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Between Jinnah and Toba Tek Singh: Rethinking the struggle for Pakistan in late colonial India*

Venkat Dhulipala**

While conducting archival research at the British Library in London, I stumbled upon a rather unexpected document in the private papers of *Qaid-i-Azam* Mohammed Ali Jinnah. The handwritten document, with its ink fading, was the record of a special séance with Jinnah's spirit held on 13 March 1955, nearly seven years after his death and eight years after the birth of Pakistan. The séance was conducted by a spiritualist hired by a government officer, a certain Mr. Ibrahim. Jinnah's spirit was asked if it wanted to smoke a cigarette since the *Qaid-i-Azam* in life had been a chain-smoker. On the basis of an affirmative answer, a cigarette was lit and fixed on a wire stand for the spirit to smoke while it answered questions. Ibrahim asked, 'Sir, as a creator and father of Pakistan, won't you guide the destiny of the nation now?' Jinnah's spirit tersely replied that it had no intention of guiding Pakistan's destiny for it was the responsibility of its current rulers. Undaunted, Mr. Ibrahim pressed further, 'Don't you think there is a prosperous future for Pakistan?' Jinnah's spirit shot back, 'I don't think so. Prosperity of a country depends on the selflessness of people who control its Destiny. None at all is eager to be selfless there. A worried Mr. Ibrahim persisted, 'What advice would you give to the present rulers of Pakistan?' The spirit promptly responded, 'Selflessness, selflessness. That is the only advice I can give them now.' Jinnah's spirit then made a telling remark. 'It is easier to acquire a country, but it is extremely difficult to retain it. That is in a nutshell the

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present position of Pakistan to gain which rivers of blood flowed.' As the interview came to an end, Mr. Ibrahim finally asked, 'How are you spending your time nowadays?' Jinnah's spirit replied gloomily, 'Not very well friend. Evil pictures regarding Pakistan are badly in my mind every now and then and I cannot live in mental peace here.'[1]

The story of how the transcript of the séance found its way into the archive would no doubt be fascinating and also raise interesting theoretical questions about the procedures involved in the constitution of the archive. But what is striking about the document is the sense of crisis that it communicates about the state of Pakistan not long after its birth. Jinnah's death in 1948 and the assassination of Liaqat Ali Khan in 1951 inaugurated a period of protracted political instability in the country which finally culminated in the first declaration of martial law in 1958. Pakistan's successive martial law administrators henceforth justified the imposition of martial law in the name of preserving the unity and integrity of Pakistan, threatened by the twin evils of either internal instability or the hostile designs of its neighbor India.

Nearly fifty years later, Altaf Hussain, the exiled leader of the Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM), underlined Pakistan's seemingly continuous crisis of identity with remarks that he made in the course of an impassioned speech at a high profile public conference in New Delhi.[2] Referring to the internal political situation in Pakistan, Hussain excoriated the Pakistani government for the atrocities it was perpetrating upon his people, the *Mohajirs*, in Pakistan. In a dramatic moment, an emotional Altaf Hussain declared that the Partition of India 'was the greatest blunder in the history of mankind'.[3] This was not the first time

[1] Venkat Dhulipala, *Creating a New Medina: State Power, Islam, and the Quest for Pakistan in Late Colonial North India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014, p.1.

[2] The occasion was the Leadership Initiative convened by the *Hindustan Times* newspaper at New Delhi on 5–6 November 2004. It was attended by quite a few South Asian Heads of State and prominent personalities from diverse fields in South Asia. It also had a sprinkling of Western public figures such as former British PM John Major, Henry Kissinger, and Hans Blix, the former Head of the IAEA.

[3] *The Hindu*, 7 November 2004; a video clip of Altaf Hussain's histrionics filled speech at the HT summit can also be found on YouTube.

that Altaf Hussain had made such remarks, but the delivery of such a speech on Indian soil that questioned the very legitimacy of Pakistan led to a considerable furor in Pakistan.[4]

The term *mohajir* means refugee in Urdu and Arabic, and has been used to describe Muslim refugees who came to Pakistan from United Provinces (now Uttar Pradesh or UP, India) and Bihar at the time of the Partition. It carries a tremendous historical, moral, and religious charge, for the *mohajirin* constituted the first community of the Prophet having migrated with him from Mecca to Medina. Altaf Hussain himself was born in Karachi to *mohajirs* who had migrated from the city of Agra in the UP at the time of the Partition. The *mohajirs* have never failed to emphasize the sacrifices they made for the creation of Pakistan—to indeed underline the fact that they were the primary creators of Pakistan. The MQM, which was started by Hussain in 1984, emerged as a significant player in Pakistani politics soon after its formation, electorally sweeping the *mohajir* strongholds of Karachi, where it continues to have a commanding presence.[5] Altaf Hussain, by highlighting the current plight of the *mohajirs*, was also pointing out that the nomenclature signified the incompleteness of their integration in Pakistan, nearly sixty years after its Independence.[6]

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[4] The former cricketer Imran Khan who heads the *Tehrik-i-Insaf* party in Pakistan went to court to press charges of treason against Altaf Hussain.

[5] Altaf Hussain fled to Britain in the early 1990s as the government launched a crackdown against the MQM in Karachi for its alleged terrorist activities. He was granted political asylum in Britain and went on to become a British citizen. He continues to live in self-imposed exile in London from where he leads his party in Pakistan. A rousing speaker, Altaf Hussain delivers weekly speeches from London which are broadcast via satellite link up in the Mohajir strongholds of Karachi. For an insightful account of these weekly rallies in Karachi, see Oskar Verkaaik, *Migrants and Militants: Fun and Urban Violence in Pakistan*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.

