



The Emergence of the British India Islamic Nationalism in the United Province

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Abstract

At the end of the 19th century, South Asia subcontinent was ruled by British Empire. After the Mutiny in 1857, British India Islamic nationalism appeared among British Indian Muslims. In this social context, the Muslims in the United Province which located in northern India grew the United Province to be a strong political vanguard. The Muslims in the United Province carried out political activities positively, established political parties, and disseminated their political ideology around the whole British India. At last, the Muslims in the United Province united most of Muslims in British India to fight for their rights.

Key words: The united province; Muslims; British India Islamic nationalism; Emergence

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INTRODUCTION

In eve of the 20th century, capitalism has been developed in India, Hindus and Muslims increasingly dissatisfied with the British rule. After the Mutiny in 1857, Britain turned to divide and rule policy gradually, in order to separate the Hinduism and the Islam and control the whole South Asia subcontinent. Under this ground, the Muslims

in British India carried out a series of political activities to fight for their political rights, among which the Muslims of the United Province were the most active grothe United Province. But, what was the specific situation of the United Province? And what threats did the Muslims of the United Province face? These two questions would be discussed as follows.

There were two views for the study of these problems. One was that the divide and rule policy, and religious differences between Hinduism and Islam were the main reason for the British India Islamic nationalism. For example, the book written by Chen Huanyi, “*The British Labour Party and the division of India*”, hold the view that the British invaded into India and provide Zamindars permanent tax in different parts of India, and by stepping the United Province the collection of land tax to plunder the wealth of India. It is the Britain’s predatory aliened that promote the modernization of Indian society, so the revolution was occurred in India and Muslim community. (Chen, 2004)

Another view was that the main reason for the rise of the British India Islamic Nationalism was Muslims’ need to build a common nationalism to fill the absence of nationalism imagination. Lan Jiang’s paper “The Rise of India Islamic Nationalism” held the view that faced with British rule, religious and cultural conflicts among Hindu and the Indian Muslims, the absent of nationalism imagination, Indian Muslims built their own national imagination by introducing modern western knowledge and education systems (Lan, 2010). Deng Hongying’s paper “Islamic Nationalism in India: The Relationship between Islam and Nationalism” had suggested that the Indian Muslims were different varying from race and language to religion compared with the Hindu, but in the religious reforming movement, the Indian Muslims connected their own interests with the interests of sectarian, so that promoted the unity of Muslim society. In addition, the Indian Muslims organized several religious

meetings to discuss the religious issues, and strengthen the Muslim identity, so the Islamic Nationalism in India had risen. (Deng, 2008)

These statements were related to the social conditions of Indian Islamic nationalism in the 19th century. The Muslims in the United Province played a mainstay role in the political movement among the Indian Muslims, so this paper aim at studying on the social situation of United Province as start to find new methods, and enrich research about the British India Islamic nationalism.

1. THREATS TO THE MUSLIMS OF THE UNITED PROVINCE IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY

All the provinces of the British India suffered varying degrees of oppression from British Empire at the end of 19th century. The United Province suffered such kind of threats more or less. As one of the most active Islamic Nationalism in province in the British India, except British divide and rule policy, the United Province was affected by a number of other threats.

1.1 Education Problems

The biggest threat to the United Province Muslims elite was education. The British colonial government tried to introduce western education, which threatened the religious beliefs, social customs, and political status of Muslim elite.

The United Province was located in the northern area of the South Asia subcontinent, unlike the coastal provinces, there were few Europeans. The merchant did not use English for business, courts did not write judgment in English, civil servants did not require to master English knowledge. Most people went to private schools. "If Muslim tend to enter the government, they do not need too many. Nobody wants to do 'translate' work for British rulers." (Francis, 2008, p.34)

However, with the British colonial government adjusted education policy, an increasing number of Muslims in the United Province went to public schools, which attacked the traditional Muslim private school seriously. Since the middle 19th century, the local government was trying to expand its influence on education during Thomas James period. Such as government schools in Halkabandi, rewarded self improvement. Moreover, a lot of attention was attracted by public elementary and secondary schools, so that "Until January 1861, there are more than 83,000 boys in public school. Until January 1880, the number of students increased to 224,000 in public schools." (Ibid., p.35)

Along with the development of education, curriculum had been changed. In colleges, stressed more on Western learning, English was the teaching medium. The courses in British India were loyalty to the British Empire (Metcalf,

1965, pp.124-126). Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit were hardly taught in public schools.

