Muslims against the Muslim League

CRITIQUES OF THE IDEA OF PAKISTAN

Edited by
Ali Usman Qasmi | Megan Eaton Robb

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The popularity of the Muslim League and its idea of Pakistan has largely been measured in terms of its success in achieving the end goal – creation of a sovereign state in the contiguous Muslim majority regions of North West and North East India. This has led to an oversight of various Muslim leaders and organizations which were opposed to this demand, predicating their opposition to the League on its understanding of the history and ideological content of the Muslim *qaum* (nation). This volume addresses the gap in academic literature by taking stock of multiple narratives about Muslim identity formation in the context of debates about Partition, historicizes those narratives, and reads them in the light of the larger political milieu of the period in which they were being shaped and debated. Focusing on the critiques of the Muslim League, its concept of the Muslim *qaum*, and the political settlement demanded on its behalf, this volume goes beyond the machinations at the level of high politics to how the movement for Pakistan inspired a contentious, influential conversation on the definition of the Muslim *qaum*.

This volume adds to the canon of works on the history of the Muslim League, Jinnah's politics and the creation of Pakistan. It focuses on the voices of dissent coming from political leaders, religious organizations, 'ulemas and activists who offered, with varying degrees of success, alternative visions and critiques of the idea of Pakistan.

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The idea for this book project was initially conceived in August 2014. It has taken more than two years of work to bring it to completion at a time when India and Pakistan prepare to celebrate seventy years of Independence. This timely contribution, we hope, will enable a sombre reflection on the critically important concepts of Indian nationalism and Muslim nationhood, and the continued relevance of these debates and ideas in the contemporary period.

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Introduction

Ali Usman Qasmi and Megan Eaton Robb

Speaking at a huge gathering in Delhi during the 1940s, Ata Ullah Shah Bukhari, the fiery leader of Majlis-i-Ahrar, a religio-political organization known for its radical anti-colonialism and as an ally of the Indian National Congress, narrated an anecdote. A mother gave 4 *annas* (a quarter of a rupee) to her son, Muhammad Ali, to fetch kerosene from the shop around the corner. The lad went to the shop and asked for 4 *annas* worth of kerosene. The shopkeeper filled the oval shaped clay pot to the brim. 'Won't you give me a *chunga* with this?' asked the boy.[1] The shopkeeper replied, 'The pot is full; where should I put the *chunga*?' The boy upended the pot and pointed towards its opening. The shopkeeper obliged and put the *chunga* there. The boy went home and handed over the pot to his mother. Surprised that there was hardly any oil in the pot, the mother asked, '*Beta* [my son] Muhammad Ali, only this much oil for 4 *annas*?' Muhammad Ali boasted: 'No mother, look there is a *chunga* with it as well.' A wry smile appeared on Bukhari's face as he concluded in front of the massive audience, held spellbound by his oratory: 'This Pakistan triumphantly presented by Muhammad Ali Jinnah as a solution for Muslims who are a quarter of India's population is also like this *chunga*.'[2]

This was Bukhari's rhetorical contribution to the debate on Pakistan. More seriously, he talked about the impracticality of the two wings of the proposed Muslim state being separated by thousands of miles of an 'enemy territory' of

[1] Pronounced *chūnga*: a token gift of little value, such as candy, that shopkeepers used to give to customers.

[2] This anecdote has been passed on to generations of Ahrar workers living in Pakistan. It will be difficult to find documentary evidence for the exact words spoken by Bukhari, the venue of this public gathering, or the date on which the speech was delivered. This is primarily due to the self-censorship imposed by Ahrar members. It was narrated to Ali Usman Qasmi during the course of his ongoing field work focusing on the history of Ahrar.

Hindus. Such a solution, he said, would divide the strength of South Asia's Muslim population, deprive them of their claims to the heartland of Indo-Islamic civilization in North India, and for the first time since the age of Ashoka give ownership of a vast empire to Hindus.[3] Bukhari was not the only leader, nor Ahrar the only religious or political organization, to raise such concerns. The Azad Muslim Conference held in April 1940, just a month after the passage of the famous March resolution demanding separate Muslim states, was a massive gathering of Muslim organizations opposed to the Muslim League's demand for a Pakistan based on its two-nation theory.[4] It was attended by delegates from Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind,[5] Majlis-i-Ahrar,[6] the All India Momin Conference,[7] the All India Shia Political Conference,[8] Khuda'i Khidmatgars,[9] the Bengal

[3] Some of these ideas have been referred to in the collection of Bukhari's speeches compiled by Sayyid Muhammad Kafil Bukhari titled, *Pakistan men kia ho ga? Khutbat-i-Amir-i-Shariat Sayyid Ata Ullah Shah Bukhari* (Multan: Bukhari Academy, 2014). The rest – for example, the reference to Ashoka – are anecdotal, for which documented reference is difficult to find.

[4] Shamsul Islam, *Muslims Against Partition: Revisiting the Legacy of Allah Bakhsh and other Patriotic Muslims* (New Delhi: Pharos, 2015), 77. The brief profiles of the political parties and organizations which were part of the Azad Muslim Conference have been compiled from Shamsul Islam's *Muslims Against Partition* and K. K. Aziz's *Public Life in Muslim India, 1850–1947* (Lahore: Vanguard, 1992).

[5] In English, this translates as 'Organization of Indian Muslim Scholars.' It was founded in 1919 at a conference held as part of the Khilafat Movement in support of the Ottoman Empire. It eventually developed as a religio-political organization of 'ulama associated with the Deoband seminary with a pro-Congress political affiliation.

[6] Also known as *Ahrar*, meaning 'the free ones' in Arabic. *Majlis-i-Ahrar* can be translated as 'the party of the free.' Founded in 1929 and comprising anti-colonial nationalists and pro-Congress 'ulama, Majlis-i-Ahrar was largely based in urban Punjab.

[7] The Momin Ansari, or simply Ansari, are a Muslim community located in West and North colonial India, and in the area corresponding to the present-day province of Sindh. The first Momin conference was held in 1928. It represented the interests of economically backward Muslim artisans and weavers in North India, especially in Bihar.

[8] It was established in 1929 by leading Shi'a landlords and lawyers from UP. It was one of the convenors of the Azad Muslim Conference in 1940 with its general secretary, Mirza Zafar Hussain, playing a key role in this regard. The conference failed to have an impact on the election results in UP since many of the prominent leaders of the League – including Muhammad Ali Jinnah himself – were Shi'a and disputed the Conference's claim to represent the interests of Shi'a Muslims.

[9] In English, this translates as 'The servants of God.' Founded by Abdul Ghaffar Khan – popularly known as Badshah/Bacha Khan – who was closely aligned with the Congress,

Krishak Praja Party,[10] Anjuman-i-Watan Baluchistan,[11] the All India Muslim Majlis,[12] and Jam'iat Ahl-i Hadis.[13]

Yet the demand for Pakistan put forward by the Muslim League was immensely popular and eventually successful. One measure of the Muslim League's popularity is the 1945-6 election result. The League won 453 of 524 Muslims seats in the central and provincial legislature. It secured about 75 percent of the total Muslim vote in India while, in the elections held in 1937, it had secured less than 5 percent. In Punjab, it defeated and unseated fifty-seven Unionists from Muslim rural constituencies, the Congress from nine rural constituencies and the Ahrar from five urban seats. The Unionists defeated the League in only eleven rural constituencies. The League polled 65.10 percent of the votes polled in the Muslim constituencies of Punjab, with a final tally of seventy-nine out of eighty-eight seats. It did even better in Bengal, where it secured 83.6 percent of the Muslim vote and 116 of the 122 seats reserved for Muslims. Even in the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), the only Muslim majority province where the League lost, it won seventeen out of thirty-eight seats. The League's performance was even more spectacular in the minority provinces, which were not even a part of the proposed state of Pakistan. It won fifty-four out of sixty-six seats in the United Provinces and forty out of thirty-four in Bihar, more than 90 percent of Muslim seats in Assam and the Central Provinces and Berar, and all the Muslim seats in Bombay, Madras and Orissa.[14]

Khuda'i Khidmatgar was a political movement aimed at liberating India and with a social agenda of reforming Pashtun society. It was hugely popular in the North West Frontier Province and accounted for Congress' victory in the only Muslim majority province during the elections of 1945-6.

[10] In English, this translates as 'Agriculturalist Tenant Party.' Established in 1936 as a breakaway faction of Nikhil Banga Praja Samiti, the party was led by A. K. Fazlul Haq who championed the cause of the Muslim peasants of rural Bengal.

[11] In English, this translates as 'Baluchistan Homeland Society.' It was led by Abdul Samad Khan Achakzai who was popularly known as 'Baluchi Gandhi.'

[12] Majlis is a term that in Urdu literally means 'assembly' or 'party'. Though the All India Muslim Majlis sent a representative to take part in the Azad Muslim Conference in 1940, it was established as an umbrella organization for various nationalist Muslim groups only in May 1944 under the presidentship of Abdul Majid Khwaja.

[13] 'Council of the People of the Prophetic Tradition.' A part of Ahl-i Hadith sided with the Congress while others supported the Muslim League.

[14] For details, see: M. Rafique Afzal, *A History of the All-India Muslim League, 1906-1947* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2013), 598-9; Anita Inder Singh, 'The Success of the Muslim League: June 1945 to March 1946,' in *Partition of India: Why 1947?*, ed.

The success of the Muslim League, measured in terms of its ability to achieve its political agenda, has been extensively studied.[15] What is generally lacking from such studies, however, is the consideration of how its critics and opponents failed to offer successful alternatives to the Muslim League and its idea of Pakistan. The failure of viable alternative approaches to Muslim representation is rendered all the more significant if the League's proposal was so self-evidently flawed and inherently contradictory, as its critics claimed.

The popularity and success of the *idea of Pakistan*, and the failure of its alternatives, remain inadequately explored for several reasons. Barely seven years after a resolution was adopted by the All India Muslim League, in its annual session in March 1940 in Lahore, demanding the establishment of sovereign states in the Muslim majority areas of the Northwest and Northeast regions of the subcontinent, and following a hectic flurry of negotiations and elections, the Indian National Congress reluctantly agreed to the partition of India. This was in direct challenge to Congress's claims to represent all communities living in India. In the Congress's version of Indian nationalism, especially its populist, nationalist phase from the 1920s onwards and the influence of socialist rhetoric largely attributed to Jawaharlal Nehru's leadership, divisions along religious lines were represented as an outcome of the British imperial policy of divide and rule. The Congress boasted that it had millions of Muslim members, with some of the leading 'ulama,[16] such as Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1958)[17] and Husain

Kaushik Roy (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014), 216; Ian Talbot, *Provincial Politics and the Pakistan Movement: The Growth of the Muslim League in North-West and North-East India 1937-47* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1990), 20.

[15] For a comprehensive review of literature produced on various aspects of Muslim nationalism in India and the demand for Pakistan, see Moin-ud-Din Aqeel, *Junubi Asia ki Tarikh Navisi: Nu'iyyat, Riwayat aur Ma'yar* (Lahore: Nashariyat, 2015), 167-91. It refers to the works of Pakistani historians, autobiographical accounts by leading Muslim League figures, compiled documents relevant to the history of the League and British policy in India, and recent academic works.

[16] The term 'ulama refers to Muslim scholars usually having received training in a madrasa.

[17] This volume focuses on those ideologues and political leaders who significantly contributed to the shaping of public discourse on Pakistan during the 1940s *and* whose role has not been adequately scrutinized in scholarship. This is why Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, though very important in high politics and religious debates, has not been included, as his contributions have been extensively discussed in several monographs and edited volumes. Examples of such works include Ian Douglas's *Abul Kalam Azad: An Intellectual and Religious Biography* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1988) and Mushirul Hasan, ed. *Islam and Indian Nationalism: Reflections on Abul Kalam Azad* (New Delhi: Manohar Books, 1992).

Ahmed Madani (1879-1957), enjoying central leadership roles in the party. In addition, not only 'Marxist Muslims' such as K. M. Ashraf (1903-1962), but also staunch secular-nationalists, such as Saifuddin Kitchlew (1888-1963) and Rafi Ahmed Kidwai (1894-1954), were enthusiastic supporters of the Congress.

The proposal for the creation of Pakistan was anathema to the Congress leadership and others who agreed with its vision of Indian nationalism. For some Marxists, the call for Pakistan indicated a state of false consciousness and a misreading of the class question; in this view, Muslim and Hindu peasants should have been forming a united front against Muslim and Hindu landlords and capitalists. For nationalist-secularists, the demand for Pakistan, based on the idea of Muslim exclusivity, amounted to a denial of India's rich civilizational, inclusive past to which Muslims had been generous contributors for over a millennium. Religious groups and 'ulama supporting the Congress, such as Madani, found the idea of composite nationalism amenable to Islam; Madani invoked the example of the Covenant of Medina dating back to the days of Prophet Muhammad when Muslims, Jews and Pagans agreed to live under the terms of an agreement as one *ummah*, or community. Several other religious groups and 'ulama not aligned with the Congress but opposed to the idea of Pakistan alluded to the impracticality of an independent state and its potential disastrous consequences for Muslims and Islam in India.

After 1947, Muslim groups operating in India, such as Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind, took pride in the anti-Pakistan rhetoric of the freedom movement to project themselves as the champions of composite Indian nationalism and claim leadership of Indian Muslims for political representation. In Pakistan, religio-political organizations like Ahrar had to live with the harsh reality of a new state whose creation they had vehemently opposed and whose founder *Quaid-i-Azam* (the greatest leader) Muhammad Ali Jinnah had been labelled as *Kafir-i-Azam* (the greatest infidel) by them. The authorities in the new state naturally watched them with suspicion, forcing Ahrar to make extraordinary efforts to convince the authorities of their loyalty to Pakistan.[18] In December 1949, the session of the Muslim League's working committee held in Karachi finally removed the name of Majlis-i-Ahrar from the list of those organizations with

[18] In numerous speeches and statements made by Ata Ullah Shah Bukhari after August 1947, he expressed unflinching commitment and loyalty to Pakistan. He described his previous statements against Pakistan and Jinnah as a political dispute and difference of opinion carried out with utmost sincerity. Sayyid Muhammad Kafil Bukhari, ed. *Pakistan men kia hoga?*, 83.

whom the League and its members were previously banned from cooperating. But the names of nineteen other organizations remained on that list.[19] Thus, the opponents of the Pakistan movement in both India and Pakistan chose to emphasize only those aspects of their political stance from their recent past that were compatible with the ideological orientations of the newly established nation-states. While Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind projected itself as unreservedly aligned to the idea of Indian nationalism, a closer reading of its politics and rhetoric during the 1940s reveals its peculiar version of the Muslim *qaum*[20] as the justification for its opposition to the Muslim League and its demand for Pakistan. For Ahrar and other parties opposed to the Muslim League, the creation of Pakistan was a *fait accompli* and little intellectual probing of past disagreements was considered prudent.

Rather than dismissing the idea of Pakistan as lacking genuine political or economic concerns, or as a result of a British conspiracy resulting from the policy of divide and rule, the present volume offers an alternative lens to examine the success and popularity of the idea of Pakistan, by understanding the failure and, in many cases, intellectual poverty of its critics. These accounts are offered without privileging the stance of the Muslim League or deligitimizing the critique offered by its opponents. The creation of Pakistan was not a 'one-off' event which settled the 'Muslim Question' once and for all. Contestations about Muslim identity in Pakistan or in India, involving decisions about the pecking order of religion, nation and ethnic-based identities, are perennially relevant for the Muslims of South Asia and beyond. Therefore, it is important to take stock of multiple narratives about Muslim identity formation in the context of debates about Partition, historicize those narratives and read them into the larger political milieu of the period in which they were being shaped and debated. Focusing on the critiques of the Muslim League, its concept of the Muslim *qaum* and the political settlement demanded on its behalf, will open up new ways in which ideas about Muslim political subjectivities can be conceived at interstitial levels.

As the title of the volume suggests, the focus here is on the Muslim critics of the Muslim League and *its idea* of Pakistan which was centred on a particular

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[19] Ali Usman Qasmi, *The Ahmadis and the Politics of Religious Exclusion in Pakistan* (London: Anthem Press, 2014), 58.

[20] *Qaum* is a term that this chapter discusses in greater depth below. Nevertheless, it is useful at this juncture to mention that the term *qaum* in its various usages can refer to a shared identity held by a community, a nation, a tribe or a religious sect.

reading of the history of a Muslim *qaum*. A proper understanding of this theme requires elucidating the evolution of Muslim identity politics from a community in the nineteenth century to a minority nationality and eventually a nation in the Western sense of exclusivity during the twentieth century. It should, however, be kept in mind that this evolutionary schema of Muslim nation formation is not meant as a telos for seamless transitions to different expressions of subjectivity. Also, shifting notions of community and *qaum* does not imply a change in political ends only but the content of political vocabulary as well. At any given moment, the term did not preclude the possibility of its usage in a different sense and also carried the potential of further unfolding in its meanings. There was always a possibility of going back to an earlier meaning. The best example of this would be the use of the term Muslim *qaum* in present-day India where it denotes the community and not necessarily Muslim nationality (even though minority rights remain central to Muslim politics in India) and rarely in the sense of a singular Muslim nation.

The later sections of the Introduction trace the evolutionary genealogy of the idea of Muslim nation during the colonial period and the various stages of it. By the time the Muslim League demanded a separate Muslim state for the Muslims of South Asia, the majority of those who had opposed this claim, covered extensively in this volume, were mainly concerned with Pakistan as the end product of Muslim politics. These voices were concerned at this stage to debate the definition of Muslim nation used by the League, rather than to disavow the concept of Muslim *qaum* as such. The aim of this volume is not only to retrieve the polyvalence of voices claiming authority over Muslim political subjectivity in British India, but also to contest the particular reading of the Muslim *qaum* articulated by the Muslim League in the 1940s and popularized by Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

This volume, therefore, attempts to look beyond the machinations at the level of high politics, where negotiations between Jinnah and Gandhi determined the fate of millions, to how the movement of Pakistan inspired a contentious, influential conversation on the definition of the Muslim *qaum* and various political solutions petitioned on its behalf. For this purpose, the longer history of the transition from a sense of Muslim community, to the concept of a minority nationality, to the emergence of a *qaum* or nation – the nature of which was hotly contested – needs closer scrutiny. Understanding this transformation requires the parsing of the various registers of political vocabulary, and the lack of precision in this vocabulary, which allowed for comparisons between community and *qaum* within the framework of Indian nationalism as it developed during the twentieth century.

This volume adds to the canon of works on the history of the Muslim League, Jinnah's politics and the creation of Pakistan, by focusing on the voices of dissent coming from political leaders, religious organizations, 'ulama and activists who offered, with varying degrees of success, alternative visions and critiques of the idea of Pakistan. As Ayesha Jalal persuasively argues, the idea of the Indian nation was itself in the process of becoming and subject to various contestations. Muslim separatism should not necessarily be understood as only or even primarily a demand for a separate state but 'something more akin to exclusion on the part of that variant of the Indian nationalist discourse which rose to a position of dominance.'[21] It is important to differentiate between the politics of the Muslim League, Muslim separatism or the demand for Pakistan, and the idea of Pakistan. Separatism was an end point emerging as a result of various political and social processes, but what undergirded it or other forms of politics from 1940 onwards was the understanding that Muslims were not simply a minority or one of the nationalities, but a *qaum* which was religiously defined, historically constituted and culturally distinct. Questions centred on divergent definitions of the Muslim *qaum* rather than, with a few exceptions, a denial of its central importance.

This particular focus on the debate around the definition of the Muslim *qaum* in this volume sets it apart from the important works of Mushirul Hasan on Congress leaders.[22] The personalities covered in Hasan's works mainly fall in the liberal-nationalist, pro-Congress camp, which supported the idea of composite nationalism, whereby Muslims were considered one of the contributing units of the Indian nation without a distinct national basis of their own. Their critique of Pakistan was thus markedly different from the approach of those covered in this volume. Hasan himself has called for the need to engage with the full spectrum of political actors contributing to the public sphere and their contestation of various political issues of critical import. His claim, however, that groups such as Ahrar, Khaksar, Khuda'i Khidmatgar, Momin Conference, All India Shia Political Conference and Jam'iat 'Ulama-i-Hind demonstrated 'a strong secular and nationalist tradition' is challenged by the essays in this

[21] Ayesha Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam since 1850* (London: Routledge, 2000), xiv.

[22] Examples of such works include *A Nationalist Conscience: M. A. Ansari, the Congress and the Raj* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1987) and *From Pluralism to Separatism: Qasbas in Colonial Awadh* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2007).

volume.[23] Distinctive from other 'nationalist Muslims' in the Congress whose lives have been documented by Hasan, many of the groups mentioned above, some of which were affiliated closely with the Congress, continued to remain invested in the concept of the Muslim *qaum* even while opposing the League. For example, although the Momin Conference used Marxist idioms to encourage marginalized Muslim artisans to overthrow the capitalist Muslim League leadership, its political language drew upon Islamic metaphors and tropes.[24] Hasan's work tends to emphasize Muslims who were loyal citizens of India and firm believers in its secular ideology and singular national identity; this research may be a reaction to a contracting liberal space in an increasingly saffronized India deeply suspicious and intolerant of non-Hindu minorities. A similar trend can be seen in Shamsul Islam's recent biography of a 'patriotic Muslim,' Allah Bakhsh Soomro, who opposed the creation of Pakistan.[25] This volume, in contrast, offers a nuanced picture of the multi-layered and cross-sectional conversations about and opposition to the Muslim League, Jinnah and the demand for Pakistan. These conversations, focusing on defining the Muslim *qaum*, Indian nation and minority rights, show that organizations and individuals had divergent reasons, many of which could not be described as secular, for opposing the Muslim League and Jinnah's approach to the idea of Pakistan.

Like the breadth of its intellectual concerns, the geographical coverage of the volume is wide, including both Muslim majority and minority areas, spanning the NWFP, Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan, East Bengal and North India. The individual leaders covered in this volume are Deobandis, Sufis and Shi'a 'ulama. Among the secularists, this volume covers communist activists and Indian nationalists. In this way, the volume offers a representative account of the critics of the Muslim League and their conceptions of Muslim community in South Asia as well as the proponents of the League and Jinnah.[26] An exploration of

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[23] Mushirul Hasan, 'Introduction,' in *India's Partition: Process, Strategy and Mobilization*, ed. Mushirul Hasan (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993), 33.

[24] Papiya Ghosh's study shows the rhetorical strategies employed by the Momin Conference which talks about the migration, or *hijrat*, of Muslims in the event of Pakistan being created, leaving behind their homes, holy places and *kabaristan* (graveyards) to the *kafirs* (infidels). See: Papiya Ghosh, *Community and Nation: Essays on Identity and Politics in Eastern India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2008), 144-5.

[25] Shamsul Islam, *Muslims Against Partition: Revisiting the Legacy of Allah Bakhsh and other Patriotic Muslims* (New Delhi: Pharos Media & Publishing, 2015).

[26] This volume does not claim to discuss all the major Muslim leaders and political organizations opposed to the Muslim League. Instead, this volume establishes a critical approach, using a range of relevant examples, in order to point out a productive

debates regarding the concept of the Muslim *qaum*, Indian nationalism and minority rights while taking into consideration regional interests, *biradari* or clan-based politics and questions of class and gender informing these debates, enable a richer understanding of how central the contested concept of the *qaum* and the public sphere that carried public discourse in the first half of the twentieth century was to the success of the Muslim League.

The Muslim *qaum* in the nineteenth century: from community to national minority

The different ways that the terms 'nation,' 'state' and 'homeland' were adopted, translated into vernacular languages and adapted in accordance with regional, linguistic and religious imperatives from the nineteenth century onward reveal the distinctiveness of this debate in South Asia.[27] The process of ascribing new meanings to existing vocabulary, such as *Heimat* or country, was in consonance with practices in Western Europe as well.[28] In the larger Muslim world, however, the trajectory was slightly different as much of the existing vocabulary and its various meanings were derived from religious sources and embedded within a long history of disputations about it. The Urdu term *millat*, derived from the Qur'an, had been used in the late Ottoman Empire to refer to a religious community governed by its own set of laws. *Millat*, in its various usages, could denote a community of any religion. But the term that was more popular in the Arab world as a conceptual alternative to nationalism was *qaumiyya*.[29] By

direction for future research. Personalities that may form the focus for future studies in this area include G. M. Syed, Khwaja Hasan Nizami and Hasrat Mohani, and political organizations like Majlis-i-Ahrar and All India Momin Conference among many others.

[27] Sylvia G. Haim, 'Islam and the Theory of Arab Nationalism,' *Die Welt des Islams* 4:2/3 (1955): 138.

[28] A good example of such processes of writing the local into the nation can be found in Alon Confino's *The Nation as a Local Metaphor: Wurttemberg, Imperial Germany, and National Memory, 1871-1918* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

[29] Writing in the 1930s, Sami Shawkat, a pan-Arab nationalist, observed: 'We have to be firm in our belief that our age is the age of nationalities (*al-qaumiyyat*), not the age of religions … We hold sacred all the divinely inspired religions; this is our motto; we shall not allow anyone to lay sacrilegious hands on them. But of the worldly creeds, we will only adopt the national creed (*al-mabda al-qaumi*), without which nations cannot be formed, nor the foundations of states laid.' Haim, 'Islam and the Theory of Arab Nationalism,' 139.

the early twentieth century, it had become preferable over the term *wataniyya*, which signified an attachment with *watan* or one's place of birth or residence.[30]

Parallel developments taking place in South Asia reflect a similar repurposing and negotiation of terminology, and were more likely to balance the necessity to maintain regional as well as national affiliation. The adoption of terms in South Asia differed from the use of the same terms in the Arab world in the same period. One such term was *ummah* which, in its modern usage in South Asia, denotes the world community of Muslim believers, transcending the boundaries of the nation state, while in the Arab world it has *also* been used in the sense of a nation or people confined within a particular region.[31] The usage in Urdu of words like *qaum* and *watan* underwent transformations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The comprehensive twenty-two volume lexicography of Urdu which gives the historical etymology of each word by citing from classical and contemporary texts, describes *qaum* in the sense of group of organized people.[32] It was used in this sense in texts dating back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The word *qaumiyyat* has had several metamorphoses. It denoted race, caste (*zat*) or subdivision of a tribe or caste (*got*) in an early nineteenth century text, and a sense of group identity based on territorial or religious affiliation by the end of the same century in Sayyid Ahmad Khan's writings – a Muslim modernist scholar known for his contributions in spreading Western education among the Muslims of British India.[33] More recently, *qaumiyyat* has also been used as an interchangeable term for citizenship or to show the legal certification of an individual's residency of a country.[34] *Watan*, even in contemporary usage, retains much of its original meanings of

[30] Haim, 'Islam and the Theory of Arab Nationalism,' 140. The terms *qaumiyya* and *wataniyya* are usefully distinguished as referring to 'ethnic' and 'territorial' nationalism respectively in Arabic.

[31] In Arabic, the use of *al-ummah* generically does align with the use of *ummah* in South Asia. However, the term is also used in Arabic to indicate a range of national or regional affiliations, in contrast to the use of this term in Urdu.

[32] *Urdu Lughat (tarikhi usul par): Volume 14* (Karachi: Urdu Lughat Board, 1992), 373.

[33] S. Akbar Zaidi offers a comprehensive survey of developments taking place in the late nineteenth century and the shifting notions about such terminologies as community and *qaum*, the cultural-geographical expanse of these terms, and the role played by Sayyid Ahmad Khan and his Aligarh College in defining and debating them. See S. Akbar Zaidi, 'Contested Identities and the Muslim *Qaum* in Northern India, 1860-1900: An Exploratory Essay,' *Pakistan Perspectives* 10, no.2 (July-December 2005): 5-57.

[34] *Urdu Lughat (tarikhi usul par)*, 376.

place of birth or permanent place of residence, abode and dwelling.[35] However, even when used in the sense of a state, *watan* usually emphasizes sentimental affiliation. Otherwise, the usual term used for state is *mulk* which actually translates as a country or a piece of land that is unified, in either geographical or political terms.[36] The more appropriate Urdu word for state is *riyasat*. The word became more prevalent and its content enriched as the concept of state in political theory became popular in the religious and secular circles of India during the first half of the twentieth century. But it did not always imply sovereign status as several of British India's princely states subordinate to the suzerainity of the Crown were also referred to as *riyasat*.

It was not lack of linguistic depth but a lack of conceptual clarity which underscored the limitations of such terms as community, nation, and nation state in nineteenth century British India. As Prachi Deshpande's work on Western India shows, there was a gradual crystallization of such terms as *rashtra*, *desh* and *lok* to denote nation, homeland and the people, and that it was a transitive process of contestation in which the regional identity of Maharashtra and sense of belonging to it was in constant tension with the national, Indian identity.[37] This relationship between the regional and national identity was a difficult one and not specific to Maharashtra. Since many of the pioneers of Indian nationalism in the nineteenth century were from Bengal and Maharashtra, these ideologues were alert to the problem of maintaining a regional identity while affirming an Indian identity. Invocations of regional aspirations – whether in Maharashtra or Bengal – continue to impact Indian politics several decades after independence.

The tension between regional, ethnic or linguistic identities and national identity, especially after 1857, was not limited to one region or ethnic-linguistic denomination.[38] The concept of Muslim *qaum* was one significant category

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[35] *Urdu Lughat (tarikhi usul par): Volume 21* (Karachi: Urdu Lughat Board, 2007), 288. As Ayesha Jalal has suggested, the genre of Urdu poetry *shahr-i-ashob* or lament for the city encapsulating the displacement and destruction caused during the late Mughal period of established civilizational and political centres is a reflection of a poet's yearning for attachment to his *watan*. Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty,* 11.

[36] *Urdu Lughat (tarikhi usul par): Volume 18* (Karachi: Urdu Lughat Board, 2002), 641.

[37] Prachi Deshpande, *Creative Pasts: Historical Memory and Identity in Western India, 1700-1960* (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2007), 127.

[38] This is not to suggest an amorphous Muslim identity in the early modern, pre-1857 period, but 'an affinity with one's city, a region, Hind and a religiously informed cultural

that stood in competition with the Indian nationalist model, and aligned with a variety of other points of tension. Defined largely by colonial sociology and its administrative-legal compulsions of identifying Indian subjects along religious lines to establish their proprietary rights, the category of Muslim lacked internal consistency. It did, however, help manufacture an increased unity for Muslims under the law, across numerous class, ethnic, social, religious and linguistic differences. In this way, the privileging of religion by the British as a marker of identity contributed towards the politicization of communitarian identities, which came to be viewed as mutually exclusive.[39] One of the earliest intellectuals credited with the idea of articulating Muslim identity in communitarian rather than in abstract legal terms is Sayyid Ahmad Khan. But his initial approach to the concept of *qaum* was marked by an emphasis on territorial over religious affiliation. His understanding of *qaum* included all citizens of a country; he used the example of Europe to illustrate another context where national identity created a *qaum* that transcended diverse religious beliefs.[40] In an address to the Indian Association of Lahore delivered in 1884, Sayyid Ahmad Khan described his understanding of *qaum* as inclusive of both Hindus and Muhammadans, both belonging to the 'Hindu nation' of India.[41] According to Sayyid Ahmad Khan, 'Hindu' was not a religious term and simply referred to the people living in Hindustan.

Khan's statements and writings suggest a gradually shifting position about the parity of such terms as community and nation, and, more importantly, about the exclusivity of Muslim identity in religious terms. While talking about 'the nature of Muslim nationality,' Khan said that unlike the communities

identity' which was later politicized with the introduction of the electoral principle. Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty*, 27.

[39] This is the crux of the argument made by Ayesha Jalal in *Self and Sovereignty*. Jalal's main focus in her book is the recovery of the Muslim self obfuscated by layered communitarian normative ideals ascribed to it as a result of colonial administrative, legal and political policies.

[40] He said: '… the word *qawm* is used for the citizens of a country. Various peoples of Afghanistan are considered a *qawm* (nation), and different peoples of Iran are known as Iranis. Europeans profess different religions and believe in different ideas, yet they are all members of a single nation. In a nutshell, since the olden times the word *qawm* (nation) is used for the inhabitants of a country, even though they have characteristics of their own.' Hafeez Malik, *Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Muslim Modernization in India and Pakistan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 244.

[41] Abdul Hamid, *Muslim Separatism in India: A Brief Survey, 1858-1947* (Lahore: Oxford University Press, 1967), 33.

held together by ties of common descent or common homeland, the Islamic alternative 'assimilates all human beings regardless of colour or place of birth.'[42] Similarly, at a gathering of Muslim students in Lahore, Sayyid Ahmad Khan said he used the word *community* to include all Muslims.[43] In an age where representative political institutions were not yet in place and a populist, mass-based idea of politics or mobilizations had not taken root, such statements by prominent figures are useful sources in understanding the debates about the Indian nation. The works of scholars like Partha Chatterjee and Sudipta Kaviraj, standing at the intersection of history and literary studies, have looked at late nineteenth century texts to tease out the formations of Indian nationhood, the processes shaping it, the limits of its boundaries and the anxieties inherent in the project of nation formation.[44] There are very few works of a similar kind which have successfully used literary texts to trace the genealogy of Muslim nationalism and imagining of the nation.[45]

One example of using the literary texts of the late nineteenth century to develop an understanding of ideas about Muslim community referred to as *qaum*

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[42] Hamid, *Muslim Separatism in India*, 39.

[43] He stated: 'Faith in God and His Prophet and the proper observance of the precepts of the faith are the only bonds that hold us together.' ibid., 39.

[44] Cf. Sudipta Kaviraj, 'Imaginary History,' *Occasional Papers on History and Society*, 2nd series (New Delhi: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, 1988); Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial History* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993).

[45] One recent example is Masood Ashraf Raja's work in which he suggests two broad phases of what he calls 'Pakistani nationalism' – 'the post-rebellion articulation of Muslim exceptionalism, and […] the rise of the Pakistani nationalist movement after 1940.' Through a reading of different literary texts, Raja attempts to suggest that 'Muslim separateness and exceptionalism took shape in the works of poets, scholars and political leaders long before party politics became a popular phenomenon. In such a reading, Indian Muslim nationalism precedes the party politics of both the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League.' Such a notion of a 'pre-political' Muslim community transforming into a national community is simply an attempt to enrich 'Pakistani nationalism' with a longer history extending into the nineteenth century. Even if we were to accept Raja's reading of, for example, Ghalib to trace the origins of 'Muslim exceptionalism,' it would be stretching the argument too far to connect it with the idea of 'Pakistani nationalism.' Raja does not succeed in supporting his assumption that its connection with the latter history of 'Pakistani nationalism' is already well established. Masood Ashraf Raja, *Constructing Pakistan: Foundational Texts and the Rise of Muslim National Identity, 1857-1947* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2010), xv-xvi and 140.

in an 'a-national' sense, would be Altaf Husain Hali's epic poem *Madd-o-Jazar-i-Islam* (The Flow and Ebb of Islam). Written in the late nineteenth century and addressed specifically to the Muslim *qaum*, Hali's idea is communitarian, invoking an ideal vision for the community's path to regain its lost glory.[46] Similarly, the *ideal* Muslim modern subject constructed by Nazir Ahmad in his novels, by Abdul Halim Sharar in his historical romances and by Munshi Zaka Ullah in his voluminous reconstruction of Muslim history all serve as relevant sources for understanding the emergence of new communitarian values, their transnational character and their relevance to local context in the colonial period.[47] A detailed exploration of literary representations in the nineteenth century that documented the shift in Muslim identity formations from community to nationality is beyond the scope of this introduction. However, the evidence suggests that understandings of *qaum* as a category of Muslim and national belonging were a matter of contestation in the late nineteenth century; these contestations lay the foundation for conversations about community in the first half of the twentieth century.

Relevant to this gradual shift among Muslims in the late nineteenth century are the establishment of the Indian National Congress, the emergence of the question of Muslim representation in a democratic context, the Hindi-Urdu controversy, and the rising crescendo of communalism. The ambiguity of the political lexicon changed at the turn of the twentieth century as British India inched towards representative institutions. Prior to the Minto-Morley reforms of 1909, a delegation of leading Muslim nobility and aristocracy called upon the then-viceroy and told him, recalling the memoirs of Agha Khan III, that 'the Muslims of India should not be regarded as a mere minority, but as a nation within a nation whose rights and obligations should be guaranteed by statute.'[48] The memorandum, presented to the Viceroy in Simla, claimed that

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[46] Christopher Shackle, 'Introduction: Urdu, Nation, and Community,' in *Nationalism in the Vernacular: Hindi, Urdu, and the Literature of Indian Freedom*, ed. Shobna Nijhawan (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2010), 12.

[47] Works on such themes include: C. M. Naim, 'Prize-winning *Adab*: A Study of Five Urdu Books Written in Response to the Allahabad Government Gazette Notification,' in *Moral Conduct and Authority: The Place of* adab *in South Asian Islam*, ed. Barbara Daly Metcalf (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 290-314; and Christopher Ryan Perkins, 'Partitioning History: The Creation of an Islami *Pablik* in Late Colonial India, c. 1880–1920' (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, January 2011).

[48] Cited in Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, *The Muslim Community of the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent* (Karachi: Ma'aref, 1977), 289.

Muslims were between one-fifth and one-fourth of the total population; if various animists and other minor religions enumerated as Hindus in census were excluded, Muslims would take up a greater proportion of the population relative to Hindus as a result.[49] The delegation's demand for safeguards resulted in a grant of separate electorates for Muslims. This anxiety to temper Muslims' minority status was felt more desperately in North India where Muslims had possessed cultural and political capital for centuries but feared a decline in their fortunes with the gradual introduction of representative institutions. Even Muslims of majority provinces had complained about their underrepresentation in district and municipal councils introduced in the provinces, as their majority did not translate into a coherent Muslim vote. Despite being the majority community in Punjab, for instance, Muslims were disadvantaged vis-à-vis a more affluent and educated Hindu community. So in Punjab it was not only the separate electorate that was being demanded, but also reserved quotas in government jobs and student seats in universities and colleges.[50] Of all such reservations and safeguards demanded, however, the grant of separate electorates was most crucial, as it institutionalized the division between Hindus and Muslims in the political arena. Communities represented at the electoral level on the basis of their religious affiliations did not need to appeal to members of other religious communities. With the system of diarchy in place after the imposition of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms proposed in 1918, cross-communal alliances gradually became impossible and provincial politics was essentially communalized.[51]

As the wording of the memorandum presented at Simla suggested, the Muslim delegation claimed a political status for Muslims based on their numerical strength and historical prestige surpassing that of an informal community, but stopping short of nationhood. Such a political category, defined in religious terms in juxtaposition to other 'nationalities' of India in a majoritarian democratic system, could only be a minority. This Muslim *aqliyyat* (Muslim minority) version of minority nationality dominated Muslim politics from the 1910s till the 1930s as attempts were made to secure the interests

[49] Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, ed. *Foundations of Pakistan: All India Muslim League Documents Volume III: 1906-1947* (Karachi: Royal Book Company, 1990), 2.

[50] For details, cf. Ikram Ali Malik, ed. *A Book of Readings on the History of the Punjab, 1799-1947* (Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1985), 241-62.

[51] David Page, *Prelude to Partition: The Indian Muslims and the Imperial System of Control, 1920-1932* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1987), 260.

of Muslims through demands for disproportionate representation in Muslim minority provinces as well as in the central legislature.

The transformation of the Muslim community into a Muslim nationality that lay within the larger assemblage of the Indian nation, rather than a rival to it, is corroborated in Gyanendra Pandey's work. Pandey points out that community-based identitarian politics, affiliations and mobilizations in the early stages of Indian nationalism gave way to a concern to promote a nationalism unsullied by any other competing ethnic, religious, linguistic or caste-based affiliation. It was in the era of mass politics of the 1920s and the emergence of a new idea of nationalism and mode of nationalistic politics, he argues, that the dialectic between religion-based communities and the new, 'pure' nationalism changed. Communitarian affection became nationalism's Other from the 1920s onward. The new nationalism of the 1920s was all-India based, socialist, democratic and secular as compared to 'communalist.'[52] In this model a binary emerged between the pre-modern, backward, communalist politics which were an outgrowth of the imperialist divide and rule, and the modern, progressive politics of nationalism with its anti-imperialist rhetoric. So from the 1920s onwards, according to Pandey, 'there arose a new contest between two different conceptions of nationalism – one that recognized the givenness of "pre-existing" communities which were to form the basis of the new India, and another that challenged this view of history, past and present.'[53]

The binding of religiously-inspired, culturally-informed communities to communalism occurred parallel to the gradual blending of Hinduism, Hindi and Hindustan in North India. This took place in the context of an empire in retreat, an empire in which the idea of nation struggled against a deep seated anxiety regarding, and at times veiled hostility towards, different minorities seeking representation.[54] In this context, the visibility of the Congress leadership, at both high and local levels, with a variety of issues – the promotion of Hindi, the prevention of cow slaughter, the invocation of Indian nationalism's difference with the West by emphasizing select aspects of Hinduism – accentuated the fears of its opponents, who in turn began viewing the Congress as a Hindu, 'communalist' organization.

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[52] Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006), 235.

[53] Ibid., 235-6.

[54] William Gould, *Hindu Nationalism and the Language of Politics in Late Colonial India* (New Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 33.

It is in this context that the politics of such leading Muslim nationalists as Muhammad Ali Johar (1878-1931) make sense. Johar, a firebrand leader of the Khilafat movement and committed to the idea of Indian nationalism as well, famously described the predicament of the Muslim presence in India as belonging to 'two circles of equal size, but which are not concentric. One is India, and the other is the Muslim world.'[55] The statement was made at the 1930 Round Table Conference in London to deliberate on the future constitution of India at a moment when the high point of 'Hindu-Muslim unity' in the political arena had given rise to 'communalist' violence. The acceptance of separate social and religious communities, participating in a common political project of the Indian nation, had been replaced by a concern to empty the nation of such content – a process which one may argue continues to unfold. An approach to Indian nationalism that delegitimized all other claims to political representation was a key contributor to the subsequent development of Muslim politics in British India.

Muhammad Iqbal's landmark presidential address at the annual session of the Muslim League in 1930, which Pakistani school textbooks now present as laying the foundation for the idea of Pakistan, described India as 'the greatest Muslim country in the world' precisely because Indian Muslims were a minority and it was only the idea of Islam or being Muslim, instead of any territorial affiliation, which united this large community spanning India.[56] Whether or not we accept Iqbal's claim of a unique Indian Muslim identity, nonetheless the subsequent unfolding of events whereby Iqbal hinted at supporting the idea of a separate state for the Muslims serves as a point of departure. This can be seen in his confidential correspondence with Muhammad Ali Jinnah during the late 1930s in the aftermath of Congress-led provincial ministries' purported cultural and political atrocities against Muslim interests.[57] That such a state itself would

[55] 'Maulana Mohammed Ali's speech at the Fourth Plenary Session of the Round Table Conference in London, 19th Nov., 1930,' Gulam Allana, ed., *Pakistan Movement: Historical Documents* (Karachi: Department of International Relations, University of Karachi, 1969), http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00islamlinks/txt_muhammadali_1930.html, accessed 10 September 2016).

[56] Faisal Devji, *Muslim Zion: Pakistan As a Political Idea* (London: Hurst and Company, 2013), 249.

[57] In a private and confidential letter that Iqbal wrote to Jinnah on 21 June 1937, he said: 'To my mind the new constitution with its idea of a single Indian federation is completely hopeless. A separate federation of Muslim provinces, reformed on the lines I have suggested above, is the only course by which we can secure a peaceful

have been created purely on the basis of a Muslim ideal devoid of territorial, ethnic or linguistic affiliation, rather than as a reflection of an existing affiliation, is less important than the insecurity that this shift signalled. The performance of Congress-led ministries in provinces had created a real or imagined sense of insecurity, especially among the Muslims of minority provinces, about an independent India led by a 'Hindu Congress'. The fear that India would cease to be the 'greatest Muslim country in the world' where, perhaps, the two circles of Muslim presence in India could no longer be concentric served as the political backdrop for a transformation of the Muslim minority into a nation.

The transformation of a national minority into a nation

The cultural shaping of the Muslim *qaum* owed much to figures like Iqbal who, through the powerful medium of Urdu and Persian poetry, helped enrich the concept of the Muslim *qaum* with cultural and ideological content drawn from multiple intellectual traditions. Such an imagining of the nation fulfilled his theory that 'nations are born in the hearts of poets.'[58] Most studies on Iqbal focus on his critique of the Western idea of nation and nationalism, and his espousing of the Islamic universalistic notions of community transcending boundaries and ethnicities. But there is a great deal in his Urdu and Persian poetry that focuses on the political community of Indian Muslims and their cultural particularism. This unison, drawing upon diverse sources in seemingly disparate ways, is actually a concerted effort in Iqbal's poetry and prose to define the Muslim community in the larger Islamic religious, intellectual, and civilizational milieu. It is a nostalgic, idyllic recounting of Muslim glory in terms of military aggrandizement as well as intellectual prowess, and intimately linked to the imperatives of the immediate political context. It would be inappropriate to describe Iqbal's vast corpus of literary and intellectual output as merely a welter of creative musings lacking a coherent thought system, and equally erroneous to search in his poetry for evidence for a concrete sense of

India and save Muslims from the domination of non-Muslims. Why should not the Muslims of North-West India and Bengal be considered as nations entitled to self-determination just as other nations in India and outside India are?' Accessed 10 September 2016, http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00islamlinks/txt_iqbal_tojinnah_1937.html.

[58] Dr Javid Iqbal, ed. *Stray Reflections: The Private Notebook of Muhammad Iqbal* (Lahore: Iqbal Academy Pakistan, 2008), 112.

Pakistani nationhood.[59] Iqbal's contribution to the idea of Muslim *qaum* was creative and imaginative, covering a major part of his career as a poet and philosopher. His role centralizing Muslim political authority in select majority regions of British India, on the other hand, manifested towards the end of his life in the form of confidential correspondence with Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

But while Iqbal's role is widely recognized, other cultural aspects of Muslim nation formation during the twentieth century have been ignored. The focus, instead, has been on political history and tracing the origins of the Muslim *qaum* within the framework of Indian politics in the 1920s and 1930s. In the first half of the twentieth century, the Muslim League and Congress jumped from one issue to another, engaging in negotiations, proposals, counter-proposals, accusations and rebuttals. Such a chronological account usually figures in the histories of Pakistan written by Pakistani scholars.[60] These accounts describe the Nehru report of 1928 which refused Muslims the right to separate electorates and weightage in assemblies, its counter by Jinnah's fourteen points in 1929, followed by the negotiations at the 1930-32 Round Table Conferences in London. In this model, it is ultimately both the failure to negotiate a settlement of Muslim political rights and also the discriminatory rule of Congress ministries during 1937-9 which culminated in the formal declaration of Muslim nationhood. Such an account of the Muslim *qaum* reduces its significance to a failure of political settlement and denies it of its intellectual content. On the other hand, a cultural history of Muslim subjectivity in the twentieth century can draw on alternate sources to offer a more nuanced view. Such a cultural history of the twentieth century *qaum* can be traced in the emergence of public discourses, as articulated through the medium of print, in newspapers, speeches, books, and pamphlets, on issues ranging from cow slaughter, to the promotion of Hindi/Urdu,

[59] This can be seen in the writings of a leading Urdu critic of Pakistan, Fateh Muhammad Malik, who argues that after presenting the idea of Pakistan in his presidential address delivered in 1930, Iqbal wrote poetry about, and expresses his affiliation with, the regions which were to become part of the proposed state. He cites poems of Iqbal written during the 1930s addressing the Baluch, Pashtun and Punjabis. Fateh Muhammad Malik, *Iqbal ka Fikri Nizam aur Pakistan ka Tassavur* (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 2003), 91.

[60] A recent example would be Afzal, *A History of the All-India Muslim League,* which is a comprehensive account of various sessions of Muslim League and major policy decisions taken in those sessions.

communal violence, and the non-cooperation and Khilafat movements. We can continue tracing this cultural history of the twentieth century *qaum* in the 1930s and 1940s by looking at the debates over how Muslim interests would be represented in the separate Muslim state or nation led by the League. An 'elaborate repertoire of shared idioms,' in Jalal's words,[61] developed through the discussion of political and social issues by Urdu newspapers and the re-imagining of community through poetry and literature. It was through such conversations that an abstract legal entity became conterminous with the lived reality of Muslims. This was consolidated by conversations that explored the translocal limits and connections of Muslim-led mobilizations, which simultaneously agitated in favour of the Ottoman caliphate and more political rights for Muslims within India.

In the process, the *qaum* retained internal inconsistencies, as regional, linguistic and sect-based contexts shaped the process of identity formation. In the case of Punjab, for example, the public arena was contested by various communities; massive popular mobilizations in the 1920s and 1930s shaped a new idea of community which 'transcended the arenas of interests and controls (both internal and external) that shaped all the class, kin-based and sectarian divisions among Muslims.'[62] This new concept of community was urban-based and promoted by Urdu newspapers, calling Muslims to defend the Prophet's honour following the infamous Rangila Rasul episode in the late 1920s; or, in the case of Sindh, agitating for Masjid Manzilgah during the 1930s.[63] But these large-scale mobilizations were still not anchored in a structured political discourse; the Muslim League increasingly re-purposed this public arena in favour of its various causes.[64] In the case of Bengal, on the other hand, the cultural history of the Muslim *qaum* involved a sharpening of a distinct Bengali Muslim literary identity and cultural milieu.[65] In Punjab and North India, embodied nationhood was asserted through the celebration of the physical prowess of the nation body; we see this, for example, in the celebration of

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[61] Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty*, 165.

[62] David Gilmartin, *Civilization and Modernity: Narrating the Creation of Pakistan* (New Delhi: Yoda Press, 2014), 116.

[63] Hamida Khuhro, 'Masjid Manzilgah, 1939-40: Test Case for Hindu-Muslim Relations in Sind,' *Modern Asian Studies* 32, no.1 (1998): 49-89.

[64] Gilmartin, *Civilization and Modernity*, 115.

[65] For details, see Neilesh Bose, *Recasting the Region: Language, Culture, and Islam in Colonial Bengal* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014).

'Muslim wrestlers' and eroticization of the female body as an object of desire and an embodiment of the *qaum*'s honour which needed protection from those outside the community.[66]

The term *qaum* assumed a new meaning with the resolution of March 1940. Muslims were no longer simply a minority seeking political rights and safeguards in India but a nation with sovereign claims seeking independence. The Muslim League under Jinnah played a major role in this transformation of Muslims from a minority nationality within India to a nation seeking settlement with India. Although neither the Muslim League nor Jinnah were exclusive contributors or instigators of this change, their appropriation and repurposing of this emerging nationhood played no insignificant part in the League's immense popularity in the 1940s. Their detractors and opponents, on the other hand, were late to realize the political potential that existed in such a shift.

Various influential leaders and groups contested the new definition of Muslim political subjectivity defined by the League and Jinnah. While some voices did not disagree with the idea of Muslim *qaum* per se, they fiercely contested its appropriation by the Muslim League and its political instrumentalization of the *qaum*. Also, the shift in terminology was translated into political action thorough the weaving of a complex web of electoral politics, civilizational codes and class interests within the cauldron of a British colonial bureaucracy.[67] This process of translation remained incomplete or in some cases failed entirely; the layered affiliations of Pakistani citizens continue to pose challenges to the nation's ideational basis.

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[66] For the details of such trends, see Markus Daechsel, *The Politics of Self Expression: The Urdu middle-class milieu in mid-twentieth century India and Pakistan* (London: Routledge, 2002).

[67] Farzana Shaikh has argued that the normative ideal of political community in Islam requires a belief that Muslims ought to live under Muslim governments. She makes a strong argument for the role of Muslimness in establishing legitimacy for political power and the inability of the Congress to address this deep-rooted historical, religious and cultural notion largely shared in the Muslim community. See Farzana Shaikh, *Community and Consensus in Islam: Muslim Representation in Colonial India, 1860-1947* (New Delhi: Imprint One, 2012), 230. But while this might be true for the normative, ideational basis for Muslim political community, it does not mean that it was neatly translated into practice. Also, it can be said that it was not the normative ideal *per se* that was translated into the electoral dominance of the League; rather, a range of issues and a long history of Muslim nation formation, mediated through the colonial state's ideological and administrative apparatus, brought it about.

The Muslim League's resolution of March 1940 can be understood within the framework of the failure of the minority scheme put in place in the aftermath of World War I, which exacerbated anxieties among communities regarding government safeguards. The idea of the nation as a self-identifier rather than a minority was gaining popularity in the 1930s and 1940s. Some Sikh groups had, by the 1940s, started referring to themselves as a nation as well.[68] Punjabi and Bengali Hindus revolted against the idea of becoming a minority in a Muslim majority state. In the case of Bengal, S. P. Mookherjee of the Hindu Mahasabha objected to the idea of a United Bengal in 1947, arguing that if Muslims could claim to be a nation and demand a separate homeland even though they were merely 20 percent of the Indian population, the Hindus being half of the population of Bengal could not be forced to live in a Muslim state.[69] In Punjab, the Hindus of Punjab expressed deep anxieties at the prospect of their separation from an all-India majority to become a statutory minority, demanding the partition of Punjab as a result.[70]

Approaches to the Muslim League, Jinnah, and the idea of Pakistan

Thirty years ago Ayesha Jalal's *The Sole Spokesman* raised a call for a better understanding of how a Pakistan that inadequately served the interests of South Asian Muslims emerged against all odds.[71] Jalal's book continues to be one of the most influential studies of the Muslim League's idea of the nation and Jinnah's political mode, offering a richly documented survey of developments in 1940s British India which shaped the strategic choices of Muhammad Ali Jinnah as the leader of the Muslim League and ultimately as the 'sole spokesman' of the Muslim League across several Muslim majority and minority provinces. Jalal's approach remains the primary revisionist approach, presenting the creation of Pakistan not as a result of a grand ideological project but instead as the fallout of a strategic game of chess played by Jinnah, in which the state of Pakistan

[68] Indu Banga, 'The Sikhs and the Prospect of "Pakistan",' in Roy, *Partition of India*, 193.
[69] Bidyut Chakrabarty, 'The 1947 United Bengal Movement: A Thesis without a Synthesis,' in Roy, *Partition of India*, 178.
[70] Neeti Nair, *Changing Homelands: Hindu Politics and the Partition of India* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2011), 258-9.
[71] Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

emerged at a distinct disadvantage in its ability to serve the interests of Muslims. Jalal's approach, as well as her contemporary work that shifts to an increasingly global context while continuing to emphasize the central role of the League and Jinnah as the primary lens of analysis, invites a provincialization of Pakistan studies, to supplement the already well-mapped landscape of high politics.[72] Her more recent work, *Self and Sovereignty*, seeks a more nuanced understanding of the Muslim politics of the 1940s and a longer history of it traceable to the late nineteenth century.

The most significant contribution in recent years to approaching minority politics in the interwar period as an access point to the Muslim politics of the period has been made by Faisal Devji in his book *The Muslim Zion*.[73] While Devji is right in pointing out the similarity between the project of Israel and Pakistan, which were both born within a collapsing imperial order and in showing that both remained detached from any ultimate goal of creating a nation state,[74] his argument that Muslim politics specific to the Muslim League was devoid of ideological content is contestable. According to Devji, rather than invoking the past, whether violent or harmonious, Jinnah was interested in reducing the categories of Hindus and Muslims to legal and juridical lines to allow for a successful negotiation of a social contract between the two.[75] The idea of the Muslim nation propounded by the League is in Devji's estimation reduced to a negation of minority status without positive content of its own. In this conception, Pakistan in its post-1947 phase is bereft of history since the

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[72] Ian Talbot, *A History of Modern South Asia: Politics, States, Diasporas* (London: Yale University Press, 2016), 130; Yasmin Khan, *The Great Partition: the Making of India and Pakistan* (London: Yale University Press, 2007), 214.

[73] A similar work was earlier done by Aamir Mufti in which he compared the Muslim in India with the category of the Jew as a minority in Europe and the various processes whereby such a minority had to be managed within the conceptual registers of nation, citizenship, tolerance and so on. Aamir R. Mufti, *Enlightenment in the Colony: The Jewish Question and the Crisis of Postcolonial Culture* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2007), 11.

[74] Although the north-western and north-eastern regions of British India did not have any particular religious significance to Muslims, the same could not be said about the land of Israel, which Jews accepted as land whose ownership was sanctioned by scriptural authority.

[75] 'The only history that mattered for Jinnah,' writes Devji, 'was the contractual or rather constitutional past that bounded these juridical figures together in British India.' Devji, *Muslim Zion*, 100.

idea of Pakistan is logical only in a context in which Muslims were a minority. Such an approach ironically reinstates Jinnah as 'the sole spokesman' standing as an authority over all regions to articulate a political demand for the rights of all Muslims, the very notion which Devji sets out to contest. Although Jinnah was of course key in forming the call for Pakistan and bringing it to the centre stage of Indian politics, this approach risks overstating the determinism of the League leadership and particularly of Jinnah. This book, in contrast, provincializes the scholarly discussion of how the concept of the Muslim *qaum* developed. Its chapters cumulatively demonstrate how transformations in the public sphere, leading to a new understanding of community, combined with the inadequacies of the League's opponents, to contribute in large part to the League's dominance. These chapters also demonstrate how, as a result of this process, ambivalence to the idea of Pakistan remained preserved in the fledgling state after independence.

Making the transition from a minority nationality to a *qaum* required more than political pronouncements from the centre. In pure legal and juridical terms, such a transformation was made in the wordings of the Lahore Resolution of March 1940, demanding the creation of separate sovereign states. However, notwithstanding the importance of the Lahore Resolution of 1940 in the transformation of Muslims from minority to nation, the significance of the public contestation played out in print, in letters and in the electoral arena during the 1940s is of utmost importance, forming the focus of a detailed discussion in David Gilmartin's work.[76]

Focusing on Punjab, Gilmartin traces the competing influence of Persianate-Islamic political and moral-ethic worldviews and the British colonial-bureaucratic apparatus. The colonial administration sought to define the Muslim in Punjab within the cauldron of census categories and the classificatory schemata of agriculturalist tribes. The Unionist Party of Punjab which comprised influential Muslim, Hindu and Sikh landlords – enumerated on religious bases in the census but classified as agriculturists otherwise – dominated the politics of Punjab and swept the polls in 1937. While census-based definitions, *biradari* affiliations and separate electorates had created a viable electoral arena of interest-based politics, it had not defined what

[76] David Gilmartin, *Civilisation and Modernity: Narrating the Creation of Pakistan* (New Delhi: Yoda Press, 2014). Ian Talbot's *Provincial Politics and the Pakistan Movement: The Growth of the Muslim League in North-West and North-East India 1937-47* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1990).

Gilmartin calls a moral language of Muslim unity. It is in this context that the appeal to overtly Islamic symbols was mediated by a colonially-determined legal identity of the census-defined Muslim, with separate electorates, leading to the electoral success of the Muslim League in 1946. In this process, the appeal had to be made in the name of religion to the individual, autonomous 'Muslim voter,' defined by the colonial legal category of a Muslim with the tribal, *biradari* affiliation of an agriculturalist.[77] As is clear from the contradictory pulls of the moral language of the community and its interest-based class affiliations, definitions of the Muslim nation remained under contestation even during the high period of the Muslim League's campaign for Pakistan during the 1940s. In Muslim League posters and handbills during this period terms like *qaum* and *qaumiyyat* were used negatively as equivalent to the parochial *biradari*.[78] Instead, such terms as *millat* and *ummah* were used in League materials to indicate a universal Muslim community, although that characterization of the Pakistan project stood in tension with the fact that the project was envisaged as a state for the Muslims of the Northwest and Northeast alone. Furthermore, the campaign for Pakistan in Punjab used a deeply rooted language of religious commitment to appeal to the 'heart' and 'emotions' of an autonomous individual Muslim voter by invoking the symbolic cultural capital of Karbala or the notion of *qurbani* or sacrifice.[79]

Another notable exception is Venkat Dhulipala's book, which offers a wealth of new information regarding the political realities influencing Pakistan's creation.[80] Dhulipala's main concern is to plug the gaps in Jalal's work, which focused on Jinnah's politics and tactics without focusing on how his demand for Pakistan was being received at the popular level. Drawing upon newspapers, journals, pamphlets and official documents, Dhulipala captures the vibrant debate surrounding the demand for Pakistan in the public sphere during the 1940s. As Dhulipala's book is limited to the United Provinces, his work does not encapsulate the variety of debates extending through both Muslim majority and minority provinces in British India. Further, in his attempt to counter Ayesha Jalal's thesis, Dhulipala overstates the unity of Muslim conversations about the establishment of and indeed the meaning of 'a sovereign Islamic State.' Nor

[77] Gilmartin, *Civilisation and Modernity*, xxxvii-xxxviii.

[78] Ibid.

[79] Ibid., 233.

[80] Venkat Dhulipala, *Creating a New Medina: State Power, Islam and the Quest for Pakistan in Late Colonial India* (New Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

does he offer the longer history of ideas surrounding the definition of the *qaum* in India that contextualize the popularity of proponents of Pakistan and the limitations of its critics.

Moving away from Punjab and North India, the lack of precision and outright contradiction in the League's appeals to transcendental and civilizational metaphors in the 1940s are equally pronounced. In the case of the Indian state of Tamil Nadu, the Dravidian movement had been constructed along the lines of caste and language, allowing Muslims to participate as one of the groups seeking a share of power in a competitive, plural political arena.[81] Jinnah indicated his awareness of this variation in the language of nationalism, by shifting from an invocation of Hindu and Hindi in North India to invoking the category of 'Aryan' in the Madras presidency.[82] Similarly, in the case of Bengal, the idea of Pakistan meant different things to different people. For some it was a peasant's utopia which would bring an end to economic suffering and exploitation with the implementation of an Islamic socio-economic justice system; for others, it would liberate not only Bengali Muslims but all the minorities of India.[83]

After independence, the new state of Pakistan's claim to legitimacy was, in part, predicated on its 'moral juxtaposition against the very structures of local power, and claims to essentialized identity, that brought it into existence.'[84] This process of establishing correspondence between the idea of the Muslim *qaum*, its articulation during the 1940s to achieve political ends and the conflicting interests and competing identities of local politics after independence, took various forms in different regions, several of which are discussed in this volume.

Essays in this volume

Without denying the importance of high politics and the role of Jinnah as a skilful negotiator, and without asserting that the idea of Pakistan was entirely

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[81] S. M. Abdul Khader Fakhri, *Dravidian Sahibs and Brahmin Maulanas: The Politics of the Muslims of Tamil Nadu, 1930–1967* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2008), 14.

[82] Ibid., 77.

[83] These and several other ideas about Pakistan prevalent in Bengali Muslim discourses can be found in Bose, *Recasting the Region* and Taj ul-Islam Hashmi's *Pakistan As a Peasant Utopia: The Communalisation of Class Politics in East Bengal, 1920–1947* (Dhaka: The University Press Limited, 1994).

[84] Gilmartin, *Civilisation and Modernity*, xxxvii.

lacking in ideological content or dispossessed of history, this volume pushes the debate further by looking at the processes of nation formation and ideas about Pakistan in diverse regional settings and from the perspective of the League's critics. The essays in this volume capture multiple Muslim voices ranging variously along temporal, ideological and regional lines, each with a particular insight on the question of Muslim *qaum* as articulated in the idea of Pakistan, the formations of Indian nationalism and debates about communalism. These Muslim individuals, leaders and religious groups and political parties were critical of or vehemently opposed the Muslim League, the leadership of Jinnah or indeed the idea of Pakistan because of their own particular reading of the Muslim *qaum*, rather than an outright rejection of it.

For instance, the chapters here on Maulana Maududi and Chaudhary Rahmat Ali, by Ali Usman Qasmi and Tahir Kamran, respectively, trace critiques of the idea of Pakistan by two opponents who approached their opposition from divergent perspectives. While both remain harsh critics of Jinnah, and both opposed the establishment of Pakistan, they remained leagues apart from each other. Qasmi argues that Maududi considered the idea of Pakistan as too close to a Western notion of nationhood rather than corresponding to the strict Islamic conceptual alternative of Muslim universalism that he developed. He therefore opposed Pakistan as demanded by the League and argued that it was being established as a Muslim national state rather than as an Islamic state. Rahmat Ali's opposition was primarily political, says Kamran. In adopting the term *dinia* for territory and *millat* instead of *qaum*, Ali sought to develop an idea of sacred geography by transforming India into *dinia* undergirded by the centralized political authority of a Muslim *millat* over a large territory.

A totally different version of sacred geography is to be found in the approach of other Muslim scholars and literati. Rais Rahman's article focuses on a number of prominent Muslim individuals from *qasbah*s of North India who chose not to migrate to Pakistan. Rahman highlights their connection with the locale of the *qasbah,* its cultural repertoire, built environment and sociality of everyday life, as expressed in their memoirs, scholarly essays and poetry as a creative alternate form of affiliation and belonging. A more religious expression of a similar sentiment, as explained by Barbara Metcalf in her chapter on Madani, is articulated by the leader of the Jam'iat 'Ulama-i-Hind who invoked a Prophetic tradition calling upon the believers to love their homeland or *watan*. He also pointed towards the Muslim burial practice as evidence of Muslims' attachment to the soil of India even after their death. Metcalf's chapter also shows how Madani tackled, in his public debate with Iqbal and otherwise, the vexed

question of a supposed clash between Islam's aversion to the ideal of territorial nationalism and the universalism of the Islamic *ummah*.

Neilesh Bose in his chapter on Rezaul Karim offers the crucial, and less often studied, perspective of a late-colonial Muslim politician standing in opposition to the Muslim League. Bose's account describes Rezaul Karim's development of a particularly Bengali definition of composite nationalism, which aimed to connect not only religion and nation, but also regional culture, in his political life.

While chapters such as these are more closely linked to the political context, other chapters emphasize the social, cultural and intellectual legacy of the idea of Pakistan and Muslim *qaum*. This volume contains essays on such figures as Ashraf Ali Thanawi and Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din who did not oppose the creation of Pakistan per se, but instead offered critiques of the League and Jinnah's approach to the creation of a Muslim homeland. As Megan Robb's chapter on Thanawi demonstrates, the Sufi scholar initiated a relationship with the League leadership not as an endorsement, but as an ill-fated attempt to offer the League guidance and to establish a council of advisory 'ulama. Although Thanawi was largely unsuccessful in his aims, his disciple Shabbir Ahmad Usmani later became instrumental in the passage of the 1949 Objectives Resolution, which was seen to contradict Pakistan's more pluralist commitments and as an attempt to define Pakistan's role as an extension of the Muslim *qaum*.

Ali Raza's article shows that Iftikhar-ud-Din was even a member of the Muslim League, but still he had reservations about the debates surrounding Muslim identity and the purposes of Pakistan, especially after its creation. Prior to joining the League and as a member of the Congress, Iftikhar-ud-Din was one of the few members supporting Rajagopalachari's suggestions for accommodating the Muslim League and its demand for the sake of national unity. Iftikhar-ud-Din's reasons for resigning as president of the Punjab Congress and joining the League were to support the demand of Muslim self-determination, as independence in his opinion in one part of the country would have meant freedom for the rest as well. Like his other comrades from Punjab's leftist/Marxist groups and parties, Iftikhar-ud-Din saw the demand for Pakistan as a progressive movement that, paradoxically, was going to ensure the unity and harmony of India. In this way, a reading of Ali Raza's chapter would suggest, Iftikhar-ud-Din had radically different notions of both Indian nationalism and Muslim nationhood.

Iftikhar-ud-Din's position was still more ideological than pragmatic. But the same may not be said for Sikandar Hayat Khan and Allah Bakhsh Soomro as

argued by Newal Osman and Sarah Ansari respectively. Hayat Khan's strategy, Osman suggests, was to keep the intrusive Jinnah at arm's length without expressly sabotaging the very pact signed by him that allowed the League a foothold in Punjabi politics. This he did while juggling the demands and pressures of Unionist landlords of different religious persuasions in the politically restive province of Punjab, vital from a British perspective for its contributions to the World War II effort. The best Sikandar Hayat Khan could do in such a context was to propose his own federal scheme that could retain the unity (and autonomy) of Punjab, allay the anxieties of the province's substantial non-Muslim minorities and appear to be on the side of the League without conceding to the latter's version of Muslim *qaum* and Pakistan as its destiny.

Soomro had similar problems, although in his case he had to manage his interactions with the Congress, with whom he shared a dislike for the League and its demand for Pakistan. As explained by Ansari in her chapter, since Soomro was a member of the viceroy's National Defence Council tasked with bringing the war effort to the provinces, his choices arose from political pragmatism rather than ideology. When he finally broke with the Raj and the colonial system of control and patronage by giving up his titles and honours, the official high circles, with whom he had worked closely in the past and who held him in high esteem, were taken aback. Describing Soomro as a man of his time, Ansari raises the hypothetical question of whether he would have welcomed the reality of Pakistan or not. In a similar vein, it can be hypothesized that it was the untimely death of both Sikandar Hayat Khan (1942) and Soomro (1943) that gave Jinnah the undisputed leadership he needed in two of the most important Muslim majority provinces to carry his bid for Pakistan forward.

The chapters by Ammar Jan, Safoora Arbab and Markus Daechsel explore alternative approaches to politics in the interwar period in colonial India, witness to the emergence of fascism and other radical movements in the form of communism and political Islam. As Daechsel points out in his analysis of Khaksar Tehrik and its leader Allama Inayat Ullah Khan Mashriqi, the key to the political vision of such movements was a specific idea of revolution as a particular sense of temporality in which the old world is coming to an end but the new order to replace it is yet to be born. Jan's essay on Shaukat Ali Usmani explores a similar idea as he traces the shared genealogy of political Islam and communism at a particular historical moment of intellectual exhaustion in the British imperial order, allowing for the imagining of an alternative future political community. Describing political Islam and communism as overlapping tendencies rather than stemming from unrelated or opposed textual traditions,

Jan brings the two strands together towards the end of his essay. It is at this intersection that Usmani's visualization of a different idea of a future political community, starkly different from that of the League, becomes conceivable. Safoora Arbab, in her essay on the Khuda'i Khidmatgars, adopts a comparative approach by teasing out the nuanced differences in politics between the League/Jinnah and Khuda'i Khidmatgar/Ghaffar Khan. Jinnah's ideas, Arbab argues, were a continuation of the normative political ideology which undergirded the colonial state apparatus (and later the postcolonial state of Pakistan), with the friend/enemy binary proposed by Carl Schmitt at its centre, and in which violence is the norm rather than a state of exception. Arbab employs Derrida's concept of 'politics of friendship' to describe the Khuda'i Khidmatgars' ideology of non-violence for an epistemological and ontological decolonization. Arbab makes explicit the differential in visions of state and community emerging out of the League and Khuda'i Khidmatgar.

Finally, the chapters on the All India Shi'a Political Conference and the translated version of the proceedings of the Kalat state assembly, by Justin Jones and Abdul Majeed respectively, bring into sharp focus divisions, whether ethnic or sectarian, within the body politic of the nation. The case of Kalat shows the emphatic denial on the part of Baluch sardars to consider themselves part of the Muslim *qaum* for various historical and political reasons. As is apparent from the discussions of these Baluch sardars, the sovereignty of the Muslim *qaum* in the form of Pakistan would have come at the cost of Kalat's own imagined sovereignty. In the case of Shi'a Muslims, as shown by Jones, the reluctance to identify with the *qaum* was predicated on the anxieties of Pakistan becoming Sunnistan. Such anxieties about majoritarianism and remedies sought to prevent it at times pushed Shi'as into political collaboration with Dalits or, at least, encouraged them to see the two groups as sharing the common plight of being victimized minorities. In this way, the idea of a Muslim *qaum* which was in itself a culmination of a long history of political struggle against fears of majoritarianism was internally riven by similar concerns and anxieties.

The main unit of analysis in this study is the *idea of Pakistan* as a continuation of a conversation about the boundaries and significance of the Muslim community which had been transformed, during the colonial period, from an all-India abstract legal identity, to a minority nationality, and finally to a *qaum* in the sense of a nation state. The chapters in this volume capture how the social and political environment of the 1930s onwards invited Muslims to link discussions of the *qaum* to the political arena in the increasingly geographically diffuse public sphere. Critics and supporters of the League alike read Pakistan

into the Muslim *qaum*'s history in distinctive ways. In some cases, the criticism was of the League, Jinnah or both, but not necessarily a denial of the importance of the Muslim *qaum* in any form. Rather than viewing opposition to the League as determined by the dictates of the League's own policies, and political settlement petitioned on the behalf of the 'Muslim community' as defined by those policies, this volume highlights critiques of Pakistan according to the logic of its critics, in the process centring concerns about the future of Islam in India and definitions of the boundaries of the *qaum*.

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Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani and the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind

Against Pakistan, against the Muslim League

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Many major Islamic scholars, including the leadership of the Darul 'Ulum of Deoband, India's leading Islamic seminary, and the major organization of 'ulama, the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind (JUH), opposed the creation of the separate Muslim state of Pakistan. Many academics, and observers generally, have judged this to be a historical paradox. As scholar of Islamic thought and Muslim history Yohannan Friedmann writes, 'one would have *expected* the Muslim religious dignitaries to enthusiastically support this call for separatism.'[1] In the words of cultural theorist Aijaz Ahmad, 'it is one of the great paradoxes of modern Indian history that traditions of Islamic piety … eventually found their way into a composite cultural and political nationalism; theories of modernization as taught in British and proto-British institutions, from Lincoln's Inn to Aligarh, begat, on the other hand, communal separatism.'[2] In the face of this alleged 'paradox,' one response has been to assume that this opposition was in response to the secular vision of the Pakistan movement's leadership in the Muslim League (ML), epitomized by the dubious religious credentials of the non-observant Muhammad Ali Jinnah (1876–1948).

That explanation sells short the positive arguments of the leading nationalist 'ulama in favour of undivided India. For a start, they claimed sacred precedent

[1] Yohannan Friedmann, 'The Attitude of the Jami'at 'Ulama Hind to the Indian National Movement and the Establishment of Pakistan,' in *The 'Ulama' in Modern History*, *Asian and African Studies, VII* (Jerusalem: Israel Oriental Society [1971]) 158.

[2] Aijaz Ahmad, 'Azad's Careers: Roads Taken and Not Taken,' in *Genealogies of the Present: Ideology and Politics in Contemporary South Asia* (London: Verso, 2000), 101. The ellipses stand in for the words 'from Azad to the Deoband ulema.'

for their commitment. But their line of reasoning, perhaps surprisingly, went far beyond 'religion.' They argued that the very foundation of the modern nation-state was territorial, encompassing whatever diverse population lived within. They expected the new state to be in a position to resist the kind of exploitation of India's economic and political interests that a colonizing power had exercised; and they argued that division would leave smaller states that would continue to be vulnerable. They were optimistic about a democratic state, attuned to minority interests, where they would even more effectively secure their own position, carved out over a century, as guardians of a distinctive sphere engaged with family law, morality, and practices of worship and ritual. Theirs was, in short, an enhanced vision of continuity of the colonial strategy of non-interference in 'religion,' recognized in the interwar period as 'minority cultural rights.'[3] They understood the risks of totalitarianism, so evident in the interwar period, in any movement to secure the ideologically defined state that some proponents wanted for the separate state. The Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind never wavered in their opposition to a separate state. They stood alone, even, at the end, apart from their close and long allies in the Indian National Congress (INC), their opposition to partition sealed in a formal declaration at a meeting held on 7 May 1947.

The anti-colonial activism of the 'ulama

By the beginning of the twentieth century, small groups of 'ulama at leading seminaries in the United Provinces were beginning to organize around what could be seen as political causes. They were thus one group among the many Indians of all religious backgrounds who sought alternatives to the constitutionalism and debates of the leading nationalists of the day. Some turned to militancy, including the terrorism linked to the *swadeshi* boycotts stemming from Bengal, which drew in even the young Abul Kalam Azad (1888–1958), then a radical journalist, who in due course would be the INC's most prominent

[3] The issue was accelerated by population movements at the end of World War I and the role of the League of Nations in monitoring specific treaties that guaranteed non-discrimination but also protected rights to maintain distinctive ethnic, linguistic, and cultural identity, including the right to officially use the mother tongue, to have separate schools, and to practice their own religion. See Patrick Macklem, *The Sovereignty of Human Rights* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 125–7. This was the language espoused by the Indian National Congress in the lead-up to partition.

Muslim member. There were also Indian anarchists active in London; Punjabis organized in *ghadar* (revolutionary) networks stretching to the west coast of North America; and, within the INC itself, the 'extremists' linked to Bal Ganghadar Tilak (1856–1920) who was exiled from 1908–14. Meanwhile, Muslim organizations focused on the Ottoman lands and support of the embattled sultan. Although short-lived, the movement set important precedents in its alliance of the Western and traditionally educated as well as in its focus on an 'imagined' community of Muslim Indians tied to a larger civilization. The Ottomans, part of that civilization, were admired as an uncolonized power, now being undermined by European machinations. A medical mission in 1912 was followed by an organization to protect pilgrims and the holy places of the Hijaz a year later. Leadership came both from 'ulama, notably Maulana Abdul Bari (1878–1926) of the old Farangi Mahal seminary in Lucknow, and from others linked to the more Westernized leadership of Aligarh. It skirted government opposition by identifying its cause as 'religious.'[4]

Such caution was necessary. The seminary at Deoband, for example, since its establishment in 1867, had relentlessly hewed to a politically quietist position after the brutal repression, and continuing suspicion, of Muslims after the 1857 Uprising. But there, too, at the turn of the century, there was organizing, initially in 1910 with the foundation of an 'old boys' society by a former student, Maulana Ubaidullah Sindhi (1872–1944), under the aegis of the school's revered Maulana Mahmudul Hasan (1851–1920). The seminary leadership, uneasy at the possible political implications of this organization, in 1913 asked Ubaidullah to leave the school. In Delhi, again with the support of Mahmudul Hasan as well as that of several figures active in the organizations focused on Ottoman problems, Ubaidullah launched a second organization. This one was intended to unite the Western and traditionally educated around study of the Qur'an, yet another precursor of the kind of alliance that would emerge more substantially within the decade.[5]

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[4] The sultan claimed an ill-defined spiritual authority over the whole of 'the Muslim world' as 'caliph,' the role that gained Indian support after World War I. The 1913 organization was the Anjuman-i Khuddam-i Ka'aba (The Association of Servants of the Ka'aba), founded with the hope of securing support from every Muslim of India in order to provide protection to pilgrims and to the holy places.

[5] See the classic work on the Khilafat Movement and the events leading up to it, Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982). For these early organizations, see

With the outbreak of World War I, some of these activists turned to the militancy that was the political currency of the day. Maulana Ubaidullah moved to the Afghan frontier to ally with revolutionary Hindus and Muslims alike in what would become known as the 'Silk Letter Conspiracy' to further invasions into British India.[6] Maulana Mahmudul Hasan travelled to the Hijaz, ostensibly to perform the hajj but actually to seek Turkish support for the scheme. There, his devoted disciple, Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani (1868–1957), put himself unreservedly at his side in his political efforts. Madani, a graduate of Deoband, had long been based in Medina where his pious father had migrated some 20 years earlier. In Medina, he established himself as an influential scholar and teacher of the prophetic traditions of *hadith*. The 'sharif' of Mecca, the British puppet who had rebelled against the Ottomans, arrested him, along with his great elder and three others. In 1916, the five colleagues were exiled to the island of Malta.[7]

In Malta, the Indians interacted with Germans, Austrians, and Turks as well as with other Indians, including a Bengali Brahmin accused of manufacturing bombs. Internment, as Madani wrote in his diary, was an occasion to study and talk freely without colonial surveillance. Madani, like so many other nationalists, forged his identity as an 'Indian' abroad, in his case both in the Hijaz and in Malta. The religious, caste, and other differences that were significant at home were irrelevant to identity outside the country.

Meanwhile, India faced substantial economic dislocations during the war, and, contrary to all expectations, at its conclusion continued to be subjected to brutal emergency laws. The peace conference betrayed what were seen as promises made about sustaining Ottoman power. The new round of council reforms issued in 1919, far from providing the 'self-determination' that the war purportedly promised, offered only limited autonomy at the provincial level. Not surprisingly, the year 1919 ushered in a new level of political organizing.

28–32. The organizations were the Jamiatul Ansar and Nizaratul Ma'ariful Qur'an respectively.

[6] Recent scholarship has shown that the Indian nationalist narrative has obscured the history of violent anti-colonialism. Faridah Zaman includes this episode among those that are de-emphasized and points to Deobandis in particular who prefer to emphasize 'a counter narrative…in keeping with the broader nationalist struggle.' Faridah Zaman, 'Revolutionary History and the Post-Colonial Muslim: Re-Writing the 'Silk Letters Conspiracy' of 1916,' *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies (2016),* accessed 4 October 2016. Available at http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00856401.2016.1195325.

[7] For a biography of Madani, see Barbara D. Metcalf, *Husain Ahmad Madani: The Jihad for Islam and India's Freedom* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2008).

The obvious organization to engage politically active Muslims would have seemed to be the Muslim League, founded in 1906 by landed and prosperous notables to further Muslim interests in political reforms. During the war, the League had drawn close to the Congress in agreeing to a scheme for the anticipated political reforms. It was Jinnah, one might note, a Congressite who had joined the League in 1913, who played a central role in the INC-ML 'Lucknow Pact' of 1916. But the distinctive issues that had brought some 'ulama into political activity during the previous decade, combined with their activist style, made them poor allies for the cautious, constitutionally oriented Muslim League, long seen by much of British officialdom as counter to largely Hindu activist politics.

In November 1919, with anger mounting over plans to dismember the Ottoman Empire and extend European protectorates over much of its former area, a Khilafat Conference of politically active Muslims, comprised of 'ulama and Western-educated professionals, was formed to defend the interests of the sultan as *khalifa*, the ill-defined leadership of 'the Muslim World' that embattled Sultan Abdul Hamid (r. 1876–1909) had propagated. The Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind was launched too, intended, by its charter, to offer guidance to Muslims, assert their religious and political rights, establish *shari'a* courts, fight for India's freedom and nurture good relations with other Indians, propagate Islam, and, finally, maintain good relations with Muslims elsewhere.[8] The Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind brought together a disparate group of seminary-educated Islamic scholars along with non-'ulama sympathizers. In later years the membership was primarily Deobandi.

The landscape of India's political world was rapidly changing. One of the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind's first steps was to ally with M. K. Gandhi (1869–1948), newly returned from South Africa. By the spring of 1919, Muslim leaders were

[8] Saiyyid Muhammad Miyan, *Jam'iyyatul 'Ulama Kya Hai?* (New Delhi: Jam'iyatul 'Ulama, n.d.), 9, quoted in Ziya-ul-Hasan Faruqi, *The Deoband School and the Demand for Pakistan* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1963), 68. There were slight amendments to the goals of the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind in 1939, including the introduction of the word *millat* to define a more demarcated religious community. The vision of *shari'a* courts, one might note, built on the colonial precedent of establishing separate personal laws for each religious 'community'; the difference was in some ill-defined intention to create a more organized format for dispute resolution, wholly in Muslim hands. As Minault underlines, the entire programme was glossed as 'strictly religious,' a potentially advantageous focus given the state's ostensible policy of non-interference in religion. Minault, *The Khilafat Movement*, 73.

already active in non-violent protests, and Gandhi, in turn, embraced the *khilafat* issue as a demonstration of British perfidy as well as a cause important to his fellow Indians. Even before the INC formally accepted Gandhi's leadership, the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind offered their support. The Muslim activists became the first formal organization to endorse *satyagraha*.

On 8 June 1920 the exiles returned to this changed world. Gandhi, as well as leading figures in the Khilafat Conference and other Deobandi 'ulama, formed an exuberant welcome party in Bombay. The exiles made Gandhi's goals their own: the self-determination, democracy, freedom of religion, and the minority cultural protection that resonated worldwide. Mahmudul Hasan in short order issued a *fatwa* supporting Gandhi's first non-cooperation movement, calling on all Muslims to withdraw from government-supported education institutions, resign government jobs and return titles, and refrain from participating in the new councils set up by the constitutional reforms. His time was short. The revered scholar died in November 1920, and Husain Ahmad Madani effectively became his successor. Maulana Madani then served as president of the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind for much of the period from 1920 until his death in 1957 while acting simultaneously for much of this period as principal of the Islamic seminary at Deoband. He would be the foremost 'ulama spokesman for anti-colonialism and, in the final decade of British rule, for a united India.

At the meeting of the All-India Khilafat Committee in July 1921, Madani introduced a *fatwa*, passed unanimously, that it was illegitimate for any Muslim to serve in the British army. The government charged him and six others with conspiracy, among them the well-known activist brothers, the Aligarh and Oxford-educated Muhammad Ali (1878–1931) and Shaukat Ali (1873–1938), as well as one Hindu activist, Swami Shraddhanand (1856–1926). At the trial, Madani shifted his arguments away from the specific political and economic abuses of British rule that he typically invoked in order to argue along religious lines. This was his best hope for acquittal given presumed official non-interference in matters of religion. Husain Ahmad was sentenced to two years of rigorous labour, the first of what would be successive imprisonments in each of the three decades until independence.

In short order, the euphoria and cooperation that had swept India at the launch of the first non-cooperation campaign dissipated. In February 1922, Gandhi ended the campaign after an episode of violence.[9] In 1924, the Turks

[9] For an account of the episode, see Shahid Amin, *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chaura, 1922–1992* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

themselves abolished the Khilafat. Meanwhile, as numbers increasingly came to matter in an era of mass politics, Hindu 're-conversion' movements were met in turn by Muslim preaching (*tabligh*) and organizing (*tanzim*).[10] The Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind, blaming the escalation of communal violence on British policy, called for full independence, *purna swaraj*, at a time when the INC continued to press only for dominion status.

Many of the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind in these years turned their efforts to the internal strengthening of the Muslim population through teaching and guidance, arguably a parallel to the 'constructive work' that Gandhi propagated. Madani saw his own work as proceeding along two complementary paths: one of opposition to the continuation of British rule; the second, the dissemination of Islamic guidance, which he saw as not in conflict with, but intrinsic to, the reclaiming of India's freedom. He taught not only religious practice, narrowly defined, but also discipline and organization for protection, dispute resolution, and participation in political processions and protests. He also encouraged the pursuit of reasonable prosperity through securing responsible livelihoods and avoiding extravagant ritual and indebtedness. In the early 1920s, Madani primarily worked among one of India's many populations of poor Muslims, those of Sylhet and adjoining regions of the rural northeast.

Madani was in these years increasingly referred to within the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind and by other followers as the 'Shaikhul Islam,' the title in a Muslim polity typically given to the official who oversaw *qazis* (judges adjudicating according to Islamic law), pious endowments, and so forth. The title itself pointed to the kind of cultural autonomy and perhaps greater institutionalization that many of the 'ulama envisaged for each religious community in independent India. And it pointed to the role that the 'ulama imagined for themselves in providing overall leadership for India's Muslims.[11]

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[10] For an important argument that status mobility also fuelled Hindu *shuddhi* movements, see C. S. Adcock, *The Limits of Tolerance: Indian Secularism and the Politics of Religious Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[11] In these years, the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind stood for official non-interference in matters of Muslim personal life (as they presumably expected to do after independence too) of which the most important example was their opposition to the Child Marriage Restraint Act (the 'Sarda' Act) of 1929 raising the age of legal marriage – an act they disingenuously alleged, in any case, was only relevant for Hindus. See Mrinalini Sinha, *Specters of Mother India: The Global Restructuring of an Empire* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006). The challenges of the times, however, did not always make for consistency. Deobandi 'ulama played an active role, along with non-'ulama leaders, in securing official legislation in 1939 to end the strategy of Muslim women's apostatizing

Muslims against Muslims: Iqbal, Maududi, and the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind

At the end of the 1920s, political debate focused on the government's plans for the next round of council reforms. The subsequent appointment of the all-European Simon Commission to provide recommendations for these reforms inflamed public opinion. Congress boycotted the Commission outright, as did, in fact, a faction of the Muslim League. Congress issued its own 'Nehru Report' in 1928 with a demand for immediate dominion status and, generally speaking, a scheme for a federal India, with a strong centre, an end to separate electorates, and an end to 'weightage' for Hindus in the Muslim-majority provinces of Punjab and Bengal and for Muslims elsewhere. In the wake of the Simon Commission fiasco, the government committed itself to greater Indian participation, proposing a series of 'Round Table Conferences' to be held in London. Although the Congress boycotted the first of these meetings, Gandhi called off the second non-cooperation movement in order to join the second.

The INC issued a call for statements on the proposed reforms from organizations that were not invited participants to the Round Tables. The Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind, among others, responded. Their Saharanpur proposal (3 August 1931) made clear their vision for the new state, which differed from that of Congress in the key matters of residual power to the provinces, greater autonomy in the adjudication of personal law, and more robust hopes for continued reservation in elected bodies on the grounds of religion.[12] What is important about the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind proposal, shared with the INC and (at this point) the ML, was a commitment to a modern nation-state that would be, whatever the ultimate shape of its components, secular, federal, and democratic.

But in the course of the 1930s, two celebrated thinkers, Muhammad Iqbal (1877–1938) and Abul Ala Maududi (1903–1979), raised more radical alternatives. In an era of nationalism, they were not nationalists. For all the

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to secure divorce by allowing multiple grounds for divorce. Political differences aside, Maulana Thanawi, consulting with Maulana Madani and others, wrote an influential pamphlet (*Al-hila al-najiza li-l-hilalat al-ajiza*) providing Islamic argumentation to justify the law; the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind took the lead in securing its popular support. See Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam: Custodians of Change* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 29–31, 205–08. If free India gave greater scope to 'ulama to administer their own personal law, such positive law would, in principle, not be necessary since 'ulama had more flexibility than colonial courts.

[12] Farhat Tabassum, *Deoband Ulema's Movement for the Freedom of India* (New Delhi: Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind), 148–50. Accessed 4 October 2016. Available at https://attahawi.files.wordpress.com/2009/07/deoband-ulamas-movement.pdf.

profound differences between them, both participated in the important interwar vision of a new transnationalism that would end the competition and destructiveness that the nationalism of the Great War had made all too clear. Both also made bold, stirring claims to counter hegemonic colonial claims that their 'Christian,' 'modern,' values alone properly shaped modern political and economic life.

Iqbal, trained in law in London and philosophy in Germany, expressed his alluring ideas in influential English prose and even more influential Urdu and Persian poetry, his very linguistic range a mark of his expansive geographic vision. He confidently held up 'Islam' as the source of ideals that other thinkers of the era held up as 'Asia' or the 'East' – symbols that he, too, invoked at times – as a euphoric and defiant answer to the materialism, exploitation, and destructive nationalism attributed to 'the West.'[13] A modernist, Iqbal stressed an understanding of Islam as 'spirit.' Its custodianship properly belonged not to the 'ulama but to creative individuals like himself, whose interpretations of the Qur'an would guide communities of Muslims that transcended political boundaries, as in his famous calls for autonomous Muslim regions within India that would be true to Islamic principles and form part of a regenerated Islamic world.[14] Iqbal posited an Islam of universal religious truths and, significantly, rejected the imposition of specific religious law.[15]

In 1937, near the end of his life, Iqbal picked up an erroneous report from a newspaper that Maulana Madani had claimed that *millat*, religious community, defined a nation state. Iqbal then launched a debate with a vitriolic poem mocking Madani which subsequently played out in newspapers and printed pamphlets. It was soon understood as a contestation over a nation based on religion as against one based on territory.[16] But Iqbal, even in this debate,

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[13] Barbara D. Metcalf, 'Iqbal's Imagined Geographies: The East, the West, the Nation, and Islam' in *A Wilderness of Possibilities*: *Urdu Studies in Transnational Perspective*, ed. Kathryn Hansen and David Lelyveld (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 147–72.

[14] Ibid., 112–15 and Iqbal Singh Sevea, *The Political Philosophy of Muhammad Iqbal: Islam and Nationalism in Late Colonial India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

[15] He regularly invoked the fact that Muslim governments in India had never legislated a prohibition on interest, a point he made for example in his famous 1930 ML Presidential Address. Accessed 19 May 2016. Available at http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00islamlinks/txt_iqbal_1930. html.

[16] Iqbal launched the debate with three vitriolic Persian couplets that imputed Madani's knowledge of Arabic, making him at once a non-Arab *'ajami* and an 'Abu Lahab,' the byword for linguistic eloquence and moral blindness. He also had him 'singing' from his 'pulpit' when the talk at stake was in fact a political meeting.

explicitly rejected *any* nationalism.[17] Madani, in what would become his most famous publication, *Muttahida Qaumiyyat aur Islam* (Composite Nationalism and Islam) did, in fact, argue for the territorial basis of the state.[18] What was at stake in defining a modern state, he wrote, was *not* religious community (*millat*) – he had never said that – but *qaum*, a 'community' of people that could share any number of bonds – language, ethnicity, culture, or, in this case, territorial nation. It was the Indian *qaum* that created a territorial homeland, their *watan,* for its residents. Muslim Indians possessed the most profound bonds as Muslims, but they also shared deep bonds of *qaum* with fellow non-Muslim Indian citizens with whom they would stand against any national foe, even if it should be Muslim. Any attempt to divide Indians on the basis of religion, Madani argued, was a colonial ploy, parallel to the secret Sykes-Picot Agreement that plotted European control of the Ottoman lands. Madani's clinching argument was to invoke the celebrated Prophetic example of the Constitution of Medina (622 CE) when Muslims and non-Muslims shared a common polity. This example was very important to the nationalist 'ulama. Azad had cited this model as early as 1913 in his Karachi address to the Congress. It was also central to Maulana Anwar Shah Kashmiri's address in 1927 as Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind president.[19]

The contrast could not have been greater than it was with Abul Ala Maududi's Islamist vision of an Islamic order, or *nizam,* that shaped all aspects of life like other totalizing systems of the era such as communism and fascism.[20] Many of the 'ulama in the 1930s dismissed Maududi's claims to religious interpretation on the grounds that he was not properly trained, contrary to the loose use of 'Maulana' as his title. Maududi was yet another autodidact, whether in the Islamic sciences or English language disciplines, and he experimented with different approaches

[17] Note the opening to Iqbal Sevea's book where he quotes Iqbal as saying that 'nationalism was the greatest enemy of Islam.' Sevea (2012), 1.

[18] For a translation see, Husain Ahmad Madani, *Composite Nationalism and Islam: Muttahida Qaumiyyat aur Islam*, trans. Mohammad Anwer Hussain and Hasan Imam, Introduction by Barbara D. Metcalf (Delhi: Manohar, 2005).

[19] 'Shaykh Anwar Shah's Presidential Address (1927).' Accessed 19 May 2016. Available at http://micropaedia.org/2011/06/17/shaykh-anwar-shahs-presidential-address-1927.

[20] A visitor to Maududi in 1937 saw his bed surrounded with English-language books on communism. Seyyid Vali Reza Nasr, *Mawdudi and the Making of Islamic Revivalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 33. For an early understanding of how Maududi's system was like the communism and fascism of his times, see Charles J. Adams, 'The Ideology of Mawlana Mawdudi,' in Donald E. Smith, ed., *South Asian Politics and Religion* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1966), 371–97.

to politics. In the 1920s, in fact, he had supported the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind and even served as editor of their newspaper before turning to his *islami nizam*.

Maududi, to Madani's contempt, urged Muslims to stay out of contemporary politics, ML or INC. Until the *nizam* could be institutionalized, moreover, they should reject any form of non-Muslim leadership. Maududi operated in a dream world, as Madani put it, if he really thought that every last Muslim on a municipal board or district board or seated in an assembly or a council, or part of a trade or industrial organization, should resign. Should Muslims forego non-Muslim doctors, shun non-Muslim engineers, avoid buildings of non-Muslim architects, and boycott the offices of non-Muslim bureaucrats?[21]

Equally damning was Madani's dismay at the notion of a Muslim state ordered by Islamic principles. Given the dissensions among Muslims – in one letter Madani listed Easternism, Westernism, Shi'ism, Qadianiyyat, Khaksariyyat, and *'adam-taqlid* – how could there be consensus?[22] In a modern state, he argued, the only sources of authority were 'persuasion, guidance, and advice.'[23] Even if a population were wholly Muslim, no state attuned to the values of the era could legislate Islam except by authoritarian tyranny. Indeed, as Madani presciently pointed out, anyone who thought they could escape the problem of Hindu–Muslim communal violence, which he, and others, thought would dissipate with an end to British policies, ought to reckon with internally generated intra-Muslim outbreaks, not least if an 'Islamic' system was imposed.[24]

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[21] Metcalf, *Husain Ahmad Madani*, 135–8; Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani, *Maktubat-i Shaikul Islam* (Deoband: Maktaba diniyyat, 1951), I, 396, in response to an inquirer, Maulavi 'Abdul Wahhab, Lahore, in 1942.

[22] Madani, *Maktuba-i Shaikul Islami*, 397; 'Qadianiyyat' is a term derived from the Punjabi hometown of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835–1908), Qadian; his followers call themselves 'Ahmadis.' 'Khaksariyyat' ('humility') describes the teachings of 'Inayatullah Mashriqi (1888–1963). *'Adam taqlid*' ('non-conformity') is a term for those who do not follow/conform to the historic law schools in favour of direct recourse to Qur'an and hadith; by their preference, they are the 'Ahl-i Hadith.' The Khaksar were a paramilitary, authoritarian movement based in the Punjab.

[23] Madani. *Maktubat-i Shaikhul Islam*, I, 399.

[24] In 1938, with the financial support of a follower, Maududi moved from his long-term base in the princely state of Hyderabad to the Punjab city of Pathankot and subsequently to Lahore, which would become part of the new state of Pakistan. In 1941, he founded the Jama'at-i-Islami, an elite organization, a 'vanguard' initially focused on reform. In the 1950s, however, the Jama'at began to act as a political party, emerging into Pakistani public life, in part, by inflaming sectarian tensions. See Nasr, *Mawdudi and the Making of Islamic Revivalism*, 9–48 for discussion of Maududi's evolution in this period.

Madani and others of the mainstream 'ulama could dismiss the Islamic arguments of a modernist poet or an Islamist idealist on the double grounds of their deficient scholarly training and their complete lack of pragmatism. Far more challenging was opposition from fellow seminary-based Islamic scholars. That opposition took two forms. One, fostered by some of the most influential scholars at Deoband, was the long-term strategy that urged complete apoliticism. This mentality had been evident in the expulsion of Ubaidullah Sindhi from the seminary back at the very beginning of the century.[25] A second form was the active opposition to the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind of a dissident group among the Deobandis that arose at the very end of colonial rule. In 1945, a splinter group broke from the 'Ulama-i-Hind Hind to abandon, as they saw it, 'Hind' for 'Islam' in their new Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Islam.[26] Their Islamic argumentation would serve the ML well.

The Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind against the Muslim League and against their 'Ulama allies

After World War I, the INC and the ML never resumed their close wartime cooperation. In 1936, however, Jinnah proposed an alliance with the INC for the first elections to be held under the Government of India Act of 1935 that had

[25] This long-term tension at Deoband continues in the differences between the original 'Darul Uloom Deoband' and of the 'Darul Uloom Deoband Waqf,' which was established by descendants of the founder, Maulana Muhammad Qasim Nanautawi, around 30 years ago. Qari Muhammad Tayyib Qasimi, Nanautawi's grandson, was rector of the school for half a century until his death in 1983. His sons and others at the school were involved in factional disputes with Maulana Madani's family, which came to a head in 1981 when the town erupted in violence. Madani family members have indeed been politically active in recent decades through participation in secular parties. After the dispute spilled into violence in 1981, the Qasimi family withdrew and established the new madrasa in the town. The respective websites of the two schools make clear their differences. The Madani-dominated school proudly recites the history of 'ulama involvement in India's independence movement and also finds a way to position the Deobandi contribution to Pakistan's public life (http://www.darululoom-deoband.com/english/). The Qasimi site, in contrast, proudly proclaims its apoliticism in favour of learning and education (http://www.dud.edu.in/).

[26] Discussion of the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Islam is taken largely from Venkat Dhulipala, *Creating a New Medina: State Power, Islam, and the Quest for Pakistan in Late Colonial North India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

followed the Round Table consultations.[27] The parties would not run against each other in the constituencies designated for Muslim candidates. In the United Provinces, ironic in light of the League's own composition, the alliance was a chance to unite against a landlord party, the National Agriculturalist Party, which was the representative of the magnates whom the British had long nurtured by favourable revenue and agricultural policies.[28] The United Provinces were the only province in which the ML, which overall won only five percent of the Muslim vote, made any noticeable gain at all, in part a reflection of what seemed the greater need of a provincial minority for a national party.

For the INC and Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind alike the break with the ML came after the election. The triumphant INC moved on to establish ministries in eight of the eleven provinces. The ML expected in vain to be part of a coalition ministry in the United Provinces. For Nehru, with his liberal vision of unmediated, individual citizenship, a party based on 'community' interests was problematic. League efforts to assert themselves as the only representative of Muslims, moreover, undermined the very inclusiveness and secularism that was core to INC ideology. Even more, for Nehru and like-minded progressives in the Congress, the ML demand for provincial autonomy threatened the creation of a strong central state that would foster economic change, including the break up of large land holdings which the League leadership would likely oppose.

Husain Ahmad Madani and other Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind leaders had their own reasons for breaking with the League. They too were self-described progressives, *taraqqi pasand*, in their social ideals. Jinnah, Madani claimed, had also assured the 'ulama explicitly that after the election the landlord members

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[27] This act provided for full provincial autonomy, albeit with considerable emergency provisions, a somewhat enlarged electorate, and a limited role for Indians at the Centre. An estimated 30.1 million persons, including 4.25 million women, had acquired the right to vote (14% of the total population), and 15.5 million of these, including 917,000 women, actually did exercise their franchise.

[28] Of his many writings on the political behaviour of UP landlords, see, for example, P. D. Reeves, 'Landlords and Party Politics in the United Provinces, 1934–37,' in *Soundings in Modern South Asian History*, ed. D. A. Low (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 261–93. There were in fact two landlord parties, one for Oudh and one for the Northwestern Provinces, neither in any sense able to organize effectively or respond adequately to the interests of the expanded electorate if they wanted to hold undisputed power. They were moreover divided over their participation and commitment to Hindu and Muslim interests, many subsequently participating in communal organizations and parties, including the ML.

of his parliamentary board would give way to people like themselves. No such change was made, nor did the League defer to the 'ulama (as did the INC) on specifically religious issues. Jinnah allegedly justified his actions as normal 'politics.' For Madani, this was a revelation of Jinnah's fundamental moral shortcomings.[29] Despite the ultimate break, the alliance serves as a reminder of how much the parties had in common. As one of the large landlords, the Raja of Mahmudabad, wrote retrospectively, 'When I joined [the ML in 1936] I hardly realized that before long the League and the Congress would be poles apart.'[30] By 1937, the ML and the INC turned to competing 'mass contact' campaigns among Muslims.