[6] The same term was however not used to describe a much bigger migration which dwarfed the exodus of the UP and Bihar Muslims. This was the migration of millions of Muslim refugees from the Indian Punjab to Pakistan. These were seen as Punjabis, not refugees.

To complete the triptych, a few months after Altaf Hussain's histrionics in New Delhi, Lal Krishna Advani, the President of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the leader of the Opposition in the Indian Parliament, created history of sorts on his visit to Pakistan.[7] On the last leg of his journey in Pakistan, Advani finally landed in Karachi. For Advani, it was a homecoming, as Karachi was the city of his birth, his native place, as Indians are wont to say. Press reports noted that instead of first visiting his old school or the house in which he grew up, Advani headed straight for the mausoleum of Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan. After paying his respects, Advani wrote in the visitors' book that

> There are many people who leave an inerasable stamp on history. But there are a few who actually create history. Qaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah was one such rare individual.

It was however not the comment in the visitors' book but an accompanying report by the Press Trust of India (PTI), India's official news agency, which created news the next day. The PTI quoted Advani as saying that Jinnah's August 11, 1947 speech to Pakistan's Constituent Assembly was

> a classic, a forceful espousal of a secular state in which while every citizen would be free to pursue his own religion, the state should make no distinction between one citizen and another on grounds of faith. My respectful homage to this great man.[8]

The statement created a firestorm of controversy in India. The Congress, India's grand old party, that makes the original claim on India's secular and composite nationalism, ridiculed Advani. The party spokesman described Advani's characterization of Jinnah as 'secular', 'truly ironic and astonishing' and caustically asked the BJP leader to clarify on 'his new definition of secularism'.[9] The party spokesman

[7] The following account of Advani's trip to Pakistan is sourced from *The Hindu*, 5 June 2005.
[8] Ibid.
[9] See the statement of Abhishek Manu Singhvi, Congress party spokesman, 7 June 2005, *The Hindu*.

further added that

> For Mr. Advani as for Mr. Jinnah as was for Veer Savarkar, secularism justifies a two-nation theory and electorates divided on the basis of religion. Perhaps, Mr. Advani wants Jinnah's brand of secularism for India, which cannot be compared to the secularism of Gandhi and Nehru.

A furious Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the parent organization of the BJP, that had given Advani a grand send off for the trip, openly expressed its disagreement with his views and demanded an explanation.[10] An embarrassed BJP which had been trying hard to reinvent itself as India's only truly nationalist party, lost no time in distancing itself from its President. Advani had after all committed that most cardinal of crimes, of eulogizing a man who in Indian nationalist histories is an arch-villain for having mutilated the motherland's sacred geography. Even Advani's closest followers and supporters in the party deserted their leader in this moment of controversy. The party rudely brushed aside his invitation for a debate on the issue and a humiliated Advani was forced to resign as the BJP President, his standing almost irreparably damaged within the party.[11]

There was some irony in Advani's fall from grace within his party. It was after all Advani who had been responsible for the BJP's meteoric rise in Indian politics by providing a new charge and impetus to the ideology of *Hindutva*. It was again Advani who had coined the term 'pseudo-secularism' to disparage the ideology of the Congress party, which according to him, coddled minorities and cultivated the Muslim 'vote-bank' behind its mask of secularism. The irony was heightened by the fact that Advani has a First Information Report (FIR) lodged

[10] See the statement of Ram Madhav, RSS spokesman, *The Hindu*, 6 June 2005.

[11] Advani was subsequently rehabilitated and was also fielded as the BJP's Prime Ministerial candidate in the 2009 general elections. But a more recent book on the Partition by senior party leader Jaswant Singh which again praised Jinnah resulted in his expulsion from the party. Jaswant Singh too was recently rehabilitated after having had to cool his heels outside for several months.

against him at Karachi's Jamshed Quarters police station for allegedly conspiring to assassinate Jinnah in 1947.[12]

These vignettes are a testimony to two persistent facts about the history and politics of contemporary South Asia. First, they are a reminder that the Partition of the subcontinent, far from being a settled fact of history, is a much disputed event and continues to evoke strong emotions in both India and Pakistan. The continuing hostility between the two nuclear armed neighbours on the question of Kashmir after three inconclusive wars, has often been described as the unfinished business of the Partition, nearly sixty-five years after Britain divided and quit the subcontinent. The ideas of India and Pakistan and their integrity as nation-states have faced serious challenges as a result of this unfinished business. India faced a serious secessionist movement in the Punjab in the 1980s and continues to tenaciously hold on to Kashmir in the face of an ongoing secessionist movement in the region, both of which are largely acknowledged to have been aided and abetted by Pakistan. While India has been relatively successful in managing these secessionist movements, these threats have been far more serious and damaging for Pakistan. Pakistan lost nearly half of its population and territory when its eastern wing seceded and formed a new republic of Bangladesh in 1971 after a decisive Indian intervention. Pakistan has also faced serious secessionist movements in Sind, Baluchistan and the North West Frontier Province (NWFP). The only province in Pakistan which has not seen such a secessionist movement is the Punjab, whose dominating presence in Pakistani politics, economy, army, and civilian bureaucracy has been an important factor in stoking unrest and separatism in the other provinces of the country. The recent

[12] The existence of this FIR was leaked to the media during General Musharraf's visit to India for the Agra Peace Summit in 2002. On that occasion Advani reportedly presented the general with a list of India's most wanted criminals being harboured by Pakistan, headed by the gangster Dawood Ibrahim, the alleged mastermind behind the bomb blasts in Bombay in 1993 that killed several hundred people. The miffed Pakistani delegation stiffly denied that Ibrahim was resident in Pakistan. Musharraf went on to blame the 'hardliner' Advani for sabotaging his peace summit with the Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee.

assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, a Sindhi, led to unprecedented violence in Karachi and was described by some observers as violence against the federation of Pakistan itself.