For the Muslims in the United Province, despite such changes took place in public schools and courses, the Muslim civil servants families could not ignore the public schools. The Muslim civil servants families' fates were relied on British India government's employment, those who did not attend public schools were difficult to enter government. Syed Ahmad Khan considered that: "In fact they are so antipathy towards Western that Muslims regard learning English as embrace Christian." (Francis, 2008, p.38) As a result, the development of education institutions among the United Province Muslims was quite slow.

1.2 The Exclusion of Bureaucracy

Before Bureaucracy reform, Muslims, Kayaths, Kashmir Brahmins mainly consisted of local authorities, of which Kashmir Brahmins monopolized the special law, complex real estate management system and the official language Persian. This system was effectiveness. The British India government still ignored its subjects and still did not interfere with the powers of the contractors, still could not able to profit from taxes. However, this system no matter effective in the 19th century. Therefore, the British India government began to reform Bureaucracy.

Since 1855, the British India had government implemented the records of connections to prevent the formation in districts of cliques of relatives in public service, including two measures. The first measure was introduction of the caste system or the proportion of public in recruitment system. In 1860s, this principle applied to police system, were used in local tax system and the judicial system in 1837. The second measure was the introduction of education accreditation system. Since 1860s, police officers had to access to cultural examination. From 1874, the tax collector must have rigid examination. From 1882, the munsif had to pass the lower standard examination and could not expect promotion until he had past the higher standard examination. From 1877, a pass in the middle class vernacular examination was made an absolute preliminary condition of appointment to any office of Rs. 10 and above. From the 1890s, those who wished to become a tahsildars or naibtahsildars had to pass the University Entrance examination. All these changes attacked the longstanding monopolies in the public service (Ibid., pp.34-42).

However, the British India did not have mixed race, and religious obviously different. Modern education in the sense did not progress or cause the same proportion of care among segments of the population. In this case, Hindus monopolized the most position, leaving the Muslim as dependent status. Abdul Latif also strongly opposed to the purposes unified electoral system and examination system in Legislative Council and municipal. Such variations were not suitable for British India and the

various conflicting interests, which British India Muslims did not wish to see.

In addition, British India's Governor McDonnell said that Muslims in British India were the culprit that leading to social unrest, it was very necessary to cut the Muslim staff in the British India government. British India's Governor McDonnell described the Muslim staff in the British India government as "fanatics" and that the Muslim staff in the British India government incited Muslim movement of British India in order to ensure that Muslims staff in British India government were not be cut (Ibid., p.43).

Therefore, British India's Governor McDonnell took a series of political reforms for the United Province Muslim: for example, fixing communal quotas for employment in the United Province government service to the Muslims in the United Province. The Muslims in the United Province were appointed in the ratio of three to five Hindus: an arrangement which British India's Governor McDonnell thought to be very liberal. As a result, it was more difficult to enter the United Province government for Muslims in the United Province, Muslims in the United Province which in fact retarded their political career.

1.3 The Prevalence of Electoral Politics

On the eve of the 20th century, under the divide and rule policy, and Indian National Congress Party' request, district elections was implemented Hindus and Muslims, the population size, and the population proportion determined the number that entranced to British India government.

It had different influence on Muslim elite who were in the town to introduce the electoral politic. One reason was that the number of informal Hindus in municipal was more than electoral institutions. The other reason was that the principle of elections needed to consider more reality.

Member of the non-official municipal did not have real power. It should be recognized that the government carefully controlled the freedom of municipal and its non official members' influence. It declared that the principle of self government developed steady with the plan, if the principle meet the need of public safety and happiness. If non official agencies wanted to become the dominant, it was necessary to win the United Province officials' support.

However, the competition for places on the municipal board, wealth had the advantage, which was disadvantage to the Muslims in the United Province. The 1883 Municipality Act gave the vote to men of substance with incomes ranging from Rs. 120 to Rs. 500 or houses rated from Rs. 12 to Rs. 60. The qualifications for candidates were three times as high. The system almost universally was regarded as hatred and fear by the Mohammedans and by the conservative class of the Hindus. (Ibid., p.57)

But the electoral politics did not suitable for British India. Cause this kind of system was based on a united

nation, and the same culture. Once Sir Syed Ahmad Khan had considered that British India was not an unified nation, there was no uniform education, thus the introduction of a representative could not be expect to produce any good results, it could only lead to the hinder the peace, stability and prosperity of the country, and make the people in the advanced enslaving the "backward part" (Lin, 2004, p.184).