By the late 1930s, the ML had the incipient support of some Deobandi scholars, foremost among them the luminous scholar and Sufi Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi (1864–1943), guide to legions of disciples and author of an enormous literary output.[31] From the beginning of mass political activity following World War I, Thanawi had insisted that the 'ulama should focus only on teaching and guidance. Any political activism, he feared, put at risk the relative religious freedom that the 'ulama enjoyed. He also feared cooperation with Hindus who, he believed, by numbers and social class if nothing else, would always dominate Muslims. Given opposition to this position by Madani and others at the seminary at Deoband, in 1935, Thanawi chose to resign as the seminary's long-serving 'guardian' or 'patron' (*sarparast*).[32] Estranged from the school, and faced with an increased pace of political activity among his followers and others, by the time of by-elections in 1937, Thanawi recommended support for the Muslim League.[33]

Madani saw the League as divisive in a united front against the British, and he completely rejected Thanawi's apolitical stance. Madani insisted that his

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[29] Madani, *Maktubat-i Shaikhul Islam,* 358–61, 384.

[30] [Amir Ahmad Khan] Raja of Mahmudabad, 'Some Memories,' in *India's Partition: Process, Strategy and Mobilization*, ed. Mushirul Hasan (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993), 414–15.

[31] Madani continued to visit him. Madani, *Maktubat-i Shaikhul Islam*, 402-07. See also Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam*, 29–31.

[32] In that year, new guidelines had constrained the role of the *sarparast* in favour of power to the school's consultative council. Madani justified the change as a 'reassertion' of the democratic order (*jamhuri nizam*) intended by the founders, his language a clue to his immersion in the emerging political culture of the times. Metcalf, *Husain Ahmed Madani*, 109.

[33] Zaman, *The Ulama in Contemporary Islam*, 39–59. Thanawi died in 1943 but Pakistanis claim him as a supporter of Partition.

political activities were nothing less than a religious obligation, the obligation incumbent on any Islamic scholar to give moral guidance. He did so, moreover, in technical religious terms. 'If in a scholar's opinion wearing a Gandhi cap is preferable [*mustahabb*] or proper [*wajib*] or obligatory [*farz*], it is his absolute obligation to exert himself [to influence others]…'[34] On this subject, Madani was in fact well-known for his expectation that everyone, as he did, should wear *khadi*.

The distress of many Muslims over the division between leading Deobandis pushed Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya (1898–1962), principal of Deoband's sister madrasa in nearby Saharanpur, to intervene.[35] In 1938, he produced a treatise insisting that the bewilderment expressed by followers over these differences was misplaced. In fact, he continued, since guidance required the identification of appropriate Prophetic models for a specific context, such contextual reasoning inevitably yielded different opinions. Such differences, he wrote, characterized scholarly advice throughout history, not least in the differences of the four, equally legitimate, canonical Sunni law schools.[36] Zakariyya made two further points. First, despite the escalating tensions, the differences, which were simply over whether to join the ML or the INC, were minor and temporary.[37]

Second, if a person felt unable to make an informed opinion, he should simply trust his feelings. If possible, an undecided person should stay in the presence of each elder for a few days and see which of them had a stronger pull.[38] In the end, the quality of the person was decisive, a standard that gives added meaning to Madani's public rupture with Jinnah on the grounds that he had lied. As in any mass movement, intellectual arguments and ideologies went hand-in-hand with multiple particularistic and idiosyncratic loyalties, including hierarchic allegiances, sectarian bonds, economic class interests, regional politics, and, as here, emotional ties.[39]

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[34] Metcalf, *Husain Ahmad Madani: The Jihad for Islam and India's Freedom*, 108–09.

[35] The book is *Al-I'tidal fi maratib al-rijal* (New Delhi: Idara isha'at-i diniyya, 1994 [1938]).

[36] Ibid., 1–2.

[37] Ibid., 3.

[38] See, for example, the anecdotal presentation of Madani's charisma provided by one of his followers in Najmu'd-din Islahi, 'Introduction,' in Madani, *Maktubat-i Shaikhul Islam*, I, 53–5 and Metcalf, 'Reinventing Islamic Politics in Interwar India,' 400–03.

[39] The tangled reasons for political allegiances were evident in 1938 in a major dispute between Sunnis and Shi'as in Lucknow, where divisions had long run deep. Colonial

With the League's Lahore Declaration of March 1940, which made autonomous and sovereign 'independent states' their objective, the differing goals of the INC and the ML could no longer be regarded as 'minor.'[40] The goal of defining areas of majority Muslim population as, in some sense, autonomous regions had been bruited by Iqbal, as noted above, in 1930, and had been proposed for multiple areas across the subcontinent by a group of Cambridge students in the middle of the decade.[41] But the goal of outright sovereignty entered the Indian Muslim political imagination relatively late.[42]

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regulations dating to 1908 had restricted the occasions on which the Shi'a could curse the first three caliphs and the Sunni, in turn, could praise them. Now each side was testing these regulations, and political activists saw the occasion to intervene as a chance to further their own ends. ML activists, joined by paramilitary volunteers from the mercurial Khaksar, saw the dispute as a chance to further their major goal of the moment: their efforts to discredit the Congress ministries as anti-Muslim, accusing them of weakening Muslims by fomenting disagreements among them. Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind leaders, joined by 'Ata Ullah Shah Bukhari of the Ahrar, also converged on Lucknow to take sides, in this case with the Sunnis. Maulana Madani presented the issue as one of illegitimate government restrictions on an activity (Sunni praise of their leaders) that was, he argued in contemporary terms, a 'religious,' 'human,' and 'civil' right, in contrast to government's sanction to an offence (Shi'a cursing of those leaders) that was illegal in international law and in India's own criminal code. Madani, *Maktubat-i Shaikhul Islam* III, 170–7. Arguably, Madani's call for an end to government regulation would ratchet down sectarian tension once officials could not be called on to play umpire. The episode thus offers a striking example of how Madani believed government involvement in religious matters fostered tension. But the argument also gave the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind/INC a chance to hold out the olive branch to local Sunnis, who had largely supported the League, and provided the ML with a chance to cultivate the Shi'a.

[40] That Resolution demanded 'autonomous and sovereign,' 'independent states' in areas of Muslim majority 'with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary.' The declaration made no mention of a central government, or definition of boundaries, or of 'Pakistan' or any other name. None of that mattered for the declaration's fundamental objective: to claim a standing for Muslims as a 'nation,' entering into negotiations as an equal nation, and not as a minority. Accessed 19 May 2016. Available at http://historypak.com/lahore-resolution-1940/.

[41] Foremost among them was Choudhry Rahmat Ali. See Khursheed Kamal Aziz, *Rahmat Ali: A Biography* (Wiesbaden: Steiner Verlag, 1987). For the text of his influential pamphlet introducing the name 'Pakistan' (1933), http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00islamlinks/txt_rahmatali_1933.html, [accessed 19 May 2016].

[42] See Faisal Devji, *Muslim Zion: Pakistan as a Political Idea* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013). This is a contrast with the late nineteenth-century emergence of

Between 1938 and 1947, the League was able to make extraordinary gains as new allies joined their campaign and politicians looked to the eventual formation of a national government under the 1935 Councils Act. Fear served the league well – fear of Hindu domination, especially given the success of the League in publicizing and exaggerating complaints about Congress biases during their brief provincial ministries. Fear was increasingly mixed with inchoate utopian hopes symbolized by 'Islam.' Jinnah himself, a true liberal, invoked Islam to foretell a society in which citizens would exist in direct relation with the state, their rights and interests unmediated by sect, ethnicity, or hierarchy, as evident in his famous declaration to Pakistan's Constituent Assembly in 1948 'that in the course of time Hindus will cease to be Hindus and Muslims will cease to be Muslims … in the political sense, as citizens of the state.'[43] For him, Islamic values entailed such principles as equality and democracy. Others, however, expected more, among them the breakaway faction of 'ulama who formed the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Islam. Among their leaders were Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani (1886–1949) and Mufti Muhammad Shafi (1897–1976), who had served as the Deoband madrasa's *mufti*. The League leadership deployed their resources to support 'ulama campaigners extensively in 1945 in the lead up to what would be the decisive referendum on partition. They were richly rewarded for doing so.

The 'New Medina' of the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Islam; 'The Goodness of our India' of the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind

Historians and others debate whether Jinnah and other leaders of the ML in the Lahore Resolution hoped, in the end, for a completely autonomous separate state or, with the leverage of a 'bargaining chip,' to simply gain a more equal place for Muslims within a united India. Jinnah refused to be locked into any precise blueprint of what he wanted. 'When Ireland was separated from Britain,' he argued at one point, 'the document [took only] ten lines of print.'[44] He

Zionism that shaped the other postwar state based on religion. As important as shared notions of religiously defined homelands for both states, however, was the European experience of massive population transfers that began at the end of World War I in the interests of ethnic homogeneity.

[43] Accessed 19 May 2916. Available at http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/legislation/constituent_address_11aug1947.html.

[44] Z. H. Zaidi, ed., *Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah Papers, Second Series, Vol. X* (Islamabad: National Archives of Pakistan, 1993), 128–31, quoted in Dhulipala, *Creating a New Medina*, 179.

did, after all, accept the 1946 plan of the Cabinet Mission for a loose federal structure, with Muslims playing a role disproportionate to their numbers at the centre. Nonetheless, in the early 1940s, he and others of the ML leadership had certainly countenanced a veritable explosion of utopian hopes associated with an autonomous state of Pakistan, largely expressed in an Islamic idiom.

Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, as head of the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Islam, led the way. Pakistan would be the leader of all Muslim countries, the Islamic guide to an ideal society, and the protector of Muslims in 'Hindu' India and in the larger Muslim world. That a large number of Muslim Indians would be left outside Pakistan's borders, far from a problem, he took to be a divine sign. At least some of them would undertake *hijrah* to a place providentially provided in the northwest, just as in the Prophet's day the beleaguered Muslims of Mecca travelled to Medina. The Muslims left behind, Usmani also declared, 'would possess as much right over Pakistan as its own inhabitants for it was as much their national homeland as it was of the natives.'[45] Usmani pivoted between declarations like this one that show him to be oblivious or at least indifferent to the realities of the modern nation-state, and other pragmatic statements about such matters as state-centred economic viability.

For Usmani, the Covenant of Medina between Jews and Muslims showed that just as Muslims led by the Prophet Muhammad in Medina were superior to the Jews, the Muslims of Pakistan would be superior to non-Muslim *dhimmi* (a non-Muslim subject or citizen with defined rights under an Islamic government). Moreover, he argued, the successors of the Prophet Muhammad, namely, the scholarly leadership, should be in charge of the polity. Politicians like Jinnah had the essential skills to win the country, but then, following this interpretation, the 'ulama would take on leadership. Husain Ahmad took from the same covenant the example of a culturally plural society, but he did not take as relevant to the current day the hierarchic political model of another era let alone the notion of religious leadership for modern states. This was the kind of difference of interpretation possible between interpreters of the prophetic traditions of the *sunna* that Maulana Zakariyya had written about. For Maulana Madani and the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind, the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Islam interpretation represented a failure to understand what a model exemplified for a particular context. Usmani further bolstered his argument, however, by claiming that Maulana Mahmudul Hasan accepted the 'two nation theory,' thus implicitly accusing Maulana Madani of deviating from their common revered

[45] Quoted in Dhulipala, *Creating a New Medina*, 373.

teacher in a tradition where authority derived precisely from continuity with forebears.[46] Mahmudul Hasan, of course, had cooperated with Hindus and Sikhs in the Silk Letter Conspiracy, and he embraced Gandhi's leadership when he returned from Malta before his death later that same year, long before any plan for a separate state was bruited.

Utopian ideals worked their intoxicating power. The Shi'a Raja of Mahmudabad, a key financier of the ML, for a time spoke of Pakistan as becoming the first Islamic state since Medina, ruled by an all-powerful caliph, where the rich would voluntarily share their wealth.[47] Shortly after the promulgation of the Lahore Resolution, the UP ML convened a conference of 'ulama and intellectuals to draft an 'Islamic Constitution.' The first draft, some 300 pages, foretold rule by a caliph (elected by the 'ulama), and it provided sanction to such laws as death for apostasy and acceptance of slavery. Perhaps, therefore, it is not surprising that the League leadership never convened the conference to work further on the draft and that it lay forgotten.[48]

Many Congress leaders were imprisoned following their protest at the colonial declaration of war on their behalf, Madani among them. The ML leadership, in contrast, remained free. During his time in prison between 1942 and 1944, Madani composed his important *Naqsh-i hayat*, a history of himself, his family, and his country. For all the 'modernity' imputed to the Muslim League, the 'Pakistan' of the ML and the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Islam lacked a fundamental characteristic of a modern state, namely, the territorial attachment to a bounded piece of land, imbued with an imagined, even mythological history. As Madani's history made clear, British India was the Muslims' native land, inhabited by their networks, and marked by the sites of their worldly and spiritual past.

Muslims, in Madani's version of the linear, dated, history that modern nationalism requires, were at the forefront of what he called 'resistance to India's

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[46] Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, *Hamara Pakistan:Khutbah-yi sadarat subah-yi Punjab 'ulama-i Islam kanfarans* (Hyderabad: Nafis Akaidemi, 1946), 3.

[47] Dhulipala, *Creating a New Medina*, 209–17. At this point in 1940, true to the mentality of a raja, he said he was tired of 'democratic yip-yapping' (217). In the end, however, sickened by partition, the raja stayed in Iraq for ten years. In 1957, he went to Pakistan and changed his citizenship, but then settled in London and served as director of the Islamic Cultural Centre. His son said that wandering around the world was like a penance. Dhulipala, (2015), 492.

[48] Dhulipala, *Creating a New Medina*, 231–43. Dhulipala, however, comments that the committee never followed up on the first draft 'for reasons that remain unknown' (233).

"slavery".' He argued not merely that Muslims were anti-British, but that of all the Indian population, they were the most anti-British. The first landmark of this history was a *fatwa* provided by Delhi's most celebrated '*alim* on the status of India after the British occupation of Delhi in 1803 declaring India no longer *dar al-islam*. The second was what he described as the anti-colonial *jihad* of Sayyid Ahmad Shaheed and others who attempted to carve out a state on the frontier beginning in the late 1820s. This was followed by 'ulama participation in the 1857 Mutiny. Then, of course, came the conspiracies preceding and during World War I that brought him and others to Malta. The Indian National Congress was, by this telling, implicitly a laggard, long niggling over minor constitutional adjustments and proclaiming its loyalty. It was Muslims who first and most courageously opposed exploitative, tyrannical imperialism. Academic historians could impute anachronism to much of Madani's story, but its importance is that it was written in the style of all histories intended to serve the nationalism of a modern state, namely a linear history and a history of heroism. By putting Muslims, and their sacrifices, at the centre of his historical account, Madani claimed a central place for Muslims in India's biography.

Madani thus cultivated a historicized territorial vision for the nation-state. He himself best knew the upper India marked in particular by his ancestral home, his madrasa, and the burial sites he venerated. But he worked extensively in the northeast, he participated in scholarly and Sufi networks across the country, and, like Gandhi and other nationalists, he criss-crossed the country by train to campaign and address Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind meetings that were scheduled in every corner of the subcontinent. Madani, moreover, was an insatiable reader and through conversation and Urdu reportage invoked a remarkable range of British writers and historical events in making his arguments, some known through organs like the Urdu periodical *Madina* (Bijnore), which carried international news gleaned from the English-language press. Even while travelling, Madani kept up with current events, filling voluminous notebooks with transcriptions and notes concerning worldwide and India news.[49]

Madani also produced a second work in these years that answered even more clearly anyone who dared to suggest that the soil of India was any less sacred and any less cherished for Muslims than it was for any other Indian. This tract,

[49] See the extraordinary eight-volume publication edited by Abu Salman Shahjahanpuri, *Hazrat Shaikhulislam Maulana Sayyid Husain Ahmad Madni ki siyasi dairi: Akhbar wa ifkar ki roshni men* (Karachi: Majlis-i Yadgar Shaikhul Islam Pakistan, 2002–11). Madani left behind extensive scrapbooks, some 90 percent of the notes in his own hand, which form the basis of this publication.

Hamara Hindustan aur us ke faza'il (Our India and its Advantages/Goodness), harked back to a genre that derived from classic Arabic *fazai'l* literature, in which writers celebrated the 'merits' of different lands. The Hindu terrorist, Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (1883–1966), the intellectual father of the virulent Hindu majoritarian nationalism that emerged in the 1980s, had insisted that India was a Hindu land, sacred only to Hindus but emphatically not to so-called 'foreign' Muslims and Christians. Muslims had no ties to India, he insisted: their holy places were all in Arabia, just as Christian holy places were all in Palestine.[50] Madani did not challenge this argument directly; he simply exploded it.

Madani, following earlier writers on India in the *faza'il* genre, pointed out that, for Muslims, India was the second holiest place on earth next to Mecca because Adam descended on Adam's Peak, in Ceylon, after his expulsion from paradise. From there, he continued into India proper. Thus, since Adam is understood as the founder of the Islamic prophetic tradition, India was the site of the first revelation, the first mosque, and the first place from which pilgrimage to Mecca was performed. Moreover, since Adam was recently arrived from paradise, he brought with him India's distinction as the place in all the world having the most fragrant flowers, the sweetest birds, its remarkable fauna, and so forth. In India 'the eternal light of Muhammad' was first manifested in Adam. And since all humans are descended from Adam, all humans of the world are also Indian. Thus, Madani added, 'among various communities residing in India, Muslims alone, because of Adam, can legitimately claim they are the original inhabitants of the land.'[51]

As for those who are the followers of the Prophet Muhammad, they had made India their home for over 1,000 years, and, as it happened, most of those who were Muslim today were descended from earlier inhabitants. Companions of the Prophet, moreover, had visited Indian soil. Thousands of scholars, Sufis, and martyrs lay buried there. India boasted millions of mosques, tombs, and other Islamic institutions. This was the Muslims' ancestral home, and, Madani insisted lest anyone think otherwise, they had no greater ties to Muslims beyond the subcontinent than did Hindus to their fellow religionists abroad. This was a response both to Hindu nationalist claims to the contrary, as well as to interpretations made of the Khilafat agitation.

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[50] V. D. Savarkar, *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?* (Bombay: Veer Savarkar Prakashan [1923]). Accessed 4 October 2016. Available at https://archive.org/details/hindutva-vinayak-damodar-savarkar-pdf., e.g. 115–16.

[51] Husain Ahmad Madani, *Hamara Hindustan aur us ke faza'il* (New Delhi: Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind, n.d.), 1.

In the nationalist competition of who were the original inhabitants of a land, in Madani's telling, Muslims won, hands down. The colonial narrative of Indian history, first formulated in the late eighteenth century, had been to position Muslims as foreigners, thus making British rule seem less intrusive and, by vilifying Muslim rule, more benign. Indians generally appropriated key elements of that narrative to account for their colonial subjection. Today, Hindu extremists justify ethnic cleansing on the basis of this same narrative of Muslims as foreigners. Madani made his case on the defensive.

Madani made a further rather startling argument to assert the sacrality of India's soil for Muslims. Muslims, he pointed out, buried their dead rather than burn or expose the body. Thus, he explained, 'even after death, a Muslim remains attached to the soil' and at the time of Judgement will rise from the very spot where buried. According to their own beliefs, moreover, Madani continued, Hindus and some other groups of Indians believe that souls after death take on new forms so that 'there is no guarantee that a Hindu soul … will again take birth in India' at all. The grave of a Muslim by contrast, he pointed out, is a sanctuary till the Day of Judgement. For the sainted dead, Madani explained, the 'grave is like a Radio Station … where messages are received and transmitted,' particularly as others pray and do good works on behalf of the deceased.[52] Madani's final, and for him irrefutable, argument was that the Prophet Muhammad loved his homeland, so his followers in India could hardly do otherwise. Madani's story resonated with old arguments made by earlier writers, but, mythical or not, it was very much a product of the times in its commitment to the territorial loyalty of a modern nation-state. *Hamara Hindustan* was where Muslim Indians belonged.

Courage and the partition of India

By the time the nationalist leaders were released from jail in 1944 and 1945, however persuasive INC and Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind arguments might have been, the tide among Muslim voters had turned. That keen observer Wilfred Cantwell Smith, based in Lahore and directly familiar with many Muslim activists, concluded that even by the end of 1942 there was 'no substantial organized group of Muslims opposed to the League's policy of separatism.'[53]

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[52] Madani, *Hamara Hindustan aur us ke faza'il*, 4–6.

[53] Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Modern Islam in India: A Social Analysis* (Lahore: Sh. Muhammad Ashraf, 1946), 306. The Kashmir National Conference and Khuda'i Khidmatgars, of course, continued in opposition, but Smith saw them as shaped less

C. M. Naim, then a schoolboy in a country town in UP, perceptively remembers an almost automatic, arrogant enthusiasm for Pakistan that was current among other Muslim boys like himself by the mid-1940s.[54] And he recounts the uphill tide faced by a Congress campaigner in the election of 1945–6 in making his case to Muslims in his area, blinded as they were by imagining Jinnah's piety and Muslim resurgence.[55] Even the wavering Communist Party of India in the end followed Soviet nationalities policy in favour of a separate state.[56]

Against this tide, the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind still focused its energy on opposition to the League. Madani himself unleashed a flood of pamphlets in 1945 and 1946: 'An Open Letter to the Muslim League,' 'What is the Muslim League?,' 'What is Pakistan?.' Following the failed Simla Conference of June 1945, the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind convened a gathering of several parties: the All-India Momin Conference, largely comprised of Bihari weavers; the Khuda'i Khidmatgar from the Frontier; the All India Muslim Majlis; the Ahrar; the Independent Party, which had won half the Muslim seats in Bihar in 1937; and the agrarian Krishak Praja Party, which had lost power to the ML during the crisis of the Bengal famine in 1943. Together representatives formed the 'Muslim Parliamentary Board,' with Madani as chair, to challenge the ML in the elections.

The League swept the Muslim vote in the centre and provinces alike. In the subsequent 'Cabinet Mission' deliberations of April 1946, Madani, representing

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by opposition to the ML than by regional interests. Smith in those years was a lecturer in Islamic history at Forman Christian College and an Associate of the Henry Martyn School of Islamic Studies in Aligarh.

[54] C. M. Naim, 'Two Days' in *Ambiguities of Heritage: Fictions and Polemics* (Karachi: City Press, 1999), 76–85. Professor Naim is one of the world's foremost scholars of Urdu language and literature, and a 'public intellectual' who has commented extensively in the Indian press and elsewhere.

[55] C. M. Naim, 'A Sentimental Essay in Three Scenes' (n.d.), accessed 19 May 2016. Available at http://muslimleague. uchicago.edu/Naim_KeynoteML.pdf..

[56] Ali, *Communism in Pakistan*. A cohort of CPI leaders emigrated to Pakistan to take the lead in political work in the new state. For a study of their work in trying to shape a truly progressive, Urdu-language literature for the new state, see Kamran Asdar Ali, 'Communists in a Muslim Land: Cultural Debates in Pakistan's Early Years,' *Modern Asian Studies* 45, no.3 (2011): 501–34. The distinguished writer Sajjad Zaheer was the main protagonist in the struggle to foster a Marxian literature against those who evoked a romanticized vision of early Muslim societies as an ideal. Zaheer, like other leftists in the early years in Pakistan, was periodically jailed; he could only survive by living underground and he ultimately returned to India.

the Board, along with other 'Nationalist Muslims,' made his case against the country's partition. To their long-held arguments about viability on the one hand and shared culture on the other, they questioned the very significance of the election results, given that so much of the impoverished Muslim community fell outside the franchise. They also alleged that campaigning had violated India's official law of misuse of religious fear and prejudice.[57] Madani presented his own 'formula,' evidence of the extent to which the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind by this point had been pushed to take up an ever-looser federal plan. Something close to this plan was in fact proposed by the Mission. But the plan failed; and violence escalated as the date for the transfer of power – 15 August 1947 – approached.

It is striking how often the theme of courage was part of the anti-Pakistan rhetoric in these last few years. It was courage that Madani called for as he crossed the country in his campaign in 1945 and 1946. In a stray, seemingly spontaneous speech in April 1945, Madani counterposed the brave Nationalist Muslims to the 'weak-hearted' Muslims of the League:

> Alas that Muslims today are weak-hearted. Muhammad bin Qasim as a youth … led a force of a few thousand against millions … Today Muslims are afraid that without the shade of the British, life would be over. Today you raise the slogan of 'Pakistan, Pakistan,' but you are not ready to make any sacrifice.[58]

It took courage to stay the course given growing Muslim enthusiasm for Pakistan and the level of anti-Congress feeling that Madani knew well, subjected as he was to even physical attacks.[59] For Madani, the lives of Muslims in

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[57] For a discussion of electoral cases entailing 'spiritual undue influence' in colonial India, see David Gilmartin, 'Election Law and the "People" in Colonial and Postcolonial India,' in *From the Colonial to the Postcolonial: India and Pakistan in Transition*, eds. Rochona Mazumdar, Andrew Sartori, and Dipesh Chakrabarty (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2007), especially 68–73.

[58] A speech of Madani delivered at a meeting of the Markazi Tanzim, 3 April 1945, from the journal *Zamzam* (Lahore), in Abu Salman Shahjahanpuri (n.d.), 3 and 493.

[59] Ibid., 796–99. A letter from Muhammad Tayyib Bhagalpuri to Sayyid Muhammad Miyan describes successive outrages by ML 'goondas' in September 1945. He writes, he says, with a halting pen and a weeping heart. The thugs surrounded Madani's party, preventing them from going forward, raising black flags and shouting curses (*murdabad).* Some were intoxicated; one knocked Madani's (Gandhi) cap off. They attacked the party physically and wounded the driver. The next day was worse, the ML attackers joined by the town riff raff and schoolboys. The letter makes clear Madani's tireless travel and speaking even in the face of opposition like this. The letter ended with a

undivided India would not, at least initially, be easy. He was a true disciple of Gandhi, however, in his commitment to the courage of forbearance. 'Today on every side there are attacks on Islam,' he continued in that same talk. 'Respond to all of them, but sweetly…'[60] The choice for India, in his view, took courage. Beyond courage in the face of potential physical violence, there was in fact a need for courage in living with difference that Madani's two celebrated interlocutors rejected: Iqbal spurned the differences inherent in a religiously plural society; Maududi ignored (and Jinnah obfuscated) the intra-Muslim differences of sect and lifestyle that Madani, in contrast, knew to be entrenched.

The greater sympathy of the Jamiʿat ʿUlama-i-Hind ʿulama for social change reflected a kind of courage as well. As the anthropologist Marc Gaborieau points out:

> … those Deobandīs who supported the creation of Pakistan, such as Ashraf ʿAli Thanawi (1863–1943) and Mufti Muhammad Shafi (1897–1976)… were among the most vocal in reaffirming the social inferiority of despised artisans and forbidding them to adopt Arab surnames. The weavers of the Deobandī area revolted in 1933 against a *fatwa* of Muḥammad Shafi in which he declared that the occupations of barber, weaver, and dyer were condemned in Islam because they affected the personal development and morals of those who exercised them, and he had for some time to quit his position as official *mufti* of Deoband. Others, like Kifayat Allah (1875–1952), the *mufti* [of the Jamiʿat ʿUlama-i-Hind] … opposed such stigmatization …[61]

Is it a leap to suggest that the Jamiʿat ʿUlama-i-Islam ʿulama may in fact have been alienated from the INC in part because they lacked the courage to face the social changes that progressives imagined? The old hierarchies seemed safer. To be sure, the Jamiʿat ʿUlama-i-Hind itself offered no formal plan for restructuring society even though someone like Madani wrote and spoke at length about

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description of a successful speech to an INC gathering of Hindus and Muslims and an opportunity for congregational prayer with 700–800 Muslims – with police protection.

[60] Abu Salman Shahjahanpuri, *Hazrat Shaikhulislam Maulana Sayyid Husain Ahmad Madni ki siyasi dairi: Akhbar wa ifkar ki roshni mein* (Karachi: Majlis-i Yadgar Shaikhul Islam Pakistan, 2002-2012), 3 and 493.

[61] Marc Gaborieau, 'India (Hind),' Encyclopedia of Islam, 3rd ed., accessed 16 May 2016. Available at http://referenceworks. brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-3/india-hind-COM_0035?s.num=1. Zaman also points out that in addition to Shafi's 1930s statements, in 1970 he called Islamic socialism (presumably that associated with Z.A. Bhutto), un-Islamic. Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *Modern Islamic Thought in a Radical Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 255.

the economic devastation wrought by the colonial presence and the particular suffering of the poor. Still, even if not official policy, there were in fact 'ulama associated with the Jami'at ma-i-Hind who did imagine real structural change.[62]

Against courage, the League, one might suggest, traded in fear. Fear, as noted above, served the League well, raising the spectre of Hindu domination during the INC's provincial ministries from 1937-39. There was growing fear on the part of Aligarh students, whose campaigning soon blanketed the countryside, that in undivided India they would never get jobs.[63] There was fear of forced cultural homogenization. There was fear for personal safely. Most significant for the ML cause in the all-important province of Punjab was the support of the rural elites, whose landed interests had been protected from competing Hindu interests by explicit British policy and who now feared an end to that security. In Bengal, there was fear on every side. The League benefited from having controlled the provincial government in a period of unspeakable human misery and disruption in a devastating man-made famine.[64] The desperate

[62] Maulana Azad was a strong proponent of governmental responsibility for progressive social and economic policies, for which he was a strong advocate after independence. In 1955, at the 60th annual meeting of the Congress in Madras, he presented a resolution in favour of 'a socialist society,' both secular and democratic, focused at once on increased production and equal distribution of wealth. See Ishtiyaq Ahmed Zilli, 'Azad Hind Ki Manzil-i Maqsud Aur Maulana Azad Ki Rahnumai.' Accessed 20 May 2016. Available at http://makaias. gov.in/Azad_Conference_2012_Program_and_Abstracts.pdf. Among other progressives, Maulana Ubaidullah Sindhi, who lived in exile until 1939 after the 'silk letters' were exposed, was influenced by his time in the USSR, as well as by the INC, to oppose capitalists, imperialists and exploitative religious elites alike in favour of government policies oriented towards the poor. Maulana Abdur Rahman Popolzai (1892–1944) embraced the socialist side of Congress politics and actively supported peasant resistance to unjust taxes in the Frontier. Maulana Hifzur Rahman Seoharwi (1901–1962) published works undergirded by Islamic argumentation to further an end to economic exploitation and the need for the government to intervene to ensure adequate livelihoods for the poor. Both he and Ubaidullah Sindhi drew on the seminal work of Shah Waliullah in his denunciation of exploitative elites; and Seoharwi was also inspired by the work of Ibn Hazm (d. 1064), recently published in the Middle East. All three of these thinkers in their concerns with social justice knew and participated in larger transnational trends of the day from progressives in the Middle East to Catholic Workers in the United States. Zaman, *Modern Islamic Thought in a Radical Age*, 223–44.

[63] Amber H. Abbas, 'The Solidarity Agenda: Aligarh Students and the Demand for Pakistan,' *South Asian History and Culture* 5, no.2 (2014): 147–62.

[64] Janam Mukherjee, *Hungry Bengal: War, Famine and the End of Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

migrations in search of jobs and foods, the starvation and deaths, particularly impacted Muslims – the poorest segment of society – and set the stage both for the communal violence that began even before partition as well as for the support that in the end went to the League.

By the summer of 1947, Delhi and its surrounding region faced horrific turmoil. Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya – Madani's beloved younger colleague who had written the conciliatory book in 1938 – described those days as like the end times portrayed in sacred books, when all human relations would be severed and all normal human behaviour cease. In the midst of this misery, Zakariya writes, he and the Sufi *shaikh* Maulana Abdul Qadir Raipuri (d. 1963), turned to Madani in despair as their respective disciples implored them to come to Pakistan lest they arrive there bereft even of their spiritual elders. Madani assured them both that he would blame no one for whatever choice he made, but he made clear that the choice was one dependent on courage:

> Whoever is ready to sacrifice his life and goods, honour and respect, religion and the world for Muslims should stay; and anyone who cannot bear all this should go.

They stayed, even though, as Madani said during their conversation, with tears in his eyes and using the English words, 'our "scheme" has "failed".'[65]

The Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind scheme 'failed,' but much of what the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind stood for did not. Their principles laid the foundation for the place of India's Muslims as Indian citizens – decimated and suspect as they were after partition, but today roughly equal in numbers to Pakistan's own population. The nationalist 'ulama had initiated an extraordinary change in justifying from within the Islamic tradition the institutionalization of equal citizenship with non-Muslims as members of a common *qaum* in a shared *watan*. As a corollary to this, they had confirmed against all talk of an Islamic state the treatment of *shari'a* as an *internal* moral imperative.[66] Moreover, Madani, and the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind generally, had put front and centre a language of pragmatism, progress, and popular well-being, not only as personal, but as governing goals for officials to attend to.

Aspects of the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind 'scheme' were very much products of their times, as were virtually all of the plans put forward to reflect a communitarian structure of society that conflicts with a classic liberal democratic

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[65] Muhammad Zakariyya, *Ap Biti nambar 5 ya yad-i ayam nambar 6*, 25-26.

[66] Peter Hardy, *Partners in Freedom and True Muslims: The Political Thought of Some Muslim Scholars in British India, 1912–47* (Lund: Studentlitteratur, 1971), 40–42.

model. That structure, and the suspicions that make all Muslim Indians into proto-Pakistanis, have hampered Muslims' assertion of their rights in terms of India's constitution and their claims on the secularism of India's founding. In answer, the story of the role of the mainstream Muslim religious leadership needs to be an integral part of India's nationalist history. It needs also to be an important component of Pakistan's founding story as one example among many that belie any argument that Pakistan was the inevitable result of some undifferentiated Muslim will. [67]

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[67] And particularly that it was not the fruit of an inevitable Islamic imperative or will. This has been an uphill struggle. The neo-Marxist sociologist Hamza Alavi (1921–2003), for example, sought to influence public policy by arguing that far from a project of religious scholars, Pakistan was the fruit of a secular vision to serve the pragmatic ends of Muslim interests in employment and landholding; the turn to 'the worn out rhetoric of religion,' he writes, was launched only in the early 1950s to silence opposition to the secular leadership, and, specifically, to counter Bengali regional nationalism. Hamza Alavi, 'Social Forces and Ideology in the Making of Pakistan,' in *Economic and Political Weekly* 37, no.51 (21 December 2002): 5119.

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2

The Partition Conundrum
Perspectives, experiences and ambiguities from *qasbahs* in India

M. Raisur Rahman

Writing about the impact of the partition of India, renowned Urdu writer Ismat Chughtai (1915–1991), born in *qasbah* Badaun, elaborates: 'It wasn't only that the country was split in two – bodies and minds were also divided. Moral beliefs were tossed aside and humanity was in shreds … Families were torn apart. One brother was allotted to Hindustan, the other to Pakistan, the mother was in Hindustan, her offsprings were in Pakistan; the husband was in Hindustan, his wife was in Pakistan. The bonds of relationship were in tatters, and in the end many souls remained behind in Hindustan while their bodies started off for Pakistan.'[1]

At least with regard to the *qasbahs* of the United Provinces (the state of Uttar Pradesh in independent India), this was a rather common story. *Qasbahs* or unique small towns that littered the state witnessed significant movement of people to Pakistan in the wake of the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947. Families were divided, several individuals departed to the newly created nation-state of Pakistan in search of greener pastures or to explore and experience the new homeland created 'as a political idea.'[2] For whatever reasons, several people chose to remain at home in *qasbahs*. This suggests how opinions were divided in these areas with regard to the Muslim League-led demand for Pakistan. *Qasbahs*, like most towns and cities in North India, had individuals who were pro-Congress and anti-Congress, pro-Muslim League and anti-Muslim League. But the picture that emerged overall was one of great ambivalence and

[1] Ismat Chughtai, *My Friend, My Enemy: Essays, Reminiscences, Portraits* (New Delhi: Kali for Women, 2001), 3.

[2] Faisal Devji, *Muslim Zion: Pakistan as a Political Idea* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2013).

predicament. The pattern that emerges from *qasbahs* presents both critique and dilemma in regards to the very idea of Pakistan. It emerged as a shared pattern among the *ashraf* (well-born, Muslim gentry) families of UP in general and in *qasbahs* in particular from where members of families crossed borders to settle in Pakistan. Many, of course, chose to remain in the newly independent India. It was not unusual to see one brother leave while the other stayed behind. So what sets *qasbahs* apart from other towns and cities? For one, the emigration from *qasbahs* was not just limited to people moving to Pakistan. Both during and after the partition, several *qasbati* (of *qasbah*) individuals moved to larger towns and cities such as Delhi, Lucknow, Bombay, Allahabad and Aligarh, leaving behind divided families and communities. The revolutionary poet Asrarul Haq Majaz (1911–1955), who hailed from Rudauli, moved to Lucknow and Delhi. Jan Nisar Akhtar, married to Safia Akhtar, a sister of Majaz and a writer in her own right, had moved to Bombay to make a literary career in the film industry. Such moves were prompted by factors such as a desire to find better livelihoods or pursue individual dreams in the larger, urban centres. It was also in large part related to the eventual decline of the *qasbahs* as hubs where the traditional Muslim elite such as the zamindars and the taluqdars thrived and patronized economic and cultural activities of all sorts. Even Hindu landlords such as Krishnanand Khare of Rudauli moved to a nearby *qasbah*, Nawabganj, within Bara Banki.[3] The passage of the UP Zamindari Abolition and Land Reforms Act of 1951 no doubt further exacerbated this entire process.

The point is that the *qasbahs* provided a different set of reasons that led to an outward movement of people from what was found happening in the larger towns and cities across North India. It was not just the appeal that the Muslim League attempted to blaze through its mass contact programmes in the 1940s and Muhammad Ali Jinnah's pleas to establish 'solidarity and complete unity' that determined where people went.[4] Neither was the refutation of the notion of Pakistan as unrealistic and without any plans entirely convincing, as Saiyid Tufail Ahmad Manglori presented in his famous tract *Musalmanon ka Roshan Mustaqbil* (The Bright Prospect of Muslims).[5] The second feature that distinguishes *qasbahs* from other entities is the fact that those who moved away

[3] Saiyid Ali Muhammad Zaidi, *Bara Banki* (Rudauli: Azmi Publishers, 1984), 207–208.

[4] 'Presidential Address by Muhammad Ali Jinnah to the Muslim League, Lucknow, October 1937,' In G. Allana, *Pakistan Movement: Historical Documents* (Karachi: Department of International Relations, University of Karachi, 1969), 140–51.

[5] Saiyid Tufail Ahmad Manglori, *Musalmanon ka Roshan Mustaqbil* (Lahore: Hammad al-Kutbi, n.d.).

from *qasbahs* remained deeply nostalgic of their original home and continued to find ways to hold on to their original identities. While one might argue that people in Pakistan who may have moved from the city of Kanpur or Lucknow could have retained similar emotional links to their city of origin, in the case of *qasbahs* these connections went beyond the obvious and have inescapably lasted through generations, manifested till the present day in multiple forms. In Karachi, for instance, it is common to find community wedding halls, formal gatherings, and literary forums and globally, websites and social media have connected people to the *qasbahs* to which their forefathers once belonged. Efforts to intermarry among themselves, cherishing and sharing original recipes and celebrating festivals together clearly testify to this. In fact, this sense of belonging continues to be emphasized and practised every day.[6]

While some *qasbatis* supported the demand and the coming into being of Pakistan, others opposed, and yet others chose to be unsure, in some cases discerningly so. This essay looks into the question of support or the lack of it for the idea, demand, and formation of Pakistan both during and after 1947 among *qasbah* residents of UP and how variously individuals such as Chaudhary Muhammad Ali of Rudauli (1882–1959) and Abdul Majid Daryabadi (1892–1977), among many others, articulated themselves. How their positions as individuals who chose to remain in India after partition can be read as critiques to the demand and eventually the creation of Pakistan is an important focus of the essay. What they also represent are voices that wavered, depicting concern and a lack of conviction as well as how individual experiences and choices determined paths that came out as more commonplace, natural and historical rather than treading upon a linear path of either support or opposition to Pakistan. I argue that ambiguities and the lack of a clear conviction was what people in the 1940s and 1950s endured, given their own insecurities as they grappled with the realities of the moment. In a situation where friends and families were becoming alienated, it would be unfair and ahistorical to seek a clear answer of support versus disavowal, especially in *qasbahs*, where all kinds of intellectual leanings and attributes were found. This does not mean that clear persuasions and pathways were not found, though. This essay explores more of the reactions and afterthoughts than the causations that led to the partition of the Indian subcontinent.

[6] For a detailed discussion on memory and nostalgia as tied to *qasbahs*, see M. Raisur Rahman, 'Qasbas as Place: A Sense of Belonging and Nostalgia in Colonial India,' *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 58, no.5 (2015): 668–92.

Chaudhary Muhammad Ali (1882–1959), a taluqdar, writer, and literary activist from *qasbah* Rudauli has been described as someone representing the 'pangs of the Muslims' who chose India over Pakistan after partition.[7] A descendant of taluqdars who was widely read in Western tradition and yet equally rooted in indigenous and Muslim cultures, Chaudhary Muhammad Ali represented the ethos of his class and generation. Very active in literary circles and public life, he was opposed to the two-nation theory in principle, despite members of his immediate family opting to settle in Pakistan. During the years leading up to partition, his house in Rudauli remained filled with people, brimming with discussions. One of his contemporaries, Nasim Ansari, writes that when he visited Rudauli in the summer of 1946 on the occasion of the *'urs* (death anniversary) of Shah Makhdoom Sahib, a renowned Sufi figure, he was able to witness the zeal with which Muslims were debating the various facets of this critical political juncture in the history of the subcontinent. As the details of the Cabinet Mission plans were being announced, he, along with the iconic Urdu poet and India's freedom fighter Hasrat Mohani (1875–1951), gathered at Chaudhary Muhammad Ali's house, the only one with a radio.[8] Hasrat Mohani remained a key activist in the nationalist struggle and is known for coining the term *Inquilab Zindabad* (Long Live the Revolution) in 1921. The slogan became the rallying cry for the nationalists and continues to be used in a variety of contexts. Mohani, who came from *qasbah* Mohan, chose to stay in India after partition, both like and unlike many of his peers. Similarly, Ansari chose to remain in India and penned articles that were serialized in a Lucknow newspaper and later published as a book titled *Jawab-e-Dost* (A Friend's Reply). This was in response to a fellow student, Mukhtar Masood from his *alma mater* Aligarh Muslim University, who had chosen to move to Pakistan and whose book *Awaz-e-Dost* (A Friend's Call) invoked the ideology of Pakistan and Jinnah's role in its creation.[9] Ansari, who happened to be around in Aligarh in the 1940s, an era of 'strange days' and 'stormy clouds' seemingly bursting, writes that he was increasingly convinced that any problem in India

[7] Mushirul Hasan, *From Pluralism to Separatism: Qasbas in Colonial Awadh* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004), 141–55, 255–65.

[8] Nasim Ansari, *Choosing to Stay: Memoirs of an Indian Muslim* (Karachi: City Press, 1999), 61.

[9] Mukhtar Masood, *Awaz-e-Dost* (Lahore: An-Noor, 1973); and Nasim Ansari, *Jawab-e-Dost* (Aligarh: Educational Book House, 1988).

needed to be resolved by both Hindus and Muslims together.[10] As someone who had attended the Lahore session of the Muslim League in 1940 alongside his uncle, Ansari writes about how passionately many Muslims connected with the Lahore Resolution but discusses equally how the Congress party fervently countered Muslim League politics.

In his corpus of writings, Chaudhary Muhammad Ali Rudaulvi does not dwell much upon his thoughts on the politics of the Muslim League. As a *taluqdar* involved in literary pursuits, he was active in the organization of the Progressive Writers' Association (PWA). At the time of partition, he and his loved ones underwent the same ordeal of families being torn apart, as regards Ismat Chughtai's quotation cited at the beginning of this essay. A large section of his family left for Pakistan, leaving behind his young second wife, her sister, their children and a couple of attendants as companions. He started expressing his opinions on partition as well as post-partition India more vociferously once his children moved to Pakistan. The 65-year-old had chosen to remain in India while his children, Hima, Kajjan, Chabban and Salman, departed in succession. No doubt, this made him melancholic, and he henceforth became dejected about his life. Several of his letters testify to this state of his mind. In a letter written on 14 February 1948 to his most beloved daughter Hima, he emotively voiced that he had nothing better to do than to either write letters to his children or dream of it and that he was 'alive and imaginably the same as you [Hima] had seen last.'[11]This was a common story of divided families from *qasbahs* such as these. The post-partition years and decades saw intensified conversations across borders and attempts to defend, blame and lament, thereby generating much ambivalence. Such qualms are very well presented in Francis Robinson's forthcoming work on Maulana Jamal Mian of Firangi Mahal, which suggests that even though Jamal Mian fought for a separate nation-state for Muslims, he never wanted to move to Pakistan.[12] Robinson further shows that Jamal Mian, despite his intention, was forced by circumstances to become a Pakistani passport holder, reflecting how often choices and subsequent outcomes themselves were uncertain. One cannot just look at this figure as someone who favoured the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan and lived a good part of his life as a Pakistani citizen. Most *qasbahs* were very well-connected with the

[10] Ansari, *Jawab-e-Dost*, 32, 43.

[11] Chaudhary Muhammad Ali Rudaulvi, *Goya Dabistan Khul Gaya* (Lahore: Punjab Academy, 1956), 59–60.

[12] Francis Robinson, 'How Maulana Jamal Mian became Pakistani' (unpublished).

eminent centres of learning in North India, including Firangi Mahal and the College at Aligarh, and were no doubt informed of such intellectual upheavals.

Chaudhary Muhammad Ali Rudaulvi was a reformist who promoted women's education and rights,[13] a progressive who presided over the first Reception Committee of the PWA, and a prolific writer who touched upon topics ranging from religion to female sexuality, a topic still considered a taboo in South Asian and Muslim contexts. On 2 April 1947, Rudaulvi wrote that he was least concerned about anything but the Muslim League. But he did not elaborate upon what he exactly meant. Given his general political standing, he might have been referring to the concerns that the politics of the Muslim League was able to generate, with its emphasis on the two-nation theory. Hindu–Muslim discord was not unknown to either Muhammad Ali or his *qasbah*. Deeply concerned about local communal tensions in 1948, he writes that 'a conflict over Baqr Eid is old news.'[14] In a letter to his daughter Hima written in November, Chaudhary Muhammad Ali mentions a murder in the village of Jaffar Mehdi on the occasion of Baqr Eid or Eid al-adha, the Hindu outrage in Wazirganj over the slaughter of goats and the Hindu insistence in Saiyidanpur that Muslims should not even slaughter goats, let alone cows. He points out that in Benaras and a few other districts, sacrificing cows had been next to impossible for at least a year. These questions speak of the hardening religious identities in India in the aftermath of partition, a question of food, culture and religion which has seen a vigorous resurgence in India today. The issue of cow slaughter was a major bone of contention between the two communities and Baqr Eid, as a festival that required Muslims to perform annual animal sacrifice, was an occasion that regularly caused dissonance between Hindu and Muslim groups. Muhammad Ali's tone is one of complaint. He reveals how loathsome Hindu–Muslim relations had become, and possibly this was the reason why he seemed disinterested in Muslim League politics. The advocacy of the two-nation theory had led to even greater skirmishes between the two communities, in particular during the years and months leading up to August 1947. Moreover, Chaudhary Muhammad Ali had grown up in Awadh where, in Lucknow, he had attended the famous Colvin Taluqdar School, which later became Colvin Taluqdar College. There, he had made friends with peers from gentry backgrounds from other *qasbahs* and towns, among whom were many

[13] His daughters attended schools in Allahabad and Lucknow. Chaudhary Muhammad Ali Rudaulvi, *Mera Mazhab* (Patna: Idarah-e-Tehqiqat-e-Urdu, 1991), 16.

[14] For details, see Rudaulvi, *Goya Dabistan Khul Gaya*, 83–84.

non-Muslims. Some, such as his childhood friend Raja Prithvipal Singh, who he met for the first time in 1892, had a lifelong influence on him.[15] Growing up in a rather composite and cosmopolitan environment, combined with his later interactions with writers of different religious and cultural backgrounds, such as his peers at the PWA, including the iconic writer Munshi Premchand (1880–1936) and communist leader-writer Sajjad Zaheer (1905–1973), might have made it rather problematic for him to consider the independent nation that the Muslim League and its supporters envisaged and rallied around.

Despite occasional clashes and conflicts, *qasbahs* had by and large remained entities bringing people of different faiths together, particularly as they served as Sufi nodes for surrounding towns and villages. The arrival of Saiyid Sharfuddin Shah Wilayat from Wasit, popularly known as Shah Wilayat (d. 1381), a greatly revered Sufi saint across religious groups, in modern-day Iraq marked a turning point in Amroha's history.[16] This was no less evident in Rudauli and other *qasbahs*. In fact, each *qasbah* had one or more patron Sufi saints whose marked presence integrated people of different backgrounds on occasions, such as an *'urs*, but also on an everyday basis. The shrine of Shaikh Ahmad Abdul Haq (d. 1434), commonly referred to as Makhdoom Saheb of the Sabiri Chishtiya order in Rudauli continues to be an important Sufi centre in North India. The world-view of *wahdat-ul-wujud* (unity of being), discussed at length by Indian Sufis, is fully developed in the work of Abdul Quddus Gangohi, a disciple of Makhdoom Saheb.[17] It promoted a belief in the essential unity of all phenomena. *Rushdnama*, a collection of his verses and those of other Rudauli saints, is considered a respected Sufi text. Some of its verses, with slight variations, were regarded as common to both Hindu and Muslim mystics, including those in Gorakh Nath's poetry and Kabir's *dohas* or couplets.[18] A descendant of Abdul Haq, Shaikh Abdur Rahman Chishti translated into Persian a Sanskrit treatise on Hindu cosmogony under the title *Mirat-ul-Makhluqat* (Mirror of the Creatures). Through this, Abdur Rahman tried to expound on certain Hindu legends. He also sought to reconcile certain Hindu ideologies with Muslim ideas and beliefs through a Persian recension

[15] Chaudhary Muhammad Ali Rudaulvi, *Kashkol: Muhammad Ali Shah Faqir* (Lucknow: Siddique Book Depot, 1951), 101.

[16] Mahmood Ahmad Abbasi, *Tarikh-e-Amroha* (New Delhi: Tajalli Printing Works, 1930), 36–37.

[17] Annemarie Schimmel, *Islam in the Indian Subcontinent* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1980), 42.

[18] S. A. A. Rizvi, *A History of Sufism in India,* Vol. I (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1978), 336–43.

of the Bhagavad Gita, entitled *Mirat-ul-Haqaiq* (Mirror of the Realities).[19] Sufi interaction with Hindus and their involvement with Hindu theology in the context of Rudauli are representative of the cosmopolitan nature of life in *qasbahs*. Growing up in such a milieu must have shaped the world-view of Chaudhary Muhammad Ali. Those who differed with him on the question of moving to Pakistan may have had similar exposure. However, migration is a much more complex phenomenon than a simple question of whether one subscribed to the idea of Pakistan or not. Motivations and persuasions varied from one individual or family to the other.

Chaudhary Muhammad Ali Rudaulvi, however, also articulates the ebb and flow of life in India. A few months after the partition, he wrote a long letter to his daughter Hima about what bothered him most in post-independence India.[20] To him, democracy as a system was bereft of wisdom and intelligence and allowed for mediocrity dominated by the ignorant. He was indicating the loss of social status he now faced in a democratic India that was gradually empowering the social classes that had earlier remained subdued to the authoritative aura of the likes of the taluqdars and the zamindars and the people from upper-caste backgrounds. Seemingly wary of what he wanted to convey, he ends his letter to Hima by stating that 'you have seen Hindustan, and also Pakistan, you can decide better than I can.' The greatest objection that he had against the government of Uttar Pradesh was that it was intent on reducing the zamindars to ashes. It was this change of order that he found irreconcilable. To illustrate, he related a story of a *baqqal* or grocer who always used to visit his house and sit on the floor, true to his status in that society.[21] One day, Muhammad Ali offered him a chair, and the grocer sat on it. He also went out to see the grocer off, a move considered rare in colonial times. Adding to the narrative, Chaudhary Muhammad Ali writes that by this act he was merely trying to reconcile himself with the changed realities that came as a result of partition and independence. The masters of yesteryear were no longer at the helm of affairs. To Muhammad Ali, the choice left for someone like him was 'either Pakistan or *qabaristan* (graveyard).' So worried was he that he complained of having lost sleep and his peace of mind. Another taluqdar complained that his children would now

[19] Muzaffar Alam, 'Assimilation from a Distance: Confrontation and Sufi Accommodation in Awadh Society,' in *Tradition, Dissent and Ideology: Essays in Honour of Romila Thapar*, eds., R. Champakalakshmi and S. Gopal (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996), 175.

[20] Rudaulvi, *Goya Dabistan Khul Gaya*, 82–92.

[21] Saiyid Ali Muhammad Zaidi, *Apni Yadein: Rudauli ki Baatein* (Rudauli: Azmi Publishers, 1977), 35.

have to sweat it out. The old days when the taluqdars could live with authority and in luxury without lifting a finger were long gone.[22]

Independence, partition and the abolition of zamindari had transformed India. The taluqdars and zamindars of Awadh were particularly affected by it. Aimed at ending feudalism and large, elitist landholdings in the democratic political dispensation of newly independent India, the zamindari abolition supposedly stripped them of all their landholdings except 'home farms' (*khudkasht*) and grove lands. In Awadh, the tiny zamindars who comprised the bulk of the UP landholders felt more poignantly the reduction of social status than the loss of income. For the bigger taluqdars, zamindari abolition meant an end to their careers. The smaller taluqdars had lost the pride they had always taken in their aristocratic background rather than pride in their wealth, which was not much different from that of many zamindars. Regardless, the taluqdars and zamindars had to adjust through instantaneous changes. They were 'poorly placed to retrieve their fortunes in the competitive marketplaces of Lucknow and Allahabad.'[23] Chaudhary Muhammad Ali was one such individual seeking hope and redemption. After having won a local election, he was finding solace in the optimism that he might eventually secure the presidency of the district board. His personal loss was a bit more intense. The Hindu landlords belonging to the upper castes and supported by a network of influential caste fellows scattered through the countryside were successful in perpetuating their local influence and eventually maintaining deferential respect.[24] The likes of Chaudhary Muhammad Ali who lacked such a well-entrenched social support system seemed disillusioned with democracy, which he described as merely driven by numbers.[25] The loss of pre-eminence and deference that people like him had enjoyed in the past and their dilution in the post-colonial era under growing democratic norms made him revisit the political decisions he had made. Such was the dilemma. Could he be better placed in Pakistan, which saw few land reforms? Was he unhappy about his decision to stay in India and refusal to go to Pakistan after partition, while most of his family members left? Or, did such ramblings mostly emerge from the loneliness that he encountered afterwards? While it is difficult to answer such questions given the lack of clear evidence, partition did have life-altering effects for many.

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[22] Zaidi, *Apni Yadein*, 36.

[23] Thomas R. Metcalf, 'Landlords without Land: The UP Zamindars Today,' *Pacific Affairs*, 40, no.1/2 (Spring-Summer 1967): 7–10.

[24] Metcalf, 'Landlords without Land,' 15–16.

[25] Rudaulvi, *Goya Dabiustan Khul Gaya*, 82–83.

Abdul Majid Daryabadi (1892–1977) was a highly prolific writer, journalist and religious scholar from a *qasbah* near Rudauli. A well-known translator of the Qur'an, editor of the Urdu weeklies *Sach* and *Sidq-e-Jadeed* (Lucknow), major contributor to *Hamdard*, and biographer of Ashraf Ali Thanawi, whom he considered his spiritual mentor (*pir*), Daryabadi articulated himself with rare clarity on a variety of issues. The author of 50 books and multiple other contributions, he passionately followed the religious cause of pan-Islamism. In the early 1910s, he was the most active contributor to Maulana Muhammad Ali Jauhar's (1878–1931) *Hamdard* in which he wrote several articles on the impact of the Balkan Wars on the Muslims. Although he entered active politics via the Khilafat Movement during 1919–1926, Daryabadi's concern with other political entities such as the Indian National Congress or Muslim League was almost negligent as far as most of his writings go. But when Jawaharlal Nehru visited Daryabad in 1932 in connection with a peasant movement, Daryabadi presided over the meeting. His biographer, Saleem Kidwai, concludes that Abdul Majid Daryabadi entered politics with Muhammad Ali Jauhar, who had a deep influence on him and following whose death in 1931 Daryabadi tried to stay away from active politics.

In general, and more than Muhammad Ali Jauhar, Daryabadi was a solid advocate of Muslim religious interests, while being an equally strong adherent and admirer of Gandhi.[26] Daryabadi wrote in the journal *Aaj Kal* that he was greatly impressed with Gandhi's vision, resolve and integrity.[27] In fact, Kidwai suggests that Daryabadi's emphasis on religiosity and respect for all religions was by and large an imprint of Gandhi, in addition to others. In an essay in the periodical *Subh-e-Ummeed*, Daryabadi vigorously justified Gandhi's principles of politics, religious vision and perspectives on cultures. He also argued that there was essentially no difference between Gandhi's non-violent tool of *satyagraha* (truth force) and the emphasis on peace in Islam.[28] Finding himself in sync with a Gandhian approach and philosophy, he wrote extensively in favour of

[26] Daryabadi served as the president of the Awadh Khilafat Movement, a member of the Khilafat Working Committee, and the chair of the Khilafat Reception Committee. He had raised serious objections to the Nehru Report (1929) and possessed keen insights into contemporary politics.

[27] He also started wearing *khadi* under Gandhi's influence. Saleem Kidwai, *Abdul Majid Daryabadi: Hindustani Adab ke Maemaar* (New Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, 1998), 93.

[28] He also wrote an article titled 'Islam and Satyagraha' in *Modern Review* and thereby reasserted his position that Islam was perfectly compatible with Gandhi's non-violent principles. Kidwai, *Abdul Majid Daryabadi*, 93.

India's freedom struggle, drawing parallels between his political intents and Islamic injunctions,[29] but when it came to issues pertaining to partition, he did not divulge much information. Later, in April 1955, Daryabadi visited Lahore and Karachi for two and a half weeks and wrote a travelogue titled *Dhai haftah Pakistan Mein ya Mubarak Safar* (Two and a Half Weeks in Pakistan or the Auspicious Journey). In it, he provided a vivid description of Pakistan, the residents of which he refers to as 'a piece of one's heart [*dil*] and liver [*jigar*].'[30] As noted in the title, he considered this trip, which brought him joy and happiness throughout, auspicious. For instance, he was able to spend time with Zahid Ali, who happened to be Shaukat Ali's son as well as Muhammad Ali's nephew and son-in-law. In addition, Daryabadi had a chance to catch up with Zahid Ali's wife, Muhammad Ali's daughter.[31] Having been a close associate of the Ali brothers in the early days of his journalistic career and political activism, Daryabadi had long wished to see the Ali children, to whom he felt endearingly close. Daryabadi's observation and emphasis on the striking likenesses between India and Pakistan and the people of the two countries seem to indicate the shallow and synthetic nature of boundaries that divided the two nations and the hollowness of the rhetoric that had led to this situation.

Pakistani historian S. M. Ikram alludes to Abdul Majid Daryabadi recalling an incident from 1948 when, among others, a son of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was present at a gathering hosted by Maulana Azad, who had no complaint or criticism to offer those who supported Pakistan. Rather, he fostered goodwill by making statements such as this one: 'Now that it has come to existence, everybody's interest is in its being strong and stable.' Ikram refers to Daryabadi as 'by no means a friend or admirer of Abul Kalam Azad' to validate the authenticity of the statement.[32] Ikram, of course, has been a supporter of the 'cultural basis of Hindu–Muslim separatism' along the lines of the Muslim League. Returning to Daryabadi, who hailed from a family background in Firangi Mahali 'ulama, his is a different example from that of Chaudhary Muhammad Ali Rudaulvi.[33] As someone who remained a self-confessed agnostic between the ages of 17

[29] He engaged with *hadis* in order to emphasize the use of *charkha* (spinning wheel) and participation in the Salt March.

[30] Abdul Majid Daryabadi, *Dhai haftah Pakistan mein ya mubarak safar* (Lucknow: Maulana Abdul Majid Daryabadi Akademi, 1981), 8.

[31] Ibid., 85.

[32] S. M. Ikram, *Indian Muslims and the Partition of India* (New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, 1992), 151.

[33] Ikram, *Indian Muslims and the Partition of India*, 494–98.

and 27, Daryabadi closely pursued religious issues the rest of his life. He writes that it was in 1914 that he was much inclined towards rationalism (*'aqaliyyat*) and non-institutionalism (*la-idariyat*).[34] He was neither a close friend of the Indian nationalist Maulana Abul Kalam Azad nor a supporter of the version of Islam as trumpeted by Abul Ala Maududi. Even later in his life, he continued to defy easy classification. When Maududi and a few other 'ulama cared little for what happened to Muslims in other countries so long as their own particular brand of Islam gained currency in Pakistan, it evoked a strong response from people such as Abdul Majid Daryabadi.[35] He, along with Husain Ahmad Madani of Deoband, viewed Abul Ala Maududi's ideas as religiously suspect.[36] But unlike both Madani and Maududi, he refused to strongly identify with political currents with regard to partition and chose to live in India and find commonalities between the two newly created nation-states.

The voices from *qasbahs* were manifold. Another taluqdar and writer from Rudauli, Syed Ali Muhammad Zaidi, alias Nabban Mian, focused on freedom fighters as a prominent theme in his local history-cum-memoirs. He dealt with figures such as Krishnanand Khare of muhallah Kayasthana,[37] who participated in various movements including the peasant movements of the 1930s, and Habibul Haq,[38] a committed Congress worker, who was interned during the Quit India Movement. This no doubt is telling of his clear political position and emphasis on nationalism in post-independence India where he and his family chose to stay, unlike many of those who moved to Pakistan.

Similarly, the younger brother of Asrarul Haq Majaz, Ansar Harvani (1916–1996) was a freedom fighter and a dedicated leader who feared that many Muslims were joining the Muslim League under false propaganda.[39] He had participated in the Quit India Movement, hid himself during searches and was later arrested for his participation in Gandhian politics and his nationalist zeal. This speaks of his strong commitment to Congress's inclusivist politics and to what Maulana Abul Kalam Azad alluded in his 1940 speech at the

[34] Abdul Majid Daryabadi, *Khutut-e-Majidi* (Karachi: Idarah-e Tasnif-o-Tehqiq-e Pakistan, 1986), 178.

[35] Ali Usman Qasmi, *The Ahmadis and the Politics of Religious Exclusion in Pakistan* (London: Anthem Press, 2013), 151.

[36] Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution: The Jama'at-i Islami of Pakistan* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994), 127.

[37] Zaidi, *Apni Yadein*, 418–19. Also, Zaidi, *Bara Banki*, 207–08.

[38] Zaidi, *Apni Yadein*, 422.

[39] Zaidi, *Apni Yadein*, 425.

historic Ramgarh session of the Indian National Congress in order to counter the Pakistan Resolution: 'Whether we like it or not, we have now become an Indian nation, united and indivisible. No fantasy or artificial scheming to separate and divide can break this unity. We must accept the logic of fact and history, and engage ourselves in the fashioning of our future destiny.'[40] After independence, Harvani played an active role in India as a member of parliament from Fatehpur (1957–1962) and Basauli (1962–1967) constituencies in UP and remained active in national politics. He supported cases such as the one of Saeeduddin Khan of Fatehpur, who was denied Indian citizenship since he had crossed borders to travel to Karachi to take care of his sick aunt, leaving behind his family in UP. It was a classic case that many divided families faced. But Khan's situation led him to breach technicalities and jeopardize his Indian citizenship. Harvani personally wrote to Home Affairs and Jawaharlal Nehru pleading this case, and Khan's passport was restored.[41] When Subhas Chandra Bose, as Congress president, visited Lucknow in 1938, he visited Dar-us-Siraj, which was the family's private dwelling in Lucknow. Harvani had initially joined the Forward Bloc upon its foundation and was also the founder and the first general secretary of the All India Students' Federation, but he soon grew to be a confidant of Jawaharlal Nehru.

Two other residents of Rudauli, Wasim Ansari and Banwari Lal, were very active Congress leaders.[42] In his memoirs about his *qasbah*, Zaidi mentions several youth and socialist leaders of Rudauli but does not elaborate upon their role or opinions on partition. Most discussions centre on 'nationalist Muslims' as Barbara Metcalf describes those Muslim political figures who supported the Indian National Congress and eschewed communal organizations after the 1920s.[43]

Qasbahs provided a host of nationalist Muslims in India: Husain Ahmad Madani, Maulana Abdul Bari Firangi Mahali, Dr M. A. Ansari, Hasrat Mohani, Maulana Shibli Numani, Syed Suleiman Nadwi, Muhammad Ali Jauhar and

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[40] Abul Kalam Azad, 'Presidential Address to the Fifty-Third Session of the Indian National Congress, Ramgarh, 1940,' In *Congress Presidential Addresses, Volume Five: 1940–1985*, ed. A. M. Zaidi (New Delhi: Indian Institute of Applied Political Research, 1985), 17–38.

[41] For a detailed discussion of this and other cases of divided families, see: Vazira Fazila-Yacoobali Zamindar, *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 220–223.

[42] Zaidi, *Apni Yadein*, 433–37.

[43] Barbara D. Metcalf, *Husain Ahmad Madani: The Jihad for Islam and India's Freedom* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2009), 121.

Akbar Allahabadi. These were people who clearly sided with united nationalist interests as represented by the Indian National Congress. Many people from *qasbah* backgrounds, on the other hand, subscribed to the ideology disseminated by the Muslim League. Just like most major urban centres in North India, hordes of *qasbati* people migrated to Pakistan, often leaving a part of their families behind. Josh Malihabadi (1894–1982) and Jon Elia (1931–2002) of Amroha moved to Pakistan in the late 1950s. While Malihabadi saw in this move a way to work for the Urdu language, given the nature of the language politics in India, Elia viewed his migration as a compromise. Josh Malihabadi, popularly known as the 'Poet of Revolution' (*Shayar-e-Inquilab*), injected a rebellious spirit among the youth of the 1930s and 1940s to rise up against imperialism. But when it came to emigrating from India to Pakistan, he moved late, in 1958, fearing that the language of Urdu would not survive in India after Nehru.[44] It should be noted that there were many like Malihabadi who decided to move to Pakistan later, while there were many who later chose to return to India from Pakistan, such as the doyen of Indian classical music, Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan (1902–1968). Some, such as Chaudhary Muhammad Ali Rudaulvi and Abdul Majid Daryabadi, chose to stay in India in defiance of the separatist politics that the Muslim League had increasingly espoused and which had culminated in heightened communal awareness and conflicts. Their thoughts and responses to the issue of Hindu–Muslim interaction and composite culture were shaped by their individual exposure and experience. Just like those who migrated to the newfound homeland after much reflection, Rudaulvi and Daryabadi too underwent new experiences and thought processes that came along with the options they chose for themselves. In certain ways, they were representative of the people who resolutely decided to stay in India and resisted the pressure to migrate. Choosing to stay in India for many Muslims was in itself a negation of the separatist politics the Muslim League stood for.

In *qasbahs* such as Bilgram and Amroha, the Shia Political Conference, which was founded in 1929, had a strong base through the general mass contact programmes of the Indian National Congress. Similarly, the pro-Congress factions of 'ulama also contributed to such mobilizations.[45] These efforts, however, did not go unchallenged. Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi of *qasbah* Thana Bhawan, and Shabbir Ahmad Usmani of *qasbah* Bijnor and Deoband

[44] Gyanendra Pandey, *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism and History in India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 70–71.

[45] Hasan, *From Pluralism to Separatism*, 142.

madrasa were prominent among them, in addition to Maududi, the founder of Jama'at-i-Islami. Usmani was late in joining the Muslim League though. He joined the party in 1944 and founded Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Islam in 1945, taking up a contrasting position to the mainstream Deobandi school of thought prevalent in Saharanpur and elsewhere. The trajectories of Chaudhary Muhammad Ali Rudaulvi and Abdul Majid Daryabadi were different and unique in their own ways, neither abrupt nor radical. For those who chose to remain within their native *qasbahs*, such responses were understandable. At a moment when these small towns were divided and so were families, it is unreasonable to expect clear choices. While Rudaulvi was a case of the pathos of partition, Daryabadi represented recoil from pure politics to focus on the religious and the spiritual. Despite this, their individual trajectories are reflective of the choices and ambiguities they espoused. It is also hard to consider fluctuations in responses in the years following the partition surprising.

In her first novel, *Mere Bhi Sanam Khane* ('My Temples, Too') (1947), the noted Urdu writer Qurratulain Hyder (1927-2007) eloquently captures the ramifications that partition and the ensuing events spurred. Centred on the vicissitudes of the time, the novel is critical of the 'abnormal circumstances' and how the riots had led to 'scenes of life and of death.'[46] Daughter of Syed Sajjad Hyder Yidirim, an accomplished Urdu writer who hailed from *qasbah* Nehtaur of Bijnor, Qurratulain Hyder had moved to Pakistan along with her family. While her father was a strong supporter of the Muslim League and the demand for Pakistan, Qurratulain Hyder later went to London and eventually settled back in India,[47] thus furnishing yet another example of divided opinions and families. Neither those who moved to Pakistan nor the ones staying behind in India whose family members migrated had straight, linear responses to what the Muslim League and its two-nation theory had projected as the ultimate answer for the Muslims of the subcontinent.

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[46] Qurratulain Hyder, *My Temples, Too*, trans. Qurratulain Hyder (New Delhi: Women Unlimited, 2004), 47-51.

[47] There is no conclusive evidence as to what led Qurratulain Hyder to this decision but most speculations surround the critique and opposition that she faced in Pakistan with regard to her classic novel *Aag ka Darya* ('River of Fire') (1959) in particular and the authorial desire to find a congenial home in general. Without making clear her position on relocation to India, she discusses some of these issues in her autobiography. See Qurratulain Hyder, *Kar-e-Jahan Daraz Hai,* Vol. I, (New Delhi: Educational Publishing House, 2003), 687-92.

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3

Choudhary Rahmat Ali and his Political Imagination

Pak Plan and the Continent of Dinia

Tahir Kamran

Introduction

Rahmat Ali (1897-1951) is mentioned in the history textbooks circulating in Pakistan only briefly. His coining of the name for a separate Muslim polity, Pakistan, and the publication of the pamphlet *Now or Never,* which he wrote in 1933, are the reasons that Rahmat Ali found a marginal niche in the collective historical imagination of the Pakistani laity. In the Pakistan Studies books for undergraduate students, sponsored by the University Grants Commission, Rahmat Ali's description begins and ends in one line: 'Choudhary Rahmat Ali had started his struggle for a separate state for Muslims in 1933.'[1] Why Rahmat Ali's other works, comprising ten pamphlets of varying size and scope, are not mentioned in Pakistani national discourse is a pertinent question that has not yet been framed. Similarly, his thoughts are conspicuously barred from circulation in the media as well as in educational institutions. Despite a sizeable corpus of literature in Urdu that underscores Rahmat Ali's role as a thinker and political visionary, including Khurshid Kamal Aziz's adulatory biography, Ali has remained a peripheral figure in the annals of Pakistani political history. The lack of interest in Rahmat Ali exhibited in the Pakistani national narrative could be due to his disdain for Muhammad Ali Jinnah, obvious in his writings. Rahmat Ali derisively branded Jinnah '*Quisling-i-Azam*,'[2] instead of *Quaid-i-Azam* (The

[1] Azhar Hameed, *Mutaliya-i-Pakistan: Degree Classes Kay liye* (Islamabad: Allama Iqbal Open University, 1981), 87.

[2] Choudhary Rahmat Ali, *The Greatest Betrayal, the Millat's Martyrdom & The Muslim's Duty* (Cambridge: The Pakistan National Liberation Movement, 1947), 6. Vidkun Quisling was the head of a puppet regime installed in Norway by Nazi occupation

Great Leader), his customary epithet in Pakistan. Similarly, his well-known repugnance for the idea of Pakistan as a nation state was explicitly articulated in a pamphlet *The Greatest Betrayal*, which he wrote after Pakistan's creation in 1947. This evolution in Rahmat Ali's political imagination will be the central focus of this chapter, in order to make sense of Rahmat Ali's virtual banishment from Pakistan's history, along with his thoughts and the history and evolution of the Pakistan National Movement that he founded in 1933. The Pakistan National Movement was later transformed to the All-Dinia Milli Movement in 1940. Thus Ali's political vision went through various phases of evolution: starting with the Pak Plan in 1933, it was transformed into the concept of the Continent of Dinia, and eventually culminated in the *Cultural Orbit of Pakasia*.[3]

The sources employed for this study comprise the original writings of Choudhary Rahmat Ali, stocked as part of the Foster papers at the Centre of South Asian Studies, University of Cambridge. For biographical details, I have depended on the biographical account put together by Khurshid Kamal Aziz. Additional vernacular sources are also used to demonstrate that Rahmat Ali has not been omitted altogether from Pakistani national discourse, but instead has remained present on the margins of our political narrative. In order to contextualize Rahmat Ali's political thought, it is imperative to furnish a brief biographical sketch. Historians such as Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi and even Khalid bin Sayeed have considered the formative phase of Rahmat Ali's life a 'closed book.' Communal antagonism, which was a recurring feature of the Punjab from the 1880s, had a bearing on his political imagination. Similarly, pan-Islamism permeated Rahmat Ali's ideology, indicated by his frequent use of the political category '*millat*' to describe Muslims instead of 'the nation.'

Communal strife, pan-Islamism and Rahmat Ali's early career

At the time of Rahmat Ali's birth in 1897 the Punjab was engulfed by communal strife. Traditionally the Punjab has been a diverse region unsurpassed in the rest of the subcontinent. Three religions – Islam, Hinduism and Sikhism – co-existed uneasily with three languages – Urdu, Hindi and Punjabi, each with

forces. Labelling Jinnah as 'the great Quisling' amounts to deriding him as the greatest traitor or collaborator of an enemy regime.

[3] For details about the Continent of Dinia, see Choudhary Rahmat Ali, *The Millat and Her Ten Nations: Foundation of the All-Dinia Movement* (Cambridge: The All-Dinia Milli Movement, 1944).

its own script.[4] Despite the British administration's claims of impartiality, communal fissures started appearing in the wake of 1857. Modern modes of communication, institutions and the aggressive mode of proselytization by Christian missionaries exacerbated communal tension. British administrative policy added fuel to the fire.[5] N. Gerald Barrier maintains that by the 1880s, the Punjab Government had rescinded its general policy of communal impartiality. However, he rules out religion as the factor employed to set one community against the other when Lord Ripon promulgated reforms in 1882, by virtue of which the power of the municipal committees were extended and nomination was replaced by election.[6] Satya M. Rai, arguing to the contrary, traces the roots of communal antagonism to these reforms, as electioneering was organized along communal lines.[7] Barrier also refers to the British making 'two significant contributions to the [communal] conflict,' by introducing 'new arenas of power and competition and inadvertently [creating] a political context which permitted and even invited communal agitation.'[8] The lower rung of the bureaucracy and municipal committees in particular became the focus of religious antagonism. Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims fought hard for control of the new structures.[9]

The missionaries and their aggressive method of proselytization triggered the impulse of reformism in all three religions. By the 1880s, 'a network of missions covered the Punjab, from Delhi north to Simla, from Ambala west to Peshawar, from Lahore south to Multan, and from Peshawar south along the border to Dera Ghazi Khan.'[10] The missionaries introduced the printing press in the province, and deployed 'the tract, the pamphlet, and the religious newspaper' to good effect.[11] As a consequence, reform movements like the Arya Samaj among the Hindus, the Singh Sabha among the Sikhs, and the Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam among the Muslims sprang up with their respective agendas of the others' exclusion. During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the

[4] Kenneth Jones, 'Communalism in the Punjab: the Arya Samaj Contribution,' *The Journal of Asian Studies* 28, no.1 (November 1968): 40.

[5] Ibid.

[6] N. Gerald Barrier, 'The Punjab Government and Communal Politics, 1870-1908,' *The Journal of Asian Studies* 27, no.3 (May 1968): 527.

[7] Satya M. Rai, *Legislative Politics and the Freedom Struggle in the Punjab: 1897–1947* (New Delhi: Indian Council of Historical Research, 1984), 5–7.

[8] Barrier, 'The Punjab Government and Communal Politics,' 529.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Jones, 'Communalism in the Punjab,' 42.

[11] Ibid., 43.

Arya Samaj orchestrated condemnatory campaigns not only against Christians but also against Muslins and Sikhs.[12] Thus the atmosphere in which Rahmat Ali grew up was charged with communal antagonism. His antipathy for Hindus was deep-seated primarily because of the Arya Samaj's aggression and condemnation of Muslims.

After Rahmat Ali completed his matriculation he came to Lahore, where he lived until 1930. In Lahore, he chose Islamia College at Railway Road and stayed there in Rivaz Hostel's room number 12 until 1918, the year of his graduation. He took six years to complete his graduation, which was generally supposed to take four years. It is probable, as K. K. Aziz has surmised, that Rahmat Ali had to suspend his studies several times because of financial constraints. In the intervening period he worked as a journalist to supplement his income at the Lahore-based Urdu daily *Paisa Akhbar*, earning 25-30 rupees per month.[13] Despite these constraints of varying nature, his stint at Islamia College was extremely productive; he was not only the editor of the college magazine *Crescent*, but also secretary of the College Debating Union and Vice President of his tutorial group.[14] During his student years in Lahore he used *Azad* as his *nom de plume*, as he is rumoured to have tried his hand at composing poetry. However, none of Rahmat Ali's poetry could be found to corroborate this conjecture.[15]

While at Islamia College, Rahmat Ali founded an organization by the name of *Bazm-i-Shibli* in 1915. Rahmat Ali's vision did not have any correspondence with that of Shibli Naumani (1857-1914), who was a great laureate and historian.[16] Naumani's vision, according to the conclusions drawn by Amir

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[12] Ibid.

[13] Rahmat Ali was born on 16 November 1897 in a village by the name of Balachaur, Tehsil Garhshanker in the Hoshiarpur district. His father Shah Muhammad, despite being a person of modest means and religious disposition, had a forward-looking nature. Rahmat Ali's religious instruction began at a very early age at home. After completing his primary schooling in his village he proceeded to Rahon, a neighbouring town, and took his English-language middle school certificate from the Municipal Board Middle School probably in 1910. He did his matriculation from Saindas Anglo-Sanskrit High School, Jullundur. K. K. Aziz, *Rahmat Ali: A Biography* (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 1987), 5.

[14] Ahmed Saeed, *Islamia College Ki Sad Salla Tarikh, Vol.1, 1892-1992* (Lahore: Idara-i-Tehqiqat-i-Pakistan, Danishgah-i-Punjab, 1992), 348.

[15] Aziz, *Rahmat Ali: A Biography,* 5.

[16] As Muhammad Amir Ahmad Khan points out in his PhD dissertation, Naumani later emphasised a patriotic impulse among the South Asian Muslims that was unequivocally embedded in Indian soil and culture. Muhammad Amir Ahmed Khan, 'Rhetorics and

Ahmed Khan, was diametrically opposed to the views that Rahmat Ali came to uphold. It is true that Naumani produced biographical literature in a huge quantity, the tangible bulk of which was about Muslim personalities from beyond the Indian subcontinent. But beyond such conjectural inferences, there is nothing concrete that suggests the influence of Naumani on Rahmat Ali's political imagination. *Bazm-i-Shibli* as an organization, however, provided the initial articulation of Rahmat Ali's political thought, which continued evolving over time and attained maturity by 1933, when he wrote *Now or Never*. The role of *Bazm-i-Shibli* in the formulation of Rahmat Ali's vision will be elaborated more fully later.

K. K. Aziz contends that, after graduation, Rahmat Ali wanted to study law but, again, financial constraints probably prevented him at that time. For some time, he worked on the editorial staff of various newspapers owned by Muhammad Din Fauq.[17] After a while he found a tutorship at Aitchison College, Lahore, with the help of the Principal of Islamia College, Henry Martyn. His stint as a tutor at Aitchison College spanned five years (1918 to 1923). Immediately after his appointment, he was chosen as the tutor to the son of the Nawab of Bahawalpur, a princely state in the South of Punjab. When in 1919 his princeling tutee left for England, Rahmat Ali was assigned to supervise the sons of the Mazari Nawab (the Mazari tribe was part of the Punjabi aristocracy of South Punjab). Such connections as he managed to forge at Aitchison College helped him in many ways, including the fulfilment of his desire of going to England. He then entered the Punjab University Law College (1923-1925), but it is uncertain whether or not he completed his degree. Concurrently he was appointed private secretary of Sardar Dost Muhammad Khan, the Mazari *tamundar* (the title used for Baloch tribal leader) of Rojhan in district Dera Ghazi Khan. However, he was stationed at Lahore, first as 'the family's authorized representative to look after the Mazari family's interests' in the law courts. Subsequently he was promoted to private secretary 'at a good salary and with all expenses paid.'[18] Rahmat Ali kept working in this capacity

Spaces of Belonging among North Indian Muslims, 1850-1950' (Unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Cambridge, 2015).

[17] Aziz, *Rahmat Ali: A Biography*, xii.

[18] 'Once he joined the service of the Mazaris his salary was fixed at Rs.700 a month, a handsome amount in those days. In addition, he was paid house rent (and later provided with a free bungalow), and all travelling and other expenses.' See Aziz, *Rahmat Ali: A Biography*, 9.

until early 1930. Importantly, in the 1920s the Mazari estate became a subject of litigation and Rahmat Ali was able to provide some useful legal advice. As luck would have it, the Mazaris won the legal battle and their title to ancestral land was confirmed and recognized by the court. Rahmat Ali, in lieu of his services, received a hefty honorarium of Rs. 67,000, which he decided to invest in the pursuit of higher studies in England.[19] Thus, Rahmat Ali departed for England on 30 or 31 October 1930, and reached England by mid-November.[20]

In England, Rahmat Ali joined the Inner Temple Inn, but it took him 12 years to be admitted to the bar, until 26 January 1943. In London, Rahmat Ali stayed at the residence of Sir Umar Hayat Khan Tiwana (1874-1944),[21] a distinguished member of the landed aristocracy from Sargodha District in the Punjab who at that time was a member of the Secretary of State's Council and lived in an elite neighbourhood opposite Regent Park. Tiwana knew Rahmat Ali from back home, probably because of the Aitchison College connection, which was also the former's *alma mater*. Tiwana not only provided residence to Rahmat Ali in London but also wrote him a testimonial to gain admittance into Emmanuel College, Cambridge. With the help of reference letters from India and the influence of Umar Hayat Khan Tiwana, Rahmat Ali secured admission as an affiliated student from the University of the Punjab on 26 January 1931.[22] At Emmanuel College, Rahmat Ali took the Law Tripos, Part II, in June 1932 and received his Bachelor's degree on 29 April 1933; he received his Master's degree in 1940.[23] Rahmat Ali passed both of his University exams in the third division, which suggested an unenviable academic record. His poor academic showing was echoed in his professional career as a lawyer: he barely eked out a livelihood from his law practice. Throughout his stay in Cambridge, he never fully integrated into the intellectual milieu, remaining at the periphery. Thelma Frost reveals that he was destitute, forlorn and lonely when he breathed his

[19] K. K. Aziz, ed. *Complete Works of Rahmat Ali*, vol. 1 (Islamabad: National Commission on Historical and Cultural Research, 1978), xii.

[20] Aziz, *Rahmat Ali: A Biography,* 26.

[21] Nawab Umar Hayat Khan Tiwana, CIE, CBE, KCIE, GBE; member, Imperial Legislative Council,1910; member, India Council, 1929-34; president, Falconers Club, England. For further details, see Ian Talbot, *Khizr Tiwana, The Punjab Unionist Party and the Partition of India* (London: Routledge, 2013), 36-50.

[22] Aziz, *Rahmat Ali: A Biography,* 46.

[23] Waheed Ahmad, 'Choudhary Rahmat Ali and The Concept of Pakistan,' *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan* 3 (January 1970): 11.

last.[24] Similarly, as Pauline Hunt wrote in the Cambridge Evening News, he 'became a lonely figure, quarrelling over his principles, often moving from one set of lodgings to another, frequently using Emmanuel College as an address.'[25]

The genesis of Rahmat Ali's political vision

As already underlined, meetings under the auspices of *Bazm-i-Shibli* provided the early signs of the peculiarity of Rahmat Ali's political vision. Extremely significant was his inaugural address to the audience of *Bazm-i-Shibli*,[26] which reflected the initial delineation of the Pakistan scheme, eventually culminating into a much grander idea of 'the Continent of Dinia.' In this address he stated that

> [the] North of India is Muslim and we will keep it Muslim. Not only that; we will make it a Muslim State. But this we can do only if and when we and our North cease to be Indian. For that is a pre-requisite to it. So the sooner we shed 'Indianism,' the better for us all and for Islam.[27]

In his work *Pakistan: The Fatherland of the Pak Nation*, Rahmat Ali himself reveals that it was between 1909 and 1915 that the future of the Indian Muslims

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[24] 'Choudhary Rahmat Ali, Memoir by Miss Frost, by Thelma Frost, 8 April 1989, Box 2, Miss T. Frost, Item 9, Centre of South Asian Studies, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK. Frost gives graphic details about Ali's personality: 'Rahmat Ali was demanding and not easily satisfied either with his own work or that of other people. His papers were revised and re-revised countless times. His English was excellent but he never tired of trying to improve it. He was a devout Muslim with an absolute faith in his religion; his copy of the Qur'an always with him. But he respected other religions. He lived simply but seemed to feel it absolutely necessary to appear before "lesser" folk as though he had money. In fact, he seemed to be short of money most of the time. Rahmat Ali was a heavy smoker, though every now and then he would burn his whole stock of cigarettes and give it up, only to start again. His few clothes had to be good and well-fitted. His finickiness over detail exasperated printers, bookbinders, tailors – anyone who came up against it. He couldn't tolerate any kind of noise that might interfere with his concentration, but he had that "oriental charm of manner" which inveigled people into doing the impossible.'

[25] Pauline Hunt, 'City tribute to the man who named Pakistan,' *Cambridge Evening News*, 23 February 1989.

[26] For details see Saeed, *Islamia College Ki Sad Salla Tarikh,* 431.

[27] Choudhary Rahmat Ali, *Pakistan: The Fatherland of the Pak Nation* (Lahore: Book Traders, n.d), 214.

became 'the dominating passion of my life.'[28] As he points out in the same piece, the separatism that he so passionately espoused and advocated was a reaction to the negotiation between Hindu and Muslim leaders that aimed to find some consensus 'on the basis of the national unity' which subsequently culminated in the Lucknow Pact of 1916. Rahmat Ali called that pact 'perilous.'[29] However, the particular reasons that had made him so terribly acerbic, to the point that he was not even ready to countenance any negotiation with Hindus, seems to be the outcome of the communal tension that Punjab had witnessed at the time when Rahmat Ali was growing up.[30] The sheer inflexibility in his position regarding Hindus drew him apart from the Muslim League, producing a discord that he harboured throughout his life. His years at Aitchison College, as demonstrated above, established a certain level of affinity between him and the leaders of the Unionist Party, which was known for its pro-British leanings and its representation of Punjabi landowners. As mentioned above, the Punjabi landowner Umar Hayat Khan Tiwana played a significant role in getting him enrolled at the University of Cambridge. However, Rahmat Ali's thinking eventually turned to one of deep-seated disdain, which offered no hint of accommodation to either the Hindus or the British. Pan-Islamism was the second major influence that he imbibed, which steadily snowballed into the major postulate of his political imagination. The political category of *millat* and the geographical expression of the Continent of Dinia as an alternative imagined space to that of India reflected the impact of pan-Islamism on Rahmat Ali.

The ultimate objective of pan-Islamism was the 'realization of the Islamic ideal, the unity of the world in Islam, [and] the central direction under a leader (*imam*) of the world community.'[31] The basic concept from which thought and corresponding action emanated, was that religion transcended racial and national

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[28] Ibid., 213. Noted in Aziz, ed. *Complete Works of Rahmat Ali*, xi.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Rahmat Ali's enunciation – couched in a speech in which he says to the Hindus, 'Friends! If my views are unacceptable to you, we had better part. In doing that, let everyone of us keep true to his pledges, to the ideals of revolution; let everyone of us serve the cause of freedom according to his faith. You go your way and I will go my way. You work for your Indian revolution but I will work for my Islamic revolution. At the end, we shall see who creates the most dynamic and creative revolution in India' – can hardly be contextualised. Ali is not succinct about the real cause for his intense alienation from the Hindus, when rapprochement between the two communities had materialised. See Rahmat Ali, *Pakistan: The Fatherland of the Pak Nation*, 214.

[31] Dwight E. Lee, 'The Origins of Pan-Islamism,' *The American Historical Review* 47, no.2 (1942): 279.

ties. Albert Habib Hourani and Thomas W. Arnold think that pan-Islamism came about only when Abdul Hamid II used it 'to enhance his prestige and power through emphasis upon his headship of the Islamic world by virtue of the title of caliph.'[32] The dwindling state of the Ottoman sultanate strove to re-invent itself as an Ottoman caliphate in its bid for sustenance. Pan-Islamism was thought by the Sultan to be the most effective tool to do it.

The Muslims of the Indian subcontinent became cognisant of the decline of Islam as a world power in the 1860s. The growth of *hajj* and more general travel in the Middle East, and then the remarkable growth of the Urdu vernacular press, brought Indian Muslims into contact as never before with the wider Muslim world.[33] Jamal ud Din Afghani (1839-97) was a particularly influential individual, about whom Albert Hourani writes that

> it would be truer perhaps to speak of a person than a movement; for this revolutionary pan-Islamism, this blend of religious feeling, national feeling, and European radicalism was embodied in the strange personality of a man whose life touched and deeply affected the whole Islamic world in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.[34]

Indian Muslims in general drew inspiration from Afghani, who epitomized the transnational Muslim outlook. He was particularly concerned about the grim situation besetting the Muslim countries. The Mughal empire in India had been abolished in 1857 and the Ottomans in Turkey were long past their prime. The Safavids of Iran, contemporaries of the Mughals and the Ottomans, had been supplanted by the Zands (1750-94) and then the Qajars (1785-1925). Territories belonging to them for centuries were steadily escaping their control and these empires were barely holding themselves together against fissiparous tendencies. Mushirul Hasan gives an elaborate description of the dismal state that Muslim countries were in at the time Rahmat Ali was growing up: 'Such currents, which gripped the Muslim countries from North Africa to SE Asia, left their mark on an influential section of the Indian Muslim intelligentsia. They were most clearly reflected in Altaf Hussain Hali's lamenting the "ebb"

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[32] Thomas W. Arnold, *The Caliphate* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924), 73-74; Lee, 'The Origins of Pan-Islamism': 278-87.

[33] K. H. Ansari, 'Pan-Islamism and the Making of the Early Indian Muslim Socialists,' *Modern Asian Studies* 20, no.3 (1986): 510.

[34] Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age: 1798-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 108.

of Islam in the famous *Musaddas*, in Shibli Naumani's pan-Islamic anguish in the topical poem on the "Trouble in the Balkans," and in Muhammad Iqbal's nostalgic ode to once-Arab Sicily. The intellectual content to many of these themes was given in the works of Ameer Ali, Syed Ahmad Khan, and Naumani, while their political expression was reflected in the pan-Islamic concerns of MA Ansari, Abul Kalam Azad, Mohammed Ali, Abdul Bari, the *Shaikhul Hind* Mahmud al Hasan, and a whole generation of young Muslim leaders.'[35] Rahmat Ali used the pan-Islamist impulse as his most potent instrument to completely dismiss 'Indianism'.

The Pakistan National Movement and the fetish of 'Indianism'

Now or Never: Are we to live or perish for ever? was the first circular that Rahmat Ali produced in January 1933. It was published under the auspices of the Pakistan National Movement, an organization established in 1933 at Cambridge, Rahmat Ali being its founder-President and the only prominent member. Rahmat Ali's role was central, since

> every idea, suggestion, statement, leaflet, declaration, pamphlet or demand came from one individual. The organization and its variants notwithstanding, the man and the movement were literally the same thing.[36]

An introduction to the Pakistan National Movement can be gleaned from another of Rahmat Ali's pamphlets, *What does The Pakistan National Movement Stand for?*, published in synchrony with *Now or Never*. In it, Rahmat Ali establishes the primacy of what he calls 'Indianism' as 'one force' which had dominated and suppressed the people of South Asia and 'defeated their efforts to improve the lot of their countries.'[37] Other than that, Rahmat Ali does not provide any concrete definition of Indianism.[38] However according to his works caste Hindus, their abode and their culture are the primary and essential constituents of Indianism. His condemnatory tone and tenor is quite categorical

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[35] Mushirul Hasan, 'Pan-Islamism versus Indian Nationalism? A Reappraisal,' *Economic and Political Weekly* 21, no.24 (14 June 1986): 1074.

[36] Aziz, ed. *Complete Works of Rahmat Ali*, xxvii.

[37] Choudhary Rahmat Ali, *What Does the Pakistan National Movement Stand For?* (Cambridge: The Pakistan National Movement, 1942), 3.

[38] In contrast, he was very specific about his vision for Pakistan. For the detailed account of his vision for Pakistan, see Rahmat Ali, *Pakistan*.

and uncompromising. According to his scheme of territorial re-arrangement, the North-Western part of the subcontinent has a separate geographical and cultural identity from 'Hindustan,' a tract of land that limits to the centre of the Ganges-Yamuna valley. The rest of the landmass that is stretched around 'Hindustan' is, according to him, non-Indian, which has been subjected to the fetters of subjugation by Indianism for centuries.

He asserts this while excoriating Indianism in the strongest possible terms, describing it as a phenomenon that from the dawn of history has destroyed and victimized 'men and *millats*, crippled creeds and countries, and enslaved at least half the continent of Asia.'[39] Then he notes with concern the way Indianism has not only sustained itself but has consolidated itself 'under the auspices of British imperialism and through the hands of a British citizen in the service of that imperialism.'[40] He calls that 'collusive mutuality' between the caste Hindus and the British an 'Anglo-Hindoo Entente.'[41] He cites the example of the All-India National Congress, brought into existence in 1885, whose name implied that it represented all the lands of South Asia incorporated into the British Empire.[42] In this model, 'non-Indian nations' were denied the right to their distinct nationhood. Lastly, Indianism asserted its 'pretentious claim to stamping Indian nationality on the people living in those lands which through such dubious devices have been made known to the world as the "subcontinent of India."'[43] Curiously enough, Rahmat Ali enunciates that the Muslims, the Sikhs, the Marathas, 'Akhoots' (Achuts, or untouchables),[44] and the Rajputs are in fact non-Indians, on whom the fetters of 'Indianism' were fastened by imposing on all of them this 'preposterous prefix of All-India.'[45] He also criticizes the notion of the unity of 'the country of India'; instead, he considers it a continent with a wide variety of nations, ethnicities and religions.

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[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Choudhary Rahmat Ali, *India: The Continent of Dinia or The Country of Doom* (Cambridge: The Dinia Continental Movement, 1945), 4.

[42] Rahmat Ali, *Pakistan: The Fatherland of the Pak Nation,* 212.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Rahmat Ali referred to *achut* or untouchables as 'Akhoots' to play on the word *akhuwwat* which means brotherhood; thus, hinting at a more conciliatory approach towards them and treating them differently from the Hindus.

[45] He gives such examples as the All-India Muslim League, the All-India Sikh Conference and the All-India Rajpoot Conference, and so on. In all these cases, 'All-India' meant that 'though they were Muslims, Sikhs or Rajputs, […] they all were primarily Indians,' which to Ali was a contradiction in terms. Ibid., 3-4.

Rahmat Ali similarly derides the constitutional principle of 'one country, one nation' which he thinks is not suitable to the subcontinent. He instead invokes the category of *millat* in juxtaposition to nationalism. Although the concept of *millat* throughout carries a strong imprint of pan-Islamism, it retains a restrictive locus on South Asia. These points will be subject to investigative focus in the section on the Continent of Dinia below. Here we turn our gaze to Rahmat Ali's critique of federalism.

Rahmat Ali is vociferous in his rejection of the proposal to implement a federal structure at the All-India level, as it had been envisaged in the proceedings of the Round Table Conferences. He sees the proposal for a federation, as passed by the British parliament, as a machination of Indianism that was hand in glove with British imperialism. This was thwarted only, as he claims somewhat bizarrely, 'by the forces of opposition, inspired, fostered and led by the Pakistan National Movement.'[46] Thus to ward off any prospect of a federation at an All-India level, Rahmat Ali founded the Pakistan National Movement, with its programme consisting of seven cardinal principles and aims. These principles, according to Rahmat Ali, 'symbolize the seven dirges of the doom of Indianism and the seven trumpets of the dawn of Asianism.' The fundamental aims of the organization were to counter Indianism effectively and to strive for the liberation of Muslims and the other 'nations of South Asia' from its hegemony. These aims are described briefly as:

Spiritual liberation from the secular thraldom of Indianism; Cultural liberation from its barbarian influence; Social liberation from its caste tyranny; Economic liberation from the impoverishing capitalism of Indianism; National liberation of the people of South Asia from its destructive domination; The inter-national consolidation of the nations of South Asia against the de-nationalizing dangers of Indianism; The creation of a new order of 'Asianism' to take the place of the old order of 'Indianism' in South Asia.[47]

Thus, Rahmat Ali's simplistic panacea to South Asia's ailments was to extirpate the 'curse' of Indianism so that the dignity of non-Indians could be restored. None of the schemes for the territorial alteration of the subcontinent put forward by various individuals – whether it be Muhammad Iqbal, M. H. Gazdar or even those propounded by Dr Sayyid Abdul Latif (between 1938 to 1943)[48] – exhibited as much antipathy for what Rahmat Ali called 'Indianism,'

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[46] Ibid., 4.

[47] These principles are given in brevity. For their full text, see Ibid., 4-8.

[48] For these schemes of territorial re-arrangement, see K. K. Aziz, *A History of the Idea of Pakistan, Volume 2* (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 1987).

or, in other words, the Hindus. Rahmat Ali's overall ideology was anti-Hindu, and his weariness with Hindu majority rule was at the heart of his vision and political action. The pamphlet discussed above and the pamphlet *Now or Never,* the first publication under the auspices of The Pakistan National Movement, share a temporal context. A detailed analysis of Rahmat Ali's vision can be complete only through an examination of *Now or Never* in the following section.

Now or Never and Pakistan as a political imaginary

As stated in the previous section, *Now or Never: Are we to live or perish for ever?* was the first circular that Rahmat Ali produced in January 1933 and published yet again in the next year. It was authored by Rahmat Ali himself. However, at the very end of that pamphlet, the names Muhammad Aslam Khan (Khattak), Sheikh Muhammad Sadiq (Sahibzada) and Inayat Ullah Khan (of Charsaddah) are also mentioned along with Rahmat Ali.[49] K. K. Aziz notes that to make the declaration 'representative,' Rahmat Ali searched for more than a month, for people who would endorse it. Eventually he stumbled upon three young men in London, ready to lend support to the declaration. Aslam Khan Khattak was a student at Oxford; Sahibzada Shaikh Muhammad Sadiq was reading for the bar in London; and Inayat Ullah Khan was a student of engineering in London.[50] Khattak signed the document as the President of the Khyber Union and Inayat Ullah as its secretary.[51] Soon afterwards Khattak rescinded his support and Rahmat Ali was left on his own to rudder and anchor the ship of the Pakistan National Movement in the alien environs of England.

In the content of their demands, these students from the Punjab and the North Western Frontier under the leadership of Rahmat Ali made a radical departure from several proposals that had already been floated by people like Hasrat Mohani, Lala Lajpat Rai, or Iqbal's scheme enshrined in his famous Allahabad Address in 1930. Rahmat Ali and his companions propounded a

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[49] Rahmat Ali, *Now or Never: Are we to live or perish for ever?* (Cambridge: The Pakistan National Movement, 1933), 8.

[50] Rahmat Ali describes Inayat Ullah Khan reading veterinary science in his publication *Pakistan: The Fatherland of the Pak Nation*, 227. Aziz disputes this; he claims to have met Khan and says that he studied engineering and not veterinary science. See Aziz, *A History of the Idea of Pakistan*, *Volume 2*, 385.

[51] Ibid., 344.

scheme of 'an Islamic state cut on the Indian soil entitled Pakistan.'[52] The eight-page pamphlet was written during (or just before?) the roundtable conferences.[53] Therefore it was addressed and sent to the British and Indian delegates participating in the deliberations at the parliamentary Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform during 1933-34.[54] Rahmat Ali was trenchantly critical of the delegates of the first and second Round Table Conferences who by accepting 'a constitution based on the principle of an All-India Federation' had committed 'an inexcusable blunder and an incredible betrayal.'[55] More importantly, it was in this pamphlet that a name close to that of Pakistan appeared for the first time, spelled *Pakstan*.[56] *Now or Never* was meant to represent 'the thirty million Muslims of Pakstan, who live in the five Northern Units of India-Punjab, North-West Frontier (Afghan) Province, Kashmir, Sind, and Baluchistan.'[57] It sought the 'recognition of their national status, as distinct from the other inhabitants of India, by the grant to Pakstan of a separate Federal Constitution on religious, social and historical grounds.'[58]

In his later and much more elaborate publication *Pakistan: The Fatherland of the Pak Nation* (1946), Rahmat Ali not only expanded upon his earlier description of Pakistan but also introduced some noticeable changes to the original plan. He marked out three regions for the minorities who intended to continue living in Pakistan, but in exchange for six similar regions to be given to the Muslims namely Osmanistan, Siddiqistan, Faruqistan, Haideristan, Muinistan and Maplistan. The first enclave, which he called *Sikhia,* consisted of the Sikh principalities of Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Faridkot. These principalities

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[52] Waheed Ahmad, 'Choudhary Rahmat Ali and The Concept of Pakistan,' 20.

[53] In its original (hand-written or typed and then cyclostyled) format, the pamphlet was four pages in its length. The version found in the Foster Papers housed at the Centre of South Asian Studies, University of Cambridge, is eight pages long. See Ibid., 11.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Rahmat Ali, *Now or Never*, 2.

[56] It should be mentioned here that Rahmat Ali is not the only one who is credited for coining the name Pakistan. S. M. Ikram, on the authority of Mian Abdul Haq, claimed that the name Pakistan was first coined by Khawaja Abdur Rahim. Ikram got another confirmation for this claim from Dr Muhammad Jahangir Khan who was Rahim's contemporary in Cambridge. Cited in S. M. Ikram, *Indian Muslims and Partition of India* (Delhi: Atlantic Publishers & Distributors, 1992), 178. But the popular view in Pakistan still credits Rahmat Ali for coming up with the name 'Pakistan.'