Second, just as the testimony of a dead man's spirit along with those of others pointed to a radical indeterminacy regarding the central incident of the narrative in Akira Kurosawa's *Rashomon*, the testimony of the *Qaid-i-Azam's* spirit along with the controversies surrounding the Partition of India, points to a similar difficulty regarding the 'truth' about the Partition and Pakistan. The controversy in the Partition debates begins with use of the term 'Partition' itself. It has been argued that 'Partition' is primarily an Indian designation of the event for it connotes a mutilation of India's sacred geography and a disruption of its unitary history. There is some truth to this argument since Indian nationalists operating with a singular conception of the subcontinent's history and geography have viewed India as a civilizational unity. The underlying theme of India's history in these accounts is the absorption into India of numerous peoples and cultures since the dawn of civilization and the emergence of a distinct Indian unity in the midst of its diversity.[13] Pakistan, in the Indian nationalist imagination, is thus of recent pedigree, a very modern phenomenon, and ultimately a tragic historical aberration. The event is usually attributed to the perfidious British policy of 'divide and rule' that was unfortunately aided and abetted by the Muslim League (ML), led by collaborationists and reactionaries who unleashed their rabid brand of 'communal politics in order to wrest Pakistan.[14]

Pakistani nationalists on the other hand prefer to describe the same event as *Azadi* (freedom) instead of Partition. They reject the nomenclature of the subcontinent as the 'Indian subcontinent' and instead seek to deploy the term the 'Indo-Pakistan subcontinent' to describe the region. They have also resisted the melting pot version of South Asian history, repudiated the drastic foreshortening of Pakistan's antiquity and sought to write a parallel and separate history of South

[13] For a classic exposition of this view see Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India*. London: The John Day Company, 1946.
[14] See Bipan Chandra et al., *India's Struggle for Independence*. New Delhi: Penguin,1988.

Asian Muslims and Pakistan. Pakistan's origin in their narratives often begins with the incorporation of Sind into the Umayyad Empire by Muslim armies of the Caliphate in the 9th century AD.[15] This narrative thus emphasizes the special identity of Indian Muslims, the importance of Islam to such an identity, and the struggle of the Muslims to hold on to that unique identity in the Indian environment over several centuries.[16] More 'proximate' histories of Pakistan see the coming of the nation as a natural and inevitable culmination of irreconcilable divisions between Hindus and Muslims in the 19th and 20th centuries. And needless to say, these narratives end with how the heroic Jinnah singlehandedly led his people to Pakistan and freedom in the final leg of this long historical journey.

However, as the historian Gyanendra Pandey has pointed out, in spite of some of these objections, the term 'Partition' has entered into the lexicon of several languages in both India and Pakistan and is extensively used by historians on both sides to refer to the division of British India.[17] While Nationalist histories have thrived on both sides of the border over the past sixty-five years—in school textbooks, popular culture, and institutional memories, to name a few sites of their existence—a rich multi-disciplinary efflorescence of studies on the Partition has also emerged especially in the last two decades. These debates have explored the causes, conditions, and processes that led to the Partition and the creation of modern India and Pakistan besides examining how the event affected, and continues to affect the lives of millions of people in the subcontinent as well as their diasporas in several countries abroad.

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[15] See I.H. Qureshi, *The Muslim Community of the Indo-Pakistan Subcontinent (610/–1947): A Brief Historical Analysis.* S-Gravenhage: Mouton, 1962.

[16] See Aziz Ahmad, *Studies in Islamic Culture in the Indian Environment*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999.

[17] See Gyanendra Pandey, *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism and History in India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 13–14.

How did Pakistan Happen? Reviewing Partition Historiography

Historians studying the Partition initially analysed the actions and motivations of major political players in the Partition drama justifying it on the grounds that it was the decisions of these great men that made history. The United Provinces of Agra and Oudh (now Uttar Pradesh, UP, India) was at the center of the earliest historiography in this genre which traced the origins of Pakistan to local politics in this province in the decade preceding Partition.[18] The centerpiece in this regard was the fiasco over ministry making in the UP, the bitterness it created among its social and political Muslim elite, and how in turn they started a mass campaign to discredit the provincial Congress government as 'Hindu Raj' by raking up controversies over *Vande Mataram*, Hindi-Urdu, and the Wardha scheme of education. All these factors, it is widely believed, were critical in reviving the sagging political fortunes of the ML leader M.A. Jinnah and transforming the UP into an ML bastion from where the Pakistan movement began its successful journey.[19] These painstaking analyses of UP politics during the era of Congress government between 1937 and 1939 were however not followed by detailed studies of the Pakistan movement in UP or the role played by the its men in this struggle at the all India level, for the focus soon shifted to the 'high politics' of the Partition.

