusing on education. However, simultaneously, the anjuman continued to play communal-political role.

Education and Community Organization

The initial phase of the anjuman Islamia is a critical period as regards to its extensive vision and financial difficulties it faced in its inception era. Basic idea was community organization through the formation of volunteer body. For an organization setup was established. Maulvi Mir Hassan, the prominent religious scholar of the Sunni sect, the teacher of famous poet/philosopher Allama Muhammad Iqbal was chosen as the president of the anjuman.³² He vigorously ran a move to increase the membership to remove the financial hurdles. Maulvi Ibrahim Mir was a renowned religious scholar of Ahl-e-Hadith sect.³³ He was entrusted with the responsibility of fund raising and recovery. The butcher biradari of Sialkot lent a unique helping hand in this connection. They declared that 2 paisa per cow slaughter, 01 paisa per goat slaughter and 01 anna on each skin of animals would be deposited in the fund. The butcher biradari also gave heavy funds for construction of the mosque. In 1915 collection of flour movement from every Muslim home was

³¹ Muhammad Afzal Deura, "Qawaid Anjuman-i-Islamia Sialkot (Implemented since 1913)" (Office Anjuman-i-Islamia Sialkot, 1999).

³² Niaz, *Tarikh-e-Sialkot*, 246–51.

³³ Muhammad Ansar Javed Ghumman Dr Maulana, *Sawaneh-Hayat Maulana Hakeem Muhammad Sadiq Sialkoti: Ta'ruf-o-Khidmat*, 1st ed. (Sialkot: Markaz Nasr-ul-Islam , Pakki Kotli Toheed Town Daska road, 2023), 156–61.

started by the anjuman to meet the rising expenditures on the educational projects. The account of the anjuman was first opened in the post office and then shifted to the Punjab National Bank Limited. The membership of the Anjuman was not limited to any sect. Sunni, Shia and Ahl-i-Hadith were the members of the Anjuman.

By the establishment of the Anjuman the students of madrassa Anjuman Taid-ul-Islam and Madrassat-ul-Quran were merged in Islamia Primary School Adda Shahbaz Khan adjacent to the mosque and the central office of the anjuman. In 1915 the education department registered the school and it was upgraded to the level of High School. By 1920, the number of students had reached to the limit of 700, all Muslim in the school.³⁴ In the city through a drum beater it was announced for the Muslim community to get their children admitted in the exclusive Muslim school. The establishment of the exclusive Muslim school was a big achievement of the Anjuman-e-Islamia. An initiative was taken to fix donation boxes on the walls at different places of city for all those philanthropists who wanted to donate for the construction of building for Islamia High School. The foundation stone of Mir Hassan Hall was laid in 1925. At this juncture, three primary schools had been established under the supervision of the anjuman: K.D. Islamia Primary School, Railway Islamia Primary School and Tibba Islamia Primary School. Till the partition only this school catered the educational needs of the Muslim community in the city at Matriculation level. Its extension was done in very difficult financial conditions. Meanwhile due to acute shortage of funds the Anjuman tried to hand over the primary school which was running under its administration to the Municipal Committee but it was not accepted by the Local Government authorities. In 1929, for the education of the adults, a night school was also inaugurated under the auspicious leadership of Hakim Muhammad Shafi in Mubarikpura.

After the establishment of Pakistan the Arya High School was turned in to Muslim High School and the anjuman took its charge and spent thousands of rupees on its repair, maintenance and extension. From April, 1947 the Islamia Girls High School had been running under the administration of the anjuman till 1972 when it was nationalized. This school was established by

³⁴ Government, *Gazetteer of the Sialkot District 1920*, XXIII-A:57.

the ‘Anjuman Muslim Khawateen Sialkot’ but the Anjuamn–i-Islamia on the request of the Anjuman Muslim Khawateen took it under its supervision and ran it successfully till its nationalization.

Murray College Sialkot was established by the Scotch Mission in 1889 and the Muslims of this region had to get higher education there. There was no Muslim led college in this region. The Anjuman-e-Islamia in its resolution of 1939 set a goal of establishing of a Muslim college in Sialkot and a committee under the president-ship of Molvi Muhammad Ali was formed. The committee consisted of Khan Sahib Shahabuddin, Khan, Mian Akbar Ali, Khawaja Hakim Din, Sayyad Mazhar Hussain, Malik Sardar Ali, Mian Fazal Ahmad, Haji Sheikh Ahmad Din, Sayyad Jafar Ali Shah, and Moolvi Abdul Rahaman to look into the matter and submit report. The process delayed due to the hectic years of the Pakistan Movement and the lack of funds. After the partition, the Hindu-Sikh Muslim civil war led to severe carnage and great exodus. Sialkot had to accommodate millions of migrants from Jammu & Kashmir and the East Pakistan. The district became a border city and the administrative, economic and political systems of the city collapsed.