[57] Rahmat Ali, *Now or Never*, 1.

[58] Ibid.

had a total area of 8,825 square miles and a population of 2,837,398, of which 41.4 percent were Sikhs, 30.7 percent were Hindus, 22 percent were Muslims and 5.9 percent were followers of other religions. In the event of its creation, Muslims living there were to be exchanged for Sikhs living in the rest of Pakistan. The other enclave on the eastern part of Rahmat Ali's conceived 'Pakistan' was to be the habitat of the caste Hindus, which he calls *Hanoodia*. It was roughly the area that 'lies along the southern bank of the Yamuna River from Agra to Allahabad in the United Provinces.'[59] If this enclave of the caste Hindus were created, all Muslims residing there would be swapped with caste Hindus from the rest of Eastern Pakistan. A similar sort of an enclave was named *Handika*, which in the imagination of Rahmat Ali lay between the 'southern half of Kathiawar and the Rann of Kachch for the caste Hindus.'[60] An exchange of the two communities was to take effect there too.

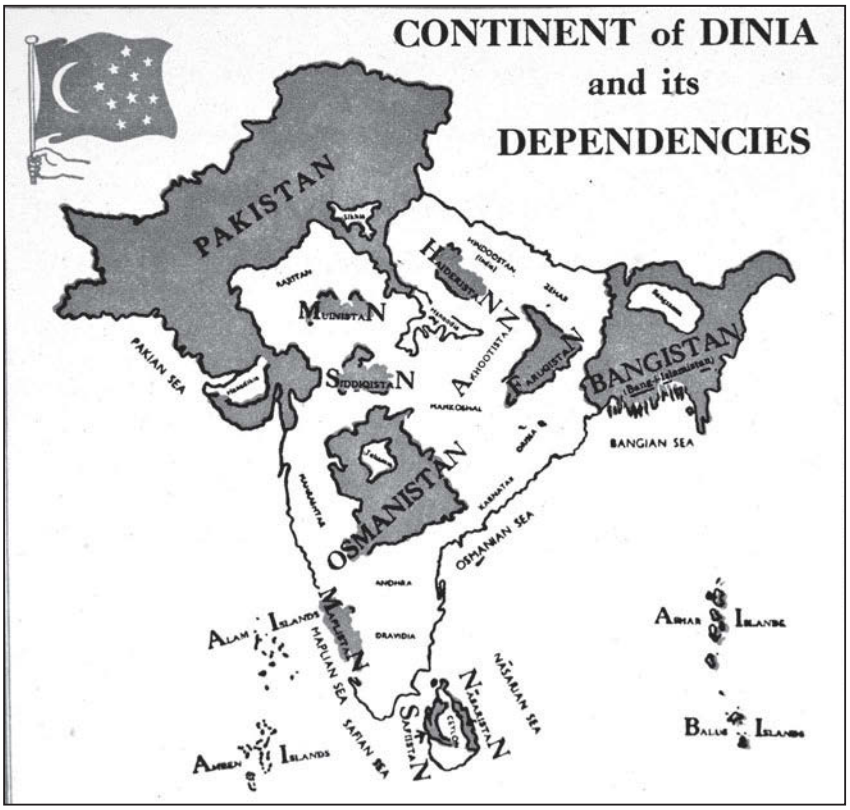
He calculated that Pakistan, with an area of 521,000 square miles, would cover about five percent of the total territory of the Muslim world, and therefore would be the seventh largest Muslim state in the entire world. Its population would be fifty-five million among the world total of 400 million Muslims which would make it the second largest Muslim country, the first being Bangistan (Bengal) with a population of seventy million.[61]

Rahmat Ali proclaimed Urdu as the national language of Pakistan and renamed it 'Pak.' He positioned Urdu, or Pak, as the language of the whole *millat* and, 'in fact, the *lingua franca* of the whole Cultural Orbit of Pakasia and one of the most extremely understood languages in the neighbouring Continent of Asia.'[62] Such a claim about Urdu as the *lingua franca* of the whole 'Cultural Orbit of Pakasia' hardly held any water. The Muslims of Bengal and Assam, and those living in South India, did not understand Urdu. Therefore, Rahmat Ali's exaggerated claim about the status of Urdu in the continent of Asia was farcical to say the least.

In Rahmat Ali's vision, Muslim laws would be the national laws of Pakistan predicated on the Qur'an, *hadith*, *fiqh*, *ijma* (the consensus of legal scholars), and the *rai* (the scholarly opinion of jurists). From these sources, Muslim jurists have, over the course of centuries, put together a comprehensive legal system, the *sharia*. Two distinctive features of the *sharia*, according to Rahmat Ali were that

[59] Rahmat Ali, *Pakistan: The Fatherland of the Pak Nation*, 123–24.
[60] Ibid., 124.
[61] Aziz, *Rahmat Ali: A Biography,* 274.
[62] Ibid., 272.

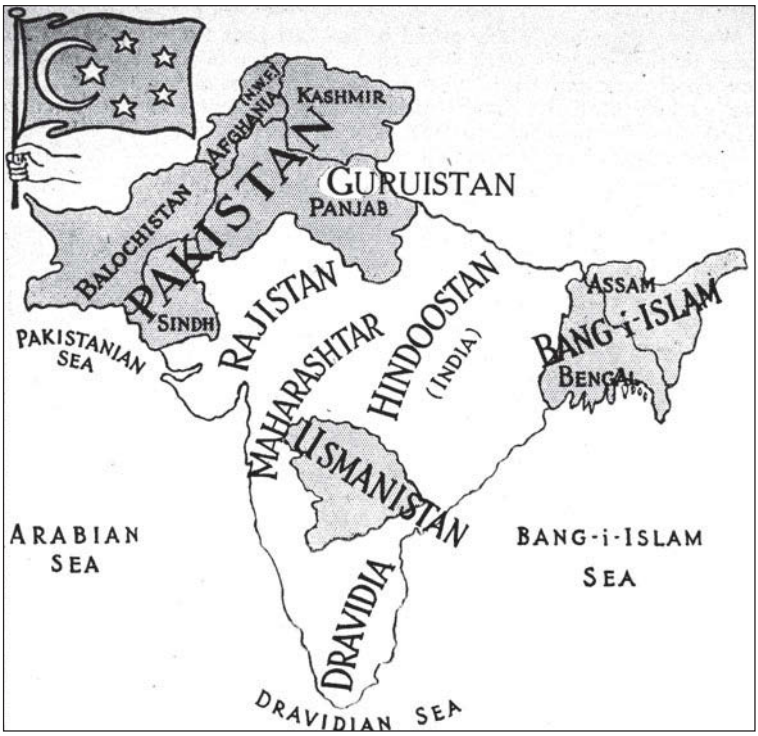
'it is the only system of law in which sovereignty belongs to Allah, and human allegiance is therefore due only to him.' Secondly, according to him, it was not a collection of commands enforced by the sanction of the state; rather, in this system the commands were only an element of a wider scheme which were 'concerned first and last with the relation between God and the human soul.'[63]



Source: The Centre of South Asian Studies, University of Cambridge

Rahmat Ali talked of the national code of honour, comprising a list of virtues and values. These are: *izzat* (honour); *azadi* (freedom); *bahaduri* (bravery); *wafa* (faithfulness); *panah* (protection of the weak); and *tawazo* (hospitality).[64] Rahmat Ali also prescribed the national courtesy titles befitting the Paks (people of Pakistan). The proud courtesy title for Paks, according to Rahmat Ali, was

[63] Rahmat Ali, *Pakistan: The Fatherland of the Pak Nation*, 161.
[64] Ibid., 162.



Source: The Centre of South Asian Studies, University of Cambridge

Khan, 'an ancient honorific which has been immortalized by poets, ennobled by kings, and honoured by the world.'[65]

As Waheed Ahmed infers, Rahmat Ali's expressions like 'grim and fateful struggle,' 'political crucifixion,' and 'complete annihilation' were symptomatic of an exaggerated reaction to a situation characterized by communal tension.[66] Ahmed, drawing on an inference from his conversation with Choudhary Zafarullah Khan on 22 May 1970, said

> The British were still in firm control in India and, even to the most far-sighted, a withdrawal of British authority from India in the near future did not appear likely. As such any scheme of substantial transfer of power to the Indian hands or Indian Balkanization was not practical politics.[67]

[65] Ibid.
[66] Waheed Ahmad, 'Choudhary Rahmat Ali and The Concept of Pakistan,' 14.
[67] Ibid.

Regardless, Rahmat Ali continued to contest quite vehemently the status of India as a single country or the home of a single nation. It was, in his view, 'the designation of a State created by the British for the first time in history.'[68] It included peoples who previously had never formed part of the Indian nation at any period of its history and they had retained their distinct identity from the dawn of history until the establishment of British rule. More details about Rahmat Ali's deconstruction of India as a country is given in the section on 'the Continent of Dinia.' It is noteworthy that Rahmat Ali's demand for Pakstan did not include Bengal. Subsequently, however, he mentioned it as an integral part of 'the Continent of Dinia,' with the name Bang-i-Islam; later on it became Bangistan.[69]

Rahmat Ali stated that the total number of Muslims in India was eighty million, and the constituent areas of his proposed Pakistan contained just thirty million Muslims. He proclaimed in no uncertain terms about his aim to save all Muslims inhabiting the subcontinent from impending Hindu rule. But while propounding his Pakistan scheme, Rahmat Ali's plan left a clear majority of the Muslims under the Hindu Raj. It was much later that he made an amendment by his imagining of 'the Continent of Dinia,' the scheme, which despite its flaws, was thorough in its political scope and imagination.[70]

Another aspect of Rahmat Ali's demand enshrined in *Now or Never* was his enunciation of the Muslims as a separate nation. K. K. Aziz correctly states that 'none before him had announced this [the call for a separate nation for Muslims] so clearly, so insistently and so rationally.'[71] Rahmat Ali's statement that Muslims constituted a separate nation would later on became part of Muhammad Ali Jinnah's presidential response to the Pakistan Resolution on 23 March 1940 in Lahore. Ironically no reference to Rahmat Ali was made during the entire event, nor was the word 'Pakistan' uttered even once. Rahmat Ali's statement is as follows:

> Our religion and culture, our history and tradition, our social code and economic system, our laws of inheritance, succession and marriage are fundamentally different from those of most peoples living in the rest of India. The ideals which move our people to make the highest sacrifices are

[68] Rahmat Ali, *Now or Never*, 4.

[69] For his political imaginary and its evolution, see Rahmat Ali, *The Millat & Her Ten Nations*.

[70] Aziz, *Complete Works of Rahmat Ali*, xxii.

[71] Ibid.

> essentially different from those which inspire the Hindus to do the same. These differences are not confined to broad, basic principles. Far from it. They extend to the minutest details of our lives. We do not inter-dine; we do not inter-marry. Our national customs and calendars, even our diet and dress are different.[72]

One could argue that this statement later on became the foundation of the two-nation theory. The divergence between the two major communities of India had never been articulated before in such a succinct manner. The irony, however, was that while the ideology of Rahmat Ali had been appropriated by the Muslim League, its original exponent was quite conveniently flung to the margin of Pakistani national discourse. An interesting aspect of Rahmat Ali's political imagination was its evolution, which eventually culminated in the idea of 'the Continent of Dinia,' spreading across the entire Indian subcontinent. Its final manifestation carried a very evident tinge of pan-Islamism. Rahmat Ali unveiled the second part of the Pak Plan in 1940, which included Bang-i-Islam and Usmanistan. In 1942 he inaugurated an additional five parts to his plan in a pamphlet entitled *The Millat and the Mission: Seven Commandments of Destiny for the Seventh Continent of Dinia*. This will be the focus of the next section.

Arguing for the Continent of Dinia

As described above, Rahmat Ali propounded the Pak Plan in 1933 in *Now or Never*. In that plan he proposed a separate Muslim federation of at least five predominantly Muslim units: Punjab, North-West Frontier Province (which he also called Afghan Province), Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan.[73] By contrast, Iqbal, in his Presidential Address to the All-India Muslim League at Allahabad in 1930, proposed the amalgamation of four out of these five provinces into a single state within an all-India federation.[74] Thus, unlike Rahmat Ali, Iqbal kept the all-India federation structure intact. Rahmat Ali extended the frontiers of Pakistan to the Yamuna river, incorporating Delhi and Agra within its geographical reach.[75] Hence Iqbal's proposition was fundamentally

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[72] Rahmat Ali, *Now or Never*, 4.
[73] Ibid., 5-6.
[74] Ibid., 6.
[75] 'Bani-i-Pakistan,' *Daily Hayat* (Karachi), Eid edition 1943, 3.

different from what Rahmat Ali prescribed three years after the Allahabad Address. However, Rahmat Ali would go on to present all the phases of his plan, considerably different from Iqbal's proposal, in which India and its various parts were reconfigured and re-designated in one of his several pamphlets, *The Millat and Her Ten Nations* being the prelude. But before embarking on an analysis of the way that Rahmat Ali envisaged the re-configuration of India, it will be pertinent to zoom in on his re-designation of India and his decision to call it instead 'the Continent of Dinia.' Information regarding 'the Continent of Dinia' given in the following paragraphs has been gleaned from *India: The Continent of Dinia or The Country of Doom?*

In *India: The Continent of Dinia or The Country of Doom?*, Rahmat Ali laid out 'The Two Supreme Facts.' The first, as also mentioned above, was that India was not a country but a continent, not only in terms of its geography but in terms of history too. It was not a 'fair-sized, politically demarcated area of land that possesses some individual characteristics,' thus it is not a country.[76] Quite conversely, like a continent, it was a 'huge, continuous mass of land that is bordered by mountain chains or high seas, or partly by one and partly by the other.'[77] A country, in his estimation, was 'a respectable-sized unit of territory' that was 'uni-lingual, uni-cultural, uni-national and uni-statal.'[78] A continent, on the other hand, contained an aggregation of such territorial units, which were 'multi-lingual, multi-cultural, multi-national and multi-statal.'[79] India therefore had all the qualifications to be designated as a continent and not a country. Rahmat Ali turned to history to prove his point. In its essentials, the history of India was a narrative of 'many separate countries which have, throughout the ages, been inhabited by many distinct people, with different languages, philosophies and civilisations, and organized for the most part into sovereign states, ruled by their own kings or emperors.'[80] In the particular context of the rise of the nation state in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Rahmat Ali was essentially subscribing to and promulgating the dimensions and characteristics of the nation state in order to undermine its relevance for India, which was a perceptive and novel line of argument.

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[76] Rahmat Ali, *India: The Continent of Dinia or The Country of Doom?*, 7.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid., 8.

The second 'Supreme Fact' was about the re-designation of what was erroneously known as India: 'the exclusive domain of Caste Hindooism and Caste Hindoos is creedally, as well as humanly, Dinia.'[81] Ironically, as Rahmat Ali himself states, the word Dinia is composed of the same letters as India. He just juggled the letters by transposing "d" to the first place to make it Dinia. The word Dinia has its origin in Arabic, and its usage in Urdu signifies the land of *dins* (multiple religions). Thus, unlike India, the land defined as an exclusive domain of the caste Hindus, the word Dinia characterized these lands as the joint domain of all the religions and their adherents like Islam and Muslims, Sikhism and Sikhs, Christianity and Christians, and Zoroastrianism and Parsis. It also acknowledged, according to the proponent of Dinia, 'the existence and share therein of them all, and describes them as the peoples of the lands of religions – without reference to any particular religion or fraternity.'[82] Rahmat Ali described the reason for defining these lands with the word Dinia was because he saw religion as the most prominent feature of all the people inhabiting a country or continent. He was extremely emphatic in asserting that religion defined national entities, 'inspires their national ideologies, shapes their national histories and sustains their national hopes.'[83]

To ensure that the proposition of the Continent of Dinia came to fruition and the member 'nations' in what Rahmat Ali called the Pak Commonwealth were better coordinated, he proposed setting up an *All-Dinia Milli Movement* (ADMM). The three aims of the ADMM appeared in *The Millat & Her Ten Nations: Foundation of the All-Dinia Milli Movement* and are reproduced in Appendix A. Rahmat Ali then went on to declare seven commandments of the destiny of the Continent of Dinia in a pamphlet, *The Millat & The Mission: Seven Commandments of Destiny for the 'Seventh' Continent of Dinia*. The commandments are summarized in Appendix B.

Rahmat Ali died in a nursing home in Cambridge on 3 February 1951, a victim of that year's influenza epidemic, with no one at his bedside. The Master of Emmanuel College arranged for his last rites and burial at New Market Road cemetery. In 2004, an initiative was taken by Choudhary Shujat Husain, the then president of the Pakistan Muslim League (Quaid-i-Azam Group), to bring the remains of Rahmat Ali from England to be buried in Pakistan. This led to a controversy and debate about the role played by Rahmat Ali in the

[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid.

creation of Pakistan and the rationale for honouring him as a hero. A leading opponent of this initiative denounced Rahmat Ali as a *gustakh* or insulting of Quaid-i-Azam.[84] That the person credited with suggesting the nomenclature for a state demanded for the Muslims of South Asia was himself at odds with the Muslim League's campaign for Pakistan throughout the 1940s, points towards the internal inconsistencies and ambiguities of the idea of Pakistan. Rahmat Ali's own radical interpretation of the Muslim *millat* and the future he envisaged for it was also inconsistent with what was being demanded by the League and articulated by Jinnah. Like other essays in this volume, this chapter has detailed the alternative conceptualization of Muslim subjectivity in India and the political project emanating from such a concept.

Conclusion

Retrieving the past glory of the Muslims was the prime objective of Rahmat Ali, a unique if quixotic thinker. Not only was he disgusted with British rule, but he also remained wary of Hindu rule. In his political ideology, there was hardly any room for co-existence. His political ideology evolved from the idea of Pakistan in 1933 to the Continent of Dinia in the 1940s. Pan-Islamism and antipathy for Hindus, which may have emanated from the communal tension prevalent in the Punjab, provided the context for Rahmat Ali to formulate his ideology. Rahmat Ali's political imagination was completely out of sync with existing political realities. Many Pakistanis may still express sympathy with aspects of Rahmat Ali's thought, while acknowledging that his vision will not be realized, at least in the immediate future. Therefore, Rahmat Ali remains a peripheral figure in the collective memory of Pakistanis.

Appendix A

The Millat & Her Ten Nations: Foundation of the All-Dinia Milli Movement

(a) To claim at least ten nations, ten countries, six seas and four island groups; Pakistan, Bangistan (Bengal), Osmanistan (Hyderabad), Siddiqistan

[84] Munir Ahmad Munir, *Gustakh-i-Quaid-i-Azam: Choudhary Rahmat Ali* (Lahore: Mahnama Atish Fishan, 2005).

(Central India), Faruqistan (Bihar and Orissa), Haideristan (Hindoostan), Muinistan (Rajasthan), and Maplistan (South India), to be the parts of the Continent of Dinia, along with Safiistan (Western Ceylon, Sri Lanka) and Nasaristan (Eastern Ceylon, Sri Lanka); as well as the Alam Islands in the Maplian Sea, the Amin Islands in the Safian Sea, and the Ashar and Balus Islands in the Bangian Sea.

(b) To form and co-ordinate the ten national movements of the countries so that the individual nations were integrated well in their territorial spheres. These would be: the Pakistan National Movement, the Bangistan National Movement, and so on.

(c) To instil the above-mentioned movements with the Pak concept of 'Diniaism,' to organize the establishment of the Pak Commonwealth of Nations, and to foster their dedication to the sacred cause of achieving the sovereign freedom of the *millat* and the 'supreme fulfilment' of its mission throughout the Continent of Dinia and its dependencies.[85]

Appendix B

The Millat & The Mission: Seven Commandments of Destiny for the 'Seventh' Continent of Dinia

1. Avoid 'minorityism.' This means that minorities must not be left in 'Hindoo lands, even if the British and the Hindoos offer them the so-called constitutional safe-guards.' Not only that, Rahmat Ali ruled out any possibility of allowing Hindus or the Sikhs to live in 'our own lands.'[86] He believed that in ordinary times Hindus and Sikhs would set back the national reconstruction among the Muslims; in crisis, they would betray them and try to cause their destruction.
2. Avow nationalism. This commandment aimed at recognizing the distinct national status of those Muslims who would be a minority in the seven Hindu majority regions and reciprocally extend a similar offer to the Hindus and Sikhs living in what Rahmat Ali called 'Pakistan, Bangistan

[85] Rahmat Ali, *The Millat & Her Ten Nations*, 8.

[86] Rahmat Ali, *The Millat & The Mission: Seven Commandments of Destiny for the 'Seventh' Continent of Dinia* (Cambridge: The Pakistan National Movement, 1944 [1942]), 12.

and Osmanistan';[87] in other words, the Muslim majority areas. Importantly enough Rahmat Ali, unlike some religious scholars, affirmed nationalism as a political category subsuming the *millat*.

3. Acquire proportional territory. That commandment meant acquiring territory that was proportional to the number of Muslims in the population more widely, to create Siddiqistan, Faruqistan, Haideristan, Muinistan, Maplistan, Safiistan and Nasaristan in the regions overwhelmingly inhabited by the Hindus/Sikhs. Rahmat Ali's contention was that Muslims form one-quarter of the population and they were therefore entitled to about one-quarter of the total area. According to this commandment, in three proposed states, namely Pakistan, Bangistan and Osmanistan, the Muslim share, after giving the Hindus and Sikhs their portion, would be 325,000 square miles. There would thus be a shortfall of 75,000 square miles. That short fall would be met by claiming 'the proportional area for our Minorities in the Hindoo Majority Regions of Dinia and its Dependencies on the assurance of reciprocity to the Hindoo and/or Sikh Minorities in Pakistan, Bangistan, and Osmanistan.'
4. Consolidate the individual nations. Rahmat Ali considered the dispersal of South Asian Muslims extremely detrimental to their well-being. The Muslim 'minorities' living in Hindu majority areas would be the most vulnerable because they would be exposed to Hindu tyranny. Rahmat Ali called for the unification and consolidation of those Muslims in the countries which, for 'spiritual, historical and national reasons,'[88] he named Siddiqistan, Faruqistan, Haideristan, Muinistan, Maplistan, Safiistan and Nasiristan. He underscored in no uncertain terms that in thoughts, in words, and in action, these nations would be at par with the Pak nation in importance and status.
5. Provide coordination under a Pak Commonwealth of Nations. This commandment suggests bringing together all ten nations in an international organization. This is necessary for two reasons: firstly, for any nation to stand alone in the world is to invite aggression, if not annihilation; and secondly, these nations in fact belong to one *millat*, and therefore they swim or sink together. Thus for the security not only of the individual

[87] Ibid., 10.
[88] Ibid., 16.

nation but of the entire *millat*, unity and co-operation among all the nations, forging 'a Pak Commonwealth of Nations' was imperative.

6. Convert 'India' into 'Dinia.' In this commandment, Rahmat Ali established an ideal for Pakistanis to work for the service and salvation of India, which they have in fact been pursuing since the seventh century. Rahmat Ali asserted that Pakasians had waged a thirteen-century-long struggle, bore suffering and sacrificed a great deal to liberate the soul and soil of 'India' from the domination of 'Indianism,' and bring it into the domain of 'Dinianism.' What can be inferred from his assertion is that the people inhabiting India (Hindus) would either be converted to Islam or they would be content with *dhimmi* status.[89] Thus India would be restored to its original and rightful position in the world. To justify the change in the nomenclature of India, Rahmat Ali invokes a reference from history and asserts that originally Indian was Dravidia because Dravidians were inhabiting it. They were exterminated by the Hindus and then it became India. Rahmat Ali contends that India has in the past thirteen centuries been the land of several religions like Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and Sikhism. Since a fundamental change in the character and composition of the people of 'Dravidia' made it 'India,' a similar change in the character and composition of 'India' should make it 'Dinia.' Calling it India will deny the existence of several faiths and their followers on its soil.
7. Organize 'Dinia' and its dependencies into 'Pakasia.' Here the term Pakasia has a cultural and a geographical connotation. However, it does not have any racial significance. In the southern region of Asia, Rahmat Ali aspires Pak culture to dominate; geographically, it 'includes the Continent of Dinia and its Dependencies.' The Dependencies comprise the Alam Islands, the Ameen Islands, Safiistan, Nasaristan, the Ashar Islands, and the Balus Islands.

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[89] The term *dhimmi* refers to a non-Muslim residing in a Muslim state with certain rights and protection guaranteed to such a person.

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4

Differentiating between Pakistan and *Napak-istan*

Maulana Abul Ala Maududi's critique of the Muslim League and Muhammad Ali Jinnah

Ali Usman Qasmi

Born in the princely state of Hyderabad Deccan to a family tracing its roots to the aristocracy of Delhi, Maulana Abul Ala Maududi (1903–1979) was an exception among his contemporary 'ulama. Not formally trained at a madrasa, Maududi showed remarkable understanding of classical Islamic tradition and contemporary Western political thought. Rather than being associated with a mosque or a madrasa, Maududi's career started in journalism. This gave him a unique style of writing through which he could make use of simple and commonly understood language to explain complex ideas. It also gave him a broader understanding of political debates in India on issues such as the future constitution of India, the share of Muslims in power and the possible outcomes of Hindu majoritarian rule after the departure of British.

After serving as the editor of *Al-Jami'at,* a weekly newspaper belonging to pro-Congress Muslim scholars of the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind, Maududi started his own journal, *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an*. The *Tarjuman,* which started publication from Hyderabad Deccan in 1933, was not simply a journal for religious articles, but also carried political write-ups. With the change in India's political situation after the imposition of the Government of India Act 1935, the scope of electoral politics and prospects of self-government were considerably enlarged. The question of Muslim participation and share of power in these new conditions was once again at the forefront of acrimonious discussions among different political parties and religious groups. What prompted Maududi's political writings was his visit to Delhi in 1937 after a gap of seven years where he witnessed a major transformation. The city, as he saw it, was losing much of its Muslim character. Purdah among Muslim women, Maududi observed, had become lax and Hindus were making substantial gains under the new constitutional scheme. On his way back to Hyderabad, Maududi shared a compartment with the chief

minister of Bombay Presidency and a leader of the Congress party, B. G. Kher. In conversation with him, it occurred to Maududi that Hindu rule would be unbearable for Muslims in India.[1] In this situation, Maududi feared, Muslims would lose their identity, culture and religion and would be submerged in the civilization of the Hindu majority.[2] This prompted Maududi to start writing political essays in his journal.

This essay will offer a detailed description of Maududi's writings on such themes as Muslim nationalism, the two-nation theory and the role played by Muhammad Ali Jinnah and his demand for Pakistan. While it is well known that Maududi was vehemently opposed to the politics of the Muslim League and its leader, and the demand for Pakistan, the reasons for this opposition are largely misunderstood. Maududi's political writings were as much part of his commentary on the developments taking place in India as they were part of his interpretation of Islam as an all-encompassing world order. In this article, therefore, I would argue that for a better understanding of Maududi's opposition to Jinnah, the Muslim League and the demand for Pakistan, it is necessary to emphasize that his political writings, contingent as they were on the contemporary developments taking place in India, were also an extension of a larger world-view which Maududi developed over a period of time. His political and religious writings were, in other words, largely inseparable but this does not mean that the particularity of the local context changed the scope, outline or extent of Maududi's universalist project of Islamic revolution.

This approach to Maududi's religious and political world-view sets it apart from other works on his religio-political thought. This includes Seyyed Vali Raza Nasr's highly influential biography of Maududi and the history of Jama'at-i-Islami[3] and Peter Hartung's recently published account of Maududi's system of life.[4] The all-encompassing nature of Maududi's world-view, which touches upon every aspect of political, social and religious life, and explanatory details of it provided by these authors do not take into account the contexts in which some of its very foundational texts were written. This results in a

[1] Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *Mawdudi and the Making of Islamic Revivalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 31.

[2] Charles J. Adam, 'Mawdudi and the Islamic State,' in Voices of Resurgent Islam, ed. John L. Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 102.

[3] Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution: The Jama'at-i-Islami of Pakistan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).

[4] Jan-Peter Hartung, *A System of Life: Mawdudi and the Ideologisation of Islam* (London: Hurst Publishers, 2013).

misreading of these texts, especially those relating to the political debates of the 1930s and 1940s. However, a more focused approach and a reliance on the original published writings of Maududi in *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an,* rather than their compilations in later published volumes, helps us to understand particular aspects of Maududi's religio-political thought in a better way. By emphasizing a nuanced relationship between the political immediacy of Maududi's writings on various issues relating to Pakistan and his religious world-view of universal import, I seek to show that Maududi's critique of such 1940s debates as the two-nation theory, Muslim nationalism and the demand for a separate homeland can only be properly understood through an analysis of his ideas on such themes as nation, state and democracy.

Civilization, nationalism and state: the Islamic alternative

When Maududi launched *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an*, he did not harbour any political ambitions at the outset. It was meant for the propagation of his writings on different aspects of Islam. Many of his writings, which later became central to his overall ideology of Islam and his elaboration of its various systems, were initially serialized in the journal during the 1930s before being published in book form. One such example is his work on the concept of civilization and the idea of Islamic civilization. Maududi started writing on this theme from March 1933 onward. Not only were these writings later put together and published as a book,[5] they also provided the frame for Maududi's more explicit political writings during the decade. An exposition of Maududi's political ideas, therefore, requires an insight into his overall concept of Islam as an all-encompassing, religio-political world order undergirded by its metaphysical foundations of the concept of the sovereignty of Allah over the entire universe and man's humble submission to it as His vice-regent. This, as the analysis of his writings will show, was in complete contrast with the prevalent world-views, whether Liberal or Marxist, with a focus on human sovereignty and rationality. Of these different aspects of Islamic order and its difference from Western conceptualizations, Maududi's writings about such ideas as civilization, democracy, nation and state are the most relevant for this essay as they help delineate the intellectual reasons for his critique of the Muslim League and its demand for Pakistan.

[5] Several editions of *Islami Tehzib aur us ke Usul wa Mabadi* have been printed ever since it was first published in book form during the 1930s.

One of the earliest aspects of the 'Islamic' religio-political world order developed by Maududi was its concept of civilization. Writing in 1933, Maududi differed from the opinion that arts, crafts, architecture, social values and cultural norms defined the civilization of a nation. These were, according to him, only the products of civilization or the leaves and fruits of the tree of civilization.[6] His own concept of civilization was predicated on the way certain questions and values were debated in a human society. This included such questions as the purpose of existence, man's role in this world, the ends of human endeavour, the belief and ideology shaping the world view of the individual, the kind of ethical values it upheld and inculcated in its individual members and the rights and duties of men towards each other in a society. Maududi then developed these individual postulates to explain the distinctness and superiority of Islamic civilization. Islam, he said, taught a middle path on the concept of man's role in this world. Men cannot be so arrogant to claim mastery of the universe nor be so humble so as to bow down before stars and shrubs. Man had to know that he was created from an insignificant droplet and yet he was God's vice-regent on earth.[7]

In this Islamic concept of civilization, arts and aesthetics were to be allowed only to the extent that they did not diverge man from his real purpose of following Allah and His commandments. This was why many of the crafts that, in other civilizations, were highly prized and their practitioners considered national heroes, according to Maududi, were either outright forbidden in Islam or strictly discouraged. In Maududi's estimation, this was because Islamic civilization did not aim at producing Tansen, Behzad and Charlie Chaplin but Abu Bakar, Omar, Hussain, Abu Dharr Ghaffari and Rabia Basri.[8]

Similar to his ideas on Western civilization and claims regarding the superiority of the Islamic alternative, Maududi traced the historical development of the idea of nationalism and its prevalent Western conception. Maududi wrote his first article on the concept of nationalism in September 1933. It was titled 'Islami Qaumiyyat.' He wrote:

> as humans move from barbarianism [*wehshat*] to civilized urban life [*madaniyyat*], it becomes necessary to create unity in diversity so that, in order to pursue common goals and objectives, different individuals cooperate with each other and act together. With societal growth, the scope of this

[6] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 2 (1) (Muharram 1352 Hijri) [March 1933]: 26.
[7] Ibid., 41.
[8] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 2 (6) (Jamadi-ul-Aakhir, 1352) [August 1933]: 19–20.

> collective unity [*Ijtima'i Wahdat*] increases as well to the point that a large number of men become part of it. This collection of individuals is *qaum*.[9]

The purpose of this collectivity, explained Maududi, was simply to pursue common goals, but when *qaumiyyat* or nationhood crept into it, the forces of *'asabiyyat,* or group feeling, became strong as well and there had to be a common point or cause for the formation of *qaumiyyat*. This could be from a variety of causes or factors strong enough to have a commanding effect to bring diverse groups together under one umbrella and instil among them a sacrificial spirit. This spirited factor instilling *qaumiyyat*, he said, could be on the basis of race, language, land, form of government (enmity of people of one kingdom towards the people of another) and form of economy (rivalry on the basis of competing economic orders and interests). Maududi found this to be the basis of *qaum* and *qaumiyyat* from the Greek and Roman period to the present day Japanese, Germans and English. But this concept of *qaum* and *qaumiyyat*, said Maududi, had essentially been divisive. This was because people of one race could not become members of another race, people speaking one language could not become native speakers of another language and so on. Therefore, such a basis for *qaum* and *qaumiyyat* was conflict-prone by its very nature and definition.[10] It was only when these divisions were cleared that racism could give way to humanism and *wataniyyat* be replaced by universalism.[11] This, Maududi claimed, was exactly what the concept of Islam was. He wrote:

> You can read the entire Qur'an; nowhere will you find a single word in support of racism [*nasaliyyat*] or nationalism [*wataniyyat*]. Its message is addressed to entire humanity. It calls every single human on this earth to virtue and the righteous path. There is neither a distinction of nation nor land. If it has established a special link with any particular land, it is only the land of the Holy places of Mecca. In that too, it clearly says in the Qur'an ... that the original inhabitants of the city and those who come from outside are equal. And those original inhabitants who were infidels, were declared as unclean and ordered to be driven out.[12]

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[9] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 3 (1) (Rajab 1352 Hijri) [September 1933], 37–40.

[10] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 3 (1) (Rajab 1352 Hijri) [September 1933]: 37–40. Maududi is so critical of the Western concept of nationalism that, in one article, he referred to it using the term *jahiliyya,* a term for pre-Islamic pagan Arabs for their supposedly ignorant ways of life. *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 6 (2) (Safar 1354) [April 1935]: 4.

[11] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 3 (1), 46.

[12] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 3 (1), 48–9.

Maududi cited the examples of Arab and Jewish opposition to the Prophet's message as evidence to support the claim that Islam had been the biggest force opposing the forces of *'asabiyyat*. The definition and concept of an Islamic nation, he said, was based on the *kalima* or affirmation of Islamic articles of faith.

> It is on this *kalima* that friendships and enmities are based; its acceptance includes, its denial excludes; those who are excluded by it cannot be included on any connection of blood, land, language, colour, economy or government. And those it includes cannot be separated by anything. No river, mountain, ocean, language, race, colour, and no power on earth has the right to draw a line of distinction in the circle of Islam and separate one Muslim from another. Every Muslim, whether a resident of China or Morocco, black or white, speaks Hindi or Arabic, Semite or Aryan, subject of one government or the other, is part of the Muslim *qaum*, member of the Islamic society, citizen of the Islamic state, solider of the Islamic army and protected under the Islamic law.[13]

Maududi then cited the examples of such non-Arab figures from the history of early Islam as Salman Farsi, referred to the cooperation between *ansar* (helpers) and *muhajir* (migrants) and gave details of the battles in which individuals related by blood drew swords against each other.

Historically, in Islamic empires, Muslims from one region were serving as soldiers, administrators, and jurists in other parts of the empire. But in the contemporary period, Maududi regretted that Muslims everywhere were taking pride in their national, pre-Islamic pasts, Turks in Mongols, Egyptians in Pharoahs, Iranians in Rustam and Sohrab, and Indians in the Ganges or Bhim and Arjun, failing to realize that the cementing force in the European concept of nationalism was the very antithesis of Islam.[14] While in the European context, he said, it was unconceivable that a citizen of one state could be faithful to another state, it was completely the opposite in the case of Islam, where the criterion for membership was faith alone. Therefore, an Indian Muslim could be as faithful a citizen of Egypt and an Afghan could be as valiant in his fight for Syria as he was for Afghanistan.[15]

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[13] Ibid., 43.

[14] Ibid., 57.

[15] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 3 (2) (Sha'ban 1352 Hijri) [October 1933]: 58.

Other than the concepts of nation and nationalism, Maududi's critique of the idea of the state was also central to his religious polity. As pointed out by Nasr, the state was central to the overall ideology of Maulana Maududi not entirely because it was an Islamic prerequisite, but because the extent of the power and scope of activities which the modern state performed were capable of radically altering the very basis of a society.[16] Maududi believed that the state was now as intrusive as religion. It interfered in every aspect of life. There was a time when its legislative intrusion was ridiculed as '*naani amma ke ahkam* (Grandmother's instructions).' In a Foucauldian manner, he talked of the state's biopower which decided the age limit of marriage, education, language, dress, food, and so on.[17] Such a concept of state and the range of its power, Maududi opined, could certainly lead to uniformity but did not guarantee its virtuousness. Just like a civilization patterned on Divine will rather than worldly exploration could lead to a virtuous civilization, a state established in accordance with Divine rubrics could be a blessing on earth.[18] Given the prevalence of European ideas and their popularity in British India, it was obvious to Maududi that a secular state was to be created in India after independence. Maududi described such a state as born of an English mother and carrying the semen of English ideas and principles, and as being based on the three pillars of nationalism, democracy and a party system.[19] As opposed to such concepts which Maududi considered to be detrimental to the existence of Islam in India, he developed his conceptual alternatives which, in his opinion, were more rational, humane and universally applicable.

Congress rule and the beginnings of Maududi's political writings

By 1937, as a result of elections held under the provisions of the Government of India Act 1935, The Indian National Congress had been able to set up ministries in most provinces of British India. Unlike previous such governments, more autonomy was given to these provincial governments that had, in Maududi's understanding, considerably increased the influence and power of Hindus. This made him extremely concerned about the future of Islam in India. This

[16] Cf. Nasr, *Mawdudi and the Making of Islamic Revivalism*, especially chapter 5, 'The Islamic State.'

[17] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 12 (1) (Muharram 1357) [March 1938]: 5.

[18] Ibid., 6.

[19] Ibid., 9.

was because, as the analysis of his writings will show, Maududi had serious reservations about the capability of Muslim leaders, let alone ordinary believers, to understand the magnitude of problems and the ways of tackling them.

But Maududi was not the only person who was concerned. Congress's victory and its exuberance with its own success in major parts of British India had raised alarm bells among a large section of the Muslim aristocracy and intelligentsia of the United Provinces. Though a minority, North Indian Muslims were disproportionately in control of the province's landholdings and had historically dominated its political and cultural landscape. As the Congress started such schemes as a Muslim mass contact campaign, it alarmed the Muslims even more who feared a further dilution of their political power and an adverse impact on their economic and cultural interests.

It was under these circumstances that Maududi started commenting on political issues on a regular basis from 1937 onwards. Maududi warned of an impending crisis that had the potential of obliterating Muslim civilization from India. He started off by giving an overview of Muslim history in India. He described the earliest Muslims of India as a group of heretics or renegades who had fled to India because it was on the far end of the Muslim empire. Such a peripheral status hindered the growth of 'real Islam' in the region. It brought in its wake various 'Persian adulterations' (*'ajami kasafatain*). When in the sixth century *hijri*, the 'real stream' of Islam started to flow into the region, the aristocrats had become power hungry and the 'ulama had lost the spirit of *ijtihad*.[20] For these reasons, a real Islamic empire and civilization was never established in India. Whatever little had survived, claimed Maududi, was because of the concerted efforts of a small dedicated group of 'ulama and Sufis. The local converts were not properly instructed in their religion, and the Muslims who had migrated to India indulged in worldly practices and were unable to serve as role models. Thus, the Muslim civilization that emerged in India was a hotchpotch of Islamic, Persian and Indian influences.[21] For Maududi, what followed since then was a story of decline and decay. During the British period, the few remnants of Muslim culture and power were also taken away. As they became economically destitute, they were left with only one option, which was to acquire Western education. But to acquire this Western education, they had to surrender their Muslimness and embrace Western thought, ideas and lifestyle as a prerequisite for worldly success. Maududi's biggest apprehension

[20] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 10 (1) (Muharram 1356) [March 1937]: 4–5.
[21] Ibid., 6.

was that, just as Muslims submitted to the ascending power of the British and their civilization from the nineteenth century onwards, they would express similar obedience to the Hindus who, as shown by the election results, were emerging as the replacement for the British in India. Given the effeminate qualities (*zanana khasusiyat*) the Muslims had acquired during the last 150 years, it would not be long, warned Maududi, before they were absorbed into Indian nationalism.[22] The Congress party, which was politically Indian nationalist, ideologically Communist and culturally English, was becoming popular among the Muslim youth as well. It was only a matter of time, anticipated Maududi, before the Muslims changed their direction once again and mister was replaced by *mahashay*, missus by *shrimati*, *namastay* replaced good morning and the hat gave way to the Gandhian cap.[23]

For these reasons, Maududi was averse to the idea of cooperating with Congress in its effort to dislodge British rule in the name of a freedom movement. He wrote:

> It is certainly important, rather it is compulsory, to put an end to British rule. No true Muslim would accept slavery. Any person with faith in his heart, even for a moment, would not like to see India in the clutches of exploitative British rule. But in your enthusiasm for freedom, do not forget that in opposing the British rule, Muslims' reason for opposition are different from those of nationalists. We do not oppose the British because they are British and have come from 6000 miles away and not born into this land: the reason for opposition is that the British are unjust; they rule unlawfully; spread injustice instead of establishing justice; create disorder rather than making improvements. If the same was done by others, we could not have supported them simply because they are our fellow-countrymen. For a Muslim, such distinctions of national and non-national mean nothing. .... Your task is to eradicate Falsehood [*batil*] and establish Justness [*haq*] – not to eradicate Falsehood and replace it with another, more powerful Falsehood.[24]

Maududi was not satisfied with the prevalent mode of Muslim politics in India. In his opinion, none of the political parties or their leaders were able to foresee the threats posed to the future of the Muslim community in India. Without naming the Muslim League in his initial writings, Maududi indirectly criticized its policies because he thought that demanding constitutional

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[22] Ibid., 12.

[23] Ibid., 14.

[24] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 10 (2) (Safar 1356) [April 1937]: 10.

safeguards alone would not solve the problems of Muslims. Similarly, supporting the Congress, as some 'ulama and Muslim nationalists were doing, was not going to help either. Something new had to be done, which Maududi pointed out in the next instalment of his editorial.

Maududi said that the agenda should be to make India into *dar-ul-Islam* (abode of Islam) to as great an extent as possible. In its theoretical setting of Islamic fiqh, this term would have implied the setting up of an Islamic state. While this was the end point of Maududi's long-term strategy for Indian Muslims, his usage of this term in 1937 was to instil a will for power among Muslims. Instead of petitioning for representation in councils and job quotas, Maududi enjoined upon Muslims to become so powerful as a community that they would be able to organize themselves around their religious ideology, impart religious education and carry out necessary reforms in such domains as *auqaf* religious endowments, collection of *zakat*, and so on.[25] Maududi thought that if the Muslims of India could become a powerful and united community, they would not only have considerable power internally but also be able to ensure their influence on India's external policy, especially with regard to the use of force against any Muslim nation.[26] Such unity of ranks, power in policy making and autonomy in internal affairs alone, said Maududi, could make sure that the history of Sicily and Spain was not repeated in India. According to Maududi, the possibility of the obliteration of Muslims from India under Hindu domination was even greater than it ever was during British rule. The British never forced Indian Muslims to give up Urdu, take up English dress or drink alcohol. Practically, the British kept them aloof from such matters. They were small in number and did not interact with the natives either. Yet all these changes took place because power was in the hands of non-Muslims. Maududi asked Muslims to imagine the impact of changes as power would move to another non-Muslim group that was the majority in the country, interacted with the local population as well and was not made up of foreigners who could be stopped from interfering in social and cultural matters.[27] In Maududi's estimation, therefore, the threat of the extinction of the Muslim community from India was real.

At the time Maududi was writing these editorials, the Muslim League had not come up with the idea of a distinct Muslim nationhood, let alone the demand for a separate state. The politics of the Muslim League, as critiqued by

[25] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 10 (2), 10–11.
[26] Ibid., 11.
[27] Ibid., 12–13.

Maududi, was limited to demanding constitutional safeguards for Muslims and a disproportionate share in power. As Maududi later pointed out, this mode of politics was empty of any ideological content and focused mainly on serving the political and economic interests of Muslims. The term 'Muslim,' in other words, was only another political category lacking in ideological content and only carrying distinctness in terms of the rights and protections demanded for it. In such an intellectual and political environment, Maududi had to make an extra effort to explain his reasons for opposing the Congress party.

Maududi thought of Muslims living in India in two capacities: Indians and Muslims. As Indians, Maududi said, they were suffering from the same exploitation and poverty as other Indians. To the extent of getting rid of this exploitation, they were part of the endeavour. But in their capacity as Muslims, thought Maududi, no other group shared the kind of destruction of social values and lifestyles that they had suffered under British rule. So while the rest of the Indians could get their rights with independence, the same could not happen automatically in the case of Muslims. This was because, feared Maududi, the nationalists, at the most, would allow for Muslim personal law to continue, but as far as organized religion in public affairs was concerned, such a concept was anathema for them. Their ideal was the gradual dissolution of religious bonds and values and their replacement by a uniform national identity.[28] In British colonialism, no matter how damaging its impacts were on Islamic values, there was still a possibility of a return to the original, as Muslims could not be absorbed within the British national identity. But in case of Indian nationalism, prophesized Maududi, such absorption was a real possibility, especially when an organized Muslim community was to be unacceptable or any affiliation with religious symbols denounced as communalism. This was evident in the case of the Muslim mass contact campaign launched by the Congress as well. Muslims were asked to join the party, not as a group but as individuals. The party called for distinction on the basis of landlords and landless, capitalists and workers, haves and have-nots.[29] Such a scenario was nightmarish for Maududi as it meant cutting asunder the connection of one Muslim with another and becoming connected instead with the non-Muslim members of one's political party. In such a scenario, Maududi thought, it would be unfeasible for Muslims to join the Congress party or take part in a united struggle for freedom. From Maududi's point of view, it was important for Muslims to understand the distinctness

[28] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 10 (4) (Rabi'-ul-Sani 1356) [June 1937]: 4–5.
[29] Ibid., 6.

of their community not from the point of view of job quotas or legislative representations, but as defined by Islam. It was the elucidation of a universal and revolutionary ideology of Islam and the ways of Muslims striving towards its implementation in India which became the focus of Maududi's writings.

To give an account of the distinctness of Islam and Muslim identity, Maududi wrote:

In a legal sense, every person who recites *kalima* and does not denounce the essential beliefs [of Islam] is a Muslim. But he is Muslim only in the sense that he has entered the fold of Islam. We cannot call him a *kafir* nor deny to him the rights to which he is entitled as a member of Muslim society which he has become through his ritualistic acceptance of Islam. This is not real Islam but only a permit for entering the frontier of Islam.[30]

For Maududi, a person like K. M. Ashraf, a Marxist affiliated with the Congress, was a Muslim as per the definition of census statistics, even though he did not understand or believe in Islamic ideology. Instead, he believed in Muslims giving up their idea of Islamic nationalism and becoming part of one Indian nation and, most alarmingly, calling upon the herd of poor and hungry Muslim masses to join hands with poor and hungry non-Muslims in a joint struggle to end their poverty.[31] Maududi called this movement Shuddhi, the movement for 'purification' launched by extremist Hindu organizations during the 1920s, with the difference that Shuddhi was more open about its intents and objectives.[32] So, unlike Abul Kalam Azad who said it was obligatory for Muslims to be part of this freedom movement, Maududi strongly advised Muslims to keep themselves aloof from such a movement, as it was as much against the values and ideologies most dear to Muslims as it was against British imperialism.

If India was one nation, said Maududi, there was no justification for quota systems in jobs and the reservation of seats in the assembly. Since all were Indians, it became immaterial as to who got the job or was elected to the assembly. In such a situation, the principle of democracy became even more destructive. Here Maududi echoed Sayyid Ahmad Khan's argument without citing him and said that such a mechanism for representation and election would always benefit the majority.[33] In practice, Maududi argued that the concept of

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[30] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 10 (6) and 11 (1) (Jamadi-ul-Aakhir and Rajab 1356) [August-September 1937]: 11.

[31] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 11 (4) (Shawwal 1356) [December 1937]: 24–25.

[32] Ibid., 26.

[33] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 12 (2) (Safar 1357) [April 1938]: 15. Warning against the perils of democratic representation based on universal suffrage, Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Muslim

one nation as a prerequisite for a state and its apparatus did not exist in India. While poor Hindu and Muslim farmers might act together in a struggle as desired by the Congress, once they had won they would dispute over the spoils as the Hindu poor would prefer the Hindu poor and poor Muslims would prefer the Muslim poor.[34] In such a situation, democracy would simply establish majoritarian tyranny. As for the party system, Maududi described the Congress as a predominantly Hindu party with negligible Muslim representation. Mostly these Muslims were those who had completely immersed themselves in Indian nationalism at the expense of their distinct cultural or religious identity. If Muslims joined this 'national party,' feared Maududi, it would subject them to the discipline of the party, which was largely run and dominated by Hindus. Maududi called it a vicious circle (one nation, democracy, party) and said that it was being projected as a war of liberation.[35] It presumed one nation and paved the way for democracy, which helped one party to come into power, and then this party would transform the state and society the way it wanted to.

Islam as a 'party' with a 'revolutionary agenda'

In early 1938, Maududi had shifted from Hyderabad Deccan to Pathankot in Punjab.[36] There he organized weekly Friday sermons and called it the

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reformer and educationist of the nineteenth century, had said: 'And let us suppose, first of all, that we have Universal Suffrage, as in America, and that all have votes. And let us also suppose that all the Mohammadan electors vote for a Mohammadan member and all Hindu electors for a Hindu member, and now count how many votes the Mohammadan member will have and how many the Hindu. It is certain that the Hindu member will have four times as many, because their population is four times as numerous. Therefore, we can mathematically prove that there will be four votes of the Hindu to every one vote for the Mohammadan. And now how can the Mohammadan guard his interest? It will be like a game of dice, in which one man had four dice and the other only one!' S. M. Ikram, *Modern Muslim India and the Birth of Pakistan* (Lahore: Institute of Islamic Culture, 1997), 44-45.

[34] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 12 (2), 16.

[35] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 12 (3) (Rabi'-ul-Awwal, 1357) [May 1938]: 9.

[36] Maududi had made the shift as he wanted to have a proper base, backed by financial resources, to further his agenda of Islamic revival in India. Chaudhry Niyaz, a retired civil servant, was in contact with the famous poet-philosopher Muhammad Iqbal for a suitable scholar who could administer a *waqf* (endowment) made by Niyaz and set up a centre for Islamic learning. Since Iqbal's health was failing and with no other suitable alternative available, the offer was made to Maududi, who was becoming increasingly

beginning of organizing Muslims along Islamic lines. He said if 8 crore Indian Muslims attended Friday sermons every week, it would be a congress and a mass contact campaign more effective than anyone else could mobilize.[37] This marked the beginning of his efforts towards formally organizing his followers under a religious as well as a political banner. This had an impact on his writings published in the journal and they increasingly became directed towards espousing a specific line of action rather than just commenting on the prevalent situation.

Maududi put together the editorials and essays he had written in *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* in 1937–38 on the political issues and thematic debates relating to the nation and state in a special issue in October–December 1938. At the end of this volume, he gave possible solutions as well. He first reiterated the principles that needed to be considered. This included denial of the idea of one nation, the concept of democracy premised on this idea of one nation and the necessity of including Muslims in the future Indian commonwealth with full assurances and rights as Muslim Indians and not just as Indians.[38]

As Maududi consciously inched towards setting up an organization under his command, he first elaborated his ideas about such terminologies as political parties. He did so by conflating the term party with nation. According to Maududi, there was no conceptual equivalent for the term nation to be found in the Qur'an. Rather than referring to Muslims as a nation that has clear '*jahili*' precedents emphasizing common descent of some form, the Qur'an refers to Muslims as '*hizb*' or party/group.[39] In Qur'anic terms, there was either *hizb Allah* (Party of Allah) or *hizb Shaitan* (Party of the Devil). Another concept used in the Qur'an to refer to the Muslims was *ummat*. The third term which had been used (in *hadith* mostly) was *Jama'at*, which, Maududi said, was conceptually similar to the term 'party.'[40] In Maududi's estimate, Islam as a 'party' did not

disappointed with the princely state of Hyderabad and its lack of interest in financially supporting his work. This led to the establishment of Dar-ul-Islam Trust in Pathankot. Nasr, *Mawdudi and the Making of Islamic Revivalism*, 34–35. But Maududi soon fell out with Niyaz as Maududi's increasingly harsh critique of the Muslim League was interpreted by Niyaz as a violation of the terms of reference of the *waqf*, which was meant to be apolitical.

37 *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 11 (6) (Zil Hajj, 1356) [February 1938]: 12.

38 *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 13 (2–4) (Sha'ban, Ramzan, Shawwal 1357) [October-November-December 1938]: 228–31.

39 *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 14 (2) (Safar 1358) [April 1939]: 3.

40 Ibid., 7.

confine itself to being just one of the competing powers but by its very nature was the only power. It was neither to be confined within a region, nor to cater to the economic interests of a particular group, nor be bound by the traditions of a local culture.[41]

According to Maududi, this conflation of the Islamic concept of nation with party gave Islam its unique power and universality. This was because, in other forms of nationalism, one had to be born in Italy in order to become an Italian; in the case of Islam, no matter where a person was born, he or she could easily become a 'member' of the Islamic party by agreeing with its agenda and ideology. Western civilization was, from the beginning, dominated by nationalism, which restricted its appeal. Marxism, Maududi thought, was still aspiring to an ideal but had to yet to achieve it. Therefore, it was Islam alone that had the universal approach and agenda. This subsuming of nation, party, ideology and state naturally brought Maududi closer to the model of the Communist Party of Russia, the Fascists of Mussolini and the Nazis of Germany who, despite their limited numbers, were able to capture power because they were organized as a party.[42] Numbers did not matter for parties that had a powerful ideology and philosophy, concluded Maududi.

Such a conceptual understanding overrode the prevalent concepts about nation, nationalism and state and the various modes of politics articulated in India in the name of safeguarding Muslim interests. The term minority became largely irrelevant because, for Maududi, the census figures did not estimate the real strength of Islam or Muslims in India. It could only be properly gauged once Muslims had ceased to be ritualistic and become a live force and a practical movement. What mattered for Maududi was to have a dedicated, disciplined cadre ready to make sacrifices.[43] Eventually, Jama'at-i-Islami (JI) was to serve as the 'party' that was to provide such an anchor for ideologically trained and motivated cadres set to convert Islam into a pan-India movement and bring about the revolution of Islam.

In order to dispel the impression that he was seeking world domination of Muslims for material gains and imperialist aggrandizement, Maududi said he did not want *Musalmanon ki hakumat* (a government of Muslims) but *Islam ki hakumat* (an Islamic government).[44] The only distinction he tried to make

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[41] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 14 (3) (Rabi'-ul-Awwal 1358) [May 1939]: 9–10.
[42] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 14 (4) (Rabi'-ul-Sani 1358) [June 1939]: 8–9.
[43] Ibid., 13.
[44] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 14 (5) (Jamadi-ul-Awwal 1358) [July 1939]: 5.

between the two was to suggest that the latter would not in any way privilege only those who were born as Muslims. It promised to give equal respect and prestige to any non-Muslim who converted to Islam. But Maududi did not mince his words in declaring his aspiration for the domination of Islam. This was no different, he said, from a socialist driven by the dream for world revolution thinking that it would lead to the best possible solution for humanity.

Confrontation with the Muslim League

Prior to November 1939, Maududi had never really criticized the Muslim League. He considered it the lesser evil compared to Congress and the Marxists, who were wooing Muslims. Some members of the League insisted he supported their cause as he was a natural ally because of his ideas critiquing Indian nationalism and the looming threat of Hindu domination. But Maududi did not do so, because his idea of a party and the solution he proposed for Muslims were radically different from those espoused by the Muslim League. Still, he chose not to refer to the League directly in his criticism of its political agenda. On at least one occasion he came out in support of Muhammad Ali Jinnah when he was criticized by the pro-Congress Jam'iat 'Ulama-i-Hind for his European lifestyle. He said that no doubt Jinnah was irreligious and *firangi* but at least Jinnah believed in the idea of Muslim brotherhood. His opponents, on the other hand, were supporting those whose character and religion were both un-Islamic. They were, therefore, criticizing Jinnah out of sheer political opportunism rather than religious concerns.[45] But after the Muslim League passed a resolution in favour of British efforts in the Second World War, Maududi's condemnation was strong and direct. He thought an ideal opportunity to express and establish the superiority of Islamic principles had been lost. He wrote:

> But alas, from Muslim League's greatest leader [a pun on the use of the term *Quaid-i-Azam* for Muhammad Ali Jinnah] to its junior leaders, there is not

[45] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 11 (4) (Shawwal 1356) [December 1937]: 10–11. Maududi's overall critique of Jam'iat 'Ulama-i-Hind and its support for Congress was hard-hitting. But since it was thoroughly steeped in a strong theological position, Jami'at found it extremely difficult to counter his political arguments. According to Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, an important historian of Pakistan and known for his pro-Muslim League bias, Jam'iat decided in principle not to respond to JI. Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, *Ulema in Politics: A Study Relating to the Political Activities of the Ulema in South Asian Subcontinent from 1566–1947* (Karachi: Ma'aref, 1974), 352.

> a single individual whose mind and thought is Islamic, and who looks at affairs from an Islamic perspective. These people are unaware of the meanings of [the concept of] Muslim and its distinct position. In their eyes, Muslims too are a nation just like other nations, and they think that every possible political gimmick and useful political strategy which protects the interests of this nation is 'Islamic polity.' In actual fact, to call this ordinary mode of politics 'Islamic polity,' is no less than defamation for Islam.[46]

After airing these views, Maududi received letters criticizing him for his stance of opposing all existing Muslim groups. Even if they were not ideally Islamic, his critics said, they were making an effort. Maududi, in response, reiterated his stance on what it meant to be a Muslim. He wrote:

> If Islam is the name of a movement then its leader can only be a person who knows this movement well and sticks to it practically. If he does not have this quality, then no matter how qualified and wise, he cannot, nonetheless, be the leader of Islamic movement. And [look at] your leader of the nation [*qua'id-i-millat*], and the marshal of your troops [*amir-i-lashkar*]! About the first gentleman [Jinnah], the whole world knows that he does not even know the basics of Islam. As far as the second gentleman [Allama Mashriqi of Khaksar Tehrik] is concerned, his highest achievement and quality lies in the fact that he has deformed the basic principles of Islam and built a new building in the name of Islam.[47]

In the following month, without naming Jinnah and the Muslim League directly, Maududi challenged their religious credentials once again. Those who were leading the movement, he said, should be in the back row at the most. Putting them at the front was like putting the engine at the back of the cart.[48]

Maududi's harshest critique of the Muslim League started after March 1940. Capitalizing on Muslim anxieties and concerns about 'Hindu domination,' the Muslim League had responded by passing the famous Lahore resolution demanding sovereign Muslim states in the Muslim majority areas of the northwest and northeast. The resolution came at a strategic moment, as Muslims were becoming increasingly concerned and Maududi too was in the process of projecting himself as the leader of Indian Muslims. But this well-timed resolution deprived Maududi of this opportunity and catapulted Jinnah to the

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[46] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 15 (3) (Ramzan 1358) [November 1939]: 79.
[47] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 15 (4) (Shawwal 1358) [December 1939]: 11.
[48] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 15 (5) (Zil Qa'da 1358) [January 1940]: 9.

centre stage of Muslim politics as the most charismatic leader.[49] In other words, the Lahore resolution demanding Pakistan effectively stumped Maududi's ideological vision and political ambition. In comparison to the Muslim League's relatively well-established organizational machinery, Maududi had not even formally set up his own religio-political organization and, second, unlike the Muslim League's more realistic and practically possible solution to the 'Muslim question,' Maududi's proposed panacea was too utopian to create any confidence in his capacity to lead the Muslims at such a critical moment.

Frustrated by the initiative taken by the Muslim League and articulating an ideological position to which Maududi, too, had contributed significantly through his writings,[50] Maududi became a bitter critic of the Muslim League, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, his idea of Pakistan, and his credentials to be a leader of Muslims.

After the March resolution was passed, Maududi's first written comment was:

> As a Muslim, I am not interested in the issue that Muslim rule gets established in the Muslim majority areas of India. The question which is of foremost significance to me is whether in this 'Pakistan' the system of government will be based on the sovereignty of God or, as per the Western democratic principles, the sovereignty of the people? In the case of the former, it would certainly be Pakistan; otherwise, it will be '*Napak-istan*' [land of impure] just like the part of the country where, according to your scheme, non-Muslims will rule. In fact, in the eyes of God, it will be more impure and deserving of [God's] curse and wrath because those who call themselves Muslims will be doing something which non-Muslims do. If it makes me happy that instead of [some] Ramdas, an Abdullah will sit on God's throne, then it is simply nationalism, not Islam. And this 'Muslim nationalism' is as much worthy of condemnation in God's *shari'at* as 'Indian nationalism.'[51]

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[49] Abul Khair Maududi, brother of Maulana Maududi, recalled that Maududi never understood the reason for Jinnah's popularity. If instrumentalizing Islam for politics appealed to the Muslim masses, estimated Maududi, it should make him the most popular leader because of his more valid Islamic credentials. Nasr, *Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution,* 25.

[50] Maududi's political writings and critiques of Congress were hugely popular among the members, as well as the leaders, of the Muslim League. Copies of his collected articles, *Musalman aur Maujuda Siyasi Kashmakash*, were on some occasions purchased in bulk for widespread distribution. Nasr, *Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution,* 86.

[51] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 16 (3–4) (Rabi'-ul-Awwal and Rabi'-ul-Akhir 1359) [May–June 1940]: 11.

For him it was not important if India was to be divided into two or thousands of states. Replacing British imperialism with another false god of Western democracy was like replacing Lat with Manat, the names of two deities worshipped by the pagans of Mecca before the advent of Islam.[52] Maududi rhetorically asserted that all he aspired for was just one square mile where God's sovereignty alone would prevail. A single particle of this land, said Maududi, would be more precious than the entire landmass of India.[53]

That resources and numbers alone were not sufficient to establish an Islamic state was evident for Maududi from the proposed idea of Pakistan itself. Although it was going to be an overwhelmingly Muslim-majority state, it was not going to be an Islamic state because neither its leaders nor their mode of politics reflected the ideological and revolutionary spirit required for this purpose. In his harshest criticism, Maududi termed the Pakistan scheme '*Napak-istan*.' He was summarizing the prevalent trends among Muslims and the political parties with different agendas in the name of Islam and the welfare of the Muslim community. He wrote:

> ... these people want to reach Pakistan through *Napak-istan*. When asked about what they mean by Pakistan, they say according to us Pakistan is where there is sovereignty of Allah and where it is free of sovereignty of man. And then when they are asked as to why such purity and sanctity [*paki aur taharat*] is reserved for North West India and Bengal alone? What is the fault of rest of India that you do not want to make it into 'Pakistan'? They respond that in these areas Muslims are in a majority who already believe in the [idea of] sovereignty of Allah. Therefore, we will first establish Pakistan here and then call upon other areas of India towards this purity and sanctity.[54]

But the lack of numerical strength, argued Maududi, was no excuse for practising nation-based democratic politics (*qaumi jamhoriyyat*) rather than directly establishing *hakumat-i-ilahiyya* (divine rule). If 'Pakistan' too needed preparation for *hakumat-i-ilahiyya* just like rest of India, then why not prepare for an Islamic movement for the entire region, in fact for the entire world, rather than just focusing on Muslim-majority areas?[55] In other words, if Muslims could

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[52] Ibid., 12.

[53] Ibid., 12.

[54] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 17 (4–5) (Shawwal and Zil Qa'da 1359) [December 1940–January 1941]: 154–55.

[55] Ibid., 154–55.

be ideologically trained and Islam could be transformed into a revolutionary movement, Maududi ambitiously thought, the entirety of India, or the entire world, could be transformed into Pakistan. What was required for this purpose was an organization and a leader who could do this.

Towards the establishment of the Jama'at-i-Islami

By 1941, Maududi was moving towards the launch of his own party. The third volume of his collected essays on Muslims and the predicament of the ongoing political struggle was published in February–March 1941 and in it he summarized all his previous arguments and the reasons for his disagreement with the nationalist 'ulama and the Muslim League among others. In his arguments against the Muslim League, he criticized its strategy as well as its agenda. His main objection was that they organized Muslims along nationalist lines and called for the protection of the worldly rights of Muslims. By doing so, they maligned Islam, which had nothing to do with such a concept of nation or the rights demanded on its behalf. Islam, Maududi said, got a bad reputation in this Hindu–Muslim struggle and was targeted in the heat of politics. This made difficult any sincere effort by someone else to preach Islam or to reach out to non-Muslims.[56] Second, Maududi criticized the flawed organizational structure of the League, as their main criterion for membership was that the prospective member should be a Muslim. Maududi believed that in a situation where 99.9 percent Muslims were simply born into a Muslim family without any deep knowledge of Islam, it was futile to place the decisive power in their hands and expect positive results.[57] Third, the presumption that once a separate state was established it would be possible to transform itself into an Islamic state was spurious. This was because, argued Maududi, people's minds and thoughts had neither been transformed nor inculcated with the revolutionary fervour of Islam. Thus, what would be established was a '*kafir* government of Muslims. To call it *hukumt-i-ilahiyya* would be an insult to its sacred name.'[58]

Maududi concluded by summarizing his ideas about Islam and the need for an organization. He said that Islam was aimed at transforming the rotten system of life completely, which could only happen by following the strategy

[56] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 18 (1) (Muharram 1360) [March 1941]: 25–26.
[57] Ibid., 27.
[58] Ibid., 29.

adopted by the Prophets. Whatever had been done by Muslims in the past was not at all along these lines. It was for this reason that there was the need for a new 'Jama'at-i-Islami.'[59]

Not every Muslim was to become the member of this new, proposed Jama'at. Only those who completely understood the essence and philosophy of the *kalima* were to be included. In Charles J. Adams' words, the Jama'at was to give concrete realization to Maududi's idea of the *Salih Jama'at*, or virtuous community, as an answer to the Indian Muslim political dilemma.[60] They had to understand what it denied and what it affirmed. No distinction on the basis of a born Muslim and a new convert was to be made.[61] This was to be followed by a strict adherence to *shariat*, giving up un-Islamic practices, surrendering ill-acquired wealth and property, resigning from any legislative council, giving up honorary titles conferred by the British and abstaining from filing cases in non-Islamic courts.[62] This was to bring about a revolution in the character of these people in a number of ways. Based on their commitment to the agenda of the Jama'at, the willingness to make sacrifices and their level of dependence on the prevalent non-Islamic system, the Jama'at cadre was to be divided along three lines. The top layer was to be made up of those who committed their life and wealth to furthering the cause of the Jama'at and the lowest tier was to comprise of sympathizers of the Jama'at.

At the time this special issue was published, there was no Jama'at-i-Islami nor had Maududi made any explicit claim to establish any such organization. He had published these ideals before he printed a brief paragraph in April 1941 calling upon people to contact him if they agreed with the outline of the Jama'at-i-Islami developed in the previous issue.[63] In August 1941, at the residence of Maulana Zafar Iqbal in Lahore, 75 men who had responded to Maududi's call gathered. They all, following Maududi, stood up and recited the *kalima* to symbolize re-entering Islam and becoming part of the sacred community.[64] They then discussed matters relating to the organization and constitution of the new party.

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[59] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 18 (1): 83.

[60] Charles J. Adams, 'Mawdudi and the Islamic State,' in *Voices of Resurgent Islam*, ed. John L. Esposito. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 105.

[61] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 18 (1) (Muharram 1360) [March 1941]: 84.

[62] Ibid., 85.

[63] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an*, 18 (2) (Safar 1360) [April 1941]: 13.

[64] Nasr, *Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution*, 26.

Surprisingly, after the establishment of JI in 1941, Maududi did not write a detailed essay on political issues for quite some time. During this period, he and his followers, such as Manzur Numani, did, however, respond to individual queries, misperceptions and allegations. These largely comprised answering questions, such as whether becoming a member of JI was equal to being a Muslim or a pious Muslim and so on. Also, during this period, JI focused on organizational issues, setting up its own press and education system, while Maududi worked on his *tafsir* of the Qur'an.

As preparations were being made for fresh elections, Maududi received different queries about the demand for Pakistan and the religious permissibility of voting in favour of the Muslim League in these elections. Jama'at itself was not participating in the elections as it was busy raising a cadre of ideological workers, and it also did not believe in the Western model of democratic elections based on man's sovereignty over his own affairs. But for others these elections were of vital significance, as they were largely considered to determine the future of Muslims in India: whether they were going to live in India as Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind had been pleading and strive for their religious-cultural rights, or in a separate independent state where Muslims could develop themselves socially and economically.

One questioner asked whether the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan was similar to Jewish demands for a separate state in Palestine. The questioner said that Jews were accursed and condemned by God and it was not appropriate for Muslims to follow in their footsteps. Maududi did not accept this stance. He said the Jews had not been living in Palestine for 2000 years. It was as much their homeland as Central Asia was for the Aryans. The Muslim League was demanding Pakistan on the basis of being a distinct *qaum* living in India for centuries. His disagreement with the League, said Maududi, was that in doing so they were similar to other nations demanding political and economic rights.[65] About voting for the Muslim League in the crucial elections of 1946, the questioner, while agreeing with Maududi's criticism as outlined in his various essays, described the Muslim League as the lesser evil but, in the given circumstances, the only option to help preserve a distinct Muslim identity and establish their national government. Maududi said that regardless of the importance of these elections and their impact on the future status of Muslims, Jama'at-i-Islami, as an ideological party, could not forego its principled position.

[65] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 25 (1–4) (Rajab, Sha'ban, Ramzan, Shawwal 1363) [July–October 1944]: 104.

His objections was not about voting for the Muslim League per se, but the whole system of election and democracy, as it was based on the false system of people's sovereignty and would lead to the formation of an assembly that would partake of God's domain of divine laws.[66] But very cleverly, Maududi abstained from naming the Muslim League or preventing people from voting for it. He simply raised objections against the legitimacy of the entire electoral process.

In answers to questions put to him in December 1945, Maududi categorically stated that 'the membership of assemblies or parliament which are based on the present day principle of democracy is *haram* [forbidden]' and 'to vote for it is also *haram*.'[67] He said that there could not be any accommodation of this process on the pretext of the necessity of the situation as this situation had arisen out of Muslims' own negligence. In the same issue, responding to a different question, Maududi allowed for participation in the electoral process only if there were clear chances that it would result in a victory that could then be used to overhaul the system in accordance with divine principles. This depended on assured support in public opinion and participation in elections that had been convened for drafting the future constitutional arrangement.[68] In response to those who said that the legislature had sufficient powers to make any kind of laws, even those which could eventually transform it into an Islamic system, Maududi said that the pre-condition for joining the system amounted to rejecting the basic principle of Islam, and was hence forbidden. Changing the system from within, therefore, would not be possible, so it had to be changed and opposed from outside.[69]

Reiterating the lack of spirit and knowledge of Islam among the masses that would eventually form the voting power, even in independent Pakistan, Maududi was convinced that Pakistan 'would definitely be established on the principles of a democratic secular State where non-Muslims will have as much share in government as Muslims.'[70] Writing on the eve of the elections, Maududi repeated his stance that the Muslim League was a Muslim nationalist movement without the bearing of an actual Islamic movement. He sympathized with the sincerity of the 'ulama who had joined the Muslim

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[66] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 27 (3–4) (Ramzan and Shawwal 1364) [September-October 1945]: 93.

[67] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 28 (1) (Muharram 1365) [December 1945]: 52.

[68] Ibid., 55–56.

[69] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 28 (3) (Rabi'-ul-Awwal 1365) [February 1946]: 40.

[70] Ibid., 42–43.

League without realizing that the real power lay in the hands of those who believed in a secular mode of politics and state. Maududi said that their fate would not be dissimilar to those who, in the aftermath of the First World War, supported and believed in Kemal Mustafa Pasha.[71] Maududi could see visible excitement on the eve of elections. This was, in his estimate, because of the fear of Hindus that had temporarily created a stir in the ranks of Muslims and apparently assembled them under a banner. But he could not see it lasting for long as there was neither a defined agenda and organizational strength nor a committed leadership and cadre. That this movement was called Pakistan, said Maududi, did not mean that it was very definite. It was just a name given to it with very vague contours.[72] He was also upset about the enlistment of communists in the ranks of the Muslim League. He ended his response by saying that he did not want to criticize the League but was forced into doing so by its own proponents, who had provoked him.[73]

Maududi's responses to different queries on the eve of the crucial elections of 1945 show that the reasons for his opposition was not simply because the Muslim League was 'a party with no morals' or that it was a secular party as asserted by Nasr.[74] Similarly, it can be concluded from the discussion above that to say both the Muslim League and Jama'at-i-Islami were striving to secure communal rights for the Muslims and 'each legitimated the political function of the other in furthering their common communalist cause' is the exact opposite of what Maududi stood for.[75] Maududi's opposition was because of his overall critique of the idea of Western democracy, party system and electoral politics. Reading Maududian thought as a complete religio-political order without specificity of context can, therefore, lead to incorrect conclusions.

Maududi's only support for the Muslim League and Pakistan came when the scheme of Pakistan had formally been announced. When asked about the possibility of voting in favour of Pakistan in the referendum held in the North West Frontier Province, Maududi differentiated between a referendum and elections for a legislative assembly. He left it to the members of the Jama'at to make their decision about it, but added that if he had had a chance he would

[71] Ibid., 46–48.
[72] Ibid., 46.
[73] Ibid., 51.
[74] Nasr, *Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution*, 88 and 92.
[75] Ibid., 94.

have voted for Pakistan.[76] Voting for Pakistan in this case, he said, would not be the same as an endorsement of the system of government that was going to be established in Pakistan.

The failure of Jama'at-i-Islami to impress even a small section of the Muslim population and the overwhelming support shown for the Muslim League's agenda for Pakistan did not dampen Maududi's idealistic spirit. During most of 1947, Maududi wrote about the ongoing communal violence in the country. After it had become clear that a sizeable Muslim minority would be left behind in India, Maududi urged them to continue believing in the possibility of success for their mission. In his view, the chances of an Islamic revolution in Muslim-majority areas was almost as much a possibility as it was in the non-Muslim-majority areas of Hindustan.[77] Maududi regretted that if the Muslims had, instead of Indian nationalist Muslims and Muslim nationalists, shown the same energy and spirit elsewhere, 'today the map of Indian politics would have been totally different and instead of two little Pakistans, the possibility of converting entire Hindustan into Pakistan would have become apparent before their eyes.'[78] This is because, according to Maududi, the internal contradictions of Indian society, which had remained hidden during the freedom struggle, were going to become apparent, leading to a collapse. In this situation, the main contention to fill this vacuum was going to be between communism and Islam. In such an encounter, estimated Maududi, Muslims had a 60 percent chance of success.[79] He, therefore, urged the Muslims of India to remain spirited and not to leave the field open to the communists.

Jama'at-i-Islami post-1947

Due to the turmoil and violence in Punjab at the time of partition, Maududi's scholarly activities were affected for many months. He had to relocate from Pathankot to Lahore. The resumption of the publication of his journal was held up considerably as the government of West Punjab was delaying the issuance of a declaration. His criticism of the Muslim League, Jinnah and the idea of Pakistan continued for some time, even after the creation of Pakistan.

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[76] Seh Roza, *Kausar*, 5 July 1947, accessed 21 September 2016. Available at http://maududi.org/scan/?itemid=711&title.

[77] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 31 (1) (Rajab 1366) [June 1947]: 41.

[78] Ibid., 40.

[79] Ibid., 48.

The first issue, published in June 1948, carried a preamble of demands on the behalf of the people of Pakistan addressed to the constituent assembly of Pakistan. It said:

> Since the overwhelming majority of people of Pakistan believes in the principles of Islam and since the entire struggle and sacrifice of Muslims for the independence of Pakistan was only for the purpose that they be able to live their lives in accordance with the principles they believe in; therefore, now, after the establishment of Pakistan, every Pakistani Muslim demands from the Constituent Assembly to declare that: 1. The supreme power [*badshahat*] of Pakistan is for Allah alone and the status of government of Pakistan is nothing more than to fulfil the Commandment of its King in this country. 2. The main law of Pakistan is *shari'at*. 3. All those laws which are in contradiction with *shari'at* and have been in force, shall be abrogated and no law shall be implemented in future which is against *shari'at*. 4. The government of Pakistan shall exercise its authority within the limits set by *shari'at*.[80]

This list of demands had actually been taken from a speech Maududi had delivered in different cities of Pakistan in 1947. It was reprinted in June 1949 while Maududi was under house arrest. The reason for presenting these demands, said Maududi, was because an artificial revolution had taken place; had it been a real revolution then these demands would not have been necessary, as an Islamic state would automatically have been established. The chances of Pakistan becoming an Islamic state, added Maududi, were as high as those that it may become a secular state. This was because the people to whom the reins of power had been given were saying contradictory things. Without giving any names, Maududi made a clear reference to Muhammad Ali Jinnah's oft-quoted speech of 11 August 1947 during the inaugural session of the Constituent Assembly.[81] Maududi said: 'At times these people say that the achievement of Pakistan would be meaningless if an Islamic system of government is not

[80] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 31 (2) (Sha'ban 1367 [June 1948]).

[81] Jinnah had famously said in his speech: 'Now I think we should keep that in front of us as our ideal, and you will find that in course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus, and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense, because that is the personal faith of each individual, but in the political sense as citizens of the State.' Accessed 21 September 2016. Available at http:// www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00islamlinks/txt_jinnah_assembly_1947. html.

established here; at times they say that a secular [*la-dini*][82] democratic State will be established; at times they say that the rule of Qur'an shall be established; and at times they say that here, in the political sense, neither a Hindu would remain a Hindu nor a Muslim a Muslim, rather everyone will be just Pakistanis.'[83] But the Westernized lifestyle of the power elite was such that a toast was raised for the health of King George and the Quaid-i-Azam in a military gathering.[84] In the rest of the speech, Maududi outlined the basic features of the state, opposition to it from Muslims and non-Muslims for various reasons and his assurances and appeals to educated middle classes, labourers and religious scholars.

The first issue of *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* after independence makes an interesting read. It shows that Maududi was not willing to address the question of his opposition to the idea of Pakistan and the movement launched for it under the guidance of its irreligious leadership. He wanted to ignore it altogether and start afresh by arrogating to himself the task of converting Pakistan into an Islamic state. Interestingly, the new state was, at least in the very beginning, willing to benefit from Maududi's advice. The first issue carries the content of speeches he had delivered on Radio Pakistan in which he had outlined the features of an Islamic state and the ways of transforming Pakistan into an Islamic state. At the same time, it carried Maududi's critical responses to two questions. The first was about the oath of loyalty to the state of Pakistan demanded from government servants. Maududi left it to the government servants to decide whether their conscience allowed them to take such an oath.[85] For Maududi, this demand for an oath was problematic because the new state was still functioning on the basis of the Government of India Act 1935. Before such an oath could be taken from government servants, insisted Maududi, the state itself needed to take an oath of loyalty to God and obedience to its Prophet.[86] Until and unless the constituent assembly had debated and legislated on the future polity of Pakistan, such an oath could not be taken. But Maududi was reluctant to advise his followers to give up jobs and resist taking the oath. He said that whosoever had recommended such a thing had made an error of judgment.

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[82] In religious literature, it is an established practice to translate secularism as *la-diniyyat*. This means that rather than describing it as a religiously neutral state, a secular state is described in religious literature as irreligious or anti-religious state.

[83] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 32 (1–2) (Rajab and Sha'ban 1368 [June 1949]): 20.

[84] Ibid., 21.

[85] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 31 (2) (Sha'ban 1367 [June 1948]): 60.

[86] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 31 (2) (Sha'ban 1367 [June 1948]): 61.

An oath of loyalty to Pakistan and a commitment to work diligently and with honesty would have been more appropriate.

The second question concerned Maududi's opinion on Pakistan's ongoing military conflict with India in Kashmir which, according to him, was not a *jihad*. *Jihad* required, opined Maududi, Pakistan cutting off diplomatic ties with India and making an open declaration of war.[87] Such critical views at a time when Pakistan was faced with an existential threat, by a person who was opposed to the creation of Pakistan in the first place, were obviously not looked upon favourably by the new state.

In fact, rather than admitting that he was on the wrong side of history, Maududi continued with his critique of the idea of Pakistan even after its creation. In an editorial for July 1948, he recounted the history of Nehru's Muslim mass contact campaign and the challenges faced by Muslims. Maududi said that the majority of Muslims chose to rally around the banner of Muslim nationalism, opted for Western models for the political struggle and included all those amid their ranks who were simply born Muslims.[88] Also, he repeated his criticism that from top to bottom, the League was comprised of leaders who had little knowledge of Islam let alone a reputation for practising it. Since the aim was to compete with the Hindus, it was considered acceptable to stoop to the lowest levels or adopt questionable ethical/moral means of achieving political ends. This, he said, 'is the ethical and religious background of our incredible national movement.'[89] They could not see that the logical conclusion of their demands was to create a Poland/Czechoslovakia-like state on the border of the Soviet Union, dump a large number of Muslims under Hindu hegemony in India, and leave a gap of a 1000 miles of hostile territory between the two units of the country, rendering it impossible for them to cooperate with each other in times of war or peace.[90] Worst, no preparations were made in anticipation of a backlash from the Hindus, which resulted in large-scale destruction. Since Muslims were lacking in Islamic spirit, it resulted in such things as people exploiting Muhajirs while the Muslims of East Punjab 'shamelessly' surrendered their areas simply on the basis of verbal threats.[91] He then blamed them for incompetence and a lack of vision in dealing with such issues as demarcation

[87] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 31 (2) (Sha'ban 1367 [June 1948]): 63.
[88] Ibid., 5.
[89] Ibid., 7.
[90] Ibid., 7–8.
[91] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 31 (3) (Ramzan 1367 [July 1948]): 10.

of boundaries and so on. The concluding paragraph raised questions about the ability of those who had been leading Muslims for the last decade and were blamed by him for having brought about this situation. Whatever had been achieved could not be undone and did not need to be debated, but whatever they had done, could they still be trusted to tackle the challenges faced by the Muslims, asked Maududi?[92] This clearly shows that Maududi still fancied himself as the leader of the Muslims of South Asia. But all his efforts towards this end came to a halt as he was put under house arrest by the government of West Punjab under the Public Safety Act, and the declaration for *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* was suspended.

Making peace with Pakistan

It did not take long for Maududi to realize the limitations of his actions in the new state which had acted sharply and aggressively to put him in his place. As a result, Maududi was left with no option other than to either stand his ground defiantly or concede to statist pressure and use the breathing space it would afford him to carry on with his mission. He chose the latter option, albeit reluctantly. On Jinnah's death in September 1948, Maududi wrote a brief obituary in carefully chosen words, making sure not to eulogize him in glorifying language. He called the death of 'Mister Muhammad Ali Jinnah' a tragedy, as it was his personality which, for the last twelve years, had led Muslims as a unified nation and resulted in the creation of Pakistan. He alone could have served as an individual who united all and was loved and respected by everyone.[93] Maududi's party, Jama'at-i-Islami, on the other hand was more eager to project itself as loyal to the state and conciliate with it. But this happened gradually.

In the proceedings of Jama'at-i-Islami's main consultative body, it was considered necessary to dispel propaganda against Jama'at-i-Islami. It expressed its hope that the future constitution of Pakistan would be along Islamic lines. But if not, it said, then 'we will not at all be willing to be loyal towards it and, in fact, consider it as much of a *taghuti* state (rebellious of God's commandments) as the former British government was.'[94] It, however, added that it did not mean Jama'at-i-Islami would resort to violence or anarchy. It promised to carry out its activities to change the system within the remit of the law and the constitution.

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[92] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 31 (3) (Ramzan 1367 [July 1948]): 12.
[93] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 31 (5) (Zil Qa'da 1367 [September 1948]): 2–3.
[94] Ibid., 61–2.

The issue of September 1949 gave an account of Maududi's activities from 1947 onwards. It said that Maududi had been going to different cities and colleges giving lectures about an Islamic state and its establishment in Pakistan. It was his popularity and the ready audience he received which alarmed the power elite. Without naming him, it referred to Jinnah's 11 August speech as a clear digression from the promises made to Muslims. It quoted Jinnah (without naming him) as saying that 'Pakistan will be a *la-dini* (secular) democratic State' in which Hindu would cease to be Hindu, not in a religious sense but in a political sense.[95] On the serious charge of Maududi's comments about Kashmir and recruitment in the military, the journal claimed Maududi's comments had been made in a private meeting and were explicitly told not to be used for wider circulation. Maududi had given a detailed clarification about Pakistan's right over Kashmir which was not carried by newspapers. A more serious allegation was that in a private conversation Maududi had asked people to recruit themselves to the Home Guards rather than National Guards, which were part of the military. They could still take military training as a Home Guard, Maududi had argued, and cooperate with the military if the country was attacked. The rationale was that until and unless the shape of the future constitution was clear, it would be difficult for the Jama'at-i-Islami to encourage or discourage people from being recruited to the military.[96] The same response was given in correspondence to a question sent to the Jama'at-i-Islami. It was published in the newspaper and used for propaganda purposes. The same was the case with the oath of loyalty, which was actually dropped, it said, when Maududi convinced the chief minister of West Punjab and interior minister of Pakistan to do so.[97] The essay said that the government had planned to declare Pakistan as a secular state two months after Maududi's arrest. But they had underestimated the strength of Jama'at-i-Islami, which launched a massive campaign, and ultimately the government had to yield by passing the Objectives Resolution in March 1949. This resolution, bearing close resemblance to the demands made in the first issue of *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* after the creation of Pakistan, expressed faith in the concept of the sovereignty of Allah and resolved to frame the future constitution of Pakistan based on Islamic teachings. In April 1949, Jama'at-i-Islami issued a statement saying that since the constituent assembly had set itself the task of transforming Pakistan into an Islamic state, it was now permissible for Muslims to serve in all government

[95] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 32 (4) (Shawwal 1368 [September 1949]): 39.
[96] Ibid., 51.
[97] Ibid., 54.

jobs, contest court cases and participate in elections.[98] Maududi himself tried for closure by his editorial in June 1951. With the passage of the Objectives Resolution, he said, the situation had changed. He gave the example of a person who himself admits to being a non-Muslim, no matter what anyone else thinks of him, and is thus ineligible to be appointed as an Imam or to be married to a Muslim girl. Similarly, until and unless a state's 'constitutional language does not affirm faith in Islam' it cannot be declared as an Islamic state even if its entire population and government machinery is run by Muslims.[99] With this affirmation in Islam by the State of Pakistan, Maududi believed it had become binding for every Muslim to contribute towards its strength and development.

While Maududi and Jama'at-i-Islami's loyalty to Pakistan, from that point, was not much of a concern, their relation with the state remained problematic for another two decades. From time to time, the Jama'at-i-Islami made an effort to project itself as a contributor to the idea of Pakistan and a defender of its ideology.[100] But on various political issues, it remained at loggerheads with successive governments. In 1953, Maududi was sentenced to death for taking part in the agitation movement demanding the declaration of Ahmadis as non-Muslims. The sentence was later revoked. During the 1960s, the Jama'at-i-Islami remained under considerable pressure from the military regime of Ayub Khan, which had its own agenda of instrumentalizing a modernist idea of Islam for the national development of Pakistan.[101] It was eventually with the ascendancy of General Zia-ul-Haq and his quest for allies who could support his agenda of Islamization that Jama'at-i-Islami was actually co-opted into power circles. It was a remarkable shift for the Jama'at-i-Islami which, after decades of being treated with suspicion, became an influential player in power circles. This important position of Jama'at-i-Islami in the power arena of Pakistan has, with changing fortunes, continued to exist even today.

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[98] Ibid., 55.

[99] *Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an* 36 (2) (Sha'ban 1370 [June 1951]): 3.

[100] In order to prove its loyalty towards Pakistan and its ideology, a special issue of *Chiragh-i-Rah,* a subsidiary publication of Jama'at-i-Islami for publishing 'Islamic literature' and other intellectual themes, was published in 1960. The issue evaded the question of Maududi's opposition to the Muslim League, Jinnah and Pakistan. *Chiragh-i-Rah (Nazariya-i-Pakistan Number)* 12 (14) (Karachi, December 1960).

[101] Cf. Ali Usman Qasmi's 'God's Kingdom on Earth?: The Politics of Islam in Pakistan, 1947–69,' *Modern Asian Studies* 44, no.6 (June 2010): 1197–1253. It gives details of Ayub Khan's modernist vision and his project of 'The Fundamental Conflict' aimed specifically at countering the ideological threat posed by Jama'at-i-Islami.

Concluding remarks

Maududi's life and ideas show a remarkable failure and yet fascinating resilience and will-power. He failed in his mission to become the undisputed leader of Muslims, failed to raise the coveted cadre of committed Muslims and failed to bring about an Islamic revolution in Pakistan, let alone the entire world. Yet, he remained committed to his vision and its practicality. He faced desertions in the ranks of Jama'at-i-Islami from the very beginning as, one by one, all leading Muslim scholars left the party. This includes such stalwarts in their own right as Abul Hasan Ali Nadawi, Maulana Manzur Numani and Maulana Amin Ahsan Islahi.[102] His party lost every election miserably, from when it joined electoral politics in the 1950s till the last election fought under Maududi's leadership in 1970. But this never dampened Maududi's spirits nor made him revisit possible shortcomings in his ideas. For him the impossibility of Pakistan becoming an Islamic state was a result of its leader having hardly any knowledge of Islam and its being based on the very Western political thought critiqued by Maududi. He did not oppose Jinnah, the Muslim League, and the demand for Pakistan because he was pro-Congress or stood for composite Indian nationalism, but because the idea of Muslim nationalism, as encapsulated in the two-nation theory and articulated politically in the form of the demand for a separate sovereign state, did not correspond with Maududi's critique of the nation, state and democracy, and the conceptual Islamic alternatives he developed. It is this understanding of Maududi's opposition to Pakistan on intellectual grounds and its nuanced reading that this essay has contributed to.

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Tarjuman-ul-Qur'an (1933-51).

5

Advising the Army of Allah
Ashraf Ali Thanawi's Critique of the Muslim League

Megan Eaton Robb

In the late 1930s, Ashraf Ali Thanawi (1863-1943), the pre-eminent Deobandi Sufi-scholar known as an authority and prolific author of texts on Muslim scholarship and behaviour,[1] wrote letters to leaders of the Muslim League in the United Provinces and at the national level, offering his guidance on transforming the Muslim League into *lashkar-i Allah* or an army of Allah. While the Congress Party's success in the 1937 elections had made a clear case for the limits of provincialism, Muhammad Ali Jinnah's claim to be spokesman for India's Muslims at that point remained unfulfilled. Following the elections, alongside top-level political manoeuvring, the League became increasingly concerned with the challenge of appealing to the common Muslim, who until that point had taken little interest in the League.[2] In this context,

[1] For most South Asian Muslims, Thanawi needs little introduction. An intellectual giant, the most prominent South Asian Sufi of the twentieth century, Thanawi was the disciple of Haji Imdadullah, tracing his spiritual lineage to the great reformer Shah Wali Ullah. Thanawi was educated at Deoband, developing a strong relationship with one of the madrasa's founders Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (d. 1905). After the completion of his studies he travelled to Mecca and Madinah to embark on extended study, during which time he took the oath of allegiance to Haji Imdadullah. On his return to India he taught at the Faiz-e Aam Madrasa in Kanpur until 1897. At that time, he shifted to the *qasbah* Thana Bhawan, where his *pir* or master Haji Imdadullah had put down his roots. Thana Bhawan remained his home until his death in 1943. At Thana Bhawan Thanawi dedicated himself to mentorship, correspondence and publication; he granted audiences to both the learned and the ignorant. His published works remain among the foremost authorities on Islam; their popularity spread far beyond South Asia, and they continue to offer practical advice as well as incisive scholarly commentaries on all matters governing Muslims' behaviour. See: Muhammad Qasim Zaman, *Ashraf Ali Thanawi: Islam in Modern South Asia* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2008), 82-84.

[2] Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League, and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 42.

the League accepted the support of Sufis and scholars who were leaders in the Muslim community, in a volte-face from its previous denigration of 'traditional' sources of authority. This attempt to enlist support, itself marked by deep ambivalence, took the form of diplomatic missions, conducted through visits and letters. Thanawi was distinctive not only in his prominence, but also in his decision to offer his counsel unsolicited. Through letters and speeches given to national meetings of the League by his students, Thanawi attempted to secure guarantees from the leaders of the League that its claim to represent Muslims would be built on foundations that were key to Muslims' self-interests, those interests defined by the 'ulama. While these attempts were unsuccessful, the vision of a Muslim centre offered by Thanawi and his followers and the inability of that vision to influence or provide an alternative to the League model, add important nuance to the political movement that led to the founding of Pakistan. Thanawi's imaginary offers evidence of an alternate conception of the state, accompanied by the authority of 'ulama as partners in nation-building and demonstrates the division between Thanawi's exhortations to the League and its aversion to his advice.

Barbara Metcalf and Mushirul Hasan have established Thanawi as a member of the religious leadership that ultimately supported the Muslim League as an attempt 'to establish the 'ulama as advisers, even partners, to a ruling class'[3] and as an illustrative example of the League's shift to enrol the support of previously apolitical 'ulama to bolster their credibility.[4] Ashraf Ali Thanawi's attitude toward the Muslim League shifted over time, between the 1920s and 1940s, just as the League's attitude had shifted toward him. Scholarship has given less attention to this change, variously emphasizing Thanawi's membership in the so-called 'apolitical' camp of 'ulama during the Khilafat Movement,[5] or highlighting his leadership among the group of scholars who expressed support for the League in the late 1930s and 1940s.[6]

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[3] Barbara D. Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860–1900* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 14.

[4] Mushirul Hasan, *Legacy of a Divided Nation: India's Muslims Since Independence* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002), 92–93.

[5] Zaman, *Ashraf Ali Thanawi*, 21.

[6] Mushirul Hasan, *Legacy of a Divided Nation*, 92–93; Hafeez Malik, *Moslem Nationalism in India and Pakistan* (Washington DC: Public Affairs Press, 1963), 326. Malik presents Thanawi as a figure 'whose followers supported the Pakistan national movement,' reporting that some of his followers had outlandishly claimed that Thanawi had

This chapter relies on discursive analysis of primary sources to demonstrate the models of spiritual authority that Thanawi applied to his guidance of the League leaders, and the distance between those models and League policies. The primary sources consulted include: Thanawi's correspondence with the Muslim League as preserved in Urdu biographies, the pro-Muslim League newspaper *Asar-i Jadid* (The Modern Time), the Jinnah papers and the memoir of Thanawi's protégé Abdul Majid Daryabadi.

Thanawi from the Khilafat Movement to the Pakistan Movement

Thanawi's scholarship was a source of inspiration and advice on how to live correctly. His work is cited in references to Islamic legal interpretation, as signifying the shift after 1875 from a period of *ijtihad* to one of *taqlid*, following a scholar's interpretation.[7] As a Deoband Sufi, in contrast to a Sufi of the Barelwi tradition, he affirmed Sufi practices only insofar as they cohered with shari'a law as defined by the Hanafi school.[8] His treatises defended the rational basis for Muslim religious law.[9] In the popular and even artistic imagination, his influence has persisted most prominently in the popularity of *Bihishti Zeiwar* or *Heavenly Ornaments*, a reformist text discussing the reform of women's behaviour that remains a popular gift for young women and brides.[10] His political vision was characterized by an aversion to Hindu leadership and

originated the plan for an independent Muslim homeland, with the League only adopting the approach later. Footnote 109.

[7] *Ijtihad* indicates independent interpretation of legal sources, while *taqlid*, literally translated as 'to follow,' indicates adhering to the interpretation of a *mujtahid* or Islamic scholar trained in interpreting *shari'a*. Ashraf Ali Thanawi, *Al-Iqitisad fi al-Taqlid was al-Ijtihad* (Original in Urdu, 1912). Cited in: L. Ali Khan and Hisham M. Ramadan, *Contemporary Ijtihad: Limits and Controversies* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 39.

[8] Frederick De Jong and Bernd Radtke, *Mysticism Contested: Thirteen Centuries of Controversies and Polemics* (Brill: Boston, 1999), 402, 412.

[9] Ashraf Ali Thanawi, *al-Masalih al-'aqliyya li-l-ahkam al-naqliyya* (Rational Grounds for the Traditional Laws); and *al-Intihabat al-mufidali ishkalat al-jadida* (Useful Notes on Modern Problems). Cited in: Muhammad Khalid Masud, 'Islamic Modernism,' in *Islam and Modernity: Key Issues and Debates*, eds. Muhammad Khalid Masud, Arnando Salvatore and Martin van Bruinessen (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 45.

[10] See the discussion of an artist developing modernist art inspired by *Bihishti Zeiwar*: Iftikhar Dadi, *Modernism and the Art of Muslim South Asia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 45, 205.

a pragmatic opposition to Muslim separatist politics until the late 1930s. Thanawi had demurred from involvement in the Khilafat movement, a movement in India pressuring the British government not to break apart the Ottoman Empire, based on his suspicion of a Hindu-led Congress. He also later sent a deputation of 'ulama in 1939 to a League conference asserting the inter-connectedness of religion and politics, as part of his argument for preserving the authority of 'ulama in any proposed Muslim state.[11] The Muslim League interpreted this statement as one of support for their cause; the speech even appeared in the pro-League newspaper *Asar-i Jadid*, to Thanawi's dismay. Thanawi's interaction with and response to the League demonstrated a mismatch of expectations regarding the nature of the relationship. Thanawi sent Zafar Ahmed Usmani in a delegation to the Patna meeting of the Muslim League, as part of a deputation that read aloud a speech on his behalf.[12] Thanawi did not seek to bestow a political endorsement with this deputation, but instead sought to hold his future support hostage against the fulfilment of a series of conditions. His demands showed not only ambivalence regarding the Muslim League's ability to adequately represent the interests of Muslims, but also demonstrated a misunderstanding of how the League would use its affiliation with scholarly voices.

Jinnah courting Thanawi: Muslim League attitudes towards Thanawi

Jinnah congratulated himself on counteracting the influence of the 'ulama in 1938. By 1939, however, he stated that religion and politics were intrinsically connected, demonstrating beliefs aligned with Ashraf Ali Thanawi in the process.[13] This shift on the part of Jinnah was a reflection of a consistent concern with unity, and a pragmatic approach to which causes would protect the Muslim community most effectively.[14] The League vilified those 'ulama who favoured Congress in the early 1940s.[15] Thanawi's name was consistently

[11] Abdur Rahman, *Maimaran-i Pakistan* (Architects of Pakistan), (Lahore, 1976). Cited in Mushirul Hasan, *Legacy of a Divided Nation*, 92.

[12] Ahmad Said, *Maulana Ashraf 'Ali Sahib Thanawi awr tahrik-i azadi* (Rawalpindi: Khalid Nadim Publications, 1972), 135-36.

[13] Rahman, *Maimaran-i Pakistan*, 92.

[14] Printed Material, box no. 1, FMA; English translation box 56, FMA; cited in Hasan, *Legacy of a Divided Nation*, 92.

[15] Hasan, *Legacy of a Divided Nation*, 94.

included at the head of the lists of 'ulama brought into the Muslim League camp at the eleventh hour.[16] Nevertheless, arguments that Thanawi would have favoured the form that Pakistan took when it emerged are unconvincing and evidence derived from Thanawi himself for this assertion is scarce. Sources documenting correspondence between Thanawi and the League, taking into account his correspondence with modernist Muslims who had been educated in Western models, affirm both the existence of a common conversation among modernists and scholars, and simultaneously suggest a disconnect between the approaches of Thanawi and the Muslim League.

Modernist Muslims sought guidance from Thanawi while simultaneously accommodating Western epistemologies. These lines of communication offered opportunities for cross-pollination regarding the relationship between religion and political identity. The following section assumes that Abdul Majid Daryabadi was an epitome of the modernist Muslim seeking guidance from a Sufi. The relationship was characterized by regular, open communication and collaborative approaches to spiritual projects. Thanawi may have sought unsuccessfully to establish a similar relationship with the leaders of the League, including Jinnah. This type of relationship was not mirrored, however, in the relationship between the Muslim League leadership and Thanawi. Instead, the Muslim League's response was characterized more by a mismatch of expectations than it was by the acceptance of Thanawi's authority.

Thanawi and the League

Thanawi gradually came to believe that the Muslim League was the more necessary of the imperfect options available for Muslims who were seeking a political centre.[17] As an expression of *farz-i kifaya*, or communal obligation, Thanawi not only remained available to advise politicians, but when they failed to contact him with requests for advice he initiated contact.[18] In the late 1930s he sent letters to individual Muslim League leaders and deputations of the League while avoiding direct involvement in political meetings. Although Thanawi took the unusual step of initiating communication without invitation from the League, Thanawi's initiation of a relationship with League leaders

[16] Hasan, *Legacy of a Divided Nation*, 58, 94-96; Zaman, *Ashraf Ali Thanawi*, 48.

[17] Zaman, *Ashraf Ali Thanawi*, 50-51.

[18] Venkat Dhulipala, *Creating a New Medina* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 114.

mirrored in some ways his early conversations with Abdul Majid Daryabadi. The conversation began with Thanawi clarifying the conditions under which he would continue his relationship with the League, asserting his own authority in the process. Correspondence, personal audiences and collaboration were paramount in importance. While correspondence occurred between Thanawi and Muslim League leaders, most notably Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Nawab Mohammad Ismail Khan, a reliable record of only one example of direct correspondence between Jinnah and Thanawi can be found. More importantly, the series of conditions that Thanawi laid out to League leaders in his message to the 1938 deputation remained unfulfilled as the vision of Pakistan came into focus. Thanawi's relationship with the League failed to flower according to Thanawi's established model, and the League only partially accommodated his advice for the League's transformation into *lashkar-i Allah* or army of Allah. Ultimately, Thanawi's attitude toward plans for a Muslim centre that emerged under the helm of the League remain characterized by ambivalence.