This shift in focus was primarily facilitated by the publication of the massive 'Transfer of Power' volumes from declassified British government documents. Disentangling complex threads of negotiations

[18] See the essays in C.H. Phillips & M.D. Wainwright (eds), *The Partition of India: Policies and Perspectives, 1935–47*. London: Allen & Unwin, 1970; Deepak Pandey, 'Congress-Muslim League Relations, 1937–39: The Parting of Ways', *Modern Asian Studies* 4, 12, (1978) pp. 626–652; Sunil Chander, "Congress-Raj Conflict and the Rise of the Muslim League, 1937–39", *Modern Asian Studies*, 21, 2 (1987) pp. 303–328; Salil Misra, *A Narrative of Communal Politics, Uttar Pradesh, 1937–39*. Delhi: Sage Publications, 2002.

[19] See Venkat Dhulipala, 'Rallying the *Qaum*: The Muslim League in the United Provinces 1937–1939', *Modern Asian Studies*, May 2010 for a fresh analysis of ML politics in the UP for this period.

between the British Government, top echelons of the Congress and M.A. Jinnah as the 'sole spokesman' of the Indian Muslims, the new scholarship sparked off a contentious debate regarding 'the guilty men of India's partition'.[20] The ball was set rolling by Ayesha Jalal, who began her seminal book with the question, 'how did a Pakistan come about which fitted the interests of most Muslims so poorly?'[21] In addressing this question, Jalal analysed the movement for Pakistan through Jinnah's 'angle of vision', primarily taking into account the actions and imagined political strategy of this 'sole spokesman' of the Indian Muslims. In a novel and controversial thesis which has become the new orthodoxy in the field, Jalal asserted that a separate sovereign Pakistan was not Jinnah's real demand, but a bargaining counter to acquire for the Muslims, political equality with the numerically preponderant Hindus in an undivided post-colonial India. The Cabinet Mission Plan, she contends, came close to what Jinnah really wanted, but it was rejected by Congress leaders who vengefully pushed Jinnah's demand to its logical conclusion by forcing the Partition upon him.

While Jalal's Cambridge thesis challenged existing commonsense about Pakistan's creation, the spirited counter-response by her Oxford counterpart Anita Inder Singh steered the argument towards more conventional Congress party waters. Contesting the Jalal thesis, Singh contended that Pakistan as it finally emerged in 1947 bore a close resemblance to the demand that was couched in the ML's 1940 Lahore Resolution, and indeed corresponded to the logic of the resolution.[22] Arguing that Jinnah's vision of Pakistan was based on the repudiation of any idea of a united India, Singh charted in great detail the process by which a determined Jinnah was able to outmanoeuvre a war weary British establishment and the Congress led by 'tired old men', as Nehru put it, to successfully accomplish his goal of partitioning India and forming a sovereign Pakistan.

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[20] See Ram Manohar Lohia, *Guilty Men of India's Partition*. Hyderabad: Ram Manohar Lohia Samata Vidyalaya Nyas, 1970.

[21] Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, p. 4.

[22] Anita Inder Singh, *Origins of the Partition of India*, 1936–1947. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1987.

The emphasis on UP as the center of the Partition drama was however renewed as a result of '*longue duree*' histories of the region from the so-called Cambridge school of history that underlined the depth of communal cleavages in north Indian society, and the ways in which they contributed to the eventual division of British India. Particularly important in this regard were C.A. Bayly's influential researches that explicated the rise in the 18th century of distinct social identities and ideologies coalescing around Hindu and Muslim elites in north India, whose mutual antagonisms intensified in the context of a fading Mughal empire, *before* the colonial state began to consolidate itself.[23] By stressing long-term continuities in the history of conflict between Hindus and Muslims in the subcontinent that pre-dated the rise of colonialism, these studies seemingly absolved the colonial state of some of the blame for the rise of 'communalism' and consequently the Partition.

Francis Robinson, another historian from the Cambridge school, complemented the researches of C.A. Bayly by substantiating the implications of his 'continuity thesis' for the 19th and 20th centuries.[24] Robinson therefore charted the emergence in colonial north India of a new self-conscious community of Muslims, united by an acute awareness of their distinct religious and political identity. Led by the *ulama* in the face of Mughal collapse, this community developed in the context of an incipient 'print capitalism' involving mass publication of the Quran and Islamic classics in Urdu translations, new methods of Muslim mass education through revamped *maktabs* and *madrasas* and the rise of a new autonomous individual Muslim self which began

[23] C.A. Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars: North India in the Age of Imperial Expansion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983; *Empire and Information: Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 1780*–1870. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. See also *Origins of Nationality in South Asia*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998 where Bayly argues that South Asian nationalisms were not just European derivatives but built upon local patriotisms with indigenous concepts, symbols and sentiments echoing the model developed by Anthony D. Smith.

[24] See the various essays in Francis Robinson, *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia*. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000 (OIP).

to directly access the holy texts. Combined with improved transport and communication links between South Asia and the core lands of Islam that facilitated greater movement of scholars, pilgrims and ideas, Robinson argued that these developments intensified trends towards more purist versions of Islam in India besides deepening the Indian Muslim sense of belonging to the *ummah*, the global community of Muslims. In the light of these historical processes, Robinson concluded that it was hardly surprising that South Asian Muslims tended to organize politically on the basis of their religion. He further noted that it is for these reasons that the Congress was unable to gain the confidence of the bulk of the Indian Muslims, who gravitated towards the ML as it led the drive towards Pakistan.