The announcement for the establishment of the Jinnah Islamia College ultimately led to the realization of the dream of the Muslim on 4th May, 1951. ‘Madar-e-Millat Fatima Jinnah’ laid its foundation stone. Khawaja Hakim Din president Anjuman-e-Islamia convened a meeting and it was decided to admit all the students in the college who passed matriculation from Islamia High School Sialkot. A committee consisting of Khawaja Hakim Din president of anjuam, Khawaja Muhammad Safdar, Khawaja Muhammad Jamil, Muhammad Shafi Rasheed and Khan Bahadur Muhammad Yousaf Hashmi Retired Principal of Calcutta College was formed to gear up the process. It was decided to spend the entire collected amount on college. The amount was deposited in the Sialkot Cooperative Bank Limited. The college had no play-ground. The anjuman wrote a letter to the Chairman Municipal Committee to allow the students to use the Jinnah Park ground. The public donated luxuriously and soon the anjuman as able to extend college boundaries in the donated land and prepare its own ground.

The college Fund week was conducted. A procession was arranged. The bands of Ahrar, Islamia School and Muslim League led the procession throughout the city which had been divided in fifteen parts for collection of funds along with the students of 6th to 10th classes and the administrative council of Anjuman-e-Islamia. On 3rd of August, 1951 the administrative council of the Anjuman-i-Islamia appointed Muhammad Faizan, Chaudhry Mukhtar, Abdul Qayyum, Muhammad Ibraheem Nayyar, Irshad Ahmad, Muhammad Asghar Sodayi, Fazal Ilahi as professors and Abdul Ghafoor as physical instructor. Afterwards the professors of political Science, Philosophy and Arabic were appointed.

The University of the Punjab granted affiliation to the college within two years of its establishment. The government issued grant of Rs.50,000/= for the college in 1954. In 1955 the administrative council of the anjuman allocated Rs.18,322/= for the extension of the college building. In 1956 the owner of National Rubber Factory Sheikh Inam Ilahi donated Rs.2500/= for the gas plant in the Science Laboratory. In 1956 the college magazine “Shahab” was published. Afterwards its name was changed as “Kawish”. In the annual convocation of 1961 the Finance Minister of Pakistan Muhammad Shoib was invited. In 1962 Medical Science was started in the college and the construction of a medical block was started. In 1963 the under construction college hall was named after the President of the anjuman, Khawaja Hakim Din. In this way his untiring services were recognized by the administrative council of the anjuman. In 1965 a 25 member Governing Body of the college was elected. The Khawaja Hakim Din hall was completed in 1968. The college entertained the students from all over the district from Shakargarh to Daska and Head Marala to Qila Kalarwala. Within 20 years of its inception it had become the central college whose enrolment had reached above two thousand comprising the Muslim community of Sialkot district. The sole role of the anjuman for the educational uplift of the Muslims strengthened the social fabric of the Muslim community throughout the pre-partition era. Its services were not limited to any sect or denomination of the Muslim community. Until the nationalization of the educational institutions of the anjuman the institutes had been considered purely Muslim institutes where regular morning assembly was conducted with the

recitation of the holy Quran and the sermon by the teachers of Arabic and Islamic studies. The students who got education from Jinnah Islamia College were called ‘Islamians’ in the society.

All the schools and the college established by the anjuman were nationalized in 1972. The anjuman afterwards concentrated on the arrangements for the poor and the orphanage. The anjuman at present is running Dastkari School, Darul-Shafqat (Orphanage, children residing and getting education in the orphanage are trained technically too for prospects of better future. A boarding house was also established for the students who belonged to far-off localities) and a madrassh housed in its central office at Adda Shahbaz khan Mohallah Chiragh Pura Sialkot, a free dispensary, Markazi Eid Gah, Islamic Education Foundation, Religious Library, Dar-ul-Afta and a T.B. Drug Bank.