The relationship between the 'ulama and politics had been transformed in the early decades of the twentieth century. World War I and the inter-war years were characterized by the 'ulama's growing involvement in political life, in both the Congress and the Muslim League. The Lucknow Conference of 1918 demonstrated the burgeoning political awareness of the 'ulama, and their corresponding influence on the Khilafat movement.[19] The young party of the Muslim League needed the sanctioning power of the 'ulama, and the 'ulama needed to continue to assert their authority over Indian Muslims.[20]

Ashraf Ali Thanawi of course had opposed the Muslim League's involvement with the Khilafat Movement. Thanawi's opposition derived in part from his suspicion of the Congress Party and, by extension, Hindus and Gandhi. Thanawi saw the failure of the Khilafat movement as confirming that any political movement not grounded in the principles of Islam as interpreted by the 'ulama was doomed.[21] As the 1920s wound on, Thanawi interpreted the Congress Party's emphasis on Hindu symbols and the unifying influence of the Hindi language as further confirmation of Congress's bias against Muslim interests.[22]

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[19] Francis Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims: the Politics of the United Provinces* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 289-292.

[20] Ibid., 292.

[21] Zaman, *Ashraf Ali Thanawi*, 50-51.

[22] William Gould, *Hindu Nationalism and the Language of Politics in Late Colonial India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 38, 268.

Prior to the 1937 elections, the Muslims of Jhansi had been anxious to know Thanawi's attitude toward the contest, and asked him if they had permission to vote for the Muslim League. He responded: 'The Muslim League is an association of big people and zamindars. I do not know whether under this organization, if they become dominant, the Islamic system will prevail or not. Although I hold that the Muslim League is better than the Congress, but even so I have my suspicions.'[23] Upon Zafar Ahmed Usmani's suggestion, Thanawi told people not to vote for Congress, rather than telling people to vote for the Muslim League. In this way Thanawi's conscience was clear that he had done his duty at least in guiding Muslims away from an organization that he was sure would not serve their interests. Although generally the 1937 elections were a great disappointment for the League, in Jhansi the League was successful. Thanawi allowed Zafar Ahmed Usmani to hold a gathering to celebrate at Thana Bhawan, on 1 April 1938, and commanded Usmani to give a speech on his behalf: 'In my heart I am with you, and I am in agreement with the good purposes of the Muslim League and I am praying for the progress (*tarqi*) and wellness (*behebud*) of it.'[24] The tone of this speech is complimentary to the League, while indicating the League's need for further progress in its attempt to represent Muslims centrally.

Thanawi had acknowledged in the 1930s the need for a centre, or *markaz*, for Muslims, the primary function of which would be the protection of Muslims; at the same time he remained sceptical of the League's ability to form this centre.[25] Thanawi's acknowledgement occurred in the context of vigorous discussion on the same subject both within the United Provinces (UP) Muslim League and in the public sphere more widely, recently documented by Venkat Dhulipala.[26] After years of resisting affiliation with any political group, following the 1937 elections Thanawi determined to correspond with League leaders regarding the involvement of the 'ulama. He first sent a letter to the President of the UP Muslim League, Nawab Mohammad Ismail Khan, asking

[23] Said, *Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib Thanawi awr tahrik-i azadi*, 134-35.

[24] ibid., 128.

[25] It is unclear the extent to which Thanawi envisioned this centre as necessarily political. Instead, he seemed to envision the Muslim League as a political aspect of a larger reform movement that saw South Asia Muslims emphasise their distinctive minority status. Thanawi, *al-Idafat al-yawmiyya min al-ifadat al-qawmiya*, 83, 87, 91-92 [#116]. Cited in: Zaman, *Ashraf Ali Thanawi*, 49.

[26] Dhulipala, *Creating a New Medina*, 194-278.

questions regarding, among other things, the place of the 'ulama within the Muslim League.[27] Thanawi received an assurance that the status of the 'ulama would remain high in proportion to the value that they held in Muslim society generally.[28] Interpreting this response as an invitation to provide scholarly advice, Thanawi responded, 'it made me very happy that, thanks be to Allah, you also feel the importance of the involvement of the 'ulama.'[29] Thanawi was not corresponding directly with Muhammad 'Ali Jinnah at this point, of course, following the channel of command by first courteously writing to the provincial representative of the League. He showed eagerness for the 'ulama to be involved in the development of a political centre for Muslims, presenting his proposal as a '*mashvarah*' or suggestion. The message that his deputation read out loud to the League indicated four clear conditions to his approval of the League's development.

Thanawi later wrote separately to Jinnah in 1938, perhaps encouraged by the response of Nawab Mohammad Ismail Khan, offering his prayers for the leader's success in representing Muslims and asking the leader's permission to send advice regarding any matter that emerged.[30] This letter was written at a time when the Muslim League and Congress were at an impasse, following the tumultuous elections of 1937. In the late 1930s, Jinnah and Nehru embarked on a chain of correspondence exploring a reconciliation that never solidified.[31] During this period, hearing about these efforts, Thanawi wrote a letter to Jinnah, concerned that any reconciliation

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[27] Zaman, *Ashraf Ali Thanawi*, 51.

[28] Abdurrahman Khan, vol. 2 of *Sirat-i Ashraf* (Lahore: Shaykh Academy, 1977-79), 258-71. Cited in: Zaman, *Ashraf Ali Thanawi*, 51.

[29] For the full response to Nawab Mohammad Ismail Khan, see: Ahmad Said, *Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib Thanawi awr tahrik-i azadi*, 131.

[30] Mohammad Shafi, *Majalis-e-Hakimul Ummat* (Karachi: n.p., 1974), 287. This letter has been frequently invoked as evidence of Thanawi's affection for Jinnah, and by extension his support for the foundation of Pakistan. See for example two recent newspaper articles published in *Jang*: Safdar Mahmood, 'Quaid-i Azam and Ashraf Ali Thanawi,' *Jang*, 22 February 2012, http://jang.com.pk/jang/feb2012-daily/22-02-2012/col2.htm, Accessed 1 December 2015 (link has since expired); and Haroon ur Rasheed, 'Paivastah rah shajar se, umid bahar rukh,' *Jang*, 14 February 2012, http://jang.com.pk/jang/feb2012-daily/14-02-2012/col2.htm, Accessed 1 December 2015 (link has since expired).

[31] Rajendra Prasad Dube, *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Study in Ideology and Social Change* (New Delhi: Mittal Publications, 1988), 119; Nehru-Jinnah Correspondence, published by the General Secretary, AICC, Allahabad, 1938.

should accommodate the concerns of the 'ulama. He offered this warning: 'until you show the peace-creating bill [*masudah salah*] to 'ulama experts and take on the suggestions of 'ulama experts you will not have the right to reconcile with them [Congress] on religious issues.'[32] The message made the credibility of any rapprochement with the Congress contingent on the League's consultation with scholarly experts, most notably Thanawi. Jinnah wrote a diplomatic yet evasive response in English, which Mohammad Shafi translated into Urdu for his biography of Thanawi:

> I had the opportunity to speak with Maulana Mazaruddin Naiz Nawabzadah Liyaqat 'Ali Sahab and I was very happy to know that you are fully sympathetic with the aim and programme of the All-India Muslim League. I received your letter, but because of several existent responsibilities and periods of absence from Bombay, I was not able to give a response before now. I have written down carefully the suggestions that had been presented before me and I assure you that in connection with those matters I will take suggestions from you when the time comes.[33]

In his response, Jinnah re-framed Thanawi's initial letter as an expression of support for the League and its aims. While Jinnah reassured Thanawi that he would take suggestions from the 'ulama regarding any possible reconciliation with the Congress, that agreement failed to materialize. Here ends the record of direct correspondence between Jinnah and Thanawi.

Nevertheless, possibly encouraged by this response, Thanawi sent a seven-page missive to the 6 June 1938 meeting of the All-India Muslim League in Patna, along with a four-person deputation, including Maulana Shabbir Ahmed Usmani, Maulana Shabbir Ali Thanawi and Maulana Abd al-Karim Gathalawi. His student, Maulana Zafar Ahmed Usmani, read aloud the message, in which Thanawi laid out a series of conditions for the League's ability to represent Muslims.[34] In his speech he first commended the Muslim

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[32] Mohammad Shafi, *Majalis-e-Hakimul Ummat*, 287; Ahmed Saeed, 'Quaid-e-Azam and Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanvi,' M. A. Jinnah Blogspot, May 2010 http://m-a-jinnah.blogspot.co.uk/2010/05/quaid-e-azam-maulana-ashraf-ali-thanvi.html, accessed 21 September 2016.

[33] This is the author's translation of Shafi's Urdu translation of the letter. Mohammad Shafi, *Majalis-e-Hakimul Ummat*, 287.

[34] Included as an Appendix to this chapter is a translation of the reported speech of Thanawi to the Patna Assembly of the Muslim League in June 1938.

League leadership for taking the necessary step for the correct representation of Muslims, by founding a group that advocated a separate political organization for Muslims. While in his letter Thanawi agreed that the first step, a separate organization, had been a positive one, he doubted that the decision had been motivated by the Prophet's inspiration, or by the Holy Qur'an.[35] Therefore, he had cause for concern that the League might not be equipped to consolidate those gains by foregrounding scholarly authority, which in his view was the only way to represent Muslims correctly in a political forum. He then laid out the conditions that the League would have to fulfil in order to become an Army (*lashkar-i Allah*). First, all Muslims should acknowledge belief in Allah. Second, he advised that all members of the Muslim League should stay free from Westernizing influences, Hindu influences and worldliness.[36] Third, all members of the League should distinguish themselves from non-Muslims in their appearance and behaviour, by growing a beard to indicate unity in Islam and their admiration of the Prophet. Fourth, all Muslims should adhere to the call to prayer to retain the favour of Allah, which would ensure their victory. Finally, Muslims should pay *zakat* for the uplift of the destitute and observe Ramadan.[37]

Thanawi further suggested that the inclusion of a 'consultative body' of 'ulama in meetings of the League would help consolidate the organization's credibility. In his conclusion he also drew particular attention to the problem of apostasy among Muslim women, which in his assessment amounted to women's effective defection from Islam as a means of escape from unsatisfying marriages. This point fed into the discourse around the Dissolution of Marriages Act 1939, which prevented the renunciation of Islam being used as the sole reason for the dissolution of a marriage. In his 1938 speech, Thanawi seems to support the League's efforts to pursue reform that makes it easier for Muslim women to gain a divorce without leaving the faith.[38] At the same time, Thanawi remained sceptical of any Congress involvement in the legislation, probably as a result of Congress leaders' successful efforts to delete Clause 6 from the Dissolution of Marriages Act. This had mandated that any cases

[35] Said, *Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib Thanawi awr tahrik-i azadi*, 135–36.

[36] See translation in Appendix. Also: Said, *Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib Thanawi awr tahrik-i azadi*, 136.

[37] Said, *Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib Thanawi awr tahrik-i azadi*, 136-43.

[38] Rohit De, 'Mumtaz Bibi's broken heart: The many lives of the Dissolution of Muslim Marriages Act,' *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 46, no.1 (2009): 83-104.

heard under the Dissolution of Marriages Act must be tried by a Muslim judge; it was as a result of this clause that the legislation initially garnered widespread support among 'ulama.[39] Thanawi deplored the Congress' attempt to enact legislation governing this matter, referring indirectly to their opposition to Clause 6, as hypocritical and insincere. Some 'ulama would later express displeasure with Jinnah for supporting this act in the assembly, concerned that it disempowered traditional practitioners of *fiqh*, or jurisprudence, in interpreting the *shari'a*; since the League ultimately failed to retain Clause 6, undermining the place of the 'ulama in regulating the act's impact, it is reasonable to assume that Thanawi would have objected to its final version. Thanawi's speech most crucially describes his desire for an institutionalized role on the part of the 'ulama in the Muslim League, reflecting a concern that the 'ulama would continue to be sidelined in the creation of a Muslim political centre.

The speech also demonstrated Thanawi's concern for consistent observation of Islamic practice, and his attention to the importance of women as a stronghold of Islamic culture and belief. Of particular importance to this chapter is Thanawi's emphasis on the inclusion of a consultative body, or *majlis-i shura*, of 'ulama to advise the League, and his belief that only with the guidance of such a body could the League establish adequate credibility with the common Muslim and ensure that politicians were acting in the best interests of the Muslim community. Thanawi's letter was not a sign of approval, but an offer of guidance. In correspondence and interactions after the 1938 conference, Thanawi distanced himself from the suggestion that he was a sponsor of the League, acknowledging his support, but only insofar as the organization was capable of reform under his guidance:

> What I have announced, is this that I have supported the Muslim League, but I have clearly written that both the Congress and the Muslim League are not only capable of being reformed, but are organizations of reform [*al-silah*]. Yes, the Muslim League in comparison to Congress is better, much better. Therefore, I should be involved [in the League] with the intention of [promoting] accuracy and reform. I understand the Congress to be like a blind person, and the Muslim League like a one-eyed person, and it is clear that there is a preference for a one-eyed person over a blind one. For example, if there is a necessity to keep a servant and by chance you

[39] Ibid., 120.

> encounter two servants, one blind and one half-blind, if you retain one of them you will definitely retain the one-eyed servant. For this reason only, I am pro-Muslim League.[40]

Thanawi's support was as such qualified; he maintained deep reservations about the ability of the League to serve the spiritual and political needs of Muslims. Thanawi's letter to the League was published in the major Muslim League daily newspaper *Asar-i Jadid*,[41] founded by Ghulam us-Saqlain.[42] Thanawi regretted the appearance of his letter in *Asar-i Jadid*.[43] He did not wish to be used as a feather in the Muslim League's cap, but had rather hoped to instigate internal reforms within it. Moreover, he would have found it distasteful that correspondence intended only for the League leadership had gone astray. In the same way that Thanawi reprimanded his follower Daryabadi when he forwarded a letter to him from Madani (in which Madani had suggested that Daryabadi make *bai'at* or an oath of allegiance to Thanawi), as the letter had not been addressed to Thanawi himself,[44] Thanawi saw the newspaper *Asar-i Jadid* as interrupting the proper chain of communication between the scholar and the leadership of the League. Second-hand sources risked twisting his statement to the League as a stamp of approval, rather than what it was: an olive branch, extended to the League as an opportunity for it to facilitate proper piety among its followers.

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[40] Said, *Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib Thanawi awr tahrik-i azadi*, 135-36.

[41] Francis Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims: the Politics of the United Provinces* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 370; Dhulipala, *Creating a New Medina*, 152.

[42] Said, *Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib Thanawi awr tahrik-i azadi*; Iqbal Singh Sevea, *The Political Philosophy of Muhammad Iqbal: Islam and Nationalism in Late Colonial India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 45. 'The primary aim of the *Asar-i Jadid* (The Modern Time) was to contribute to 'qawmi taraqi' (community progress) and 'tamdani islah' (civilizational reform) by dealing with *tamdani* (civilizational) rather than *ilmi* (intellectual) issues. Yet much space was dedicated in this journal to the discussion of politics and political ideas, as it was felt that in order to secure the *tamdani* improvement of Muslims, it was essential first to raise their political concerns and to familiarise them with political ideas and concepts.' Quotation from: *Asar-i Jadid* 1:1 (January 1903), 1-6. For a translation of the text of Thanawi's letter in reserved support of the League see Appendix.

[43] Said, *Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib Thanawi awr tahrik-i azadi*, 129.

[44] Abdul Majid Daryabadi, *Hakim al-Ummat* (Lahore: al-Faisal, 1992), 91.

Thanawi approached the leadership of the Muslim League in the same way that he treated any new, potential follower. We see this pattern clearly in his guidance of the then-secular modernist Abdul Majid Daryabadi, when as a young man he first wrote Thanawi a letter requesting an audience with him. Thanawi expressed his openness to offering guidance, but made that support conditional upon the follower's acceptance of his authority and his consistent striving to understand the role of Islam in his life and correct action.[45] Just as Thanawi's guidance to followers was predicated on the authority of the 'ulama, so was his approach to the Muslim League predicated on the leaders' and citizens' acceptance of his authority. Correspondence would also have remained crucial as a medium of regular communication.

Thanawi established a relationship with the League as an initiation of a spiritual conversation with the League's political figures, rather than as a decision to offer political sponsorship. Looking at Thanawi's unsuccessful attempts to reach out to the League helps us to do two things. First, it clarifies the dichotomy between the categories of 'political' and 'apolitical' 'ulama in the nationalist period. Pressing on this dichotomy pushes us toward a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between spiritual and political life among South Asian Muslims in the period prior to Independence and Partition, and demonstrates the failure on the part of Thanawi to understand the League's approach to the voices of the 'ulama, which acknowledged their influence without any intention of building the League's authority on the foundation of scholarly influence. Thanawi hoped to convince the League's modernist leaders to recognize the value of the 'ulama in their traditional role as overseers of the political process. In his last letter to the League leadership, written in his final illness in 1943, he sent along two of his books to improve the minds of his correspondents in his absence, which while difficult to read, he promised they would be an effective medicine against spiritual ailments.[46] Just as he had been with Abdul Majid Daryabadi, Thanawi remained determined to act the part of the scholarly guide, offering not a stamp of approval but a helping hand in the modernized League leadership's spiritual journey. The League leadership to an extent expressed awareness of some of Thanawi's concerns; it had already embraced common symbols and language drawn from Islam. Jinnah remained beardless, but had long been accustomed to donning a *sherwani* in his public appearances, reflecting a concern to demonstrate his physical uniformity with the Muslim League. After 1937 Jinnah had begun

[45] Majid Daryabadi, *Hakim al-Ummat*, 8-9.

[46] Said, *Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib Thanawi awr tahrik-i azadi*, 157-58.

to wear his distinctive *topi*, a karakul hat from Afghanistan.[47] Regardless of the complexity of his motivations and his lack of success in offering substantial guidance, Thanawi's support, withheld for so long, was a major coup for the League.[48] Thanawi gradually became convinced that the Muslim League, while imperfect, was more likely to accept reform from within than any other organization.[49] Nevertheless, his attempts to enact reform were repeatedly rebuffed by the realities of nationalist politics with the League at the helm.

Thanawi after Thanawi

As late as 1946, three years after Thanawi's death, leaflets were distributed in Meerut District reminding voters that the renowned Sufi Ashraf Ali Thanawi had issued a statement of support for the Muslim League.[50] Thanawi having died before the existence of a Muslim homeland became inevitable, Thanawi's final judgement of the Muslim League and its ambition to provide a political centre for Muslims remained suspended. According to Thanawi, the Muslim League had the potential to provide much-needed political leadership for Muslims. He retained hope for the Muslim League's development as a source of reform for Muslims, a centre from which Muslims could strive toward perfection, their right to do so protected by a political Muslim voice. It is unjustified to extend that hope, and that attempt to reform the League to reflect his concerns for renewal in the Muslim *qaum*, to approval or disapproval for the emergence of Pakistan. Instead, Thanawi became and has continued to be a discursive space invoked by a variety of voices in independent Pakistan,

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[47] Jinnah, Nawab Ismail Khan and MAH Ispahani had been staying in Mahmudabad House in Lucknow for the autumn 1937 meeting of the All India Muslim League. Ismail Khan was wearing a black karakul hat at that meeting. Jinnah asked if he could try it on, and wore it to great effect at the subsequent Muslim League session. See MAH Ispahani, *Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah, as I knew him* (Karachi: Forward Publications Trust, 1967), 311. See also the biography of Jamal Mian in Francis Robinson, *The 'ulema of Farangi Mahall and Islamic culture in South Asia* (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2001).

[48] Hasan, *Legacy of a Divided Nation: India's Muslims Since Independence*, 92-93.

[49] Zaman, *Ashraf Ali Thanawi*, 51.

[50] *Irshad-i Aliya Janab Hakim al-Millat Maulana Shah Ashraf Ali Thanwi Kalimat al-Haq* (Statement of Ashraf Ali Thanwi, the *alim* who guides and speaks the Word of God); *Maulana Zafar Ahmad Saheb Thanwi, Khalifa-i Azam wa Janashin Hazrat Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi ki Paigham Musalmanon-i Meerut division ke Nam* (Message of Zafar Ahmad, Khalifa and successor of Ashraf Ali Thanwi to the Muslims of Meerut Division), Printed Material, box 1, FMA, cited in Zaman, *Ashraf Ali Thanawi*, 51.

independent India and the South Asian diaspora, to justify their own interpretations of the relationship between Muslim identity and political action.

The relationship of Thanawi's disciples Zafar Ahmed Thanawi and Shabbir Ahmed Usmani to the Muslim League was transformed after the death of their *pir*. His students left Deoband with sixty students and colleagues to found the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Islam, a supporter of the League, in 1945.[51] Popularly, Thanawi's name is regularly invoked as a primary supporter of the Pakistan project. These sources state that Thanawi felt drawn to support the League as a result of Jinnah's commitment to the Muslim faith.[52] Articles in news outlets such as *Jang*[53] and *Dawn*[54] have suggested a strong connection between Jinnah and Ashraf Ali Thanawi, a relationship for which available sources provide little evidence. Scholarship also invokes Thanawi's name in association with unmitigated, enthusiastic support for the Muslim League,[55] going so far as to suggest that Thanawi predicted the emergence of Pakistan as a separate nation.[56]

Nevertheless, the assertion that Thanawi would have supported Pakistan in the form in which it emerged in 1947 is debatable. What is more credible to assert is that the campaign for Pakistan may have taken on a different form if Thanawi's relationship with the League had developed in the way that he desired, with the addition of a consultative committee of 'ulama advising its decisions. As it happened, after Thanawi's death his followers' affiliations

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[51] Hasan, *Legacy of a Divided Nation: India's Muslims since Independence*, 95.

[52] A. Sattar Khan, 'The role of Ulema and Mashaikh in the Pakistan Movement,' Nazaria-i Pakistan Trust, http://www.nazariapak.info/Pakistan-Movement/Role-Ulema.php, Accessed 1 December 2015 (the link has subsequently expired).

[53] Safdar Mahmood, 'Quaid-i Azam and Ashraf Ali Thanawi,' *Jang*, 22 February 2012, http://jang.com.pk/jang/feb2012-daily/22-02-2012/col2.htm, accessed 1 December 2015 (the link has subsequently expired); Haroon ur Rasheed, '*Paivastah rah shajar se, umid bahar rukh*,' *Jang*, 14 February 2012, http://jang.com.pk/jang/feb2012-daily/14-02-2012/col2.htm, accessed 1 December 2015 (the link has subsequently expired).

[54] Faiza Zia, 'What's Wrong with Pakistan,' *Dawn*, 13 September 2013, accessed 21 September 2016. Available at http://www. dawn.com/news/1042583.

[55] Ishtiaq Ahmad states in his review of Venkat Dhulipala's *Creating a New Medina* that '[Thanvi] and other Islamists vigorously campaigned for the Muslim League' in the 1937 elections. Ishtiaq Ahmed, 'Imagining Pakistan as an Islamic State,' *Daily Times*, 7 April 2015, accessed 21 September 2015. Available at http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/07-Apr-2015/imagining-pakistan-as-an-islamic-state.

[56] Safdar Mahmood, 'Jinnah's Vision of Pakistan,' *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, 35, no.1 (2014): 47.

with the League became more overtly political, and as a result took a form radically different from that of his own relationship with the organization, characterized as it was by distance and a tone of parental encouragement and condescension. The actions of Thanawi's disciple Usmani took the form of direct intervention in political legislation, and cannot be seen as an extension of Thanawi's approach, which advocated that the 'ulama avoid direct political activity when possible.[57] Usmani became a member of the Muslim League in 1944, a year after Thanawi's death; he died in 1949 after spearheading the Objectives Resolution, which attempted to preserve the Islamic character of the new Pakistan and, as a theological commentary posing as a piece of political legislation, was criticized as toothless and contradictory. The Muslim League leaders were successful in glossing over the ambivalence of Thanawi's engagement with them, presenting his engagement instead as a form of political branding that lent significant credibility to their effort to become the voice of South Asia's Muslims. Individuals and governments continue to use Thanawi in this way, as a kind of floating signifier whose representations resonate with the allegory of the blind man and the elephant, each focusing on a discrete facet of Thanawi, eliding ambivalence and ambiguity. This chapter has instead sought to draw out the nuance of Thanawi's attitude to the Muslim League, and highlight the demands that remained unmet at the time of his death, to portray in relief the ways that the League fell short of Thanawi's ideal Muslim centre.

Thanawi, like many anti-colonial figures who died before Partition,[58] has become a malleable image in Pakistan and India, a man whose social and cultural significance is ubiquitous, with many of his works retaining the popularity they first claimed one hundred years ago. At the same time, the particular moment of his death in 1943, just when the League was gaining momentum and changing its form almost by the day, has allowed his legacy to be invoked in ways he may have detested; he has been claimed as the oracle that treasured the concept of Pakistan as 'a cherished dream,'[59] as a man who only supported the League as the best of a few bad options,[60] and even as a man who was essentially apolitical until the end.[61] The true complexity of Thanawi's relationship to the League, which in his view conferred upon him authority

[57] Zaman, *Ashraf Ali Thanawi*, 52-54.

[58] Chris Moffat, 'Politics and the Promise of Bhagat Singh,' Modern South Asian Studies Seminar, University of Oxford. Oxford, United Kingdom. 10 November 2015.

[59] Hasan, *Legacy of a Divided Nation: India's Muslims since Independence*, 92-4.

[60] Zaman, *Ashraf Ali Thanawi*, 51-52.

[61] Muhammad Moj, *The Deoband Madrassah Movement: Countercultural Trends and Tendencies* (New York: Anthem Press, 2015), 171.

over the existence of any Muslim political centre, whether it be a homeland or a political party, but also which drew its power from a core theology whose importance superseded any concrete political manifestations, belies attempts to shackle him into a static state.

In contemporary South Asia, Thanawi as a figure has become all things to all men, in the sense that many groups claim affiliation with him, or indeed claim his affiliation with *them*. Understanding Thanawi's decidedly ambivalent approach to the Muslim League and its proposed Muslim centre has become increasingly difficult as a result. To understand Thanawi is to reserve judgement about the foundation of Pakistan, a feat increasingly impossible even for academics; from the 1950s, in a new-born Pakistan, when historians like Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi (1903-1981) scrambled to assemble a master narrative that would extend the legacy of Pakistan backwards into time as an inevitable outgrowth of Islam's incontrovertible legacy in South Asia, indecision was increasingly equated with betrayal.[62] After decades of polarization, in which the boundaries between Pakistan and India shifted from blurry, to stark, to heavily militarized, it is increasingly impossible to access in a public sphere the state of mind of Ashraf Ali Thanawi, who reserved judgement about the project of creating a Muslim homeland on the condition that its leaders continued to operate under his guiding hand.

Appendix: A translation of the text of Thanawi's letter to the Muslim League, delivered to the 1939 Muslim League conference in Patna by Maulana Zafar Ahmed Usmani.[63]

With mere love and goodwill, this unworthy slave,[64] void of any competence, submits – in service of all Muslims commonly and in service of the gentlemen of the League particularly – that this organization and gathering is a strict necessity of Muslims for the object of a particular revolt.[65] I pray to Almighty

[62] Ali Usman Qasmi, 'A National History for Pakistan: Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi (1903-81) and the Genealogy of the "Master Narrative",' (paper presented at Modern South Asian Studies Seminar, University of Oxford. Oxford, United Kingdom. 24 November 2015.

[63] This speech can be found in Urdu in two locations. The first location is Said's book, 136-145. The second is in archived issues of *Asar-i Jadid*, the pro-League newspaper published in Calcutta. *Asar-i Jadid* (Modern Time), Kolkata, 20 September 1938, 6.

[64] *Ahqar* here is a form of self-abegnation, that Thanawi uses to refer to himself.

[65] '*ahqar bavajud apni har nu' ki na-ahliyat ke mehez mohabat-o-khair-khwahi se sab musalmanon ki khidmat mein 'amuman aur hazrat ahl-i-League ki khidmat mein khasusan*

Allah that the gentlemen of the League organization, feeling this [strict necessity], had begun its management wholeheartedly; even before [beginning its management], they had published an article under the name of the Muslim organization, to make clear the importance and approval of it however far it is known. Thank Allah, too, that the desired result has been sufficiently realized; but, as yet, there are still preparations to be made, in accordance with what has been demanded.

Gentlemen, at this time, the Muslims of Hindustan are very familiar with the period that is passing, and the difficulties that appear in front of them. They thank Allah that the sentiments of the common Muslim at this time have already awakened. In order to face these difficulties, the statesmen of the League have adopted certain justifications which conform to their own understanding and learning. It is good news that they are satisfying these justifications;[66] the reason being that they have placed their first step upon the right path and they have not gone down the wrong path. I cannot say whether it is by chance that your first step has fallen upon the right path, or whether you have chosen it in the light of the Holy Qur'an and the tradition of the Prophet. However, in either case, you are deserving of many congratulations.

The First Step: Organising Muslims Separately

Your first step is to contemplate Muslims as a separate entity, for which there is a desperate need, a desperate need that no intelligent person can deny. This problem has already been demonstrated reasonably and through transmitted knowledge [*aqlan-o naqlan*], that any community that does not organize itself independently [*mustaqil-i tanzim*] cannot remain on this earth. Instead, once it has become joined with other communities, it is counted among them. There is also no doubt that under this form of independent Muslim organization all Muslims would join together under the flag of Islam. Under a non-Islamic flag there can only be joint organization, there cannot be Muslims' independent organization, and the profits of such joint organization always go to the majority. From this there can be no profit for the minority if they lose their independent organization. In this way, the League has worked

'arz karta hai kih us vaqt baujah khas inqilab ke jis chiz ki musalmanon ko sakht zarurat hai voh ijtima' aur tanzim hai.'

[66] These justifications may refer to the League's claim to represent the Muslims of colonial India.

with great wisdom, arranging a separate organization of Muslims so that, in future, they can profit from shared association, lest, withdrawing to the margins, they would forever live on the mercy of others, with their existence eventually destroyed [*fina ho jati*].

This is what is indicated in the Qur'anic verse by the word *jund*. This refers to *jund* as the army, and the army is composed from its community [*ijtima' shān*]. Individuals, from whichever community, or however many there are, cannot be called an army. And only an army organized in the name of Allah – not one organized in the name of nationalism [*qaum-parasti*] or patriotism [*vatan-parasti*] – can be called Allah's army.

This was the first step that the Muslim League did well to take. After this, there is also the necessity to go one step further, after which the garland of success and domination will be on your head. May Allah will that this next step will also be on a correct path. If you follow the correct guidance of the Holy Qur'an and the good example of the Divine Messenger (may blessings be upon him), and make it into a beacon, there is no reason that you would come face to face with error in this second step. Muslims do not need any audience or following; in their house is gathered all the wealth that is the reward of tradition and success. But regretfully the Muslim community wants to progress by adopting the traditions of other communities [*qaum*]. They do not want progress following the traditions of the Holy Qur'an and the Divine Messenger (may blessings be upon him), but instead progress through other communities. Progress can be achieved by unbelievers and only by an unbeliever [*kafir*]. There is no progress for Islam or Muslims. If Muslims want Islamic progress while remaining Muslims, they should search out their own past and they should make the Holy Qur'an and its good example their beacon. For this reason, Allah Almighty commanded: '*wa-inna jundana la-hum al-ghalibuna*.'[67]

[67] 'Our army shall overcome them,' Q37:173. It may be useful to read this verse in the context of those verses immediately preceding:

> And indeed, the disbelievers used to say,
> 'If we had a message from [those of] the former peoples,
> We would have been the chosen servants of Allah.'
> But they disbelieved in it, So they will know.
> And Our word had already come to Our servants, the messengers, […]., the messengers,
> [That] indeed, they would be those given victory
> And [that] indeed, Our soldiers will be those who overcome. (Q37:167-173)

Truly, only our army remains mighty always. This is Allah's promise and it is a constant promise that can never be opposed. History is witness that only Allah Almighty's army has always remained victorious; it has never been overwhelmed. If anyone has ever opposed it, the reason was only that there was some reduction in the godliness of the army.

The Second Step is this: that the Muslim League should become Allah's soldiers

So the Muslim League should take the second step in such a way that it correctly creates the army of Allah, which it has organized in the name of Allah. After this truly it will be mighty and conquering, and on its head will be the garland of success. Respected gentlemen, you must have heard many justifications for progress. You must have thought about this a great deal. You must have determined many options. Please experiment with *this* option too, which your ancestors experienced for a period of more than a thousand years. History is witness, that as long as that path remained established they always remained mighty and successful, and the day when they strayed from that path, then came decline and degradation, to the point that now we have arrived at the condition that is before us and you. So do we now need to prepare a different state of affairs by searching our past? May Allah give blessings to His own, and, moreover, may He not make victims of His own.

Why Become an Army of Allah?

After all this [you ask me], why become an army of Allah? Respected gentlemen, to answer that, before anything else it is necessary that every man in this army – in whatever language he speaks – should say, "Allah is Great," and he should know in his heart that Allah is the greatest of all. He should work for the success of Allah and, aside from pleasing him, should not strive for anything else.

[He should not practice] self-love, [he should not be] concerned with rank, [he should not] strive after name or honour, nor [be] desirous of any post. Every person, whether they are a president or deputy president, whether he is a commander [*qa'id*] or a driver, should understand himself to be a soldier of the army of Allah; whatever work he is entrusted with, he should be satisfied with it. The respected Khalid ibn al-Walid was made the Great Leader [*Quaid-i A'zam*] of the Islamic soldiers, he fulfilled the obligations of that designation

well. At another time he was separated from his office and was made a soldier, so even more than before he fulfilled his right of service to Islam.

The Second Condition

The army is the touchstone of the Quranic quotation, '*wa-inna jundana la-hum al-ghalibuna*.'[68] With each other they shall be kind and compassionate, and to the unbelievers they are strict. No person of this army should be a devotee of the English, nor a devotee of Hindus, nor one who seeks worldly pleasures; all should be devotees of Allah.

The Third Condition

According to the true interpretation, there is a third stipulation to becoming an army of Allah; and that is that the army's behaviour and dignity should be such that by looking at it everyone can recognize it as the army of Allah. Their behaviour should be distinctive from the behaviour of the army of the enemy. Its condition should be separate from that of the rebels against Allah. Its sign should be separate from the sign of the unbelievers of Allah.

The Political Importance of the Third Condition

Respected gentlemen, this is not only a religious problem but also a political one. In every Sultanate system, for every department, there was fixed some or other special symbol [*uniform*].[69] The symbols particular to every government are distinct from those of other governments. The community, when it sometimes makes progress, will attempt to distinguish its symbols, its culture, its religion, and its languages, from others. Any community that does not continue to safeguard its signs [*uniform*] will very quickly become absorbed into other communities, and will be destroyed. It is not necessary for me to describe this problem. The political class knows this very well. In this matter we should admire the Congress leaders for inviting Muslims into the Congress and, for the purpose of Mass Contact, presenting aims that in appearance and form were absolutely in accordance with Islam; and if there were only some dispensation for prayers then the Muslim League would be

[68] 'Our soldiers will be those who overcome.' (Q37:173)

[69] This aside – 'uniform' – was transliterated into Urdu directly from English.

an organization representing Muslims. It did not feel it necessary to take as its aim the fulfilment of prayer nor to take on the mode of Islam because the common class of Muslims comprehends politics only in retrospect. Look first at the appearance. I say to you here that Islam and its perfectors and fulfillers, Allah and Islam's spiritual guide Muhammad the Messenger (may blessings be upon him), have fixed a particular symbol for Muslims, the protection of which is their responsibility. In the *Sahih Bukhari* it says to go against the polytheists, wear a beard, cut your moustache. Anyone who does not do these things is not one of us.[70] On this topic, no Muslim should have any doubt that on the blessed face of the Messenger (may blessings be upon him), there was a beard. Even today in the prophetic greeting, there is preserved some consideration for the exalted hair of the glorious beard of that exalted one. So it should be compulsory for the credibility of the wisdom and nature of a Muslim that in physical appearance, and the like, he should act according to the conduct and style of the biography of his Sir, his Beloved, his Spiritual Guide, and that he abstain from the lifestyle and fashion of the enemies of the Beloved. This will always remain the command of nature and wisdom.

The Fourth Condition

For the army of Allah there is also the necessity that it absolutely adheres to the call to prayer. Respected gentlemen, whether war is constitutional or not, a Muslim requires the assistance of none but Allah. History is witness that as long as every man among Muslims has remained a true soldier of the army of Allah, the Muslims have always remained mighty, because they had the assistance of Allah. Whoever Allah stands with has no need for any other assistance. The mandated condition for being deserving of help is following that stipulation.[71] The true reason for the Muslims' lack of success is nothing but the adherence to the ways of the world and deficiency according to Allah.

Respected gentlemen, may Muslims always remain in the minority. In every age we have had less worldly goods and trappings than others, but history is witness that Muslims have not lacked anything. They always remained cumbersome to the majority for this reason alone: that they had Allah's assistance, Allah was theirs, they were Allah's.

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[70] The *Sahih Bukhari* is one of the most famous collections of *hadith* traditions.

[71] Presumably this stipulation includes both adhering to the call to prayer as well as generally depending on Allah.

Respected gentlemen, I am not speaking about Iranian, Afghan, Egyptian, or Turkish Islam, as I do not have the right to present anything on the precedents of those countries. I am calling you toward this reform, which three hundred and fifty years ago was the fortune of Muslims, which had no precedent in the world. For this it is not necessary to have the world's inheritance; instead it is necessary that Muslims should not be slaves to the world, but instead be the slaves of Allah. When Muslims become the slaves of Allah, then the world's entire power comes into their possession. Going along this path, then see, Allah willing, you will be mighty, soaring, and successful because this is that weapon, the force of which the opponent does not have. It can break every weapon of yours but it does not have a response when, having obedience to the Lord, you have the assistance of Allah, and that same assistance will not be with them.

Respected gentlemen, you know that your religion is complete and entire. Politics, devotion, and matters are all held within it. Whereas you command progress in economic and trade issues and in political issues, whereas you command the viewing of proposals, it is not only in proposals but in action you should command devotion, and also command a gathering of those among the Muslim League, to whom you give suggestions on particular worldly matters in political and economic matters, it and its area of influence which is very large. You will conduct action with heart and soul on these approved proposals.

Respected gentlemen, it is clear that you should organize all Muslims, as there are many Muslims for whom even now the 'ulama wield significant influence. When they see that there is a consultative body of 'ulama working with you shoulder-to-shoulder; that they are working within your organization, that they are present in your gatherings; that action is manifest in your proposals and you are taking action on the religious proposals of it [that consultative body]; then, as a result of this, an unprecedented coalition will come into being among the impoverished and the landowners, the likes of which has been extinct in India for centuries. And the Muslim League will garner the real organization and power that is the heartfelt desire of every Muslim among us.

With this I hope that you will command even additional special conditions regarding the affairs mentioned below. My opinion is this: that the more the landowners take action on those affairs, the more this movement will gain a greater acceptance among the common people.

[Additional Conditions]

1. Every Muslim member [of the League] will remember well the creed of Islam and will remind others of it.

2. Every Muslim member will do *namaz* [Muslim daily prayers] themselves and will understand it as their necessary obligation to cause others to do *namaz*.
3. The organization will be complete when the mosques also are thriving and the members of the League are connected with the common people of Islam.
4. Those Muslims who have the duty of *zakat*[72] should be encouraged to pay it, from which effort the League will also have compassion for the poor and their destitution will be lessened.
5. Every Muslim member will observe Ramadan.

If the Muslim League placed attention on this subject [of additional conditions listed above], included it as one of its aims, and did not delay the matter by instituting some committee, it would be as if the League were not content to discuss politics but also had started action extremely quickly. You will then see with open eyes that the dignity of the League will increase and it will progress by leaps and bounds.

After this I want to bring to your attention one point of danger. That is the danger of the apostasy of Muslim women, which presents itself in hundreds of forms in some places. When some women become helpless and upset, whether because of the cruelty and tyranny of their husbands, or because their husbands become absent, or because of their husbands' impotence or their falling madly in love with another; when they cannot see any way out of their marriage, because there is no courthouse [*dar ul-qaza*] in India which will offer an acceptable solution to their difficulties; then these women become apostates and flee into another religion.[73] To counter this risk a bill had been presented in the [national] assembly that is named the divorce bill, or Kazmi Bill.[74] In the bill, at one point it had been asserted that the authority

[72] Religious obligation of alms-giving.

[73] Under British Indian law, apostasy of a Muslim woman dissolved marriage; this trend sparked concerns among Muslims that a woman unable to secure a divorce on the grounds of cruelty or abuse would secure a divorce by means of apostasy. The Kazmi Bill, in an attempt to discourage women from abandoning Islam in pursuit of a divorce, delineated clear routes for a woman to petition for divorce on the grounds of cruelty, neglect, or impotence of her husband.

[74] Named for Muhammad Ahmad Kazmi, a member of the central legislative assembly who presented the bill for debate in 1936. For more on Kazmi's role in the bill and its passage see Sabiha Hussain, 'A Socio-historical and Political Discourse on the Rights

of a Muslim court would preside over cases of Muslim women concerning divorce and marriage – because a decision by a non-Muslim authority in this matter would be banned and invalid. According to religious precepts, divorce cannot occur under the authority of a non-Muslim court nor can marriage be terminated. Once it so happened that a married Muslim woman became an apostate, but then she continued to live in a marriage with her husband; although she did not have permission to have intimacy, the marriage was not terminated as the apostasy did not occur because of any doubt [in God]; instead apostasy was only committed as a tool to end the marriage. We hope that the Congress government, which claims responsibility for forming the national government, will understand the difficulties of Muslims and make this bill successful; but the elephant has tusks it uses to eat, and tusks just for show.[75] In the hands of the Select Committee of the assembly, it is no secret that the debate on the bill will remove the very provisions that are at its heart, after which the bill will be not only be unhelpful but harmful to Muslims. The Muslim League should raise its voice forcefully in opposition to this decision of the Select Committee, it should not remain silent, and it should remain engaged in a sustained attempt until the bill is successful. The Muslim League should take steps toward action with force and alacrity, it should not remain content with mere proposals and suggestions. This alone is the secret to success, to act according to the *shari'at* and with pure intention for Allah. Now I end this message with a prayer that almighty Allah instil in us, and all you Muslims, the feeling of service to His faith. May He make our leaders successful in sincerity and action, in prosperity and in policy.

*Many thanks to Jack Clift, who pointed me towards the Pickthall version of the translated Quran available at Quran.com, and provided notes to clarify its meaning.

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[75] An idiom indicating the presence of hypocrisy, and acting in bad faith.

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6

The Illusory Promise of Freedom
Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din and the Movement for Pakistan

Ali Raza

Veteran politician, inveterate rebel, self-styled defender of progressive values; Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din remains one of the most intriguing individuals to have been associated with the Pakistan movement and the Muslim League. As an outspoken advocate of Muslim self-determination and Pakistan, the inclusion of Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din in this volume might seem like an odd choice indeed. And yet, his political journey reveals much about the tense political climate of the 1940s and the impossible choices that many were confronted with at the time. More importantly, though, his politics also provides an insight into the varied dreams and aspirations that were tied to the idea of Pakistan. In doing so, Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din's political trajectory also contributes to a deeper understanding of relatively neglected aspects of the Pakistan movement and the early years of the nascent post-colonial state when many of those utopian dreams turned sour.

Early political career

In the archival record, Mian Muhammad Iftikhar-ud-Din first emerges as a politician of note in 1936, when he joined the Indian National Congress. Aside from the most rudimentary details, not much is known about his earlier life. Born in 1907 into an affluent family in Baghbanpura, Lahore, Iftikhar-ud-Din obtained his primary and secondary education at the city's elite Aitchison College. He later obtained his higher education at Balliol College, Oxford. Not much is known about his political leanings or affiliations during his time at Oxford or his preoccupations after he returned to India in the early 1930s. After his entry into politics, Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, like others belonging to his illustrious background, rose to occupy the highest ranks of the provincial Congress Party. He contested the 1937 elections on the Congress ticket and was

duly elected as a member of the Punjab Legislative Assembly. In 1940 he was elected as the president of the Punjab Provincial Congress, a position he held until 1945. During this period, like other Congress leaders, he too was interned for civil disobedience and for participating in the Quit India Movement.

That Iftikhar-ud-Din was a prominent voice in the provincial Congress party provides some clues into the contours of the nationalist movement in Punjab. As in other provinces, the Congress, especially in the 1920s and 1930s, was a broad church of groups with varied political leanings. Unlike other major provinces though, the Congress party in the Punjab was a relatively weak political force. Racked by internal dissensions and factionalism, composed of competing interest groups, unevenly spread and communally riven, the Punjab Congress remained a relatively marginal force until the 1945–6 elections. Indeed, as one candid police report remarked, the Congress would be little heard of in Punjab, 'were it not for the hypnotic influence which the All India organization wields.'[1] Naturally, this remained a constant source of frustration for the parent body. A frequently irritated Nehru in particular, often denounced the 'selfish struggle of power of the leaders' and the 'complete lack of organization' which characterized the Punjab Congress.[2]

The party was, for the most part, dominated by urban commercial and professional groups, which together formed the outspoken supporters of nationalist politics/movement. In 1935 for instance, the provincial party had a rural membership of a mere 47 percent, which was a figure that was not only the lowest recorded among all provinces,[3] but also a reflection of the failure of the Congress to penetrate an overwhelming rurally based population. While its membership was spread across the province, the party was relatively stronger in the central and eastern districts of Rohtak, Hissar and Karnal. Given communal cleavages in Punjabi politics and their increasingly fractious nature over the 1930s and 1940s, the Congress was viewed by many Muslims as a party for the Hindu commercial classes. Admittedly, this view was lent credence by the Congress's frequent lack of support for the agrarian classes and its ostensible defence of urban commercial and moneylending interests, and in particular, the largely caricaturized figure of the Hindu *bania*. Thus, in 1940 for instance, several Muslim Congressites severed their connections with the party, with

[1] National Documentation Center, Islamabad, *Punjab Police Secret Abstract of Intelligence* (PPSAI) 1931, Simla-E, 27 June, No. 25, 397.

[2] See for instance, PPSAI 1931, Simla-E, 3 October, No. 39, 579.

[3] Ibid., 43.

some likening it to the Hindu Mahasabha, for the Congress's opposition to the Relief of Indebtedness Bill that was aimed at curtailing the practices of Hindu and Sikh moneylending groups.[4]

Despite this, the Congress was also home to a number of leftist individuals and groups. Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din belonged to this camp. Long suspected and subjected to special surveillance for his 'communistic' leanings by colonial officials, Iftikhar-ud-Din was one of the leading members of the Congress Socialist Party. The party was an affiliate of the Congress and home to leftists of many stripes who hoped to nudge the Congress further leftwards. It was also a refuge for communists who could not openly conduct their activities under the auspices of the banned Communist Party of India (CPI). More importantly, though, the CSP and Congress platform was a means for socialists and communists to contest provincial assembly elections in 1937. Notwithstanding their hostility and opposition to Congress policies, a number of leftists were elected to the provincial Legislative Assembly on the Congress ticket. While its unclear whether Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din was ever a formal member of leftist organizations in the province, he was nevertheless a prominent advocate for progressive policies in the Legislative Assembly.

As an unapologetic leftist, Iftikhar-ud-Din frequently made the headlines (along with anxious entries in police and intelligence reports) for his thunderous and all too frequent denunciations of British imperialism, its Unionist 'stooges,' 'foreign interests,' landlords, capitalists, and 'exploiters of (the) country.'[5] In doing so, he broke ranks with many who shared his socio-economic background, but not his political views. He also defended, in the Legislative Assembly and beyond, political prisoners incarcerated for their nationalist and revolutionary activities, leftist stalwarts like Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna and Sohan Singh Josh, and those generally derided as 'fifth columnists' on account of their real or perceived pro-Soviet sympathies.[6]

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[4] Gerald Heeger, 'The Growth of the Congress Movement in Punjab, 1920–1940,' *The Journal of Asian Studies* 32, no.1 (November 1972): 49–50. Moreover, details of Party factionalism are present in virtually all weekly intelligence abstracts in PPSAI files. Again, reasons ranging from the ideological to the communal and personal lay behind these divisions. In particular, see the years between 1931–39.

[5] See his speech in the Punjab Legislative Assembly on 2 July 1937; quoted in *Selected Speeches and Statements: Mian Iftikharuddin*, ed. Abdullah Malik (Lahore: Nigarishat, 1971), 69–75. (Henceforth referred to as *Speeches*.)

[6] See his speech in the Punjab Legislative Assembly on 25 January 1938, and 6 November 1939, quoted in *Speeches* 129–131 and 132–33.

Throughout his political career however, Iftikhar-ud-Din, along with his party in general, often cut a lonely figure owing to the dominance the Unionist Party exercised over the provincial landscape. The Unionists, a cross-communal alliance of landed and 'agriculturist' interests, functioned as a key support group for the Raj. The party held sway over rural areas through deeply embedded patron–client relations, particularly in the western districts of the province. And notwithstanding its localized factional struggles, the party was ably led by two stalwarts of Punjabi politics, Sir Fazal-e-Hussain and Sikander Hayat Khan. Given its widespread sway over the provincial landscape, the Unionist Party swept to victory in the 1937 provincial elections. Helped in no small measure by an exceedingly limited franchise, the extent of the Unionist Party's dominance over the Congress was indicated by the fact that the latter could only manage to win roughly 10 percent of the seats in the Punjab Legislative Assembly, which happened to be the lowest share of seats won by any provincial Congress Party.[7] Both parties, of course, suffered a complete reversal of fortunes in the 1945–6 elections, when the Congress emerged as the largest party in the provincial legislature after the Muslim League, while the Unionists could only manage a paltry 15 seats in an Assembly of more than 170 members.[8] In the run up to independence then, there could only be room for the expected winners of the colonial end game.

Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, then, for much of his political career with the Congress, remained the head of a weak provincial party. And yet, despite its relatively marginal existence in Punjab, the Congress remained one of the most prominent platforms for conducting politics. As alluded to above, the provincial Congress party mostly functioned as a relatively inclusive political platform for groups with varying agendas who entered into transitory alliances on the basis of their opposition to British imperialism and/or the Unionist Party. This position was, without doubt, underscored by the provincial party's affiliation with the All India Congress movement. Indeed, it was at this juncture that the 'national,' 'provincial,' and 'local' met. Despite being marginal political actors in the

[7] B. R. Tomlinson, *The Indian National Congress and the Raj, 1929–1942: The Penultimate Phase* (London: Macmillan, 1976), 71. Also see, 'Document No. 6. "Emerson to Linlithgow: February 22nd 1937",' in *Punjab Politics, 1936–1939: The Start of Provincial Autonomy*, ed. Lionel Carter (New Delhi: Manohar, 2004), 76–78.

[8] 'Document No. 61. "Note by Glancy," March 7th 1946,' in *Punjab Politics, 1 January 1944–3 March 1947: Last years of the Ministries: Governors' Fortnightly Reports and Other Key Documents*, ed. Lionel Carter (New Delhi: Manohar, 2006), 178.

province, the Punjab Congress's rank and file could nevertheless conduct their politics based on their affiliation with the most prominent All India movement. Thus, despite being electorally insignificant, Congress leaders in the provincial hierarchy could still command a great deal of prestige in local politics. Given this prominence, political activists with varying organizational and ideological affiliations could conduct their politics from the Congress's platform. Indeed, during the 1920s and 1930s, it was quite normal for political activists to belong to the Congress as well as other organizations. In part, this was possible owing to the Congress's claim of representing the entirety of the Indian 'nation.' But more to the point, this was also an attractive option for sectional interests, who felt that their grievances and aspirations could only be addressed by dominating the provincial Congress movement. This was certainly the case insofar as the interests of commercial and urban-based groups were concerned, though even this was subject to frequent disputes and mutual acrimony. And unsurprisingly, the same logic applied to radical politicians of various shades, including those from the 'Left.' The politics of Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, then, can best be situated within this broader context.

Demand for Pakistan

Like other leftists, Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din was sympathetic to the demand for Muslim self-determination raised by the Muslim League in the famous Lahore Resolution in March 1940. His attitude went against the prevailing consensus within the provincial and national Congress party, a position that came with its set of political risks given that he was the president of the Punjab Congress. At the All India Congress Committee (AICC) meeting at Allahabad in 1942, Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din was one of the 15 out of 135 members who supported C. Rajagopalachari's proposal to recognize the League's demand for separation. Rajagopalachari's resolution urged the Congress to choose the 'lesser evil' and recognize the 'Muslim League's claim for separation,' as a means of maintaining national unity and forming a national government.[9]

Further elaborating his stance to the press shortly after the All India Congress Committee (AICC) meeting, Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din explained that his conviction in the basic unity of India had compelled him to support Rajagopalachari's resolution. Indeed, 'the unity of India [could] only be maintained through the

[9] *Speeches,* 'Report of the Civil and Military Gazette, May 10, 1942,' 3–4.

consent of various elements that constitute[d] the national life of this country.' These 'elements' included Muslims as well. In his view, holding India together against the wishes of its communities would only serve to stiffen 'separatist tendencies.' The way to unity, therefore, lay in conceding the right of secession. Moreover, national unity was crucial given that India had never passed through a more 'critical time in [its] history,' especially when the need of the hour was to compel the British government to part with power and yield to the popular demand for a National Government, which, among other things, would be best placed to offer 'resistance to the new invader' (more on that below). What was required at this juncture was to create the 'right atmosphere for the Muslims masses to understand' what was at stake. And this could only be done by 'taking the wind out of the sails of the separatist opponents by granting the right of secession.' Regarding the demand of other communities such as the Sikhs, Iftikhar-ud-Din was clear in his position that if the right of secession was granted to Muslims, it should also be conceded to other communities like the Sikhs, irrespective of the fact that they comprised a mere one percent of the total population of India and did not constitute a majority in any single district. Accordingly, he accepted that there would have to be many changes in the existing provincial boundaries since 'consistency [would] require that the same right which Muslims demand for themselves be conceded by them to others.'[10]

Predictably, Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din's stance incurred the wrath of his provincial party and sections of the press. For a while, he contemplated resigning from the Congress but postponed his decision owing to the impending Quit India movement. Like other Congress leaders, Iftikhar-ud-Din was also arrested once the movement had been launched. During these years, he maintained his position with respect to the League and its demand and unsuccessfully lobbied the All India Congress leadership, including Jawaharlal Nehru, Mahatma Gandhi and Abul Kalam Azad, after their release from jail in 1945, to push for rapprochement with the League by conceding its principal demand. In doing so, he also argued the case for communists who developed serious differences with the Congress on account of their opposition to the Quit India movement, which in their view was a distraction from the more pressing need of participating in the struggle against 'international fascism.' Recognizing the dim prospects of his position, Iftikhar-ud-Din resigned from his position as the president of the Punjab Congress after his release from jail. Soon after, he also resigned from

[10] Ibid.

his primary membership of the Congress. His statement on his resignation expressed disappointment at the position of a Congress leadership that had failed to pursue its historic policy of Hindu–Muslim unity, which to him, had always been the foundation of Indian freedom. In his view, Hindu–Muslim unity expressly meant a settlement between the Congress and the League. He maintained that the Muslim demand for self-determination for the Northwest and East was a just and 'perfectly democratic demand.' The refusal of the Congress to concede this demand meant that there was no place for people like himself in the party. Moreover, in his statement, he also announced that he would henceforth work with the Muslim League in pursuit of its just demand. After all, the 'independence of one part of our country, i.e., Pakistan, [was] bound with the freedom of all.'[11]

There was of course a broader context to Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din's political positioning. Given his overt sympathies towards the Left, his views and actions frequently echoed and paralleled the position taken by the CPI. At the onset of the Second World War, the CPI, along with the Congress, opposed the war effort. As far as the CPI, and other like-minded political activists like Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din were concerned, the war was a clash between rival imperialisms. As a result, CPI cadres, along with many Congressites, were imprisoned on account of their activities opposing the war effort. A dramatic shift, however, came after Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941. The Left now confronted an impossible situation. They were required to prioritize a seemingly existential struggle against fascism over their implacable opposition to British imperial rule. Bitter enemies now found themselves on the same side, as the CPI with their famed 'People's War' line decided to support the British war effort and break ranks with the Congress. In return, the British Raj legalized the CPI for the first time in its hitherto bleak and torturous existence. Communists were freed from jails and prison camps and allowed to openly conduct their politics, except that in these circumstances they were rallying support for the war effort.

Allied to its 'People's War' line, the CPI also changed its policy regarding the question of Muslim self-determination. Endorsed in 1942, the resolution supporting the principle of national self-determination was predicated on the need to preserve communal harmony and building national unity. Both were necessary for winning independence and resisting the advances of the 'fascist aggressor'; a line also adopted by Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din in his arguments for

[11] *Speeches*, 34–35.

building national unity to resist the 'new invader.' Accordingly, the resolution supported the demand for Pakistan by proclaiming that:

> Every section of the Indian people which has a contiguous territory as its homeland, common historical tradition, common language, culture, psychological makeup and common economic life would be recognized as a distinct nationality with the right to exist as an autonomous state within the free Indian union or federation and will have the right to secede from it if it may so desire … Thus, free India would be a federation or union of autonomous states of the various nationalities such as the Pathans, Western Punjabis (dominantly Muslims), Sikhs, Sindhis, Hindustanis, Rajasthanis, Gujaratis, Bengalis, Assamese, Biharis, Oriyas, Andhras, Tamils, Karnatakis, Maharashtrians, Malayalees, etc.
>
> … Such a declaration of rights in as much as it concedes to every nationality as defined above, and therefore, to nationalities having Muslim faith, the right of autonomous state existence and of secession, can form the basis for unity between the National Congress and the League. For this would give to the Muslims wherever they are in an overwhelming majority in a contiguous territory which is their homeland, the right to form their autonomous states and even to separate if they so desire … Such a declaration therefore concedes the just essence of the Pakistan demand and has nothing in common with the separatist theory of dividing India into two nations on the basis of religion.[12]

In pursuance of this shift in policy and the illusory dream of building a 'National Front,' communist cadres and *kisan* (peasant) workers actively started to support the Muslim League in its campaign for Pakistan. Kisan workers, for instance, were instructed to organize secret 'cells' in villages for the dual purpose of strengthening their internal organization and conducting propaganda in rural areas in pursuance of this campaign.[13] Assorted 'Unity Weeks' were also organized to spread the message of 'unity' in which communist workers toured urban areas on cycles 'carrying Congress, League and Communist flags and exhibiting slogans advocating national unity.' Demands were also made for the immediate establishment of a National Government with the inclusion of the Muslim League and the Congress. In joint meetings held with local

[12] Gangadhar Adhikari, *Pakistan and Indian National Unity* (London: Labour Monthly, 1983), 31.

[13] PPSAI 1942, 'Extract from the Summary of Communist and other Subversive Activities for the fortnight ending the 15th October,' Lahore, 655.

Muslim League office bearers, the Congress was also implored to accept the Pakistan demand to bridge the misunderstanding that existed between it and the Muslim League.[14]

These public pronouncements of unity clearly indicated that the CPI-affiliated Left did not view the League as a 'communal' organization. Consequently, it never attempted to back rival Muslim organizations against it. Notwithstanding the role that convoluted political theories may have had in its development, this view can more practically be seen as the politics of pragmatism, even if highly misplaced, by the communist leadership. For by this time, the League was a force to be reckoned with at the all-India level where it had virtually been granted a veto over any constitutional arrangements concerning the future of India. The decision of the communists to endorse the League's demands, then, was an appropriate recognition of its potential power and influence over all-India matters, in which Punjab, as a key Muslim-majority province, was to play a decisive role.

As part of its support, the CPI also encouraged its Muslim cadres to join the League. In accordance with this policy, prominent leftists like Daniyal Latifi resigned from the Communist Party and joined the League. With their articulations of what they imagined 'Pakistan' to be, these individuals stepped into an emotive fray of varied socio-political imaginations associated with the demand for independence from British imperialism and Hindu domination. These ideas stood alongside the more widely known religiously inspired articulations of Pakistan.[15] The most significant illustration of leftist-inspired imaginations came in the shape of the Punjab League's manifesto. Co-authored by Daniyal Latifi, the manifesto, according to a police report, bore the 'stamp of Communist ideology.'[16] Among a series of progressive pledges, the manifesto promised the nationalization of key industries and banks, the control of private industry, the abolition of imperial preferences and an improvement in the standard of living and labour conditions for all individuals. A plan for agricultural development was also put forward, in which the reduction of rural indebtedness, provision of cheap credit facilities, cooperative and state marketing at guaranteed prices, extension of the Land Alienation Act, provision of state land to poor individuals and the general welfare and advancement of all agricultural classes

[14] PPSAI 1942, Lahore, 7 November, No. 45, 696.

[15] See for instance David Gilmartin, 'A Magnificent Gift: Muslim Nationalism and the Election Process in Colonial Punjab', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 40, no.3 (1998), 415-36.

[16] PPSAI 1944, Lahore, 18 November, No. 47, 637.

irrespective of religious affiliation was promised.[17] Working in tandem was an election campaign in which claims were made that the 'Muslim League now truly represented the Muslim masses and was no longer a body of aristocrats, *Khan Bahadurs, jagirdars,* and capitalists acting under official influence.'[18] The circle of cooperation and collaboration, then, was complete. According to Sharif al Mujahid, the manifesto and its associated claims provided the League's 1945–46 election campaign with a 'direly needed progressive streak.'[19]

As a prominent member of the progressive camp within the Punjab League, Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din, too, saw in the movement the promise of a better and more progressive future. Like his leftist counterparts, he also took the view that the unity and harmony of India could only be ensured by supporting the Pakistan demand. In doing so, Iftikhar-ud-Din committed himself to working for the League in the run-up to provincial elections. The results of the elections confirmed that the Muslim League, in a complete reversal of fortunes, emerged as the largest party in the Punjab Legislative Assembly. Yet, it did not have the required number of seats to form a government, which was eventually formed by a weak Unionist–Congress–Akali Dal coalition in 1946 under the premiership of Khizar Hayat Khan. This further worsened political and communal tensions in the province, as the League felt aggrieved at being denied the opportunity to form a government. These grievances were aired in the Assembly and on the streets of Punjab. In the Assembly, Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din led the charge against the ruling coalition by decrying the injustice meted out to the League. In doing so, he presented the League as a 'progressive and revolutionary party.' In a memorable moment defending the Nawab of Mamdot for his former association with a 'reactionary party' (the Unionist Party), he retorted:

> God willing, this Nawab of Mamdot who today is the leader of a progressive Muslim League, will tomorrow be the leader of a revolutionary Muslim League, and under the name of citizen Iftikhar Hussain Khan, resident of Mamdot, will be marching shoulder to shoulder with the Muslim masses. Those who were Khan Bahadurs yesterday are Khan Bahadurs no more, and those who are Khan Bahadurs today, soon they will become revolutionaries and court imprisonment in the cause of their country's freedom.[20]

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[17] Ibid., 641.

[18] PPSAI 1944, Lahore, 21 October, No. 43, 595.

[19] Sharif-ul-Mujahid, '1945–46 Elections and Pakistan: Punjab's Pivotal Role,' *Journal of Pakistan Vision* 11, no.1 (Pakistan Study Centre, University of Punjab, 2010): 5.

[20] *Speeches*, 'Address in the Punjab Legislative Assembly, 28 March 1946,' 40.

While it may seem incredible in hindsight, this statement was nevertheless an adequate reflection of how Pakistan was envisioned by its progressive supporters. If anything, as Iftikhar-ud-Din said, it was the Congress that had become reactionary by its refusal to acknowledge the democratic basis of the League's demand. It was only Pakistan now that could deliver an 'effective knock-out to British Imperialism.'[21]

Despite this virtually unconditional support, however, leftists were still viewed with much suspicion within the League. Jinnah himself remained suspicious of communists and their attempts at infiltrating the party. In a similar vein, the CPI was still regarded by many Leaguers as merely a 'Hindu Party' with sensible views on Pakistan.[22] It was only a matter of time, therefore, before tensions between the two unlikely allies would come to the fore. With elections over, there were attempts to remove Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din and Daniyal Latifi from prominent positions in the Party.[23] At the all-India level, the CPI rapidly grew disillusioned with the League with its political positioning and intransigence over the Cabinet Mission Plan and the formation of the Interim Government of India. It was only in August 1946, then, that P.C Joshi was finally moved to denounce the Muslim League, since its 'desire to fight imperialism [was] not genuine but tainted with the hope of threatening the Imperialist Government into giving the League better terms.'[24]

Despite internal opposition, Iftikhar-ud-Din continued to work with the League in the run-up to independence. By January 1947, tensions between the League and the Punjab government had increased to unprecedented levels. A trigger came in the form of the ruling ministry's decision to ban the Muslim League National Guards (MLNG) and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). As far as an increasingly worried Punjab government was concerned, the MLNG and RSS were primarily responsible for ratcheting up communal tensions to breaking point. The League, however, viewed this step as yet another draconian move that was designed to prevent the Muslim League from exercising its democratic rights. Thus, on 24 January, Iftikhar-ud-Din along with six other leaders of the Punjab Muslim League were arrested in Lahore for stopping the police from carrying out a search of the MLNG headquarters in Lahore. Their arrest sparked a violent province-wide agitation that continued

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[21] Ibid.

[22] PPSAI 1943, Extract, Lahore, 2 October, 581.

[23] PPSAI 1946, Simla-E, 25 May, No. 20, 251; Simla-E, 1 June, No. 21, 267.

[24] PPSAI 1946, Extract, Simla-E, 15 August, 405.

for more than a month and eventually succeeded in bringing down Khizar Hayat's ministry on 2 March 1947. By this time, communal relations had reached a point of no return. Within a few days, massacres were being carried out in Rawalpindi division. What followed is an all too familiar story. Punjab, suffice to say, would never be the same again.

The darkness of freedom

The first police report after 15 August 1947 remarked at the very outset that 'the inauguration of Pakistan, which had been so eagerly awaited by the Muslims, brought very little joy.'[25] As far as observations went, this was perhaps understating the widespread disillusionment and darkness that marked the birth of Pakistan. This sense has been emotively immortalized in much of the literature that has been devoted to partition and perhaps none more so than in the renowned poet and leftist Faiz Ahmed Faiz's poem, *Subah-e-Azadi*.[26] Millions on both sides had been displaced in what was the largest forced displacement of people in modern history. More than a million, according to some estimates, had been killed in the violence.

In the run-up to the formal transfer of power, there was little that leaders like Iftikhar-ud-Din could do except for issuing futile appeals for an end to violence. After independence, however, Iftikhar-ud-Din joined the Punjab Cabinet in September and was appointed the minister for refugees and rehabilitation. He lasted two months in the role. As minister, he had his work cut out for him. The nascent state, with a struggling Muslim League government, was ill-equipped to cater to the needs of the millions who had flooded in from East Punjab and elsewhere. In a census conducted in April 1948, it was estimated that approximately 5.5 million refugees had arrived in West Punjab. Together, they constituted over 28 percent of the population.[27] Given the scale of refugee displacement, few could have disagreed that this was the single biggest crisis confronting the nascent state of Pakistan. Deprived of their worldly possessions and sources of income, packed into makeshift refugee camps or living in the open, vulnerable to disease, hunger and violence, the millions of refugees in West

[25] PPSAI – West Punjab (WP) 1947, Lahore, 23 August, No. 34, 419.

[26] 'Dawn of Freedom.'

[27] Ilyas Chattha, 'The Impact of the Redistribution of Partition's Evacuee Property on the Patterns of Land Ownership and Power in Pakistani Punjab in the 1950s,' in *State and Nation Building in Pakistan: Beyond Islam and Security*, ed. Roger D. Long et al. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 15.

Punjab were not only a severe strain on the resources of the state, but, more worryingly for the authorities, also a potential source of discontent and agitation. Long after the summer of 1947, police and intelligence reports described, week after week, the plight of refugees and the tensions that simmered at the local level across West Punjab. The following four excerpts, culled from just one week's reporting, illustrate this adequately:

> Authorities came in for adverse criticism in connection with resettlement of Meos along the border with a prospect of uprooting the earlier settlers. On 30 March 1948 about 150 of the older settlers held a demonstration outside the civil secretariat at Lahore. In Lyallpur, a further deterioration of relations between the refugees and local inhabitants has taken place. The former are becoming aggressive generally. At a meeting attended by 200 refugees at Jaranwala on 26 March 1948, threats of looting the stocks of sugar in the local market were held out while complaining the non-availability of food stuffs and unfair distribution of abandoned goods ... on the following day a procession of 550 persons was organized ... to protest against and demonstrate in front of the house of Tahsildar Jaranwala, who was alleged to have misappropriated property from the [*bait-ul-maal*] and to have abused the refugees … At Kabirwala, Multan District, a fracas occurred between Rohtak refugees and local residents. The refugees from Rohtak, Hissar and Gurgaon have given considerable trouble in the Multan district.
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> A general discontent over the question of rations was discernible in both the Walton and Bawli camps at Lahore. On 1 April 1948 parties of refugees from there held a demonstration in front of the Assembly Chamber. The refugees in the camp in Multan district feel forgotten and uncared for and are likely to fall a prey to any popular movement and ... In Multan city on 30 March 1948, 119 refugees were arrested in Multan Cantonment for damaging District Board trees...
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> There are about 60,000 refugees in the three main camps of Montgomery district. Need for medical assistant, nurses, and medicine is badly felt in the Aruham Camp at Okara, which houses 17,000 persons. At Montgomery, the refugees complained of unsympathetic attitude of local officials …
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> In a meeting organized by the Muslim Leaguers in Jaranwala on 27 March 1948 the refugees were accused of looting abandoned property and their large influx was held responsible for unfair distribution of houses and shops.[28]

[28] *Police Abstract of Intelligence West Punjab* (henceforth PPSAI-WP), Vol. 1, No. 12, 115–16.

Together, these four excerpts are powerful testimonies that give lie to prevailing nationalist narratives, many of which are too obvious to spell out here. But underlying this reporting was a growing concern that the prevailing discontent could be channelled in ways that could challenge the authority of the state and the legitimacy of the Muslim League government. At stake was the belief in Pakistan itself. Thus, one Qazi Ahmed Jan, Imam of a mosque in Thata, Attock district, spoke for many when he was reported to have declared to a public gathering that:

> Hindustan and Hindu Government were better than Pakistan and Muslim Government, as under the latter Government, the people could not even get enough to eat. He [Qazi Ahmed Jan] shouted slogans of [*Pakistan Murdabad*] and [*Muslim League Murdabad*] and said the Pakistan Government was encouraging corruption and doing injustice.[29]

Another report provided by a former Indian Army officer went as follows:

> The refugees themselves say, 'We were promised Pakistan, what we got is *Qabristan* [cemetery]' and from the thousands and thousands who have died from exposure one can but sympathize with them. I have met quite a number of wealthy people who lost their all owing to partition, [and] they, as a class, all complain that nothing is done for them and they are the bitterest critics of most of the 'tops' now in office. The wish for Communism, which is so foreign to the nature of the Mussalman, is very freely expressed and particularly by the former wealthy classes, the more educated types. Of one thing I am certain, and that is that unless the refugees are very speedily rehabilitated Pakistan will have a permanent problem of hundreds of thousands of *ghoondas* [criminals].[30]

These critiques were not merely restricted to refugees. Erstwhile allies and members of the Muslim League also joined in with their denunciation of the 'tops' in office. Foremost among them was Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din. His differences with the provincial government had begun emerging as soon as he accepted the ministerial portfolio of Refugees and Rehabilitation. In his very first press conference on 27 September 1947, Iftikhar-ud-Din expressed his determination to eject 'grabbers, squatters, "local refugees"' from lands and buildings vacated by departing Hindu and Sikh refugees. Nor, he added, would

[29] PPSAI – WP 1948, Lahore, 14 February, No. 7, 48.
[30] P. 133, Despatch from Office of HCUK, Karachi CAIP IOR/L/P&J/12/772.

the government 'recognize private transactions and exchanges effected with a view to harming the legitimate interests of the refugees.'[31] In taking this position, Iftikhar-ud-Din was directly pitting himself against local powerbrokers, many members of the Muslim League, who had seized and claimed evacuee property for themselves.[32]

His proposals for dealing with the refugee crisis further distanced him from the ruling party. Among other things, he called for raising taxes on landlords and private incomes, providing financial support to unemployed refugees, rapid industrialization and nationalization of major industries and a more equitable distribution of national wealth.[33] More radically, he also advocated breaking up large estates and distributing the proceeds to refugees. He further called for a complete reorganization of the agrarian sector, a 50-acre ceiling on landholdings and progressive taxation on large landholdings.[34] To the argument that these proposals were un-Islamic, he replied that Islam stood for the levelling of economic differences and for the elimination of exploitation (which was the standard argument used by leftists to legitimate their demands). It was only through 'Islamic Socialism,' then, that refugees could best be rehabilitated. And it was only through a speedy and just resolution of the refugee crisis that far-reaching socio-economic reform and justice could be achieved.[35]

In putting forth these proposals, Iftikhar-ud-Din cut a lonely figure. His ideas were met with incredulity and barely concealed hostility. Given the privileged and landed background of the Punjab League leadership, few shared his political leanings or visions for reforming state and society. His opponents accused him of inconsistency, charged him with being a communist and brought up his past affiliation with the Congress.[36] Replying to the charge of being a communist, he

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[31] *Speeches,* 'Campaign Against Unauthorised Occupiers of Evacuee Property,' 55.

[32] See for instance the important interventions by Ilyas Chattha's 'Impact of Redistribution' and 'Competitions for Resources: Partition's Evacuee Property and the Sustenance of Corruption in Pakistan,' *Modern Asian Studies* 46, no.5 (2012), 1182–211.

[33] *Speeches*, 'Islamic Socialism – The Best Way to Refugee Rehabilitation,' 58.

[34] Chattha, 'Impact of Redistribution,' 22–23. Also see *Speeches* 'Prefer People to Property,' *Pakistan Times,* 28 November 1947, 65–66.

[35] *Speeches*, 'Islamic Socialism – The Best Way to Refugee Rehabilitation,' 58.

[36] For a similar, albeit extended, treatment of the left's contested relationship with the Muslim League and Pakistan, see Ali Raza, 'An Unfulfilled Dream: The Left in Pakistan ca. 1947–50,' *South Asian History and Culture* 4, no.4 (2013), 503–19. Also see in the same issue, Kamran Asdar Ali, 'Progressives, Punjab, and Pakistan: The Early Years' and Anushay Malik, 'Alternative Politics and Dominant Narratives: Communists and the Pakistani State in the Early 1950s.'

denied ever being a member of the Communist Party, but remained unapologetic in his sympathies for them. Calling them the 'sincerest political workers' in the subcontinent, he reminded his detractors that the communists were the only organized group that supported the League's campaign for national self-determination. He also defended his past affiliations, claiming that the Congress was the only political party with a concrete anti-imperialist agenda at a time when the Muslim League was comprised of political reactionaries. There was no other party a political activist wanting to fight for independence could work with. With the Muslim League, he stated that two out of three objectives had been met, namely, the achievement of freedom and the establishment of a Muslim state. The third, however, remained unfulfilled. This was 'the achievement of complete economic, political and social justice.'[37]

That Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din was compelled to defend himself from personal and political attacks was a measure of how quickly the promise of Pakistan had faded for progressives. Convinced that he would be unable to effect a change, he resigned from his portfolio, explaining to the premier of West Punjab, the same 'citizen' Iftikhar Hussain Khan of Mamdot he extolled barely a year ago, that the prevailing attitude of the League government prevented the implementation of the radical measures he thought were necessary to deal with the ongoing crisis.[38]

Soon after resigning from his ministerial portfolio, Iftikhar-ud-Din conducted tours across West Punjab, addressing large rallies of refugees and the general public. In meeting after meeting he called for a change in the socio-economic system and for a change in leadership, as exemplified in the following detailed excerpt:

> Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din said that it was his intention to rejuvenate the Provincial League and to make it follow a new programme. He asked the Muslims to work hard with a view to rehabilitating the six million Muslim refugees in West Punjab. In his speech at Jhang on 2 January 1948 before an audience of 3,000 persons, he asserted that the Muslim League being the representative body of Muslims was responsible for the amelioration of the lot of Muslims … Clarifying his attitude towards landlordism he declared that he wanted landlords to reduce their share of income from one half to one

[37] *Speeches*, 'Islamic Socialism – The Best Way to Refugee Rehabilitation,' 60–62.

[38] *Speeches*, *Pakistan Times*, 16 November 1947, 63–4. Also see Farzana Sheikh, *Making Sense of Pakistan* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), chapter 4, in which she situates Iftikhar-ud-Din's demands within the broader politics of 'Islamic Socialism' in the formative years of Pakistan.

> fourth of the produce as this would make it possible for more refugees to be absorbed. This principle, he claimed, was in consonance with the principles of Islam. He condemned the inertia and corruption, which prevailed in the ranks of the Muslim League. Two meetings were held during the visit of Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din to the Jhelum district … Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din spoke in his usual strain and advocated that refugees should be helped and non-Muslims who had decided to stay in Pakistan protected. Addressing a gathering of about 8,000 at Shahpur on 1 January 1948 he criticized big landlords and called upon the public to come out to afford succour to refugees. He also exhorted the audience to elect new blood next time.[39]

Notwithstanding his many attempts to deny that a rift existed between himself and the League, it was hardly surprising that his public denunciations did not sit well with the party leadership. Nor were his progressive ideas aligned with those of the government. Other than his speeches and rallies, the *Pakistan Times*, a leftist publication under his ownership and edited by Faiz Ahmed Faiz, also expressed these ideas.[40] While Mamdot's government was criticized in the press over its mishandling of the refugee crisis, it was the *Pakistan Times* that was at the forefront of criticizing the League leadership and linking it to instances of corruption, embezzlement and land grabbing.[41]

To make matters worse, Iftikhar-ud-Din continued to criticize the central and provincial government on other issues, and in particular on the rapid erosion of civil liberties. Eventually, matters came to a head in January 1950 when he criticized the central government, despite Liaqat Ali Khan's warning not to do so, in the Constituent Assembly. He criticized the government for its insistence on pushing through 'public safety and security' ordinances, its co-option of the rulers of princely states in the constituent assembly instead of their subjects and lastly, on the question of obtaining justice for minorities.[42]

The 'Safety and Security Acts' in particular were a sensitive issue. As the *Pakistan Times* put it, the proposed ordinances were a 'fascist measure' and

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[39] PPSAI – WP 1948, Vol. 1, No. 1 Lahore, 4 January, 1948.

[40] The *Times*, founded in 1947, were part of the Progressive Papers Limited, which Iftikhar-ud-Din founded, and which later would also publish the daily *Imroze* (1948) and the famous weekly *Lail-o-Nihar* (1957).

[41] Chattha, 'Impact of Redistribution,' 25. Intriguingly, Chattha also points out how the *Pakistan Times* contributed to developing a narrative of 'corruption' that was used by political rivals 'with debilitating consequences for the consolidation of parliamentary democracy.'

[42] *Speeches*, 157.

an attempt by the state to stifle free speech, criticism of the ruling party and government, and freedom of association and assembly. If anything, these ordinances were a throwback to the darkest days of British imperialism and the Unionist Ministry. It was in January 1947 after all that the League launched a province-wide agitation against the curtailment of civil liberties. Reintroducing these measures and further strengthening them, the paper added, was 'a betrayal of the ideals embodied in the demand for Pakistan.'[43] This theme of betrayal was also resonant in Iftikhar-ud-Din's address to the Constituent Assembly. Expressing the sentiments of many leftists at the time, he wondered what had changed when the same Crime Investigation Department (CID) men who followed him in his days with the Congress and the League, followed him after independence. As he put it, the government only wanted submission and subservience, not honest thinking. For Iftikhar-ud-Din, then, the question of civil liberties was 'synonymous with the question of freedom of the people of Pakistan.' If anything, the 'freedom' that had been achieved was the 'freedom for the upper and middle classes.' Real freedom, he maintained, would only be achieved once workers and peasants were free from the exploitation of their capitalist and feudal overlords. Until then, 'freedom for 95 percent of the people of Pakistan will only be in name.'[44]

As a result of his relentlessly withering criticism, Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din was expelled from the Muslim League Parliamentary Party. He was charged with opposing the decision of the Party, injuring the interests of Pakistan and the Muslim League and discrediting the central government. He responded to these charges in a characteristically blunt press statement, defending his positions in the Assembly and reiterating that the Muslim League government had betrayed the ideals of Pakistan.[45] Given his resoluteness, and the League's intolerance of any political opposition, he was finally expelled from the Party in April 1950.

The expulsion, however, did not succeed in silencing Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din. As he remarked memorably in yet another speech criticizing the government in the Constituent Assembly, 'What do they know of freedom, who only freedom know?'[46] Soon after his expulsion, which was the first expulsion of a League member by the central committee since the establishment of Pakistan,[47]

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[43] *Speeches*, *Pakistan Times*, 11 October 1949, 159.

[44] *Speeches*, 'Speech on the Resolution Regarding Criticism of Government or Ministry, Constituent Assembly (Legislature) of Pakistan,' 4 January 1950, 160–62.

[45] *Speeches*, *Pakistan Times*, 19 January 1950, 167–72.

[46] *Speeches*, Constituent Assembly, 22 March 1950, 183.

[47] *Speeches*, 'Iftikharuddin explains his point of view,' *Pakistan Times*, 13 April 1950, 173.

Iftikhar-ud-Din, along with another Leaguer, Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan, established the 'Azad Pakistan Party' in November 1950. Addressing the press on the occasion Iftikhar-ud-Din remarked that the 'Muslim League having thrown all its promises and its ideals to the winds and having failed utterly in the task of building up economic, social and political life of the country, stood naked and discredited in the eyes of the peoples.' In a moment of characteristic candour, he referred to the struggle for Pakistan, when he, along with other leaders, 'promised freedom, liberty and economic prosperity to the people.' And yet, 'none of those promises had been fulfilled.' Its betrayal of the 'politically oppressed' and 'poverty ridden' aside, the League had also kept Pakistan tied to the 'apron strings of British or American Imperialism.' With the Muslim League's disintegration, it was absolutely necessary, then, 'that a party with a programme for economic, social and political advancement of the country should come into being.' Such a party was necessary to defeat 'reactionary' forces, an outcome that would not only influence the course of events in Pakistan but the 'whole of Asia.'[48]

As it turned out, the Azad Pakistan Party proved to be a short-lived entity. Detailing its objectives in a lengthy and ambitious manifesto, the Party promised the repeal of the notorious Safety Acts, dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, the election of a new Assembly by universal adult franchise, abolition of the *zamindari* system, severing of ties with the Commonwealth, an independent foreign policy and a 'peoples' revolution' in Kashmir. The party, however, was in no position to work towards these ambitious objectives. With no organization or popular base to speak of, the party only functioned as a parliamentary group in the Constituent Assembly. At the time, it was the only Muslim opposition party in the Assembly. It was also the only West Pakistan-based party to demand a loose confederation of ethnic and linguistic provinces, with the centre merely being responsible for defence, communication and foreign affairs. Weakened by internal disputes and defections of its founding members, the party faded into oblivion by 1954. That was also the year that the Communist Party of Pakistan (CPP) was banned. With the ban on the CPP, the Azad Pakistan Party's Karachi office was also raided and sealed.[49] Whatever was left of the party later merged with progressive organizations in other provinces to form the National Awami Party (NAP) in 1957. In due course, the NAP eventually emerged as the most prominent platform for progressive politics in Pakistan. True to form, Iftikhar-

[48] *Speeches,* 'Azad Pakistan Party Formed,' *Pakistan Times*, 12 November 1950, 67–68.

[49] See M. Rafique Afzal, *Political Parties in Pakistan,* Vol. 1 (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, Quaid-i-Azam University, 2002), 141–46.

ud-Din was one of the leading spirits behind the formation of the NAP.[50] He, however, did not live long to continue his politics with the NAP. With his death in June 1962, Pakistan lost one of its most prominent progressive voices.

It is important to point out though, that Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din was not the only prominent dissident to break ranks with the Muslim League. If anything, his post-independence political trajectory can best be situated within a broader atmosphere of disaffection and uncertainty that marked politics in Pakistan in its early years. Punjab politics for instance, continued to be dominated by the rivalry between Mumtaz Daultana and Iftikhar Hussain Mamdot. In their jockeying for control of the provincial party and the Punjab Ministry, Daultana managed to edge out Mamdot and his newly established Awami Muslim League in 1949.[51] Beyond Punjab, there was widespread disaffection in other provinces as well. The Central Government and the League leadership remained the target of popular and multifaceted opposition.[52] Central to this opposition were leftists and progressives of varying political affiliations. Many, like Iftikhar-ud-Din, had either joined or allied themselves with the Muslim League in the run-up to independence. In doing so, they articulated their visions of what they imagined Pakistan to be. The creation of Pakistan, however, and the politics that marked its initial years proved to be an egregious betrayal of those dreams. At the very least, then, the political career of Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din stands as a testament for all those who considered the promise of decolonization and freedom unfulfilled.

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[50] See Kauser Parveen, *The Politics of Pakistan: Role of the Opposition 1947–1958* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2013), 133–36.

[51] Chattha, 'Impact of Redistribution,' 26–27.

[52] Ayesha Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule: The Origins of Pakistan's Political Economy of Defence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 74–76.

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7

Visionary of Another Politics
Inayatullah Khan 'al-Mashriqi' and Pakistan

Markus Daechsel

The religious reformer and political activist Inayatullah Khan, better known as 'Allama Mashriqi' or 'al-Mashriqi' ('Sage of the East'), has attracted interest among intellectual historians for his idiosyncratic interpretation of Islam as a 'scientific' social Darwinism and for his flirtations with European fascism.[1] Born into a well-educated middle-class family in Punjab in 1888, he spent the first 30 years of his adult life as an educationist and civil servant in British colonial service.[2] In 1924, he published *al-Tazkirah*, his main religious-philosophical work, which he claimed, with characteristic exaggeration, to have narrowly missed a Nobel prize nomination and to have directly inspired Adolf Hitler.[3] But it was only after 1931, when Inayatullah Khan founded the paramilitary Khaksar movement ('the humble ones'; lit. 'those with ashes on their head') that he began to develop a more public and activist political vision. It was underpinned, as this chapter will argue, by a distinctive notion of revolutionary

[1] Most recently Ali Raza and Franziska Roy, 'Paramilitary Organisations in Interwar India,' *South Asia* 38, no.4 (2015): 671-89; Markus Daechsel, 'Scientism and Its Discontents: The Indo-Muslim "Fascism" of Inayatullah Khan Al-Mashriqi,' *Modern Intellectual History* 3, no.3 (2006). For excellent earlier interpretations with first-hand experience of al-Mashriqi and his men, see Phillips Talbot, 'The Khaksar Movement,' *Indian Journal of Social Work* 2, no.2 (1941); Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Modern Islam in India, a Social Analysis* (Lahore: Minerva Book Shop, 1943); J. M. S. Baljon, *Modern Muslim Koran Interpretation (1880–1960)* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1961).

[2] Muhammad Aslam Malik, *Allama Inayatullah Mashriqi* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2000), 1–3. According to colonial sources, he failed his ICS exam despite 'brilliant career prospects.' http://dal.ca.libguides.com/archivalresearch/citation/chicago.

[3] See discussion in Daechsel, 'Scientism and Its Discontents: The Indo-Muslim "Fascism" of Inayatullah Khan Al-Mashriqi.'

politics that captivated the hearts of millions of South Asian Muslims, just as Muhammad Ali Jinnah's Pakistan movement was gathering pace.

At the height of his influence, Mashriqi's impact was spectacular enough to overshadow much better remembered events in the great drama of Muslim identity formation in South Asia. The Lahore Resolution of March 1940, for instance, is now universally regarded as a breakthrough moment for Jinnah and the Pakistan movement. But for observers at the time, who did not yet know where history would lead in the years to come, it was 'al-Mashriqi' and his Khaksars that made the headlines. In a signature moment of colonial violence, scores of the Allama's followers were shot dead by the police after deliberately defying curfew orders in Lahore's Old City.[4] This was less than a mile away from Minto Park, where the Muslim League delegates were gathering for their historic annual session. In the minds of sympathetic observers, the massacre immediately invoked two of the most famous and significant battles of all of Islamic history. The precise number of Khaksar activists involved was said to be 313, the same as the number fighting under the Prophet Muhammad's very leadership to win their first military victory at Badr. Others spoke of a second 'Karbala,' that quintessential battle of the Shi'a passion story when a corrupt establishment brutally slaughtered a band of true believers, and when martyrdom became a byword for righteousness and moral victory.[5] Teenage boys in the alleyways and streets of Lahore would demand to be called 'Khaksar' in admiration for the spade-wielding men in khaki, who bravely faced death in a hail of bullets rather than obey orders issued by Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan's provincial government.[6]

Official worries about the disruptive potential of 'al-Mashriqi' and his movement persisted for many years to come; in fact, well into Pakistan's early years as an independent nation. His hold over the public imagination, in contrast, waned much earlier, despite his studious attempts to stay in the limelight. By the end of the war, the Muslim League had begun to eclipse the Khaksars. Rather than as heroes of a particularly radical and principled strand of Muslim

[4] 'Confidential Report on the situation in Punjab for the second half of March 1940,' File l/P&J/5/243, Oriental and India Office Collections (Henceforth OIOC). 'Khaskar Disturbances in Lahore on 19 March 1940,' File 74/1/40, Home Political, NAI.

[5] File 33/8/40 Home Political, 'Proposed action under the Indian Press (Emergency Powers) Act against the al-Islah, the principal organ of the Khaksar Assoc.,' NAI.

[6] As remembered in a personal communication by Daniyal Latifi, later secretary of Punjab Muslim League and author of the 1946 Muslim League election manifesto. New Delhi, March 1999.

nationalism, they were increasingly seen as spoilers and 'fifth columnists.'[7] The Khaksars' decline vis-à-vis the League was not a straightforward matter of one ideological position defeating another, however. In the final analysis, the Khaksars failed not because their message ran against the grain of history but because it was successfully appropriated and repackaged by their competitors, the Muslim League chief among them.

It is therefore not a straightforward matter to include al-Mashriqi and his men among 'Muslims against the Muslim League.' The Khaksars often insisted that they felt no enmity towards Jinnah and his party, but this did not stop them from vigorously campaigning against individual League politicians throughout their history. This antagonism was of a different order to that between the League and many of the other movements and personalities discussed in this volume. The Majlis-i-Ahrar, the Khuda'i Khidmatgar or the Jama'at-i-Islami each proposed a very distinctive vision of how the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent *could* have constituted themselves politically if their respective movements had not been outmuscled by the Quaid-i Azam's forces. The Khaksar alternative, in contrast, was altogether less tangible; less a blueprint for a different future than a different sense of what it meant to be 'political.' As this chapter will demonstrate, Mashriqi could speak both in favour of Pakistan and in favour of a united 'Hindustan' without seeing this as much of a contradiction. The key to his political vision was not a particular ideological content but a particular sense of temporality. His programmatic statements and his often spectacular mass mobilization campaigns only made sense within a certain understanding of how past, present and future fitted together, and how political activism could interact with the flow of time. It was here, rather than at the level of any specific policy proposals, that his difference from the Muslim League mainstream was most tangible.

The Allama and Pakistan

Mashriqi's chequered afterlife in independent Pakistan offers a good entry point to his complex relationship with the country's national ideology. Despite his one-time prominence, he has been largely left out of official narratives of

[7] Dawn, 6 February 1947 and 8 February 1947, reprinted in *Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah Papers: First Series*, ed. Z. H. Zaidi (Islamabad: Quaid-i-Azam Papers Project), 1993, Vol. 1/II, 251, 255. When Mashriqi sought to stage a triumphal entry to Lahore in 1944 complete with fireworks, he was not warmly received by the local population. Som Anand, *Lahore, Portrait of a Lost City* (Lahore: Vanguard Books, 1998), 144–46.

the nation's 'formative phase,' which present the ascendancy of Jinnah and the Muslim League as a foregone conclusion.[8] At the same time and unlike many of the other personalities discussed in this volume, Mashriqi is not directly vilified or considered as an anti-national figure. Almost all of Mashriqi's original writings have been re-issued, including *al-Tazkirah* and his more political works from the 1930s to the 1950s, but they remain mostly unread; messages in a bottle that have yet to find a significant audience. Meanwhile, latter-day Khaksar apologists have been free to publish sympathetic accounts of his life that seek to downplay any antagonism that may once have existed between the Khaksars and the League.[9] Even sporadic attempts to rehabilitate his political movement after his death have been politely tolerated by the power elites but have not attracted more than passing curiosity.[10]

Among the first attempting to reclaim Mashriqi for Pakistani nationalism were other political outsiders, who had similarly been excluded from the official record. Shortly before his death in 1975, the firebrand journalist and Majlis-i-Ahrar activist Shorish Kashmiri published an article about the Khaksar's 'Karbala' – that great confrontation with the Punjab government at the time of the Lahore Resolution.[11] What he had to say is significant because

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[8] He is only mentioned in passing, for instance, in Khalid Bin Sayeed, *Pakistan: The Formative Phase 1857–1948* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968) and not at all in the officially endorsed Roger D. Long, *A History of Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2015).

[9] Most easily accessible is Malik, *Allama Inayatullah Mashriqi*, who also claims a direct endorsement from General Zia ul-Haq for his biography. There are also numerous academic and personal publications by Mashriqi's grandson, for example Nasim Yousaf, *Allama Mashriqi & Dr Akhtar Hameed Khan: Two Legends of Pakistan* (New York: Nasim Yousaf, 2003); and Nasim Yousaf, 'Khaksar Movement Weekly "Al-Islah's" Role toward Freedom,' *Pakistaniaat* 3, no.3 (2011): 1-21. For a complete list of his extensive output, see http://independent.academia.edu/NasimYousaf, accessed 22 September 2016.

[10] The latest revival attempt by Mashriqi's son, Hamid ud-Din, ran out of steam when the latter died. 'Khaksar leader dies of cardiac arrest' *Dawn*, 6 March 2006. The death of other Khaksar leaders is also occasionally reported in Pakistan's leading English-language daily (*Dawn*), e.g. 11 January 2010. For a recent historical assessment of the Khaksars in the same paper see Nadeem Paracha, 'Smoker's Corner: Man of Action,' *Dawn*, 20 March 2016.

[11] *Chatan*, 1 September 1975, reprinted as Shorish Kashmiri, 'Khaksar Tehrik Siyasi Karbala Mein Shahid Ki Ga'i,' in *19 March 1940 Ke Khaksar Shuhada: Eik Khun Chakan Sanihah Jo Qiyam-e Pakistan Ki Buniyad Bana*, ed. Hakim Ahmed Hussayn (Lahore: Maktaba-i-Hurriyat, 1999).

it anticipates some of the main argument proposed in this chapter. The true movement for 'Pakistan,' Kashmiri asserted, was not identical with the official Muslim League led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah but consisted of a tradition of resistance against imperialism that stretched all the way back to the Great Uprising of 1857. For Kashmiri, this included many who had in fact been *against* the Muslim League (and ironically also against 'Pakistan' as it was then understood) because they disagreed with the latter's gradualist approach and lack of principled anti-colonialism. This included not only the Khaksars but also his own Majlis-i-Ahrar, the Khuda'i Khidmatgar, the Pir of Pagaro and others.[12] What gave the Khaksar's cause added importance was the fact that their martyrdom was inflicted on them by the provincial government led by Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, a prominent Muslim League ally who in his closeness to the colonial establishment encapsulated all that was wrong with the Quaid-i Azam's party. For Kashmiri's revisionist history, the real battle line in the struggle for Pakistan was not between a Hindu nation and a Muslim nation, or even between Western imperialism and Muslim resistance, but between an illegitimate Muslim establishment and those who were willing to die for their true beliefs in their fight against it. This struggle continued long after 1947; in fact it was still considered incomplete by men of Kashmiri's ilk at the time of his death.

This was in part disingenuous. Far from perceiving themselves as fighting on the same side, the Ahrar had traditionally been the enemies of the Khaksars, who condemned and occasionally even physically assaulted them for their sectarianism and perceived theological misguidedness.[13] Most importantly, al-Mashriqi and the Khaksars never had much truck with the religious right's cause célèbre – the official excommunication of the Ahmadiyyah community as non-Muslim – and neither, for that matter, did they care for ongoing demands to make some version of the *Shari'a* the law of the land.[14] Kashmiri's sketch of an alternative Pakistan movement contained an important kernel of truth, however. The Khaksar's political vision did indeed share something important with that of the Ahrar and other opposition groups. It was a sense that the 'Pakistan' the Muslim League delivered in 1947 was in some way incomplete

[12] Ibid., 151.

[13] This conflict was rampant in the 1939 stand-off with the Congress government in U.P. 'Letter Aligarh District Muslim League to Jinnah,' File 92/39 Home Political, Punjab CID memorandum, 11 July 1939. NAI.

[14] Paracha, 'Smoker's Corner: Man of Action.'

and therefore illegitimate, that 'Pakistan' was not simply the name of a country brought into existence, but an ongoing project, a work in progress that had to continue across the moment of decolonization as conventionally conceived.

It is illustrative here to consider some material coincidentally included in a book that went out of its way to deny any fundamental ideological disagreement between Mashriqi's Khaksars and Jinnah's League. Its main argument was already spelt out in the title, which simply reads *Sir Sayyid – Jinnah – Mashriqi*.[15] The suggestion here is that the story of Pakistan can be traced as a succession of different founding fathers who each had their own particular limitations but nevertheless were perfect for what was required of them: Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan, the nineteenth-century reformer who got Muslims thinking about the challenge of Western science for the first time; Mashriqi, who developed a successful fusion of science and Islam and translated it into a programme for political action; Jinnah, the lawyer and statesman who made sure that Pakistan finally emerged from the constitutional wrangling of the 1940s. A lot of the discussion is dedicated to defuse one of the most serious allegations made against Mashriqi at the time of his greatest popularity – that he sponsored a failed assassination attempt on Jinnah in 1943.[16] Although the perpetrator had indeed been a member of the Khaksars, he acted without the knowledge of the organization or its founder. In fact, as the author emphasizes again and again, as far as loyal Khaksars were concerned, the Quaid-i Azam was an object of their sincere veneration, not hatred.[17]

The Allama's seamless incorporation into Pakistan's national story is disrupted by a discordant note that comes from a piece of writing appended at the very end. It is al-Mashriqi's own rention of a *Tarana-i-Pakistan* – an alternative national anthem, which had first been published as part of Mashriqi's collection of political and religious poetry, *Armughan-i Hakim*.[18] Unmentioned in Sher Zaman's apologetic history, it was dated to a precise and politically significant moment in the Allama's life: the night from 3–4 July 1952. This was a few days before he, weighed down by persistent ill health, would be released from seven months of preventive detention, imposed on

[15] Khaksar Sher Zaman, *Sir Sayyid, Jinnah, Mashriqi* (Chah Sultan, Rawalpindi: Madani Publishers, 1992).

[16] Ibid., 106–08.

[17] Ibid., 45.

[18] Inayatullah Khan Mashriqi, *Armughan-e Hakim* (Lahore: Tazkira Publishers, n.d.), 201–3. Also reprinted in Sher Zaman, *Sir Sayyid, Jinnah, Mashriqi*, 205–07.

him by the Pakistani authorities for posing a threat to the political order of the newly independent nation-state.

Mashriqi's 'anthem' shares the poetic refrain 'Arz-i-Pakistan ('Soil of Pakistan') with Hafeez Jullundhri's anthem which was officially adopted by the government in 1954, but there the similarity ends. Mashriqi's rendition of the national song highlights that particular sense of incompleteness that was already suggested in Shorish Kashmiri's article as the hallmark of an alternative 'Pakistan.' Jullundhri's officially endorsed verses speak about a glorious country that already exists – the Quaid-i Azam's efforts have made this possible – and that the singer hopes may *endure* into the future. '*Pak sarzamin shad bad*' ('May the land of the pure *stay* glad'). The past is mentioned only in a single line and immediately connected up with what is yet to come: Pakistan is '*tarjuman-e mazi, shan-e hal, jan-e istiqbal*' ('interpreter of the past – pride of the present – soul of the future'). Mashriqi's very different 'anthem' starts with the following verses:[19]

Musalman ki tamannaun ki duniya – Arz-e Pakistan
[A world of longing for the Muslims – Land of Pakistan]

Musalman ki dunya ki tamanna – Arz-e Pakistan
[Object of desire of the Muslim World – Land of Pakistan]

Sila milna to tha Muslim ko khun-e be-gunahun ka
[The blood shed by the innocent would not go unrewarded for the Muslim]

Yam-e khunab ka lo'lo'e lala – Arz-e Pakistan
[Oh red pearl from a sea of tears of blood – Land of Pakistan]

Uth ae mard jawan! Talwar se rabb ko salami de!
[Get up and come young man! And greet the Lord with your sword drawn!]
…
It ends with the couplet:
Bulao Mashriqi ko kham ke kham lae wafaun ke
[Call out for Mashriqi to get you drunk with wine of dreams fulfilled]

Ke ho jae rag-e khal-e saweda – Arz-e Pakistan!
[that it may be as dear to you as the ruddy drops – Land of Pakistan]

In contrast to Jullundhri's invocation of an actual country, Mashriqi's anthem dwells on the memories of the struggle for Pakistan, on the emotional state that brought about the formation of the nation. For him, Pakistan is the fulfillment

[19] Translation is by the author

of wishes and a repayment of debts accrued over years of political activism. It is about the state of intoxication felt when years of violent victimization are finally overcome in a new dawn of militarist awakening. This is not a country that is called upon to *remain* glorious, as in the official anthem, but a country that its citizens by virtue of their faith and sacrifice have a right to demand to *become* glorious. In other words, Mashriqi's Pakistan is not only an achievement to be proud of but also a struggle unfinished, a country barely on the threshold of existence.

This vision of 'Pakistan' is never far from the narrative of Mashriqi's political career as it is described in many of the biographical sketches appended to the new editions of Mashriqi's writings.[20] There is no acknowledgement here that the Khaksars' fortunes irreparably declined in the years before partition, or indeed that the achievement of independence was a significant turning point for the Mashriqi saga. Instead, there is an unbroken line from the great Khaksar resistance campaigns of 1939 and 1940, when they first confronted the Congress government in the United Provinces over Sunni–Shi'a violence, and then the Unionist/Muslim League government in Punjab, to Pakistan's post-independence period. In 1947, we are told, Mashriqi immediately pursued a campaign to bring the two wings of Pakistan closer together by resettling large numbers of their inhabitants in the respective other wing. He then founded the Indo-Pakistan Islam League, reportedly to protect India's Muslims by bringing further territories under Pakistani control; he got in touch with the United Nations to settle the refugee issue but was prevented from travelling to New York because the Pakistan government refused to issue him with a passport; he held a mass rally in Lahore in 1950, urging Pakistanis to militarize their society in order to defend the country against Indian aggression (an event prominent enough at the time to be mentioned by US diplomatic observers in their situation reports).[21] He claimed to have uncovered a secret Indian plot to strangle Pakistan by diverting Punjab's great rivers. He was arrested and sent to Mianwali jail under preventive public order legislation. He proposed the creation of a One Unit Scheme for West Pakistan years before it became official policy, and a class-based, corporatist electoral system for the new Pakistani

[20] See Mashriqi, *Armughan-e Hakim*, 1; and *Isharat* (Icchra: Tazkira Publishers, 1997), 11–38.