In making some of these arguments, Robinson drew upon path-breaking works by Barbara Metcalf on Islamic revival pioneered by the *ulama* at Deoband, and by David Lelyveld on the parallel development of *ashraf* Muslim solidarity at the Muslim University in Aligarh in the 19th century north India. Along with Gail Minault's pioneering study of the Khilafat movement in India led again by the UP Muslims, these studies further highlighted the province's importance as the heartland of Indian Muslim culture and politics.[25] In the ensuing debate over the reasons behind the UP Muslims support for Pakistan, Robinson again adopted the 'primordialist' position by arguing that it is this sense of a separate religio-political identity among the UP Muslims that provided the impetus for the Pakistan movement.[26] The 'instrumentalist' counterpoint, on the other hand was provided by the

[25] Barbara Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860–1900*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982; David Lelyveld, *Aligarh's First Generation: Muslim Solidarity in British India*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978; Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982.

[26] 'Nation Formation: The Brass Thesis and Muslim Separatism', in Francis Robinson, *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000, pp.156–76. Robinson's initial work, though, had discounted the power of ideas and relied on the 'loaves and fishes of office' model to explain politics in colonial India. See Francis Robinson, *Separatism Among Indian Muslims: The Politics of United Provinces Muslims, 1860–1923*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975.

political scientist Paul Brass, who attributed the Pakistan movement's success in the UP to its *ashraf* Muslim quest for attaining political power through 'symbol manipulation' and 'myth creation' while claiming to defend separate rights and interests of north Indian Muslims.[27]

Subsequently, the Robinson thesis was reinforced by Farzana Shaikh's monograph on the development of modern north Indian *ashraf* Muslim political culture. Shaikh argued that this culture was 'based on an unmistakable awareness of the ideal of Muslim brotherhood, a belief in the superiority of Muslim culture and recognition of the belief that Muslims ought to live under Muslim governments.'[28] She further related these attitudes to Islamic political theology which recognized the Muslim community as the basic building block of a political community with individual Muslims enjoying political rights only within its framework. Shaikh argued that in this set-up, only Muslims could represent Muslims. Pakistan was thus inevitable, given the incommensurability of the foundational values of this *sharif* political culture with those of liberal democracy upon which undivided India's democracy would presumably have been predicated.

In contrast to this trend emphasizing Muslim separatism, another strand of scholarship highlighted the heroic but unsuccessful efforts in the cause of an undivided India by prominent Muslims, hailing primarily from the UP Z.H. Faruqi's work on the Deobandi *ulama* demonstrated how these holy men stood by the Congress in stoutly opposing the ML's drive towards Pakistan.[29] Complementing Faruqi's work, Mushirul Hasan in his many books has underscored a similar

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[27] Paul Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974. Brass drew upon the theoretical model developed in Karl Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication: An Inquiry into the Foundations of Nationality*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1966.

[28] Farzana Shaikh, *Community and Consensus in Islam: Muslim Representation in Colonial India 1860–1947*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 230

[29] Ziaul Hasan Faruqi, *The Deoband School and the Demand for Pakistan*. New York: Asia Publishing House, 1963. Also see Barbara Metcalf, *Husain Ahmad Madani: The Jihad for Islam and India's Freedom*. Oxford: One World Publications, 2009.

contribution by Congress 'Nationalist Muslims' from the UP.[30] Hasan also pushed the tiller in a new direction by arguing that the rise of Muslim communalism that led to the Partition was not just the result of the ML's politics, but also the Congress party's failure to adequately challenge it with a rigorously uncompromising brand of secular politics. He attributed this failure to the Hindu right wing's power within the Congress which ostensibly sabotaged Nehru and Congress socialists' quest to integrate Muslims into the nationalist mainstream.

William Gould's recent monograph has lent some substance to this insight by contending that the Congress party in the UP (including its socialist wing), was dominated by Hindu nationalists, whose ideology and political practice arguably provoked and sustained separatist Muslim politics and the drive towards Pakistan.[31] This line of thinking has further been supplemented by Charu Gupta's social history of Hindu nationalism in the UP that underlines the popular Hindu communalist construction of the Muslim as the masculine, unclean outsider from whom women and the holy land had to be protected.[32] Indeed, these works need to be placed in the context of a burgeoning literature over the last decade and a half on the growth and spread of Hindu nationalism in different parts of India in the 19th and 20th centuries.[33] Manu Goswami's recent monograph has added a new dimension to this scholarship by demonstrating that Hindu nationalism was not the Other

[30] Mushirul Hasan, *India's Partition: Process, Strategy, Mobilization*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993; also Chapters 1–3 in his *Legacy of a Divided Nation: India's Muslims Since Independence*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001.

[31] William Gould, *Hindu Nationalism and the Language of Politics in Late Colonial India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

[32] Charu Gupta, *Sexuality, Obscenity, Community: Women, Muslims and the Hindu Public in Colonial India*. New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2001.