The very basis of the anjuman was religious rather than political and religious class was dominating the anjuman. Therefore, alongside the educational services, religious activity was the permanent part of the Anjuman’s activities. The founders of the anjuman were religiously motivated. ‘Shams-ul-Ulema, Molvi Mir Hassan, Maulana Ibrahim Mir, Muhammad Shafi, the real founder of the anjuman in 1902, Sayyad Rasool Shah and others desired to disseminate social and educational services on communal grounds only for the Muslims. The orphanage and the madrassa which are continuously running since more than one century are testimony to the unparalleled religious services of the anjuman. The support of the Khilafat Movement was also on religious grounds. On June 3rd, 1927 the Deputy Commissioner Sialkot wrote a letter to the Anjuman to deliver the reformation sermons to the prisoners in the jail. Maulvi Muhammad Ali, a teacher of Islamic Studies was appointed for this purpose.

In July 1927 the Anjuman passed a resolution to establish department of preaching of Islam. Therefore, a newly converted Hindu Sita Dev whose Muslim name was Maulvi Muhammad Masood was appointed as preacher and was paid out of the Anjuman’s funds. Maulvi Mir Ibrahim Sialkoti, a renowned Ahl-e-Hadith religious scholar led the move to face all the onslaughts of the Christian and Hindu adherents. Rajgopal, a publisher published a book “Rangeela Rasool” which contained sacrilegious and insulting remarks about the Holy Prophet

Muhammad (SAW). The Muslims all over India expressed their deep sorrow and agitated against this act. The Muslims of Sialkot expressed their grief through a condemnation resolution passed by the Anjuman-i-Islamia. Many non-Muslim embraced Islam due to the preaching efforts of the anjuman.³⁵

The Political Assertion

The formation of a communal organization was the part of the communal politics and Anjuman played a role in communal politics. The Anjuman during this period took part in agitation against the prostitution and the Non-Cooperation Movement under the Khilafat Movement as it was the sensitive religious issue. Agha Muhaammad Safdar, the first general secretary of the anjuman was arrested and jailed for three years due to taking active part in the Khilafat and Non-Cooperation Movement.³⁶ For the first time the students were allowed to take part in the Eid Milad Procession so as to show the common strength of all the Muslim denominations.

During the 1920 decade the communal violence in India had been escalating. In 1927 the Anjuman-i-islamia expressed its deep concern on the rising tide of inter-communal violence before the Commissioner Lahore and the Deputy Commissioner Sialkot and demanded the permission to Muslims to keep sword with them as the Sikhs had the permission to keep ‘Kirpan’ as their religious marker. In 1930 the anjuman picketed the area adjacent to the school where the brothel houses had been working and having bad effects on the youngsters and students of the Islamia School. The president of the Anjuman Chaudhry Muhammad Amin as a convener of the committee with the assistance of Hakim Abdul Latif, Ch. Gulab Din, Sheikh Zahoor Ilahi, Haji Fateh Muhammad and others did a miraculous job successfully and de-rooted the brothel houses from the vicinity.³⁷ In 1931 the Muslims of the state of Jammu and Kashmir faced worst kind of atrocities of the state machinery and the Hindus. The anjuman took active part in the resistance movement and on several forums protested against it. The movement of the Majlis-e-Ahrar was fully supported by the members of the anjuman. Although the anjuman was dominated by the followers of Ahl-i-Hadith sect, in 1932 when the police flogged the Shia

³⁵ Munir, *Un-kahi Siyasat*, 39.

³⁶ Niaz, *Tarikh-e-Sialkot*, 519.

³⁷ Shaikh Abdul Wahid, “Oral Accounts of Sialkot History after Partition,” March 8, 2022.

participants of the procession of Muharram, the anjuman passed a condemnation resolution against this act and sent telegrams to the Viceroy and the Governor. After partition the issue of large scale Muslim migrants from the state of Jammu & Kashmir and the East Punjab was faced by Sialkot which had become a border city over night. In 1949 the Commissioner for Resettlement of the Refugees sought the help from the anjuman. The anjuman formed a committee to cooperate with the district administration. The political representation by the anjuman related to the Muslim Community has much importance as the All India Muslim League till 1944 had no solid footing in Sialkot.³⁸

The period 1944-66 is marked by the presidency of Khawaja Hakim Din, the president of the Anjuman. This is the hyper active period because of the Pakistan Movement and the services lent by the Anjuman, the political division among the members of the Anjuman and other important aspects of the history of Sialkot.³⁹