[21] 'Coming Elections in the Punjab,' 19 January 1951, File 790 D.00/1-1951 Lahore Despatch, RG59, Box 4145, National Archives and Record Administration (Henceforth NARA).

constitution. He was arrested again in 1957, when he organized 'jihad camps' along the border with Kashmir to start a people's struggle against India, again over the division of the Indus river water.[22] Following General Ayub Khan's military coup, Mashriqi was released again. A planned nationwide Khaksar convention in Rawalpindi, however, was quickly banned under martial law, and the Allama himself placed under house arrest. When he finally died in August 1963, a complete *hartal* (general strike) was said to be observed in the city of Lahore as a sign of mourning and respect. Ayub Khan himself responded with an official eulogy for the dead leader.[23]

The common theme that emerges from this life-story is Mashriqi's mastery of a politics of confrontation. Throughout his career he opposes those who are already in power, a pattern that hardly changes whether his opponent is the Punjab government in the 1940s, the British colonial government at large or indeed, the Government of Pakistan under Jinnah, Liaquat Ali Khan or their successors after decolonization. From Mashriqi's point of view they are ultimately all somewhat illegitimate, and they all respond to his campaigns in a similar way – by sending him to jail. Importantly, Mashriqi's political stock depended on his trading in *visions for the future*, whether they were of a national polity of some description, more concrete but equally unrealistic schemes like settling millions of Bengalis in West Pakistan or waging an unofficial mass jihad against India. Mashriqi's 'Pakistan,' as his 'national anthem' already indicated, is not a country, let alone a set of state institutions and policies but a political project that is embodied in the hopes and dreams of its people. Most importantly, this was a 'Pakistan' that one never truly arrived in, as it lay, forever unreachable, on the other side of the temporal horizon. More than anything else, Mashriqi's vision stood out for its distinctive and peculiar relationship with temporality.

Speaking at the edge of time

In one of his last speeches before the advent of Pakistan, at Bankipur, Patna, in May 1947, Mashriqi delivered a remarkable apocalyptic tirade about the

[22] As Daniel Haines states in his forthcoming book, *Rivers Divided: Indus Basin Waters in the making of India and Pakistan* (Hurst, forthcoming), a flyer advertising Mashriqi's agitation found its way into the papers of US Secretary of State John Foster Dulles. See also 'Kashmir 1957,' Subject Files relating to Pakistan 1953-1957, A1 Entry 1306, RG59 Lot Files, NARA.

[23] *Dawn*, 25 and 28 August 1963. *Jang*, 30 August 1963.

future of the Indian subcontinent.[24] With hindsight it was wildly unrealistic as a political alternative. But it included a remarkably radical critique of the unfolding process of decolonization highly relevant for our discussion. In fact, the Allama anticipated much of what later theorists of post-colonialism like Frantz Fanon would have to say about violence and identity in the early 1960s.[25] The speech began with a dramatic vision:[26]

> Only a revolution [*inqilab*] that has been brought forth in the battlefield [*maidan-i jang*] and by the collective physical force of the people ['*awam ke mutahhida jismani zor se*] can bring to the people of Hindustan freedom in its true sense. Such a revolution can fundamentally overturn the system of government prevailing today. … A revolution born out of the power of the masses [*jamhur*] can offer a clear path towards the establishment of *a true Hindustani government* [*hindustani raj*], after erasing all aspects of British rule in a wholly self-made and self-willed [*khud bakhud*] upheaval.

After noting the typically post-colonial distinction between 'true' and 'false' freedom, between superficial and total liberation, and the need for an experience of collective violence to achieve the latter, an interesting choice of phrase stands out – the consistent reference to 'Hindustan' for what is authentic and truly reflective of the revolutionary masses. It is not, here or anywhere else in the speech, juxtaposed to 'Pakistan,' although the establishment of Pakistan in some form was highly likely when the speech was given. What is more, Mashriqi himself is said to have been in favour of some form of partition of India at that time, even though he still believed that the new nation-state for Muslims would leave the Muslim-majority provinces Punjab and Bengal undivided and also include a generously proportioned corridor linking East and West Pakistan across the Muslim-dominated towns and cities of the Gangetic planes.[27] But he chose not to speak of 'Pakistan' when he described what a true liberation from colonialism would entail. Freedom had to involve all of the subcontinent's 400

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[24] Reprinted as 'Taqsim-i Hind ka khaufnak anjam' in Inayatullah Khan Mashriqi, *Hadis ul-Qur'an* (Icchra: Allama Mashriqi Publications, 2002), 471–72.

[25] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963).

[26] Translated by Markus Daechsel.

[27] 'Hayat-e Hazrat 'Allama Mashriqi eik nazar mein' in Inayatullah Khan Mashriqi, *Dah Albab* (Icchra: al-Tazkirah Publications, n.d.). According to colonial reports the inclusion of Delhi, Ajmer and Agra in Pakistan was also demanded by the Khaksars. File 28/7/1947 Home Political, Khaksars. NAI.

million people or it would be meaningless. Freedom was not the prerogative of any particular religious group but a human universal, as other references later in the speech would confirm.

Questions can be asked whether this vision was at least in part influenced by tactical considerations. The speech was after all delivered in Bihar, where Muslim communities had suffered grievous communal violence only a few months earlier, and where any chance of being included in a future Pakistan was remote. A total revolution across all of Hindustan and without religious exclusions may well have been the audience's best hope at the time. The Khaksar leader had made the rehabilitation of internally displaced victims of communal violence a main theme of his activism, petitioning the government and the Muslim League to commit to generous compensation payments, even sending his own men to build houses for the destitute in badly affected places such as Patna.[28] This was a direct response to the Khaksar's weak position as a political force. Their numbers had spectacularly collapsed over the two years before partition, largely due to mass defections to Jinnah's Muslim League National Guards and particularly in erstwhile strongholds in the Muslim-majority provinces such as Punjab.[29] In consequence, Mashriqi had so little of an organization left that he could not afford to ignore the needs of his followers, simply because they happened to live in territories bound to go to India. But his commitment to a pan-South Asian framework was not dropped in later years when his career was in effect confined to Pakistan alone. Revealingly, he called his revamped Khaksar organization the '*Indo* Pakistan Islam League' and often included cross-border references in his post-partition statements.[30] Although he also often condemned Pakistan's larger neighbour for its threatening behaviour, and made waves by calling for a jihad against India in the 1950s, Mashriqi never believed that a Pakistani nation was facing an Indian nation with unbridgeable hostility. Rather, his exhortations to struggle against India applied to people

[28] Letter Mashriqi to M. Yunus 29 May 1947, Press Statement Patna, 29 May 1947 in: Zaidi, *Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah Papers: First Series*. Vol. 1, No. 505, encl. 4.

[29] Khaksar numbers in Punjab declined from 4,000 in 1943 to 600 in June 1946. File 28/5/46 Home Political, Volunteer Organisations – private armies membership first half of 1946. NAI.

[30] An often reprinted speech given at Peshawar in 1954, for instance, ends with the words 'Having become proper Muslims again, would we still be sitting around in Delhi, Agra, Ajmer, Lucknow and Calcutta, whimpering for God to help us [*Allah Allah kar rahe hunge*]; 'Hazrat 'Allama al-Mashriqi ka akhiri intibah' in Mashriqi, *Isharat*, 40.

on both sides of the border, and singled out the political regime of India as its target. When considered more closely, these were not plans for invasion but exhortations to change political realities across the region. There is no reason to believe that Mashriqi did not mean it when he dreamed aloud about a revolution that would engulf all of 'Hindustan' in May 1947.

Much of this was already evident from the text of the Bankipur speech itself. Mashriqi went on to describe, with his characteristic gusto for apocalyptic imagery, what the alternative to total liberation by means of total revolution would entail:

> The British offer a peaceful transfer of power to those corrupted by British education, but this cannot give rise to anything but a return of the worst form of British rule. In fact, this kind of rule will be ten times worse than the worst of British rule, more oppressive and ugly, more terrible, more capitalistic [*sarmaya-darana*] and more *un-Hindustani*. … Really it will be a state of institutionalized civil war [*munazzam fitna*], permanent tyranny [*mustaqal zulm*], and permanent anarchy [*harbong*] of the worst order – an everlasting government as violently destructive as a nuclear bomb [*ek atomi bomb ki tarah ki da'imi hukumat*], an ever-lasting imperialist autocracy [*badshahahat*] based on fear. Under these circumstances the killing of nations [*qaum*] that refuse to submit will be publicly licensed. There will be the murder of babies in their mothers' womb, the annihilation of other nations' civilization and culture, the humiliation of their true histories, the death of nationalist [*milli*] philosophies, the total erasure [*nist aur nabud karna*] of all honourable traditions, the general slaughter of ideas … To transfer power over Hindustan to any one or to several *political parties* [a reference to be noted for later] will only give rise to the worst autocracy [*shahinshahiyat*], the worst capitalistic exploitation and the worst barbarism ['*halaku khaniyat*'] …[31]

A few sentences on, Mashriqi even spoke of the utter annihilation of the 5,000 years old 'beautiful civilization of Asia,' the wholesale disappearance of Islam from South Asia, followed by the possible destruction of Sanksritic and Hindu culture. 'I have grave doubts,' he continued, 'that *under these governments* [note the use of plural], 18 crore *low-caste* Hindus, nine and a half crore *poor* Muslims and six crore untouchables [*Acchut*] would preserve enough life [*is qadar zinda bhi reh sakenge*] to be able to raise their voices against such oppression.'

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[31] *Hadis ul-Qur'an*, 471.

Only a call for united action by what Fanon would later call 'the wretched of the earth'[32] could prevent the horrors of a continued 'Birla Raj [Hindu bourgeois capitalism], Brahmin Raj [upper caste domination], Khan Bahadur Raj [Muslim bureaucratic cronyism], and British Raj [rule by the Westernized]':

> Under present circumstances the only remedy is for all the people of Hindustan to stand united as one soul and one voice against this terrible conspiracy, to unify their powers and bring about a joined-up revolution [*mushtarak inqilab*]. … Tens of thousands will surely have to die in the process but tens of millions will be saved forever. If one human being has decided to kill another human being in the pursuit of power and if the world has become a mere theatre of loot and oppression [*lut aur zulm ka tamasha*] then the time has come to sacrifice tens of thousands of our men until truthfulness, dignity and justice prevail again.[33]

A speech like this squarely positioned Mashriqi in a revolutionary tradition which, with great many and often mutually hostile variations, had existed in colonial India since the late nineteenth century, stretching from the Bengal terrorists, the Congress 'radicals' around Tilak, the Ghadr movement and with a detour to V. D. Savarkar's Hindutva ideology, all the way to Bhagat Singh's Hindustan Socialist Association of the 1930s. They all linked true liberation to a comprehensive and violent overturning of the existing political, social and economic order, a categorical rejection of British imperialism not only as a political but also as a cultural and civilizational force, and a valorization of a coalition of the downtrodden as revolutionary agent.

As Chris Moffat has suggested in his work on Bhagat Singh, the notion of 'revolution' in this tradition is all about a particular notion and experience of historical time.[34] Revolution is *not* necessarily based on a clear blue-print for capturing power and for reorganizing power relations according to a new ideal, once a takeover has succeeded. The example of Lenin and the Bolshevik revolution in Russia is actually misleading here, as are most orthodox Marxist models of revolution. Instead, being revolutionary is a way of living at the edge of temporality itself, when the world we know is coming to an end but the new is not yet tangible. This is a moment when the true revolutionary has to demonstrate what Alain Badiou called 'fidelity' to an 'event,' an ability first to recognize the moment when a radically different tomorrow becomes possible,

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[32] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 1963).
[33] Ibid., 472.
[34] Chris Moffat, 'Experiments in Political Truth,' *Postcolonial Studies* 16, no.2 (2013).

which often comes unexpected and cannot be pre-planned; and then second, to stay true to the possibility of this moment and to pursue it as far as it may lead.[35] Being revolutionary, in short, is only apparently about the future; in fact it is above all else about living in and for the present – a present, that is, that has been wrenched out of the normal logic of time.

Mashriqi's political activism has always fitted this mould to some extent (more examples from the early 1940s will follow in due course) but the revolutionary sense of temporality just described is particularly pronounced in the Bankipur speech. It is striking that despite all the invocation of 'freedom' and 'revolution,' Mashriqi does not actually describe in positive terms what a best-case future may hold. There are no depictions of a just society beyond the very general reference to 'truthfulness, dignity and justice' at the very end. If there is any sense of utopia at work here at all, it is simply the *absence* of the evils of today. It is as if the success of the revolution is beyond the revolutionary's capacity of perception. All too clear, in contrast, is what will happen if the revolution fails. In his description of the terrors that await the people of India if the British simply hand over their power to the Congress and the League (although they are not directly named) Mashriqi can truly let rip. But even here an entanglement with the present is inescapable. The apocalypse is not truly unfathomable, it will simply be a more terrifying version of what we already know: autocracy, capitalist exploitation, bureaucratic cronyism, de-culturation, caste prejudice, communal violence. Once again, thought is thrown back to the present. And yet, what Mashriqi demands of its listeners is *not* simply to put up with the world as it currently stands. Rather, it is an exhortation for action, for a total commitment to total change, but one that does not yet know where it will eventually lead. All that Mashriqi *does* know, and tries to convince his listeners to accept, is that the moment when such change would be possible is now, that here in May 1947 historical time as it normally exists is about to be suspended.

Without anticipating too much of the material that is yet to follow, it is already quite apparent what made Mashriqi's politics different from other more mainstream nationalist options. It was not so much a choice between 'Pakistan' and 'Hindustan,' which for somebody like Mashriqi was never exclusive; rather

[35] Alain Badiou, *Ethics: An Essay on the Understanding of Evil* (London: Verso, 2001). In a way that works directly for the case at hand, he uses the 'events' of May 1968 in France, the Paris Commune of 1870, and the Cultural Revolution in China rather than more obviously 'successful' revolutions as his historical models. Alain Badiou, *The Communist Hypothesis* (London: Verso, 2010).

it was a radical vision of how politics related to time – or put differently, of what politics itself actually meant. It is no coincidence that Mashriqi specifically laid the responsibility of the upcoming apocalypse at the door of 'political parties' (*siyasi jama'atein*) who acquired their claim to rule over India through peaceful, constitutional transfer; or in other words, within the flow of time as it *normally* works. The evil of this 'political' politics is precisely grounded in its inability to break through the limits of temporality, leading to an 'everlasting' (*da'imi* – repeated several times over in the speech) confinement in a cycle of horrors. At the very moment when everything should be possible, 'political parties' entrap the people of India in a state where nothing is possible. Conducting politics according to *plans* for the future was precisely the problem here, for a future planned was also a future tamed and a future foreclosed. It was no longer a revolutionary moment to be seized.

It should come as no surprise that the relationship between the Khaksars and the League reached a particularly low point in the immediate run-up to partition when the nature of temporality was at its most contested. Probably no other point in time over the previous several decades had felt quite so much like a potential revolutionary moment. The stakes were higher than ever before, and hostilities were at fever pitch. Not only were there further attempts on Jinnah's life, although less seriously pursued than the one in 1943, which Muslim League supporters would again immediately blame on Mashriqi's men.[36] Perhaps the most forceful direct confrontation between the two political forces occurred on 9 June 1947, when a Khaksar contingent raided the Imperial Hotel in New Delhi where the Muslim League Working Committee under Jinnah's leadership was deliberating how to react to Mountbatten's '3 June Plan.'[37] After disrupting proceedings for some time they were expelled and a great majority of League delegates followed Jinnah in accepting the 'Plan.' This was the moment when it became clear that Pakistan would only come into being with the two large Muslim majority provinces Bengal and Punjab divided – the much-invoked 'truncated' or 'moth-eaten' Pakistan that upset Jinnah's intricately constructed logic of how to balance the respective interests of Muslims living in majority and minority provinces.[38] From now on, the political futures of Pakistan and

[36] Letter Mrs K. L. Rallia Ram to Jinnah, 13 June 1947, Zaidi, *Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah Papers: First Series*. Vol. 2, 177.

[37] File III-6, Encl., 9 June 1947, ibid. Vol. 2.

[38] The classic discussion is Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

India would no longer be part of the same constitutional arrangement, however loose or indirect. For Jinnah and the Muslim League, having to let go of so much territory was less than ideal, but it was not a deal breaker. They would soon be able to greet the foundation of Pakistan with all the enthusiasm of a nationalist movement victorious, and proudly take their seats at the helm of government. From a Khaksar point of view, in contrast, this was the moment when 'Pakistan' became nothing more than a 'plan' – a (mostly) foreseeable and not particularly appealing future. If 'Pakistan' ever had a place in that revolutionary moment which Mashriqi had evoked in Bankipur, it was now lost. In short, this was the day when the revolution died. Nothing could be greater testimony to just how different the Khaksars were from the Muslim League than the chasm that existed between their respective experiences of 1947.

The Allama at war

Allama Mashriqi had not always been as circumspect about spelling out possible futures as he was just before partition. Only a few years earlier, in 1945, he published a document that at least made him appear little different in his political sensibilities from other mainstream nationalist politicians. It bore the grand title 'Constitution of India' and contained what at face value looked like an intricate system of institutions and detailed policy suggestions.[39] This appeared to be a conventional 'future planned,' and compelling evidence for the Khaksars' principled rejection of 'Pakistan.' Surely, nobody even vaguely loyal to the Muslim League cause would have published a document entitled 'Constitution of India' at a moment when the antagonism between pro- and anti-Pakistan forces was more unbridgeable than ever. But it would be a mistake to interpret this document in such a straightforward manner. Mashriqi was still writing as the grand master of a different kind of politics. The best way to understand the 1945 document was in fact, and quite literally so, as an *anti*-constitution. The context is as important here as the actual content, and to grasp it fully requires a detour further into the past, to the very beginning of the Second World War.

Mashriqi was convinced that the war was the revolutionary moment that offered the key for India's ability to achieve total liberation. In fact, much of

[39] File 28/4/45 Constitution of Allama Inayatullah Khan Mashriqi and the Khaksars, Home Political, NAI. 'Naqib-e Fitrat, Mufakir-e A'zam, salar-e Inqilab aur bani Khaksar tehrik Hazarat 'Allama Muhammad Inayatullah Khan al-Mashriqi ki dastan-e hayat' in Mashriqi, *Isharat*, 22–27

his political career before 1947 is hardly comprehensible without taking this assumption into account. This was not simply a strategic calculation, along the lines that the colonial overlords were now in a position of weakness and therefore more amenable to making concessions, or, for that matter, easier to overthrow by a revolution. In a statement made just after the war had started, Mashriqi decreed categorically that 'bargaining with an enemy in trouble was unmanly.'[40] How to best exploit British weakness at the time was precisely what preoccupied more conventional nationalist politicians, but not him. Wildly different opinions were voiced on the matter. The Congress was completely paralyzed over whether to support or oppose the British war effort, and what they should demand in return. Eventually they chose the worst of both worlds, courting arrest en masse for purely symbolic acts of individual defiance. The Muslim League pursued a more unified and farsighted strategy of offering limited support in exchange for being allowed to operate as a party, but it too struggled with division over whether its members were allowed to serve on war councils, or directly contribute to the British recruitment effort.[41]

Mashriqi, in contrast, immediately offered, or more accurately loudly demanded, to support the Allied war effort with 30,000 paramilitary Khaksar volunteers. To his fury, he received no reply from the colonial authorities who understood only too well that this was a well-calibrated gesture of nationalist resistance rather than a well-meaning offer to beef up the imperial war effort.[42] At first sight, such a proposal must seem unlikely for a man who always boasted about having met Hitler in Germany in the 1920s, and having directly inspired him in the creation of national socialism. But Mashriqi's sudden enthusiasm for fighting 'the evils of Nazism' as he now called it, was not in fact an ideological volte-face.[43] According to his version of militarism, it did not really matter on which side one fought as long as one could partake in the experience of war itself. The motivations and circumstances had to be right, of course. Simply to enlist in the colonial forces for personal opportunity or under compulsion, as

[40] Statement Mashriqi, Lucknow Central Jail, 30 September 1939, File 101, Khaksars, QAP. Quaid-i-Azam Papers (QAP).

[41] File 1/P&J/5/243, Letter (private and personal) Craik to Linlithgow, 24 September 1940. For the wider context see Yasmin Khan, *The Raj at War* (London: The Bodley Head, 2015).

[42] File 74/6/40 Home Political, Protests from Mr Inayatullah Elmashriqi. Telegram to Viceroy, 4 October 1939. NAI.

[43] Statement 7 June 1944, File 915, Khaksars, QAP.

hundreds of thousands of his countrymen did,[44] was not what he had in mind. Indians in general, and his Khaksars in particular, had to fight as autonomous units defending their own country against an outside aggressor. As national soldiers they had to be Britain's allies, not British subjects.

There was a direct connection between the coming of the revolutionary moment and the experience of fighting, both at an individual and at a collective level. This had been the central tenet of Khaksar ideology all along. For much of the 1930s, Mashriqi had been harping on about how military organization and participation in war were the only remedies left that could prevent the Muslims from becoming a nation earmarked for extinction.[45] Mashriqi had been a relatively early adopter of an ideal of militaristic self-strengthening but he was by no means the only one in late colonial India to make suggestions of this kind. V. D. Savarkar and the Rastriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS) had been proclaiming a similar message with reference to the Hindu community from the mid-1920s, and by the late 1930s virtually all political movements that believed in anything more than constitutional loyalism had their own uniformed cadres holding parades in the streets across India. For most of them, however, paramilitary self-strengthening and its enactment in the public sphere was only an additional string to their bow, operating side by side with other and more conventional forms of conducting politics. This was certainly the case for the Rashtriya Seva Dals of the Congress and for the Muslim League National Guards.[46] The Khaksars stood out by virtue of the fact that for them militaristic self-strengthening was all there was.

Mashriqi's prescriptions of how to redefine Islam as a militaristic ethos, for instance his reinterpretation of the famous Five Pillars of Islam as military tactics, are relatively well-known from the literature and do not require to be discussed

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[44] See Khan, *The Raj at War*, Chapter 1.

[45] Talbot, 'The Khaksar Movement'; Daechsel, 'Scientism and Its Discontents: The Indo-Muslim "Fascism" of Inayatullah Khan Al-Mashriqi.'

[46] See File 74/3/40 Home Political, Question of Taking Action on an All-India basis in regards to the Khaksars and similar volunteer organizations. File 4/1/40 Home Political, Volunteer Movements in India; File 4/50/46 Home Political. Also see Raza and Roy, 'Paramilitary Organisations in Interwar India'; Markus Daechsel, *The Politics of Self-Expression: The Urdu Middle-Class Milieu in Mid Twentieth-Century India and Pakistan* (London; New York: Routledge, 2006), 67–81; Ian Talbot, *Freedom's Cry: The Popular Dimension in the Pakistan Movement and Partition Experience in North-West India* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1996), 59–80; William Gould, *Hindu Nationalism and the Language of Politics in Late Colonial India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 234–64.

in greater detail in this chapter again.[47] What is very significant for the present argument, however, is the connection between militarism and the Khaksar politics of the time. Mashriqi valorized war above all because it represented a powerful state of exception in which normal rules no longer applied. War took people who would otherwise never dream of revolutionary moments or, for that matter, of any higher ideals, into a state of mind where such considerations would suddenly become paramount. War created an absolute distinction between friend and enemy, constituting new national communities (what he once poetically described as 'cries of *murdabad* and *zindabad* arising everywhere and affecting everything').[48] Most importantly, war took people out of the entanglement of everyday life that demanded constant small compromises: the requirements of family, society, and politics as a game of material gains won through cunning and manipulation at the expense of others. In war, the logic of politics was fundamentally transformed from what I have called 'the politics of interest' to a 'politics of self-expression.'[49] Only in war as an ontological state would the people of India be able to appreciate Allama Mashriqi's visions of the revolutionary moment. Only when facing death, can the question of time, the need to seize the moment and to make life meaningful by taking authentic choices no longer be avoided.[50]

The transformative power of war also had a direct bearing on how the Muslims of India should think about their own place in the larger context of South Asia. Before exhorting the Muslims of India to 'claim the joly [sic] game of blood!,' Mashriqi wrote the following in his prison cell in Lucknow Central Jail where he had been detained just as the conflict started (in an English that is remarkably shaky for a Cambridge-educated and self-ascribed 'scientist'):

> Muslims if they want to escape annihilation must decide now not being ruled by a majority. We must prove British [sic] again that the Mussalman are actual defenders of India and therefore above all have the natural also inheritary [sic] right to control it. Blood and Rule have always gone together in History.[51]

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[47] Daechsel, 'Scientism and Its Discontents,' 455–57.

[48] 'Hazrat ʿAllama al-Mashriqi ka akhiri intibah' in Mashriqi, *Isharat*, 39.

[49] Daechsel, *The Politics of Self-Expression*.

[50] This is, of course, the core idea of German existentialism as formulated in Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (Halle a.d.S.: Niemayer, 1927).

[51] Statement, 30 September 1939, Lucknow Central Jail, File 101, QAP. The same point was also made in a telegram sent to the viceroy to which Mashriqi did not receive a reply, which in turn he made the subject of subsequent political camapaigning. Khan

Mashriqi had already made a similar argument in his pamphlet *Aksariyat ya Khun* ('Majority Rule or Blood').[52] It is undeniable that it was an exhortation to re-establish some form of Muslim rule. But was it really *only* Muslim imperialism reborn, as some contemporary observers saw the Khaksar message? In fact, this was not entirely what the Allama meant. Again the issue of how historical time comes to play in his visions is crucial here. Unlike later theoreticians of the Islamic State,[53] Mashriqi was never particularly interested in what renewed Muslim rule over India would actually be like once it was established. It was certainly not a rerun of the glorious age of the early Islamic conquests which he often glowingly described in his writings.[54] 'Time does not fly back' a programmatic article in a Khaksar organ proclaimed unambiguously, 'what once was, shall never be again … true, progressive, creative revivalism consists in reviving [a] spirit and letting it work freely.'[55] The important thing was to create the framework in which this spirit could be recognized and let it go to work. Sending Muslims into war would do just that. It was a way to disrupt normal time, a throw of the dice which might later settle in any kind of unforeseen way.

Some of Mashriqi's student followers at Aligarh University were crystal clear in their rejection of religious chauvinism when they explained the Khaksar creed a few years later:

> This [the War] is the only occasion during the last one hundred years *when 'politics' or 'political gains' do not matter because nobody knows* who is going to hold India. Therefore all parties can unite … All Parties can unite to do social work irrespective of caste or creed, *because bombs and guns know no caste or creed*.[56]

This was why, unlike the Muslim League, the Khaksars always maintained that non-Muslims were welcome as full members of their organization, and why the Khaksar oath did not actually include many distinctive references to

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Mashriqi, 'Kya Hindustan Mein A'indah Hukumat Ka Mi'yar Aksariyat Ya Khun Hoga?' (Icchra: Idara-ye 'Aliya Hindiyya, [1939]), 2.

[52] Ibid., appended to File 74/2/40 Home Political, NAI.

[53] See Ali Usman Qasmi in this volume; Jan-Peter Hartung, *A System of Life: Mawdūdī and the Ideologisation of Islam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 99–156.

[54] Daechsel, *The Politics of Self-Expression*, 49–51.

[55] 'Khaksar Views,' ed. The Radiance (Aligarh: The Radiance, 1943), 32–33.

[56] Ibid., 2.

the Muslim faith, focusing mainly on a declaration of total obedience to the supreme Khaksar leader.[57]

Mashriqi's deliberations on 'Pakistan,' which were repeated across a long exchange of often hostile open letters with Jinnah over the years that followed, were similarly driven by the Allama's main consideration: how to utilize the war as a revolutionary moment for all of India. Mashriqi began his campaign of correspondence while detained in Vellore jail, following the crackdown against the Khaksars after their 1940 'Karbala.' Mashriqi's hopes to provoke a countrywide upheaval by staging carefully coordinated stand-offs with government power had failed. His men had shown remarkable revolutionary fidelity when they willingly walked towards their death at the hand of the security forces, but all that was left of this enthusiasm now was a massive come-down. The revolutionary moment was slipping through Mashriqi's fingers, and he was desperate not to lose it altogether. His immediate hope was that a worsening of Britain's position in the war would once again give Indians of all backgrounds a chance to take charge of their own destiny. He hoped that the experience to fight against a common enemy and alongside the British as self-conscious nationalists would transform squabbling representatives of communal politics into revolutionary subjects.

Events were certainly dramatic. By 1942, the Japanese were in the process of overrunning Southeast Asia, and captured elements of the old British Indian army were reorganized by Subhas Chandra Bose's Indian National Army to join forces with the Axis. Churchill sent his cabinet colleague Stafford Cripps to India to persuade the leaders of the nationalist movements to join the war effort in exchange for an offer of dominion status once the conflict was over. Mashriqi not only once again pledged his Khaksars to join the fight; he also wanted the main nationalist players of India not miss this unique chance of liberation. For this purpose he sent letters to Jinnah, Abul Kalam Azad (who was Congress President at the time) and V. D. Savarkar (representing the Hindu

[57] There was no reference to the Prophet and no use of standard Islamic religious vocabulary. In the transcription of a Muslim League activist the oath read: 'Mein khuda ko hazir aur nazir jan kar yah eqrar karta hun ke ghalbai Islam ke khatir idarat ul-Ulya ka jo hukm hoga uspar apni jan mal qurbani wo fidda kardunga aur apne khoonke akhiri qatre se bhi daregh nahin karonga.' [I bear God my witness who is Omnipresent, all-Seeing, that for the cause of supremacy of Islam, I shall sacrifice my life and money to follow the order of the high command, and shall not shy away from spilling my last drop of blood.] Letter 'Imtiyaz Kasim, District Muslim league Patna, to Jinnah,' 30 December 1939. File 915, Khaksars, QAP.

Mahasabha) exhorting them to bury their differences and to immediately proclaim a National Government of India which could respond to the Cripps offer with a single voice.[58] The same point was also made, in shorter and more formulaic form, by Khaksar sympathizers who backed their leader with a letter writing campaign of their own. Thousands of postcards in Urdu and English and containing near identical messages were sent to the Quaid-i Azam in order to create the impression that the mass of India's Muslims shared the Allama's demand for national unity. Starting with formulaic statements like 'On behalf of the Muslims of …' followed by some locality, or 'As a serving member of the All India Muslim League …' they would claim to come from the Muslim League's own constituency, and then emphasize the importance of Hindu–Muslim unity for the future of the subcontinent.[59]

Similar exhortations were repeated over the following years, usually timed to coincide with further set backs for British forces in the East. Just as the Japanese had finally reached Indian soil in spring 1944 and the battle of Kohima was about to commence, the Allama again wrote from his prison cell to the Quaid-i Azam:

> As a last word I can only say that if you as the Quaid-i Azam of the Mussalmans of India do not show any real action in the matter of Hindu-Muslim understanding or in getting Pakistan for the Mussalmans, I shall be compelled to the conclusion that Mussalmans of India must leave you alone and try their luck elsewhere.[60]

In order to give his words greater force he then went on hunger strike, subsisting entirely on fruit juice 'in accordance with the teachings of Islam'[61] to force a meeting between the Quaid-i Azam and Gandhi who had just been released from jail. Jinnah was incensed by this treatment and worried that Mashriqi's actions were actually effective in raising the Khaksars' public profile again at the expense of the Muslim League. In a strongly worded public statement he rebutted the Allama's accusations but with some degree of selective listening. While ignoring that Mashriqi's accusation of a 'lack of action' applied

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[58] S. S. M Bahmani, 'Khaksar Efforts for the Freedom of India,' Madras 1942, File 915, Khaksars, QAP.

[59] Several dozens of these postcards and letters, in both English and Urdu, written between 1942 and 1944, and originating from places as far apart as Larkana and Patna, are preserved in File 915, QAP.

[60] Letter Mashriqi to Jinnah, 13 March 1944, File 915, QAP.

[61] Undated Memo, File 915, QAP.

both to the matter of Hindu–Muslim unity as well as to gaining Pakistan, he stated that the League had now in fact constituted a 'Committee of Action' to take the idea of Pakistan to the people more effectively.[62] The emphasis on paramilitary organizations and other forms of 'direct action' that were to prove key to the League's eventual success were to a large extent prompted by the need to counter Khaksar competition.[63]

Mashriqi's exhortations to Jinnah to immediately reach some kind of agreement with Gandhi continued into 1945 when the colonial government at last began to make arrangements for final status negotiation with the main Indian nationalist parties. It was his frustration over his inability to get a serious response from Jinnah or to be himself involved in the debate that prompted the Allama to draft the 'Constitution of India' mentioned earlier in this chapter. In typical fashion he wanted to use the document as part of an ultimatum to force the hand of the other political players. The plan was to distribute 50,000 copies of his constitution across India and directly invite key members of the public to accept it, *unless* the League and the Congress were able to reach an agreement of their own first.[64] The main purpose of the 'Constitution' was to show that an agreement across communal lines was possible if only one left the game of 'politics' behind. It was precisely Mashriqi's penchant for the very different politics of the revolutionary moment that led him to believe that constitution-making was essentially a straightforward and easy exercise. His lifelong hatred for 'political parties' also meant that he had little grasp of 'politics' in a sense that Jinnah would have understood – the balancing of different competing interests and pressures. In his sense, his was literally an *anti*-constitution.

As it happened, the great distribution campaign never happened, and the draft was not taken seriously by anyone at the time. One civil servant who read it regarded it as gobbledygook.[65] The content is relevant here purely because it offers a window onto the Allama's mindset, and crucially also on his troubled relationship with Jinnah and the League. The stated twin objectives of the constitution were 'to end Muslim Raj and Hindu Raj forever' and further to

[62] Jinnah, Statement to the press, 19 March 1944, File 1092, QAP.

[63] File 28/4/46 Home Political, Volunteer Organisations: Muslim League National Guards. NAI. See wider discussion in Talbot, *Freedom's Cry*; and Daechsel, *The Politics of Self-Expression*, 35–59.

[64] File 28/4/45 Activities of Allama Inayatullah Khan Mashriqi and the Khaksars, Home Political, NAI.

[65] Amalendu De, *History of the Khaksar Movement in India 1931–1947, Volume II* (Kolkata: Parul, 2009), 345.

ensure that everyone in the country enjoyed 'cheap food, good clothing and good housing.'[66] In order to bring this about, Mashriqi envisaged a strictly hierarchical government structure based on little consultation and strong leadership figures who would automatically do what was right because they would be chosen from a 'non-political' civil service rather than from any nationalist party. In fact, membership in a 'political' party automatically disqualified a person from holding any office of state. The proposed representation of the people followed a corporatist model of separate electorates, a strange cross between Prussia's three-class franchise and D'Anunzio fascist Charter of Carnaro. Not only would there be a formula for fair numeric representation of any conceivable religious and caste grouping in order to achieve harmony, electoral constituencies would also be separated according to class – one for the elite, one for the middle class, one for the labouring poor – so that all sections of society could be faithfully reconstituted in parliamentary bodies. In order to end plutocracy, the currency would not be based on a gold standard but on a 'wheat standard[67],' a strange echo of discussions on the nature of currency dating back to the American populist presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan at the turn of the century.

Effortlessly transcending all other possible antagonisms that plagued Indian society, the constitution would also be able to transcend the greatest antagonism of all – that between a united India and Pakistan. There would be a united India, Mashriqi proposed, but the most powerful office of president would have to alternate between a Hindu and a Muslim, provincial governors had to reflect the religion of the majority of the population and Muslim-run provinces would in theory have the right to secede from the Union if they felt threatened. For Mashriqi this was enough to call 'Pakistan' a reality. In order to make sure that no one felt victimized, Jhatka (Sikh) slaughter would be allowed, as was the killing of cows in private; and the song *Vande Mataram*, which had long been seen as a symbol of Hindu oppression by League activists, was to be banned in all but exclusively Hindu gatherings.[68]

In short, all existing problems would be abolished by the stroke of a pen. What looked like a detailed, even pedantic, technocratic dream at first sight was in reality not very different from the heady revolutionary spirit of the Bankipur speech discussed earlier. Again, the vision of the future presented

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[66] Quoted in ibid., 324.

[67] Ibid., 341.

[68] File 28/4/45, 'Activities of Allama Inayatullah Khan Mashriqi and the Khaksars,' Home Political, NAI.

here was essentially negative, a state when all present-day evils had somehow been abolished. Importantly, this was not 'future' in the conventional sense of 'times to come.' Rather than an open-ended duration when life would go on to face new and unforeseen struggles and problems, Mashriqi's constitution denoted a state of everlasting stasis when nothing of true significance was still to happen, not 'times to come' but 'time coming to an end.' A constitution as conventionally conceived does not seek to end or resolve all political struggles, only to provide them with a basic framework of values and procedures that allow these struggles to be contained within a predictable yet flexible political environment. Mashriqi's unwillingness or inability to understand this basic fact revealed him once again as a thinker of the revolutionary moment, as somebody who could incessantly talk about the future but only grasp its peculiar temporality as complete transcendence.

Pakistan and a different kind of politics

Even when he was writing faux constitutional tracts, Mashriqi's vision boiled down to bringing about the disruption of 'normal' temporality and with it 'normal' politics. Direct action by the Khaksars would provide the kindling and the war would fan the flames, until at some point, suddenly, a new future for the peoples of India would explode out of the collective revolutionary struggle of its peoples. It did not really matter for this strategy what kind of accelerant was used to get the process going; the end result of revolution was not reducible to what originally started it. Khaksar support for 'Pakistan' has to be understood in those terms; it may not have been the ultimate goal of the struggle but it was good enough to be accepted, even believed in, for part of the way.

Mashriqi had recognized the potency of a revamped Muslim nationalism under Jinnah's leadership early on and hoped that he could appropriate some of the momentum for his own ends. In 1939, the Bombay Khaksar Salar-i Sadr (commanding officer) asked Jinnah if he would accept a salute by a Khaksar contingent as a sign of their loyalty.[69] From worried letters by regional Muslim League dignitaries back to the Party's leadership it is apparent that this was part of a larger and concerted infiltration strategy. Across the land, the Khaksars would attempt to enrol Muslim League members, pretending that there was

[69] Letter Salar-e Sadr, Bombay Khaksar Tehrik to Jinnah, 23 June 1939, File 914, Khaksars, QAP.

really no difference between the two organizations.[70] British government officials even believed that formal merger talks were being prepared after the Lahore session when the Khaksars were formally banned.[71] They claim to have 'sympathy with the Muslim League,' a worried Muslim League worker wrote: 'I, however, apprehend a great danger and fear not only a weakening of the League and damage to the solidarity of the Muslims, but the development of a serious situation in which fratricide may become inevitable.'[72] Another reported in 1944 that 'people in villages believe that the Khaksars are part and parcel of the Muslim League and that they are its army.' There was no chance to organize the League's own paramilitary wing, the Muslim League National Guard, until such propaganda was countered. 'The Khaksar movement is gaining strength day by day, and people are attracted to it by the parades and the propaganda of the so-called sacrifice … and the [alleged] secret pact between Mr Jinnah and the Allama.'

Mashriqi himself never hid his more ambivalent attitude towards 'Pakistan.' In one of his open letters to Jinnah in 1943 he wrote: 'The Khaksar now stands for Pakistan more zealously than the Qaid-i Azam or Muslim League'[73] but then went on to make a sarcastic joke about how League had sought to utilize the assassination attempt against the Quaid to turn the latter into a supernatural figure. One was almost led to believe, the Mashriqi quipped, that Jinnah had fought off his assailants with his own powerful fists, after which the injuries he sustained in this fight miraculously closed up and healed without trace (in reality the perpetrator got nowhere near enough to Jinnah to actually fight or harm him). Furthermore, the whole 'Pakistan' idea was not really Jinnah's own; he had 'borrowed it from some hot-headed youth' in Cambridge, a reference to Rehmat Ali who had first coined the name 'Pakistan' while being completely ignored by the League and then given it to the 'desperate Musalmans' of India to 'win popularity.' But since this strategy had worked, Mashriqi would be a 'crack-brained fool to oppose the Qaid-e Azam.' 'Hostility between the Khaksars and the Muslim League is indeed impossible under any circumstance,' Mashriqi affirmed once more, but only because the Khaksars were by their very nature above all 'political parties.'[74]

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[70] Letter 'Imtiaz Karim to Jinnah,' 30 December 1939, File 915, Khaksars, QAP.
[71] 'Notes on Khaksar Muslim League Negotiations,' File 28/6/42, Home Political, NAI.
[72] Letter Sayyid Abdul Aziz to Jinnah, 30 December 1939, ibid.
[73] 26 August 1943, File 101, Khaksars, QAP.
[74] Ibid.

A pamphlet collecting programmatic pieces in the Khaksar English-language journal *The Radiance* made the same point. The idea of Pakistan was 'interesting enough,'[75] it stated with muted enthusiasm, before again reassuring the reader that 'we have no differences with the Muslim League.' But then the Khaksars had no differences with the All India National Congress either, with its members being as welcome to sign up as those coming from the League.[76] Readers who could remember the Khaksar's first great foray into the limelight back in 1939 must have felt confused by such statements. When the Khaksars intervened to end the vicious bout of Sunni–Shi'a violence that had plagued the city of Lucknow for the preceding years, it had issued strong condemnations against the sitting Congress ministry under Govind Ballabh Pant. They accused Congress politicians of deliberately fermenting trouble in order to split Muslim loyalties, even issuing death threats against prominent Congress Muslim leaders they believed were behind the violence.[77] And they at least verbally supported the Muslim League's claim that the Pant government constituted an autocracy guilty of anti-Muslim 'atrocities.'[78]

So why adopt a policy of equidistance towards the League and the Congress now? The answer was, of course, the Khaksars' particular understanding of what constituted 'politics.' Most political parties in India, *The Radiance* argued, understood it to mean a game of 'snatching power' from those who were already powerful, but this was really a 'senile' form of politics that was forever confined in a colonial mindset. The kind of real power that the Khaksars were after had to be built from the bottom up through 'social' work and individual transformation, activities that were not 'political' in the conventional sense at all. In a passage that Mahatma Gandhi would have wholeheartedly approved of, *The Radiance* argued that before even thinking about Indian independence, or for that matter about 'Pakistan,' it was necessary to build the 'physical and moral competence *which may enable you to acquire and hold sovereign power over a single village*.'[79] 'Nationalism,' the pamphlet concluded was no more than 'a

[75] 'Khaksar Views,' 30.

[76] Ibid., 60–61.

[77] Report by Gopinath Srivastava, October 1939, File 101, QAP. See also Justin Jones, *Shi'a Islam in Colonial India: Religion, Community and Sectarianism* (Cambridge: New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 186–221.

[78] Communique Zia ud-Din Ahmed, Khakasar Nazim-e Ala, U.P., Letter Aligargh District Muslim League to Jinnah, 11 October 1939, File 101, QAP.

[79] 'Khaksar Views,' 30.

cult' but it could still contribute to the betterment of mankind if it helped its adherents to exercise self-improvement.[80]

This was a notion of politics that had no place for any distinctions between public and private, and between individual and national salvation. Everything was equally political. Political goals – even relatively vague ones such as 'Pakistan' – were interchangeable; what really mattered were political experiences. The most celebrated episode in the Khaksar's entire history, their 'Karbala' in Lahore in 1940, had arisen over mundane, even surreal matters. Mashriqi wanted a ban against the Khaksars lifted, and he demanded to be given a radio station and access to schools so as to be better able to spread the Khaksar creed in Punjab.[81] These were demands that everyone knew would never be met. Their sole purpose was to trigger the kind of confrontation that allowed the Khaksars to demonstrate their bravery and ideological commitment to the rest of the country and, finally, to embrace martyrdom. It was 'Karbala' and not that elusive radio station that was the Khaksars' true political goal.

The Khaksars were a political movement that was more about the form of politics than about its content.[82] They rejected politics as it was usually understood as dirty and corrupting, regardless of who carried it out and for what purpose, and valorized a state of being where politics would no longer be necessary. This distinction was embedded in a particular sense of temporality. The Khaksars saw the ordinary flow of time as a prison in which the daily indignities of living under colonialism were endlessly repeated. Salvation was only possible by disrupting this flow in time through the creation of a new extraordinary present: through war, military exercises, civil disobedience campaigns, revolutions, even fasts. They hoped that these states would at some point flip over into an entirely different future, which was always more powerful and more unfathomable than anything that could be anticipated as a political goal or plan. This longing for transcendence is not easily confined to any particular place or time, or to any particular political position as conventionally understood. This gave the Khaksars such immense appeal in their heydays. One has to be an irredeemable pragmatist and system-conformist liberal not to find Mashriqi's visions at least a little bit inspiring.

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[80] Ibid., 85.

[81] Smith, *Modern Islam in India, a Social Analysis*, 243.

[82] Trend-setting for wider changes in political culture. Daechsel, *The Politics of Self-Expression*, 60–92.

The politics of the revolutionary moment also had a striking weakness, however. Precisely because it was so oblivious to conventional political goals, it could also be easily appropriated across the political spectrum. Although this was never acknowledged by this self-confessed 'visionary,' it is inconceivable that Allama Mashriqi did not learn from V. D. Savarkar, Bhagat Singh and above all M. K. Gandhi, who had thought through the politics of opposition like no other political philosopher before him, and more than anyone else abolished any dividing line between the personal and the political. By presenting this kind of politics in an unmistakably Muslim flavour for the first time, Mashriqi could be wildly successful. But only until others caught up with him. Mashriqi himself always understood that he could well win a fight against the Muslim League, which could be easily shown to be a 'political' force like any other, no better in fact than the colonial overlords themselves. But he also knew that he had no such chance against 'Pakistan,' a political *chiffre* that could combine a new *form* of politics with a variety of possible contents. Jinnah's success depended immeasurably on his ability to appropriate the superior political methodologies of others for the Muslim League. In the end, the politics of the revolutionary moment ate its own children. It is only so long that any political movement can promise complete deliverance from an unbearable present before fatigue sets in and the baton of hope must be passed on to a new contender. This proved to be the undoing of Allama Inayatullah Khan al-Mashriqi.

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8

Nonviolence, *Pukhtunwali* and Decolonization
Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the Khuda'i Khidmatgar Politics of Friendship

Safoora Arbab

maydān tâ waẗey yū da meynay muḥabat da pāra
da khudaə makẖlūq ṯa wasyaẗ kṛu da ūlfaẗ da pāra

we've come onto the battle-field for the sake of love and affection
counseling god's creatures for the sake of loving friendship[1]

The Qissa Khani Bazaar had yet another tale to recount: the slaying of hundreds of unarmed Khuda'i Khidmatgars as they poured into its narrow lanes to protest the arrest of their leaders. When the colonial authorities sent armoured cars to control a crowd they claimed was dangerous, they ran down many Peshawar city dwellers as well; consequently, some in the crowd set fire to the tanks. Others, probably the women in the apartments above the narrow streets witnessing the Indian Army's heavy-handed brutality, pelted the army officers below with stones. And even though the soldiers fired upon the crowd, inevitably killing and injuring many in the tight confines of the bazaar, the most surprising event in the three days of rioting that ensued throughout the Province after the 23 April 1930 Qissa Khani shootings was the refusal of two platoons of the Indian Army's Garhwali Regiment to fire upon the crowd.

Echoing, yet inverting, the Jallianwala Bagh massacre of 1919, the killings in the historic storytellers' bazaar also created shock waves throughout India. The ruthless policing of the Province for over a year after this incident, and the Khuda'i Khidmatgar's nonviolent resistance, made this a pivotal moment both for the nationalist movement and the North-West Frontier in the annals

[1] Abdul Malik Fida, 'Khuda'i Khidmatgar 'Aqeydah,' *Diwan-e-Abdul Malik Fida*. (Peshawar: Manzur Alam, First published 1957; 2nd edition: 1972), 156. My translation from the original Pashto is 'The Tenets of the Khuda'i Khidmatgars.'

of Indian independence. While the Garhwali Regiment's refusal to fire upon the protestors substantiated the fact that they were unarmed and not an unruly crowd that required 'disciplining,' as the British authorities quite defensively maintained.[2] It was a pivotal moment for many other reasons as well: it made the rest of India aware of the extraordinary fact that a large nonviolent resistance 'army' existed in the volatile North-West Frontier Province, whose ranks were, even more surprisingly, composed largely of Pashtuns or Pukhtuns[3] – a fact which undermined a long history of racial representations of the inherently violent 'Pathans.' After the Peshawar Riots, the deliberate and brutal imperial policing swelled the ranks of the Khuda'i Khidmatgars even more dramatically from a few hundred volunteers to many thousands; eventually most people in the Province either belonged to the movement or had family members who did. It also brought into sharp focus the harsh and repressive disciplinary measures routinely inflicted upon a cordoned-off strategic military zone designated as the 'scientific' frontier of imperial India.

I analyze the extraordinary phenomenon of Khuda'i Khidmatgar nonviolence, including the fact that they were the largest organized resistance 'army' in British India, to draw attention not only to how they subverted long-held tropes (which had transmuted into truths) regarding the Pashtuns and the North-West Frontier, but especially to focus on the radically alternative political imaginary they created for a brief moment in history. This political imaginary was tacitly antithetical to the philosophical foundations that grounded the normative

[2] Two official investigations were ordered into the Qissa Khani Bazaar killings: the first, the Peshawar Enquiry Committee report conducted by the AICC, published testimonies of many Khuda'i Khidmatgar members about police brutality. The colonial government countered with its own findings a few months later in the *Sulaiman-Pankridge Enquiry Report*, which refuted the claim that the demonstrators were unarmed. Instead, the colonial authorities justified their use of force by claiming the demonstrators were throwing stones and occasionally firing and they, therefore, had to restore 'law and order.'

[3] The pronunciation of 'Pashtun' is prevalent among the Pashtuns straddling the western side of the Durand Line, in Afghanistan and Baluchistan, while the harsher 'kh' sound of 'Pukhtun' predominates on the eastern side of the border, especially in Peshawar and the surrounding areas. As the Khuda'i Khidmatgars were mainly from the east they refer to themselves as 'Pukhtun' (also spelt 'Pakhtun'). The Pashto script allows the same word to be pronounced either 'Pukhtun' or 'Pashtun' depending on the dialect. However, 'Pashtun,' 'Pashto,' and 'Pashtunwali' are more commonly used in English and, therefore, I use that as well, but I also use 'Pukhtun,' '*Pukhto*,' and '*Pukhtunwali*' in translation as those are the terms used by the Khuda'i Khidmatgars self-referentially.

political of the colonial State, one that was also, as I contend, seamlessly adopted by the All India Muslim League in their call for a separate Muslim state. As such the Khuda'i Khidmatgar ideology of nonviolence was a radical and anarchic form of epistemological and even ontological decolonization. I explain this alternate political through the framework of Derrida's 'politics of friendship,' and contrast it with the normative political that Carl Schmitt articulates through the 'friend–enemy' binary, at the core of which violence is the norm rather than a state of exception. I further argue that this normative political also tacitly undergirds Jinnah's imagined community, in stark contrast with the alternate communal imaginary the Khuda'i Khidmatgars were cultivating. While the Khuda'i Khidmatgar organization was originally created to reform the Pashtun social milieu – especially its valourizations of violence – as the Provincial representatives of the All India National Congress, the Frontier Congress formed the Provincial government after decisive electoral victories in 1936 and 1945–46, making them ideological opponents both to British colonialism and the All India Muslim League. However, what makes this unique embodiment of nonviolence even more extraordinary is not only its embeddedness in the ethos of Pashtunwali, the indigenous tribal codes of conduct, but especially its geographical location on the intractable North-West Frontier of British India. Represented in colonial (and popular) discourse as an unruly border territory inhabited by untameable tribals, the region has acquired a distinct identity as an oppositional space to the state and its civilizing structures. While designated as an (ostensibly) autonomous, nonstate space, this discursive imaginary particularly lends itself to multivalent interpretations. It was the appropriation of particular aspects of this nonstate imaginary, especially its indigenous apparatus of radical democracy, that enabled the Khuda'i Khidmatgars to create an alternate communal organization that was an intrinsically anarchic threat to the state, both imperial and nationalist.

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After the Peshawar Riots, the Province was cordoned off under strict martial laws for over a year, impelling Abdul Ghaffar Khan and other leaders of the movement to join the All India National Congress Committee. He explains why they were compelled to ally themselves with Congress instead of the All India Muslim League in his Pashto autobiography, *zmā žwand āw jdow-jeẖd*.[4]

[4] Abdul Ghaffar Khan, *Zma Zwand aw Jdow-Jehd* (Peshawar, 1983). This Pashto autobiography needs to be distinguished from the one he narrated in Urdu to K. B. Narang and which was later translated into English as *My Life and Struggle* (New Delhi:

Ghaffar Khan recounts that, while imprisoned in Gujrat Jail, some Khuda'i Khidmatgar members came to report the harsh conditions of the garrisoned province. He advises them to make the Muslim League leaders aware of the atrocities the colonial authorities were committing in the Province and to ask 'our Muslim brothers' for help in broadcasting this news to the world-at-large, and inform them that 'the Khuda'i Khidmatgars are only a reformist party' and not a political one. However, after the Khuda'i Khidmatgar members follow Ghaffar Khan's advice, they despondently return to report: 'We went to meet all the Muslim League leaders but they are not ready to help us. They are not ready [to help us] because they are a faction the English have created to oppose the Hindus, and our fight is with the English, so why would they help us?'[5]

That the All India Muslim League were aided by the British is a constant refrain in Ghaffar Khan's writings and speeches, and in other Khuda'i Khidmatgar literature.[6] The fact that they neither had a grass roots anti-colonial organization, nor were any of its leaders deemed threatening enough to be silenced or arrested by colonial authority, corroborated the view that AIML's primary objective was not decolonization[7] per se. As the AIML's own discourse

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Hind Pocket Books Ltd, 1969). The Pashto autobiography (which is also much more voluminous) is tinged with a distinctly defensive tone. It was written well after various Pakistani governments had imprisoned him for much longer terms than the colonial government and the Khuda'i Khidmatgar organization had been effectively destroyed. Khuda'i Khidmatgars were declared traitors to the new postcolonial nation-state in the 1950s and all traces of the movement were systematically destroyed.

[5] Khan, *Zma Zwand aw Jdow-Jehd*, 386-87 (my translations from the original Pashto).

[6] See Wali Khan (1983) and Waris Khan, in whose work this refrain about the Muslim League occurs frequently, in which this refrain about the Muslim League occurs frequently. In fact, they quite forthrightly state that the AIML were a party specifically created by the British to divide India and disempower the large mass and diversity of Muslims living in it. Wali Khan, *Facts are Facts: The Untold Story of India's Partition* (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1987); Waris Khan, *Da Azadey Tareekh* (Peshawar, 1988). Stephen Rittenberg also mentions how this allegation occurs frequently in Khuda'i Khidmatgar writings and speeches. See his dissertation *Ethnicity, Nationalism, and the Pakhtuns: The Independence Movement in India's North-West Frontier Province, 1901-47* (Durham, North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press, 1988).

[7] I am using the term 'decolonization,' in the sense that Walter Mignolo uses it as form of resistance that necessarily has to deconstruct the systemic fabric of colonialism, especially its epistemological and ontological roots and structures. This included the ontological ground that gives rise to the normative political of the imperial state and which later gets incorporated into the structures of the postcolonial nation-state. Walter

iterated they were instead the 'sole' representatives of an ostensibly homogenous Muslim community, with the steadily increasing objective to transcend the status of 'minority' altogether. By imagining this community as a 'nation,' Jinnah especially wanted to represent and safeguard the rights of this unified imagined nation at the colonial centre.[8] From the outset then, the objectives of the Muslim League and the Khuda'i Khidmatgars were at cross-purposes. The former were fostering a homogenous identity dependent upon starkly distinct communal identities, one that later demanded distinct states as well, despite, quite paradoxically, also envisioning this future state as ahistorical and 'anti-territorial.'[9] The other was a radical and nationalist call for decolonization that was materially embedded within a particular geographical space, historical context and linguistic ethos.

Therefore, after the attempt at soliciting help from the AIML failed, Ghaffar Khan's narrative continues to explain how the Khuda'i Khidmatgars allied themselves with the AICC instead:

> After this I told them [the KK members]: then go and meet other parties in Hindustan and tell them about our condition.
>
> They went and after some time when they came back they told us they had gone far and wide but apart from the Congress no one offered to lend a hand. The Congress leaders asked us our reasons for fighting the English. We told them: 'to free our country.' Then they asked us with what means were we fighting them [the English]? We said: 'with nonviolence.' They

Mignolo. *Local Histories/Global Designs*: *Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000).

[8] See Faisal Devji especially on Jinnah's notion of nationalism as 'the transcendence of the given': *Muslim Zion: Pakistan as a Political Idea* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), 139. As well as Ayesha Jalal on the context of Jinnah's famous remark justifying his tactical collaboration with the British during the war, as becoming an 'ally of even the devil,' or in other words as practitioners of realpolitiks to serve his political vision for the Muslim League, in *The Sole Spokesman* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 45.

[9] See Faisal Devji explicating Maulana Maududi's thoughts and writings about a territorial nationhood versus an Islamic fraternity (p. 239). Devji uses the phrase 'anti-territorial vision' to conceptually define a speech given by Liaquat Ali Khan in 1945, who became the first prime minister of Pakistan. This vision conceptually founds the new nation-state in opposition to an 'ideological' nationality. Devji traces this conception to Muhammad Iqbal's declaration that a love or attachment to territorial nationhood was in itself idolatrous. Devji, *Muslim Zion*, 242–43.

> told us: 'this is our endeavour and our creed also; you are enslaved and we are also enslaved; the English are your enemy and they are also our enemy; you want freedom and we want it also. If you want to become our *friends* [*malgarey*] then we are ready to help you.'
>
> So after they related this to us [GK and other KK leaders in Gujrat Jail] we told them to go back to their own neighbourhoods and discuss this amongst themselves and convene a Provincial Jirga – whatever their decision we will agree to abide by it. The Provincial Jirga decided to become the *friends* of Congress, saying: 'Today we are being destroyed and are drowning in a raging river; whoever extends us a helping hand we will take it.' After this the Jirga made a pact with Congress …[10] (my italics)

I quote this passage from Ghaffar Khan's autobiography to point to a number of salient formulations that made up the Khuda'i Khidmatgar movement. First, harnessing the powerful motivating principle of *azadi* or autonomy, which has historically impelled even feuding Pashtun factions to unify together against a common enemy, the Khuda'i Khidmatgars organized one of the largest resistance movements in British India. However, there were crucial ontological differences between their articulation of *azadi* with, not just prior Pashtun resistance movements, but also with other Indian nationalists of the time. Not only did the conscripts in this 'army' take an oath to fight non-violently, but their unique geographical location also positioned the Khuda'i Khidmatgars in a context and an imaginary different from other anti-colonial resistance frameworks. By grounding and legitimating their ideology of nonviolence in the spatio-conceptual imaginary of Pashtunwali they amplified its deconstructive potency which enabled them to reformulate communal organizational structures in contra-distinction to the colonial state. Thus their unique, anarchic, nonstate ethos differentiated their methods of decolonization from other nationalist movements of the time, because, as I argue, the Khuda'i Khidmatgars were not only in the nascent stages of organizing a community or a nation untethered to a centralized state structure, but they were also, much more crucially, tacitly attempting to refashion the normative political altogether. Therefore, their call for '*azadi*' was an ontological decolonization, but not just of the Pashtun habitus or space.

In the passage quoted above, Ghaffar Khan points to the Khuda'i Khidmatgar organizational grounding in Pashtunwali when he defers the decision-making process to a provincial Jirga rather than exercising his prerogative as leader. The

[10] Khan, *Zma Zwand aw Jdow-Jehd*, 386-87 (my translations from the original Pashto).

Pashtunwali ethos of egalitarianism, at least nominally, gives the jirga system a democratic right of voice to all who participate, even if in practice it is not as egalitarian as conceived. And despite the Khuda'i Khidmatgar's military organizational system, with its similarities to the affiliative[11] structures of the British Army,[12] their novel ideology was coalesced with local forms of social organization in ways that also disrupted traditional filiative bonds and kinship structures. Moreover, rigid class and economic distinctions were also destabilized as the ranks of the Khuda'i Khidmatgars were largely composed of subalterns who often rose to the top echelons of power.[13] Thus, one of the ways in which the Khuda'i Khidmatgars reformulated the habitus was by grafting modern affiliative social relations onto customary practices; and in reinterpreting long standing meanings and tropes of Pashtunwali, they represented themselves as a progressive and more enlightened aspect of the traditional ethos.

Finally, and most centrally for my argument, Ghaffar Khan gives voice to the concept of 'friendship' that pervades the discourse of the Khuda'i Khidmatgar movement. I deliberately translate the original Pashto term of '*malgaray*' and '*malgarthya'* quite literally into the English 'friend' and 'friendship.' Although *malgarthya* is a common enough political term in colloquial Pashto discourse, I

[11] In 'Introduction: Secular Criticism,' Edward Said describes 'affiliation' as a new form of social relationship and also 'a new system': a system that transplants natural 'filiative' or kinship bonds with transpersonal social and cultural relationships; a relationship of choice rather than one of necessity. Edward Said, *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge: 1984), 21-22.

[12] Arguably, Kamila Shamsie ascribes the egalitarian structure and sense of fraternity the Khuda'i Khidmatgars cultivated to the organizational structure of the British Indian Army in her novel *A God in Every Stone* (New York: Atavist Books, 2014).

[13] Though Ghaffar Khan and other senior members of the Khuda'i Khidmatgar organization, and especially the Frontier Congress ministry, were also composed of the landlord class or Khans, nevertheless they could be classified, in Ranajit Guha's words, as indeterminate 'dominant indigenous groups at the regional and local levels.' Gayatri Spivak cites Guha's classification in her essay, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?,' stating that this group 'was heterogeneous in its composition and, thanks to the uneven character of regional economic and social developments, differed from area to area … This could and did create many ambiguities and contradictions in attitudes and alliances, especially amongst the lowest strata of the rural gentry, impoverished landlords, rich peasants and upper middle class peasants all of whom belonged, ideally speaking, to the category of "people" or "subaltern classes".' Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?,' in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture,* eds. C. Nelson and L. Grossberg. (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1988), 79–81.

retain the original word in order to point to the radical form of the political that these terms also implied. I argue that the Khuda'i Khidmatgar articulation of '*malgaray*' not only denoted the affiliative social systems with which they tried to disrupt traditional kinship relations but, like Jacques Derrida's formulation of a 'politics of friendship,'[14] it also pointed to the new political they were fashioning. I especially maintain that the Khuda'i Khidmatgar ideology of nonviolence and its politics of friendship were attempting to iterate an alternate set of normativities that were in stark contra-distinction to the long lineage of normative Western political philosophy that structured the state. The normative political structuring the colonial state was also unthinkingly adopted by the Muslim League and Jinnah in their vision for a new polis. Explained in Khuda'i Khidmatgar discourse as the Muslim League's unwillingness to oppose colonial hegemony, I believe this unwillingness described not so much a lack of motivation to resist imperial domination, but rather, a tacit adoption of colonial epistemological frameworks and normative standards in which violence was (and continues to be) considered an inevitable norm. It was particularly these implicit and explicit disjunctions and ideological cross-purposes that prevented the Khuda'i Khidmatgars from allying themselves with the Muslim League.

The politics of friendship

Derrida explains the politics of friendship as a revolution of the political: the dominant political grounded upon an 'imposing corpus of Western philosophical literature.'[15] As Carl Schmitt explains in *Concept of the Political*, one of the most relevant explications of normative political theory, embedded in the lineage of this imposing theoretical corpus is the anthropological supposition about the nature of the human.[16] In the prevalent political, whose lineage Schmitt traces from Hobbes and Machiavelli,[17] human nature is regarded as intrinsically violent,[18] legitimating, thereby, the coercive and regulative mechanisms of the state. With the central presumption that humans inevitably destroy all difference and otherness, Schmitt formulates the 'friend–enemy' binary as the

[14] Jacques Derrida, *The Politics of Friendship* (London: Verso, 2005), 28.
[15] Ibid., 27.
[16] Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1932/1996), 58.
[17] Derrida, *Politics of Friendship*, 113.
[18] Schmitt, *The Concept of the Politica*, 64.

conceptual keystone of the political, especially as a bulwark of state foreign policy. In contrast, Derrida grounds a revolutionary politics of friendship upon an alternate philosophical lineage articulated by Nietzsche's declaration: 'foes, there are no foes.' Nietzsche's radical declaration not only displaces the Socratic injunction of 'friends, there are no friends,'[19] but more crucially disrupts the centrality of the 'enemy' in normative political theory,[20] and the vast corpus of Western philosophy upon whch it is grounded.[21] Disengaging the 'friend' from the 'enemy,' or the self from the other, would make 'friendship a question of the political' in such a radically new way[22] as to also entail an alternate set of normativities.[23]

However, for Schmitt 'a pacified globe' without the friend–enemy distinction would mean the end of the political.[24] War and the threat of violence are the necessary horizon constituting Schmitt's political, as Derrida points out, even the 'friend' cannot exist without the real possibility of being put 'to death unequivocally,' disclosing, thereby, that violence is 'the essence, the center and the heart of things,' or the norm rather than the state of exception.[25] Could one not imagine, Derrida muses, another possibility of the political if the friend were unshackled from its mirror-image other; rather than the end of the political perhaps one can imagine an 'even more sublime' state, one which 'calls friendship back to the irreducible precedence of the other.'[26] By accepting alterity as normative instead of the constant 'deadly drive'[27] to obliterate otherness, a nonviolent Levinasian relation with the other could produce, instead, 'a new *justice*.' Displacing the justice of proportionality and

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[19] Derrida, *Politics of Friendship*, 29.

[20] Ibid., 27–28.

[21] Nietzsche states in *Human All too Human*: 'And so, since we can endure ourself, let us also endure other people, and perhaps to each of us will come the more joyful hour when we exclaim:
"Friend, there are no friends!" this said the dying sage;
"Foes, there are no foes!" say I, the living fool before.'

[22] Derrida, *Politics of Friendship*, 28.

[23] See Judith Butler's discussion on the necessity for devising 'new constellations of thinking about normativity' in 'Non-Thinking and the Normative' in *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable* (New York: Verso, 2010).

[24] Derrida, *Politics of Friendship*, 130.

[25] Ibid., 123.

[26] Ibid., 63.

[27] Ibid., 124.

'vengeance,' and 'the law of eye for eye,' this new politics of friendship could, instead, be a 'species of love.' [28]

> A hypothesis, then: and what if another lovence (in friendship or in love) were bound to an affirmation of life, to the endless repetition of this affirmation, only in seeking its way (in loving its way, and this would be *philein* itself) in the step beyond the political, or beyond *that* political as the horizon of finitude, putting to death and putting of death? The *philein* beyond the political or another politics of loving, another politics to love, for love (*à aimer*)? Must one dissociate or associate altogether differently *pólis, politeía, philía, Érōs*, and so forth? [29]

Fida Abdul Malik, the renowned Khuda'i Khidmatgar poet whose *sher* I use as an epigram to this chapter, uncannily echoes this Nietszchean-Derridean formulation of love and friendship at the heart of their new political, obviously without any influence from the earlier philosopher. I repeat three *sher*s from his *nazm* 'The Tenets of the Khuda'i Khidmatgars,' published in the *Pukhtun* journal in 1940, the ideological voice of the movement, to illustrate the altered normativity they were attempting to fashion. Fida inverts and replaces the norm of battlefields with that of counsel and the rule of a monarch, or of singular ideologies, with an egalitarian concept of sovereignty and governance through service:

> *klkah 'adm-e-ïushadud kay 'aqēdah dah zumung*
> *kah sar-o-mal pradu aṛah wrkṛū ẖum fāhdah dah zumung*
>
> staunch is our belief in the tenets of nonviolence
> we profit even if we leave our self and our wealth
>
> *maydān ïtâ wïey yū da meynay muhabaï da pārâ*
> *da khudāy makhlūq ïtâ wasyaï kṛū da ūlfaï da pārâ*
>
> we've come out upon the battle-field for the sake of love and affection
> counseling god's creatures for the sake of loving friendship
>
> *mungah spāyān yū da ṭol qūm da hakumaï da pārâ*
> *nəĥ da yow ṫan nəĥ da yow khyal da sulṭunaïe da pārâ*
>
> we are the sepoys governing the whole nation
> neither for one person's imperialism nor one ideology[30]

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[28] Ibid., 64.

[29] Ibid., 123.

[30] Fida, *Diwan-e-Abdul Malik Fida*, 154. These are the third, fourth, and nineteenth *sher*s from the poem.

If nonviolence is substituted for the Nietszchean-Derridean call for a new type of justice[31] it also fulfils the conditions of a revolutionary reorientation of the political. Most strikingly, Fida points to a battle that must be waged in order to overcome the old order for the sake of fostering new communities of the future. Not a battlefield, however, upon which killing and death are waged but upon which love can flourish, a nonviolent battle to reorient the social from the norm of violence to a new set of political normativities. A political not of empires, kingdoms or singular ideologies but an egalitarian service to humanity as a new method of governance.[32]

Towards the end of Ghaffar Khan's biography, he points to the radically altered political which the Khuda'i Khidmatgars achieved for a brief period of time, but whose ramifications still reverberate in memory. Significantly, he juxtaposes the love and affection that was fostered through nonviolence and 'Khuda'i Khidmatgari,' or service in the name of god, with the death and divisiveness produced by Partition and the creation of Pakistan:

> … there are people who wish us ill and spread propaganda about us and ask, 'What have the Khuda'i Khidmatgars done?' They also ask, 'What has nonviolence achieved? Our very simple brothers have been swayed by these self-serving people.' So I will say to them that Khuda'i Khidmatgari had two purposes: one was the freedom of the country, and the other, to make the Pukhtuns aware of nationalism, brotherhood, love, affection, unity and a new [form of] communal organization.
>
> Judge for yourselves: this awareness was created while the country also became independent; but also, pay attention to the fact that this was all achieved through nonviolence and without violence. Also judge for yourselves, that Khuda'i Khidmatgari created such love and affection in the hearts of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh people and aroused such an ardent [sense of] brotherhood that those Hindus and Sikhs had to be forcefully sent to India from the Frontier Province, yet even till today they call themselves Khuda'i Khidmatgars. Every time I go to Hindustan I feel the love and

[31] Nietzsche would never consider substituting the concept of nonviolence for justice. Because nonviolence is often defined as 'pacifism' in the Western philosophical tradition it should, therefore, be distinguished from the way in which the Khuda'i Khidmatgars, and Gandhi, defined '*adm-e-thushadud* or *ahimsa*: an active principle entailing the concept of a righteous war or resistance against injustice.

[32] And Fida mentions all nations and religions in the poem as part of a global call to transcend the nationalist boundaries of the normative political – or to transcend the 'friend–enemy' binary.

> affection that still lies in the hearts of these Hindus and Sikhs. See also for yourselves: when the chaos of Partition started in Hindustan the Khuda'i Khidmatgars bore a lot of hardship in order protect the Hindus and Sikhs and their properties and belongings; the Khuda'i Khidmatgars used their bodies as shields wherever they were present.[33]

In this passage Ghaffar Khan credits the ideology of nonviolence with refashioning the political as well as reforming the Pashtun habitus. While also, quite crucially, in opposition to the representations of the inherently violent and martial 'Pathans,' and Pashtun self-representations, Ghaffar Khan positions 'love' and affection, or '*meena*' and '*mohabat*,' as the catalyst reforming the Pashtun habitus from the norm of agnatic rivalries to a unified, trans-tribal communal organization. Countless ethnographies have positioned *badal* as the normative Pashtun code of honour determining social relations; however, it is always defined in its narrower meaning of revenge and violent retribution. The Khuda'i Khidmatgars redefine and expand *badal* into its more accurate and broader meaning of 'reciprocity'; a meaning which is hardly ever acknowledged in popular representations describing the culture.[34] The justice of proportionality and vengeance is, therefore, reformulated into a 'species of love'[35] that Derrida describes as the crucial core of a shifted new political. Furthermore, this new species of love is not only restricted to an ethnic brotherhood, as Ghaffar Khan's passage and the rest of Fida's poem testify, or limited only to members of the organization which included Sikhs and Hindus, but rather it is conceived as an intercommunal and even global coexistence, embedded as it also was in South and Central Asia's rich history of syncretic belongings.

The friend–enemy binary and the normative political

The AIML, and especially Muhammad Ali Jinnah as its driving force, founded their nationalist aspirations and the politics of partition not only antithetically to Khuda'i Khidmatgar ideology, but also upon the same corpus of Western

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[33] Khan, *Zma Zwand aw Jdow-Jehd*, 739

[34] That *badal* is hardly ever translated as 'reciprocity' but more often as 'revenge' or 'vengeance' also has to do with the conceptual lens through which the Pashtuns have long been represented as an essentially martial and violent people. This is a representation which not only circulates today but also which the Pashtuns have often internalized and proudly claimed as their hallmark.

[35] Derrida, *Politics of Friendship*, 64.

philosophy that grounded the normative political of the colonial state. Jinnah's speech at the Lucknow session of the All India Muslim League in October of 1937 discloses this implicitly shared ground:

> No settlement with the majority is possible, as no Hindu leader speaking with any authority shows any concern or genuine desire for it. Honourable settlement can only be achieved between equals, and unless the two parties learn to respect and *fear* each other, there is no solid ground for any settlement. Offers of peace by the weaker party always mean confession of weakness, and an invitation to aggression. Appeals to patriotism, justice and fair play and for goodwill fall flat. It does not require political wisdom to realize that all safeguards and settlements would be a scrap of paper, unless they are backed up by power. *Politics means power and not relying only on cries of justice and fair play or goodwill*. Look at the nations of the world, and look at what is happening every day.[36] (My italics)

I especially want to point out Jinnah's terminology that describes the 'two parties' as binary oppositionals, opponents that are vertically or hierarchically arranged: the weaker or subordinate Muslim minority versus the dominant Hindu majority. The way Jinnah frames the communal inequality logically leads to the conclusion he also reached: the political weakness of Muslims can only overcome the power of the majority through a strength of force. By acquiring a state, the coercive powers of the majority can not only be replicated but, more crucially, the subordinate status of a minority community could also be transcended. As both Faisal Devji and Ayesha Jalal have pointed out, in order to safeguard the rights of the 'weaker party' and enforce normative claims, the call for a distinct Muslim nation transformed the status of the 'minority' into a political group on par with the Hindu 'majority.' However, Jinnah's tacit understanding and definition of political power was based precisely upon the capacity of coercion to ensure 'justice and fair play,' because reliance upon 'goodwill' alone would have been a sign of impotency and weakness. In other words, Jinnah was articulating the framework of the normative political, in which rights can be guaranteed only through the implicit or explicit threat of violence: in Jinnah's understanding a community cannot simply aspire to ideals but must be able to enforce them as well. In this framework of politics as usual, Jinnah unquestioningly embraces the Hobbesian model of the Leviathan state as the normative form of communal organization; while also realizing the

[36] Devji, *Muslim Zion*, 105.

necessity for homogenous unity in order to achieve such an end he perforce had to represent himself as the sole voice of India's Muslims.[37]

However, Jinnah's call for Muslim nationhood was disconnected from prior factors with which nationalist belonging has been invested: a common language, ethnicity, and a shared history or territory. Faisal Devji characterizes this nationhood rooted in Enlightenment philosophy and structured upon seventeenth-century European models of the state as social contract, but also, paradoxically, he calls it 'a new kind of politics.'[38] What was certainly new was Jinnah's immaterial conception of a nation unrooted in either a particular place or a people's historical context, which, as Devji argues, 'led them to conceive of a novel and remarkably abstract form of political unity premised upon a paradoxical rejection of the past.' While untethered to a particular history or geography 'they claimed a territory of their own.'[39] However, to define Jinnah's aspiration (and accomplishment) as a 'new political' would be both accurate, to a degree, but also misleading in many ways, especially when compared to the new political that the Khuda'i Khidmatgars had created. Although Jinnah's call for a nation, based upon the abstract principle of a common religion was historically unprecedented (except for Israel, as Devji's book also argues), nevertheless, the imaginary of this new nation, and the structures it adopted to create its statehood, were a perpetuation of politics as usual, as I stress here.

Building upon Hobbes' and Machiavelli's Enlightenment philosophy, Schmitt explains that the moral must be excluded from the domain of the political because it dehumanizes the natural human propensity to obliterate otherness or difference, especially difference that cannot be incorporated into sameness. In order to preserve the borders of one's imagined community, the political, or the state,[40] must be organized in such a way as to constantly threaten and if necessary destroy such alterity or the 'enemy.' As Schmitt contends: 'Each participant is in a position to judge whether the adversary intends to negate his opponent's way of life and, therefore, must be repulsed or fought in order

[37] Devji, *Muslim Zion*; Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

[38] Devji, *Muslim Zion*, 106.

[39] Ibid., 91.

[40] For Schmitt the concept of the state presupposes the political, or the political is always tautologically defined in relation to the state, because, as Derrida points out, only 'the state can bestow status on the political.' And it is an ideological concept rather than a natural, organic one or even a mechanical conception. Derrida, *Politics of Friendship*, 120.

to preserve one's own form of existence.'[41] If the political is determined by the constant possibility of enmity, or the threat of alterity, it logically necessitates and justifies state coercion and disciplinary violence, not just to control its borders from external threat but, perhaps even more, to obliterate otherness that could fracture it from within. I reiterate this conception of the normative political in order to point out that Jinnah's ideal polis also reflected what Derrida calls Schmitt's 'Platonic dream';[42] one that unequivocally accepts violence as the necessary core of the state.

This formulation of the political grounding Jinnah's ideological thrust is disclosed by not only the speech quoted above but most pointedly his departure from the All India Congress Committee after the Nagpur session in December 1920. It was at this session that Gandhi changed the Congress constitution to ally with his principles of *satyagraha*. As the preamble to the new resolution stated, Congress would renounce 'voluntary association with the Government at one end' and refuse 'to pay taxes at the other.'[43] Almost unanimously accepted, Jinnah specifically objected to the revision of Congress creed to a 'nonviolent non-cooperation scheme' through a number of seemingly discrete arguments. First, he objected to the declaration that Congress could attain *swaraj* only through 'legitimate and peaceful means,'[44] because he maintained that India could not attain independence without bloodshed. Second, and seemingly paradoxically, he wanted to limit nationalist resistance within a constitutional framework.[45] Before the Nagpur Congress session Jinnah wrote a letter to Gandhi in which he plainly critiques *satyagraha*, saying: 'your methods have already caused a split and division in almost every institution that you have approached hitherto, and in the public life of the country not only amongst Hindus and Muslims but between Hindus and Hindus and Muslims and Muslims.'[46] Continuing his

[41] Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, 27.

[42] Derrida, *Politics of Friendship*, 116.

[43] D. G. Tendulkar, *Abdul Ghaffar Khan: Faith is a Battle* (New Delhi: Gandhi Peace Foundation, 1967), 34.

[44] Ibid., 34.

[45] Stanley Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1984), 69; Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman*, 8.

[46] Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan*, 70. However, Gandhi was supported by almost all members of the religious communities, including the Muslim 'ulama with whom he had developed strong ties during the Khilafat Movement. The Sheikh-ul-Hind, the head of Darul-Ulum Deoband, actually issued a fatwa a few days after this Congress session giving Islamic sanction to the nonviolent non-cooperation movement. See Ziya-ul-Hasan

critique of nonviolent resistance, Jinnah states: 'your extreme measures,' would create 'complete disorganization and chaos,' while it has 'struck the imagination' only of 'inexperienced youth' and 'the ignorant and the illiterate.' In other words, Jinnah unequivocally states that while fostering communalism – a communalism, interestingly, not based upon religious distinctions but on some other factor which Jinnah does not articulate or analyze – nonviolent resistance was a means only for the ignorant masses or the easily gullible.[47]

That Jinnah wanted to conduct nationalist resistance through constitutional means while retaining the option of violent resistance is not, perhaps, as contradictory as it at first seems. If we locate his discourse within Schmitt's normative political framework it becomes clear that Jinnah wanted to keep the means of resistance within the framework of the colonial state; within this purview violent resistance would be considered a norm and not an exception. And Jinnah was not simply objecting to the impracticality and danger of breaking 'the British connection,' as Wolpert argues,[48] but furthermore, as I want to especially point out, he was tacitly objecting to the Gandhian 'programme' which opposed colonialism on epistemological grounds.[49] Voicing Jinnah's objection through Schmittean vocabulary, one could say, the methods and aims of *satyagraha* depoliticized politics and blurred the borders between the social and the political by introducing the language of morality into it.[50] These

Faruqi, *The Deoband School and The Demand for Pakistan* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1963), 64.

[47] The crowd at Nagpur, who resoundingly cheered and applauded the resolution for nonviolent resistance, howled down Jinnah's speech with cries of 'shame, shame' when he addressed Gandhi as 'Mister' instead of 'Mahatma.' In one of his most publicly humiliating moments Jinnah resigned from the Congress at this point knowing that Gandhi commanded 'the majority' in this large assembly of both of Hindus and Muslims. After this, Jinnah devoted all his energies to the Muslim League, of which he was also already a member. He was staunchly distrustful of Gandhi and rigidly oppositional to the politics of nonviolence after this point. Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan*, 71–72.

[48] Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan*, 71.

[49] Gandhi's critique of modernity and the 'West' is famously outlined in *Hind Swaraj*, in which he elaborates this epistemological ground as the means for true decolonization. Anthony Parel, ed. *Gandhi: Hind Swaraj and Other Writings* (Cambridge: University Press, 2009).

[50] As Schmitt notes, political science since Hegel maintains 'that the state is qualitatively different from society and higher than it' and, therefore, the state must be kept distinct from society. Whereas democracy (especially the liberal kind) intermingles the concept of the state with the 'concept of human-society.' Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, 24.

breached borders would mean that the state, as representative of the political, would no longer transcend society through its institutions and laws, but rather, democracy would ultimately acquire an anti-statist edge; while the language of morality, and especially of nonviolence, would displace the 'friend–enemy' core of the political by its egalitarian address to alterity. Not only does nonviolent resistance render the laws of the state quite powerless through the economic weapon of the strike, which even Schmitt concedes,[51] but also the ultimate aim of Gandhi's utopian communal vision was a reconfiguration of the social to such a degree that the political would become superfluous. Rather than political institutions and power governing society, in Gandhi's words, 'a state of enlightened anarchy'[52] would take its place; in this *state of enlightened anarchy* each self-sovereign person would police themselves through their own moral imperatives.

The Khuda'i Khidmatgars brought into being a nascent yet alternate form of communal organization which Gandhi only envisioned but never realized. Their parallel and independent governing system, based upon the indigenous codes of Pashtunwali, was both the harbinger of this alternate form of community as well as an anarchic threat to the colonial state. However, I do not mean to imply that the Khuda'i Khidmatgars were merely imitating Gandhian ideology, especially as the title of 'Frontier' or '*Sarhad*' Gandhi bestowed upon Ghaffar Khan suggests in popular representations. Although there were strong ties between the two leaders, and they mutually influenced each other's ideology and practice, there were also distinct differences (which I will not explore in this essay). Instead, I use the rich and prodigious writings of Gandhi, who explicitly wrote of an enlightened state of anarchy as the ideal end of the political, to highlight how the Khuda'i Khidmatgars implicitly understood nonviolent resistance as a radical form of the political, as well as a potent decolonizing methodology. In other words, not only was this embodiment of nonviolent resistance embedded within their particular milieu, but, I want to stress, this particular context especially allowed for the 'enlightened state of anarchy,' not just as an exception but as the norm. A unique nexus was created by the convergence of Pashtunwali, to which radical forms of democracy are intrinsic; alternate tribal forms of communal organization, the imaginary of a nonstate space and the ideology of nonviolence; a nexus in which an alternate form of the political could and,

[51] Ibid., 39.

[52] Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse?* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 92.

indeed, did flourish. Partha Chatterjee's argument about Gandhian *ahimsa* can perhaps even more appropriately be extended to Khuda'i Khidmatgar ideology: '[It] lay entirely outside the thematic of post-Enlightenment thought, and hence of nationalist thought as well.'[53] It was instead, as Chatterjee explains, 'the organizing principle for a "science" of politics – a science wholly different from all current conceptions of politics which had only succeeded in producing the "sciences of violence," but a science nevertheless – "the science of nonviolence," "the science of love." It was the moral framework for solving every practical problem of the organized political movement.'[54]

Nonviolence or *ad'm-e thushadud*

The Khuda'i Khidmatgars' inclusion of the moral into the realm of the political makes their embodiment of nonviolence not just an expression of the new 'science' of love and politics that Chatterjee formulates, but also, as I am arguing, it unwittingly articulates the politics of friendship that Derrida describes also as a 'species of love.'[55] This reconfigured political is articulated in the memoirs of the Khuda'i Khidmatgar Waris Khan. I quote a lengthy passage from it below because the social change he describes also points to the new forms of subaltern organization taking shape at that time.[56] Further, the seemingly random connection he draws between an altered communal organization and the effect of the ideology of nonviolence upon inconsequential acts of daily living exemplifies the shift in both subject formation and the habitus, which heralds a transformed political.

> But unity and organization of the people is what true power is made of. When someone spread this kind of propaganda, people called them 'toadie

[53] Ibid., 100.

[54] Ibid., 107.

[55] Derrida, *Politics of Friendship*, 64.

[56] Mukulika Banerjee calls this a vertical as well as horizontal enlistment into the ranks of the Khuda'i Khidmatgars that enabled the movement to grow the way it did in such a short span of time. Although there certainly were vertical channels of enlistment as well, and Ghaffar Khan was able to recruit people into the movement simply because of his moral stature and rhetoric, that cannot fully explain the large numbers who did join the movement in such a short time; such an enlistment could only occur via horizontal channels of subaltern recruitment, including peer pressure and kinship bonds. Mukulika Banerjee, *The Pathan Unarmed* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2000), 66–67.

> child.' People would hate them. The government would always give the authority of the post of *thanedar* to a man of the village that they trusted, and he would recruit his own people for the local police. We used to call these recruiters 'manure stackers.' They tried their hardest, but the floodwater of the masses was surging in the direction of freedom to such a degree that no dam could hold it back. The unity was so powerful that in our village, a loyalist man opposed the movement. One day it was his *ashar.* All the people working at the *ashar* were men from his own neighbourhood. We sent uniformed volunteer workers to tell them to get up out of that man's field. When we did this, they all got up. Due to the blessing of this unity, and discipline, everyone respected our decisions and judgments. If any sort of dispute arose in the village, we would judge it in our office. *The courts came to be nearly empty.* We urged everyone toward concord, unity, justice and forbearance; and to boycott foreign goods. People acted on our words too. Once a volunteer worker left the house in uniform and went to a parade. In a lane, a dog started coming after him. It attacked him and injured him pretty badly. Someone asked him, 'Hey kid, you have a stick, but you didn't beat the dog with it?' He replied, 'I took an oath that I will not use violence. I have put on my uniform and I was heading to a parade. If I had struck the dog, that would have been violence.'[57] (My italics)

That the Khuda'i Khidmatgars had the power to socially ostracize a landlord because he was a collaborator and probably an upper-class Khan spoke not only to the social standing they occupied within their own communities, but also to the power they exercised in changing economic relations and traditional class hierarchies. And the fact that people listened to and obeyed them without an external disciplinary threat also speaks to the acceptance of Khuda'i Khidmatgar ideology on ethical terms, and therefore, as a self-regulating normative mechanism or moral imperative. While there probably was more than an element of social ostracism involved in disobeying these imperatives, however, this too could be said to belong to the realm of alternative forms of communal organization in which normative conduct is self-regulated or socially codified rather than imposed vertically via state policing and coercion. It is precisely the insertion of the moral into the political that allows for this alternate form of ethical self-governance. What distinguishes this from the self-regulating traditional codes of Pashtunwali, which is the armature upon

[57] Waris Khan, *Da Azadey Tareekh* (Peshawar, 1988), 100. Unpublished English translation from Pashto by James Caron, 'A History of Independence' (unpublished manuscript, 2016), Microsoft Word file.

which the Khuda'i Khidmatgar were shaping this altered political, however, is the ideology of nonviolence, or what they called '*ad'm-e thushadud*.' As Waris Khan's passage illustrates, nonviolence was not only accepted, but consciously adopted as an ethical code of conduct even on the mundane level of daily living, to such an extent that a youth does not beat a dog that is attacking him once he has changed into his Khuda'i Khidmatgar uniform.[58]

I am arguing that the Khuda'i Khidmatgar embodiment of nonviolence represents, in Judith Butler's terms, an altered constellation of 'thinking about normativity.'[59] As Butler explains, our concept of violence 'has built into it certain pre-conceptions about what culture ought to be, about how community is to be understood, about how the state is formed, and about who might count as a recognizable subject,'[60] so that an alternate normativity (produced by an ethical politics of nonviolence) must also address these pre-conceptions and not just the epistemological frameworks that represent violence as either the norm or normative. It is at this pre-conceptual level that altered normativities are generated in tandem with altered subject formation. If the 'subject' is understood not as constant and fixed, but instead as a vacillating being whose subject-ness is a constantly alterable process, because it is open to effect at the perceptual and pre-conceptual levels, then a crucial space for change opens up in the habitus (and the imaginary). Therefore, if this pre-conceptual and perceptual process is a constantly iterative one, then it also disallows deterministic or linear conceptions of the future. This means that even if the subject habitually (and even unwittingly) iterates its production within the frameworks of violence, and seems permeated by its violent origins, this would not necessarily determine its future trajectory; the subject's subsequent iterations can take place within an altered space of constitution. Because not all normativity, as Butler points out, is based or founded upon violence;[61] a normativity located in nonviolence can also be imagined even within frameworks already permeated with violence.

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[58] The Khuda'i Khidmatgars famously wore red or brick-coloured uniforms and were thus also called the 'Red Shirts' by the British. However, the red colour was chosen for expediency's sake because it camouflaged the dust and dirt of everyday wear more efficiently than undyed *khaddar,* or the homespun cotton from which their uniforms were made. However, the British wrongly interpreted their red uniforms as a sign that they were Bolshevik sympathizers.

[59] Judith Butler, 'The Claim of Non-Violence,' in *Frames of War: When is Life Grievable* (New York: Verso, 2010), 145.

[60] Ibid., 156.

[61] Ibid., 169.

It is in this sense that nonviolence becomes a constant, ethical choice in the practice of daily living and not, according to Butler, a disembodied ideal or universal principle. Instead, it is an ongoing struggle against the possibility of violence: 'violence is not foreign to the one to whom the address of non-violence is directed; violence is not, at the start, presumptively "outside". Violence and non-violence are not only strategies and tactics, but form the subject and become its constitutive possibilities and, so, an ongoing struggle.'[62]

The reinscription of the Pashtun habitus and, using Butler's terminology, the modalities of normative subject formation, were cogently perceived as the necessary foundation for all manner of interlinked emancipations. An inner transformation was seen as the first step to transforming the public sphere. Waris Khan recounts how Ghaffar Khan, fondly called Bacha Khan in the vernacular, equated this altered political with radical decolonization:

> Bacha Khan used to say, in every speech, 'Do not engage in any kind of violence, beating, or shooting. Our war is a war of patience. If anyone should resort to violence, he is a creature belonging to the *firangi*s. If someone slaps you in the face, offer him your other cheek too. Violence shall not be answered with violence.' This was a new philosophy for the Pukhtuns. It was hard to accept, but there was no other way than this. There was no other path.[63]

Using Ghaffar Khan's words, Waris Khan articulates that the use of violence enabled normative and colonial systems, while nonviolence was a potent decolonizing methodology, undermining the infrastructure both of imperial domination and Pashtun valourizations of violence. The fact that Waris Khan, almost intuitively, recognizes that the only viable path to emancipation was to adopt and internalize nonviolence speaks to the radically reformulated self-imaginary that the Khuda'i Khidmatgars had brought about. While nonviolence itself was seen as the radically transformative force bringing about this progressive change, in being grafted onto traditional modes of resistance it was also perceived as an especially potent decolonizing methodology.

Conceived first of all as an emancipatory social reformation to change traditional Pashtun social structures, especially of agnatic violence and the suppression of women and their exclusion from the public sphere, Ghaffar Khan formed the Khuda'i Khidmatgar movement in 1929. But after the Peshawar Riots it became an anti-colonial movement as well, with the declaration that their

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[62] Ibid., 165.

[63] Khan, *Da Azadey Tareekh*, 102.

resistance would be strictly nonviolent. Although the Pashto, Persian and Dari word for nonviolence, *'ad'm-e-thushadud,'* is an Arabic term, it is not specifically a Muslim one; no connotations or anecdotal accounts (about the Prophet or its use in Islamic history) surround the phrase; it is religion-neutral. When Ghaffar Khan uses anecdotes about the Prophet Muhammad's nonviolence he uses the term '*sabr*,' or patience, instead, which explains the practice of nonviolence rather than the ideology itself. An ideological grounding in Islam was demonstrably less self-conscious and more a taken-for-granted mode of discourse, an unquestioned framework of the habitus rather than a discourse requiring constant legitimation.[64] Even though the framework of Islam was crucial to the acceptance and popular dissemination of Khuda'i Khidmatgar ideology, it was very rarely foregrounded, explained or justified.[65] As such, their rhetoric unselfconsciously spoke through the vocabulary of Islam in explaining, integrating or embodying nonviolence, while being a 'true' Muslim never needed accounting and was never a serious question that Pashtuns posed to themselves.[66] What was of more pressing importance was their authentic Pashtun-ness and whether they were acting in accord with Pashtunwali, or doing '*Pukhto*.'[67] Therefore, Khuda'i Khidmatgar

[64] Not that I mean to imply that Ghaffar Khan's version of Islam necessarily translated into Khuda'i Khidmatgar ideology or was adopted en masse by the movement, but instead I hope to show that there was another mode of religiosity that was popularly and unselfconsciously practised, which was drowned out by the rhetoric of religious distinctions that eventually led to the call for Pakistan.

[65] See Sruti Bala, 'The Performativity of Nonviolent Protest in South Asia (1918–1948)' (PhD thesis, University of Mainz, Germany, 2009), 151; Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism, and the Pakhtuns*, 265-66. Even right before partition, when aspersions of being 'Hindu' were more loudly cast upon the Khuda'i Khidmatgars and the Frontier Congress by the Muslim League, there were few self-conscious rebuttals justifying their Muslim-ness.

[66] See also Rittenberg's work on the Khuda'i Khidmatgar movement explaining the importance, or lack of importance, of Islam for the Pukhtun ethos. The focus is instead centrally on 'ethnocentrism,' as he calls it: Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism, and the Pakhtuns*, 2-3.

[67] Pashto is also called '*Pukhto*,' so that, once again depending on the dialect, it can be pronounced with either the 'sh' as 'kh' sound. *Pukhto*, however, is not just considered a language, but language itself becomes representative of the world and especially the ethos occupied. Used as a verb, 'to do *Pukhto*' signifies an active engagement with the codes and the imaginary of *Pukhtunwali*, which serves as an ethical, juridical, political and social framework within which daily life is negotiated. Doing *Pukhto* means one is acting like an authentic Pukhtun, or acting in the true spirit of *Pukhtunwali*, even if one is not an ethnic Pukhtun.

discourse was focused on explaining how the ideology of nonviolence was actually a reoriented form of doing '*Pukhto*,' and locating this altered normativity within the constellation of *Pukhtunwali* or Pashtunwali.

The iconic modern Pashto poet Abdul Ghani Khan, who was also a Khuda'i Khidmatgar and Ghaffar Khan's eldest son, always had a somewhat contentious relationship both with his father and the movement. Although Ghani Khan penned a prolific amount of poetry in his lifetime, he has only one poem titled 'Nonviolence' or '*Ad'm-e Thushadud*.' Befitting his characteristic contrariness, however, it is also Ghani Khan who most persuasively locates the ideology of nonviolence within the framework of Pashtunwali, as the following *shir* from the poem illustrates:

mūwr ĥey ʿgdi paĥ sar quran beyiā
khowr ĥey s̈irgey kṛlay ẗowray

mothers place the Qur'an on their heads, once again
sisters have blackened their eyes

Part of the unwritten code of Pashtunwali contains the precept of *nanawati*, which is the obligation to forgive those who ask for forgiveness, generally those who have been engaged in a long cycle of vengeful enmity, but it extends to anyone who asks. The traditional method of asking for such forgiveness is for the mother of one family to put the Qur'an on her head when she goes to the house of the enemy, and as the term '*nanawati*' literally means 'to enter in,' the other family is obliged to let her enter the house, thus paving the way for dialogue and an end to a long-held feud. With this line in the poem Ghani Khan evokes all the metaphors surrounding this precept, pointing to a tradition which, though acknowledged as part of Pashtunwali, is nevertheless less commonly cited or practised than *badal*. Thus the *misra* implicitly replaces the precept of *badal* with that of *nanawati*. Thereby, Ghani Khan points to the shift in interpreting the codes of Pashtunwali so that the concept of forgiveness becomes the new badge and hallmark of doing '*Pukhto*' rather than *badal*.[68] In the second *misra,* Ghani Khan adds that sisters can now blacken their eyes as they are no longer mourning the deaths of brothers and can happily prepare for their weddings, perhaps even finding suitors in the

[68] Often, in the case of both Pukhtun self-imaginaries as well as in ethnographies about them, especially British colonial ones, *badal* is cited as an explanation for Pukhtun violence and thus a hallmark of the race.

former enemy's household. In giving precedence to the precept of *nanawati*, Ghani Khan situates the idea of nonviolence squarely within a Pashtun ethos, while subtly reconfiguring its normative interpretations.

In the last two *shirs* of the *nazm*, he also expresses and equates nonviolence with love, but a particular kind of mystical love. By associating Sufi tropes that commonly occur in Islamic poetry with the nonviolence that the Pashtuns are now practising, he intermingles and equates the two traditions:

nen pâ neway masẗey masẗh
pāhkâ weynâ də pukhẗun shwâ
weley gowrâ keh̊ laylā biyā
ẗesh pâ miynâ də majnuwñ shwâ

today a new intoxication intoxicates
the Pukhtun's blood purified
let's see if Laila can once again
abandon herself to Majnun through love alone [69]

The intoxication here refers not only to intoxication in the literal sense but it also evokes the Sufi poetic tradition of the ecstatic love of the beloved: the intoxication in the quest of the beloved divine. The iconic figures of the lovers Laila and Majnun are obvious pointers to that poetic tradition. But it is the interpolation of the Pashtun's blood, now purified by this ecstatic love, which is the new interjection into the traditional poetic metaphor, especially in equating nonviolence with the quest of the intoxicated mystic lover. In this pointedly original interpretation of both the Sufi as well as the Pashtun tradition, nonviolence is equated neither with passivity nor with impotence, as would be expected of an ostensibly martial race of people, but instead, nonviolence becomes an exhilaration of the spirit and a vital ecstatic force with the potential power to conquer and possess its end through love alone, even if in that act it annihilates itself. The love of Laila and Majnun is a trope within Islamic mystical poetic traditions that represents precisely this annihilation of tragic lovers in their quest for union with the sacred beloved – the sacred beloved being the other of themselves. I point to this *shir* to also highlight the particular kind of grounding in Islam that the movement was evoking: a grounding rooted in the pluralistic and syncretic Sufi Islam prevalent in the region rather than the Islam called upon in the rhetoric legitimating the politics of Partition.

[69] Ghani Khan, *Latoon* (Peshawar: Jadoon Printing Press, 2000), 687–88. These are the author's translations from the original Pashto.

Pakistan or *Pukhtunistan*

Jinnah's other objection to the new Congress constitution ratified at Nagpur, apart from his constitutional and secular objections, was the fact that provincial Congress committees became semi-autonomous from the AINCC centre; the untethering was further enabled by adopting the vernacular for conducting provincial affairs. This allowed the Pashto-speaking majority to dominate the Frontier Province while marginalizing the non-Pashtuns. The linguistic reorientation had a profound economic impact upon the Province as well: it shifted power from the urban centres to the rural ones largely populated by Pashtuns; it also shifted economic and class hierarchies from elite landowners to middle-class landowning Khans and rural peasants.[70] Not only did the vernacular reorientation of provincial politics allow for the ascendance of this largely Pashtun movement, but Khuda'i Khidmatgars also rooted their resistance and change in the long literary traditions of pan-Pashtun nationalism. In fact, by some accounts they also instigated the renaissance of modern Pashto literature.[71]

However, this also marginalized the non-Pashtuns of the Province, mainly the Hazaras, who subsequently rallied with the Frontier Muslim League in opposition, especially after the Frontier Congress Committee[72] won two decisive electoral victories and formed the provincial government in 1937 and again in 1945–46. Lacking any grass-roots organizational infrastructure the FML never had much hold upon the Province until the call for Partition became loudly voiced. Before that, as Stephen Rittenberg explains, it was merely a reactionary force to the FCC.[73] And while the FCC's grass-roots stronghold amongst the subaltern and middle-class rural Pashtuns was further strengthened by their economic reform measures, it also alienated many elite landowning Khans who then also rallied to the call of the FML – along with many Mullahs and Pirs who joined the FML in the name of defending Islam from the secular and 'Hindu' FCC.

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[70] Barren Ray, 'A Unique Leader of a Unique Movement: Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the Pakhtun National Struggle,' in *Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan: A Centennial Tribute* (New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications, 1995), 54.

[71] Salma Shaheen, *Modern Poems (Nazm) in Pashto* (University of Peshawar: Pashto Academy, 2013), 75.

[72] Referred to as FML and FCC respectively in the rest of the essay.

[73] Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism, and the Pakhtuns*.

As the North-West Frontier was one of the major recruiting grounds for the Indian Army, the British Raj made concerted efforts to counter the anti-war stand of Congress during the Second World War years by framing the war as a fight to save Islam from Bolshevik Russia and the German *kaffir*s. This was especially evident from Governor Cunningham's clandestine 'Mullah programme,'[74] in which religious leaders were enlisted on the pro-war side, and by 1941 many influential Mullahs and Pirs were participating in this 'secret, government-run network' operating on both sides of the settled–tribal divide.[75] This programme was launched to sway the region against the FCC and Ghaffar Khan's staunch opposition to the war, while it also ideologically bolstered the FML, who endorsed India's allegiance with the allied forces. The clandestine Mullah programme also became the wedge to cleave apart the solidarity between the provincial and tribal areas that had strengthened during the 1930 Peshawar Riots; a solidarity consciously cultivated by Khuda'i Khidmatgar trans-border nationalism, not only between state-incorporated and nonstate spaces but also across the Durand Line. This was a trans-border nationalism that posed an especially formidable threat to the critical tripartite, north-western borders of colonial manufacture.

It was at this point also that the Muslim League gained considerable traction not just nationally, but also provincially, as they rode the ideological coat-tails of British propaganda and became the saviours of Islam, in their case from 'Hindu' domination.[76] As Rittenberg's research reveals, this was the Frontier League's constant refrain:

> To compensate for its lack of a positive program, the party placed heavy reliance upon religious appeals. As Ambrose Dundas, the Provincial Chief Secretary noted about one of its district branches in March 1938: 'The speeches reported have contained no policy and no arguments and have in about every case had no other theme but that Congress is a Hindu organization and that no true Muslim ought to ally with it.' Pro-League newspapers stressed the same theme with articles purporting to show that 'the Congress … has plans for Ram Raj in their hearts.' Leaguers told the Pakhtuns that they were condemning the Indian Muslim community into the hands of its mortal enemies by supporting the Congress and that they were also placing their own interests in jeopardy since the Hindu Congress'

[74] Ray, *Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan*, 61.
[75] Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism, and the Pakhtuns*, 287.
[76] Ibid., 255, 261.

