The estate proved to be the first place for the reconstitution of organized religion. While men well-versed in Islamic knowledge generally did not leave India, there were a few who arrived and served a full or abbreviated indentureship: Syed Abdul Aziz of Jere Village came to Trinidad in 1883 from Afghanistan; Ruuknudeen Miah, a Punjab of Tunapuna, arrived in 1893; and Hafiz Nazuddaen of Tunapuna came to Trinidad in 1913. These were some of the indentured immi-
grant Hindus who assisted in the reconstitution of Islam. The unlettered immigrants depended upon these learned men to nurture their faith, either on the estate or in the villages. At some estates, for instance that of Watertown, there were mosques, or ‘bamboo sheds near to the barracks where Muslims met nightly to read their prayers and read the Qur’an (Faiz Ali, interview with ex-
indentured immigrant, 26/02/1998).

As village settlements developed, circa 1870, every village or set of villages established its own mosques with imams. John Morton, a Presbyterian missionary, noted in his diary that mosques began to appear as early as the 1860s as ‘nice little buildings with galvanized roofs’ (Sarah Morton, John Morton of Trinidad, 1916). Former immigrants and their descendants, once they became prosperous, built mosques, usually made of wood. The mosques that sprang up throughout India-Muslim settle-
ments were primarily male bastions of worship until circa 1928. It was at that point that the females of Peru Village (St. James) began attending certain special mosque activities, such as the ‘id-ul-Fitr and ‘id-ul-Adha prayers. By the early 1900s, mystical (religious classes) were held in the mosque compound. These classes were taught by imams or elderly learned men of the district, imparting the rudiments of Islam to young boys and girls. Classes included such subjects as Arabic, Urdu, prayers, and other basic Islamic knowledge. Prior to the establishment of madrassas, young boys and girls were socialized into Islam by emulation and by the knowledge imparted by their parents and grandparents. In some instances, this practice continued even after young girls began attending madrassas.

From the early twentieth century, Muslims began forming religious groups that would cater to their specific needs. These groups pressed for the recognition of Muslim marriage, the right to establish their own schools with state recognition, encouraged Islamic education. These religious organizations all sought state recognition, first as Friendship Societies and later as incorporated bodies. The first among the multiple religious organizations to be formed was the Islamic Guardian Association (IGA) of Princes Town in 1906. This group was organized by Syed Abdul Aziz, an ex-
indentured labourer from Afghanistan, who had settled in Jere Village near a Presbyterian mission. Aziz was also instrumental in the establishment of the East Indian National Asso-
ciation (EINA), an all-Indian pressure group, in 1916. As a believer in Muslim unity, Aziz, along with his peers to declare his position as either Sunni or Ahmadi. Ali refused to condemn Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, a religious leader who had been invited to Trinidad by local Muslims in 1921. Durrani left in 1923 and within a few months, Ali, by his encouragement, left for the Ahmadyya Anju-
man Islam-i-tul-Islam Institute in Lahore. Ali returned to Trinidad in 1930 and mouvi and immediately became involved with the TIA. He introduced a spirit of inquiry into the faith and preached Islam in a confrontational, new thought and scientific discoveries. For instance, he propagated that Jesus was dead and that he was not taken up to Heaven alive and as such could not return, and that the miraj (succession) of the Prophet Muhammad (u.w.b.p.) was not in conformity with the ethos of purdah veil or curtain of separation as expounded by the Qur’an. Furthermore, he advocated equal privileges for women in order to aid in the social development of communi-
ty. He also spoke, without condemnation, of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, a nineteenth century founder of the Ahmadyya movement in India. Traditionalists (Sunnis) at the time were less than pleased to see the movement come to Trinidad to make a name for itself. Ahmad was accused of being a recipient of revelations, the Promised Messiah and mahdi (the One Rightfully Guided). Much of his preaching ran counter to the beliefs and interpretations of the faith as understood by the Sunni. The ideas introduced by the mouvi met with a storm of opposition. He was forced by his peers to declare his position as either Sunni or Ahmadi. Ali refused to condemn Mirza Ghulam

and it was therefore assumed by the traditionalists that he was indeed a secret believer of his creed. He was consequently accused of being a kafir (unbeliever) by the tra-
ditionalists. By 1931, a schism developed within the TIA as a result of these varying ideologi-
cal positions. Again, lectures were the medium used to consolidate the varying stances and increase the number of followers. From circa 1914, the TIA was again plagued by tension, litigation and injunctions resulting from disputes over the rightful claim to leader-
ship. This led to a split in the TIA and the sub-
sequent formation of the Trinidad Muslim League (TML) on August 15, 1947, the same date as the partition of India and Pakistan. The