[33] See among others, Vasudha Dalmia, *The Nationalization of Hindu Traditions: Bharatendu Harishchandra and Nineteenth Century Banaras.* New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996; Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Sangh Parivar*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005; *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics*. New Delhi: Viking Penguin, 1996; Manjari Katju, *Vishva Hindu Parishad and Modern Politics*. Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2003; Thomas Blom Hansen, *The Saffron Wave: Democracy and Hindu Nationalism in Modern India*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.

of a secular, composite Indian nationalism led by the Congress. Instead, Indian nationalist thought was simultaneously anchored in autarkic economic theories seeking to preserve India's national wealth within its borders, and organic conceptions of Mother India as a living being and a Hindu Goddess.[34]

While Partition historiography may initially have been UP-centric, it was not long before the focus of scholarship shifted once again, this time in the direction of the Punjab and Bengal which were partitioned to create Pakistan. These studies provided a counterpoint to separatist Muslim histories from the UP by pointing to the Pakistan idea's late popularity in these provinces, besides its insufficient and uncertain comprehension amongst its Muslims. Thus, Ian Talbot in his work on the Punjab discounted the role of religious ideology and popular agency in the struggle for Pakistan, and instead explained its creation primarily in terms of its rural Muslim elites 'rationally' switching their loyalties in the treacherous sands of Punjabi politics to a rising ML, as Jinnah gained prominence at the centre and the Unionist party hemorrhaged almost continuously in post-war Punjab.[35]

Complicating this story, David Gilmartin's nuanced monograph located Muslim parties, factions, and their conflicts within the fundamental contradiction that the Pakistan movement brought to a head in Punjabi Muslim society.[36] This contradiction lay between competing ideas of the *Quam*—as 'community' in rural Punjab based on 'spiritual inequality, mediation and hierarchy' epitomized by Sufi shrines and their *sajjada nashins*; and as 'nation' comprised of equal, like-minded Muslims in horizontal solidarity, best articulated by urban-based reformist *ulama* aligned to the ML. The idea of Pakistan, Gilmartin argued, overcame this fundamental contradiction by emerging

[34] Manu Goswami, *Producing India: From Colonial Economy to National Space*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004.
[35] Ian Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj 1849–1947*. New Delhi: Manohar, 1988; *Provincial Politics and the Pakistan Movement*. Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1988.
[36] David Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam: Punjab and the Making of Pakistan*. Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988.

primarily as a central *symbol* of Muslim solidarity and Islamic authority in the context of the rise of electoral politics.

Complementing these studies from Punjab, Haroon-or-Rashid's study of Muslim Bengal further challenged the unicity of the Pakistan idea, arguing that its imagination by influential sections of Bengal ML was very different from that of Jinnah, for they saw it in terms of an independent Eastern Pakistan or an undivided greater Bengal.[37] For Rashid, the Pakistan movement therefore 'foreshadowed' the arrival of Bangladesh in 1971. Joya Chatterji's subsequent study affirmed this thesis besides adding a further dimension by arguing that it was Bengal's Hindu *bhadralok* who were primarily responsible for partitioning that province.[38]

The subaltern studies scholar Gyanendra Pandey has however launched a blistering critique of this whole range of scholarship for reducing South Asian history to a teleological biography of the nation-state. Pandey has further deplored the inability of the discipline of History to account for the violence and suffering of the Partition besides condemning its naturalization of the nation-state with its mainstream majorities, inassimilable minorities, and the 'routine violence' of the former against the latter. His studies on north India have instead privileged 'fragmentary' histories involving ordinary Hindus and Muslims with 'un-partitioned' selves, multiple identities and shared life-worlds, operating in their own times that chop up and crisscross the established chronologies of nation-states in South Asia.[39] These insights have been recently extended by Vazira Zamindar's sensitive monograph that explains the Partition primarily as a long, post-1947 phenomenon in

[37] Harun-or-Rashid, *The Foreshadowing of Bangladesh: Bengal Muslim League and Muslim Politics*, 1936–1947. Dhaka: Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, 1987.
[38] Joya Chatterji, *Bengal Divided: Hindu Communalism and Partition, 1932–1947*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
[39] Gyanendra Pandey, *Routine Violence: Nations, Fragments, Histories*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006; *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006 (second edition); *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism and History in India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

which the post-colonial states of India and Pakistan actively produced Indians and Pakistanis by demarcating borders, establishing passport and visa regimes, and managing forced migrations and evacuee properties of displaced Muslims and Hindus.[40]

The recent books by Willem van Schendel and Lucy Chester have further underlined this line of thinking by highlighting the ambiguities of the Partition as evident from the seeming lack of comprehension among 'Indians' and 'Pakistanis' about their status, as they found themselves in two countries consequent to the drawing of the Radcliffe Line. Their books have also underlined the massive human tragedies that accompanied this cartographic exercise in Bengal and Punjab, how it never resolved the problems that it was meant to resolve, and instead created new ones for those living in the borderlands and its myriad enclaves, an ongoing commentary on the continuing legacies of the Radcliffe Line.[41] These works are part of a new wave of Partition scholarship focused on the partitioned provinces of Bengal and Punjab that include ethnographies detailing personal histories of ordinary people especially women caught up in its violence.[42] These studies again point to an utter lack of comprehension on the part of the people as their worlds collapsed around them as a result of unfathomable political decisions taken at the top. They have further been accompanied by increasing interest in literature and cinema generated by experiences

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2001; 'The Prose of Otherness', in David Arnold and David Hardiman (eds), *Subaltern Studies VIII: Essays in the Honour of Ranajit Guha*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994, pp.188–222; 'In Defense of the Fragment: Writing about Hindu-Muslim Riots Today', *Representations*, Winter 1992, pp. 27–55.

[40] Vazira Zamindar, *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007.

[41] Willem Van Schendel, *The Bengal Borderland: Beyond State and Nation in South Asia*. London: Anthem Press, 2004; Lucy Chester, *Borders and Conflict in South Asia: The Radcliffe Boundary Commission and the Partition of Punjab*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009.