> real aim in the NWFP was to 'demuslimize' and emasculate them. With regard to the Frontier Congress, they argued that its members were traitors to Islam who were furthering the Congress' anti-Muslim designs in return for power and personal gain.[77]

Except for its communal platform the Frontier League had no concrete political or social mandate of its own and never gained a stronghold in the Province. However, despite both the British Indian government and the FML's efforts they did not fully succeed in swaying the majority of the Frontier residents into believing that the FCC, the Khuda'i Khidmatgars, or Ghaffar Khan[78] were in actual fact Hindus trying to de-Muslimize or emasculate them. And neither were they convinced that the Muslim League were in fact the sole representatives of all Indian Muslims, nor the propaganda that the British were fighting the Axis powers for the protection of Islam. This was demonstrated by the fact that the FCC won a decisive victory when elections were held again in the Province after the war in 1945–46. Although the FML had made serious inroads into the Province by then, especially in the non-Pashto-speaking areas, their new success was, once again, not due to any grass-roots organizational structure but because categorical communal divides, which had long been their ideological banner, were becoming manifest all over India at this time.

While being one of the largest Muslim-majority provinces, the anomalous politics of the Frontier Congress could not be categorized within the neat binary communal divide which the Muslim League were evoking. Jinnah's ahistorical, amorphous polis was founded upon a transcendent pan-Islamism that negated geographical specificity and Indic history alike.[79] Despite his reputation as the ambassador of Hindu–Muslim unity,[80] Jinnah uses the language of communal incommensurability even before the late conception of a separate nation-state. In his presidential address of 1937 (at the Lucknow session of the All India Muslim League), he articulates this starkly binary framework, but even more tellingly, (and interestingly), he accuses the FCC of communalism instead.

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[77] Ibid., 262–63.

[78] The Frontier Congress Party were always differentiated from the volunteer Khuda'i Khidmatgar organization, while Abdul Ghaffar Khan never accepted a political position or government office; instead the political branch of the movement was the Frontier Congress Committee, headed by his brother, Dr Khan Sahib.

[79] Devji writes how 'Muslim nationalism was, among other things, a project of self-making premised upon the transcendence of all that was given.' See Devji, *Muslim Zion*, 138-39.

[80] Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman*, 9.

Inverting the accusations that the Khuda'i Khidmatgars constantly levelled against the Muslim League, Jinnah relegates their unclassifiable politics to a moral lack: these Muslims, according to Jinnah, had 'lost faith in themselves'[81] and, using the rhetoric of just war, they were collaborating with the enemy and betraying the community to which they rightfully owed allegiance. Fidelity to this communal belonging, as Jinnah's discourse reveals, was not a matter of choice, material specificity or social production but rather an essential and categorical identity authenticating true 'Muslims' from false ones, and therefore, not open to negotiation.

> I want the Mussalmans to ponder over the situation and decide their own fate by having one single, definite, uniform policy which should be loyally followed throughout India. The Congressite Mussalmans are making a great mistake when they preach unconditional surrender. It is the height of defeatist mentality to throw ourselves at the mercy and goodwill of others and the highest act of perfidy to the Musalman community; and if that policy is adopted, let me tell you, the community will seal its doom and will cease to play its rightful part in the national life of the country and the Government. Only one thing can save the Mussalmans and energise them to regain their lost ground. They must first recapture their own souls and stand by their lofty position and principles which form the basis of their great unity and which bind them together in one body-politic. Do not be disturbed by the slogans and the taunts such as are used against the Mussalmans – *Communalists, toadies*, and *reactionaries*. The worst *toady* on earth, the most wicked communalist to-day among Muslims when he surrenders unconditionally to the Congress and abuses his own community becomes the nationalist of nationalists to-morrow! [*sic*] These terms and words and abuses are intended to create an inferiority complex amongst the Mussalmans and to demoralize them; and are intended to sow discord in their midst and give us a bad name in the world abroad. This is the standard propaganda which can only be treated with contempt.[82]

Warning 'the Mussalmans' against the contamination of their distinctive way of life, and rallying them to recapture '*their lost ground*,' through the discourse of loyalty and unity, he threatens them with dire moral and psychological

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[81] *Speeches and Writings of Mr Jinnah*, Vol. I, ed. Jamil-Ud-Din Ahmad, 1st edition 1942, 9th edition 1960 (Lahore: Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf), 29–30.

[82] Ibid., 31–32.

consequences if they collaborate with or surrender to the enemy. And yet, despite the rhetoric of just war, Jinnah effectively relegates the ethical outside the realm of the political: a community cannot depend upon the 'goodwill' of the other, or upon a self-regulating moral sense, but instead its rights must be guaranteed through a position of normative, coercive power. The narrative of a homogeneous and unitary Muslim community that could be governed through 'one single, definite, uniform policy' created precisely that position of power. However, the Khuda'i Khidmatgars were simply not playing their 'rightful part,' as Jinnah bemoans; their deviant ideology and their alliance with the 'enemy' camp undermined this narrative of power. [83]

Jinnah and the FML's discourse of difference eventually became the wedge that drew apart a sense of Muslim-ness from that of Pashtun-ness in the Frontier Province. What had once been a seamless part of the Pashtun ethos was now set in opposition to itself and debilitated the Khuda'i Khidmatgar nationalist platform. When the politics of Partition finally allowed the FML to gain significant legitimacy in the Province, and Jinnah's call for Direct Action unleashed the violence that logically resulted from the rhetoric of incommensurability, the normative political, or the Schmittean friend–enemy framework, was reinstituted in the Frontier. While the communal violence was

[83] Jinnah's narrative of incommensurability between Hindu and Muslim metaphysics only deepened and became more intransigent over the next few years. He also credited the present 'artificial unity of India' to 'British conquest'; one that is maintained solely 'by the British bayonet.' This discourse of difference becomes especially manifest in his historically significant presidential address of Lahore, 1940, which founds the idea of Pakistan:

> 'Hindus and the Muslims belong to different religious philosophies, social customs, and literature. They neither intermarry, nor interdine together, and indeed they belong to two different civilizations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. Their aspects on life and of life are different. It is quite clear that Hindus and Mussalmans derive their inspiration from different sources of history. They have different epics, their heroes are different, and they have different episodes. Very often the hero of one is a foe of the other, and likewise, their victories and defeats overlap. To yoke together two such nations under a single state, one as a numerical minority and the other as a majority, must lead to growing discontent and the final destruction of any fabric that may be so built up for the governing of such a State.'

'Jinnah's Presidential Address – Lahore 1940' in *India's Partition: Process, Strategy and Mobilization*, ed. Mushirul Hasan (New Delhi: Oxford University Press), 56.

no where near the levels that took place in Calcutta, Bihar, and later in Punjab, it did destabilize the Frontier Congress government and their nonviolent ideology. Many members of the FML, according to Rittenberg, 'were readily convinced of the political efficacy of violence' despite their facade of nonviolent civil disobedience. Starting 'in March [1947], they encouraged and organized sabotage, and made no effort to curb communal terrorism until Jinnah gave them explicit orders to do so.'[84] With the FCC represented as a 'Hindu' party, all means were justified in toppling their government, so that 'violence became integral to direct action.'[85] It was within this atmosphere that the idea of *Pukhtunistan* came into being: a last-minute, desperate effort to preserve Pashtun autonomy and the alternate political the Khuda'i Khidmatgars had so painstakingly cultivated.

However, the All India Congress Committee also played decisive roles in fostering the politics of Partition that would eventually, to paraphrase Ghaffar Khan's famous words, throw the Pashtuns to the wolves. It was a shocked Ghaffar Khan who proposed the idea of a third state upon learning that Congress had agreed to partition India. In his autobiography he recounts the devastating grief, or '*afsus*' and '*gila*' he felt at Congress' betrayal, especially from 'Jawaharlal Nehru and Gandhi-ji.' Because, as he says, 'even they agreed to this state of affairs,' and to holding the decisive referendum in the NWFP without consulting him.

> We joined Congress with the promise of becoming their friends in this fight for freedom so that together we would liberate our country from foreign rule. But when the time came for the enemy to feed on us no thought was given [to us]; we were not consulted about this astounding future [fate] of ours. Rather, the referendum for [joining either] Pakistan or Hindustan was forced upon us and we were in fact the big selling point. We were the ones that had made great sacrifices; our blood had flown; our properties and wealth had been destroyed yet others reaped the profits. Congress leaders would always ask my opinion on most affairs; they would not act without my advice or council. Yet on this most crucial matter, not only did they not ask for my advice, but they never even informed me. I am most grieved by the fact that the Congress Working Committee also did not aid us or have concern for us …We won the election from the Muslim League then why the need for another election? If they wanted a new referendum then, for our

[84] Rittenberg, *Ethnicity, Nationalism, and the Pakhtuns*, 370.
[85] Ibid., 371.

> sakes, they should have done it on the question of Pakistan or Pukhtunistan. This referendum, however, was [on the question] of Pakistan or Hindustan, and because of Congress betrayal we did not want be with Hindustan. That is why we did not participate in the referendum and boycotted it. The British used to tell us not to be friends with Congress and that they would give us much more than they give Hindustan. But we did not betray Congress, instead they betrayed us. The most upsetting part is that we did so much for them and this is what they did [in return] to us.[86]

Unlike the warm welcome Nehru received on his first trip to the NWFP in 1938, the hostile reception that greeted his second visit in October 1946, especially during his tour of the tribal areas, had far-reaching consequences and possibly played a vital role in the politics of Partition.[87] While the third option of *Pukhtunistan* may have been a possibility, especially during the Cabinet Mission Plan, it was Nehru in particular who dissuaded Mountbatten of the option of granting provinces the right of autonomy, or a choice beyond the parameters of either India or Pakistan.[88] Although Ghaffar Khan does not discuss the details of this history forthrightly or in great detail in his autobiography (written as it was well after the Khuda'i Khidmatgars were declared traitors, or '*ghadar*s,' by the nation-state of Pakistan), his pointed grievance against Nehru seems to imply that there was a moment in time when the fate of the province could have been otherwise. His most egregious lament against Congress concerned their instrumental use of the power of nonviolence: 'the truth is that *ad'm-e-thushadud* was their [Congress'] policy but it was, and is, our creed.'[89]

Perhaps even more 'insufficiently imagined' than Pakistan, to use Salman Rushdie's phrase, the contours of *Pukhtunistan* may not have been fully envisioned at the time of Partition, but given that Pashtun nationalism had a

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[86] Khan, *Zma Zwand aw Jdow-Jehd*, 737–8. These are the author's translations from the original Pashto.

[87] Banerjee argues that it is possible that Nehru vetoed the option of Pukhtunistan on the referendum ballot because of a sense of vindictiveness towards the Pukhtuns after his hostile reception on his second visit to the Frontier. Banerjee, *The Pathan Unarmed,* 185, 189.

[88] See Jalal, 285 on Nehru dissuading Mountbatten about provincial autonomy which could have led to the Balkanization of India. And Tendulkar's uncorroborated claim that Pukhtunistan was an option in the first draft of Mountbatten's partition plan that he sent to London with Ismay in the first week of May 1947. However, Nehru's 'violent' reaction against it decided the fate of the Frontier without that option, 421.

[89] Khan, *Zma Zwand aw Jdow-Jehd*, 739.

long lineage and the Khuda'i Khidmatgar mantle rested on the notion of self-sovereignty, it most likely referred to some kind of autonomous nationhood. It was not just a bargaining strategy, as Erland Jansson conjectures, or the more befitting name for the NWFP, as Ghaffar Khan later claimed,[90] but while both of those claims were likely components of the call for *Pukhtunistan,* or the concept evolved to include these components over time, some kind of a community that would uphold the radical transformation the Khuda'i Khidmatgars had achieved must have been the main motivating factor in Ghaffar Khan's call for a third alternative. As such, the imaginary of *Pukhtunistan,* as the space for the alternate political that had been cultivated, would have been of paramount consideration when it became obvious that all that he had strived for would be destroyed once the Muslim League had replaced the British as the new rulers. The new, unstable, postcolonial nation-state of Pakistan could neither tolerate nor afford to have such an alternate political or autonomous nationalist entity within its own borders. It thus became imperative that all traces of the call for *Pukhtunistan* be systematically destroyed. Thereafter, members of the movement not only remained constantly suspect but spent more time in Pakistani prisons than they had in colonial ones. The Khuda'i Khidmatgars, and the ideology of the movement that had become mainstream in the Province, were a reminder that Pakistan was not created with the consent of all its citizens, or more crucially, in the name of all its Muslims.

In an eerie echo of the Qissa Khani Bazaar killings – which had propelled the movement to the forefront of Indian nationalism – Khuda'i Khidmatgars, including many women, were once again killed by state policing, however, not by the colonial State's disciplinary mechanisms this time but by Pakistani forces. Demonstrating in the village of Babra, Charsadda (a district of NWFP), against the Public Security Ordinance Bill passed in 1948 by the newly formed Pakistani government – which outlawed mass gatherings and granted the government powers to arrest and hold people without charge – many Khuda'i Khidmatgars

[90] After Ghaffar Khan was arrested in 1948 he addressed the Constituent Assembly on 16 December 1948 as a member of that house. When asked by Liaqat Ali Khan whether 'Pathan' was a name of a country or a community, Ghaffar Khan replied: 'Pathan is the name of a community and we will name the country Pakhtoonistan [*sic*]. I may also explain that the people of India used to call us Pathans and we are called Afghans by the Persians. Our real name is Pakhtoon [*sic*]. We want Pakhtoonistan [*sic*] and we want all the Pathans on this side of the Durand Line joined and united together in Pakhtoonistan [*sic*].' *Debates of Baacha Khan in Constituent Assembly of Pakistan* (Peshawar: Baacha Khan Research Center).

were gunned down by police fire.[91] The massacre effectively destroyed the subaltern infrastructure of the Khuda'i Khidmatgars, while also declaring them *ghadar*s, or traitors, shortly after. All literature and records of the movement were systematically destroyed, effacing them and the Frontier Congress government from the memory and history of the emergent postcolonial nation-state. Fida Abdul Malik laments this cataclysmic event in his poem, 'Death don't come, I am coming,' which tellingly positions this extermination, and themselves as a '*quwm*,' or nation, in opposition to the Pakistani State: the politics of friendship in opposition to the logics of State violence; a logic that necessarily had to obliterate such alterity threatening its existential structures. I end the chapter with two *shir*s from this epitaph, which not only points to the willful destruction of the movement as the 'enemy' within, but especially as contrast to Fida's earlier *nazm*, the 'Tenets of the Khudai Khidmatagrs,' that heralded the movement, and with which I begin this chapter.

yow khwā tâ ẗūpay mashinunah
de hukumaẗ wadrâ fūwźunā
bel khwā tâ qūwm khaley lasuwnâ
muqābilay tâ mey kathəl hairānədemâ
mergeyah meẖ rāźah drźemah

On one side, cannons and machines:
The government's army all spread out;
On the other, a nation, empty handed.
Looking at this opposition, I was astounded –
Death don't come, I am coming

dā pākistān ŵgey fūwźunūw
mṛaẖ zakhmeyān ŵukṛl pe zergūnuw
dweẖ-e dā khndā shawl dā qūwmunuw
yow zlm neẖ dey zeẖ baheŷ kum kum yādāŵmah
mergeyah meẖ rāźah drźemah

[91] The exact number that were killed is still in dispute. According to government and official sources the numbers were, initially, 15 killed and 50 wounded. Later, these figures were modified to 20 killed and 25 wounded. According to Khuda'i Khidmatgar literature the figures vary from 400-500 to 900 killed and wounded including about 100 women (official reports state that only men were amongst the victims). Newspaper reports published at the time – *The Morning News* from Calcutta for example – stated that 300 were killed and around 400-500 wounded.

These hungry armies of Pakistan
Producing thousands of dead and wounded
They make a mockery of nations
It's not just this one injustice, how many shall I recount?
Death don't come, I am coming.

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9

Islam, Communism and the Search for a Fiction

Ammar Ali Jan

Political Islam and communism present us with a curious case of two global political ideologies that seem to follow each other like shadows, either equated as principal threats to liberal universalism or presented as fierce adversaries fighting to win political hegemony in the nonEuropean world.[1] In colonial India, both traced their modern genesis from the same political event, the Khilafat/Non-Cooperation movement (1919–1922). In fact, the first Communist Party of India in Tashkent was established by partisans of pan-Islamism, symbolizing the intimate relationship between the two political currents during the anti-colonial movement.[2]

In this essay, I engage with the writings of Shaukat Usmani, a forgotten figure of the Indian communist movement who was perhaps one of the best known communists outside Europe during the 1920s. His early life allows for a study of both the convergence and the splitting of political Islam and communism as he traversed both these ideological spectrums in the charged political atmosphere of the 1920s. Since Usmani quit active politics in 1932 (almost a decade before the idea of Pakistan entered popular imagination), I deal primarily with the shared 'pre-history' of political Islam and communism in India prior to the emergence of the Muslim League and the Communist Party of India (CPI) as major political entities in the subcontinent. This intellectual history permits us to conduct a geneological investigation into the relationship between Islam and communism, to unearth both the *subterranean connections* and *antagonisms* between the two

[1] See for example, Margaret Thatcher, 'Islamism is the New Bolshevism', The Guardian, 12 February 2002. Accessed 24 September 2016. Available at http://www.theguardian.com/world/2002/feb/12/afghanistan.politics; and David Satter, 'Yesterday Communism, Today Radical Islam,' Forbes, 11 March 2009. Accessed 5 June 2016. Available at https://www.forbes.com/2009/10/30/ideology-islam-communism-opinions-contributors-berlin-wall-09-david-satter.html.

[2] Gangadhar Adhikari, *Documents of the History of the Communist Party of India, 1917-1922, Vol. I* (New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1976).

political ideologies. More importantly, my emphasis on the shared history between political Islam and communism aims to conceptualize the 'problem' posed by Muslim nationalism to the burgeoning communist movement (which moved between supporting and contesting the Muslim League, as detailed by Ali Raza in this volume), as well as for the Muslim League, which oscillated between strategic alliances *with* and declarations of treason *against* Muslims involved in the communist movement.[3] In other words, my essay attempts to conceptualize the complicated relationship between political Islam and communism at the moment of their simultaneous birth, in order to shed light on the overlapping yet antagonistic trajectories of these political projects, with important consequences for the development of political thought in Pakistan. Perhaps it may also aid us in viewing this history as a living past, one that may still offer us resources to rethink our current impasse, caught between a rising fundamentalist threat and an increasingly authoritarian response.

My aim in this chapter is twofold. First, I want to provide a historical and conceptual basis for analysing perplexing similarities between communism and political Islam. Centring my argument on the specificity of colonial India in the 1920s, I argue that such resonances existed due to the historical moment in which Britain's imperial order appeared intellectually, if not politically, exhausted, prompting activists to seek newer horizons for imagining a future political community. I deploy the concepts of 'distancing,' 'negation,' and 'heroic sacrifice' as aspects of the shared subjectivity between communism and political Islam. We can delineate the contours of these overlapping tendencies, however, only if we view Islam and communism as *political projects in the making* within specific histories of anti-colonialism, rather than as stemming from unrelated, and even opposed, textual traditions. Consequently, I show how exigencies of the political conjuncture always stood in primacy to any straightforward textual fidelity.

[3] The Pakistan movement presented a peculiar problem to the CPI. While it supported the right of self-determination for all nationalities in the Indian Union (a thesis it borrowed from Lenin), the party was forced to rethink the very meaning of a nation when confronted with a territorial claim based on religious belonging. It was precisely for this reason that the party repeatedly changed its position on the Muslim League, at one point joining its electoral campaign in Punjab, while terming it a 'communal' organization later. Conversely, the post-partition Muslim League government immediately launched a countrywide crackdown on communists (many of whom had supported the Pakistan movement), eventually banning the Communist Party in 1954. For more details on the trajectory of the Communist movement in Pakistan, see Kamran A. Ali, *Surkh Salam: Communist Politics and Class Activism in Pakistan 1947–1972* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

Second, I posit that despite a shared genealogy, communism and Islam differed in important ways during this period, in particular in their conception of a future political community. I particularly highlight the central role played by a permanent 'antagonism' to communist thought in the anti-colonial world.

Shaukat Usmani: a short biography

Born in 1901 in Bikaner, Rajasthan, Usmani became involved in the Caliphate movement in 1919 while he was still a student in school. In his memoirs, Usmani often ignores or downplays his involvement in this religiously inspired event, as is evident in his later characterization of the movement as

> ... the greatest drawback to India's progress. It strengthened the extra-territorial sympathies of the Indian Muslims and cut them more and more asunder from the Nationalist movement.[4]

Yet, Usmani never criticizes his own involvement in the movement, which had compelled him to leave his home and face death on a number of occasions. I shall later return to the significance of Usmani's condemnation of a past movement while simultaneously attempting to redeem his own role in it. For now, it will suffice to say that Usmani responded to a call to Indian Muslims by a number of ulama to migrate to Muslim-ruled lands after British plans to dismember the Ottoman caliphate were revealed. As one of the earliest recruits to this movement, which witnessed the exodus of 36,000 people from India, Usmani left for Afghanistan in early 1920, en route to Turkey to join the forces of Enver Pasha, who were believed to be defending the caliphate against the British empire. Recalling his abrupt decision to join this movement, Usmani sought to highlight the desire of the Indian youth to escape the drudgery of colonial rule:

> Some of us had started with high hopes when we had left our homes, of being able to liberate our country and drive away British imperialists. I had sharply rebuked a classmate of mine at the railway station of Bikaner a few days before leaving for hijrat, when he had sarcastically remarked, 'What about your holidays, are you also going to some hill stations to pass your summer vacations?' I had retorted 'No, I am going to the other side of the

[4] Shaukat Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow: Leaves from an Indian Muhajireen's Diary* (Varanasi: Swarajya Publishing House, 1927), 13.

> Pamirs to bring calamity on the heads of the British rulers whom your relatives are serving so obediently.' This had completely silenced him. He was the son of a surgeon in the British service.[5]

Usmani, who left for Afghanistan with the 'third batch' of the *muhajirs* (totalling 80 people), was welcomed by none other than the amir of Afghanistan, who provided lodging for these youngsters as state guests at Jabalus Sirah, a hill station near Afghanistan. The purpose of this seclusion was to provide military and political training to the *muhajirin* before they could be integrated into Afghan society. Soon, however, differences emerged between the *muhajirin* and Afghan authorities, as the former asked for more access to major cities such as Kabul, eventually asking to be relieved to continue their journey towards Turkey and join the jihad for the Ottoman empire. Part of their decision to leave Afghanistan was influenced by the lack of enthusiasm for the caliphate amongst the Afghan population:

> The Khilafat which meant so much to the Indian Muhammedans had no meaning whatsoever for the Afghan masses. They remained quite indifferent to it, save a few who saw in it a potent weapon against the British government. To an average religious Afghan, millat did not mean more than nation … I invite our Moulanas to come with me to Afghanistan, Turkestan, Azerbaijan or Turkey and show me half the zeal about Khalifa and Arabia there, as we see in India … It was the pursuit of some higher ideals that had forced us to quit it (Jabalus Saraj), so very early, and we left it much in the same way as we had left our homes.[6]

Despite the setback in Afghanistan, the search for 'higher ideals' impelled Usmani and others to continue their journey. Entering Turkestan after a perilous journey across the border, the *muhajirin* found themselves in the middle of intense civil strife between pro-Bolshevik forces against the traditional ruling classes of Central Asia. A split occurred within the ranks of the *muhajirin* over their relationship with the political developments in Turkestan. A few, including Usmani, insisted on staying in the Soviet Union, while others were adamant about leaving Central Asia for Turkey to launch a jihad. The Soviet authorities persuaded Usmani to remain with the larger group, since they believed that a division among the *muhajirin* over the Soviet Union would tarnish the image of communism in Indian nationalist circles. In a bizarre event (on which I further

[5] Ibid., 32.
[6] Ibid., 1517.

elaborate later), Turkestani authorities seized the boat of the *muhajirin* as soon as they left Soviet waters, accusing them of being Bolsheviks. Sentenced to death, only a host of contingent of circumstances, including bombardments from rival factions, secured the release of the *muhajirin*, who immediately headed back to Soviet-controlled Asia.[7]

These experiences had exhausted Usmani's inclination towards the caliphate, and he became keenly interested in the communist project. He promptly joined the revolutionary committee to defend Bokhara against the forces of the former *amir* (leader). Shortly thereafter he was called to Moscow, and later to Tashkent, by the prominent Indian intellectual M.N. Roy, who was given the responsibility by the Comintern to coordinate revolutionary movements in Asia. Studying first at the University of the Toilers of the East, which had been set up by Lenin specifically for non-European students, and then moving to Moscow, Usmani studied Marxist theory and strategy, and also undertook military training. He eventually became a leader of the newly constituted 'Communist Party of India' in Tashkent in 1920.[8]

Usmani returned to India at the end of 1922 as a partisan of the communist movement, was arrested in 1924 in the famous Kanpur Conspiracy Case of 1923 and then was jailed for four years. Released in 1927, he left for the Soviet Union to participate in the Sixth Comintern Congress, where he was welcomed as one of the most important international figures of the communist movement, giving him a place on the Presidium of the Congress, seated only third from Stalin.[9] On his return to India, he was arrested in the infamous Meerut Conspiracy Case in 1929 and was sentenced to life in prison. A global campaign for his release (and the release of other prisoners) was organized. Usmani also achieved the distinction of being the first Indian to contest the British general elections while imprisoned in an Indian jail when the Communist Party of Great Britain nominated him as a candidate in 1929. While his election campaign further enhanced his status as a global celebrity of the communist movement, the Indian political scene changed rapidly during this period, challenging the rootless 'cosmopolitanism' of the preceding decades, as I elaborate later. Local communist leaders challenged the 'émigre' leadership of the party, ousting many of its founding members in 1932, including Usmani himself.[10]

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[7] Ibid., 2327.

[8] Ibid., 3750.

[9] Shaukat Usmani, *I Met Stalin Twice* (Bombay: K. Kurian, 1953).

[10] Gene Overstreet and Marshall Windmiller, *Communism in India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959).

Usmani's political rise and fall was nothing short of spectacular. Welcomed by the king of Afghanistan as a 19-year-old *muhajir*, developing personal relations with political giants such as Stalin, Zinoviev, Nehru, Maulana Muhammad Ali and even Enver Pasha, in whose name he had left Bikaner in the winter of 1920, he became one of the most prominent Indian political figures on the international scene. Yet, by 1932, dejected due to his ouster from the communist party, he quit active politics at the young age of 31, devoting his life to journalism and literary writings, with a number of fictional portrayals of his voyages across Central Asia. Usmani, however, remained engaged in exploring progressive political possibilities within the Muslim world, as he moved to Cairo in 1964 to join *Lotus*, a literary magazine of the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organisation. During this period, he also worked closely with the Palestine Liberation Organization, penning a book dedicated to the Palestinian struggle.[11] An Indian 'Islamist' who embraced communism but remained closely tied to political causes in the Muslim world, Usmani's story is one of intellectual and political promiscuity opened by the interwar period, a project that, nonetheless, remained politically and intellectually incomplete. Writing in 1976, two years before his death, he emphasized this lack of closure in his political life:

> Sweet memories of that period still haunt me, give me inspiration sometimes and at others depress me because we are still far away from the goal which we cherish.[12]

'Divine cry of Lenin': communism and political Islam

The intense rivalry in Asia between the Soviet Union and the British empire was not only a conflict between two different socioeconomic visions for the region, but in its geographical specificity, was also a contestation to become the sovereign of Muslim Asia after the impending collapse of the Ottoman empire. While British authorities represented themselves as members of 'the greatest Mohammedan Empire in the world,' the Soviet Union sought to build alliances with political Islam to construct a countergeography to the empire.[13] In fact, what is often termed as the 'National Question' in the Soviet Union was primarily a 'Muslim Question' since a majority of 'nationalities' in

[11] Shaukat Usmani, *Historic Trips of a Revolutionary: Sojourn in the Soviet Union* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 1977).

[12] Ibid., 73.

[13] David Petrie, *India and Communism* (Calcutta: Government of India Press, 1928).

the country consisted of Muslim states in Central Asia. Posing the most radical challenge in developing a political relationship between communism and the non-European world, the newly installed Bolshevik government immediately sought a common ground with Islamic movements challenging the British empire or the remnants of Tsarism within Central Asia. A special appeal to 'Muslims' sent out in December 1917 highlights the significance attached to political Islam by the newly installed Soviet authorities.

> Muslims of the East! Persia, Turks, Arabs, and Indians! All you whose lives and property, whose freedom and homelands were for centuries merchandise for trade by rapacious European plunderers! All of you whose countries the robber who began the war now want to divide amongst themselves ... Lose no time in throwing off the ancient oppressors of your homelands ... Muslims of Russia! Muslims of the East! In the task of regenerating the world we look to you for sympathy and support.[14]

Here, we witness the contradictory movement inherent in the historical conjuncture within which the Soviet state found itself. The lack of revolutionary enthusiasm in Europe, the centrality of Central Asia to any modern state-building project and the emergence of an anti-British pan-Islamism compelled Bolshevik leaders to develop new alliances outside their traditional relationships with European communists. Such calls for support were followed by a number of concrete measures to forge unity, including the formation of a 'Muslim Congress' in Petrograd, the introduction of sharia courts in Central Asia and a financial campaign to fund a 'global jihad' against the British, particularly among the Pashtun tribes of India. In fact, at the Baku Congress of the Peoples of the East held in 1920, Soviet leaders such as Zinoviev repeatedly pledged support to anti-colonial movements in the Muslim world, setting the freedom of 'Muslim lands' as one of the primary internationalist duties of the revolution.[15]

The sentiments were largely mutual, as some of the most important Muslim scholars called on Muslims to take inspiration from the Soviet revolution in their own efforts to regenerate the Muslim world. In fact, rather than viewing Bolshevism as a European tradition incommensurate with Islam, many sought to displace it onto a quasi-spiritual register to allow for a common political

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[14] Maia Ramnath, *Haj to Utopia; How the Ghadar Movement Chartered Global Radicalism and Attempted to Overthrow the British Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 194.

[15] Dave Crouch, 'The Bolsheviks and Islam,' *International Socialism* (110) April 2011.

project. Maulana Mohammad Barkatallah, a popular Indian revolutionary with strong sympathies for pan-Islamism, called on Muslims to 'embrace' socialism 'seriously and enthusiastically.'

> Following on the dark long nights of tsarist autocracy, the dawn of human freedom has appeared on the Russian horizon, with Lenin as the shining sun giving light and splendour to this day of human happiness ... Oh Muhammedans! Listen to this divine cry. Respond to this call of liberty, equality and brothership which brother Lenin and the Soviet government of Russia are offering you.[16]

This equation between the 'divine cry' of Lenin and the historical regeneration of the Muslim nation may seem anachronistic today, but it remained a dominant theme in the evaluation of the Soviet government in Muslim political thought during this epoch. Religious scholars ranging from Obeidullah Sindhi, who was a member of the Indian provisional government in Afghanistan, to Maulana Hasrat Mohani, who became one of the founding members of India's first Communist Party, praised Soviet policies towards Muslim Asia and sought to develop fraternal relations between communism and political Islam.[17] Even Maulana Muhammad Ali Jauhar, the principal leader of the Khilafat Movement, contacted Shaukat Usmani to explore the possibility of opening up a channel for Soviet funding. It is not surprising then that the first émigré Communist Party of India formed in 1921 consisted entirely of Indian Muslims based in the Soviet Union, and almost all of them were related to the pan-Islamic movements of the era.[18]

My objective in recalling these events is not meant to inscribe this shared history between political Islam and communism onto the register of political or geostrategic interests. In such narratives, it is simply an 'aligning' of interests between unrelated political currents that allow for such momentary alliances. Claiming to be free from an ideological bias but deeply embedded in a positivist sociology, such analyses naturalize 'interests' onto certain sections of society, without investigating the hard labour through which individuals or groups even begin to identify with particular causes. For a Muslim or an Indian or a worker is under no abstract obligation to identify with any one particular cause, let alone to agree to sacrifice one's life for it, an act that blurs the very

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[16] Ibid.

[17] Ramnath, *Haj to Utopia,* 185.

[18] Adhikari, *Documents of the History of the Communist Party of India, 1917–1922, Vol. I.*

criterion for judging interests. Moreover, as Faisal Devji has argued,[19] the conceptual tools used to justify particular movements or momentary alliances often obtain a life beyond both the 'inner motives' of their authors as well as the immediacy of the political conjuncture. My own aim now is to demonstrate that beyond the multiple contingent reasons that brought together specific encounters between political Islam and Soviet communism, there are more deeply embedded questions of a shared historical subjectivity that allow these two political currents to recurrently overlap throughout the twentieth century.

The act of distancing

A number of scholars have argued that the inability of Indian subjects to compete with the material wealth of Europe prompted the construction of an 'inner' domain or spiritual essence of the nation, both superior to, and uncorrupted by, the experience of Western colonialism.[20] *Sanyasis*, Sufis, and a number of other ascetic currents in India in the late nineteenth century aimed to reconfigure spiritual rituals as transformative practices for carving out an indigenous mode of existence, autonomous from the constraints of a colonized world. A key feature of these practices included an active *distancing* from the material and ideological coordinates of colonial life through embodied sacrifice and personal suffering. In a world dominated by a colonial ideology preaching gradual assimilation of Indian subjects into the imperial project, and held together by the terror of unrestrained violence, rejecting the comforts of material life and voluntarily undertaking bodily suffering were aimed at creating a bulwark against one's submission to the compulsions of colonial rule, at least in the realm of ideology.

Once the modern Indian 'political' burst onto the scene with the onslaught of the Caliphate/noncooperation movement, the motif of collective sacrifice and transformative violence took centre stage in the Indian political landscape. From local to transnational 'terror' outfits, to organs of mass 'national' politics, the question of self-negating violence dominated the political imagination in India. Maulana Muhammad Ali Jauhar, the leader of the Caliphate movement

[19] Faisal Devji, *Muslim Zion: Pakistan as a Political Idea* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013).

[20] See for example, Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments. Colonial and Post-colonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

which acted as the first inspiration for Shaukat Usmani, had already called upon Muslims to 'sacrifice their health, wealth and life in the name of God' and urged them to decide what 'they intended to do and announce it plainly, leaving the authorities to decide their own course of action as they pleased.'[21] Indeed, Devji has shown that even Gandhi, often held up as an example of liberal humanism in the West, based his theories of non-violence on the absolute rejection of life preservation as an ideal, instead privileging a relationship with death through voluntary suffering as a more authentic mode of existence.[22]

Such indifference to colonial sovereignty and commitment to axiomatic declarations were attempts to forge a political subjectivity freed from the seductive calculations and imposing violence of colonial rule.[23] The absolute disjunct between a linear conception of historical progress that had undergirded imperial ideology, and the actual global events that unleashed unprecedented catastrophes on a planetary scale since the outbreak of the First World War, necessitated such a *distancing*. As Shruti Kapila has argued in her reading of Tilak, a foremost Indian nationalist, the emergence of the Indian political was conceived as being tied to a non-historicist conception of a violent event that could overcome the increasingly stifling reality of colonial rule.[24] In this conception, politics is neither merely an individual nor collective relationship to the state, nor an expression of historically sedimented contradictions, but is instead a process of creative production aiming to overcome a conjunctural impasse, with transformative violence as its motor. It is no wonder then that the Khilafat movement, which coincided with the peace celebrations of the First

[21] Mushirul Hasan and Margrit Pernau, eds. *Regionalizing Pan-Islamism: Documents on the Khilafat Movement* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2005), 13.

[22] Faisal Devji, *The Impossible Indian: Gandhi and The Temptations of Violence* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012).

[23] This is not to make the rather exaggerated claim that there was an absolute binary between colonial and anti-colonial politics. Indeed, heterogeneous forms of political subjectivity existed in the 1920s, which often engaged productively with questions of equality and dignity within colonial India. My claim, however, is that following the Amritsar massacre, the status quo was deemed unstable by both the government (which resorted to emergency measures) and political organizations in India, including the Congress, which began calling for immediate independence. It was the overlapping of an end in the belief of colonial infallibility and a desire for a post-colonial future that led to the search for newer horizons for political action in the present. A key aspect of developing a politics incongruous with the colonial present was to demarcate an autonomous space for political action, a praxis I call 'distancing,' as I explain later.

[24] Shruti Kapila, 'A History of Violence,' *Modern Intellectual History* 7, no.2, (2010): 437-57.

World War in India, urged a boycott of the celebrations in favour of a martyr's week to commemorate Indians killed by the British, indicating that the war had only just begun in India.[25]

The Khilafat movement then provided the necessary ruptural event from imperial rule that could inaugurate a political modernity beyond the contours of colonial governmentality. In the ensuing decade, it became the reference point for all the major currents in Indian political life, as Islamists, nationalists, 'terrorists' and even communists oriented themselves by claiming fidelity to it. Shaukat Usmani's political career itself was the product of the Khilafat movement as he, in a supreme act of self-negation, left his home in the hope of finding adequate resources for launching an effective war against imperial rule. The act of self-exile in the Hijrat movement inscribed a physical geography to the distancing sought from colonial ideology, as partisans literally explored novel frontiers for developing new forms of political praxis. But how did Usmani, and many others like him, subsist in this breach opened by the mass upheavals in India, guarding against the threats and temptations of reassimilation?

The interregnum: between negation and death

The positing of an absolute negation of colonial rule did not signify that Indian revolutionaries possessed a neatly laid out plan to replace it. This was a moment of purely axiomatic claims against the empire, as well as its alleged allies within the Indian social body, to mark out the emergent political community from a decaying political order. Indian political imagination was at a crossroads, with the old dying and the 'new yet to be born.'[26] A decomposition without a recomposition, a destruction sans reconstruction, a negation without an affirmation, this interregnum was marked by a ferocious violence, which could easily shift from being deployed against colonial officials to a fratricidal war against religiously or ethnically marked communities.[27] Indeed, Usmani

[25] Hasan and Pernau, *Regionalizing Pan-Islamism,* 11.

[26] David Forgacs and Eric Hobsbawm, *The Antonio Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings 1916–1935* (New York: New York University Press, 2000).

[27] The 1920s raised novel questions on both the form and content of anti-colonial politics. The intellectual promiscuity was characteristic of the 1910s, in which political organizations as varied as the Congress and the Ghadar Party avoided explicit ideological borders, imbibing instead disparate ideologies deemed incongruous in European political thought. The defeat of the noncooperation movement led to multiple fissures within the nationalist movement, while the colonial state's efforts

characterized his own decision to leave India as not only stemming out of opposition to British rule, but also out of disgust at the 'non-violence' of the movement, 'a cult destitute of any dynamic force', which 'did not appeal in the least' to 'the younger imagination.'[28]

The journey thus begins as a search for a politics that could usher in a radical beginning for a future political community. We mentioned earlier how Usmani in his writings simultaneously denounced the 'misadventure' of Hijrat as orchestrated by Muslim fanatics while glorifying his own heroic rule during the epic journey. In fact, in one of his travelogues written from prison in 1927, meant to be one of the most important works of propaganda for the communist movement, Usmani narrates the heroism of this journey as part of his credentials as a communist leader. From what subjective position, then, can one of the most widely acknowledged events of modern political Islam be reinscribed into the short history of the burgeoning communist movement in India? Such a collapsing of the two political currents onto each other allows us to locate the shared subjectivity of this period, held together in the search for a politics adequate to a future political community.

The *Hijrat* movement provided thousands of Indians 'an opportunity for going outside and studying the methods of other countries.'[29] This search for

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to implement punishments based on alleged associations with ideologies aided the process of consolidating ideological and, consequently, organizational demarcations. It is no wonder then that the intelligence apparatus in India deemed the entry of the ideologically driven into India as the greatest threat to colonial stability, going as far as using the presence of Marxist literature as the strongest evidence for indicting a number of anti-colonial activists in the infamous Meerut Conspiracy Case. I argue against the romanticization of a 'pre-ideological' era of the late 1910s and early 1920s by demonstrating that the need for political ideology as a new compass was felt precisely as a result of an impasse within anti-colonial politics which operated within a simple (ideological) binary between the colonizers and the colonized. The bursting of popular politics in colonial India meant that social contradictions, including class, caste, religion, gender etc, could not be easily integrated within the dominant nationalist narrative. The formation of political projects that could recognize such disparate contradictions and turn them into political antagonisms, as well as colonial differentiations amongst political currents, prompted the need for ideological affiliation. See, for example, Ali Raza, 'Separating the Wheat from the Chaff: Meerut and the Creation of "Official" Communism in India,' *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and Middle East* 33, no.3, (2013): 316-33.

[28] Shaukat Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow: Leaves from an Indian Muhajireen's Diary* (Varanasi: Swarajy Publishing House, 1927), 1.

[29] Ibid., 1.

new horizons signifies the experimental nature of this period which at least partly explains the overlapping of multiple political trends before they became anchored into precise ideological and organizational disciplines. Such a search intensified in Usmani's life as he, along with a group of *muhajirs*, became increasingly dissatisfied with the lack of political orientation in 'Muslim Afghanistan.'[30] The wrath of the *muhajirin* had quickly turned from British officials to Muslim rulers, particularly the amir of Afghanistan, who was accused of curbing their enthusiasm by keeping them isolated in Jabalus Siraj, cut off from any political or intellectual activities. This was by no means a light charge, since the characteristic impatience of anti-colonial politics was precisely aimed against a 'politics of waiting' imposed by colonial rule in which colonial subjects could attain their full being through a gradual civilizing process supervised by the colonial state.

What role did then violence play in this interregnum, characterized by a passionate wandering without clearly defined goals or a strategic axis to achieve them? The embracing of a heroic death provided possible destinations that could vindicate the journey begun in India. Indeed, in an interregnum where the map of the journey to come remained insufficiently imagined, death was elevated to the principal guarantee for subsisting in the negation opened by anti-colonial revolts. I will elaborate this point with an anecdote from Usmani's travelogues. As already mentioned, the *muhajirin* were arrested by Turkestani authorities as Bolshevik spies, and were ordered to be executed. The reasons for their arrest are not entirely clear from Usmani's account, owing largely to the fact that none of the *muhajirin* spoke Turkish and hence did not fully comprehend all the discussions. Yet, it is clear that, from the perspective of Usmani at least, it was a case of mistaken identity, since the *muhajirin* had arrived to support the Turkestani authorities.[31] Let me now quote some passages that describe Usmani's thoughts minutes before an execution that seemed imminent, in order to shed light on the role of death within this chaotic moment.

> There was deathlike silence, no one stirred or lifted his head. The rifles were levelled at our heads in order. The second message that came confirmed the first one. The commander made a similar announcement. This time the rifles

[30] Ibid., 20.

[31] From Usmani's account, it seemed as if the local warlords, fearful of a Soviet invasion, hastily arrested the *muhajirin* arriving from Soviet territory and handed out a death sentence. Usmani does not provide detailed reasons for his arrest and sentence, claiming that the language barrier prevented him from understanding the intricacies of the situation.

> were loaded and we were convinced that our end was near … Death began to dance before our eyes. Nothing was visible, save death stark naked … It was a matter of a few more minutes … With our heads bowed down we were reviewing our past. Within a few moments our imagination travelled from home to Kabul, from Kabul to Tirmiz to the massacre ghat … We resigned ourselves to our fate and had some consolation that we were dying in pursuit of noble and high principles. We reviewed our past and were satisfied that we were dying at our posts. We had set out on our journey from India and were dying for India's cause.[32]

Within this narrative, we view two seemingly unrelated trajectories. On the one hand, we are confronted with the utter horror of a meaningless death imposed upon these young partisans, dying for a charge they never understood, and at the hands of an enemy that never was. Thus, this imminent death signified an internal deadlock for anti-colonial politics, one that seemed to take it to a point of exhaustion.

However, we are not immediately offered a Nietzschean recommencement after an end. Without the delineation of any clear horizon for political action, we are instead presented with death as a substitute for a political strategy. For if the subjectivity induced by anti-colonial politics did not allow for annulling the constitutive negation of colonial rule, and the lack of a vision for a new world denied a novel measure for one's own political actions, death confirmed the permanent subsistence within this space of negation. The abrupt move in Usmani's narrative from the chaos of an impending and perhaps pointless death to 'dying for India's cause' is part of a retrospective act to provide meaning to what appears to escape it. In short, death here 'sutures' the terrifying gap between the subject's intense desire for a new world and his complete lack of capacity to attain it, suspending political subjectivity within the space of negation.[33]

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[32] Ibid., 6873.

[33] My aim is to build the writings of a number of theorists, including Antonio Gramsci, who argue that the existence of popular upheaval marks a crisis for the status quo, and if not superseded by an emancipatory political alternative, is often followed by a morbid fascination with death. Etienne Balibar and Alain Badiou have recently stated that such periods, termed such 'intervaillac' periods, often lead to pathological symptoms, including fascist mobilization, as a possible resolution of the gap in social reality opened up by political events. Hence, against the subsistence in a space of pure negation which may end up aligning itself with fascism, they emphasize the need for alternative political

Much of the political realignment in India during the 1920s can be read as an attempt to move out of this impasse, a project in which Usmani was an enthusiastic participant. To initiate discussions on possible future trajectories, a record number of political journals appeared on the public scene, with the influx of 'subversive literature' termed the 'gravest threat to the Empire' by colonial officials.[34] How should we then understand this widening interest in different political ideas within India, including Usmani's association with communism, beyond its caricaturization as an ideological entrapment?

Knowledge, incalculability and decision

While a melancholic attachment to death maintained a pervasive presence within the subjectivity of an interregnum, it was supplemented by the desire for a heroic overcoming of obstacles, the two often anchored in the same instance. I argue that this move from one to the other represented the passing from negation to affirmation. Let me quote a passage from Usmani's journey from Afghanistan into Central Asia as he passed through the notoriously dangerous Panjshir valley. In a section titled 'Panjshir Defiant,' Usmani recounts the decisions imposed on the group as they confronted the seeming impossibility of moving ahead owing to the physical characteristics of the route:

> After that came an abrupt descent and we came face to face with the turbulent Panjshir, then in flood and sweeping over the road. There was no other way and the mountains looked inaccessible and defiant … Every one of us was forced to think over this serious question. A bitter feeling of defiance arose in our mind against the refractory river and a council was called. Some hinted at the plan of going back, but the majority were for victory or death.

projects, including alternative fictions (in fidelity to the consequences of the event) to overcome the impasse produced by an interregnum. See for example, Alain Badiou, *The Rebirth of History: Times of Riots and Uprisings* (New York: Verso, 2012).

[34] Petrie, *India and Communism*. An important part of the CPI's activities in the 1920s was the goal of smuggling Bolshevik propaganda into India, while for the British officials, including David Petrie, the inflow of 'subversive literature' was at the heart of the Empire's strategy to curb communism. In fact, as stated earlier, the possession of 'illegal' literature, including books from Marx, Engels and Lenin, was the main charge against in the Meerut Conspiracy Case which led to life sentences for the entire leadership of the Communist Party of India. See Raza, 'Separating the Wheat from the Chaff: Meerut and the Creation of Official Communism in India.'

> Arguments on principles were also made. Napoleon's crossing the Alps was quoted. Alexander's exploits were instanced. To go back meant surrender, to step into the fastrunning water meant instantaneous death. Which was to be preferred? All agreed that death with honour was preferable to turning back. Not a step backward became our slogan. Death with heroism was something attractive and we decided to go forward … At moments it seemed that the river would wash away. But our will power proved stronger than the current, and in due time we reached dry land.[35]

Both the reference to political figures before crossing the Panjshir, as well the decision to narrate this event in communist propaganda literature, exemplified the supreme importance attached to heroic sacrifice in Usmani's political imagination. The conflation of nature and politics is neither a stretch, nor without precedent, since in the same era, the Soviet Union was claiming to have regained the control of nature from the abstract temporality of capital, directing it through official will by the five-year plans.[36] A few years later, such overcoming of nature through politics would reach its peak in China during the Long March, where every soldier who died because of the punishing physical geography was deemed a martyr, while a belief in the human ability 'to move the mountains' became a slogan for the perpetual overcoming of 'natural' challenges.[37]

Such a determination to overcome adversity through transformative sacrifice structured the political landscape in which Usmani encountered communism. On his return to Bokhara, the city had witnessed a 'revolutionary' uprising against the amir, the latter backed by landlords and the institutional clergy.[38] I quote his passages on the encounter with this revolutionary movement, to elucidate the stakes involved in his decision to side with it as the amir's forces launched a counterattack to recapture the city:

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[35] Shaukat Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow*, 19.

[36] See for example Sheila Fitzpatrick, *Everyday Stalinism: Ordinary life in Extraordinary Times* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

[37] Mao Zedong, 'The Foolish Old Man Who Moved the Mountains,' 11 June 1945, Marxist.org, accessed 26 October 2016. Available at https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/ volume-3/mswv3_26.htm.

[38] For an in-depth study of Bolshevik activities in Central Asia, see Helene Encausse, *Islam and the Russian Empire: Reform and Revolution in Central Asia* (London: I.B. Tauris and Co. Ltd., 1988).

> In a few days more the Turkomans again mustered strong and surrounded the town. One day we saw that our Afghan friends who used to come to us at least once daily did not come for two days, instead we saw a corpse lying on horseback and brought to the adjacent barracks which were occupied by the Red soldiers. We went to the President and expressed our sympathy and deep anguish to see a friend of ours thus killed … We offered him our services if required. The President welcomed our offer and took us into his confidence as good comrades.[39]

The *Muhajirin* were given the task of defending a strategic point near the river by the 'revcom,' the revolutionary committee of Bokhara:

> To defend the river front was a military problem of great interest … But what could we do? We were a motley crowd of 36 and our fighting strength really amounted to nothing. But there was no other course left. Either we should choose to fight and die, or should see the town plundered before our eyes, then, falling into the hands of the Turkomans, should meet a death of ignominy and cowardice. Moreover, was not fighting for the cause of Bokharans a cause of all the freedom loving people on earth? We happened to be there, and liked to share the fate of the Bokharan soldiers.[40]

We are presented with a subjectivity identical to the crossing of the river at the Panjshir valley. The crossing of the flooded area was based on neither a prior knowledge of the operation, nor could be undertaken with any guarantees of success. 'Death' or 'victory' were the options. Similarly, in Bokhara, Usmani was confronted with a political decision to side, and possibly die, for a communist government, without any knowledge of Marxism, or even an awareness of military strategy. The execution of their friends, the impending invasion by the city, and the 'fearlessness' exhibited by the revolutionaries placed the *muhajirin* and the Bokharan communists in a shared existentialist situation. In other words, they offered to die for a regime to which they had no ideological affiliation, but only a sense of *practical solidarity.*

This situation invoked the ethical decision of either continuing or abandoning the battle, a moment of pure schism between confidence and doubt, without any mediating term. For political action always depends on the existence of

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[39] Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow,* 82.

[40] Ibid.

a remainder that cannot fully be elaborated through premeditated action or prior knowledge, opening an interstitial space that must be filled by axiomatic declarations amounting to a leap in the dark, rather than following sociologically deduced conclusions. The decision to identify with Bokhara's revcom opened a new phase in Usmani's life, as he successfully defended the town to 'vindicate the honour of India.'

> … he (the president of revcom) came straight to us and began to lift us up in ecstasy, praising us, and shouting 'Long live the Indian Comrades' 'Long Live the cause of free India' 'Long Live the defenders of free India.'[41]

We are already miles away from discussions of 'scientific' or 'sociological' political theory, engaging instead with more immediate questions of heroism and sacrifice in the face of impending danger. Usmani encountered communism as part of the continuum that began with a distancing from imperial ideology and a search for a new anchor for political action. This primacy of political action led Usmani to repeatedly complain about the part of his life in Russia when he was compelled to undertake classes in Marxist theory.

> I had no knowledge of Marxism. My main aim was to fight like a soldier in the ranks of the fighters for the liberation of India … It was quite amusing to come across terms such as bourgeoisie, proletariat, petty bourgeoisie and dictatorship of the proletariat. Often irresistibly I would laugh while reading such odd terms, and my fellow residents would be amused by my behaviour … Frankly speaking, I was not satisfied with a mere theoretical study of the subject … The big theoreticians drowned us in their arguments about building a theoretical background for the Indian revolution.[42]

In an impatience characteristic of anti-colonial politics, Usmani instigated a revolt against the alleged pedantic ways of M. N. Roy, whom 'all regarded as our teacher,' insisting that he be relieved from the studies to rejoin the the struggle for independence in India. He approached 'Comrade Raccocci' the secretary general of the Communist International, who arranged Usmani's meeting with Stalin on this matter:

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[41] Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow,* 84.
[42] Usmani, *Historic Trips of a Revolutionary*, 46.

> I told him bluntly, 'I want to go back to India.' And his reply was, 'why did you come here if you want to go away without completing your studies?' But I succeeded in convincing him that I could best serve the cause of Indian revolution there, in India.[43]

The primacy of politics over theory, of decision over knowledge and of confrontation over waiting, is clear from these passages.[44] The ease with which Usmani was simultaneously able to occupy the position of a partisan of communism and political Islam allows us to make a preliminary hypothesis on why political Islam and communism were often anchored in the same geographical and temporal conjunctures in the twentieth century. First, both stem out of a negation of the globally prevalent liberal imperial ideology, creating a space for an intellectual and political rupture. Second, both engaged in a search for a novel political community, and hence were oriented towards the future. Third, they used heroic sacrifice, including the voluntary embracing of death, as both a rejection of the fear of colonial violence and as an assertion of the transformative potential of political violence.

After leaving his studies in Moscow, Usmani was imprisoned in India in 1923 for four years, where he claims that the only books available to him were the Mahabharata and Ramayana.[45] On his release in 1927, he became involved in clandestine political activity as the leader of the Communist Party before being rearrested in 1929 in the Meerut Conspiracy Case. It is then fair to suggest that the premier face of Indian communism in the 1920s was not at any point well acquainted with Marxist theory, a condition shared by other renowned communists of the era.

If Usmani identified with communism as a result of a pre-history of political action, what did it even mean to be a communist beyond organizational affiliation? In other words, is there any efficacy in maintaining the term 'communism' after this idea's entry into the non-European world?

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[43] Ibid.

[44] There is of course a different conceptualization of waiting in Gandhi's thought, as recently pointed out by Uday Mehta. As a response to the dislocations in social life produced by colonial capitalism, Gandhi elevated waiting as a political virtue for sustaining an authentic relationship with the self. Such a conception of waiting came into a productive conflict with other strands of anti-colonial politics, including communism, a theme I shall discuss in future work. See Uday Mehta, 'Patience, Inwardness, and Self-Knowledge in Gandhi's Hind Swaraj,' *Public Culture* 23, no.2 (2011): 417-29.

[45] Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow* , 83.

Communism, historical difference and the role of fiction

The search for a regulative idea that could orient a movement caught up in a space of negation was a response both to the actually existing violence of imperial rule, and to the inertia and confusion arising out of the collapse of the Khilafat/Non-Cooperation movement. Usmani's association with communism was part of what Althusser in his later writings described as an 'encounter,' similar to a person jumping onto a moving train, except that it was the idea of communism that jumped onto the moving train of anti-colonial nationalism.[46]

As noted earlier, the deadlock of a violent and discredited imperial order in the aftermath of the war did not just present an abstract intellectual problem, but was shaping multiple political trajectories. Thus, if the ideological universe occupied by a supposedly harmonious imperial liberalism was now viewed as simply a mask displacing a deeper antagonism between the colonizers and the colonized, attempts to replace it with a newer order required a minimal level of fiction as a support for political commitment in the present. By fiction I mean the postulating of certain ideals emanating from a political terrain in order to interrogate the same terrain in a self-reflexive act of political knowledge production. While always containing elements of ideology, the necessity of fiction arises out of the need to move out of the domain of a pure, melancholic negation and allow for new coordinates of self-relating, a new horizon for evaluating actions in the present.[47] The name 'communism' sought to provide one such horizon, inscribing into permanence the rupture from imperial liberalism instituted by the anti-colonial revolt, and allowing particular actions to be invested with larger, transcendental meaning. For any 'anti-colonial' action depended on such a horizon that permitted localized acts of disobedience to gain a meaningful coherence at the national scale, beyond their depictions as contingent 'disturbances' by the colonial state.

It is on such a register that I read Usmani's glorifying accounts of the Bolshevik Revolution in Bokhara:

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[46] See Louis Althusser, *Philosophy of the Encounter: Later Writings 1978–87* (New York: Verso, 2006).

[47] My argument is influenced, though not determined, by Badiou's treatment of fiction. Mobilizing popular mythology and culture was part of a global trend amongst political thinkers in the 1920s, including Sorel, Gramsci, and Ernst Bloch. This engagement was partly a response to the inadequacy of 'scientific' analysis in developing communist praxis and partly a response to the successful mobilization of popular culture by fascist forces in Europe. See Alain Badiou, *Philosophy for Militants* (New York: Verso, 2012); and George Sorel, *Reflections on Violence* (Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, [1908] 2004).

> At every hundred steps the Russians and Bokharans delivered lectures in Russian and Persian, emphasising the solidarity of the oppressed people … It was a lesson for us. We saw freedom in her true guise here. In spite of their poverty the people looked more jovial, and revolution had instilled in them contentment and fearlessness. The real brotherhood of mankind could be seen here amongst these people of 50 different races. No barriers of caste or religion hindered them from mixing up with one another. Every soul was transformed into an orator … The speech, suppressed for centuries together, burst out like a flood.[48]

In other instances, Usmani explains the relationship between religion and communism in the Soviet Union:

> The most amusing was the visit of Faizullah Khojaev, head of the Bokhara administration … He invited the Indian students to his room for tea and entertained us with Bokhara sultanas, talking about the progress Bokhara was making under the new regime. I could not resist the temptation of asking him whether he was a Communist. Prompt came his reply, 'By the Grace of God, I am a Communist.'[49]

The accuracy of his descriptions is a moot point, since that would place us back into questions of hermeneutics, debating whether he had correctly read the situation, tying an entire generation's political experience with textual interpretations. Instead, we must read his choice of narrating these events onto a political register, as an attempt to produce an alternative fiction to the imperial one, a fiction that could both speak to the real anxieties within the Indian conjuncture and envisage an actionable plan for overcoming them. The depiction of the Soviet Union as a concrete representation of the future to come for the colonized world was perhaps a case of a poor fiction, one that would later be challenged by a Maoist assertion that argued for locating and intensifying the contradictions within the socialist states. But that does not take away the necessary function of a fiction in suturing the space of a lack of absolute knowledge, particularly when the sacrificial decisions demanded by any oppositional political project require a minimal level of confidence in undertaking actions laden with unforeseen risks. In this respect, a fiction does not

[48] Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow*, 57-58.
[49] Usmani, *Historic Trips of a Revolutionary*, 56.

represent a sociologically deduced conclusion, but an affirmative prescription, one that marks the commencement of a conceptual labour aimed at instituting a new form of politics.

Once again, however, this should not be confused with an uncomplicated acceptance of communist ideology by Usmani and others. Indeed, what he finds fascinating about the the Soviet experience is not its dominant hagiography by European communists, but the shared affinities between the Soviet Union and the 'Oriental people.' In a section titled 'Russians and Soviets are Oriental' Usmani asserts these similarities:

> Firstly, villages in the Soviet Union and especially in Eastern Russia, while differing in the details of their organisation, present a social picture similar to the villages in India. They are essentially cooperative. The people of the West resent the idea of the Soviet as much as they resent the idea of the Panchayat. It is due to its coming into direct clash with their social experience which is individualistic in all respects and aspects. But on the other hand the eastern tribes and clans as well as villages find nothing inconsistent in the Soviet idea since their mode of life is primarily social and not individual.[50]

Needless to say, such affinities between a village panchayat (itself too grand a category to have much meaning) and the Soviets cannot stand any historical test. Yet, as Shruti Kapila has powerfully argued, citations often functioned to mark a point of rupture from, rather than an unquestioned fidelity to a textual tradition. The attempts to register communism as an 'Oriental ideology' or insist on the multiple ways of being a communist against the more universalizing narratives of traditional Marxism, was precisely an example of the infidelity characteristic of Indian political thought.

Yet it was the emphasis on communism's own missed encounters with the non-European world that propelled the anti-colonial as an agent of communism's universalism outside its point of origin. Usmani and a host of anti-colonial communists during this period were communists to the extent that they allowed communism to speak in situations and to processes hitherto outside its purview. Thus citations, much like borders, not only separated, but also allowed for shared intellectual trajectories in which geographically scattered and historically disparate indices of suffering could nonetheless be concentrated into a common and actionable political project, in the here and now. For Usmani, communism was a name that summoned such heterogeneous struggles to institute a global political project, making the rupture with imperial liberalism permanent.

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[50] Usmani, *Peshawar to Moscow*.

Islam and communism: the divergence

If political Islam and communism shared an antagonistic posture to a deadlock in imperial liberalism, they differed precisely on the nature of the fictions they constructed to respond to it. This speaks both to their intellectual and geographical overlap, but also to the subtle but crucial differences that mark out their internal antagonism. Indeed, throughout his retelling of the disputes amongst the *muhajirin* between those wanting to associate with the communists in Bokhara and those wanting to continue the journey to Turkey, Usmani uses the term 'our step-brethren,' denoting a familial, yet fraught relationship.[51]

A detailed engagement with the specificities of political Islam is beyond the scope of this work. I elucidate my argument by engaging with Faisal Devji's study of the most successful manifestation of political Islam in South Asia, the Pakistan movement.[52] As already stated, I do not want to reiterate the already well-known history of the Communist Party's attitude towards the Pakistan movement. Instead, my aim in this essay has been to simultaneously interrogate the political projects of Islam and communism at a conceptual level. If earlier I showed their overlapping tendencies at their moment of birth, here I attempt to delineate the point of departure between the two political ideologies, one that sheds light on the reasons for the often-tense relationship between the Muslim League and Muslims belonging to the communist movement. Devji's study of the Pakistan movement is an ideal site for examining these differences, both for his emphasis on the political thought produced by the Pakistan movement, and for explicitly comparing it to the ideas developed by the communist movement.

Devji argues that what provided the Pakistan movement its historical specificity was a concept of a nation that never fully coincided with a state or a territory. It was instead religion that provided an alternative to Pakistan's lack of territorial anchorage. Moreover, the Pakistan movement was conceived of as a political community oriented towards a future, in which questions of territory and ethnic/linguistic diversity would be made to disappear to allow for a homogenous polity, an ideal that Devji claims it shared with communism.[53]

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[51] Ibid., 59.

[52] Faisal Devji, *Muslim Zion: Pakistan as a Political Idea* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013).

[53] Ibid., 28.

There are two major assumptions in this otherwise thought-provoking work. The first is obvious; communism in the non-European world, at least since Lenin's thesis on the colonial world in 1920, always emphasized 'national liberation' as the principal task of the communist movement in Asia, with 'nation' understood in as orthodox and territorially bounded a conception as possible during the era.[54] It will be difficult to find any theoretical work of significance from communists in Asia, or even Latin America or Africa, which rejects the nation as a principal site for political action.[55] The other, and perhaps more significant comparison, concerned the belief that historical differences would disappear in a future to come. This perspective offers a more interesting lens to conduct a comparative study of Islamic and communist thought, since in a certain teleological itinerary of European Marxism, the working class is invested with the capacity to overcome all existing antagonisms.

The difference, however, persisted in the role of contradiction or antagonism within the structure of a communist fiction. For whatever the teleologies of European Marxism, the existence of a radically different political geography in Asia, with questions of colonialism, nationalism, religion and regionalism, to name a few, meant the problem of engaging with multiple and intrinsic contradictions could not be circumvented. A cursory look at the literature of Indian communism makes it clear that all given political categories, such as regionalism, nationalism, caste politics, or even socialism are intrinsically tied to antagonistic terms that never allow for any full closure. Usmani himself defers any possibility of an epoch shifting moment in a pristine event of class struggle as he rarely, if ever mentions the word 'proletariat' in his writings, substituting it with 'nation,' 'oriental people,' 'colonized,' 'workers,' 'peasants,' 'eastern characteristics,' etc without any preferential order. Neither does Usmani elevate any particular contradiction to a transhistorical character to provide for a 'subject-object' of history that could overcome all existing contradictions. Instead, he indicates a number of possible nodal points for future conflict,

[54] V. I. Lenin, 'Draft Theses on National and Colonial Questions for the Second Congress of the Communist International,' *Lenin's Collected Works: Volume* 31 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1965) 144-51. Accessed 26 September 2016. Available at https://www.marxists.org/archive/ lenin/works/1920/jun/05.htm.

[55] 'National Liberation' remained a central concern for political praxis amongst communists in countries as diverse as Vietnam, South Africa and Indonesia. On the importance of national sovereignty for communist movements in the non-European world, see Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* (New York: The New Press, 2008).

arising out of his own political experience, without ever providing a coherent conceptual framework to explain this apparent aberration when viewed from orthodox Marxism. That these historically sedimented conflicts represented a challenge to be overcome through the anti-colonial motif of sacrifice, rather than automatically superseded in industrialized society was further clarified in his electoral campaign in the British general elections.

As stated earlier, Usmani was chosen as a candidate for the Communist Party of Great Britain in 1929. The elections were important for two symbolic reasons; first, it allowed for publicizing the cause of political prisoners in India. Second, he was pitted against Sir John Simon from the infamous Simon Commission Report of 1929, a controversial report on constitutional proposals in India that led to India-wide demonstrations, often violently suppressed by the police. Placing a communist imprisoned in a colonial jail against one of the most prominent symbols of colonial domination in India generated much public discussion on the plight of Indian prisoners, even if this hype did not translate into votes.[56] The following quote from Usmani's letter to constituents titled 'Echo of the General Elections,' which arrived too late to be widely distributed in the constituency, indicates the difficulties he saw in building a shared political project, even while fully believing in its possibility:

> I have been selected by the Communist Party in Spen Valley to stand as a candidate for Parliament and I wish, though separated from you by 6,000 miles and prison bars, to place before you an appeal. I appeal to you, not on my own behalf but of the 300 million toiling masses of India ... I claim to be a humble representative of the vast mass forces of revolt which are now so quickly gaining strength in India and throughout the entire colonial world. I have been working for the masses of this country since 1920. Imprisoned without trial in 1923, I was tried and sentenced to four years' rigorous imprisonment in 1924 for Conspiracy as a Communist … All in India who take part in the struggle for emancipation or who assist the exploited masses must suffer more or less the same fate as I have done … I am asking you to disregard personal consideration, the claim of traditions and the ties of race and colour, and to prefer the weak to the strong, the poor to the rich, the absent to the present. I ask you to make this sacrifice not for my sake,

[56] Shaukat Usmani, 'An Echo of the General Election,' *The Labour Monthly*, August 1929, 504-08, accessed 24 October 2016. Available at https://www.unz.org/Pub/LabourMonthly-1929aug-00504.

> but for the sake of the solidarity of the workers of the world … I appeal to you, confident that you will rise superior to limitations of race and colour, and, in spite of all obstacles, stand by your class.[57]

The first issue to highlight is that there are no claims made of a generalized equivalence between the interests of the working class, but rather this unity is viewed as political project to be constructed. Taking historically produced differences, including 'race' and 'colour,' which are termed 'limitations' and 'obstacles,' what is striking is how Usmani describes their overcoming as an act of 'sacrifice,' rather than a natural alliance based on easily discernable, shared interests. Such identitarian claims having their autonomous anchor in 'tradition' could not be disregarded, not least because much of colonial ideology was built on the fiction of a separation of races. Nor does it imply an immediate personal advancement for British workers, since the communists in India had already pointed out the corrupting influence of imperialism on them. In a characteristic overlap of anti-colonial subjectivity and communist politics, Usmani calls for an indifference towards 'personal consideration' as a condition for building global solidarity. Thus, his conception of class solidarity, rather than overriding historical antagonisms, sought their resolution through a process calling for a transformative sacrifice.

Second, what future political community is Usmani invoking by calling on his constituents to choose the 'poor to the rich, the absent to the present'? This 'absence' does not point to a future community fully coinciding with a humanity freed of its immanent antagonisms. Instead the call to 'stand by your class' points towards an insurgent, divisive unity. 'Class' in communist politics denoted a partisan and divisive viewpoint to name a structuring gap impossible to suture within capitalist society, with *class politics* indicating a political project corresponding with this recognition. It is at this point that the communist fiction decisively parts ways with fictions of a harmonious whole, whether defined territorially or ideationally. The communist fiction in the colonial world was instead constituted as a response to antagonisms engendered by colonial rule by not only inscribing them into a specific politics, but also to widen their horizon, displacing them diagonally onto existing identity formations in search of new political alliances. There is then only a theory of society as a contradictory totality, one that permanently invokes decisions on the antagonistic terms within

[57] Usmani, 'An Echo of the General Election,' 504–08.

a particular situation, without allowing for any closures.[58]

The politics of place

Usmani viewed his own travels as not only political, but as tied to the politics of India. Even while travelling abroad, the 'honour of India' dominated his political imagination:

> This travelogue, this piece of history, this journey, is not a pilgrimage without politics. We had started our journey because of the political situation in our country. The entire country was in revolt. The foreigners, the British imperialists, had made our lives impossible … Though it is true that I have traveled extensively in Asia, Europe and a part of Africa, it must be frankly stated that there has never been the slightest notion in my head to become another 'Sinbad the sailor.'[59]

Against the contemporary post-modern or post-colonial celebration of hybridity as a political possibility, anti-colonial thought elevated the geographical categories of territory and place as primary sites for political intervention. Perhaps Usmani's non-place within the emergent political landscape of India is what prevented him from gaining a political foothold within the country that was equal to his stature in the international arena. His description of the multiple directions in which he was pulled after his release from prison in 1927 testifies to his own anxiety regarding his lack of an anchor on the political stage, as well as indicates the realities of the political scene in India:

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[58] It was for this reason that the Communist movement, even while supporting the Pakistan movement, rejected the argument that there was an ontological basis for the creation of Pakistan based in religion or territory. Instead, the demand for Pakistan was supported or opposed on the basis of the resolution of the nationalities question, as a partial step towards working-class unity in the subcontinent. This partly explains the hostility of the Communist Party of Pakistan (CPP) towards the Muslim League (and vice versa) immediately after independence, since the Communists saw the post-colonial situation as displacing rather than ending social contradictions, with the Muslim League emerging as the primary adversary for 'real freedom' in Pakistan. See Ali Raza, 'The Unfulfilled Dream: The Left in Pakistan 1947–1950,' *South Asian History and Culture,* 4, no.4 (2013): 503-19.

[59] Usmani, *Historic Trips of a Revolutionary,* 16, 111.

> I was facing several problems at this time at the end of 1927. Arjan Lal Sethi, who was held in great esteem by the revolutionaries of North India ... was impressing upon me that being a son of Rajasthan, I should settle down in Ajmer and train revolutionary cadre there. Then there was the Kanpur Mazdoor Sabha, with whose leaders I had worked during the period of my underground life before my arrest in May 1923 ... Thirdly, there was a call from my Communist party comrades that I should do something for Akbar Khan Qureishi who had by this time already undergone some seven years of imprisonment … Habib Ahmed Nasim, one of the Moscow-Tashkent conspiracy ex-prisoners was already settled in Delhi and it was agreed between him and I that I should do some editing and journalistic work in Delhi.[60]

Usmani was even approached by a number of young political activists to begin a guerilla war against the British, a result of 'an exaggerated sense of my capacity to lead a military campaign.' As Usmani emerged from a four-year sentence into the changing realities of the country, the pressure of the Indian political scene, with antagonisms working in multiple vectors, was evident. The 'problems' he faced included questions of regional and political belonging, not to mention the mundane tasks of earning a living. While Usmani decided to settle in Delhi, he was approached by Maulana Muhammad Ali, who wanted him to tour the Soviet Union to ask for financial aid for the journey he decided to undertake with the help of Abdul Ghaffar Khan, who helped him escape to Afghanistan via the Khyber Pass.[61]

This journey was Usmani's last significant public act as a communist leader before his arrests in 1929 and his subsequent retirement from politics. Perhaps it was an indication that his politics had become suspended at the meeting point between his association with global communism, and its reconceptualization within the Indian political scene, even though, as I have argued, the former was overdetermined by the subjectivity of the latter. Against the contemporary celebration of a groundless cosmopolitanism, the emerging Indian public sphere demanded political ideas to be anchored in specific histories and geographies, not as a hurdle to their universalization, but as their only condition of possibility.

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[60] Ibid., 85–86.
[61] Ibid., 84.

Conclusion

This short historical account shows us the multiple contradictions faced by communists in Indian politics since the beginning of the communist movement. Shaukat Usmani's brief political life expressed the contradictory terrain navigated by Muslims active in the anti-colonial movement in the 1920s, since both communism and political Islam presented possible political projects congruent with the emerging anti-colonial consciousness. Though they both emanated from a shared search for a political future beyond imperial liberalism, political Islam and communism differed in how each imagined a future political community, with important consequences for political action in the present. This fraught, yet intimate relationship continued to structure the relationship between these two ideologies throughout the Muslim world in the twentieth century (including Pakistan), a theme I hope to explore in future work.

The entanglement of political Islam and communism not only sheds light on *a trajectory* of Muslim political thought that challenged an exclusionary form of religious politics as the only viable option for Muslims in India, but also delineates an alternative path imagined by Muslim activists to enter a more inclusive and universal political project. Perhaps this subterranean current of Muslim anti-colonialism, obfuscated equally by the nihilism of contemporary imperialist and Islamist violence, may also aid us in developing an emancipatory alternative in contemporary South Asia.

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10

Muslim Nationalist or Nationalist Muslim?
Allah Bakhsh Soomro and Muslim politics in 1930s and 1940s Sindh

Sarah Ansari

The small Muslim-majority province of Sindh occupied an ambiguous position vis-à-vis the Muslim League in the years immediately leading up to independence and the creation of Pakistan. On the one hand, the Sindh Provincial Muslim League Conference at its first session at Karachi in October 1938, presided over by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, adopted a resolution, moved by prominent local Leaguer Shaikh Abdul Majid Sindhi,[1] recommending that the party should devise a constitutional scheme under which Muslims might attain full independence. Whatever this resolution may have signified at the time (and it is important to note that it was passed only two years after Sindh had been separated from the Bombay Presidency following an increasingly 'communal' campaign), it was subsequently held up by Sindhi Muslims to assert their province's key role in the wider movement to secure some kind of separate political future for the Muslims of British India. On the other hand, one of Pakistan's most vocal critics after 1947 was the Sindhi nationalist politician G. M. Syed who, after he had broken with the Muslim League by 1946, remained steadfast in his opposition to the federal arrangements on which the new Pakistani state was based, calling by the 1970s for the creation of an independent Sindh or *Sindhu Desh*.[2] Moreover, observers of Sindhi Muslim politics, both

[1] As the use of this title 'Shaikh' in Sindh indicates, Shaikh Abdul Majid Sindhi was a Hindu convert from Thatta, who edited key Sindhi Muslim newspapers such as *Al-Haq*, *Al-Amin* and later *Al-Wahid*, and played a prominent role in Muslim League politics in the province.

[2] Oskar Verkaaik, 'Reforming Mysticism: Sindhi Separatist Intellectuals in Pakistan,' *International Review of Social History* 49, no. S12 (2004), 65–86; Sarah Ansari, 'Identity politics and Nation-building in Pakistan: the case of Sindhi nationalism,' in *State and*

contemporaries and those with the benefits of hindsight, have also frequently pointed to its highly factional nature during the late colonial period.[3] Certainly, provincial politicking in the decade after 1936 (when Sindh was established as a separate province within British India) represented a complicated web of shifting political alliances and allegiances, within which the Muslim League occupied an uncertain place despite its improving electoral record by 1947.

This chapter, rather than exploring Syed's infamous and well-known break with the League and its bitter aftermath, focuses instead on the activities of another Sindhi Muslim politician, Allah Bakhsh Soomro, whose story is far less familiar but whose impact on provincial politics in the late 1930s and early 1940s was arguably as significant as that of his better-known counterpart during this period. One of the biggest 'what-ifs' of mid twentieth-century Sindhi history is to speculate on the course that politics in the province could have taken in the years immediately preceding independence had Soomro not been murdered in May 1943.[4] In contrast to many of his fellow Sindhi Muslim politicians who gravitated to varying extents in the direction of the All-India Muslim League (AIML), Soomro seemed resistant to its pull, leaning instead towards a pragmatic nationalism that saw him align himself with 'Nationalist' Muslim initiatives at the all-India level. Accordingly, the following discussion, rather than directly exploring the shifting ideological landscape of Sindh during this period, addresses Soomro's individual political role set against unfolding developments in the province, in part to caution against any over-simplistic understanding of the process by which Muslims in this part of British India

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Nation-Building in Pakistan, ed. Roger D. Long, Yunus Samad, Gurharpal Singh and Ian Talbot (London: Routledge, 2015), 101–17.

[3] For instance, Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Ian Talbot, *Provincial Politics and the Pakistan Movement: The Growth of the Muslim League in the North-West and North-East India 1937–47* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1988).

[4] Born in 1900 in Shikarpur, Allah Bakhsh Soomro matriculated in 1918 and joined his landlord father's business as a contractor. Then, at the age of 23, he entered politics when he was elected to the Jacobabad Municipality. His ascent was rapid and soon he became president of the local district board. In 1926 he defeated an influential landholder rival and represented Upper Sindh in the Bombay Legislative Council (BLC), where he remained for the next ten years. In 1937, following the separation of Sindh from Bombay Presidency, he was elected to the recently created Sindh Legislative Assembly as a member of the newly formed Sindh United Party, becoming chief minister on two occasions between 1938 and 1942. For an (admittedly very admiring) account of Soomro's life and political career, see Khadim Husain Soomro, *Allah Bux Soomro: Apostle of Secular Harmony* (Sehwan Sharif: Sain Publishers, 2001).

moved in the direction of support for the League's 'Pakistan' programme by August 1947.

It is important to note from the outset, however, the particular syncretic religious traditions associated with this part of British India. Many of Sindh's Muslim inhabitants, who comprised around three-quarters of the population of this stretch of the lower Indus valley, shared a long-standing reverence for the large number of Sufi *pir*s whose tombs (*dargah*s) dominated the local religious environment and whose descendants enjoyed access to influence and power as a direct result of this charismatic appeal.[5] As others have pointed out, this pattern of reverence extended also to sections of the non-Muslim population of the province, resulting in the 'widespread Sindhi participation in the worship of saints belonging to the "other" community and their enthusiastic involvement in each other's religious festivals,' and the difficulty involved in slotting 'Sindhis into tidy "Hindu" and "Muslim" categories.'[6] Moreover, to apply Nile Green's comments on 'Bombay Islam' to Sindh, its Muslims, like their Bombay-based counterparts, did not collapse themselves 'into a coherent or unified community based on … religion.'[7] Instead, Sindh contained a 'variety of Islams … [ranging] from modernist associations to the brotherhoods of custom,'[8] all of which helped to influence the diverse responses among Sindhi Muslims when it came to what the Muslim League had to offer in the decades leading up to independence and the creation of Pakistan. Put simply, the political consequences of local religious demographics were complex and at times contradictory.

Muslim League activities in Sindh dated back to the party's earliest years since the first session following its creation in 1906 was held in Karachi in 1907. Sindh was a Muslim-majority region within, at that time, a majority-Hindu Bombay Presidency. But it was not until the late 1930s that an affiliated branch was set up there, despite periodic attempts in the intervening years, which also witnessed huge popular support in Sindh for the Khilafat agitation of 1919–24. Indeed, in 1920 as Allen Jones explains, the 'campaign of pro-League Sindhi

[5] For a study of the political responses of these *pir* families, see Sarah Ansari, *Sufi Saints and State Power: the Pirs of Sind, 1843–1947* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

[6] Lata Parwani, 'Myths of Jhuley Lal: deconstructing a Sindhi cultural icon,' in *Interpreting the Sindhi World: Essays on Society and History*, eds. Michel Boivin and Matthew A. Cook (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2010), 2.

[7] Nile Green, *Bombay Islam: The Religious Economy of the West Indian Ocean, 1840–1915* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 2.

[8] Ibid., 237.

Muslims to secure formal ties with the AIML ended in frustration as before, but this time they decided not to wait any longer on the central organisation and went ahead, in early November, to form a branch which they called the Sindh Muslim League.'[9] As Jones also points out, 'The all-India outlook of the Sindh Muslim League was … evident … when, at a 1920 meeting, three resolutions were passed, all of which pertained to concerns of national prominence and none contained any local, Sindh content.'[10] Provincial Khilafat leaders such as Ghulam Muhammad Bhurgri actively sought to promote the League's agenda locally. However, they were also members of the Bombay Presidency Muslim League because Sindh at this time was part of the Bombay Presidency.[11] By the late 1920s, there was growing Sindhi resentment at this arrangement. While the possibility of Sindh becoming a separate province had first been raised by a Hindu, Harchandrai Vishindas, as early as 1913, reflecting a desire among members of the local commercial community to extricate itself from having to compete with far more powerful Bombay-based interests, by the early 1930s the demand had become an issue that many Sindhi Muslims supported.[12] As one prominent Sindhi Muslim later argued in response to growing Hindu opposition, it increased

> ill will to talk on the one hand of the right of India to be free, an India where the majority community, namely the Hindus, will respect the rights of the

[9] Ghulam Ali Chagla to All-India Muslim League Secretary, Lucknow, 3 November 1920, Muslim League Archives, Karachi (hereafter MLA), Sind Provincial Muslim League (hereafter SPML), I, cited in Allen Jones, *Politics in Sindh 1907–1940: Muslim Identity and the Demand for Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2001), 14.

[10] *Some Features of Bureaucratic Administration in Sind* (Hyderabad: The Sind Publishing House, 1918), introduction by Jairamdas Doulatram, 63, cited in Jones, *Politics in Sindh*, 14.

[11] In 1847, four years after having been annexed by the British, Sindh lost its independent status and was made part of the Bombay Presidency, primarily for reasons of British convenience. It was thought that Sindh would be better governed by an administratively more efficient, economically more developed and politically more sophisticated Bombay. For more discussion of the longer-term repercussions of Sindh's attachment to Bombay, see David Cheesman, *Rural Power and Landlord Indebtedness in Colonial Sindh, 1965–1911* (London: Curzon Press, 1997).

[12] Muhammad Irfan, 'A Brief History of the Movement of the Separation of Sind,' *Al Wahid* (Karachi), Special Number, 1 April 1936, 52; Jones, *Politics in Sindh*, 16–28; M. A. Khuhro, 'A Story of the Suffering of Sind' (1930), in *Documents on the Separation of Sind from the Bombay Presidency*, ed. Hamida Khuhro (Islamabad: Islamic University, 1982), 196–254.

> minority community, and, on the other hand, to mistrust the Muslims where they unfortunately happen to be in a majority, and to bring forth a hundred and one false excuses to deprive them of their due share in the administration of the country. If this is a foretaste of what the Hindus mean by 'Swaraj,' I fear evil days are ahead for India and even more evil days ahead for Muslims.[13]

Consequently, prominent individuals such as Syed and M.A. Khuhro threw their weight behind the separation campaign, though others, notably Sir Shahnawaz Bhutto, opposed it, in his case on the grounds that the proposal was 'impractical.'[14] But with the support of Muslim participants, including Jinnah, Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah, another leading Muslim politician from Sindh, and by now Bhutto also, the go-ahead was given at the 1931 London Round Table Conference to investigate the financial viability of provincial autonomy. In the meantime, an informal umbrella organization, the Sindh Azad Conference representing Sindhi Muslim views on separation, was formed. By the end of December 1932 the lobbying had paid off, the decision in favour of an autonomous Sindh had been announced and, though the authorities in Bombay regretted losing the usually cooperative votes of Sindhi representatives on the Legislative Council there, the outcome was in line with 'the principles of self-determination and provincial autonomy which were given a prominent place' in the Government of India Act of 1935.[15] In the new Sindh Legislative Assembly (SLA) to be set up after separation in 1936, its 60 seats were allocated as follows: General 19, Muslims 34, Commerce and Industry 2, European 2, Landholders 2 and Labour 1.[16]

Sindhi Muslim politics now moved up a gear, and there was a flurry of party organization in view of the forthcoming 1937 provincial elections. On one side stood the Sindh Azad Party (SAP), heir to the Sindh Azad Conference, but now incorporating support from the Sindh Hari Association and a local

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[13] *Daily Gazette* (Karachi), 30 April 1931, 7.

[14] *Report of the Indian Statutory Commission*, vol. 4 (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1930), 36, cited in Jones, *Politics in Sindh*, 22.

[15] Jones, *Politics in Sindh*, 27. In March 1935, Lord Brabourne, the governor of Bombay, wrote to the viceroy explaining that in view of the departure of his Legislative's Sindhi Muslim members on whose cooperation he could as a rule rely, the forthcoming budget session would be very difficult for the provincial administration, see Mss. EUR F 97/7, n.p. British Library (hereafter BL).

[16] Mss. EUR F 150/4, 228 BL.

branch of the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind.[17] On the other was the Sindh United (or Ittehad) Party (SUP), a new creation modelled on the Punjab's Unionist Party and the brainchild of Seth Haji Abdullah Haroon (Karachi's most prominent 'sugar baron,' who had played an active role in the movement for provincial separation).[18] Indicative of the highly factional nature of Sindhi politics, however, Hidayatullah quickly split with the SUP to form his own Sindh Muslim Party (SMP).[19] But in the subsequent elections to the SLA Haroon was unexpectedly defeated by an independent candidate (and likewise his colleague Bhutto lost to the SAP's Shaikh Abdul Majid Sindhi, admittedly with the help of SMP leader Khuhro).[20] And so despite the fact that the SUP (which Soomro had joined as one of its earliest members) had managed to win 21 out of 34 seats, the governor of Sindh, Sir Lancelot Graham instead handed the task of putting together a coalition ministry to Hidayatullah, whose SMP had secured just three seats. Under these circumstances, and faced with the imminent loss of potential power and influence, members of the SUP, as well as the SAP, then proceeded to defect *en masse* to the SMP, which resulted in Hidayatullah and his supporters emerging as the largest single bloc in the new assembly, a clear indication, as Jones describes it, of the 'triumph of personality over party,' with the 'vagaries of personal ambition' revealing themselves to be 'key determinants of political power, rather than loyalty to party principles.'[21] As Graham reported to the Viceroy Linlithgow, 'This will go on until I can get Muslims working together harmoniously on a single platform. At present they have two platforms which are indistinguishable from each other except by enmity.'[22]

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[17] Jones, *Politics in Sindh*, 39–47.

[18] For a daughter's presentation of her father's life and achievements, see Doulat Haroon Hidayatullah, *Haji Sir Abdullah Haroon: A Biography* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[19] Hidayatullah was recognized to have a long-standing rivalry with Bhutto, and their differences came to a head in early November 1936 when Hidayatullah announced the creation of his new party. See the various correspondence on this split between the governor of Sindh, Graham, to the viceroy, Lord Linlithgow contained in Mss. EUR F 125/112, BL.

[20] In the North Muhammadan Rural constituency of Larkana, Bhutto polled 2,091 votes compared to Sindhi's 3,691 votes. Haroon who polled 2,559 votes in the Karachi City North Muhammadan Urban constituency was defeated by an independent candidate, Khan Sahib Allah Bakhsh Gabol, who polled 3,111 votes. See Graham to Linlithgow, 18 February 1937, Mss. EUR F 125/112 BL.

[21] Jones, *Politics in Sindh*, 89.

[22] Graham to Linlithgow, 19 April 1937, Mss. EUR F 125/113 BL.

By early 1938 Hidayatullah had succeeded in building bridges with the remnants of the SUP, whose members now banded together with his own supporters to form yet another party, the Sindh Democratic Party (SDP). But this unity proved short-lived. During the SLA's March 1938 budget session, the 'rising star' of the SUP Soomro (together with other prominent Muslim politicians, including Syed) voted with the mainly Hindu, pro-Congress, opposition to defeat Hidayatullah's ministry. The reason for this about-turn was given by its protagonists as the ministry's failure to stick to party principles and its programme, though Graham did suggest that personal factors may well have played a part in Soomro's withdrawal of support from the premier.[23] The outcome of these tangled political manoeuvrings was that Soomro himself was offered the opportunity to form the next government. This he duly did, drawing on the support of Hindu Independents in the Assembly as well as former SUP, European, and other non-aligned MPAs. While Congress did not officially back Soomro, its tacit support, or lack of opposition, meant that his was regarded as a 'pro-Congress' ministry.

In this context of political flux and resultant uncertainty, the League turned its attention to securing support in Sindh. Although Sindh was a Muslim-majority province, the League's election performance there in 1937 had ranked alongside that in the Punjab as its most disastrous attempt to win votes.[24] Such a dismal showing was blamed on the Congress contriving a split among Sindhi Muslims, but the election results told a different story. Simply put, they suggested that Sindhi Muslims remained largely unconvinced as far as the League's involvement in local, provincial politics was concerned. Under these circumstances, if Sindhi Muslims were reluctant to come to the League, the League had to go to them. But whereas the League quickly embarked on similar processes of reorganization elsewhere after October 1937, its efforts in Sindh only got underway once Hidayatullah's ministry had fallen the following March. This new, albeit delayed, resolve was triggered by the fact that Hidayatullah's replacement, now headed by Soomro and supported by a sizeable chunk of the Assembly's Muslim membership, was openly backed by Congress politicians, together with a growing number of influential landholders (*wadero*s) and custodians of local shrines (*pir*s).[25] Pulling in first Sindhi, then Haroon and

[23] Ibid.

[24] In the 1937 provincial elections, the Punjab Muslim League won only two seats in the Punjab Legislative Assembly.

[25] See Ansari, *Sufi Saints and State Power*, 117.

Hidayatullah, and finally Syed, over the course of 1938 the League attracted high-profile converts to its cause, who joined forces with earlier enthusiasts, also including Khuhro and M. H. Gazdar.[26] As a result, by October 1938 'the newly-formed Muslim League Assembly Party could claim the support of 27 Muslim members.'[27] As mentioned above, it was Jinnah himself who then presided over the first Sindh Provincial Muslim League Conference that took place with great pomp and ceremony in Karachi that same month.[28] Sindh's pro-Leaguers were confident that the party would be able to break what they, by now, regarded as Soomro's 'stranglehold' on local power and the stage was set for a deliberate programme to strengthen support for the League.

The gradual shift towards the League that followed (albeit in fits and starts), therefore, was the tide against which Soomro effectively swam for what was left of his life, during which time, unlike many of his contemporaries in Sindh, he steadfastly remained outside the League's fold. From early 1938, Soomro seemed to embark on a political career that revolved around, or was at least characterized by, deliberate attempts at cross-communal cooperation. Whatever his personal motives for this stance may have been, it set him apart from his Sindhi Muslim counterparts who were being actively wooed, and (in many cases) won over to varying degrees, by the League. But it is important to note that Soomro was not completely immune to the temptations of the possibilities offered by an All-India League connection, at least initially. Though his was arguably a more consistent political outlook than that of many other Sindhi politicians, he too had personal interests to protect. Hence, perhaps, his apparent willingness to enter into negotiations with other Sindhi Muslim leaders during the League's 1938 conference in Karachi over whether, and if so how, to form a Muslim League Assembly Party in the SLA to which he might possibly subscribe. In the event, he withdrew from pursuing this agreement, a decision that generated accusations of betrayal by Jinnah, but which confirmed Soomro's unfailing

[26] See Sind Fortnightly Reports from late 1937 and early 1938 in IOR L/PJ/5/251 BL. According to Sindhi, who proved himself to be a key organizer, by the end of 1938 the number of Muslim League branches in Sindh had risen to 138; see Shaikh Abdul Majid Sindhi to Secretary All-India Muslim League, 30 November 1938, File 241, 73–4, Freedom Movement Archives, University of Karachi (hereafter FMA). See also Pir Ali Muhammad Rashdi, *Report of the General Secretary of the First Sind Provincial Muslim League Conference, October 8 to 12, 1938* (Karachi, 1938), FMA.

[27] Talbot, *Provincial Politics*, 41.

[28] See Pir Ali Muhammad Rashdi, *Report of the General Secretary of the First Sind Provincial Muslim League Conference, October 8 to 12, 1938* (Karachi, 1938), FMA.

public commitment to an overtly non-communal political stance. Initially he explained that, though he was prepared to support the League on matters of all-India importance, he wished to maintain freedom from its control in provincial affairs, a desire that he believed precluded formal membership of a Muslim League Assembly party. Later on, he shifted the emphasis to a dislike of what he termed 'communalist' organizations. Critics, however, offered a different set of reasons for Soomro's change of heart that hinged on the desire to stay in power, something that would likely have been threatened had negotiations with the League reached a successful conclusion. But whatever the precise reasons involved, his ministry was now set on a collision course with the pro-League members of the Assembly, a clash that came to a head, due to the communal tensions generated by the Manzilgah agitation of late 1939 and early 1940.

By 1939, despite the fanfare surrounding the previous year's Karachi Conference and a lengthening list of primary organizations, it had become obvious to League leaders that the basis of the party's support in the province remained weak. To rally the party's fortunes, which also required intensifying its attack on Soomro's premiership, the League was keen to find some means to fire local imaginations and pick up new members. The solution came in the shape of an agitation over a domed building in Sukkur, Upper Sindh, which local Muslims wanted to control on the grounds that it had apparently once been used as a mosque.[29] According to Hamida Khuhro, 'it had been a long-standing demand of the Muslims of Sukkur that the mosque and its buildings be returned to the community and put to their proper use. This demand had been made as early as 1920 and repeated from time to time.' But as she goes on to explain, the Manzilgah's location, directly opposite the Hindu temple on the island of Sadh Belo in the River Indus, meant that the Sukkur Municipality wanted to avoid communal tension and so rejected the claim.[30] With the help

[29] The building had been taken over by the British in the mid-nineteenth century and incorporated into the local 'residency' of British officials. See *Report of the Court of Inquiry Appointed under Section 3 of the Sind Public Inquiries Act to Enquire into the Nature of the Manzilgah Buildings at Sukkur* (Karachi: Government Press, 1941).

[30] Hamida Khuhro, 'Masjid Manzilgah, 1939–40: Test case for Hindu–Muslim Relations in Sind,' *Modern Asian Studies* 32. no.1 (February 1998): 52–53. It should be noted that the author is the daughter of M. A. Khuhro, a major presence in Sindhi politics during the decades spanning independence, and so this article can be read as a positive account that focuses in particular on his role in expanding League support in the province. For a discussion of the impact of the Manzilgah agitation, see also Ayesha Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam since 1850* (London: Routledge, 2000), 415–16.

of local religious leaders, the League was now able to popularize the cause of the 'Masjid Manzilgah' so that it achieved provincial importance. Indeed, the whole episode underlined just how far League leaders relied on their cooperation to rally support among the province's Muslims.[31]

By the end of September 1939, thousands of volunteers had arrived in Sukkur. When no agreement was reached between Soomro's administration and local League leaders, the League launched its campaign. Within a couple of hours, over 300 people had been arrested, with many more over the following days. On the third day of protest, the volunteers pushed past the police and occupied the building. The authorities' response was to adopt a lenient approach, hoping that this would defuse tension, and all those taken into custody thus far were released and the police withdrawn. However, instead of improving the situation, these moves only seemed to strengthen the resolve of the occupiers, who decided not to leave until the Muslim claim had been officially conceded. When ministers' homes in Karachi were picketed, the governor intervened to promulgate an ordinance allowing arrests to be made without a warrant.[32] As negotiations dragged on, the atmosphere in Sukkur became increasingly and dangerously communal in nature. The legacy of insecurity left by the recent campaign for Sindh's separation among local Hindus encouraged them to view Muslim claims to the Manzilgah as a direct threat to their immediate and future interests and wellbeing. From Graham's perspective, old tensions took on a new life, and the two separate streams that had been running parallel with each other now converged and became 'almost inextricably confused.'[33] In the middle of November, the authorities arrested local League leaders, including Syed, chairman of the Restoration Committee, on the grounds that they were deliberately forestalling a settlement, and re-took control of the disputed building by force.[34] The outcome was a wave of communal disturbance and rioting that rippled out from Sukkur into the surrounding districts. While both communities suffered in terms of loss of life and property, non-Muslims lost proportionally more, and prominent members of their community were killed.[35]

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[31] See Ansari, *Sufi Saints and State Power*, 118–20.

[32] Graham to Linlithgow, 15 October 1939, Mss. EUR F 125/95 BL.

[33] Graham to Linlithgow, 4 January 1940, Mss. EUR F 125/96 BL.

[34] For Syed's own presentation of events surrounding the Manzilgah agitation, see G. M. Syed, *Struggle for New Sind: A Brief Narrative of Working of Provincial Autonomy in Sind in the Decade (1937–1947)* [Karachi, 1949] (Sehwan Sharif: Sain Publishers, 1996).

[35] See the casualty figures included in correspondence between the governor of Sind and the viceroy: Graham to Linlithgow, 22 December 1939, Mss. EUR F 125/95 BL.

Here is not the place to go into more detail about the Manzilgah agitation, save to say that there is consensus among historians that the contested status of this building was clearly manipulated by local political interests aligned with the Muslim League to undermine Soomro's ministry and strengthen their own provincial position. A compromise was finally reached in February 1941, when the building was handed over to Muslims in return for their agreement not to obstruct the playing of music in the nearby Sadh Belo temple. At the same time, an enquiry committee, set up in November 1939 under Judge Weston to report on the riots, pointed to the fact that Soomro himself had succumbed to pressure to re-open the Manzilgah question only eleven days after assuming the office of chief minister, but then had failed to consult local officers sufficiently on the matter (Hidayatullah before him had held the Manzilgah to be government property and so had refused to hand it over to Muslim control).[36] Hence, Soomro too was deemed to be, at least in part, responsible for a series of events that (the report concluded) had produced the greatest 'test case' for Hindu–Muslim relations in Sindh. In particular, Weston criticized the chief minister's policies as weak and vacillating when it came to making promises to particular interest groups that he then proved unable or unwilling to fulfil. In the words of the report,

> the truth is that after May 1939 K.B. Allahbux [*sic*] realised the opposition he would arouse by the decision he wished to give, opposition not only in Sukkur but also in his Ministry, and among his supporters in the Assembly. He preferred to do nothing in the hope that the agitation would die away.[37]

Soomro arguably took pains thereafter not to fall into the same communal trap, pursuing a political trajectory that, even if it was not completely devoid of self-interest, sought to build bridges between different religious communities living in the province.

One of the ironies of the Manzilgah agitation that was evident to contemporary observers was that it pitted a pro-League opposition using Gandhian-style tactics of (what activists themselves described as) *satyagraha* against the Congress-supported ministry led by Soomro. But, in the process, the chief minister was blamed by many local Hindus for having failed to protect them and their interests sufficiently during these tense times. Not surprisingly,

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[36] *Causes of Sukkur Disturbances: Important Findings of the Court of Inquiry into Sukkur Riots of November 1939, Presided over by Judge Weston* (Karachi: Government Press, 1940) (hereafter *Weston Report*).

[37] *Weston Report*, 26.

Soomro moved quickly to try to restore their confidence, for instance by introducing legislation that would allow summary action to be taken against those held responsible for the disturbances. His ministry, however, came under severe and sustained pressure, and lost its majority in the SLA when Hindu ministers withdrew from the cabinet in early 1940. Soomro then hung on for around a month, supported by Graham, who, it has been suggested, regarded him as a usefully pliable chief minister[38]; after all, unlike Congress ministries elsewhere, Soomro and his ministers had very conspicuously not resigned in late 1939 in protest at Britain taking India into the Second World War without proper consultation. But on 7 March 1940 the ministry finally ran out of steam, lost an important vote in the SLA and by the end of the month Soomro had been dismissed from office.[39] Initially rumours circulated that Vallabhbhai Patel had issued instructions to local Congress MLAs that they should try to maintain the *status quo* in Sindh until after Congress's Ramgarh session later in 1940[40] (to enable them to attend it), but, as it turned out, the local party was given 'freedom to act as local conditions demanded,' and so withdrew its backing for Soomro.[41] Graham was particularly scathing about what he regarded as the unprincipled nature of Sindhi politics as revealed by this episode; in his view, provincial politicians were still not 'worthy of the Constitution that has been presented to them.'[42] But the paradox of Soomro's removal from a League perspective, as Jones highlights, was that it had been 'accomplished not by their

[38] The Viceroy Linlithgow, for one, was loath to lose Soomro. As he explained to Lord Zetland, the secretary of state for India, in February 1940, 'I am glad to say that all now seems to have gone well, the vote of no confidence … Against [Soomro's] Ministry have been defeated by the casting vote of the Speaker, and Allahbux having withdrawn his resignation. Let us hope that this fence having been taken, all will go well,' Linlithgow to Zetland, 27 February 1940, Mss. EUR D 609/18 BL, 27, cited in Khuhro, 'Masjid Manzilgah,' 82.

[39] Graham to Linlithgow, 14 February 1940, Mss. EUR F 125/96 BL.

[40] In 1940 the 53rd Annual Session of the Indian National Congress was held at Ramgarh under the presidency of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.

[41] As Graham reported, the decision of the Congress Working Committee to give a free hand to Sindhi Congress representatives 'must be something of a blow to my Premier after his talks with Vallabhbhai Patel. I find it difficult to see how the Ministry can survive and I find it equally difficult to see how any other Ministry could be set up,' Graham to Linlithgow, 24 January 1940, IOR L/PJ/5/255 BL.

[42] For the Sindh governor, this joint venture represented a most 'unnatural' alliance between independent Hindus and Muslim League members. See Graham to Linlithgow, 9 January 1940, IOR L/PJ/5/255 BL.

efforts alone but also with the help of [those] Hindus, with whom [Leaguers] were most often in opposition.'[43]

Soomro's ministry was eventually replaced by a new political grouping, the Sind Assembly Nationalist Party, based on a 21-point agreement between Muslim League SLA members and independent Hindus ('ex-Unionist, ex-Hindu Independent and ex-Muslim-League'[44]), and headed up by Mir Bandeh Ali Talpur.[45] Its Muslim ministers included leading local 'Leaguers,' namely Khuhro, Syed and Sindhi. As a gesture of communal goodwill (important in the context of ongoing Manzilgah uncertainties), and the basis on which the in-coming coalition had been formed, the new administration undertook to continue Soomro's earlier effort to introduce joint electorates in municipal and district elections in the province.[46] However, the resulting Joint Electorates Bill, which was passed by the SLA in April 1940, caused embarrassment as well as practical difficulties as it clashed directly with the All-India Muslim League's commitment to separate electorates and its recently-passed Lahore (or Pakistan) Resolution.[47]

Soomro's loss of office, however, did not push him into the background of either provincial or national politics. Soon after his defeat, he travelled to the Ramgarh Congress session himself, encountering a black flag demonstration at Lahore station en route, and then a supposed attempt on his life on his way back to Sindh.[48] He then followed up this trip with another in late April to Delhi where he delivered the presidential address at the All-India Azad (or Independent) Muslim Conference, a gathering that he had helped to organize

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[43] Jones, *Politics in Sindh*, 139. Fortnightly Report for the First Half of March 1940, IOR L/PJ/5/255 BL.