The Anjuman-i-Islamia as an organization did not take part in the Movement for Pakistan. The members of the anjuman who were activists in the All India Muslim League had bitter feelings on this issue. Khawaja Hakim Din remained president of the anjuman from 1944-66. The anjuman totally came under the influence of the followers of Deobandi and Ahl-e-Hadith sects. The majority of the political leadership of both the sects opposed All India Muslim League and the ideology of Pakistan. Therefore, soon after partition the Muslim Leaguers slowly kept them aloof from the anjuman. Anjuman-i-Iqbal was established by them which in turn established the Allama Iqbal College for boys Hakim Khadim Ali road (The College has now been turned in to women college by the government) and Qaumi High School (Established in 1951) in Ramtalayi. However during the 1953 Khatm-e-Nabuwat Movement the members and the office bearers of the anjuman in their personal capacity actively took part in the movement. Hakeem Abdul Latif, Maulana Ibrahim Mir, Muhammad Ali Kandhalvi, Maulana Muhammad Sadiq and other fully supported the Khatm-e-Nabuwat cause.⁴⁰ In the Indo-Pak war 1965 and 1971 the anjuman

³⁸ Muhammad Arshad Tehrani, *Quaid-e-Azam Ka Daura-e-Sialkot*, 1st ed. (Sialkot: Maktaba Bazm-e-Afkar, Chowk Imam Sahib, 2021), 42.

³⁹ Qamar, *Tareekh-e-Anjuman-e-Islamia Sialkot*, 11–125.

⁴⁰ *Munir Inquiry Report*, 259–67.

accommodated the people who had been displaced and in the orphanage admitted the children. In the Jinnah Islamia College the full fee concession was granted to the students belonging to the war affected areas.

Yet the sectarian outlook of the Anjuman after the partition created a distrust on the Anjuman and alternate plate farms began to emerge. These plate farms were established more on ethnic basis than communal. The Anjuman-i-Sheikhan was established in 1963. This anjuman too was established by some members of Anjuman-i-Islamia who wanted to organize the Sheikh biradari on caste base. This anjuman is too an off-shoot of the Anjuman-i-Islamia. Anjuman-i-Sheikhan is running Al-Sheikh Jinnah Memorial Teaching Hospital in Sialkot. There is close coordination between Anjuman-i-Islamia and the Anjuma-i-Sheikhan.

Conclusion

After the formal fall of the Mughal Empire in 1857, the phenomena of the establishment of Muslim welfare associations became prominent. Although aiming at the consolidation of Muslim society, the phenomena represented in essence a strong communal divide in South Asia. These Anjumans primarily had regional and local outlook without any British Indian context, yet the idea of the Muslim brotherhood remained central to the mutual cooperation and welfare. Generally influenced by the western hegemony and impressed by the British knowledge and sciences, the central focus of such Anjumans was education and communal harmony, taking a slight break from the traditional education of religious Madarsa, and incorporating modern western scheme of Knowledge to compete with the culture of time. However, the communal base seems to be converting into sectarian ground very soon after the partition. Even some of these Anjumans including Anjuman-i-Islamia did not support the creation of Pakistan and aligned themselves with the Pan-Islamists. Resultantly, the sectarian divide in Pakistan began to widen yet, the educational and welfare services of such Anjumans remains beyond question. The consistent efforts of the Anjuman-i-Islamia strengthened the Muslim social fabric of Sialkot City in British India. The education and social welfare contribution of the Anjuman is a hall mark for the economic development and structural growth of the city through educational development. Although, the anjuman is considered as a non-political association, still it played a vital political

role through non-political slogans. Standing with the Ahrar's was ultimately standing against the All India Muslim League. Simultaneously, political participation of the members and leaders displayed a political role in one way or other. The alignment with the local government was linked primarily with the governmental agenda and support. As a whole, the role and contribution of the Anjuman remains very positive and constructive in educational and social services. The modern outlook of the regional locale seems clearly defined by such Anjumans, yet communal drive had a segregational impact on the society first among the communities and after the partition among sects. The sectarian outlook make the role of the Anjuman limited and offered alternate regional, ethnic, sectarian, commercial spaces and associations to interact and communicate social needs.

Yet the sectarian outlook of the Anjuman after the partition created a distrust on the Anjuman and alternate plate farms began to emerge.

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