[42] Ritu Menon & Kamla Bhasin, *Borders and Boundaries: Women in India's Partition*. New Delhi: Kali for Women, 1998; Urvashi Butalia, *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 1998; Vazira Zamindar, *The Long Partition*, New York, 2007.

of the Partition, now deemed more suitable than the discipline of History for articulating its suffering, violence and displacement.[43]

Given this rich efflorescence in the field, in an influential review essay marking the fiftieth anniversary of the Partition, David Gilmartin tried to reconcile its divergent viewpoints in order to come up with an overarching explanation that would account for Pakistan's creation.[44] The key for Gilmartin lay in linking the 'High Politics' of Partition to the 'actions and agency of Muslims in their varied contexts', thus explaining popular influence on the momentous political decisions that came to be taken in the imperial chambers at Delhi, Simla, and London. Gilmartin therefore enquired as to why Muslims with local, multiple identities coming from diverse contexts provided such overwhelming support to an 'extraordinarily vague' idea like Pakistan. In addressing this question, he argued that Pakistan was seen by most Muslims primarily as a 'transcendental symbol of Muslim community' than as a territorial nation state located in a specific part of India. It is this *non-territorial* conception of Pakistan he insisted, that could explain its popularity *even among Muslims belonging to the 'minority provinces'* which would remain outside Pakistan.[45]

As evident, Gilmartin's hypothesis reflects a widely shared assumption in Partition scholarship of the last two decades notwithstanding some sharp conflicts within the field—that Pakistan was an extraordinarily vague idea and that popular support for Pakistan could be explained primarily in terms of Muslims rallying around an emotive religious symbol or an abstract, nebulous idea without being aware of its meaning or implications. Thus, Ayesha Jalal has dismissed popular conceptions of Pakistan tersely noting that 'a host of conflicting

[43] Gyanendra Pandey, *Routine Violence*, 2006; M.U. Memon, *An Epic Unwritten: The Penguin Book of Partition Stories from Urdu*. New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 1998; Bhaskar Sarkar, *Mourning the Nation: Indian Cinema in the Wake of Partition.* Durham: Duke University Press, 2009.
[44] David Gilmartin, 'Partition, Pakistan and South Asian History: In Search of a Narrative', *Journal of Asian Studies*, 57, no. 4, (November 1998) pp. 1068–1095.
[45] Ibid., p. 1082.

shapes and forms, most of them vague, were given to what remained little more than a catch-all, an undefined slogan'.[46] Anita Inder Singh, while disagreeing with Jalal's thesis on Jinnah, has also argued that Pakistan remained a vague concept and meant 'all things to all Muslims.'[47] This view ironically has also found support from the fierce critic of such Great Man history, the subaltern studies scholar Gyanendra Pandey. He too has therefore noted that 'the Muslims had fairly widely supported the movement for Pakistan, though, as was already becoming evident, few had clear ideas about what that goal meant'.[48] Mushirul Hasan too has located the ML's successful achievement of Pakistan *'not so much in the realm of ideas* or popular Muslim upsurge for achieving a desired goal, as in the realm of high politics. He has therefore called for greater scholarly attention to be paid to the performance and subsequent resignation of Congress ministries in 1939, the fluid political climate on the eve of and during the [World] War, the Congress decision to launch the Quit India movement, and the government's readiness to modify its political strategy towards the League.'[49] Indeed, the most recent general history of the Partition by Yasmin Khan has largely echoed some of these themes besides emphasizing the confusion and uncertainty about the future of the subcontinent that gripped India at large at the end of World War II, with the only certainty being that the British would quit India sooner rather than later.[50]

Pakistan, by all accounts, seems to therefore have happened in a fit of collective South Asian absentmindedness, the tragic end result of the 'transfer of power' negotiations gone awry, hastily midwifed by a cynical, war weary Britain anxious to get out of the morass of an imploding empire, leaving the unsuspecting millions to face its brutal

[46] Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, The Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1985, p. 4.
[47] Anita Inder Singh, *Origins of the Partition of India*, 1987, Oxford University Press, New Delhi, p. 107.
[48] Pandey, *Routine Violence*, 2006, p. 135.
[49] Mushirul Hasan, *Legacy of a Divided Nation: Indian Muslims since Independence*, Oxford University Press, 2001 (OIP). pp. 55–56.
[50] Yasmin Khan, *The Great Partition: The Making of India and Pakistan.* New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2007.

consequences. And, somewhere in the dialectic between the secret politics of ambivalent elites and inchoate aspirations of the masses seemingly lies the hazy answer to the riddle of Pakistan. That broadly sums up the emphasis of both the older and newer waves of scholarship over the past two decades, leaving us trapped between the incongruous and unyielding polarities of Jinnah and Toba Tek Singh.

Pakistan: A Nation Insufficiently Imagined?

But the explanations given within this spectrum raise more questions than they answer. The most deeply troubling question that comes up relates to the seeming absence of any debate, discussion, or contestation over the idea of Pakistan, which surely became the most pressing political issue confronting all Indians once the ML had lobbed its bombshell at Lahore in March 1940. This seems a strange anomaly in a society as 'argumentative' as India. One explanation that has been given to clinch this issue is that neither the British government nor the Congress ever confronted Jinnah with the implications of his demand, thus never quite 'flushing Jinnah into the open'. Thus, as the overlords on all sides played their high stakes game of poker, keeping their cards close to their chests, and the rest were caught up in the vicissitudes of life, chaos was bound to happen once the game came undone. Such being the scenario, it is assumed that Pakistan was never 'sufficiently imagined' and that even this incipient imagination was further truncated by Pakistan's rather premature arrival that caught everyone by surprise.