[44] Graham to Linlithgow, 9 April 1940, IOR L/PJ/5/255 BL.

[45] For discussion of the process by which this ministry was formed, but very much from the perspective of the governor of Sindh, see Graham's letters to the Viceroy contained in IOR L/PJ/5/255 BL.

[46] Fortnightly Report for the Second Half of March 1940, IOR L/PJ/5/255 BL.

[47] Jones, *Politics in Sindh*, 150–51.

[48] Fortnightly Report for the Second Half of March 1940, IOR L/PJ/5/255 BL. This attack turned out to be an exaggeration. According to Graham, Allah Bakhsh was not the author of the story that an attempt had been made on his life. He himself was of the opinion that no such attempt had been made and he did not believe that the broken window of the lavatory was due to a revolver. He says that he was asleep when the affair took place, it being about four o'clock in the afternoon, and that it was his companion in the carriage, a young European (I believe it was a Dutchman) who insisted that a shot had been fired.' Graham to Linlithgow, 9 April 1940, IOR L/PJ/5/255 BL.

just a month after the Muslim League had passed its Pakistan resolution at Lahore. Graham, it should be noted, had seen 'no harm in [Soomro] doing' this, and had even had a conversation with him beforehand, impressing upon him 'that while standing out against the separatism of Jinnah he should avoid falling irrevocably into the arms of Congress.' Soomro, in response, had assured the governor that he would argue that 'the two communities have got to get together and make a nation.' This was to be his reply to Jinnah, while his message to Congress would to tell it that 'whatever may be the future of India [Congress's] present job is to do nothing to embarrass Britain in the prosecution of the war and to make no immediate demands.'[49]

Once at Delhi and from the Azad Conference platform Soomro proceeded to denounce the League as the 'main obstacle in the way of India's progress as a whole.'[50] This all-India rally, described by Nehru in his *The Discovery of India* as having held a 'very representative and very successful' session in Delhi,[51] drew together several 'nationalist' Muslim political formations, such as the Ahrars, the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind, the Shia Political Conference, the All-India Momin Conference, the Ittehad-e-Millat and Abdul Ghaffar Khan's Red Shirts, all of which had their differences with the League's 'communal' stance. In the view of Maulana Azad, who addressed the conference, 'the session was so impressive that even the British and the Anglo-Indian press, which normally tried to belittle the importance of nationalist Muslims, could not ignore it. They were compelled to acknowledge that this Conference proved that nationalist Muslims were not a negligible factor.'[52] On 28 April 1940 the conference with Soomro at its helm declared that 'India with its geographical and political boundaries [was] an indivisible whole and as such it [was] a common homeland of all citizens, irrespective of race or religion who [were] joint owners of its resources.'[53] The fact that Muslim-majority as well as Muslim-minority provinces were represented at the Conference also posed a major challenge to the League's claim to speak on behalf of Indian Muslims as a whole.

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[49] Graham to Linlithgow, 22 April 1940, IOR L/PJ/5/255 BL.

[50] See *Presidential Address of K.B. Allah Baksh to the All India Independent Muslim Conference, 27 April 1940* (New Delhi: National Journals Press, 1940), cited in Jones, *Politics in Sindh*, 172.

[51] Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India* (1946) (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1985 ed.), 386.

[52] Anil Nauriya, 'Allah Baksh versus Savarkar,' *The Hindu*, 14 May 2003, accessed 26 September 2016. Available at http://www.thehindu.com/thehindu/2003/05/14/stories/2003051401081000.htm.

[53] Nicholas Mansergh, ed. *Transfer of Power*, Vol. 1: The Cripps Mission, January to April 1942 (London: HMSO, 1970), 293.

But not all detractors of the Muslim League were as positive about this political initiative as the Congress leaders Nehru and Maulana Azad. B. R. Ambedkar, for one, dismissed it in his *Pakistan or the Partition of India*:

> It is true that in the month of April 1940 a Conference of Muslims was held in Delhi under the grandiloquent name of 'The Azad Muslim Conference.' The Muslims who met in the Azad Conference were those who were opposed to the Muslim League as well as to the Nationalist Muslims. They were opposed to the Muslim League, firstly because of their hostility to Pakistan, and secondly because they did not want to depend upon the British Government for the protection of their rights. They were also opposed to the Nationalist Musalmans (i.e. Congressites out and out) because they were accused of indifference to the cultural and religious rights of the Muslims. With all this, the Azad Muslim Conference was hailed by the Hindus as a conference of friends. But the resolutions passed by the Conference leave very little to choose between it and the League. [54]

Indeed, the conference attendees passed three resolutions that, for Ambedkar, summed up its intrinsic 'communal' position. The first openly repudiated the scheme of Pakistan. The second asserted that safeguards for Muslims had to be determined by Muslims alone. And the third emphasized the need for any future Indian constitution to devise a set of safeguards that satisfied Muslims, centring on the protection of their economic, social and cultural rights and share in public services. In his view, it 'was a body of Muslims who were not only opposed to the Muslim League but were equally opposed to the Nationalist Muslims. There is, therefore, no ground to trust that they will be more merciful to the Hindus than the League has been or will be.'[55]

Graham too remained sceptical about what Soomro was really 'up to' by being so involved in 'his Azad Committee.' All the same, as the governor conceded, Allah Bakhsh still has a very considerable following not only in the Assembly but in the country.'[56] Hence, when in June 1940 the ex-premier (at the invitation of fellow Sindhi Acharya Kripalani) attended an All-India Congress

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[54] B.R. Ambedkar, *Pakistan or the Partition of India* (Bombay: Thacker & Co., 1940), accessed 26 September 2016, http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00ambedkar/ambedkar_partition/ index.html#contents.

[55] Anil Nauriya, 'Allah Baksh versus Savarkar,' *The Hindu*, 14 May 2003, accessed 26 September 2016, http://www. thehindu.com/thehindu/2003/05/14/stories/2003051401081000.htm.

[56] Graham to Linlithgow, 11 June 1940, IOR L/PJ/5/255 BL.

Committee session at Bombay, he did so 'not as a member of the Congress, which he is not, but as the leader in Sind [*sic*] of the Azad Muslims in which capacity the invitation was sent to him.' But in view of the communal fallout triggered by the recent Manzilgah agitation, and local Congress initiatives to intensify *satyagraha* activities in Sindh, Soomro again reassured the governor that it was his intention to 'say to the people at Bombay that in no case should the Congress Party in Sind [*sic*] be allowed to embark on Civil Disobedience because it would inevitably tend to the gravest communal disorders.'[57]

From the authorities' perspective, Sindh remained a tense place throughout the second half of 1940. But, as Graham explained, 'this state of very considerable alarm … is not any apprehension of invasion from outside but an apprehension that the strength of Government is declining and the Muslims are preparing to loot and murder the Hindus.' Too many wealthy Hindus in Upper Sindh, it seemed, were leaving the province in response to the communal uncertainties, their fears stoked by the murder of H. S. Pamnani, a Congress member of the SLA, at Rohri on 17 July. The governor therefore dispatched Soomro, whom he described as being 'very far from being anti-British, though he is genuinely anxious to bring about reconciliation between Hindus and Muslims,' to his home town of Shikarpur in Upper Sindh where the tension seemed most pronounced, with the express purpose of allaying panic and reassuring local Hindus that 'by running away themselves, they were merely making the position more difficult for those who stayed behind.'[58] Soomro also publicly demonstrated his solidarity with Hindu Sindhis by attending a public meeting organized by the District Congress Satyagraha Committee, in Karachi, under the presidency of another Congress MLA, Dr Popatlal A. Bhoopatkar, who blamed the Sindh government for failing to take appropriate steps to stamp out lawlessness from the province.[59] As Graham complained the following month,

> I cannot believe that K. B. Allah Bakhsh has consented to join the Shikarpur Congress Satyagraha Committee. I have sent for him to find out the truth.

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[57] Ibid. For instance, the Sindh Satyagraha Volunteers Camp was held in Karachi from 2–8 June 1940. Its opening ceremony was performed by Kikibhen Chhabaldas Lalwani, sister of the general secretary of the All-India Congress Committee, Acharya Kripalani. According to British official reports, a number of fiery speeches were delivered by local Congressites, condemning British imperialism alongside that of Germany and Japan. See Fortnightly Report for the First Half of June 1940, IOR L/PJ/5/255 BL.

[58] Graham to Linlithgow, 13 July 1940, IOR L/PJ/5/256 BL.

[59] See Fortnightly Report for the Second Half of July 1940, IOR L/PJ/5/255 BL.

> There have been rumours before about him joining the Congress and whenever I have asked him he has always stated that they are entirely untrue and that they are circulated maliciously in order to harm him in the eyes of Muslims generally.[60]

The underlying weakness of the Talpur-led ministry, however, led to Soomro receiving periodic offers to re-join the provincial government, which he refused, making it, on one of these occasions, a condition of his return that the premier should retire in his favour and that his 'old enemy' Khuhro should likewise depart.[61] During a visit by Maulana Azad, All-India Congress president, to Karachi in November, Soomro issued a statement to the press that the only solution for the ills of the province would be 'a union of the Congress and the Nationalist Muslims in the Sind [*sic*] Assembly.'[62] The later months of 1940 saw much manoeuvring by Muslim SLA members, both for and against the League, and Hindu independents seemed unsure whether or not they would welcome Soomro's possible return to office.[63] By December, however, Soomro was back as a minister in the Talpur administration, though his relations with the All-India Muslim League remained lukewarm at best; that month Soomro deliberately pre-empted a scheduled visit to Sindh by Jinnah by leaving for Shikarpur, 'presumably because he did not wish to be in Karachi for the [latter's] arrival.'[64] According to Graham, who met the AIML leader during this visit, Allah Bakhsh … as a prominent member of the Azad party, is entirely despised and hated by Jinnah.'[65]

In view of the messy comings and goings of ministers over this period, the return of a second Soomro-led ministry in early 1941 would have come as no surprise to contemporary onlookers. His continuing close relationship with

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[60] Graham to Linlithgow, 22 August 1940, IOR L/PJ/5/256 BL. One response to this problem was that ministers agreed to the recruitment of an additional 250 police officers, to be selected in the main from among the large number of Punjabis who had served in the army and were looking for civilian employment. See Graham to Linlithgow, 25 July 1940, IOR L/PJ/5/256 BL.

[61] Graham to Linlithgow, 6 September 1940, IOR L/PJ/5/256 BL.

[62] Fortnightly Report for the First Half of November 1940, IOR L/PJ/5/256 BL.

[63] Graham to Linlithgow, 25 November 1940, IOR L/PJ/5/256 BL.

[64] Graham to Linlithgow, 15 December 1940, IOR L/PJ/5/256 BL. According to Graham, who met the League leader during this visit, Allah Bakhsh … as a prominent member of the Azad party, is entirely despised and hated by Jinnah.'

[65] Graham to Linlithgow, 18 December 1940, IOR L/PJ/5/256 BL.

Graham and the fact that he was one of the few Sindhi Muslim politicians who could claim all-India political standing and credibility made him the obvious candidate to assume the premiership when it became vacant again in March 1941. In August 1941, along with a number of other provincial chief ministers, he joined the viceroy's newly established National Defence Council, its main purpose being to bring the war effort in the provinces and states into more effective touch with the central government.[66] He also continued to be involved in the Azad Conference. In response to a March 1942 question in the House of Commons concerning reports that 'the representatives of large and influential Moslem [*sic*] communities were repudiating Jinnah's Muslim League in favour of a free, independent and united India,' Secretary of State Amery confirmed that he was aware of resolutions passed the previous month by the Board of the All-India Azad Muslim Conference, again under the presidency of Soomro:

> This Conference, which has not previously met since 1940, is mostly supported by Moslems associated with Congress. I am aware that Mr Jinnah's leadership is not accepted by all Moslems, but I have no reason to doubt that the Moslem League remains the principal organisation voicing Moslem political opinion.[67]

During his second spell as chief minister (between March 1941 and October 1942), Soomro had to deal with another and arguably more testing challenge to law and order in the province, namely the problem of Hur unrest, which resulted in martial law being imposed on large parts of Sindh in June 1942 together with pressure from Congress politicians to release the Hurs' *murshid*, the Pir Pagaro

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[66] 'India and the War,' House of Lords Debate, 22 July 1941, Vol. 119, 883, accessed 26 September 2016, http://hansard. millbanksystems.com/lords/1941/jul/22/india-and-the-war.

[67] The secretary of state was also asked whether he had considered 'the declaration of the All-India Momin Conference, at Delhi, its President, Zahiruddin and its Vice-President, Abdul Quaiyum Ansari, claiming to represent 45,000,000 Moslems [*sic*], supporting the demand for immediate recognition of India's freedom and repudiating any claim by Mr Jinnah and the Moslem League to possess the sole right to speak on behalf of Indian Mussulmans.' See 'India (Moslem) Representations,' House of Commons Debate, 12 March 1942, Vol. 378, 1186–7, accessed 26 September 2016, http://hansard.millbanksystems. com/commons/1942/mar/12/india-moslem-representations#S5CV0378P0_19420312_ HOC_99.

(who had been arrested in 1941 for failing to control his followers).[68] It took a personal visit by Soomro to convince Gandhi that Hur activities were running in a very different direction to the latter's own promotion of non-violent protest after the Mahatma in May 1942 had called on local Congress ministers and MLAs to resign their seats, form a 'peace brigade' and settle 'fearlessly' among the Hurs.[69]

As chief minister of Sindh, Soomro liaised frequently with Congress leaders both within and outside the province. But he seems to have been ambivalent at times about what this relationship necessitated in practice. For instance, in July 1942, Maulana Azad was supposed to be visiting Karachi but cancelled his trip at the eleventh hour, officially for reasons of ill health. In the view of the governor,

> it seems likely that the Maulana's indisposition will last until Congress is clearer in its own mind as to what it is going to do [the Quit India movement was launched the following month]. Sind Congressmen are probably hoping that they will again be allowed to 'contract out' of any general rumpus that the high command may decide on, though of course they protest openly their desire to be allowed to take their full part in the struggle.

When Soomro and his Hindu 'counterpart' Nichaldas C. Vazirani were both summoned to Azad's bedside in Lahore, 'Allahbakhsh … countered with a diplomatic illness of his own.'[70] By the same token, in September 1942, with the Quit India movement underway, the premier faced a dilemma about how to handle detained protesting Congress MLAs:

> As detenus [*sic*] they retain their membership of the Assembly; if they were convicted, they might lose it; and if they were at liberty, they feel that they would lose face if they did not obey the fiat of Gandhi and the AICC that they should resign, which is the last thing they want to do.

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[68] Proclamation of Martial Law in Sind, 1 June 1942, IOR L/PJ/5/258 BL. For details on the challenge posed by this uprising against British authority and the official response that it generated, see Ansari, *Sufi Saints and State Power*, Chapter 6.

[69] *Harijan*, 24 May 1942, quoted in 'Congress and the Hurs,' n.d., Mss. Eur. F208/85 BL; Jairamdas Daulatram to Allah Bakhsh Soomro, 7 June 1942, Mss. Eur. F 125/98, 128–30 BL; Governor of Sindh to Viceroy, 23 September 1942, ibid., 189–90.

[70] Dow to Linlithgow, 22 July 1942, IOR L/PJ/5/256 BL.

The fact that Soomro's ministry still depended on Congress support caused him to be unwilling to take any course that would lead to them either resigning or being deprived of the SLA seats, and, hence, they remained, in limbo, in jail.[71]

Later that same month, however, Soomro made a very public statement of support for the Congress stance when he resigned from the National Defence Council, and renounced both his title of 'Khan Bahadur' together with his OBE (Order of the British Empire) honour. As he explained in his 19 September letter to the viceroy, he could not support Britain's continued subjection of India for its own imperialistic aims:

> Convinced as I am, that India has every right to be free and that the people of India should have conditions in which they could live in peace and harmony, the declaration and actions of the British Government have made it clear that instead of giving their cooperation to the various Indian parties and communities in settling their differences and parting with power to the people of the land and allowing them to live happily in freedom and mould the destinies of their country according to their birth right, the policy of the British Government has been to continue their imperialistic hold on Indian and to persist in keeping her under subjection, to use the political and communal differences for propaganda purposes, and to crush the national forces to serve their own imperialistic aims and intentions… I feel I cannot retain the honours I hold from the British Government, which in the circumstances that have arisen I cannot but regard as tokens of British imperialism.[72]

With Gandhi and Nehru both in detention, Soomro's was a particularly high-profile rejection of British authority, prompting Subhas Chandra Bose to compliment him on the radio for his action. Soomro's recently launched

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[71] Dow to Linlithgow, 7 September 1942, IOR L/PJ/5/256 BL.

[72] Soomro to Viceroy, 19 September 1942, reproduced in *Daily Gazette*, 21 September 1942. Dow was crushingly dismissive of Soomro's stand: 'when the local papers come out with headings "Allahbakhsh answers Churchill" and talk of his classic letter to the Viceroy, he begins to think of himself as a world figure, and is a little difficult to hold down to his job.' Dow to Linlithgow, 21 September 1942, IOR L/PJ/5/258 BL. Dow was also of the opinion that Soomro's resignation of his British honours would weaken his influence in the districts, 'where such titles are highly regarded and personal loyalty to the Crown is a deep-rooted feeling.' Dow to Linlithgow, 5 October 1942, IOR L/PJ/5/258 BL.

newspaper, *The Azad*, was also causing misgivings in official circles for its 'extreme' views.[73] In many ways, therefore, the die was now cast; it was impossible for him to continue in office, and the following month he was dismissed by a rather reluctant governor, by now Hugh Dow, with whom (as with his predecessor) Soomro also enjoyed a reasonably close but certainly cordial relationship.[74]

On 14 May 1943 Soomro was murdered in broad daylight while travelling in a *tonga* in his home town of Shikarpur.[75] The detention and trial of those suspected of involvement in his murder gripped the province's collective imagination, and while his alleged assailants were tried and sentenced, the reason for his killing was never satisfactorily identified.[76] With Soomro no longer on the scene, politics in Sindh became even more obviously a struggle between supporters and opponents of the Muslim League, which finally resolved itself in the shape of another pro-League Ministry under Hidayatullah, which remained in power for the period leading up to independence. Indeed, electoral politics over the winter of 1945–46 and then again later in 1946 highlighted very starkly the extent to which different groups of Sindhi politicians were lining up on opposing sides of the pro- and anti-Pakistan debate. In the first round of these elections held in Sindh, the Muslim League proceeded to capture 27 seats, with one independent Muslim joining the party later. Nationalist Muslims won only three seats, the Congress 21 and of the remaining seats three went to Europeans and one to an independent Labour candidate. In the newly reconfigured SLA, supporters of the by now ex-Muslim Leaguer G. M. Syed then joined forces with Congress and Nationalist Muslim members which resulted in the emergence of two groupings, each with 28 members. Faced with this impasse, the governor

[73] Dow to Linlithgow, 22 October 1942, IOR L/PJ/5/256 BL.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Fortnightly Report for the First Half of May 1943, IOR L/PJ/5/259 BL.

[76] The case against seven people was tried in a special tribunal: Qasim Mangnejo, Kamal Mangnejo, Wali Mohammad Kharal, Abdullah Noonari, Abdul Haq Bhayyo, Qambar Kasai and Ibrahim Kasai. The first three received the death penalty, while the latter four were sentenced to life by the court on 24 February 1944. Khuhro was also arrested along with his brother Mohammad Nawaz Khuhro and tried, but the Sukkur sessions judge exonerated them for lack of evidence. See Hamida Khuhro, *Muhammad Ayub Khuhro: A Life of Courage in Politics* (Lahore: Ferozsons Ltd., 1998), Chapter 14, for an account of this trial from the perspective of Khuhro, in which it is argued that Hur supporters of the Pir Pagaro killed Soomro as revenge for the latter's criticisms of their *murshid* (spiritual leader) during the period of martial law.

offered the League alternative, headed up by Hidayatullah, the opportunity to form a ministry. Not surprisingly Congress politicians regarded this as an act of partisanship which they greatly resented. Hidayatullah then offered two 'Hindu' seats in his administration to the Congress Party, but the latter insisted that the offer should be addressed to Syed, the effective head of their coalition. As it was by now a Muslim League 'article of faith' not to have dealings with non-League Muslims (and Syed's recent break with the League had been a particularly public and bitter one), the matter went no further. In the second round of elections held later in 1946, the League won a resounding victory with 34 seats in the SLA as compared with only two won by 'Nationalist' Muslims. G. M. Syed himself failed to secure election.[77] As the pro-League newspaper *Dawn* proclaimed in its editorial 'The Nation's Elect,' 'Those who have been elected this time to the Legislatures have been charged by the voters with the duty of not "working the constitution" but of winning Pakistan. Within and outside the Provincial and Central Assemblies and Councils that and that alone is now the "priority job" – the time for decision is over; the time for action has come.'[78]

Pro-Congress politicians, despite their marginalization from provincial office, continued to form one significant strand of Sindh's political fabric (religious minorities comprised approximately 25 percent of the province's population), but by now, as the post-war election results underlined, 'Congress' there had come to be equated more or less completely with 'non-Muslim,' a correlation that might have been less clear-cut had Soomro continued to feature in Sindh's political life, straddling as he had done the communal divide in a more explicit fashion than any other Sindhi Muslim politician. Whether his presence would have stemmed the flow of support among Sindhi Muslims to the League that the election results indicated, or whether he too would have nailed his colours, eventually, to the League mast, we cannot know. The pressure to conform at a time when divisions between 'Muslim' and 'non-Muslim' were being drawn along increasingly simplistic lines across British India as a whole was immense. Perhaps Soomro would also have made the transition to independence on the bandwagon of Jinnah's supporters after all. Alternatively, despite the blatant factionalism of Sindhi politics from which he was far from immune, he had shown during his political career that he could stick to his guns (metaphorically speaking)

[77] For a summary of these developments, see Despatch 1373, 3 January 1947, Decimal Files 1945-9, 845.00/1-347, 4–5, United States National Archives.

[78] *Dawn* (Delhi), 7 April 1946.

when faced with the immense pressure of handling both the Manzilgah crisis and the Hur challenge of the late 1930s and early 1940s. This assessment then raises the (hypothetical) question of what Soomro might have achieved after 1947, once Pakistan had been created. If the careers of his contemporaries are anything to go by, no doubt he would have played a key role in the politics of the province, and possibly at the federal level as well. His all-India experience as well as that closer to home would likely have stood him in useful stead to deal with the immense challenges brought by independence and partition.

As neither a Leaguer nor a fully signed-up Congressman, Soomro was, and continues to be, hard to slot easily into any binary understanding of 'Muslim' and 'Hindu' politics in the years preceding the British departure. But what Soomro may have represented, and how he is remembered on both sides of the India–Pakistan border, now possesses political significance. For some Hindu Sindhis living in India today, he has acquired a particular 'nostalgic' reputation. Hence, according the Sindhi Hindu Indian politician and historian K. R. Malkani:[79]

> The unassuming Allah Bux sat by the side of the driver, never used the official flag on the car bonnet, never accepted any invitation to receptions or parties. In the train he would use the upper berth and let others use the more convenient lower berth. On one occasion when floodwaters threatened Shikarpur, he breached the canal to flood his own lands and saved the city. But above all he was non-communal and nationalist.[80]

For sections of Sindh's Muslim population, as a twenty-first-century Pakistani newspaper article commemorating the anniversary of Soomro's death commented, though he may have been 'conveniently forgotten by the rulers [on] either side of the border … he is still popular among his people who have no other idol to remember but him whenever Sindh goes through a difficult time.'[81] Under such circumstances, the best that this chapter can do

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[79] Kewalram Ratanmal Malkani (1921–2003) was born in Hyderabad, Sindh, but moved to India as a result of partition. He was vice-president of the Bharatiya Janata Party from 1991 to 1994, a member of the Rajya Sabha from 1994 to 2000 and then served as lieutenant governor of Puducherry from 2002 until his death in 2003.

[80] K. R. Malkani, *The Sindh Story* (1984) Chapter 'Thrown to the Wolves,' accessed 26 September 2016, http://story.freesindh.org/. The book is dedicated to 'the sacred memory of Allah Bux Soomro and Bhagat Kanwar Ram' (a popular syncretist Hindu singer and preacher murdered during the Manzilgah agitation).

[81] Hasan Mansoor, 'The Sindhi Leader who was Neither a Leaguer nor a Congressman,' Wordpress Blog, accessed 26 September 2016 [link no longer active].

is to acknowledge that Soomro was a man of his time, a pragmatic Muslim nationalist, who made a key contribution to events in Sindh, and perhaps beyond, during a crucial transition phase in the subcontinent's recent past. Whether he would have welcomed the reality of Pakistan or not, the likelihood is that his role as a leading Sindhi politician would not have ceased once August 1947 had passed. Indeed, G. M. Syed, who ended his life as the undisputed 'godfather' of Sindhi identity politics, later summed up Soomro's enduring enigma with the oft-quoted comment:

> Today he [Soomro] is sleeping in his grave in the Panjpir graveyard. We can't say whether he would be laughing at our condition or weeping.[82]

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11

Dancing with the Enemy

Sikander Hayat Khan, Jinnah, and the vexed question of 'Pakistan' in a Punjabi Unionist context

Newal Osman

This article explores the uneasy alliance between Sikander Hayat Khan, the last-but-one premier of undivided Punjab, and Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Signed at the zenith of Unionist glory, the Sikander–Jinnah pact begs several questions. Why did Sikander sign the pact in the first place? What did he want for the future of the Punjab, and how could Jinnah have been of use to him in attaining these goals? What were Sikander's thoughts on Jinnah's ambiguous 'Pakistan'? And perhaps most important of all, why did he refuse to end the pact even though it increasingly became a cause of embarrassment and inconvenience for him?

In seeking answers to these questions, the article challenges some major assumptions about League–Unionist dynamics in historiography. For one, Jinnah's position in the Punjab, especially after the signing of the pact, was not as tenuous as it is generally made out to be. It follows, then, that the process of decolonization was perhaps more unsettling for the landed elites than is generally acknowledged.[1] A third theme which emerges from this work concerns the lack of importance generally accorded to Sikander's various federal proposals. While these schemes did not bring Sikander any closer to achieving his goals, they nevertheless offer the clearest insight into what he wanted for the future of the Punjab. This, in itself, is interesting and significant given the uncertainty enveloping the Raj's fate and Jinnah's intentions.

[1] This argument has been explored in detail by the author in *Partition and Punjab Politics*, PhD thesis submitted to the University of Cambridge (unpublished), 2013. The author would like to thank Professor Joya Chatterji for her guidance and feedback on various drafts of this article.

Background

The Punjab National Unionist Party, a cross-communal party of landlords, won a sweeping victory in the elections of 1937, and proceeded to form the provincial government. Several independents and the Sikh Khalsa National Board decided to coalesce with the winning party afterwards. The Congress emerged the strongest party in the opposition. The Punjab Muslim League won two seats, of which one (Raja Ghazanfer Ali) switched to the Unionist Party after the election.

As head of the Unionists, Sikander became the new premier of the Punjab. His cabinet included Chottu Ram, a Hindu Jat championing the cause of landlords, and Mian Abdul Hye, an urban Muslim**.** In addition, Sunder Singh Majithia was included as the Sikh representative, while Manohar Lal was to represent the urban Hindu community. Khizr Tiwana was made a minister as well, in order to maintain the balance between the two main factions amongst Muslim landowners (i.e. the Hayat-Daultana faction and the Noon-Tiwana faction). In short, it had all the makings of a stable and inclusive provincial government reliant on key alliances.

At the All-India level the Congress captured no fewer than seven provinces, and this created new apprehensions among Muslims with regard to the federal legislature, to be controlled by the strongest Indian party, as envisaged in the India Act of 1935. This development is immensely important in understanding Unionist policy in the following years, especially the signing of the Sikander–Jinnah Pact.

Sikander and Jinnah

The general consensus in historiography on the Sikander–Jinnah Pact is that it did not really begin to create problems for the Unionists until *after* Sikander's death in 1942. The effect of the Pact in the short and medium term is thought to have been beneficial to the central Muslim League, since the Party finally had a presence worth the name in the provincial Assembly, and, equally, to Sikander and the rest of the Muslim Unionists. According to this argument, the Pact allowed Sikander a free hand to reorganize and control the Punjab League. Not only did he choose his own men to fill the League, but the new group also ensured that the Punjab League's initiatives in the villages came to a halt.[2]

[2] See, for example, Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj, 1849-1947* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1988), 124; Craig Baxter, 'Union or Partition: some aspects of Politics in the Punjab, 1936-45,' in *Pakistan: The Long View*, eds. Lawrence Ziring, Ralph Braibanti and W. Howard Wriggins (Durham: Duke University Press, 1977) 49; Ayesha Jalal, *The*

The principal losers in this new arrangement were the old, urban members of the Punjab League such as Barkat Ali, Ghulam Rasool and Muhammad Iqbal, who soon became embroiled in disputes with the new entrants over matters of provincial Party organization and methods. These 'original' League members felt that their organization was being exploited by the landowning elites for their own nefarious purposes. Significantly, when Jinnah was asked to arbitrate between the two groups of the provincial League when selecting candidates for bye-elections,[3] he supported the new members over the old ones. Indeed, Jinnah's words rebuking Barkat Ali are oft-quoted: 'those who have been already in the League are no better than the [new] Leaguers.'[4] In sum, Jinnah was unwilling to offend those persons who carried social and political clout for the sake of appeasing his old lieutenants, because he needed to carry the Muslims of the Punjab with him while he lobbied at the centre.[5]

While this argument is well taken, it focuses on only one aspect of the immediate aftermath of the Sikander–Jinnah pact. A closer look at Sikander's tenure reveals that the most significant effect of the Pact was that it increasingly caused instability in his own position. It may even be proposed that, as a result of the pact, especially in the medium and long term, Jinnah gained, and Sikander proportionately lost, more than enough to nullify the latter's initial victory of assuming charge over the Punjab League.

In Governor Emerson's estimation, the Sikander–Jinnah Pact, signed in Lucknow on 15 October 1937, was a direct outcome of the election result. Incited by Nehru's recent speech at Hoshiarpur, Sikander had somewhat impulsively signed the Pact, without discussing it with either Emerson or his (non-Muslim) Party members.[6] Nehru's speech, in particular, and the Congress's attitude, in general, since the elections of 1937 had been interpreted by most Muslims as arrogant and indicative of the Congress's intention to dominate the centre in case the idea of a federation was ever put to practice.[7] This fear

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Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 39; and Khalid B. Sayeed, 'Political leadership and institution-building under Jinnah, Ayub and Bhutto,' in *Pakistan: the Long View,* 246.

[3] See, for example, Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj*, 128.

[4] As quoted in Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman*, 39.

[5] Ibid., 39.

[6] See Emerson to Linlithgow, 21 October 1937, In Lionel Carter, ed., *Punjab Politics: Governors' Fortnightly Reports and Other Key Documents*, Vol. I (New Delhi: Manohar, 2004), 143. Also see Emerson to Linlithgow, 12 November 1937, in Carter (ed.), 148.

[7] See Emerson to Linlithgow, 21 October 1937, in Carter (ed.), 140–44.

of Congress domination, then, was the common thread between Sikander and Jinnah. At the most basic level, the pact merely stipulated that all Muslim members of the Unionist party would thenceforth officially become members of the All-India Muslim League as well; within the province, however, they would carry on their Party programme as usual (clause (a)).[8]

However, a closer examination of the clauses reveals that there was much more to the pact. As Governor Glancy was to point out some five years down the line: 'one of the difficulties is the loose wording of the Sikander–Jinnah pact … the more I study the document the less I like it.'[9] The third clause of the pact laid down that those Muslim members of the legislature who accepted a League ticket at any point would automatically form a Muslim League Party within the Assembly. Further, this party would be free to enter into alliances with other groups in the Assembly as it pleased, but only so long as it did not go against the central League's principles. The resulting alliance would still be called the 'Unionist Party' (clause (c)). The combined effect of clauses (a) and (c), therefore, was a conflation of Unionist and Muslim League identity vis-à-vis Muslim members in the Assembly, while pointedly giving the Unionists leverage to carry on their current alliances. To this extent, the pact can be understood, as historians have already noted, as Jinnah's desire to bask in Unionist glory. But it is important to bear in mind that this provision gave a name and a separate identity to Muslim Unionists and, therefore, had the effect of institutionalizing communal divisions within a cross-communal party. Second, it included a provision for the central League to have a say in the alliances formed by those Muslim Unionists who opted for a League ticket at any time in the future.

Clause (b) was perhaps the most ambiguous. It stated that all groups making up the Unionist Party would, in future elections, back the candidates put forth by each group: 'the groups constituting the present Unionist Party will jointly support candidates put up by their respective groups.'[10] Because all Muslims within the Unionist Party would thenceforth be Muslim League members, it appears that this provision was intended to leave the door open for the latter party's candidates to have the support of the other major communities (such as the Hindu Jats) who were part of the Unionist Party. In a sideways, crab-like

[8] Sikander-Jinnah Pact (clause (a)), Lucknow, October 1937, "in Carter, ed. 1, Appendix 1, 421.

[9] As quoted in Talbot, *Khizr Tiwana: the Punjab Unionist Party and the Partition of India* (Surrey: Routledge, 1996), 152.

[10] Sikander–Jinnah Pact (clause (b)), Lucknow, October 1937, in Carter, ed. *Punjab Politics*, 1, Appendix 1, 421.

fashion Jinnah tried to adopt all the advantages of being a Muslim Unionist, although this was not to become apparent until much later.[11] The last clause, clause (d), stipulated that the provincial League's parliamentary board would be reconstituted, though it did not specify how and by whom this reconstitution would be carried out. As mentioned above, most analyses of the Sikander–Jinnah Pact have tended to focus on this clause.

Signs of tension began to appear almost immediately after the signing of the pact. Soon after, there were rumours to the effect that the Unionist Party had ceased to exist and all Unionists had joined the Muslim League instead. First, the secretary of the provincial League, Ghulam Rasool, issued a press statement saying that the two parties had merged. Second, Barkat Ali, the only Muslim League member on the provincial Assembly at that time, proclaimed the 'discipleship' of Sikander to Jinnah. Such news understandably created much confusion and apprehension in the minds of several non-Muslim Unionists, as well as the governor himself, who uneasily noted: 'he [Sikander] is going to find increasing difficulty in assuming the mantle of a non-communal leader. He has, in fact, become a Muslim leader and the opposition Hindus and Sikhs will, in future, refuse to regard him as anything else.'[12]

The pact and its implications did not go unquestioned by the Hindu and Sikh press. A somewhat embarrassed Chottu Ram tried to salvage his Party's image by publicly refuting the rumours stemming from old Punjab League members such as Ghulam Rasool and Barkat Ali. Indeed, for many months after the signing of the Pact, Barkat Ali was to continue issuing (inaccurate) statements, which put the provincial government in an awkward position; for example, 'Sir Sikander, awed by the advancing tide of Muslim League nationalism in the province, marched to Lucknow to throw himself at the feet of my Leader, Mr Jinnah.'[13] A few days after the Lucknow session, a resolution was passed by the Sikh Khalsa National Party (which was in a coalition with the Unionists)

[11] After Sikander's death, Governor Glancy pointed out to the viceroy that Jinnah's goal seemed to have been to replace the Unionist name and take credit for its achievements. See Glancy to Wavell, 6 April 1944, in *The Transfer of Power, 1942–7*, eds. Nicholas Mansergh, Esmond Walter Rawson Lumby and Penderel Moon (12 vols. London, 1970–83), IV, 862 (Hereafter ToP).

[12] See Emerson to Linlithgow, 21 October 1937, in Carter, ed. *Punjab Politics*, I, 145. See also Emerson to Linlithgow, 12 November 1937, in ibid., 148; and 12 February 1938, in ibid., 171–72.

[13] As quoted in M. Rafique Afzal, ed., *Malik Barkat Ali: his Life and Writings* (Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, University of the Punjab, 1969), 127.

demanding clarification of the meaning of the Pact. Thus, although it crept up somewhat slowly, and mostly in the form of confusion, there were nevertheless signs of uneasiness on all sides, among those who had a stake in the provincial government, about the full implications of the pact.[14] The next three sections further highlight the instability created in Sikander's position by the signing of the Sikander–Jinnah Pact, and explore his real motives.

Shahidganj

Shahidganj was a site in Lahore where part of an existing mosque, built during the Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan's time, was subsequently demolished to build a *gurudwara* instead under Ranjit Singh's rule. Over the years, ownership over this site developed into a hotly contested issue between the Muslims and Sikhs of the Punjab. In 1935, the site was officially declared a *gurudwara* by the Sikh Gurudwara Act.

Significantly, shortly after Sikander left the meeting in Lucknow after signing the Pact, the Muslim League passed a resolution demanding that the site of the mosque be returned to the Muslims.[15] This was quite clearly a stance that Sikander could ill-afford to take if he was to maintain his carefully nurtured ties with his non-Muslim colleagues in the Punjab. A week later, 5,000 Muslims gathered at the Badshahi Mosque after Friday prayers and reiterated resolutions for the return of Shahidganj to the Muslims. The next month, in November 1937, a sustained campaign of civil disobedience was spearheaded by the Ahrars,[16] who soon settled into a fixed routine of sending at least five people to court arrest each day.[17]

Such shows of civil disobedience were low in intensity, albeit persistent, and they seem to have aroused only a little concern in provincial government circles. The governor merely noted that 'the campaign by the Ahrars is purely political and is the direct outcome of the Lucknow conference where Sikander made an agreement with Jinnah and a resolution was passed by the Muslim

[14] See Emerson to Linlithgow, 12 November 1937, in Carter, ed. *Punjab Politics*, I, 149.

[15] See Emerson to Linlithgow, 21 October 1937, ibid., 146.

[16] The Majlis-i-Ahrar-i-Islam was an organization that claimed to strive for an Islamic state for the Muslims of India. It was formed in 1929, and was vehemently anti-British. See Iftikhar Haider Malik, *Sikander Hayat Khan (1892–1942): A Political Biography* (Islamabad: National Institute of Historical and Cultural Research, 1985), 54.

[17] See Emerson to Linlithgow, 12 November 1937, in Carter, ed. *Punjab Politics*, I, 147; and Emerson to Linlithgow, 11 January 1938, ibid., 162.

League demanding the restoration of the place to Muslims.'[18] Early in the next year, however, three developments gave impetus to the unrest. First, in January, the High Court confirmed a previous ruling that the Sikhs had full rights over the land and everything built on it. The Ahrars, accordingly, held *hartal*s and carried out processions in protest. Second, and to make matters worse, the Muslim League Council passed the same resolution (i.e. demanding that Shahidganj be returned to the Muslims) again in a meeting in Delhi in February.[19] Unfortunately for Sikander, the newly signed pact with the League meant that he was associated with, and considered answerable for, resolutions passed by the League.

Finally, also in February, Barkat Ali proposed to introduce a private bill in the Assembly to repeal the law under which the site had been declared Sikh property. The bill, informally called the Punjab Muslim Mosques Protection Bill, stipulated that Islamic law be retrospectively applied to all buildings that had, at any point in time, been used as a mosque.[20] It is noteworthy that, hitherto, the role of the provincial government in the Shahidganj matter had mainly been to maintain law and order and to facilitate peaceful negotiation between the concerned communities. But by drafting this bill, Barkat Ali was effectively turning it into one that directly questioned the stance of the provincial government itself. Thus, for example, in a session of the provincial Assembly in March 1938, he declared:

> He [Sikander] should know … that there is a great agitation in the country outside and that if the voters want an undertaking from you that you shall support them, when the time comes for your vote on the Shahidganj, that you will get them the Shahidganj Mosque …[21]

In the face of growing communal tensions, the Sikh stance increasingly hardened against any reconciliation.

This bill was soon followed by 24 more proposals for a similar bill from various Muslim members of the Assembly, thereby putting Sikander in a quandary. Barkat Ali's purpose was not merely to deliver the Shahidganj mosque to the Muslims but to disgrace the existing ministry by deliberately creating a clash between the religious and political identities of the Muslim Assembly

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[18] See Emerson to Linlithgow, 11 January 1938, ibid., 162.

[19] See Emerson to Linlithgow, 12 February 1938, ibid., 172.

[20] See Emerson to Linlithgow, 27 February 1938, in Carter, ed. *Punjab Politics*, I, 179.

[21] As quoted in Afzal, ed. *Malik Barkat Ali*, 98.

members.[22] And he certainly succeeded in this endeavour. If Sikander decided to let this bill, which he considered quite outrageous, be introduced, he would risk injuring terms with his non-Muslim Unionist friends. If, on the other hand, he took the advice of a disgruntled Chottu Ram and the like, and asked the governor to withhold consent for the bill, he and his ministry would be certain to face a motion of no-confidence from the Muslim members of the Assembly.

In a meeting with the governor, Sikander confided that he had been trying his utmost to convince his fellow Muslim members in the Assembly to abort this idea, but was having great difficulty convincing them. The dilemma so perplexed him that he considered offering the resignation of his entire ministry, thereby greatly alarming his fellow ministers and the governor.[23] Thus, it is important to realize that, while Sikander may have been given a free hand to reorganize the Punjab League, his own position was extremely delicate in other areas. Tactics such as these by Barkat Ali and other old League members could, and did, easily create instability.

In the final instance, Sikander consulted his Muslim supporters and party members and decided to advise the governor to withhold assent, a decision with which Emerson happily concurred.[24] It is noteworthy that the reasons Sikander gave for his decision in the Assembly appear to have been worded so as not to offend Muslim sentiments. First, he clarified that there was much to be said in favour of having a forward-looking proposal for preventing such disputes over ownership of religious buildings but that a backward-looking resolution would create lots of problems. For example, because Barkat Ali's Bill was retrospective, it would involve reopening innumerable cases that had been decided by correct judicial procedure many years ago. Additionally, if the particular law were to be repealed, the governor would not be able to justifiably prevent non-Muslims from presenting a bill for the return of all those non-Muslim sites that had been occupied during Muslim rule. Last, he pointed out that this bill could adversely affect the position of Muslims in the Muslim-minority provinces of India. All of these technicalities, he concluded, had simply been waived away as insignificant by Barkat Ali.[25] As expected, a motion of no-confidence in the ministry was moved after Sikander's speech; however, the majority voted against it.[26]

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[22] See Emerson to Linlithgow, 27 February 1938, in Carter, ed. *Punjab Politics*, I, 179.

[23] See Emerson to Linlithgow, 4 March 1938, ibid., 183–87.

[24] See Emerson to Linlithgow, 17 March 1938, in Carter, ed. *Punjab Politics*, I, 193–95.

[25] See Punjab Legislative Assembly Debates (hereafter PLAD), 16 March 1938, III, 806–11.

[26] The two members who voted for the motion were Khwaja Ghulam Hussain (mover of the motion) and Chaudhry Mohammad Abdur Rahman Khan; ibid., 16 March 1938, III, 814.

Sikander's decision was better received than either he or the governor had anticipated, and non-Muslims were temporarily placated.[27] However, it is important to note that, during this episode, Sikander had considered resignation *and* been faced with a motion of no-confidence.

Sikander's federal schemes and the Lahore Resolution

A second set of events further illustrates the complexity of the problems Sikander faced. When the Punjab Assembly began to consider the question of working the federal aspect of the new constitution after the election, he placed himself exactly in the middle. He said that although he was not happy with what it might lead to, some form of a federal centre was necessary and, unlike the Congress, he did not want to make a tall claim about refusing to work with it altogether.[28]

This rather diplomatic stance did not, however, prevent Sikander from proposing a federal scheme of his own in 1939. The aim of the alternative scheme that he tried to push past the British policymakers two years into his premiership appears to have been to create as much distance as possible between the provincial level and the central government by inserting a buffer layer in between. The scheme bunched India's provinces (or 'units,' as the scheme termed them) into seven 'zones,' which were roughly equal in terms of population. The central government would be responsible for external affairs, communications, defence, customs, and currency. All other subjects would be divided between the units and zones, as would residuary powers. Each layer would be protected from the layer above it. The centre could only make a decision for the zones if at least four zones out of seven requested it; even then, the decision would have to be ratified by all the zones. Similarly, the zonal legislature could only legislate on matters that fell in the units' domain if two or more of the units asked for the same. In both cases, the legislation could be rendered void if around half the zones (in the case of central encroachment) or units (in the case of zonal encroachment) were not satisfied.[29]

Sikander proposed indirect election for the zonal and federal legislatures; that is to say, each legislature would elect members to the legislative body above it. The rationale behind this election method appears to have been that

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[27] See PLAD, 31 March 1938, I, 198–89.

[28] See Craik to Linlithgow, 5 June 1938, in Carter, ed. *Punjab Politics*, I, 219–22. Sikander was referring here to the Congress's decision to go back on its word and accept office in the provinces where it managed to secure ministries in 1936.

[29] See 'Outline of a scheme for Indian Federation (extract),' ibid., 426–31.

if representatives to the higher legislatures (i.e. federal or zonal) were directly elected by a wider electorate than the one that existed for the lower legislature (i.e. the provincial legislature), there would be little overlap between members of various assemblies, which might result in a 'tug of war' between the tiers.[30] This provision is extremely interesting because it envisages a reflection of provincial elements at the centre, or, a ladder for the prominent members of the province to climb their way up to the centre. What must be emphasized here is that such an arrangement would have had no place for those national parties that did not have a strong electoral base within the provinces, such as the Muslim League.

But this was not all. Sikander also sought to sandwich the centre between the two bottom layers on the one hand, and the British connection on the other. The British connection, in his opinion, would be indispensable for at least twenty years, even if dominion status was granted.[31] Further, the supreme authority within the executive would remain the viceroy, who was to have the final say in deciding the jurisdiction of the centre, zone and unit over a disputed subject.[32] Finally, one third of the members of the federal legislature and the central cabinet would be Muslims.[33]

This is the first and clearest indication of Sikander's preferred solution to the central impasse. As Governor Craik pointed out to the viceroy, Sikander's scheme was rooted in the fear that the Congress would, after assuming control of the federal legislature, attempt to gain control over provincial matters as well. However, and despite the uncanny resemblance that the scheme held to the Cabinet Mission plan, Sikander's machinations came to naught. They were dismissed by Governor Craik as 'impractical and indeed visionary.'[34]

Its failure notwithstanding, the scheme raises the question of what precisely Sikander was seeking to protect within his own province from external influences. For one, the Congress had made no bones about the fact that it staunchly backed equal recruitment from all provinces. Thus, even though defence was one of the reserved subjects, Sikander feared that the Congress would badger the governor

[30] Sikander explained, in this way, his opposition to direct election to the federal legislature when a Congress member criticized the Act for stipulating indirect elections. See Craik to Linlithgow, 5 June 1938, ibid., 220–21. It is proposed here that the same logic can be applied to his choice of indirect election for the federal and zonal legislatures in his own scheme.

[31] See 'Appendix 3: outline of a scheme for Indian Federation (extract),' ibid., 423.

[32] Ibid., 428, 432.

[33] Ibid., 427–28.

[34] See Craik to Linlithgow, 5 June 1938, ibid., 226.

general, using its usual pressurizing tactics, into decreasing the enormous number of army recruits from the martial classes of the Punjab.[35] Hence the inclusion of Article 18 in his federal scheme: 'The composition of the Indian Army … shall not be altered. In the event of a reduction or an increase in the peace-time strength of the Indian Army the proportion of the various communities as on the 1st of January 1937 shall not be disturbed.'[36] Second, in the premier's view, the Congress had long been trying to make inroads into Punjab using anti-Unionist propaganda, but had yet to make any substantial headway.[37] If it were able to control the centre, it would certainly attempt to undermine the influence of the current elites, and perhaps sway some of the Unionist Party's following.

The next year, about a week before the landmark March 1940 session of the All-India Muslim League, Sikander submitted another scheme, this time to the League. The exact text submitted is unavailable, but it has been suggested that the scheme's salient features were that it envisaged the status of a 'sovereign state' for each province, with only three powers given to the centre (foreign affairs, communications, and defence).[38] It appears to have been perhaps a slight variation of his original scheme. The League Council decided that all such federal proposals would be discussed at the upcoming Lahore session.

However, just a few days before the Muslim League conference was scheduled to take place in Lahore, a big confrontation between the Khaksars[39] and the police resulted in several Khaksar fatalities. The immediate cause of this clash was that, in the previous month, the provincial government had placed a ban on the organization's activities because it had been indulging in anti-British and anti-government propaganda. The Khaksars responded by calling for a big demonstration in complete defiance of the ban. This materialized on 18 March 1940; the police opened fire, thereby killing about 50 Khaksars and injuring many others.[40]

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[35] See Craik to Linlithgow, 5 June 1938, ibid., 223.

[36] See 'Appendix 3: outline of a scheme for Indian Federation (extract),' ibid., 431.

[37] See Craik to Linlithgow, 5 June 1938, ibid., 222–23.

[38] Craig Baxter, 'Union or Partition: Some Aspects of Politics in the Punjab, 1936-45,' in Lawrence Ziring, Ralph Braibanti, and W. Howard Wriggins, eds., *Pakistan: the Long View* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1977). 52.

[39] Tehreek-e-Khaksar was an organization that had been formed by Inayatullah Mashriqi in 1931. Supposedly, its aim was to unite all Indian elements to oust the British in a non-violent way. The organization was stronger in the Punjab than in other provinces. See Malik, *Sikander Hayat Khan*, 64–65.

[40] Ibid., 68.

The Punjab government reacted by imposing an eleven-hour curfew over Lahore, arresting Khaksar leader Inayatullah Mashriqi, and issuing a declaration that, under the Criminal Law Amendment Act, the Khaksars were now an illegal organization. This episode created anger and disgust among many Punjabi Muslims at the way in which their coreligionists had been treated by the provincial government. What is more interesting for our purpose, however, is the extreme anxiety that Sikander felt after this event.

Foremost among the possible repercussions of the outburst was the fear that it would create 'embarrassing complications' during the Muslim League's session in Lahore. Presumably, this meant that the holding of a three-day session by Jinnah might further excite the Muslims of the province and possibly lead to another breakdown of law and order, and perhaps even cause a retaliation from the other communities. An unnerved Sikander attempted to have the conference postponed, first by way of the president of the Punjab League, Shah Nawaz Mamdot,[41] and subsequently by way of Khan Sahib Kuli Khan. The latter was a leader from the frontier who happened to be in Lahore at the time of the Khaksar incident, and was due to meet Jinnah in Delhi just before the Lahore session. Interestingly, Sikander specifically asked Kuli Khan to suggest postponing the conference to Jinnah *without* mentioning Sikander's name.[42]

He refrained from issuing an outright refusal of the provincial government to host the conference. This, he thought, would give the impression that he had masterminded the incident himself to ensure that the League's activities in the Punjab came to naught. He also feared that it would result in the alienation of the 'saner and more moderate elements of the Muslim public,'[43] who, after the clash, had thrown their lot with the ministry and against the Khaksars. Finally, so great was his distrust of Jinnah that he believed that any straightforward request for a postponement would only be used by Jinnah to put down Sikander and his government. Interestingly, a third and rather extreme attempt at postponement was made by the Punjab governor, who asked Viceroy Linlithgow to intervene on Sikander's behalf.[44]

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[41] Shah Nawaz Mamdot, in addition to being the president of the provincial League, was also a staunch Unionist. He had previously served as the financial secretary of the Unionist Party and was the largest landowner in East Punjab.

[42] Carter, ed. *Punjab Politics*, II, 89–90.

[43] See Craik to Linlithgow, 20 March 1940, ibid., 90.

[44] The viceroy declined to intervene personally in the matter, although he did ask Zafrullah to convey the message. Zafrullah's attempt was unfruitful. See Carter, ed. *Punjab Politics*, II, 90.

However, all three attempts at postponement proved unfruitful and Jinnah arrived in Lahore as planned on 21 March 1940. On the same day, Sikander ordered an enquiry into the conduct of the officers involved in the incident, in anticipation of a showdown at the League conference. Governor Craik endorsed Sikander's move, for, though he resented this 'appearance of putting the Police on their trial,' he realized that it had great 'tactical importance.'[45] From the outset, then, the chief worry of the Punjab government was regarding the impression that the Khaksar incident would create of the ministry's ability, stability and popularity.

Upon his arrival in the Punjab on 21 March by train, Jinnah was greeted with shouts of 'Sikander *murdabad*' (death to Sikander) by Khaksar supporters at Amritsar. There he announced that he could not have an official stance on the matter until he knew all the details. Later, at a meeting held at Shah Nawaz Mamdot's house, resolutions were moved with regard to the incident. Sikander, fearful of the popular attention that this meeting was attracting, had arrived 'secretly' through the back door.[46] Upon being questioned about the provincial government's extreme action against the Khaksars, he broke down in tears[47] and highlighted the unreasonableness of the stand that the Khaksars had taken as well as the difficulties faced by the government. Sikander's speech managed to arouse sympathy for the injured officers and the provincial government. In the final instance, Jinnah said that there was no need to pursue the matter any further and a resolution was passed the next day (24 March) expressing the deepest sorrow for the injuries and losses incurred by all involved parties, and requesting the Punjab government to carry out an enquiry which, in fact, was already underway.[48]

Two factors regarding this episode warrant attention. First, it is extremely important to note the utmost anxiety that Sikander felt at the prospect of Jinnah's arrival at that critical time. His apprehension and indirect attempts to postpone the session contrast with the position of strength from which he is generally depicted, especially *before* the passing of the Lahore Resolution.

Second, it is significant that Jinnah emerged as the final arbiter on the actions of a provincial government, the leaders of which had previously outstripped his prestige and influence. That Jinnah refrained from taking action against

[45] See Craik to Linlithgow, 21 March 1940, ibid., 92.

[46] Malik, *Sikander Hayat Khan*, 68. Also see Humayun Adeeb, *Tehreek-e-Pakistan: Punjab aur Mamdot* [The Pakistan Movement: Punjab and Mamdot] (Lahore: Al-Hijaz Printing Press, 1987), 125.

[47] Malik, *Sikander Hayat Khan*, 68–69. Also see Adeeb, *Tehreek-e-Pakistan*, 126.

[48] See Craik to Linlithgow, 24 March 1940, in Carter, ed. *Punjab Politics*, II, 98–99.

Sikander may well be attributed to the fact that he wanted to carry all the Muslims with him.[49] But there are more important conclusions that need to be drawn from this incident. For example, Jinnah's position was greatly raised due to no particular effort of his own and, further, his graciousness in dealing with Sikander actually indebted the latter to him:

> There is no doubt that the general view among Muslims is … that Jinnah's able handling of the difficult situation [over the Khaksar resolution] has placed Sikander and his Ministry under a considerable obligation to Jinnah … One result of this situation will, I am afraid, be that neither Sikander – nor for the matter of fact any Muslim leader – will for a considerable time to come be in a position to criticise or oppose the League's attitude on the constitutional question.[50]

Returning now to the more important of the two developments of March 1940, the ambiguously worded Lahore Resolution demanding separate Muslim states was unanimously passed in the open session of the League on 23 March 1940. Interestingly, the scheme outlined in this resolution is believed to have been an altered version of the scheme that Sikander had presented to the Muslim League Council in February 1940. The main difference between the scheme that Sikander had proposed and the one that was passed in Lahore was that the former had sought a solution along provincial lines while the latter had turned it into a communal-minded proposal. In keeping with his first federal scheme, outlined above, Sikander had merely wanted to defuse the possibility of being affected by a Congress-dominated, intrusive central government by stressing the need for maximum provincial autonomy. However, this had been completely turned on its head by the Muslim League Subjects Committee. Unsurprisingly, Sikander was not present at the meeting during which these changes were made.[51]

Subsequently, when his Hindu and Sikh colleagues in the Assembly demanded that he explain his affiliation with the Resolution and the idea of 'Pakistan,' Sikander clarified:

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[49] See Craik to Linlithgow, 21 March 1940, ibid., 93. Also see Craik to Linlithgow, 25 March 1940, ibid., 101.

[50] Craik to Linlithgow, 31 March 1940, in Carter, ed. *Punjab Politics*, II, 104–105.

[51] As mentioned earlier, the exact text of the scheme submitted to the League by Sikander is not available. These observations and clarifications were made many years later by Khizr Tiwana. See typescript on the Unionist position with relation to the Muslim League and Jinnah [n.d.], Khizr Hayat Tiwana collection (hereafter KHT), MS210/13.

> Let me make it clear that the resolution which I drafted was radically amended by the Working Committee … the main difference between the two resolutions is that the latter part of my resolution, which related to the centre and co-ordination of the activities of the various units, was eliminated. It is, therefore a travesty of fact to describe the League resolution as it was finally passed as my resolution.[52]

And further,

> I say, give complete autonomy … to the units, and let them be demarcated into regions or zones on a territorial basis. Representatives of the units within each zone should represent their respective units as also the region at the centre. The centre thus constituted will not be a dominating hostile centre … but a sympathetic agency … We do not ask for freedom that there may be Muslim Raj here and Hindu Raj elsewhere. If that is what Pakistan means. I will have nothing to do with it.[53]

Revealing as this incident is of the (accidental, and indeed, unintended) origins of what eventually came to be hailed as the 'Pakistan Resolution,' the point that needs to be noted here is that Sikander was misunderstood on all sides and, in retrospect, comes across as apologetic and self-sabotaging. He had formed this precarious alliance with Jinnah in hopes of using it to influence national-level decision-making, because his own reach did not extend much beyond his province. However, it not only made his standing within the province precarious but also perverted and stunted his national-level goals, rather than furthering them.

Central representation

Close on the heels of the Lahore Resolution, the Raj decided to form war board committees to enroll supporters for its war efforts. Subsequently, Jinnah imposed a ban on all Muslim League members from joining these committees. On 20 June 1940, the Punjab League passed a resolution authorizing its president, Shah Nawaz Mamdot, also a prominent landowner and Unionist, to ask Jinnah

[52] 'Sikander Hayat – Response to Questions on his affiliations with the Pakistan Resolution in the Punjab Legislative Assembly on 11 March, 1941,' in Iftikhar Malik, *Sikander Hayat Khan*, Appendix ix, 177.

[53] Ibid., 178–9.

to reconsider the ban.[54] Accordingly, Shah Nawaz Mamdot wrote to Jinnah informing him that the news of the central League's resolution had reached the Punjab League a day after the war board enrolment. Resigning at this juncture would put the provincial government in a quandary: 'The position now is that if such of the League members as have already allowed themselves to be nominated on the War Board Sub Committees refuse to serve on them, it will be taken as a direct action against the Provincial Government.' Therefore, the central League should consider allowing Punjabi Muslims to continue serving on the committees.[55]

Before this letter could be dispatched, however, Jinnah had written to Shah Nawaz Mamdot directing him to resign from the war committee forthwith, as it was unacceptable for the president of the provincial League to go against the policy of the central League and, further, warning him not to fall for Sikander's statements to the contrary.[56] Mamdot agreed to comply with the first request but emphatically asked Jinnah to reconsider his stance as far as the rest of the Punjab League members were concerned.[57] Jinnah's characteristically curt reply was that there could not possibly have been any misunderstanding of the sort, as the working committee of the central League had decided its stance on the issue only ten days after His Majesty's government announced the formation of these committees; the resolution of the central League had been published in newspapers two days later, on 17 June. Thus, the Punjab League could not justifiably plead ignorance.[58] The tone of these letters, in addition to their content, is interesting because they reveal that Shah Nawaz Mamdot's own position was somewhat similar to Sikander's. Thus, while on the one hand he was concerned about the image of the provincial government and the 'peculiar conditions prevailing in the Punjab,'[59] on the other hand he was anxious to not risk a rupture with Jinnah.

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[54] See text of 'Proposal adopted by the working committee of the Punjab Provincial League on 20 June 1940,' from the Quaid-e-Azam Collection (hereafter QAC), file-97.

[55] See Shah Nawaz Mamdot to Jinnah, 21 June 1940, QAC.

[56] See Jinnah to Shah Nawaz Mamdot, 21 June 1940, QAC.

[57] See Shah Nawaz Mamdot to Jinnah, 24 June 1940, QAC.

[58] See Jinnah to Shah Nawaz Mamdot, 28 June 1940, QAC.

[59] See 'Minutes of meeting of the working committee of the Punjab Muslim League held at Mamdot Villa, 14 July 1940,' QAC. By 'peculiarity' was meant that the Punjab be given special consideration or exemption due to its position as a province with a bare Muslim majority. See Shah Nawaz Mamdot to Jinnah, 21 June 1940, QAC.

Despite Jinnah's orders, the provincialists were not going to give up without a struggle. Early the next month, Sikander and Fazlul Haq, the premiers of the two main Muslim-majority provinces, wrote to Jinnah asking him to remove the ban and reconsider the policy of 'sitting on the fence' regarding helping on the war front. The spirit in which the League Working Committee's resolution had been taken by the provinces was that it was merely a matter of clarifying with His Majesty's government that the British would not go back on their promises to the minority communities of India. Consequently, Muslims of the two provinces had unrestrainedly joined the boards; cancelling those enrolments would put the provincial governments in a very awkward position. Curiously, this letter, which amply reveals inclinations that differed widely from Jinnah's, ended on a subservient note, i.e. that the provincial Leagues awaited an 'unequivocal and final lead' from their leader.[60] Their leader, however, was quite unmoved by its contents; he retorted that there was nothing ambiguous whatsoever, and that the League had been crystal clear on its policy to make its cooperation conditional on an equal share at the centre.[61]

Subsequently, a meeting of the Punjab Muslim League was called and arguments outlined so that the 'peculiar' nature of the Punjab's predicament could be propounded to Jinnah once more. Presided over by Shah Nawaz Mamdot himself and attended by prominent Punjabis such as Begum Shahnawaz, Nawab Muzaffar Khan, Raja Ghazanfer Ali, and Karamat Ali, it concluded that the Punjab League had been misled because the development of the war boards and the consolidation of the central League's policy had taken place concurrently. Second, it pointed out that Sikander, Liaquat Ali Khan and Khwaja Nazimuddin had all declared that the ban did not apply to the Muslim ministers of the Punjab who were, as was the case with all Punjabi Muslim legislators, League members as well as Unionists.

Here again, Shah Nawaz Mamdot identified closely with the provincial government: 'We must not give the impression of a tug of war between the ministry and the followers.' Further, he fretted: 'Unfortunately a stage appears to have been reached where an open rupture between the League and the provincial government must be seriously taken into account, unless indeed, sufficient statesmanship is shown … The position of the Punjab Muslim

[60] See Sikander Hayat Khan and Fazlul Haq to Jinnah, 5 July 1940, QAC.

[61] See Jinnah to Sikander Hayat Khan and Fazlul Haq, 11 July 1940, QAC.

Leaguers is unenviable to the extreme.'[62] This letter is interesting because it betrays the immense reluctance of the president of the provincial League to part ways with the provincial government at the behest of the central League; it is important to note that this dilemma also existed (albeit to a lesser extent) for other Punjabi Muslim landowners.[63] While Jinnah ultimately accepted the request from Lahore for the Punjabi deputation to discuss the matter with him, the tone of the exchanges during the episode challenges the accepted version of the story that Jinnah was the underdog in his alliance with the Punjab landowners during this period.

In the following year, 1941, London decided to form a National Defence Council to further the war efforts; Sikander was invited to be part of this body and he happily accepted. However, in August of that year, at a meeting of the League Working Committee, the opinion was expressed that premiers who were members of the Party ought not to accept offers of membership to the National Defence Council. Sikander justified his position on the ground that he had been invited to serve in his capacity as premier of Punjab, and not as a Muslim. However, Jinnah maintained that the governor of Bombay had sent him (Jinnah) a letter making it amply clear that Sikander had been invited in his capacity as a Muslim. This was, unfortunately for Sikander, somewhat true. The letter read: 'the great Muslim community should be represented by persons of the highest prominence and capacity. He has accordingly invited the Premiers of Assam, Bengal, the Punjab and Sind to serve as members of it…'[64] Sikander, in want of a convincing reply in his own defence, then accepted Jinnah's interpretation and publicly agreed to resign from the National Defence Council. This incident was interpreted as 'Sikander's defeat at the hands of Jinnah,' and the governor noted, 'the Premier returned home … with his personal dislike and distrust of Jinnah strongly intensified. Since then he has been at pains to explain his surrender.'[65]

Analyses of Sikander's premiership in existing secondary works have focused on the factional nature of Punjab's politics, rivalries within the provincial League and Jinnah's problems at the centre. This article has argued that these focuses have diverted attention away from the fact that Sikander's position, vis-à-vis

[62] See Shah Nawaz Mamdot to Jinnah, 21 July 1940, QAC.

[63] See 'Minutes of meeting of the Punjab Muslim League, 14 July 1940,' QAC. Also see letter from Shah Nawaz Mamdot to Jinnah, 21 July 1940, ibid.

[64] See Lumley to Jinnah, 20 July 1941, ibid.

[65] See Glancy to Linlithgow, 10 September 1941, in Carter, ed. *Punjab politics*, II, 274.

Jinnah, steadily grew weaker. This can be seen clearly in at least three instances spanning the length of his premiership: the Shahidganj controversy, the Khaksar incident of 1940 and the matter of the membership of the war board committees and the National Defence Council.

Jalal has argued that, in signing the Pact, Jinnah not only practically handed over the Punjab League to Sikander and the Unionists, he also had to settle for having absolutely no say in the Punjab's internal affairs.[66] While this may have been the understanding in 1937, the events that followed suggest a rather different story, in which Jinnah does not cut such a sorry figure. As the above examples show, by no means did Jinnah bow out of the province. The fact that Jinnah did not publicly rebuke Sikander ought not to take away from the novelty of the development that he was increasingly called upon to mediate and decide matters involving the Punjab premier and government.

Craig Baxter, on the other hand, has noted with regard to the National Defence Council fiasco: 'the heavy hand used by Jinnah in this episode was not calculated to endear him to Sikander…'[67] But it is not enough to merely note that the differences in political aims and priorities of the two men sometimes shone through the facade of unity, or even that the rift between the two increased over time. Rather, it must be emphasized that, in the event of such clashes, it was Sikander who gave way, not Jinnah. This challenges the accepted version of the story that the Punjabi landlords had a politically easy ride during this period.

The alliance with the Muslim League created instability in the very roots of the Unionist Party. In fact, this alliance is important *because* it destabilized the other alliances of the Muslim Unionists, on which the power of the Unionist Party had formerly rested. Foremost among these were their ties with the Hindu and Sikh party members, who watched uneasily as Sikander flirted with the League too long and too closely for comfort. Second, the relationship with the British patrons increasingly came under strain, as Sikander vexed everyone, from the provincial governor to the secretary of state for India, with his ostensible 'capitulations' to Jinnah.

Toeing two lines

Building on the conclusions of the previous sections, a very pertinent question may be asked: why didn't Sikander simply part ways with Jinnah? In fact, he

[66] Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman*, 39.
[67] Baxter, 'Union or Partition,' 53–54.

considered doing so, but ultimately decided against it. This section takes a closer look at the reasons underlying Sikander's unwillingness to do so.

At the international and national levels, in early 1942, while the Second World War raged in East Asia, Hindu liberals demanded guarantees of quick independence in return for their help in the war. The British floundered with their response; the secretary of state for India, Amery, and the opposition leader, Attlee, at different times favoured reconsideration of the Indian question. Prime Minister Churchill, however, was unwilling to open the constitutional front or to commit to any drastic changes before the end of the war. On 26 February 1942, the India committee of the war cabinet met for the first time and proceeded, over the next few days, to hammer out a proposal made by the prime minister into a draft declaration that could be used to negotiate the future set-up of India; this draft was to form the basis of the Cripps Mission.[68]

Cripps arrived in India in the third week of March. Briefly, the draft that he brought proposed that a body called the Defence of India Council be given the task of framing the future constitution of India once the war was over.[69] Governor Glancy, Viceroy Linlithgow and the commander-in-chief of the army were all vehemently opposed to the draft for what it meant for the Punjab and, consequently, for the ongoing war efforts. It proposed that the majority in the Defence of India Council could form a federation after the war, and each of the provinces of India would be at liberty to join this federation or to stay out. Hence it conceded the principle of opting out of a united India.

Glancy predicted that this proposition would not go down well with the Punjab's Muslims, as the Congress would obviously have a majority in the future council. On the other hand, if the Punjab decided to stay out of the federation, the Sikhs would be up in arms for fear of Muslim domination. Ultimately, the Unionist Ministry would have to resign.[70] However, long before matters could escalate in that direction, Cripps's draft was rejected by the Congress on 10 April 1942.

For our purposes, the failure of the Cripps Mission had two important consequences. Firstly, it impressed further upon the British the need to support anti-Congress elements, and this caused Muslim League stocks to run higher

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[68] Mansergh et al. eds., *ToP*, I, Introduction, xi–xii.

[69] See note by Mr Amery, 7 February 1942, ibid., 125.

[70] See Glancy to Linlithgow, 4 March 1942, ibid., 321; also note by Major-General Lockhart, 25 February 1942, ibid., 391; and telegram from Linlithgow to Amery, 9 March 1942, ibid., 386.

than before at the national level.[71] Jinnah's claim to represent a separate nation ensured that London could stall the Congress until the end of the Second World War.[72] This, in turn, increased Jinnah's bargaining power within the Punjab.[73]

The second, and more important, consequence of the mission's failure was that it spurred Sikander into drawing up his second federal formula. Clause (a) of the scheme stipulated that the Punjab's accession or non-accession to the proposed Indian Federation would depend entirely on its Legislative Assembly, if at least 75 percent of Assembly members concurred with the decision. Clauses (b) and (c) were to come into play only if the Punjab Assembly was unable to agree on either course of action with a majority of at least 75 percent. Clause (b) laid down that the Muslim members of the Assembly would then have the right to choose, with a majority of at least 60 percent, to hold a referendum of all Muslims on the electoral role of the Assembly to decide in favour of the non-accession of the Punjab to the Federation. Lastly, if the Muslims decided in favour of non-accession, clause (c) gave the non-Muslim members in the Assembly the right to opt out of the province by holding a referendum of their own. As with the Muslims, the resolution to hold a referendum would also need the backing of no less than 60 percent of the non-Muslim members of the Assembly, and the referendum would involve all non-Muslims on the electoral role of the Assembly. Thus, the full implications of Sikander's second formula were that most of the *tehsil*s of Ambala, Jullundur, and Amritsar divisions would ultimately have to be separated from the rest of the province. Whether they would then join the Indian Federation or form a state of their own was left to them to decide.[74]

In sharp contradistinction to his first scheme, Sikander's second formula was one that he did not actually wish to carry through to completion. As Governor Glancy pointed out to Viceroy Linlithgow, the premier's purpose was merely to make Punjab's Muslims realize the sobering reality behind the Pakistan theory, i.e. that the creation of a 'Pakistan' would break up their beloved province.[75] Sikander was sure that this option would be utterly unacceptable to all Punjabis,

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[71] Ibid., II, Introduction, xi.

[72] Jalal has argued that the viceroy had no intention of resolving the federal issue and was only too glad to throw it 'into cold storage' for the time being. See Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman*, 74.

[73] Talbot, *Khizr Tiwana*, 84.

[74] Mansergh et al. eds., *ToP*, II, Glancy to Linlithgow, 10 July 1942, 359; Also see enclosure on 361–62.

[75] See Glancy to Linlithgow, 10 July 1942, ibid., 359.

regardless of religion. Further, it may be proposed that the larger point behind this scheme was more personal; Sikander hoped to curb divisive factors and unite the province in the war efforts, with the ultimate expectation of being rewarded for these efforts when it was finally time for the British to decide the future of India.

Given its composition, it was not only possible but probable that the Punjab Legislative Assembly would be unable to obtain a 75 percent majority in favour of any one decision regarding accession. But perhaps more interesting is the fact that, with the Sikander–Jinnah Pact in place, the Muslim members of the Assembly would have no difficulty securing a 60 percent majority in favour of holding a referendum of their community; this provision appears to have been included to make the scheme palatable to Jinnah and the League.

While conveying this scheme to the viceroy, Glancy pointed out that there was a good chance that Jinnah would see through it and take it as an attempt by Sikander to highlight the weakness of the Pakistan theory, both regarding Jinnah's purposeful vagueness as well as the consequences it held for provincial unity. Sikander, however, chose to be more optimistic. He explained to Glancy that Jinnah would accept the scheme because he had publicly propounded the principle of self-determination and thus could not deny it to non-Muslims in Muslim-majority provinces. In addition, Sikander predicted that Jinnah would take the scheme to mean that one of the most important Muslim-majority provinces had accepted the Pakistan theory on paper.[76] In retrospect, one can conclude that Sikander proved to be unwarrantedly optimistic in thinking that the subtleties of the scheme would be grasped by the general Punjabi population but go unnoticed by Jinnah.

This scheme was closely followed by Sikander's third and final proposal, which concerned the viceroy's Executive Council; he suggested that only members assigned to the defence, finance, customs and external affairs portfolios be selected by the viceroy alone, whereas the rest of the members be selected (by the viceroy) from a list of names prepared by the provincial Legislative Assemblies. The idea was to make the government more representative as a stop gap measure until the end of the war, once again using the provincial assemblies, so that the Congress's strategies to rile the masses against the British would be

[76] See Glancy to Linlithgow, 10 July 1942, ibid., 360. The viceroy's reply to Glancy's letter was that, since Sikander's second scheme was based on the terms of Cripps's proposal, which had already been withdrawn, it was not for the government to float another idea building on the same concept. Also see Linlithgow to Glancy, 17 July 1942, ibid., 402.

rendered fruitless. In addition, he was perplexed by the thought that Gandhi might eventually make peace with Jinnah and concede Pakistan due to the consistent denial of his (Gandhi's) demands by the British.[77] Most significantly, once again, Sikander proposed a method that gave primary importance to provincial assemblies at the centre. Such an arrangement would obviously exclude Jinnah and the League from the future centre. As in the case of the first two schemes, neither the governor nor the viceroy took much notice of this proposition, except in wryly noting that Gandhi would probably not risk offending the orthodox elements within the Congress by making such a move.

The failure of Sikander's various schemes has resulted in their importance being generally overlooked. However, there are several interesting observations to be made here. For instance, the first and second schemes are oddly prophetic of the final proposal that was entertained in the run-up to the partition (Cabinet Mission) and the actual fate of the province, respectively. Second, and more importantly, the latter two schemes were drawn up with a view to the Muslim League rather than the Congress. This stands in sharp contrast to his first scheme, and suggests that during his tenure, Sikander's wariness of the Congress was steadily overshadowed by his wariness of Jinnah. This is further highlighted by the fact that, in the third instance, Sikander suggested that the viceroy increase the number of Muslims on his council from three to four, lest Jinnah should 'make capital out of this deficiency.'[78] Even though Sikander's stance towards Jinnah or Pakistan may have seemed ambiguous because of his repeated public capitulations to Jinnah, his schemes prove that he was constantly trying to find a way to get what he wanted at the centre *without* Jinnah.

It is clear from this chain of events that Sikander's contradictory policies of ostensibly following Jinnah's lead while secretly toeing his own line had led him to the point where the discrepancy became a source of disillusionment for the minorities in the province, incurred the scorn of the British and provided a setting in which Jinnah could openly challenge and stalemate him.

However, it is proposed here that there was inwardness in Sikander's approach. As the British volleyed between provincial representatives and party leaders, Sikander tried to secure a favourable position for the Punjab and for himself by having a finger in each pie. If the British decided to persist in their endeavours to reach a settlement with the two main political parties, he would be forced to throw in his lot with the Muslim League, and thus there was a

[77] See Glancy to Linlithgow, 17 July 1942, ibid., 403–04.
[78] See Glancy to Linlithgow, 17 July 1942, ibid., 404.

pressing, albeit seemingly temporary, need to form an alliance with Jinnah for as long as the dust remained unsettled. In case the British faced a complete stalemate with the parties and decided to proceed with the constitution-making themselves, as the expansions of the various Indian Councils seemed to indicate, the views of their loyal friends would, Sikander hoped, be taken into account. The key in the latter case, clearly, would be to propound the special position and contributions of the Punjab from amongst all of India's provinces. This explains Sikander's unfaltering insistence on aiding the war effort.

For example, the August Offer of 1940 had proposed that a body comprising entirely of Indians would be set up after the end of the war; the purpose of this body would be to reach an agreement over the future constitution. The condition was that no arrangement would be acceptable unless it was approved by *all* major stakeholders in India. According to Jalal, this offer was merely a means by which London sought to block the Congress's proposals for a national government until after the war.[79] Be that as it may, for our purpose it is more important to note that soon after this offer was made, Sikander told Craik that he had decided to part ways with the League. He decided to announce at the next League Working Committee meeting that since the offer had secured Muslim rights at the centre, the purpose of the Sikander–Jinnah Pact had been fulfilled, and hence there was no need for the Pact anymore.[80] It may be speculated, though, that the August Offer propelled Sikander to think in this direction mainly because it implied that no arrangement which was unacceptable to the Punjab, surely one of the weightiest elements in India, would be enforced upon it. Subsequently, however, the offer was rejected by both, the League and the Congress. And with this rejection, Sikander changed his plans of breaking off with Jinnah.[81] This incident serves to highlight the fact that while the British were pretending to take Jinnah's Pakistan scheme seriously for the sole purpose of stalling the Congress until the end of the war, Sikander, too, was tied to Jinnah while the latter was being taken seriously at the centre, his own differences with Jinnah notwithstanding.

Sikander's real intentions, misleading as they were, were born primarily out of a concern for the Punjab and, second, out of loyalty to the Raj. Yet they were completely unrewarded by his patrons. While, on the one hand, his schemes for the future federal arrangement were disregarded with disdain, on the other

[79] Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman*, 62–63.
[80] Craik to Linlithgow, 12 August 1940, in Carter, ed. *Punjab politics*, II, 170.
[81] See Introduction, in Carter, ed. *Punjab Politics*, II, 10.

hand, he was admonished for causing embarrassment. His growing sense of despair can be seen, for example, when, in June 1941, Sikander heard that the Viceroy had decided to expand his Executive Council, but that none of the new members were likely to be from the Punjab. To add insult to injury, the defence portfolio was probably to be given to a non-Punjabi. Sikander's conclusion was that such actions on the part of the British 'would confirm the impression and not without justification that the policy of letting down "friends" still holds the field.'[82] Enclosed along with this letter were the resignations of all the Punjab ministers.[83]

While Sikander spoke in the language of the provinces, the British had increasingly started acting as though parties (and not provinces) were the ultimate unit of political planning. This, then, was Sikander's dilemma if he was to secure a place for himself and his province in the future set-up. For expressing these anxieties, Sikander was severely told off by a rather exasperated Glancy, who admitted to Viceroy Linlithgow on 17 July 1941 that he was 'as much disgusted with the Punjab Ministers as you are and I should have dearly liked to tell them to go where they deserved.'[84] Rather haughtily, he added, 'his [Sikander's] correct course was to wait in confidence for the realisation of his hopes instead of embarrassing all concerned.'[85] This embarrassment, of course, was the resignation threat.[86] It is also noteworthy that this incident between Sikander and the British authorities took place only one month before Sikander's capitulation to Jinnah over the National Defence Council issue. While it cannot be ascertained, it is possible to speculate that the capitulation was a result of Sikander's uncertainty about his own position with his British patrons.

Another instance can be seen in February 1942, when Sikander requested Glancy that, if any constitutional plans were to be made, it must be specified that, because of the 'valour of her soldier,' India could claim a right to dominion status, and, further, that London should make a statement clarifying that: 'when the War is over the British Government will either establish a constitution for India as devised by the main parties concerned in agreement with one another or, failing that, will set about devising one itself, taking into counsel all those who have bestirred themselves to defend the country in the time of

[82] See Glancy to Linlithgow (enclosure 2), 13 July 1941, ibid., II, 263–67.
[83] See Glancy to Linlithgow (enclosures 2 and 3), 13 July 1941, ibid., 267–68.
[84] See Appendix 3: Glancy to Linlithgow, 17 July 1941, ibid., 383.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Ibid.

danger.'[87] These requests by Sikander, which may be interpreted as efforts to seek assurance of his own position, are starkly revealing of the precariousness of the position he perceived himself to be in. And while in this position, he could not afford to burn either of his two boats.

The realization of Sikander's hopes, schemes, and all other efforts at influencing national policymaking, however, was clearly not forthcoming. In December 1942, Sikander died suddenly on the night of the weddings of his daughter and sons;[88] he was at the time only 50 years of age. It is easy to gauge the importance, or the lack thereof, that was accorded to Sikander by his British patrons through a letter from the viceroy to the secretary of state. In a three-page letter, the news of Sikander's death occupied one paragraph on the last page. And there, too, the mention was a bittersweet one; while Linlithgow acknowledged that Sikander had administered the province admirably, he added that Sikander 'was a rather difficult person to rely on in a really tight corner, and on more than one occasion he had caused me great embarrassment.'[89]

Conclusion

Sikander signed the Sikander–Jinnah Pact with a view to defusing the possibility of a Congress-dominated, intrusive central government meddling with the Punjab. However, this work has argued that the balance of power between Sikander and Jinnah started changing soon after the signing of the Pact. It shows, with the help of various examples, that instead of helping him reach his national-level goals, the alliance created problems for Sikander on all fronts, causing his Sikh and Hindu colleagues to regard him with mistrust and eventually landing him in the awkward position of being proclaimed the (rather unwilling and bewildered) author of the 'Pakistan' Resolution.

It also posits that Sikander's schemes reveal that he was constantly trying to achieve his goals in a way that excluded Jinnah, but he could not definitively let go of the League until he had received reassurances from the British that the Punjab was important enough to be considered in its own right, and not through a national Muslim voice.

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[87] See Glancy to Linlithgow, 23 February 1942, ibid., 293.

[88] Two of Sikander's sons and one of his daughters got married on the same day.

[89] See Linlithgow to Amery, 28 December 1942, in Mansergh et al. eds., *ToP*, III, 431.

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12

Religion between Region and Nation
Rezaul Karim, Bengal, and Muslim Politics at the End of Empire

Neilesh Bose

The Congress politician Rezaul Karim (1902–93), a prominent Muslim from Calcutta who actively critiqued the idea of Pakistan as it was being developed in the 1930s and 1940s, occupies a curious place in the history of Muslim India. As one of the most vocal Muslims who questioned the very idea of the Muslim League from the region of Bengal, a central place from which the debates on the future of an independent India and/or Pakistan occurred in the late colonial period, Karim illustrates the rarely studied condition of Muslim politicians in late colonial India who both identified deeply with the language of Bengali, and its associated literatures and cultures, as well as with Islam as a basis for a composite nationalism. Scholarly attention to Muslims 'against the Muslim League' has tended to focus on those personalities and individuals whose contemporary appropriations spring from the vantage point of India and Pakistan's own vexed relationship with Islam and its place in Indian history as well as the nature and meaning of the emergence of Pakistan. Such personalities have included three particular subjects: politicians associated with the ideological formation of Pakistan, such as Muhammad Ali Jinnah (1876-1948),[1] philosophers of Islam and modernity, such as Muhammed Iqbal (1877-1938) or Muslim Indian nationalists, such as Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (1888-1958) and Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani (1879-1957).[2] Perhaps

[1] The authoritative study of Jinnah remains Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

[2] About these iconic figures, see: Iqbal Singh Sevea, *The Political Philosophy of Muhammad Iqbal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Ian Henderson Douglas, Gail Minault and Christian W. Troll, *Abul Kalam Azad: An Intellectual and Religious Biography* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993); and Barbara D. Metcalf, *Husain Ahmad Madani: The Jihad for Islam and India's Freedom* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2009).

because of the emergence of Bangladesh in 1971, the politics of Muslims from Bengal who identified with a regional Bengali identity alongside an Indian Muslim nationalism has found almost no presence in the historiography, given its odd fit with the later history of East Pakistan (1947-1971) and the state of Bangladesh as it later became. Through an analysis of Rezaul Karim's political biography, with particular attention to his relationship between an all-India ethos, a composite nationalism based on Islam, and Bengali regional identity, this essay argues that Rezaul Karim developed a Bengali Muslim composite nationalism that aimed to connect religion, region and nation in the context of a subjunctive, possible future India.

Biography

Born in 1902 in Birbhum in West Bengal, Karim followed the path of the rising generation of the Muslim middle classes of the early nineteenth century by studying both at the Calcutta Madrasa as well as the hallowed halls of Calcutta University in the 1920s and 30s. Like his Bengali counterparts Abdul Wadud and Abul Hussain, who both studied law and inherited a traditional Muslim education in Arabic and Persian, Karim had access to Bengali literary and cultural traditions in Calcutta, the vast expanse of Persian and Arabic, all while being grounded in debates about law, colonialism and politics. In touch with writers and public figures like Kazi Nazrul Islam and Muzaffar Ahmed, Karim closely followed the events in Turkey and post-World War I global politics and contributed to Bengali and English periodicals during the 1920s and 30s. After earning a law degree in 1936, he worked as a lawyer in various parts of then-undivided Bengal in areas like Alipur and Behrampur, while working simultaneously for the Indian National Congress throughout the 1930s and early 1940s.

India, Islam and nationalism in the 1930s

During the 1930s, Karim developed his position on composite nationalism in two works: the Bengali *Naya Bharater Bhitti*, or *Foundations for a New India*, published in 1935; and *For India and Islam*, published in 1937, both from Calcutta's Chuckervetty and Company. Written at the height of Congress agitation in inter-war India, in both of these books he develops the idea of India as a composite set of cultures and opposes the idea of distinctive cultures preventing the state formation of India. In this regard, he is writing and

working in line with his fellow Congress Muslims in other parts of India, and is comparable to Azad and Madani. As in much of north India and areas now considered the "minority Muslim" provinces of colonial India, Rezaul Karim is writing much in line not with his fellow Bengali Muslims, but with Muslims who were compelled to identify, and embrace, a particular narrative of Indian Muslim history, to accord with a composite nationality in colonial India.

At the beginning of both books, he introduces and briefly explores Muhammed Iqbal's famous 'Our Hindustan.' During this era, Bengali Muslims in other circles were thinking critically about Iqbal,[3] just as many were critically interrogating the importance of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's writing for Muslims. Here, Karim is doing some of the same, but addressing his English language work primarily to an audience of Muslims in non-Bengali contexts. He also details how, for an English language audience in Calcutta, readers should assess historically Dara Shikoh, Iqbal, and the Aga Khan – major figures in Indian Muslim history – in order to claim the sort of nationalism that the Congress embraced. He reviews the various charges and understandings of communalism in colonial India and offers what was a standard critique of Jinnah, from the standpoint of a composite Indian nationalism. After citing the Prophet Muhammad on how patriotism is an article for faith for Muslims,[4] he critiques the idea of extra-territorial patriotism, calling it anachronistic, and arguing that India is the land of their birth, and that 'Indian Muslims attempting to swim in two waters will find it difficult to stay afloat.'[5] Like many of his counterparts in other parts of India, Karim argues that Islam, and the resources in it, such as the toleration of difference, provide a set of historical and philosophical resources to activate the goals of the Indian National Congress in the struggle against colonial rule. In a brief tour of Islamic history, he claims that early Muslims set an example for tolerance not known in Europe's own religious history.[6] By showing how there were equal rights for Muslims and non-Muslims in Muslim polities like the Ottoman Empire, he also discusses Aurangzeb in India. Though known for intolerance on many fronts, he continued practices of rent-free and tax-free land for religious purposes. Interpreting early Islam

[3] For a discussion of this parallel set of conversations, see Neilesh Bose, 'Remapping Muslim literary culture: Folklore, Bulbul, and world-making in late colonial Bengal,' *South Asian History and Culture* 5, no.2 (2014): 212-225.

[4] Rezaul Karim, *For India and Islam* (Calcutta: Chuckervertty and Co., 1937), 1.

[5] Ibid., 5.

[6] Ibid., 20.

as the Prophet signing a charter guaranteeing freedom for all, including non-Muslims, he urges his audience to approach the communal question through the light given to humanity by the Holy Prophet.[7]

Through a discussion of Dara Shikoh, Muhammed Iqbal and the Aga Khan, Karim displays a historical intervention through the claiming of one genealogy of Muslim Indian history over a recent, 'communalist' version. In his discussion of Dara Shikoh as a mystic who saw in Islam an esoteric nature that he learned from reading the Upanishads, and mixing with fakirs and mystics, this precedent shapes Dara as a tragic hero from whom Muslims in colonial India would learn about communalism and difference. Regarding other stars in Indian Muslim history, he critiques Iqbal and finds him and the party to be a communal party. He seeks to preserve the poet Iqbal (the latter's poetry adorns the opening of the book), but urges Muslims to let go of the politician in Iqbal, asking

> what have you and your party done to achieve establish harmony and accord between the different communities of India? In various activities the Muslim Conference has thrown out a challenge to those Muslims who believe that Islam will settle all international and intercommunal disputes.[8]

The Aga Khan for Karim occupies the same context as Iqbal, and his real target, Jinnah, as His Highness lives in luxury in Europe and participates in the various round table conferences, to make sure that the Muslims are gaining advantages in a British imperial system. People like Jinnah and the Aga Khan were seen as the custodians of the idea of the 'Muslim interest,' which was 'hoodwinking the entire community.'[9]

The issue of the day for activists like Karim was how to define religion itself. He defines religion as the essence of a teaching, and to care for the souls of men, that the bodies of men be taken care of in equality. Religion should be seen as spiritual not mundane, a thing not of this world.[10] This of course reflects the theosophical and Indian reformist view of religion, such that all religions are essentially comparable and exist in the same thought-space and problem-space in India. For India to move forward in the subjunctive mode of freedom, religion had to be deleted from the equation of politics with power.[11]

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[7] Ibid., 29, 32.
[8] Ibid., 43.
[9] Ibid., 51.
[10] Ibid., 64.
[11] Ibid., 66.

Karim fits into a tradition little analyzed in the history of Muslim politics in colonial India. While he does exhibit a variant of 'composite nationalism,' enunciated by Bipinchandra Pal, in *The New Spirit*,[12] he also embodies an awareness of, and participation in, oppositional intellectual cultures highlighted by the Bengali nature of his position. As he also wrote in Bengali throughout his life and, following debates about Bengali literature, had a parallel personality as a Bengali literary critic, he slots into a certain kind of category as a Muslim 'against the Muslim League.' In this regard, he provides an interesting counterpart to the north Indian Maulana Hussain Ahmad Madani (1879-1957), the scholar in league with figures like Thanawi, Azad, Nadwi and Maududi. Indeed, Madani's 1938 work *Composite Nationalism and Islam* lays out positions in which Karim fits quite comfortably.

In 1938, the year of Muhammad Iqbal's death, Madani published a book, *Muttahida Quamiyat aur Islam*, or *Composite Nationalism and Islam*, that put together his speeches and letters from the 1920s. Madani, based in the Hejaz for most of his early life, was in a colonial prison in Malta from 1916 to 1920, in which he interacted with Turks, Austrians and other Indians (much like Kazi Nazrul Islam did in his time serving in the war effort in Karachi), and the prison experience shaped him. In the 1920s, Madani recast the developing communalisms by placing the spread of Hinduism after the establishment of Muslim dynasties and discussed how India was a sacred land to Muslims, from the movements of Adam to heaven via Ceylon, and the many saints buried throughout India. As he stated at a December 1937 meeting in Delhi, the nations of the modern age were based on homelands and not religion. This theme would illuminate Karim's politics for the entirety of his late colonial career.

Ideas of Pakistan and the place of Bengal

Though Karim dedicated a great amount of energy to chalking out a nationalism grounded in both India and Islam, his Bengali location, evocative of a particular regional ethos, gives this sort of Muslim political vantage point a particular spin, in which he yearns for a future, new India. Being far from the centres of traditional power in India, as a Muslim from Calcutta, he *could* have been swayed by some parts of the Pakistan demand. But unlike his Bengali Muslim

[12] Bipinchandra Pal, *The New Spirit: A Selection from the Writings and Speeches of Bipinchandra Pal on Social, Political and Religious Subjects* (Calcutta: Sinha, Sarvadhikari, 1907).

counterparts who did see the Pakistan idea in positive, and localized, terms, he took that same localized literary and regional energy to critique, and ultimately dismantle, the notion of Pakistan as it applied to Bengali Muslims.

In 1941, his landmark English-language book, *Pakistan Examined*, emerged as a considerable response to the groundswell of support for the idea of Pakistan after the historic Lahore Resolution of 1940. Prefaced by Syed Nausher Ali, another opponent of the idea of Pakistan, Karim in his foreword introduced readers to his goal of showing that the idea of Pakistan was a 'mirage, which will soon vanish in the air, and with it will be buried the ugly demon of communalism.'[13] In addition to a wide-ranging set of discussions about communalism and the idea of Pakistan as understood in late 1940 and 1941 (the first edition was published in late 1941), the book also included several appendices, including an Appendix A that featured various affirmations of the Pakistan ideal, from Dr Syed Abdul Latif to Sir Sikander Hayat Khan's positive view on a Pakistan resolution as well as the historic text of the Lahore Resolution of March 1940. The book also includes an Appendix B, featuring the April 1940 Delhi resolution of the All-India Azad Muslim Conference, as well as counters to the Pakistan idea by prominent Indian Muslims like Malik Barkat Ali, Sir Wazir Hasan, M.Y. Shareef and Abdul Majid Khan.

In his discussion of the 'sponsors' of communalism, Karim analyzes those who proposed the Pakistan ideal, wanting India to be divided into two parts. At this point in early 1941, the Lahore Resolution was deemed a 'Pakistan resolution,' though the word Pakistan was nowhere in that document. His conception of the Pakistan demand, ironically given his location, was derived fully from his reading of Rahmat Ali of the Punjab, as well as Dr Syed Abdul Latif's conception of cultural difference residing in the religions of India. For Karim, the various arguments emanating from the north and northwest of India, and a distinctive view of Muslim Indian culture from there, coalesced into the conclusion that 'the Pakistanists are of [the] opinion that the people of Pakistan differ from that of India in culture, religion, civilization, language and literature and there is nothing in common with the people of India.'[14] Karim makes a clear stand in the diverse discussions of culture in colonial India, declaring the term 'vague, ambiguous and full of numerous interpretations,'[15] arguing rather that

[13] Rezaul Karim, *Pakistan Examined, with the Partition Schemes of Dr Latif, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan and Others* (Calcutta: The Book Company, 1941), 2.

[14] Ibid., 3.

[15] Ibid., 9.

those like Rahmat Ali, Dr Syed Abdul Latif and 'Pakistanists' were exploiting the ignorance of the masses of Muslims to erroneously single out the culture of Muslims as a distinction for the future of India.

Karim also devoted a significant amount of space to the challenge of 'vagueness' in understanding the Pakistan scheme. The imprecision inherent in the Pakistan proposals on offer led Karim to conclude at least three 'Pakistans' were at play in 1941. One proposal simply meant redistribution of provinces of India on religious, linguistic and/or cultural grounds. Another seemed to suggest two separate states, one Muslim and one Hindu, in a confederated India, and another still for Muslims suggested a Muslim confederation of states from Turkey to the Punjab.[16] Karim reviewed the potential problems in any or all of the potential Pakistans and concluded that no particular Pakistan could provide a way forward for Muslims in late colonial India. He laid out an economic challenge to any of the proposals, since the four Muslim provinces – Bengal, Punjab, Sindh, North-West Frontier Province (NWFP)/Baluchistan – were generally poor but with significantly wealthy minority communities. The seven Hindu provinces appeared less imbalanced, so in a Pakistan, the Muslim provinces would hardly be able to make their required payments and manage a potential infrastructure of a new state, thereby forcing them to borrow from India or another third party. Karim concluded that the Muslim League did not know this, or was willingly misleading the masses. Added to the problem of base economic inequities in colonial India were the theoretical and practical problems of uprooting people from their homes and making them accept the new Pakistan simply on the basis of religion. This would only be exacerbated by the problem of unequal economic burdens on the less developed portions of what may become Pakistan. This led Karim to conclude that 'instead of becoming a blessing, Pakistan will be a burden upon all the Muslims of India, as it will harden their slavery and will necessitate the constant presence of a third party in the land.'[17]

This led Karim to emphasize his signature stance that would align him fully with his north Indian Muslim compatriots, in declaring that Muslims in India

[16] There is considerable debate on the nature and importance of the 'vagueness' of the Pakistan demand in late colonial India. Scholars such as Ayesha Jalal argue that such vagueness was deliberate and evidence of Jinnah's lack of interest in an actual Pakistan. Recent work by Venkat Dhulipala argues that the Pakistan idea in United Provinces, at least, was quite deliberately pitched at the literal level of creating an Islamic state.

[17] Karim, *Pakistan Examined*, 38.

were emphatically not a minority and should not be interpreted as such. When any group, such as Sikhs, Christians, Parsis, landowners or mill-owners, could potentially claim minority status, singling out Muslims as especially minoritized did nothing but elongate the further potential alienation of Muslims in a context in which the future was not clear. What is so special about Muslims and why do they alone get minority status that would translate into Pakistan? He exhorted his audience to 'let all the world know that the Indian Muslims are not a minority, as the term is understood in European politics.'[18] Though he concedes that Syed Ahmed Khan did argue for the distinctiveness of Muslims, but also for the common national identity of Indians, he argued that the best course of action for Muslims was to work for a united India of the future. If religion were extracted from the elements of common culture in India, he suggested that India's culture contains multiple religions. Furthermore, the constant discussion of the isolation of a Muslim 'interest' would hurt Muslims in the long run, as distinguishing an 'interest' from within India would miss the diversity of Muslim entanglements, of the poor, the rich, tenants, landlords and business owners, with other communities of Indians. As a reiteration of his composite nationalism, he concluded that if 'Muslims have eyes to see and [a] mind to think and [a] heart to feel, they would never support this fantastic scheme, rather will exercise all their influence to condemn it as anti-national and anti-Islamic.'[19]

Karim's composite nationalism, in which Islam was activated, and indeed required, for a unified Indian nationalism, was clearly written before a strand of the Muslim Bengali intelligentsia began to write in Bengali about the notion of Pakistan as a local manifestation of a longer term ideal for nationalist freedom. Such discussions that crystallized a notion of a *Purba*, or eastern Pakistani ideal, articulated in and about Bengali literary distinctiveness vis-à-vis Muslim contributions to Bengali literature and culture, stretch back at least to the mid-1930s in Calcutta, with the leadership of Mohammed Akram Khan's *Azad*, the Calcutta-based Bengali publication that showcased Bengali Muslim literary criticism and debates about culture and religion.[20] Though Karim didn't share the enthusiasm for a *Purba* Pakistan in line with fellow

[18] Ibid., 56.

[19] Ibid., 67.

[20] See Neilesh Bose, *Recasting the Region: Language, Culture, and Islam in Colonial Bengal* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014), for a discussion of this literary intelligentsia's history, esp. chapter 5.

Bengali Muslim public intellectuals like Abul Mansur Ahmed, Abul Kalam Shamsuddin and Muhammad Akram Khan, he shared a life-long investment in Bengali literature and literary culture. Since the 1920s, like his *Purba* Pakistan counterparts, he published Bengali poetry and wrote small Bengali language biographies of figures like Hazrat Mohammed, the Turkish leader Kamal Pasha and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, and published poetry and prose in periodicals like *Azad, Mohammadi* and *Saogat* in Bengali, meant primarily for a Bengali Muslim audience. He was, therefore, a part of, yet apart from, his fellow Bengali Muslim literary and cultural critics, who began to develop their own appreciation of a distinctively eastern Pakistani ideal. In line with the prevailing literary appreciation in the Muslim Bengali community of Bengali luminaries like Rabindranath Tagore and famed Muslim writers like Muhammed Iqbal, Karim devoted considerable attention to the life and work of Bankimchandra Chatterjee, a figure frequently reviled in increasingly nationalist Muslim circles for his alleged communalist attacks on Muslims. Karim's signature essay, titled '*Bankimchandrar Nikat Musalmaner Rin*,' or 'Muslims' Debt to Bankimchandra,' was first written and published in 1938 before the 1940 Lahore Resolution and his 1941 *Pakistan Examined*, but then appeared in the Bengali book *Bankimchandra and Muslim Society* in 1944.[21]

In his treatment of Bankim, Karim saw his literary sensibility as much more important than the politics of religious identity. His pivotal essay began with a series of questions: 'Is his hate natural? What is the essence of this hate? Is it really hatred towards the Muslims or is it something else?'[22] Karim argued rather that *Anandamath*, the 1882 novel, which contained negative images of Muslims as enemies of the Hindu Sanyassi rebels in a narrative of anti-colonial rebellion, did not inspire hate for the Hindus against the Muslims. Rather, it sought to indoctrinate them in the ideal of nationalism.

By claiming that standards for evaluating literature lay in the aesthetic sensibilities it raised in the reader, the inculcation of nationalist feeling being the aesthetic of importance, Karim argued that Bankim cannot be seen by Muslim communalists as an enemy of Muslims. Unlike his counterparts in the *Purba* Pakistan movement, Karim urged readers to appreciate Bankim for his literary genius in creating narratives of anti-colonial revolt. Rezaul Karim's composite nationalism included the larger than life figures of Bengali literature

[21] Rezaul Karim, *Bankimchandra o Muslim Samaj* (Calcuttta: Indian Publishing Co., 1944).
[22] Ibid., 2-3.

as well as the great stars of Indian Muslim, and Indian, nationalist history, as he wrote book-length biographies of Dara Shikoh[23] and Kasturba Gandhi.[24] These individuals only complemented what Indians, in the possible, new India of the imagination in the 1940s, could aspire to.

Conclusion

Like many Muslims of the late colonial period, Karim inhabited a range of identarian positions, but did not exhibit a European territorial nationalism nor one shaped crudely from the interests of his own socio-economic position. Rather, he exhibited a Muslim modern critique of the Pakistan ideal, but yet was quite aware of the various intellectual histories behind the idea. His signature critique of the idea of Pakistan, his 1941 *Pakistan Examined*, proceeded not from the perspective of Bengali regional culture, or an existential recognition of the distinction of Bengali Muslim politics from the central Indian Muslim politics, but from the standpoint of a composite nationalist Indian Muslim vantage point looking into the future. Karim's version of Pakistan emerged just before the various ideas that undergirded the Bengali Muslim variant of Pakistan would arise, in 1942 to 1944, and his critique proceeded in parallel with the rest of the Banglaphone set of debates. He shared the interests in Bengali literature that his fellow Bengali Muslims, who were differently placed politically, promoted, yet simply disagreed with them. As an index of the transformation from colonial India to post-colonial India and Pakistan, the spaces of this disagreement became less and less feasible to manage, as holding both a critique of the idea of Pakistan from within, and inhabiting a composite nationalism in India, became impossible for a Muslim. This impossibility signals a history filled with content, not only a series of contingent moments leading to/or not predicting, the partition of 1947.[25] The role of Bengal is re-appearing in the scholarship of late colonial India and early post-colonial South Asia, through re-considerations of the nature of the history of Bengali Muslims, the history

[23] *Sadhak Dara Shikoh* (Calcutta: Nur Library, 1944).