Therefore, the enlightenment activists in the United Province required that Legislative Council members at all levels were not elected but appointed by the British authorities; if applied common election, Muslims and Hindus should be given the equal quota. In 1890, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan recruited 40,000 Muslim in 70 cities to sign a letter to British House and required that the Legislative Council should give more seats to Muslims in British India. Latif's Muslim Literary Society also made the same requirement. In addition, they argued that officials were not qualified through examination, instead of being appointed by the British authorities. Special care also requested to appoint Muslim in British India, and give them more opportunities to hold public service, which in order to counterpoise with Hindus (Ibid., p.187).

2. THE RISE OF BRITISH INDIA ISLAMIC NATIONALISM IN THE UNITED PROVINCE

In the beginning of 20th century, Great Britain promoted Hindi as the official language in British India, which aimed at long term dividing Hindus and Muslims and made Sir Syed Ahmad Khan for the first time recognize that "the Hindus and Muslims could not be a unified nation, and it is impossible to serve two nations at the same time." (Rahim, 1976, pp.250-251)

In 1860s, many the United Province People Community differentiation gradually. Islam and Hindu less concerned for the well being of the people in the South Asia subcontinent, but gave more attention to their highly respected community. The number of special joint societies was decreasing. The institutions led by Sir Syed Ahmad Khan could not stop the invasion of Community. Hindu members in Aligarh Social Scientific began to pursue their own progress and Nagari resolution. This made Muslims and Hindus against each other. In an interview of Benares committee before British India established in 1869, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan talking about pure Muslim purification for the first time, he said that from this moment, he threw himself on behalf of Muslims' interests (Francis, 2008, pp.97-98).

Apart to language disagreements, British India Islamic Nationalism also reflected in politics. When Sir Syed Ahmad Khan made efforts to continue the Muslim elite interests within Urdu interests, he create British Indian Muslim political center.

Firstly, the publication of Aligarh Institute Gazette, when faced with the problem of free subscription in the independent college, he gathered Muslim leader from Urdu elite. They were members of the family of civil servants, some of which came from the old court in Delhi as Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. They were success civil servants from the government in the United Province or Hyderabad.

Among them, there were Syed Mahmoud Khan, he is Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's son, and was a local judge in Allahabad High Court, novelist Nazir Ahmad, and mathematician Zakauallah; Chiragh Ali, he was one of the United Province porters who favored Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's Religion views, the poet Hali, he wrote, Maceda, and narrative poem *The Development and Decline of Islamic* published in Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's Testament, and had inspired a generation of Indian Muslims. They all realized that their own political influence was decreasing. The most important two people were civil servants in Hyderabad, Mohsin ul Mulk, and Viqar ul Mulk, these two civil servants led the Aligarh College in 1920s. Most of them worked for Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's educational goals, so they became the core leadership of the Muslims in the United Province (Ibid., pp.123-124).

Secondly, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan expanded the influence of Alighr College in British India by establishing the Muhammad Educational Association in 1886. In order to solving the problem of education, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan tried a variety of methods. His purpose was to coordinate the various solutions in different district, persuaded them to obey Alighr approach. Mohammed Education Association emphasized that reform the public education in order to make Muslims easy to accept it, and provided more opportunities for Muslims; urged the British India government to introduce religious education in government primary school, and rewarded Muslims advanced English language education. In addition, shortly after Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's proposal, the funds of private schools in different parts of British India should be transferred to Aligarh approach, but this attempt had failed. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan not only adopted a similar program, but from 1898, discussed and decided to establish a Muslim university in Aligarh city every time during the meeting. Aligarh College was led by Muslim

leader of the United Province, which was the arena collected with creative among the Muslims, resulting in the British India Islamic Nationalism. Muhammad Educational Association was the means to spread British India Islamic Nationalism to the Muslims in other parts of British India, which was created by Muhammad leaders (Ibid., p.125)

CONCLUSION

The Muslims in the United Province developed toward British India Islamic Nationalism in late 19th century undeniably. In fact, the rising of the nationalism movement was largely driven by England policy. As Strachey said, apart from the usual divide and rule policy nothing could be against British India government's policies and university practice (Ibid., pp.131-132). In addition, the United Province was under threat from all aspects, including education change, the bureaucratic system and the threat of elective government, so the Muslims urged to fight for their right. What is more, there were a large number of political activists led the nationalism movement in the United Province, among which Sir Syed Ahmad Khan established Aligarh Institute and it became a guide in the British India Islamic nationalism trend.

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