[24] *Mother Kasturba Gandhi* (Calcutta: Chuckervertty, 1944).

[25] Discussions in the contemporary scholarship of late colonial Indian Muslim politics revolve around how empty or malleable the Pakistan demand actually was in 1940, as well as the nature and intent of historical actors active before and after 1947. Karim's biography shows a unique position in rejecting the Pakistan demand but inhabiting a variety of subject positions in doing so.

of East Bengal and the place of Bangladesh in a broader South Asian history.[26] Rezaul Karim's political biography and relationship to composite nationalism show yet another perspective of the unravelling relationship between religion, region and nation.

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[26] See Neilesh Bose, *Recasting the Region*; Iftekhar Iqbal, *The Bengal Delta. Ecology, State and Social Change, 1840-1943* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010); Srinath Raghavan, *1971: A Global History of Bangladesh* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013); and Ali Riaz, *Bangladesh: A Political History Since Independence* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2016). Ali Usman Qasmi's 'Witness to History,' *Herald* (September 2015): 146-155, places the historiography of Eastern Bengal and the making of Bangladesh in the broader context of Pakistani public culture and politics in the contemporary age.

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'The Pakistan that is Going to be Sunnistan'
Indian Shi'a Responses to The Pakistan Movement

Justin Jones

> The All India Muslim League is a body dominated by the Sunni Mussalmans… the League is a fascist body out to crush all opposition and capture power to establish the government of a Sunni Junta, by a Sunni Junta and for a Sunni Junta... Shias [see] in it the total annihilation of their faith, their culture and their individuality.[1]

Hosseinbhoy Laljee, an Isna 'Ashari Shi'a from a trading family of Bombay and an established politician with a career on the Bombay Legislative Council, was not inclined to temper his language. As current president of the Shi'a Political Conference, a political organization that claimed widespread Indian Shi'a support, he was engaged in a furious campaign to ensure that what he called the 'Shi'a Muslims' case' was heard in the tumult of negotiations in the mid-1940s surrounding independence and the likely creation of Pakistan. Petitioning India's major political parties and British overlords, Laljee frequently invoked the perils that awaited the Indian Shi'a should their distinctive needs not be recognized within any political settlement. Pakistan, he argued in various correspondence, would fall under Sunni *shari'a* law and would fail to offer its Shi'a citizens either freedom of worship or protection from discrimination. In another telegram, he suggested with arguably some element of prescience that Shi'as 'should not… hope that their religious rights [will] be safe in Pakistan, which is going to be Sunnistan.'[2]

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[1] 'Preliminary statement re: Shia Muslims' position,' Hosseinbhoy Laljee to British Parliamentary Delegation, Delhi, January 1945, in Hosseinbhoy Laljee, *Shia Muslims' Case* (Bombay: Jawahir, 1946), 29.

[2] *National Herald* (Lucknow), 21 January 1946, Centre of South Asian Studies, Cambridge (CSAS).

Laljee's rhetoric hints at the existence of a deep apprehension about the creation of Pakistan across a spectrum of Indian Shi'a opinion, which has often been somewhat disregarded in a body of scholarship on the Pakistan movement that has more frequently emphasized the building of a coherent Muslim *qaumiyyat* ('national identity') in the face of Hindu domination. Within this dominant historiographical trajectory, Shi'a-Sunni political debates in pre-partition India have often been dismissed as either marginal or irrelevant; as M. Q. Zaman puts it, 'issues of sectarian significance were not prominent in the course of the Pakistan movement.'[3] It has equally been assumed that Shi'a and Sunni responses to, and experiences of, the Pakistan movement were roughly comparable. For instance, as expressed by Mushirul Hasan, Shi'as uncomplicatedly 'hitched their fortunes with the League bandwagon' before partition; ultimately, he claims, in spite of minor quarrels, 'the forces of an overriding and hegemonic "Muslim nationalism" subsumed sectarian allegiances. Shias and Sunnis undertook their long trek towards the promised *dar-al-Islam*.'[4] Some recent exceptions aside,[5] the common assumption of many accounts has therefore long been that Shi'a-Sunni differences lay fairly moribund during the Pakistan movement, and were indefinitely subdued, perhaps even vanquished, pending the new state's formation.

Instead, the huge growth of Shi'a-Sunni conflict in modern Pakistan is perceived to have arisen chiefly only after the state's creation. A number of key works on the enormous expansion in sectarian violence in recent decades have linked it to conditions emerging from the difficulties of nation-building emerging post-1947, whether the Pakistani state's increasing alignment with a Deobandi-oriented 'Islamization' programme, or the domestic impact of the

[3] Muhammad Qasim Zaman, 'Sectarianism in Pakistan: the Radicalisation of Shi'i and Sunni identities,' *Modern Asian Studies* 36, no.3 (2000): 691.

[4] Mushirul Hasan, 'Sectarianism in Indian Islam: the Shia-Sunni Divide in the United Provinces,' in *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 27, no.2 (1990): 222, and 'Traditional Rites and Contested Meanings: Sectarian Strife in Colonial Lucknow,' in *Lucknow: Memories of a City*, ed. Violette Graff (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002), 133.

[5] Two recent studies which give substantive attention to the Shi'a within the Pakistan movement, from which I in part draw here, are Simon Fuchs, 'Relocating the Centers of Shi'i Islam: Religious Authority, Sectarianism and the Limits of the Transnational in Colonial India and Pakistan' (PhD diss., University of Princeton, 2015), Chapter 1; and Andreas Rieck, *The Shias of Pakistan: An Assertive and Beleaguered Minority* (London: Hurst, 2015), 31-54.

Iranian revolution or the Afghan wars.[6] In other words, as in other postcolonial states such as Lebanon and Iraq, modern manifestations of Shi'a-Sunni conflict have been chiefly interpreted within the frame of complications accompanying the building of new polities in fragile and culturally complex postcolonial societies.[7] Both for the Middle East and South Asia, such a perspective rather entrenches the insinuation that the colonial period was one of comparative Shi'a-Sunni unity, as a broader Muslim *umma* was consolidated in response to the shared context of European domination. The late-colonial decades, therefore, have often been recalled as a golden age of intra-Islamic ecumenism (*taqrib*) in comparison with the sectarian conflagrations of later decades.

However, this view of the Pakistan movement as transcending, or even proactively eroding, Shi'a-Sunni differences looks increasingly difficult to countenance. For one, a raft of recent work on the South Asian Shi'a has indicated how, underneath or behind the expansion of 'Muslim' identity politics, these communities were increasingly undergoing their own processes of distinctive community consolidation in the late-colonial period. Isna 'Ashari ('Twelver') Shi'as, for instance, were establishing an array of *madrasa*s, cultural initiatives, and social organizations that emphasized their own autonomy as a free-standing religious community, and frequently spilled over into political affairs.[8] Much the same might be argued of the Isma'ilis, many of whom, whether as a result of the formalization of their spiritual leadership and legal identity in the colonial courts in the nineteenth century or the expansion of their organizational and philanthropic networks in the twentieth, equally experienced a parallel demarcation of identities and boundaries.[9] These movements of Shi'a

[6] E.g. Zaman, 'Sectarianism in Pakistan'; Vali Nasr, 'The rise of Sunni Militancy in Pakistan: the Changing Role of Islamism and the Ulama in Society and Politics,' *Modern Asian Studies* 34, no.1 (2000): 139-80; Mariam Abou-Zahab, 'The Regional Dimension of Sectarian Conflicts in Pakistan' in *Pakistan: Nationalism without a Nation?*, ed. Christophe Jaffrelot (New Delhi: Manohar, 2002), 115-29.

[7] E.g. Max Weiss, *In the Shadow of Sectarianism: Law, Shi'ism and the Making of Modern Lebanon* (Cambridge, Massachussets: Harvard University Press, 2010); Fanar Haddad, *Sectarianism in Iraq: Antagonistic Visions of Unity* (London: Hurst, 2011).

[8] Justin Jones, *Shi'a Islam in Colonial India: Religion, Community and Sectarianism* (New York: Cambridge, 2012).

[9] Respectively, see Teena Purohit, *The Aga Khan Case: Religion and Identity in India* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2012); Soumen Mukherjee, 'Universalising Aspirations: Community and Social Service in the Isma'ili Imagination in Twentieth-Century South Asia and East Africa,' *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 24, no.3 (2014): 435-54; Faisal Devji, 'The Idea of Ismailism,' *Critical Muslim 10: Sects* (London: Hurst, 2014), 51-62.

community construction could hardly fail to impinge upon responses to the notion of the broader Muslim *qaumiyyat* embedded within calls for Pakistan.

Secondly, the decade preceding Pakistan's creation comprised perhaps an all-time nadir in Shi'a-Sunni relations in parts of South Asia. From the mid-1930s, Lucknow had been the site of a Shi'a-Sunni quarrel, provoked when local Sunni leaders renewed a moribund effort to carry out so-called *madh-i-sahaba* processions, in praise of the founding Khalifas, as acts of veneration on the Prophet's birthdate. The granting of this permission by the provincial administration in 1939 led to a Shi'a counter-reaction centring upon the recitation of so-called *tabarra*, or curses upon the first three Khalifas. The subsequent dramas incurred several major Shi'a-Sunni riots, the arrest of some 14,000 Shi'a activists for proscribed recitations and a general poisoning of Shi'a-Sunni relations which transcended the boundaries of locality and drew participation and comment from across the subcontinent.[10] All this happened just years before Pakistan's creation, and could hardly fail to inform Shi'a responses to it.

This chapter thus seeks to emphasize the depth and significance of anxieties among many of India's Shi'a elites regarding the creation and potential character of Pakistan. Focusing upon the emergence of a distinctive Shi'a political movement in the pre-independence decade, one focused chiefly around the All India Shi'a Political Conference, it argues that for the most part this movement opposed the Muslim League and the formation of Pakistan, with major consequences both for the ultimate meaning and nature of Pakistan's Islamic identity, and for the South Asian Shi'a on both sides of the post-1947 borders. First, though, we need to examine the Muslim League in a longer time-frame, exploring its existing relationships with the South Asian Shi'a as background to the fragmentation of its Shi'a support before independence.

The 'third option': the Muslim League as ecumenical movement

For four decades from its foundation in 1906, Shi'a intellectuals and politicians perhaps played a role in the League's development out of all proportion to their numbers as a Muslim minority. The organization's founders included the third

[10] Literature on this episode includes Sandria Freitag, *Collective Action and Community: Public Arenas and the Emergence of Communalism in India* (Berkeley: California, 1989), 249-79; Mushirul Hasan, 'Traditional rites and contested meanings'; and Jones, *Shi'a Islam in Colonial India*, 186-221.

Agha Khan, Muhammad Shah, who led the Simla Deputation that effectively marked the party's foundation.[11] The party in its early years was prominently supported by Shi'a magnates and princes such as the Nawab of Rampur and Fateh Ali Khan Qizilbash, lawyers and officials including Badr-ud-din Tyabji, Sayyid Ali Imam and Hamid Ali Khan, and administrators for the colonial and princely states, such as Sayyid Husain Bilgrami of Hyderabad.[12] The party's London branch, which was so crucial to the political clout acquired by the party, was founded and led by Ameer Ali, a former judge at the Calcutta High Court.[13] The Muslim League's Shi'a contingent was equally visible in many of the 'young party' politicians who spearheaded the organization's more activist direction during and after World War I. These included the pleader of Lucknow, Sayyid Wazir Hasan, as well as many of those who led the nominally Sunni Khilafat agitation, including brothers Muhammad and Shaukat Ali (who were half-Shi'a), Sayyid Raza Ali and Sayyid Haider Mehdi. Up until and throughout the League's revival in the 1930s-1940s, the League was both led and bankrolled by wealthy Shi'a families. These included landowning dynasties from north India like the Rajas of Mahmudabad, who were prominent as both party leaders and financiers over two generations before partition.[14] They also included trading and industrialist families from India's presidency cities, like the business tycoon Mirza Ahmad Isfahani of Calcutta. This is before even mentioning the League's most iconic politician: Muhammad Ali Jinnah, a Khoja who converted from Isma'ili to Isna 'Ashari Shi'ism in his twenties.[15]

We can also see evidence of this heavy Shi'a presence within the Muslim League from the other direction, in that the party's Sunni opponents often cast it as not a Muslim but a Shi'a-led outfit. This was particularly true for

[11] For the Agha Khan's political role in this period, see Muhammad Shah, *India in Transition: a Study in Political Evolution* (London: P.L. Warner, 1918).

[12] Biographies of these, and other Shi'a politicians, are offered in Francis Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims: the Politics of the United Provinces' Muslims* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997), 358-434.

[13] For a synopsis of scholarship on Ali, see Nandini Chatterjee, 'Law, Culture and History: Amir Ali's Interpretation of Islamic Tradition' in *Legal Histories of the British Empire: Laws, Engagements and Legacies*, eds. Shaunnagh Dorsett and John McLaren (London: Cambridge, 2014), 45-59.

[14] On the Mahmudabad family's socio-religious and political influence, see Muhammad Amir Ahmad Khan, 'Local Nodes of a Transnational Network: a Case Study of a Shi'i Family in Awadh, 1900-1950,' *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 24, no.3 (2014): 397-414.

[15] Stanley Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), 18.

the *'ulama* who, via organizations such as the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind, were frequently allied to the Congress in the 1930s-40s. Keen to portray the League as the party of *kafir*s, many found it expedient to condemn the party not just as a vehicle for aristocratic dominance, but as a crypto-Shi'a movement that threatened an organic debasement of Indian Islam. This they often did through criticism of the League's Shi'a leaders. For instance Zafar-ul-Mulk, an *'alim* closely associated with anti-Shi'a confutation, accused Jinnah of refusing to hold political engagements on the death-anniversary of Ali, writing to Jinnah in 1944: 'I know you belong to the Khoja community… but pardon me, you have no right to impute a Shia belief to Muslims.'[16] Hifz-ur Rahman Seoharvi, a senior *'alim* of the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind, comparably asked in 1945 why Jinnah should be treated as a *mufti,* and Shi'as like the Raja of Mahmudabad (let alone Ahmadis like Zafrullah Khan) revered as 'virtuous' or 'pious' (*diyanatdar*) Muslims.[17] Muhammad Sajjad Rehmatullah, a Bihari *'alim* attached to Congress and heavily critical of the Shi'a *tabarra* agitation, criticised the Muslim League by accusing it of endless mourning for the Muslim minority ('*maatam*': a term identified with Shi'a Muharram observance) rather than active engagement with contemporary political realities: a reference to long-standing polemics against the Indian Shi'a elite for their alleged obsession with lamentation and their remoteness from political action.[18] Many such allusions to the Shi'a presence within the Muslim League insinuated the theme of *taqiyya*, the concealment of Shi'a identity: while this theme was common in anti-Shi'a polemic in India, here it was intertwined with the suggestion that the party was being used a vehicle by the Shi'a for the disguised projection of their interests.

Why should Shi'as have played such a major role within the Muslim League at all stages of its existence? Their involvement can partly be attributed to the historical wealth and influence of many of the Shi'a communities from which these politicians emerged: they included the heirs of former ruling and princely elites, and many of India's most influential Muslim landlords, officials and business moguls. Yet there are perhaps other reasons why Shi'a public figures

[16] Faisal Devji, *Muslim Zion: Pakistan as a Political Idea* (Hurst: London, 2013), 217.

[17] Venkat Dhulipala, *Creating a New Medina: State Power, Islam and the Quest for Pakistan in Late Colonial North India* (New Delhi: Cambridge, 2015), 310.

[18] Ibid., 284; Sajjad Rehmatullah, *Maqalat-i-Sajjad* (Patna: Amarat-i-Shari'a, 1999), 24-27. Sunni polemic intermittently focused upon alleged Shi'a quietism in politics, perceived to result from either their obsession with mourning or from their awaiting of the absent Imam (Jones, *Shi'a Islam,* 177-78).

should have been so apparently committed to a broader 'Muslim' politics. For one, the Raj-era policy of Muslim 'special representation,' which effectively regarded Sunnis and Shi'as as part of the same political community and as separated only by quirks of religious observance, perhaps served to constrain the development of a distinctively Shi'a political voice. Since these political structures made seeking political office as an exclusively Shi'a representative a largely redundant exercise, aspiring politicians were perhaps encouraged to present themselves as 'Muslim' rather than as Shi'a leaders. Hence, as the scholar William Cantwell-Smith put it, most Shi'a leaders, including those named above, built their reputations 'in the development […] not of the Shi'ah as a group but of Islam in general […] these men have functioned not *qua* Shi'a but *qua* Muslim.'[19]

But another reason for the heavy presence of Shi'as within the League is that the organization perhaps offered a strategy for addressing the fraught status of the Shi'a as a Muslim minority, by enabling Shi'a intellectuals and politicians to participate meaningfully in the shaping of a wider Muslim polity. This is an important perspective that reverses the disregarding of sectarian distinctions evident in some earlier scholarship on Muslim politics, and that has recently been raised by Faisal Devji in his reflections on what he describes as the 'secretive if not esoteric nature of the Shia presence in Muslim League politics.' As he argues, those Shi'as who were so prominent within the Muslim League 'were largely concerned with making a space for themselves within an Islam […] dominated by Sunni groups. And in this sense the minority protection sought by the League's Shia leaders had to do with their fear of a Sunni majority as much as a Hindu one.'[20] This is a point further backed up by occasional, albeit surreptitious, references in the correspondence of some prominent Shi'a League politicians, such as Isfahani's suggestion to Jinnah in 1945 that 'the reason why the majority of the Shias and the most prominent of their leaders are active Muslim Leaguers' was that the Shi'a would, as he put it, 'suffer greatly' should division come about among Indian Muslims.[21]

As such, just as Arab or state nationalisms in the inter-war and post-independence Middle East could provide a means for Shi'as and other

[19] William Cantwell-Smith, *Modern Islam in India: a Social Analysis* (Lahore: Muhammad Ashraf, 1963), 345.

[20] Devji, *Muslim Zion*, 66-67.

[21] Hassan Ispahani to the Maharajkumar of Mahmudabad, 25 September 1945, in *Jinnah Papers Vol XI, Consolidating the Muslim League for Final Struggle*, ed. Z.H. Zaidi (Islamabad: Oxford University Press, 2005), 169-70.

communities to rescind their minority status and assimilate into wider political visions, the League's unitary Muslim *qaumiyyat* could facilitate meaningful Shi'a participation in the political destiny of India's Muslims.[22] The League's key pioneers did, indeed, frame the League as an ecumenical movement. Taking on elements of thought from colonial India's key Muslim modernists including Syed Ahmad Khan, Syed Ameer Ali and Muhammad Iqbal, who spoke of Shi'a-Sunni and other such quarrels as a source of internal 'bigotry' (*ta'asub*) consuming Muslim society,[23] later League politicians likewise presented sectarianism as a source of decay for Indian Islam. Hence, Agha Khan III referred in a major speech to 'these terrible sectarian differences' as 'one of the misfortunes of Islam,' that hindered the great causes of Muslim educational, social and spiritual advancement.[24] A later provincial League leader, 'Abdul Wahid Khan, spoke in the 1930s of sectarianism as the 'greatest sin in Islam.'[25] So, just as the concept of Indian 'communalism' emerged in Congress rhetoric as a constructed antithesis to the idea of a unitary nationalism,[26] so sectarianism was framed by League politicians as the threatening alternative to their own vision for Indian Muslim progress.

Of course, for the most part, the League's ecumenism comprised in practice a rather straightforward dismissal of the relevance of Shi'a-Sunni differences, a position that could be (and was) dismissed as 'inadvertently sectarian' by the party's critics.[27] Yet, at other points, party leaders did speak of the League as a proactive movement that engaged intimately with building Shi'a-Sunni unity. As long-term League stalwart and president Syed Reza Ali would put it at a moment of heightened Shi'a-Sunni tensions in 1939, the League could represent

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[22] C.f. 'Shias embraced Arab nationalism, Pakistani nationalism and Iraqi and Lebanese nationalism, in each case imagining a community where Shia-Sunni divisions would not matter. The modern world, at least in its nationalist guise, held the promise of ending centuries of prejudice and persecution.' Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *The Shia Revival: How Conflicts Within Islam Will Shape the Future* (New York: Norton, 2006), 86-7.

[23] Jones, *Shi'a Islam,* 24-6.

[24] Address to All India Muslim Educational Conference, 1902, in *Aga Khan III: Select Speeches and Writings of Sultan Muhammad Shah*, ed. K.K. Aziz (London: Keegan Paul International, 1998), Vol I, 204-15.

[25] *The Pioneer* (Lucknow), 13 June 1939, Quaid-i-Azam Collection, Neg. 10773, Oriental and India Office Collections, London (OIOC).

[26] Gyanandra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006), 233-61.

[27] Devji, *Muslim Zion,* 66.

a unitary 'third option' to the opposing sides of sectarian partisanship, and should act as arbiter between Shi'a and Sunni when necessary.[28] Even Jinnah, a figure prone to dismissing sectarian disputes as petty irrelevances, made a similar point in the early 1940s, assuring Shi'a political leaders that 'the League is […] able to enforce justice and fair play between Mussalman and Mussalman whatever be his sect or section.'[29] Throughout the pre-independence decade, the League's campaign imagery was replete with symbols of ecumenical intent. Party activists during the election campaigns of 1945-6, for instance, commonly evoked Husain, the third Imam, as a model for the League movement. Comparing the Muslim struggle for freedom from Hindu India with Husain's struggle for the 'Muslim nation' on the plains of Karbala, they called upon Husain as a model for all Muslims and evoked his moral strength as inspiration for the development of Pakistan.[30]

Thus, by the 1940s, the Muslim League's 'Pakistan' project had the potential to represent the culmination of its ecumenical vision: a progressive and post-sectarian Islamic reality. Crucial to such interpretations, of course, is the acceptance of the idea that Pakistan represented for its founders and supporters not, as older studies had it, simply a constitutional necessity or a product of political machinations.[31] Rather, as several important recent studies have demonstrated, the idea of Pakistan was something that had deep imaginative and ideological underpinnings: it came to express bold visions for new kinds of utopian politics that could provide a future model for the whole Islamic world.[32] Were Pakistan thus to break so fully with all the traumas of the Islamic past, supporters might have asked in the 1940s, why should this new Islamic polity not equally be able to heal the historic wounds of Muslim sectarianism? And why, we may ask in turn, was the League ultimately so unable to convince many Shi'as of its ability to realize this ecumenical vision?

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[28] Syed Raza Ali to Jinnah, 19 June 1939, Quaid-i-Azam Collection.

[29] Jinnah to the Maharajkumar of Mahmudabad, 8 April 1940, quoted in Rieck, *The Shias of Pakistan*, 42-43.

[30] *Dawn* (Lahore), 16, 19, and 21 December 1945, CSAS.

[31] The classic example of such a perspective is Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman*.

[32] Scholars have recently argued that 'Pakistan' could be framed as, respectively, an ideational state which broke from the assumptions of liberal nationalism (Devji, *Muslim Zion*); a 'new Medina' which drew from Islamic imagery and would act as the harbinger of global Islamic renewal (Dhulipala, *Creating a New Medina*); and an expression of regional vernacular and literary traditions authenticated within a new political paradigm (Neilesh Bose, '*Purba Pakistan Zindabad*: Bengali Visions of Pakistan, 1940-1947,' *Modern Asian Studies* 48, no.1 (2014), 1-36).

The *ashraf* as *achhut*s: framing a Shi'a political voice

The revival of the Muslim League in the 1930s-40s was accompanied by parallel attempts at the construction of a separate Shi'a political movement, which usually presented itself as being distinct from, or even opposed to, the League's political project. In truth, the making of separate Shi'a political identities had longer roots in colonial India. Through the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, divergent Twelver Shi'a perspectives had been formulated towards key 'Muslim' political questions. An All India Shi'a Conference had been set up in 1907 within a year of the Muslim League, and despite its claims to being non-political in nature, it was widely perceived as challenging the League's claims to be the sole Muslim representative organization, by organizing its own deputations to government. Over the next two decades, Shi'a community leaders framed separate community responses to the Aligarh, Khilafat and non-cooperation movements, all of which further entrenched the sense of a separate Shi'a political entity.[33]

While most of these issue-based mobilizations connected only passingly with explicit political party affiliation, it was another political question that chiefly fostered Shi'a suspicions towards the Muslim League itself as a political body: that of political representation, and more specifically, the issue of whether Shi'as could secure a political voice within a system of separate Muslim electorates. With the sacrosanct notion of Muslim special representation being the closest thing that the League had to a coherent vision throughout its political life, these fears were increasingly projected at the League directly. Perceptions that Shi'a candidates faced religious discrimination during elections to public office had a long back-story in colonial India. Complaints of anti-Shi'a propaganda and electoral malpractice had surfaced during elections to Muslim seats on certain Municipal Boards as created from the 1880s.[34] Thereafter, these complaints tended to widen and louden in conjunction with the expansion of electoral arenas, including after the creation of Legislative Councils in 1909, and particularly after the creation of Provincial Legislative Assemblies in 1919. By the mid-1920s, the influential Shi'a newspaper *Sarfaraz* (founded in 1925) was arguing that 'Shias are unable to succeed at elections owing to the selfishness and bias of the Sunni majority' and that 'Shia-Sunni propaganda

[33] For more detail, see Jones, *Shi'a Islam*, 186-221.

[34] Christopher Bayly, *The Local Roots of Indian Politics: Allahabad 1880–1920* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2009), 81.

is so mercilessly pursued that Shia candidates now hardly dare to stand for election, being sure of defeat.'[35]

These grievances over political representation prompted the rise of an organization known as the All India Shi'a Political Conference. Originally the creation of several Shi'a landowners and lawyers chiefly from UP in 1929,[36] it was mostly likely an attempt to establish a voice within a recent surge of constitutional discussions, such as those centring around the Simon Commission proceedings (1928-30), Congress's Nehru Report (1928) and Jinnah's Fourteen Points (1929). From its foundation, eyeing consideration in discussions on India's constitutional future, the Conference's chief policy was the repudiation of the notion of a singular Muslim block in politics. Arguing that Shi'as faced political annihilation within a separate Muslim electorate, it instead formulated a policy of a 'joint electorate [with] separate seats for Hindus and Muslims,' indicating a system of reserved seats with, it was sometimes implied, certain 'Muslim' seats being reserved in turn for purely Shi'a candidates.[37] This faith in a joint electorate naturally steered the organization away from a Muslim League that was increasingly wedded to separate Muslim representation, and drew the organization closer to Congress through the 1930s.

It is tempting to compare the Shi'a Political Conference to the Muslim League in various ways. Both defined their communities in political terms. Both articulated a comparable and rather colonial-inspired vision of Indian society as riven with intractable community divisions, which demanded political arbitration by a neutral state. This said, the Conference's strategy differed in important ways. The actual policy to which it wedded itself – that of joint electorates with the reservation of seats – resembled far more closely that which had been formulated for the political scheduling of the low castes, especially under the Poona Pact agreed by Gandhi and Bhimrao Ambedkar in 1932.[38] This was, in fact, just one of several moments in the late-colonial decades

[35] *Sarfaraz* (Lucknow), 20 February and 27 November 1926, United Provinces Native Newspaper Reports (UPNNR), CSAS.

[36] It was founded by Thakur Nawab Ali, a *ta'luqdar* of Akbarpur in UP, and Syed Kalbe Abbas, a pleader from Ja'is, Rae Bareilly, as well as Ali Ghazanfar of Punjab. Syed Kazim Zaheer, ed., *The Memoirs of Syed Ali Zaheer* (New Delhi: Frank Bros, 2004), 19-20; Laljee, *Shia Muslims' Case,* 47.

[37] Zaheer, ed., *The Memoirs of Ali Zaheer,* 19-20.

[38] For details, see Christophe Jaffrelot, *India's Silent Revolution: the Rise of the Low Castes in North Indian Politics* (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2003), 23-25.

when Indian Shi'as would seek political comparison, and sometimes even collaboration, with India's untouchables (*achhut*s) as a fellow victimized minority. Some Shi'a '*ulama* in recent times had visibly supported campaigns against the ritual discriminations endured by untouchables, while others had sanctioned the invocation of Imam Husain as a model for low-caste emancipation.[39] Shi'a politicians similarly drew parallels with India's dalits, both comparing Sunni 'intolerance' of Shi'as with that of Hindus towards untouchables,[40] and arguing that 'the way in which the Achhuts got rid of the yoke of their majority and safeguarded their rights […] have been carefully observed by the Shias.'[41] This self-comparison with the so-called 'depressed classes' was perhaps somewhat ironic, given how Shi'a community formation in South Asia had so often emphasized their status as members of the high-born Muslim *ashraf* (nobility). Nevertheless, it also illustrates the ability of the Indian Shi'a to communicate their predicament through multiple motifs. While Shi'a politicians in late-colonial India did often evoke the martyrdom of Husain and 1300 years of Sunni oppression in their justification for contemporary political safeguards, they were equally inclined to seek sympathy by framing their plight within an Indian setting, comparing the status of Shi'as within Muslim society to that of untouchables within Brahminical Hinduism.

While the Conference held a few meetings of limited impact in its early years, its stance of opposition to the Muslim League was powerfully consolidated in the aftermath of two episodes in the later 1930s. The first of these was the crucial 1937 elections to provincial Legislative Assemblies. For one, Shi'a candidates were perceived to have suffered at the hands of Muslim League misdemeanours in several districts. The League was accused simultaneously of fielding insufficient numbers of Shi'a candidates, and of providing inadequate support to those Shi'a candidates that it did select against sectarian rhetoric. Even worse, allegations emerged that in certain seats, including in cities of elevated Shi'a-Sunni tension like Lucknow, party leaders had deliberately inflamed sectarian

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[39] Jones, *Shi'a Islam*, 66; 'Shi'ism, Humanity and Revolution in Twentieth-Century India: Selfhood and Politics in the Husainology of Ali Naqi Naqvi,' *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 24, no.3 (2014): 426.

[40] *Sarfaraz* (Lucknow), 27 November 1926.

[41] *The Moonlight,* 27 October 1945, L/PJ/8/693, OIOC; c.f. William Gould, 'The UP, Congress, and "Hindu unity": Untouchables and the Minority Question in the 1930s,' *Modern Asian Studies* 39, no.4 (2005), 858-59.

issues in order to garner support from Sunni voters.[42] Yet just as important was a wider context of breach in Indian politics. After the 1937 provincial elections in the political heartland state of the United Provinces, a victorious Congress reneged on its earlier intimations at the forming of a post-election coalition with the Muslim League. Following this breakdown in what one Shi'a politician called the 'tacit understanding' between the two parties, nationalist Muslim politicians often found themselves forced to choose an explicit party allegiance.[43] This applied to the current Shi'a Political Conference President, Syed Wazir Hasan, a former Chief Justice of Awadh, and best known as an architect of the 1916 entente between the Congress and the Muslim League. Following the aforementioned allegations of League misdeeds against the Shi'a, he used his presidential address at the Shi'a Political Conference's consequential annual meeting of 1937 to trace the history of the League at length, claiming that the body had never treated the Shi'a honestly and had thus forced them towards the Congress. He successfully tabled resolutions declaring that the League 'could not be said to represent a majority of the Mussalmans in any province,' and asking the Congress to treat the League as a 'non-representative body.'[44] With Hasan criticising the Muslim League for its dangerous policy of separate representation, and even (unsuccessfully) asking Shi'a *'ulama* to issue *fatwa*s in support of the Congress,[45] the saga led to the expulsion of Wazir Hasan from the Muslim League. His son, the barrister Ali Zaheer, would thereafter desert the League in favour of Congress, and would himself become the Shi'a Political Conference's most influential politician throughout the 1940s.[46]

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[42] In Lucknow, attention fell particularly upon the city's key League politician, Choudhry Khaliquzzaman, who was accused of exercising a 'pernicious influence' by publicly supporting a Sunni *madh-i-sahaba* procession in attempt to win Sunni support. Haig to Linlithgow, 7 June 1937, L/PJ/5/264. OIOC.

[43] Zaheer, ed., *The Memoirs of Ali Zaheer,* 14. For a wider account of this episode, see Choudhry Khaliquzzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan* (Lahore: Longmans, 1961), 152-88.

[44] *Indian Annual Register: July – December 1937* (Calcutta: Indian Annual Register Office, 1938), 415-16; *The Leader,* 13 October 1937, CSAS.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Zaheer would later narrate his own political autobiography as encapsulating his community's predicament. He argued that his Shi'ism had been raised against him during his candidacy in municipal elections in 1929, in the Legislative Assembly elections of 1937, and the Legislative Council elections of 1945-46, and that he lost these elections through being targeted as *rafiz* (heretic) by political opponents. Zaheer, ed., *The Memoirs of Syed Ali Zaheer,* 12-15. As he would write in a letter to Jinnah in

The second episode that fostered Shi'a antipathy towards the League was the party's perceived disregard for Shi'a sensitivities during the *madh-i-sahaba* and *tabarra* agitations in Lucknow.[47] Jinnah was personally and frequently petitioned to intervene by all sides, whether by a large hunk of the Muslim League's local-level support which was sympathetic to the Sunni cause,[48] or by Shi'a Leaguers who urged Jinnah to prove the League's concern by assuming a role as arbitrator.[49] Yet, Jinnah and other Leaguers appeared very aware of the dispute's implications for the party's fundamental tenet of Muslim unity, and appeared 'so nervous about their own organization being disrupted by this controversy that they [took] no line at all.'[50] Jinnah's stubborn stance of non-involvement in both the conflict itself and in attempts to resolve it may have been born of pragmatism, yet his attitude towards this complex controversy was met with frustration from within the party and scorn from outside it. As one newspaper put it, the Muslim League 'was supposed to be the custodian of every section of Muslims [but] has shown itself to be incapable of reconciling their differences. […] If the Muslim League cannot extinguish the present conflagration in Lucknow, with what right can they claim to speak […] as representatives of Muslim India?'[51]

Perceptions of the League's electoral mistreatment of the Shi'a, together with its aloof response at the height of the Shi'a *tabarra* movement, resulted in the erosion of trust within the Shi'a community. In 1939 Nasir Husain Kintori, perhaps India's most influential Shi'a cleric and the *mujtahid* with the most widely accepted status as *marja'-i-taqlid* (source of emulation for all Shi'as),

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1944: 'during the election for Muslim seats, it is a very common experience […] to find that appeal is made to the religious fanaticism of the majority of voters, and a Shia is defeated merely because he is a Shia.' *Indian Annual Register: July – December 1944* (1945), 230-31.

47 The League's bungled response to this dispute is discussed in detail in Venkat Dhulipala, 'Rallying the Qaum: the Muslim League in the United Provinces, 1937-1939,' *Modern Asian Studies* 44, no.3 (2010), 621-40.

48 Jinnah received numerous petitions from within his party to back the Sunni cause in Lucknow, contained in Quaid-i-Azam Collection, Neg. 10773. In districts such as Barabanki, prominent Leaguers had to step in to prevent district committees passing resolutions in support of Sunni demands.

49 Some Shi'a Leaguers criticised the party's 'quiet, aloof and "don't interfere" policy' and urged the party's intervention. Syed Shibli Ali and Shi'a members of the Allahabad district Muslim League to Liaquat Ali Khan, 15 April 1939, Quaid-i-Azam Collection.

50 Haig to Linlithgow, 9 May 1939, L/PJ/5/267.

51 *The Pioneer,* 15 June 1939, Quaid-i-Azam Collection.

even issued an edict advising all Shi'as to break links with the Muslim League. The move was said to be 'far-reaching in effect' and prompted many other Shi'a '*ulama* to denounce the organization.[52] At its session at the end of 1939, the Shi'a Political Conference declared that 'as a sect [the Shi'a] have never considered the Muslim League to be their representative' and that 'the Muslim League […] has always trampled upon the feelings and susceptibilities of the Shi'a minority.'[53] These perceptions of the League as a Sunni-dominated or even openly sectarian organization, palpably controverting the party's efforts to present itself as harbinger of a new Islamic ecumenism, were thus powerfully consolidated just months before the League's launch of a flagship new agenda.

From 'path of the Prophet' to 'way of the Caliphs': Shi'a portents of Pakistan

Much has been written on the ambiguity of Jinnah's 'Pakistan' demand as embodied in the Lahore Resolution of 1940, which has been variously interpreted as either an unintended consequence of contradictory political pressures within the League, or as a deliberate ploy to allow the maximum flexibility of strategy and widest possible base of support.[54] Either way, many Shi'as voiced deep nervousness about the idea of Pakistan from the outset, with the lack of clarity surrounding the proposal prompting a number of Shi'a political leaders to raise concerns regarding the League's intentions and the bearings of their proposal upon the Shi'a.

Some of these concerns related to the needs for religious and political safeguards for Pakistan's Shi'a residents in the face of the state's likely Sunni majority, and these were initially projected as challenges for the League itself to delineate. The Shi'a newspaper *Sarfaraz,* which took a broadly nationalist line in its commentary, greeted the initial demand quizzically, complaining that Shi'a requirements had not been specifically taken into account.[55] Within a week of the Lahore Resolution, Amir Haider Khan, the Maharajkumar of Mahmudabad (brother of the League-supporting Raja), wrote privately to Jinnah, asking him to further elaborate upon the Resolution's promise of

[52] Mariaj Husain to Jinnah, 10 April 1939, ibid.; *National Herald,* 11 April 1939.
[53] *Indian Annual Register, July to December 1939* (1940), 355.
[54] Most influentially, Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman*.
[55] *Sarfaraz* (Lucknow), 28 March 1940, Nehru Memorial Library, Delhi (NML).

'adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards' for Pakistan's minorities. In order that Shi'as could support Pakistan, he demanded, guarantees should be put in place for Shi'a representation in elected bodies, freedom of belief and practice and preservation of Shi'a personal laws in case of any moves towards a Hanafi legal polity. Walking political tightropes on various fronts, Jinnah was willing to give little ground: he offered vague assurances of the future protection of Shi'a rights, advising that the Maharajkumar's 'direction […] is not likely to benefit the Shias' and that 'the proper policy for the Shias is to join the League wholeheartedly.'[56]

With the League high command juggling various competing demands, the party proved entirely unwilling to recognize Shi'a calls for safeguards over subsequent years, heightening its estrangement from the Shi'a political movement. In 1944, as president of the Shi'a Political Conference, Ali Zaheer again attempted to engage the issue. Writing publicly to Jinnah, he challenged him to 'elucidate and define the status of the Shias in the scheme of Pakistan,' and demanded the elaboration of measures to protect freedom of religious observance, curb anti-Shi'a propaganda during elections and ensure Shi'a representation in politics. Jinnah's reply was abrupt and non-committal. Declaring himself 'confident that the majority of Shias are with the Muslim League,' he informed Zaheer that 'there is no need for the Shias to think that they will not be justly treated' by the party and argued that 'it is a great disservice to the Muslim cause to create any kind of division between the Mussalmans of India.'[57] Comparable to the Congress's frequent argument that 'communal' questions could be best addressed after India's independence, Jinnah adhered to a line that Shi'a-Sunni issues were ones to be resolved internally following Pakistan's creation.

Many Shi'as proved anxious about the Pakistan demand not only for the absence of precise safeguards, but the equal imprecision of the future state's 'Islamic' identity. As recent work has emphasized, regardless of Jinnah's own secularist instincts or the minutiae of constitutional negotiations, Pakistan was commonly evoked in the Muslim public sphere as a new (albeit imprecise) Islamic order, a utopian 'new Medina,' throughout the 1940s.[58] Once again,

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[56] Quoted in Rieck, *The Shias of Pakistan*, 42-43. This correspondence was only made public some years later.

[57] *Indian Annual Register: July to December 1944* (1945), 230-32.

[58] Dhulipala, *Creating a New Medina*.

however, the actual substance behind the rhetoric had been only thinly sketched by the party leadership. Of course, it is important to remember that, in these years before the Mawdudi-influenced notion of the *daulat-i-Islamiya* (Islamic regime) or the Shi'a political concept of *wilayat-ul-faqih* (governance of the jurist) had been fully elaborated, the nebulous idea of an 'Islamic' state was not necessarily one of specifically Sunni incantation. Hence, rhetoric by League supporters of Pakistan as 'God's government' (*hukumat-i-ilahiya*), or of the new nation as being established according to 'the path of the Prophet' (*minhaj-un-nubuwwat*), seemed able to garner some Shi'a support. In fact, perhaps echoing the argument above that some Shi'as within the Muslim League were actually inclined to look to Pakistan as a model for a new kind of post-sectarian Islamic reality within which Shi'as would play a full role, sometimes it was actually Shi'a Leaguers who were most willing to engage ideas of an Islamic Pakistan.

Perhaps the most senior League politician to do so, the Raja of Mahmudabad would later reflect upon his 'coming under the influence' of the idea of an Islamic state.[59] Speaking to the Bombay Provincial Muslim League soon after the Lahore Resolution of 1940, he argued that Pakistan would be 'a laboratory wherein we may experiment in peace, the greatest experiment that was ever tried: re-establish[ing] the government of Islam.' He continued: 'the creation of an Islamic state […] I say Islamic, not Muslim, is our ideal.'[60] The Raja's speech, replete with themes of historical teleology and Islam's self-actualisation within a 'democratic-theocratic State,' was more than anything resonant of Iqbal's famed evocation of 'Muslim India' a decade earlier, as well as the Islamist notion of Pakistan as the vanguard of a global Islamic revolutionism. Referring to the 'beneficent' nature of this state, he alluded to Islam's historic acceptance of religious minorities and the ability of an Islamic Pakistan to accommodate Islam's denominational and legal pluralities.[61]

However, within a couple of years, Shi'as increasingly began to express anxiety over the transmutation of Pakistan's inclusive 'Islamic' identity into one that was ever more frequently framed according to Sunni particulars. This shift seemed to be prompted by the entry of a larger body of Hanafi *'ulama* into the Pakistan movement, through affiliated organizations such as the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Islam;

[59] Raja of Mahmudabad, 'Some Memories,' in *India's Partition: Process, Strategy and Mobilisation*, ed. Mushirul Hasan (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993), 425.

[60] Speech to the Bombay Provincial Muslim League, 24 May 1940, quoted in Dhulipala, *Creating a New Medina,* 210.

[61] Ibid., 209-17.

many were from the orthodox *Dar ul-'Ulum* at Deoband and heavily associated with anti-Shi'a confutation. While the hitherto most influential *'alim* attached to the Muslim League, Ashraf Ali Thanawi, had been careful not to undermine the party by criticizing the Shi'a in political arenas, this was less so for several *'ulama* who ascended to greater prominence within the League after Thanawi's death in 1943. Some of these, perhaps seeking to assert their sustained custody of Islamic tradition in the face of challenges from lay religio-political organizations like the Jama'at-i-Islami, began to demand the modelling of Pakistan's law and constitution not, as before, according to the rather indefinite and conjectural notion of the path of the Prophet, but upon the specific strictures of Hanafi *fiqh*. The more accommodative language of the *hukumat-i-ilahi* and *minhaj-un-nabuwwat* was thereby increasingly supplanted with talk of the Sunni Khalifas' rule as a basis for modelling Pakistan.[62] Several League-affiliated *'ulama*, among them Shabbir Ahmad Usmani and Syed Nazir al-Haqq, called during the 1945 election campaigns for the construction of Pakistan's law and constitution upon the *Khulafa-i-Rashidun*: the rule of the original rightful Khalifas.[63] Even more ominous were remarks in the League-affiliated press, even English-language newspapers such as *Dawn,* of Pakistan being guided by the *sirat-i-Shaikhen* (the way of the first two Khalifas); these were latched onto by Shi'a *'ulama* especially as evidence of the League's Sunni instincts.[64]

Indeed, these interventions of Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, perhaps the League's most influential clerical supporter, often seemed particularly threatening. In 1945, when questioned on how supporting the Muslim League could be permissible when it was dominated by *kafir*s (unbelievers), he argued in a *fatwa* that classical jurists had deemed Muslim alliance with the *khawarij* ('secessionists,' a term used frequently in later anti-Shi'a polemic) to be legitimate, if they were engaged in a common struggle against the polytheists (*mushrikun*). As such, a temporary alliance with the 'false sect' (*firqah-i-batila*) of the Muslim League was permissible.[65] Such lines of argument, tacitly alluding

[62] This was powerfully expressed in Maharajkumar of Mahmudabad to Hosseinbhoy Laljee, 16 September 1945, in Laljee, *Shia Muslims' Case*, 22.

[63] Syed Kalbe Abbas, 'Further statement of All Parties Shia Conference,' in ibid., 39. These ideas were allegedly even moved at the All-India Muslim League's 1945 session and had to be blocked by Jinnah.

[64] 'Presidential address of the reception committee,' Naseerul Millat Maulana Syed Mohammad Naseer, *The Moonlight,* 27 October 1945, L/PJ/8/693.

[65] Fuchs, 'Relocating the Centers of Shi'i Islam,' 49-50; Dhulipala, *Creating a New Medina*, 367-68.

to contemporary sectarian discourse, perhaps instilled little confidence among Shi'as, and portended later attempts at the 'Sunnification' of Pakistan by sections of the Deobandi establishment after the state's creation. Worries deriving from this rhetoric at the height of the Pakistan movement were also supplemented by the behaviour of League activists, which sometimes carried affronts to Shi'a sensibilities. One commentator writing in Calcutta condemned the conversion of the sacrosanct and mournful *ta'ziya* processions of Muharram into lurid political victory rallies by League supporters, something that was offensive both for its political misuse of sacred commemorations and for the Sunni intimations of observing Muharram in tones of valour and celebration.[66] Given this suffusion of Sunni motifs into League political campaigns, the attempts of other Leaguers to uphold a broader ecumenism appeared largely futile.

Witnessing developments such as these even prompted the Raja of Mahmudabad to renege on his earlier support for the League's notion of an 'Islamic state.' Corresponding with Jinnah in 1945-6, he asserted that the League-affiliated Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Islam was 'purely a theo-political [organization] and its doors are closed against all others who do not happen to be Sunnis,' and asking in consequence for confirmation that 'the government of Pakistan will be on democratic lines.'[67] Equally significantly, these tones within the Pakistan campaigns served to turn many of India's most prominent Shi'a *'ulama* publicly against the Muslim League. While the Shi'a perhaps lacked an *'alim* who built a political career as powerfully as, say, nationalist Sunni luminaries such as Abul Kalam Azad or Husain Ahmad Madani, scholars from within the Shi'a clerical hierarchy commonly denounced the League. In July 1945 the figureheads of one of India's most influential Shi'a clerical families, Muhammad Naseer and Muhammad Said, convened a *majlis* (council) of *'ulama* at their home which castigated the Muslim League as 'almost entirely a Sunni organisation' and declared support for the Shi'a Political Conference.[68] Similar opposition to the League came from one of India's other great scholarly families: the so-called Khandan-i-Ijtihad of Lucknow. While its renowned figurehead and *mujtahid* Ali Naqi Naqvi was disinclined to proffer explicitly political opinions regarding the Muslim League,[69] he also throughout the 1940s lauded

[66] 'Statement by Syed Zahirul Hasan Rizvi,' *National Herald,* 17 January 1946.

[67] Mahmudabad to Jinnah, 5 July 1946 and 3 December 1945, quoted in Dhulipala, *Creating a New Medina,* 446.

[68] Laljee, *Shia Muslims' Case,* 11-12. This family remained very close to Congress after independence.

[69] Rieck, *The Shias of Pakistan*, 46.

Imam Husain as a cross-confessional icon of a unitary nationalism in a way that was linked implicitly to the Congress cause.[70] Since independence, this family has called upon its opposition to the Pakistan movement as a marker of its nationalist conscience and loyalty to India.

Given the argument made above that, even during the 1940s, many senior League politicians strove to emphasize the ecumenism of the League's vision, why was it instead this alternative and particularistic 'Sunni' vision that ultimately came to dominate the perceptions of many Shi'as? One reason may be gleaned from *Sarfaraz* which, despite having earlier praised Jinnah's leadership of the Muslim League for its 'progressive' character, began to turn against the League during the 1940s for its insensitivity to Shi'a anxieties and its failure to rein in the more sectarian elements within its organization. 'Won't this be a system of government and society which is exclusively built on the Sunni point of view?' asked one issue; it then insinuated that a future Pakistan could have no commanding leader, in the vein of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk or Reza Shah Pahlavi, with the authority to 'impose open-mindedness and moderation (*azad khayal aur ravadari par majboor kar-de*)' upon the majority.[71] This in fact raises an important point about the organization of the Muslim League, a party which has often been caricatured in scholarship as a pliant entity under the autocratic grasp of Jinnah, in contrast to the broad-based umbrella movement of Congress. It was, it seems, neither the Shi'a secularist Jinnah nor the party's high command whom Shi'as most heavily mistrusted. Rather they doubted that Jinnah, unlike the other Muslim stalwarts of authoritarian secularism with whom they contrasted him, held the authority and command to maintain discipline across the party's fragile spectrum of support. It was largely the League's lack of control over its more sectarian elements that brewed Shi'a mistrust, and fed into declarations such as this by the Tanzim-ul-Momineen, an influential Shi'a religio-political organization, two years before Pakistan's creation: 'the Shia community has no confidence in the Muslim League. […] There are very few Shias in the Muslim League all over India [and] it is dominated by Sunni Musalmans. The League is bent upon establish[ing] Shariat rule, and this under no circumstances can be tolerated by the Shia community.'[72]

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[70] Jones, 'Shi'ism, Humanity and Revolution': 424-29. One of the founders and figureheads of the Shi'a Political Conference, the pleader Kalbe 'Abbas, was another family member.

[71] Fuchs, 'Relocating the Centers of Shi'i Islam,' 55-57.

[72] Laljee, *Shia Muslims' Case,* 56.

All parties and none: Shi'a endgames

As the endgame of the Raj approached, the Shi'a Political Conference pursued strategies on several fronts. It continued to profess support for Congress, along with a policy of a joint electorate with certain community reservations. Simultaneously, it persisted in pressuring the Muslim League into clearly outlining Shi'a safeguards. It also conspired to place its most senior members as electoral challengers to the Muslim League's own galacticos in the upcoming 1945-6 elections: Hosseinbhoy Laljee, one of its key figures, would stand against Jinnah for election in Bombay to the Central Legislative Council, while Ali Zaheer was to challenge Khaliquzzaman in Lucknow for election to the UP Legislative Council. These moves were doubtless more symbolic than substantive, but sought to 'emphasize our separate identity and policy' as well as provide a focus for other Muslim opponents of the League.[73]

To consolidate all these initiatives and present a coherent Indian Shi'a voice, Shi'a Political Conference leaders organized a large convention termed the All Parties Shi'a Conference. Chaired by Laljee, it assembled some 700 representatives of Shi'a *anjuman*s (organizations) from across the subcontinent when it convened in Lucknow in October 1945. With the creation of some form of Pakistan now looking probable, the event sought the attentions of, at once, the Raj, the Congress and elements within the Muslim League. Seeking sympathy for their plight, its speakers applied a range of historical metaphors, not just outlining the injustices suffered by the Shi'a under Sunni Khalifas but also comparing themselves with other subjugated peoples, including Indian untouchables, Egyptian Copts and (with a possible eye on British public opinion) Irish Protestants. Equally, Laljee and others sought persuasive influence by stressing the community's importance, through two perhaps contradictory strategies. One, reflecting a widespread tendency in Indian communal politics throughout the 1940s, was the adoption of some inventive number-crunching in order to maximise the Shi'a population's numbers. Putting to one side any distinctions between Twelver, Isma'ili, Bohra and others, the Conference flagrantly disregarded the boundaries along which Indian Shi'a community formation had historically occurred, and thereby freshly evoked a large and coherent community in the range of 30 million: around one third of Indian Muslims.[74] Simultaneously, however, the Shi'a political movement also asserted

[73] Zaheer, ed., *The Memoirs of Ali Zaheer,* 20.

[74] E.g. Syed Kalbe Abbas, 'Further statement of All Parties Shia Conference,' in Laljee, *Shia Muslims' Case*, 46.

its case on the grounds of the community's alleged historical importance. Just as earlier Muslim political leaders had argued their case to the British by invoking the status of the Muslims as India's natural rulers,[75] so Conference politicians flagged the former Shi'a royal elites of Bengal, Awadh, Sindh and the Deccan, and listed the heavy numbers of Shi'as among the Indian princes, landowners, aristocrats, industrialists, lawyers and judges that had upheld the colonial administration.[76] They even sought to augment this significance by looking beyond India's shores to Indian diasporas, emphasizing the presence of Indian-origin Shi'as in the Persian Gulf, East Africa and Burma, whose 'world-wide trade activities' had 'help[ed] in the establishment of British connections there.'[77] It was an argument that invoked the formation of specific Shi'a communities like the Nizari Isma'ilis within the framework of the expansion of British imperialism in the Indian Ocean meridian, while extrapolating this framework onto the Shi'a more broadly.[78]

Ultimately, however, the Shi'a Political Conference's efforts met with failure. The All Parties Conference failed to secure a meaningful response from the Muslim League, while neither the colonial state nor Congress proved willing to countenance Shi'a demands. While Conference candidates standing in the 1945-6 elections claimed to have led 'an at least sizeable section' of Shi'as, and collected a large proportion of Shi'a votes in the few seats that they contested

[75] E.g. the leaders of the Muslim League's founding Simla Deputation of 1906 presented themselves as 'Nobles, Jagirdars, Talukdars, Lawyers, Zemindars [and] Merchants' and urged that the political representation of Muslims 'be commensurate not merely with their numerical strength, but also with their political importance […] giv[ing] due consideration to the position which they occupied in India a little more than a hundred years ago.' 'Address presented by the Mohammedan Deputation to Lord Minto, 1 October 1906,' in *Foundations of Pakistan: All-India Muslim League Documents 1906*-1947, ed. Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada (Karachi: National Publishing House, 1990), 95-96.

[76] Simultaneously, like the Muslim League itself, they sought to argue the importance of the Shi'a to imperial rule, citing, for existence, the heavy contributions of Shi'a soldiery to the war effort, and the community's preponderance in government professions. E.g. Syed Kalbe Abbas, 'Further statement of All Parties Shia Conference,' in Laljee, *Shia Muslims' Case*, 43-48.

[77] Ibid., 46.

[78] On the close relationship between Isma'ili organizational identity and the expansion of British imperialism across the Indian Ocean world, see Marc van Grondelle, *The Ismailis in the Colonial Era: Modernity, Empire and Islam* (London: Hurst, 2009).

directly,[79] the Conference secured no outright victories. Its subsequent efforts in 1946 to secure a Shi'a voice within the Cabinet Mission discussions were similarly dismissed.[80] As such, the Conference's 'Shi'a case' became virtually inaudible on the eve of the creation of Pakistan.

Why, despite its 'all-party' claims and long-standing self-comparison with 'organized' Indian minorities such as Scheduled Castes, was the attempt to mobilize a coherent Shi'a political front such a palpable failure? Much of the limitation came from the unwillingness of the key participants in the constitutional discussions of India's future, all of whom found themselves under high negotiating pressures, to acknowledge the validity or significance of Shi'a demands for consideration. The comment of one colonial official in 1946 encapsulated perfectly the British government's attitude to the question of Shi'a representation: 'We can't contemplate treating a religious sub-division of Muslims as a new minority,' he suggested, continuing that Shi'as must 'sink their fortunes with the Sunnis and be treated as Muslims.'[81] 'No action required, I think,' claimed another, 'We have had a number of representations in the past […] but no good reason has been seen for taking the[ir] claim seriously. We can't give them special help.'[82] Major Congress politicians proved equally unwilling to take up the Shi'a predicament in any detail. Laljee and Zaheer's petitions incurred polite dismissals from, among others, Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Abul Kalam Azad and others in their calls for political consideration.[83]

Further reasons related to the fragmented regional presence of the Shi'a Political Conference. Regardless of its 'All India' ambitions, the organization was confined to particular pockets of influence and remained weak in critical provinces. Punjab's provincial branch of the Shi'a Political Conference, for instance, was a largely independent organization only tenuously linked to the All-India organization; and perhaps on account of its internal dominance by major Shi'a landowners, or the irrelevance of Congress in Punjab's politics, it threw itself wholeheartedly behind the Muslim League in defiance of its

[79] Zaheer, ed., *The Memoirs of Ali Zaheer*, 23.

[80] For threats of Shi'a strikes and boycotts if their case was not considered during the Cabinet Mission, see the telegrams sent by Zaheer ul-Hasan Rizvi of the Shi'a Students' Federation to various levels of the British administration, including the Viceroy, Secretary of State and Prime Minister. L/PJ/10/64, OIOC.

[81] Telegram, 16 December 1946, ibid.

[82] Note by Turnbull, 1 August 1946, ibid.

[83] Laljee, *Shia Muslims' Case,* 62-64.

parent organization.[84] In practice, the Shi'a Political Conference thus remained strongest within a few key regions; indeed, its critics elsewhere in India even described it as an attempt by a Lucknowi Shi'a elite to style themselves as representatives of the national community.[85] Indeed, one might argue that the Shi'a populations of those places in which the Conference had meaningful presence, such as UP, Bihar, Bombay and Calcutta, were all ones with a pre-existing sense of their own exclusive identity, grounded in distinguished ancestry, sustained endogamy and self-consciousness as historical elites, whether landed *ashraf* or maritime traders. In other regions, the Shi'a political movement remained far weaker.

Social and political differences among the Shi'a provided an equal set of obstacles. With the Muslim League renowned for securing support from a range of India's most powerful Muslim landlords, princes and magnates over several generations, many of whom remained committed to the party for the influence that it held at the political centre, the League continued to garner loyalty from many of the most influential figures in Indian Shi'ism. Given much of this Shi'a establishment's immovable support for the League, the range of younger lawyers and political activists clustered around the Shi'a Political Conference often struggled to have their voice heard. Ali Zaheer, for instance, attributed the weakness of the Shi'a Political Conference in UP to the Raja of Mahmudabad, who 'wielded considerable influence' among Shi'as and ensured that 'it was like breaking one's head against a stone wall to try to win Muslim votes against prominent Muslim Leaguers.'[86] Much the same proved true in Bombay, where Jinnah enjoyed the support of the so-called 'Bombay millionaires' who included many Shi'as, not least Isma'il Ibrahim Chundrigar who rose to head the Muslim League's provincial branch.[87]

Importantly, it was not just established lay leaders who largely stuck with the Muslim League, but also the religious figureheads of certain Shi'a communities. In 1946, the 51st Da'i al-Matlaq (the 'absolute propagator,' or spiritual head) of the Da'udi Bohra community Syedna Mulla Tahir Saif-ud-din, who had

[84] Rieck, *The Shias of Pakistan,* 45-6, 50-3; c.f. *Dawn,* 1 April 1944. The Lahore Urdu newspaper *Nawa'-i-Vaqt* offered numerous articles on the Punjab Shi'a Political Conference's support for the Muslim League, as well as stinging criticisms of Laljee, Zaheer and the All India Shi'a Conference (e.g. 3 and 7 March 1945, 1 April and 27 December 1946).

[85] 'Statement by the Shias of Madras,' in *Dawn,* 26 October 1944.

[86] Zaheer, ed., *The Memoirs of Syed Ali Zaheer*, 20-21.

[87] Rieck, *The Shias of Pakistan*, 39.

long upheld an agenda of Muslim modernization and progress that echoed the wider ideology of the Muslim League, issued a consequential *fatwa* urging his community to support Jinnah and vote for him in the elections.[88] This example in fact demonstrates a further limitation for the nominally 'Shi'a' political movement: that most of its leaders were Isna 'Asharis rather than Isma'ilis. While the Shi'a Political Conference counted the latter among its flock and purported to represent them, the major figureheads of Isma'ili Shi'asm refused to support it. Most significant here was Agha Khan III. As well as being one of the League's original founders, he had long fostered a pragmatic strategy which sought to combine his roles as Isma'ili spiritual figurehead with that of wider Muslim political representative. Unlike many contemporary Twelver politicians, who had sought to define the Shi'a as a community largely separate from other Muslims, the Agha Khan's 'claim to political leadership of the Muslims of South Asia depended on the success of the identification of the Khojas within the larger Muslim community,' meaning that he instead construed the Isma'ilis not as a separate community but as a 'sub-sectarian' minority within the wider Muslim *umma*.[89] Combined with a long-standing approach by the Agha Khans of sustaining their own intra-community position by showing due deference to established political leaders, the Agha Khan found little reason to speak against Jinnah and sought the meaningful inclusion of Isma'ilis within a wider Muslim modernist programme. On the eve of Pakistan's foundation, he praised Jinnah's 'miraculous efforts' and celebrated the creation of 'the greatest Muslim state in the world' in exalted tones: 'We must, with our energy, heart and soul with faith in Islam and trust in God, work for the present and future glory of Pakistan.' 'The wheel of fortune has turned,' he elaborated, arguing that Muslims 'must work for a better world, and be no more hypnotised by the dead glories of the distant past.'[90]

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[88] Nadeem Hasnain and Sheikh Husain, *Shias and Shia Islam in India* (New Delhi: Harnam Publications, 1988), 162-63. For an analysis of the Bohra that locates the community within a 'modernity' paradigm, see Jonah Blank, *Mullahs on the Mainframe: Islam and Modernity among the Da'udi Bohras* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2001).

[89] Soumen Mukherjee, 'Being "Ismaili" and "Muslim": Some Observations on the Politico-Religious Career of Aga Khan III,' *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 34, no.2 (2011): 194-95.

[90] Message by Agha Khan to the People of Pakistan, Switzerland, 17 August 1947, accessed 1 October 2016, http:// www.amaana.org/sultweb/message.htm#Quaid-e-Azam%20-%20Man%20of%20Iron %20Will%20and%20Lion%20Courage.

Perhaps this post-partition rhetoric merely reflected the Agha Khan's long-standing pragmatic instincts. It may also reflect his attempts, in view of the Isma'ili presence across much of East Africa and West Asia rather than just India, to position his community within a wider Muslim *umma* and a global Islamic ecumenism, rather than purely within the narrower reference points of Indian politics.[91] Yet, other reasons may also have existed for the community's tepid response to Indian Shi'a politics. For many Isma'ilis, a community whose customary restrictions included refraining from inter-marrying or even inter-dining with Isna 'Ashari Shi'as, one may suspect that the prospect of being subsumed within a Twelver-dominated 'Shi'a' political movement could ultimately have seemed less desirable than meaningful engagement, within the wider *umma*, around the new project of Pakistan.

Aftermaths: Sunnistan and Pakistan

In a swipe against his political opponents, Nehru in 1946 remarked that the so-called 'Shi'a organization in India' had largely, if not fully, 'organized separately […] kept apart and differed from the Moslem League.'[92] Of course, his choice of phrasing implied a level of consensus within Shi'a political opinion that had never existed, and as is demonstrated above, the effort of many Shi'a politicians to craft the Shi'a as a united and separate political community before the creation of Pakistan ultimately came to little. This said, the analysis above reveals that the Pakistan movement was largely unsuccessful in crafting an ecumenical *qaumiyyat* that could transcend Shi'a-Sunni categories, and that Indian Shi'a reactions to the movement were marked by, at best, a degree of ambivalence. The idea of Pakistan was greeted with strong apprehension by a number of India's most influential Shi'a religious and political figures, a fact that has been little acknowledged but has important implications for our knowledge of the Pakistan movement and of post-colonial South Asia more broadly.

If this discussion disproves the assumption that sectarian concerns were not prominent in the Pakistan movement, what of the notion that Shi'a and Sunni responses to the new state's creation were broadly comparable? While the absence of meaningful statistics or other data make it difficult to ascertain the proportion of Shi'as who ultimately migrated to Pakistan, many have assumed

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[91] Devji, 'The Idea of Ismailism,' 60-61.

[92] Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994), 386.

that they moved to Pakistan in approximately similar proportions to Sunnis.[93] Some accounts, however, indicate that certainly in some Shi'a centres like Lucknow the great majority stayed behind.[94]

A further set of questions raised by this enquiry relates to the eventual character of Pakistan. With the notion and substance of Pakistan's 'Islamic' identity having generated large volumes of scholarship, to engage such debates in detail here would be futile. Yet, how far were Shi'a fears of the creation of a new 'Sunnistan' ultimately realized? Literature on the growth of sectarian conflict in Pakistan in recent decades has frequently attributed it to a *longue durée* process of Islamization, largely as a result of the ideological and institutional weakness of Pakistan's secular polity, or as an effort by the state to shore up its own ideological legitimacy during periodic spells of crisis. Very often, this literature has identified a 'politics of exclusion' within the state's trajectory of state formation. By this reading, a national Muslim identity has been reinforced through the marginalization of non-Muslim (and, by implication, increasingly non-Sunni) communities. Hence, the declaration of the Ahmadiya as a non-Muslim minority (sometimes with Shi'a support) in the 1970s thereafter morphed into an increasing Sunnification of the Islamization agenda, paving way for the casting of the Shi'a as a heretical minority in the 1980s-1990s.[95] By these accounts, like the Muslim League in the 1940s, the political leadership in Pakistan was unable to stem, or perhaps has even been complicit in, the marginalization of the Shi'a to the peripheries of a perceived Muslim mainstream. As Vali Nasr has put it, 'secular nationalism's once solid-seeming promise [gave] way like a rotten plank between the feet of Pakistan's beleaguered Shia minority.'[96]

Nevertheless, less remarked upon in this brand of scholarship has been the important role played by Shi'a politicians and officials throughout Pakistan's

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[93] E.g. Juan Cole, *Roots of North Indian Shi'ism in Iran and Iraq: Religion and State in Awadh, 1722-1859* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 289. Cole even implies a link of inspiration between historical examples of Shi'a 'state formation' in South Asia, such as the Shi'a state of Awadh, and the construction of Pakistan in 1947.

[94] P.N. Saskena et al, *Moharram in two cities, Lucknow and Delhi, Monograph Series, Census of India 1961* (Ministry of Home Affairs: New Delhi, 1965), 9.

[95] Ali Usman Qasmi, *The Ahmadis and the Politics of Religious Exclusion in Pakistan* (London: Anthem, 2015); Sadia Saeed, 'Pakistani Nationalism and the State Marginalisation of the Ahmadiyya Community in Pakistan,' *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 7, no.3 (2007): 132-152.

[96] Nasr, *The Shia Revival,* 87-88.

history in the making of a national 'Islamic' identity which could span these very same distinctions. Jinnah, Iskander Mirza, Muhammad Ali Bogra, Yahya Khan and Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto are just a few examples of Shi'a civilian and military leaders who played major roles in Pakistan's early political life, and in the construction of a state-led Pakistani nationalism. One might ask whether, just as many Shi'as had participated in the political visions of the Muslim League prior to independence, the construction of a national Muslim identity following Pakistan's creation had particular appeal for Shi'as, who could use it to assert their agency in national polity and to forgo the alternative path of minorityism. Amidst an emphasis on the modern growth of Shi'a-Sunni sectarianism, such issues have received comparatively scant attention.

As such, just as scholarship on the pre-partition Pakistan movement has often disregarded Shi'a-Sunni distinctions, many of these same issues remain largely subsumed within a body of scholarship on early-postcolonial Pakistan which has juxtaposed the supposed secular and Islamic visions of the budding state. Even within the latter of these ambiguous categories, we might suggest, alternative visions of an 'Islamic' Pakistan existed, and perhaps, rather like the Muslim League of late-colonial India, political leaders and citizens after the state's creation found themselves caught in tension between competing interpretations of its Islamic identity. On the one hand, Islamic Pakistan could represent a new, Sunni-inspired political order, the Sunnistan ominously portended by Laljee before its creation; alternatively, it could become the fulfilment of a post-sectarian Islamic ecumenism, pro-actively expunging Islam's historic divisions and misfortunes, and allowing meaningful social and political space for Shi'a Muslims. These debates, reaching right back to the 1940s, perhaps linger even now.

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14

The Baluch *Qaum* of Qalat State
Challenging the Ideological and Territorial Boundaries of Pakistan

Abdul Majeed

On 3 June 1947, the British government announced its plan to divide India into two sovereign dominions, India and Pakistan. The plan included termination of British suzerainty over about five hundred 'princely states' in the Indian subcontinent, with effect from 15 August 1947, and recognized the right of states to accede to either dominion. It was implicit in the provisions of transfer of power that with the lapse of paramountcy, princely states would become independent and under no compulsion to sign a new treaty with the successor states of India or Pakistan. Of all the princely states, only Hyderabad Deccan made use of this provision (or a preferred legal reading of it) to become independent before it was annexed by India in September 1948.

The Princely States were a product of a process of British expansion in the region during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. As the British annexed lands from various regional dynasties, which had emerged to replace the Mughal regime, they directly administered most of these territories but allowed their loyal collaborators among the local aristocracy to rule over territories either granted to them or left in their hands. In this way, a distinction was made between British India under direct British rule and princely states that paid homage to the Crown. So even though princely states fell outside the direct preview of the colonial state's administration and a set of rules, the British were able to exercise considerable influence through their resident officer and their power to depose rulers considered inefficient and tyrannical. These princely states maintained many of the royal rituals of the Mughal period. These were expressed from time to time on such occasions as the imperial assemblage of 1877 and the durbars of 1903 and 1911, which brought together the princely cadre in paying homage to their new overlord, much in the way of the old Mughal emperors.

Following the partition of India, the rulers of Bahawalpur, Khairpur, Chitral, Dir, Swat and Amb decided to accede to Pakistan. Kalat, the largest princely state to become part of Pakistan, only acceded in March 1948, seven months after partition. The history of Kalat state, its politics and its intricate relationship with the British Raj and the All India Muslim League complicated the accession process with accusations and counter-accusations about the process still being raised by Baluch nationalists and the Pakistani government, seven decades after the accession. The fractured relationship between Baluchistan and the central government since the accession has resulted in five distinct waves of insurgency in the province. Much of this discontent stems from the way this accession was handled by Pakistan's founding fathers and civilian bureaucrats.

The area comprising Kalat was contested by Baluch and Brahui tribes for many centuries, owing to competition over scarce ecological resources in the area. In the sixteenth century, the Mughals were able to establish suzerainty over the area and appointed a governor in Kalat. The Brahui Ahmadzai tribe established a dynasty (the Khanate), starting with the conquest of Kalat town in 1666. Soon after the death of the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb in 1707, Mir Abdullah, the ruler of Kalat, known as the Khan of Kalat, became independent from Mughal rule. This independence was short-lived because of interference from the Qajars of Iran and Afghan tribal incursions. In 1758, Mir Nasir Khan regained power over the state and established a stable alliance with the Afghan ruler, Ahmad Shah Durrani.[1] During Nasir Khan's reign, Makran, Las Bela and Kharan were conquered and incorporated into the Khanate.

Nasir Khan's demise in 1795 resulted in a period of chaos that receded in the 1830s due to British intervention. The 'great game' between the British and Russian empires was being waged across Central Asia throughout the nineteenth century. Afghanistan was destined to become a 'buffer' state between Czarist Russia and British India in this conflict.[2] The close proximity of Kalat state to Afghanistan raised its value greatly regarding British foreign policy objectives. In 1838, British envoys established relations with Kalat to open a line of communication with the Afghans. During the first Anglo–Afghan War (1839–42), the Khan of Kalat [Mehrab Khan I] failed to fulfil treaty obligations

[1] Inayatullah Baloch, *The Problem of 'Greater Baluchistan': A Study of Baluch Nationalism* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1987), 164.

[2] For a detailed history and discussion of political strategies of British politicians towards these regions, cf. Malcolm Yapp, *Strategies of British India: Britain, Iran, and Afghanistan, 1798–1850* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980).

and was killed by the British forces on their way back from Afghanistan. In 1854, the Khan of Kalat [Nasir Khan II] signed a treaty[3] of cooperation with the British government, in exchange for money. The treaty acknowledged Kalat's independent status and treated the Khanate as being on par with Afghanistan.

In 1876, an updated treaty[4] was signed between the two parties, affirming indirect British rule and the establishment of a decentralised political structure in the khanate. Major Robert Sandeman was deputed to Kalat[5] as part of Britain's 'forward policy' that involved direct interference in Kalat's internal affairs. The 'Sandeman system' resulted in relative autonomy for local chieftains, the formation of a tribal council of elders (jirga) to resolve disputes and the introduction of a police and administrative force (the levies). At the imperial durbar of 1877, the Khan of Kalat [Khudadad Khan] was initially treated as a 'non-Indian' prince,[6] something the Khan objected to. He asked to have a banner given to him, but it was explained to him that banners were only given to British feudatories and that he, being an independent prince, could not receive one without compromising his independence. At the conclusion of the imperial assemblage, the Khan of Kalat was admitted to the rank of 'Knight Grand Commander of the Most Exalted Order of the Star of India' as a full member, like other Indian princes, and not as an honorary member, which was the norm for non-Indian princes. When the Khan of Kalat [Mahmud Khan II] attended the durbars of 1903 and 1911, he was received on exactly the same footing and was accorded identical treatment to other Indian princes of equal rank.

During the period 1880–1920, the districts north of Kalat (Chaman, Pishin, Sibi) were ceded to the British by the Afghan government. The British also acquired other areas on lease from the Khan of Kalat, such as Quetta, Nushki and Nasirabad, to establish what is referred to as British Baluchistan. Cantonments were built in Loralai and Quetta and a railway line laid in different parts of 'Baluchistan province' which further strengthened the grip of the British in the region. In 1893, owing to the weakness of the khanate, the Government of India had assumed control of several of the powers of the Khan concerning the sub-khanates of Kharan and Las Bela.

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[3] Dr Abdur Rehman Brahui, *Baluchistan aur Pakistan: Ilhaq ki Kahani* [Baluchistan and Pakistan: The Story of Accession] (Quetta: Kalat Publishers, 2009), 48–49.

[4] Ibid., 50–52.

[5] Martin Axmann, *Back to the Future: The Khanate of Kalat and the Genesis of Baloch Nationalism 1915–55* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2008), 28.

[6] Yaqoob Khan Bangash, *A Princely Affair: The Accession and Integration of the Princely States of Pakistan, 1947–1955* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2015), 287–88.

The First World War signalled a paradigm shift in global politics as the transition from 'empires' to 'nation states' began soon after the war. During the war, German spies tried to spur a rebellion against the British Empire in Iran and Baluchistan[7]. However, these efforts proved fruitless, and the war passed Baluchistan by without much incident. The 1920s, however, was a fertile period for nationalist movements around the world. A Baluch nationalist movement started during this time, demanding basic rights for the Baluch people and a democratic setup to replace the Khanate. The event that brought the nascent Baluch nationalism to the forefront was the All India Baluch and Baluchistan conference in 1932 organized by *Anjuman-e-Ittehad-e-Baluchan Wa Baluchistan* (Organization for Unity of Baluch and Baluchistan). The conference resolved to call for the formation of a governor's province with the same constitutional reforms and the full provincial autonomy enjoyed by other provinces, the adoption of a means to propagate education, the propagation of Islamic laws and principles among the public, the closure of brothels and an end to the sale of alcohol in Baluchistan, and the abolition of the 'Frontier Crimes Regulation.' Another conference with the same agenda was organized in 1933.

The pioneers of the Baluch nationalist movement, Abdul Aziz Kurd[8] and Mir Yusuf Magsi,[9] came from important Sardari families but were critical of the traditional tribal organization and Sardari leadership. Many of their comrades went to Indian public schools where they imbibed the ideas of nationalism. They started a newspaper, named *Al-Baluch*, to promote their cause, and in August 1933, the paper carried a map of 'Greater Baluchistan' that showed the area as stretching from Bandar-e-Abbas in Persia to the present-day borders of India. The nationalists were able to influence the selection of two Khans of Kalat (Azam Jan in 1931 and his son Ahmad Yar Khan in 1933), but their activities did not impress the British government, resulting in imprisonment or exile for the leaders. In 1935, a massive earthquake destroyed much of the city of Quetta and resulted in the death of Mir Yusuf Magsi. Following a split in the movement, the 'left' wing formed a political party in 1937 called the 'Kalat State National Party' (KSNP).

The Nationalist movement and Nationalists initially had the backing of the entrenched Baluch elite (since the proposed 'Greater Baluchistan' was to be headed by the Khan of Kalat) but the two sides parted ways soon after. In

[7] Axmann, *Back to the Future,* 47–57.
[8] Baloch, *The Problem of Greater Baluchistan*, 281.
[9] Ibid.

1939, Ahmed Yar Khan banned the KSNP. However, the party soon joined forces with the Indian National Congress,[10] whose nationalist agenda meshed well with that of the KSNP, and the KSNP formally joined the All India States Peoples Conference in 1945. In 1937, another political party, called Anjuman-i-Watan,[11] was established in Baluchistan by Abdus Samad Achakzai, former chairman of the first Baluchistan conference. As opposed to the KSNP's Baluch nationalist orientation, Anjuman-i-Watan was focused on British Baluchistan and its predominantly Pashtun population. The All India Muslim League,[12] the representative of Indian Muslim nationalism, gained a foothold in Baluchistan during September 1939. It was supported primarily by the non-local Muslim population of Quetta.

The status of the Khanate of Kalat as a *de facto* independent state was changed unilaterally by the 'Government of India Act 1935' which included Kalat among the 'native' states of India.[13] In 1938, the Khan sent a lengthy memorandum to the Government of India elucidating his key demands. Amongst various items, he asked for a full restoration of the 1876 treaty and for a new one to be drawn up reaffirming all that was stated in the previous treaty. He also wanted New Delhi to restore his full control over the affairs of the state, recognize his sovereignty over Kharan and Las Bela and return the Quetta, Nasirabad and Nushki districts. The Government of India restored his powers to distribute allowances among the Sardars but he was made subservient to the Agent to Governor General (AGG) in the matter of taking any important decisions regarding these Sardars. In a separate memorandum to the government, the Khan elucidated his claim to a different status while also asking the Government of India to recognize his suzerainty over the feudatory states of Kharan and Las Bela. The Government of India carefully studied this memorandum and reached a decision in 1941 that Kalat was an Indian state and had never been treated any differently from states of comparative rank.

Despite getting his efforts rebuffed by the British government, Ahmad Yar Khan continued his quest for an independent status. He presented two memoranda to the Cabinet Mission visiting India to decide the post-withdrawal scheme for India, in March 1946. The two memoranda reiterated Khan's position on Kalat's independent status and 'retrocession' of leased areas. The memoranda

[10] Axmann, *Back to the Future*, 158.
[11] Ibid., 160.
[12] Bangash, *A Princely Affair*, 314.
[13] Baloch, *The Problem of Greater Baluchistan*, 170.

were presented by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, a barrister by trade and the leader of the All-India Muslim League. Jinnah and Ahmad Yar Khan had been in close contact since 1936 because of Jinnah's role as legal advisor to Khan.

Ahmad Yar Khan issued a proclamation in April 1947 asserting that 'In future, the Government of Kalat will be a fully free and independent government in all international and external affairs.' He did, however, signal a close association with the future state of Pakistan and noted: 'As for the ideology of Pakistan, Muslim League Party and Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the Government of Kalat is in complete agreement with him and is ready to render any sacrifice for establishing Pakistan.' On 5 August 1947, a 'standstill' agreement was signed between Kalat and the future state of Pakistan in Delhi. On 11 August 1947, a communique was issued on the current situation between Kalat and the government of Pakistan clearly stating that Kalat was an independent and sovereign state. It has been argued that since Pakistan was the successor state of British India, it had inherited all its treaty obligations with the lapse of paramountcy. Thus, the leased areas of British Baluchistan could remain with Pakistan even if Kalat's nominal independence was accepted on paper.

At the time of partition, British Baluchistan's fate was to be decided by a *Shahi Jirga*, comprising Baluch Sardars and twelve members of the Quetta Municipal Corporation. Under controversial circumstances (there is broad disagreement about the details among the Baluch nationalist and Pakistani observers), the jirga voted in favour of Pakistan. On 15 August 1947, the Khan of Kalat issued Kalat's Declaration of Independence and promulgated a constitution.[14] The constitution proposed a bicameral legislature, including an upper house of tribal chiefs and a lower house of commoners. The upper house was to be composed of hereditary tribal chiefs and could be dissolved by the Khan at any time. Members of the lower house were to be elected by the general public and serve for five years. It could also be dissolved by the Khan at his discretion. As a result of 'elections'[15] (not held by adult franchise but based on nominations by local jirgas), members and supporters of KSNP formed a majority in the lower house.

According to the constitution, 'It shall not be lawful for either House to consider any bill or amendment or motion or resolution nor shall question be put in either House relating to or affecting: a. the ruling family of Kalat b. The relations of His Highness the Khan, with his Majesty the King-Emperor or the Crown Representatives or with the successor Government or Governments c.

[14] Brahui, *Baluchistan aur Pakistan,* 112–51.

[15] Axmann, *Back to the Future*, 227–28.

Matters governed by treaties or conventions or agreements, now in force or hereafter to be made by His Highness the Khan.'[16] Another provision mentioned: 'Nothing in this Act shall effect or be deemed fit to have effect on the prerogative of His Highness the Khan to make and pass acts, proclamations and orders in His Highness's discretion without reference to either House, which right is hereby declared to and to always have been possessed and retained by His Highness the Khan.'[17] These provisions make it clear that the legislature had no more than an advisory capacity. The debates on acceding to Pakistan took place in these houses in December 1947 and January 1948 and were published in the local Urdu newspapers of Quetta at the time and later reproduced in works on Baluch history.[18]

These debates, translated from Urdu, talk about such themes as Jinnah's cordial relations with the Khan to the extent that he had been pleading Kalat's case for independence before various British missions visiting India, his acceptance in writing of Kalat's sovereignty on the eve of independence, and the leased territory of British Baluchistan.

Proceedings of House of the People and House of Elders
Subject: Accession
December–January 1947[-1948], Venue: Dhaadar

Speaker: *The Respectable Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo (Member, House of Commons)*

The issue of accession to Pakistan is of utmost importance but it cannot become the cause of further concern. Therefore, the members of this house have never been negligent in this matter – if we are to remain independent, how can we protect our independence? All of you are cognizant of who we are and how our neighbours are watching us. Just as Afghanistan and Iran have their own culture and civilizations, [similarly] we are Muslims but it is not necessary that, because of being Muslim, in giving up our independence we should assimilate with others. If it is for this reason that we should join Pakistan, that it is a Muslim government, then the Islamic governments of Afghanistan and Iran should also assimilate into Pakistan. We are presented the examples of Sindh

[16] Brahui, *Baluchistan aur Pakistan*, 135.
[17] Ibid., 151.
[18] Ahmad Yar Baluch, *Tarikh-i-Baluch Qaum wa Khawanin-i-Baluch* (Lahore: Al-Asar Publications, 2007), 132-46; Brahui, *Baluchistan Aur Pakistan*, 189-236.

and Punjab despite the fact that there is no major nation inhabiting those lands. There are various divisions within them and they do not have a distinct culture. It was another matter, when the British government subjugated the whole of Asia at the point of the sword. They enslaved the Baluch, inhabiting the land called Baluchistan, as well. Although we revolted, the British government was cruel and tyrannical, and they took away our freedom. We were never part of India before that. Pakistan's unreasonable demand that Kalat, which was formerly known as Baluchistan and was home to the Baluch people, accedes to it, is impossible. The way we treated Pakistan and the way they treated us is an open secret. Before the establishment of Pakistan, our Khan [the ruler of Kalat] established the Muslim League in his area. Our houses, bungalows and cars were freely available to the Muslim League and a majority of Baluch under the leadership of the Khan of Kalat through every possible effort made it successful. But look what Pakistan is doing to us in return. Our leased and tribal lands such as Bela and Kharan, which have been a part of us, are being denied to us. We don't want to forcibly incorporate Bela and Kharan, instead they are our national brothers and it is because of this connection that they continue to be a part of Kalat state. Pakistan has refused to even talk about this issue and the precondition for talks is that until the government of the Baluch is humiliated and shame-faced they refuse to talk to us.

President of the House:

(At this point the President of the House intervened) Pakistan has never used such strong language so you should please refrain from using these words.

Member: (continuing his speech)

I am only saying what I have understood as Pakistan's attitude towards Kalat state. The British Raj deputed the control of Kharan and Bela to us but Pakistan of its own accord took over those areas. We are ready for friendship on honourable terms but not with indignity. We are not willing to become part of Pakistan's territory at any cost. We are threatened with death as if 15 million Asian Baluch should sign their own death warrants. We can't become a party to this huge crime of humiliating the Baluch nation by submerging it in a non-Baluch nation. In my opinion, we shouldn't become an impediment to Pakistan, which has just recently been formed. Regarding defence, external affairs and communications we are told that we can't defend ourselves because it is the age of the nuclear bomb. According to Pakistan's standards, can even Afghanistan and Iran defend themselves at this stage? Russia and America, if

they want to, can extinguish all these states so if we can't defend ourselves, we are no exception to countless other states. There are no Asian states that fulfil the criteria to be called a modern state, including Pakistan. We might not have cash in hand but we have countless sources of income. We have minerals, ports and petroleum. We should not be forced into slavery in the guise of economics. If Pakistan wants to make a treaty with us as an independent nation, we will offer them a hand of friendship. If Pakistan doesn't agree to this, certainly it will be undemocratic on their part, which will be unacceptable to us. If this undemocratic attitude is forced upon us, every Baluch child will sacrifice his life to preserve their independence.

Speech by The Respectable *Maulvi Muhammad Omar, Member House of the People:*

The speech delivered by the Honourable member Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo, although it was delivered in his words, those words represent every single Baluch living in the mountains. What Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Bizenjo said is the voice of this house, nay the whole Baluch nation. Our prayers are with the government of Pakistan. Pakistan has been established in the name of Islam. Muslims have always been equal. If one Muslim does not inflict pain on another Muslim and does not steal the livelihood of the other, it is improper for the other Muslim to rush into the first person's house to demand, say I am the boss or get out. Our prayers are with Pakistan. If Pakistan ever calls for our help, we will run to their assistance with our rifles. When the British government granted us independence, we celebrated and lit fires on the mountains. We celebrated independence. Now we are told that our independence is being stolen again.

***President of the House**:*

(At this point the President of the House intervened) Let me clarify this point again that the government of Pakistan has not intimated any intention of taking away our independence. The Government of Pakistan, as I have mentioned before, has talked only about three issues which are: External Affairs, Defence and Communications, and what is at issue here is these three issues. These can determine the dependence or independence of a government and this is why accession is being requested.

Member: (continuing his speech)

True, it is these three issues, it is on the basis of these three issues that our country can become a part of Pakistan and our nation can be absorbed into

it. We shall consider this a loss of total independence. If Pakistan needs our help, we shall send them dates and barley, cultivated in our land, as gifts, just like Islamic countries used to send gifts to the Caliph of that period during the age of the Islamic Caliphate. Accession means joining two things so that nothing distinguishes them and treaty means that two governments retain their existence. If Pakistan wants to sign a treaty regarding the three issues mentioned by the President of the House, we are willing to enter into a friendly and honourable treaty.

Speech by Respectable *Maulvi Arz Muhammad, Member House of the People:*

Respected members of the house! I am a member of the clergy, without much knowledge of laws, etc. Thankfully the state of Pakistan has been established. Baluch resides in Sindh, 550,000 [Baluch] live in Dera Ismail Khan and Dera Ghazi Khan. We are very happy that an Islamic state has been established with a population of 95 million people. Our relationship to Pakistan is akin to that of the younger brother. The elder brother should treat us with kindness and console us. We poor have fallen, we are dispersed. Sindh has more Baluch than the state of Kalat but everyone living in Sindh is called Sindhi. If Pakistan wanted to woo us, it should have said 'Kharan and Las Bela are nothing to us, aside from these areas and leased areas, take other Baluch areas as well. You are my little brother. I do you this kindness.' Then Pakistan would have seen we would not have just acceded, but also become subservient to it. We are not strong in the current circumstances but just as when a dog attacks a cat and the cat scratches the dog to death, we are like a weak cat that, even though it dies in trying, will slash at the dog. We don't have food. We are helpless, living a simple life. We are dying of hunger. Pakistan is a big country. It should have been generous and said, 'Take half of Sindh. Take the leased areas.' Instead, Pakistan is forcing us to accede and trying to take away our independence, we can never be ready for this. We want an honourable and friendly pact and in this spirit if Pakistan asks for anything we will be willing to give it.

Speech by the Respectable *Maulvi Noor Muhammad of Makran, Member House of the People:*

Preceding speeches by members of this house have covered everything there is to say on this topic. However, I will say this much, that the Baluch feel dejected by Pakistan's demand. Pakistan is an Islamic country. They don't have to force us to give the assistance that is theirs by right. We want to complain regarding the way Pakistan, despite being our friend, took away parts of us, meaning

Kharan and Las Bela, which are integral parts of our existence. They have not joined them with us, neither have they given us an answer regarding the leased areas. The Baluch nation wants to live and without complete existence, life is meaningless. We want to have friendly relations with all governments, particularly with Pakistan. This friendship suits Pakistan's interests as much as it suits our interests. Till Pakistan treats us as equal and until it returns the leased areas and Las Bela and Kharan to us, this friendship will be difficult. We are ready for friendship and in the service of friendship will accept any obligation with all our hearts, but we cannot accede our country to Pakistan's territory.

Speech by the Respectable *Malik Faiz Muhammad Khan, Member House of the People:*

Respected members of the house have discussed this issue at length in front of you and I just want to state some facts so that you may easily understand. The Kalat state was independent before the arrival of the British. The martyrdom of Khan Mehrab Khan is undeniable proof of this fact. He sacrificed his life for independence in Kalat. His bloodstains are still imprinted upon Kalat's stones. Khan Mir Khudad Khan was imprisoned for forty years for the sake of Kalat's independence. God willing, the state of Kalat will remain independent now as well. It is better if there is a friendly treaty between the states of Pakistan and Kalat. But if we are asked to do anything, which would result in our enslavement, and would endanger the integrity of our distinct national identity, then we Baluch are not ready to tolerate it.

Speech by the Respectable *Mirza Khuda Bakhsh Khan, Member House of the People:*

In its importance this is a unique issue. I admire the way the Respectable Mir Ghaus Bakhsh Khan presented the case to this honourable house. I also admire the magnanimity of Hazrat Maulana Arz Muhammad. The way the honourable Foreign Minister and Prime Minister have admirably explained the situation to the house, we have understood it well. External Affairs, Defence and Communications are issues of utmost importance. This is a question of saving the Baluch nation and is a profoundly critical one. Now we need to see if the Baluch are able to save themselves in times of crisis. We should not be prejudiced. Pakistan came into being because of Mr Jinnah's efforts, but at the same time the Baluch have not forgotten their traditions. Whenever someone has wanted to befriend us, we have never backed away. The field of Panipat is a testament to a time when countless Baluch gave their lives in aid of a

Muslim state. The Baluch nation has never shied away from friendship. Even though right now the Baluch nation is not powerful, we have not forgotten our traditions. Pakistan should have displayed some magnanimity. In case of Las Bela and Kharan and other areas, which lie outside our national government for now, it is being fed into their minds that they should remain separate and rule independently.

Leader of the House:

Pakistan did not at all say this to anyone.

Member: (continuing his speech)

I think Las Bela and Kharan have been given 'underground' temptations and the policy of 'divide and rule' has been used with them. Events indicate that Pakistan is aggressively pursuing the ambition of expanding its territory. We are willing to consider ourselves as the younger brother. We want a friendly treaty with them. We are even willing to give up External Affairs, Defence and Communications, on the condition that they would return these [lands]. We are certainly ready for a friendly treaty.

Speech by the Respectable *Mir Kanar Khan (Makran) Member, House of the People:*

I agree with whatever has been said in this chamber today. No member of the Baluch nation would like to settle this issue in a bad way. We are ready for a friendly treaty.

President of the House:

Does any other respectable member of the house wish to say anything?

Members of the house (all in one voice):

We all agree that accession should not take place in any form and we want an honourable, friendly treaty.

Address [by Mir Ahmad Yar Khan] in the capacity of the *Head of Kalat State of Baluch*

Speech in the House of Elders

Representatives of my beloved Baluch nation! You are aware of the fact that the Islamic State of Pakistan has come into existence on 14 August 1947 by

the grace of God. [Population-wise] it is the fifth largest country in the world and the largest Islamic country. Based on its resources and prestige, Pakistan is going to become a future centre for Muslim unity and brotherhood. I urge you and every member of the Baluch nation, whether they are in Kalat or in any areas of the world, after the five daily prayers, that they pray to God earnestly for the Islamic state's integrity, strength and success and pray that the state acts according to the sacred principles of Islam so that it becomes an example and leader for other Islamic countries. That this country be able to resurrect our thirteen-hundred-and-fifty-year-old Islamic glory and grandeur and that it enlightens the whole world with Islam's glorious civilization and traditions, something for which 600 million Muslims in this world are desperately waiting for.

You are well aware of the fact that for the last ten years, your Islamic Baluch government has been cooperating wholeheartedly and with deep religious commitment with the Muslim League's movement. For the establishment of Pakistan, we have kept providing evidence of our intense cooperation of every kind in the form of monetary resources and assistance in writing and speech. We did all of this despite the British Raj breathing down our neck and their evident dislike of our cooperation. Our Baluch nation and my own self were suspect in the eyes of the British because we had made a promise to God considering it our duty that we help in every way this Islamic Movement (Muslim League) and the establishment of Pakistan. We fulfilled this duty and openly proved our friendship. Thank god that Pakistan came into being and we are delighted to see a foreign, non-Muslim nation being replaced by our own Islamic government. But soon after independence, Pakistan became trapped in difficult matters. It desperately requires the help of the Baluch government and the Baluch nation. I have written to the Most Honourable Quaid-i-Azam on the behalf of your Baluch government and the entire Baluch nation, to reassure him that we shall help in every way in writing and speech. We have been working in this regard with great sincerity and purity of heart, for the last four and half months and will, God willing, continue to do so. You should keep this in mind that the promise that we made God regarding this Islamic government, we shall abide by this promise until the very last. The five-hundred-year-old history of the Baluch nation reveals that whichever countries and nations that we have made friendship and treaties with, we have always carried them out, and proved that Baluch are a nation that strongly abide by their commitments.

I am well aware of the fact that there are some outstanding issues between my Baluch nation and the Government of Pakistan which are causing anxiety

to my Baluch nation and Baluch everywhere are looking to me for the final decision. It is my fervent request to you and the entire nation not to hurry in making this decision, do not act from emotion. With patience and forbearance give me some time. I urge you to remain hopeful. I assure you that, God willing, the matter between you and Pakistan will be resolved amicably in an atmosphere of Islamic brotherhood and love. I am repeatedly requesting that you be patience, don't be hasty and there are also certain reasons for that:

1. Pakistan has been in existence for only four and a half months. Since its inception, it has been beset by tremendous difficulties and compulsions such as the refugee crisis facing this country, which is an unprecedented problem in the history of the world.
2. The Kashmir dispute is no less critical than the refugee crisis.
3. There is a constant threat of conflict between India and Pakistan.
4. There is a steady stream of domestic problems. To make the governmental structure effective and deal with these problems quite some time is required. I do not want Baluch to also become a difficult and complex problem, adding to Pakistan's considerable challenges. Our attitude in this regard that we are in every situation friends of Pakistan and at any time willing to give help and support.

I am well aware of the fact that the emotions of friendship, loyalty, love and devotion, and purity of heart, are being perturbed in you gentlemen and in my entire Baluch nation because some miscreants and the self-interested, through the medium of speech and newspapers, are busy in propaganda so that relations between the governments of Pakistan and Baluchistan should deteriorate. They are trying to portray their own seditious activities as if they were friends of the Government of Pakistan and as if the Government of Baluch is the enemy of Pakistan, this is how they would justify their activities. I appeal to the nation to give no attention to the mischief of these seditious actors and wrong-doers. History is witness to the fact that, and you know well that the biggest cause for the destruction of Muslims was their mutual discord. In every age, there are always some miscreants, or those with corrupted character, who sell their conscience and faith to fragment Muslims and break apart the Islamic brotherhood. You and I should abide by the promise we made to God that as the well-wishers of Islam and Muslims, we will support the Islamic government of Pakistan in every possible way. You will be rewarded by benevolent God for this action, and success in the end shall be yours. God willing.

At the moment the Most Honourable Quaid-i-Azam and I are engaged in efforts to find a way by which, on the one hand, matters under discussion

between the governments of Pakistan and Baluch can be resolved, and, on the other hand, there is an honourable way forward for bilateral relations between Pakistan and the government of Baluch. Both of these crucial matters are under consideration. Representatives of both governments are in contact verbally and through official correspondence. I believe and you should also be rest assured that Pakistan is an Islamic state and that is something we identify with, unlike some alien enemy government. Its policy is based on justice, truth and fostering relations with other Muslim nations and states on the basis of love and respect. His [Jinnah's] competence and sense of justice is exemplary. I have been friends with him for the last ten years. The experience of these long years of association is this, that he holds dear to his heart the welfare and prosperity of the Baluch nation. It is for this reason that he keeps giving his valuable suggestions in every matter of ours. I know that he is very busy these days and this elderly man with his youthful spirit is shouldering the deluge of problems faced by Pakistan. That is why I do not want to add to his existing troubles by complicating the Baluch Government issue.

To prove my claim that the founder of Pakistan, the Most Honourable Quaid-i-Azam, is a friend of yours, and that he wants from the bottom of his heart to see Baluch successful and prosperous, I want to present before you a communique issued from Viceroy's palace in New Delhi on 14 August 1947:

> As a result of a meeting held between a delegation from Kalat and officials of the Pakistan States Department, presided over by the Crown Representative, and of a series of meetings between the Crown Representative, His Highness of Kalat and Mr Jinnah, the following is the situation:
>
> 1. The Government of Pakistan recognizes Kalat as an independent sovereign State in treaty relations with the British Government, with a status different from that of Indian States.
> 2. Legal opinion will be sought as to whether or not agreements of leases between the British Government and Kalat will be inherited by the Pakistan Government.
> 3. When this opinion has been received, further meetings will take place between representatives of Pakistan and the Khan of Kalat at Karachi.
> 4. Meanwhile a Standstill Agreement has been made between Pakistan and Kalat.
> 5. Discussions will take place between Pakistan and Kalat at Karachi at an early date with a view to reaching decisions on Defence, External Affairs and Communications.

From this communique, you must have realized that this champion of Islam and just man, considering your status, has recognized Kalat as an independent and sovereign state, according to the specificity of its situation, different from other Indian [princely] states. These types of emotions and practices have engendered in our hearts feelings of love for him and a sense of the greatness of Pakistan.

Proceedings of the House of Elders, State of Kalat, Baluch

Sardar Bahadur Nawab Sahib Raisani:

I have personally come to know that there has been some recent correspondence with the government of Pakistan and it mentions 24 conditions. The House of Elders should be informed about this as well.

President of the House:

No such letter has been officially received and if any such letter had been received, I as the Prime Minister of Kalat, would have known.

Sardar Nawab Sahib Raisani:

In that case, my information is based on some misunderstanding and I apologize for that.

Nawab Mir Norouz Khan, the chief of Zarak Zai tribe:

The conditions for accession should be presented before House of Elders.

Sardar Bahadur Nawab Sir Haji Muhammad Asadullah Khan Raisani:

I want to state that personal relations between the Most Honourable Khan of Kalat and Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah are not hidden from anyone. Their relationship is like that of father and son. This relationship has been present much before the establishment of Pakistan. The Most Honourable Khan, who is our king, and whatever agreement he signs with the government of Pakistan, it will be acceptable to us. We are perfectly certain that the Most Honourable Khan, keeping in view Baluch traditions, will agree upon a good decision with the government of Pakistan and this agreement will preserve the independence and sovereignty of the Baluch nation, and in this way it will be a source of honour and status.

Khan Sahib Wadera Sher Muhammad Khan, Chief of Rind:

If the government of Pakistan wants to sign a friendly treaty with Kalat state on specific conditions, there is objection to that. We have just come out of slavery

from the British. We are not willing to be enslaved again. We are ready for any friendly treaty that preserves the dignity and honour of our country's existence.

Khan Sahib Syed Aurang Shah Sahib:

We are all thankful to Quaid-i-Azam for accepting Kalat's independence. We are not ready for accession; however, we want Kalat state to sign an honourable treaty with Pakistan.

Khan Sahib Sardar Mehboob Ali Khan Magsi:

We are all thankful to the government of Pakistan for the independence and sovereignty which they have accepted, and we expect that in the future as well the Government of Pakistan will assist our government in every possible way. Since the Most Honourable Khan of Kalat and Quaid-i-Azam have a pleasant relationship, therefore we want that these two Islamic governments should maintain friendly relations as well, so that both governments may remain happy. Our agreement should be based on a friendly treaty rather than in the form of an accession in which our distinct national existence and dignity would be lost forever.

Nawab Mir Norouz Khan Sahib, Chief of Zarak Zai:

We are grateful to the Government of Pakistan for accepting our independence and sovereignty. Therefore, Kalat state should not refuse any such treaty, but under no condition would we accept accession. It is our dearest wish that there should be an agreement between the Government of Kalat and the Government of Pakistan that is conducive to the satisfaction and happiness of both.

Mir Dost Muhammad Khan, Chief of Leheri:

Pakistan is a source of pride for all of us Muslims. Relations between Quaid-i-Azam and the Most Honourable [Khan] are fatherly and brotherly. Due to these relations, we hope from the venerable personality of the Most Honourable [Khan] that whatever treaty he signs with the government of Pakistan, it would be a source of honour and progress for our national pride and Baluch existence. And we also expect from Pakistan that it will retain our distinct national existence and homeland and would agree to a friendly and benevolent treaty with us.

Sardar Bahadur Nawab Haji Muhammad Khan Shahwani:

We pray for Pakistan that Allah grants it tremendous success, however we want to live by the axiom, 'live and let live.' We can't lose our independence at

any cost. Until we had gained independence, we were unaware of the value of freedom, now we are beginning to realize the value of independence. We want an honourable treaty between the two governments. Just as independence is dear to the Pashtun nation, it is dear to the Baluch people as well. We are willing to consider Pakistan our elder brother, and ourselves as the younger brother, but before this we want to preserve our independence and under no condition are we willing to give up the independence we have already gained. Therefore, we are not willing to lose our complete independence. With our complete independence and sovereignty intact, we are willing to sign any friendly treaty.

[…] Later on in response to the question placed by the President of the House, all the honourable members of the gathering unanimously stated that if the Most Honourable Khan of Kalat would sign an honourable and friendly treaty with the government of Pakistan while preserving Kalat's independence and sovereignty, it will be acceptable for this house, but this House is not ready to accept accession, which threatens the extinction of the Baluch nation's distinct existence.

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