Yet, it must be pointed out that even the secretive Jinnah often poked fun at his opponents who accused him of not being clear about Pakistan. As he noted during the election campaign in the autumn of 1945, 'They (Congress) say they do not understand Pakistan. If you do not understand it, then what is it that you are opposing?[51] Moreover, while the elections of 1945–46 greatly clarified the stakes involved in the partition, one need not wait that long to see the valence the issue had assumed; for Pakistan began to be debated with much zest and passion right from the time of the Lahore resolution till the Partition, and beyond, as it continues to be debated now. So how was Pakistan

[51] *Dawn*, 20 October 1945. Speech at Quetta.

articulated, discussed, debated and fought over in the public sphere during the run up to the Partition?

If we were to look at the UP, it becomes clear that two themes became central in the its Muslims imagination of Pakistan and played a critical role in attracting popular support for its creation— thanks to the extensive propaganda by the ML in the aftermath of the 1940 Lahore Resolution. First, Pakistan was envisioned as a sovereign state in the Muslim majority provinces of British India which would not only be the natural home of Indian Muslims to which they all had the right to migrate, but a potent international guarantor for protecting the rights and interests of Muslims staying behind in post-colonial Hindu India. This conception was bolstered by conceptions of Pakistan as a powerful nation–state blessed with adequate territory, rich human and natural resources, infrastructural assets, and strategic location abutting fellow Muslim states of West Asia, enabling it to project its influence not just beyond its immediate borders, but on the world stage.[52] Territorial sovereignty was thus central in the imagination of the UP Muslims while debating the idea of Pakistan. The wording of the Lahore resolution by denoting Muslim majority areas in the northwest and the northeast of the subcontinent as Muslim homelands, which were to be sovereign, clearly placed the Muslim minority provinces such as the UP, outside the territorial domain of Pakistan and firmly in the realm of Hindustan. It is precisely this assumption that it would remain outside Pakistan that informed public discussions in the UP in the aftermath of the Lahore resolution. Thus, far from being an amorphous or vague idea or a fundamentally 'non-territorial vision of nationality', the extensive public debates on Pakistan compelled an engagement with maps, territories, geographies and their alteration, which occupied the minds of not only the rational, western educated political elites, but also of the 'vernacular public' in South Asia.

Second, this vision of a sovereign territorial state of Pakistan was crucially linked to Pakistan's anticipated role in redeeming Islam's

[52] See Venkat Dhulipala, 'A Nation-State Insufficiently Imagined? Debating Pakistan in Late Colonial North India', *Indian Economic and Social History Review*, July–September 2011, pp. 377–405.

historic destiny in the subcontinent and the world at large. In this regard, Pakistan was imagined as a new Medina, an Islamic utopia where a just and equal brotherhood of Islam would be established dissolving myriad particularistic identities of Indian Muslims to serve as a model for the whole Islamic world. As the new Medina, Pakistan was anticipated to emerge as the leader of the Islamic world in the 20th century, a laboratory where experiments in Islamic modernity would be successfully conducted en route to ushering a new Islamic renaissance in the 20th century. This idea was popularized by an influential section of the Deobandi *ulama*, who charged the UP Muslims with special responsibility for bringing this new Medina into existence, as the modern counterparts of the *muhajirin* who had accompanied the Prophet on his *hijrat* to help him create that ideal state and society.

Popular articulations of Pakistan in the public sphere blended these secular and theological arguments. It was therefore assumed that while the 'geo-body' of Pakistan with its natural and human resources, infrastructural assets, strategic location would provide it with material strength, Islam would demonstrably constitute its soul and spirit. Pakistan was thus expected to not just survive but to emerge as a far more powerful state than India, and to become a major player not just within the subcontinent, but in the *umma* and the world at large. This material–spiritual complex was ultimately seen as carrying forward the South Asian Muslim contribution to Islam from the 18th century.

This question of 'vagueness' of Pakistan however needs to be addressed much more substantially. While Pakistan had its share of ambiguities which allowed its supporters and opponents to interpolate meanings, the idea of its extraordinary vagueness and the consequent confusion in the minds of the people has been greatly exaggerated if one were to go by the evidence from the UP. This would also hold true for other minority provinces of British India. The Lahore Resolution initially 'shocked all communities in India including the Muslims themselves' given its radical suggestion about partitioning India.[53] The pandemonium that ensued across India was further exacerbated by Jinnah's resolute refusal to immediately provide an elaborate blueprint for the new nation-state. However, the minimalist definition of Pakistan

[53] Zetland to Linlithgow, 24 April, 1940, Linlithgow Papers. OIOC, British Library, London.

as a sovereign state for the Muslims in the Muslim majority provinces was, as the Viceroy noted, 'something that the meanest intelligence can understand [and] is taking very deep root among Muslims'.[54] Such a simple definition of Pakistan therefore had a positive virtue when it came to rallying the Muslims.

But it needs to be remembered that this minimal definition of Pakistan was followed by several progressively clarifying statements on Pakistan by Jinnah. These clarifications emerged as the Cripps Mission implicitly conceded Pakistan and Jinnah quelled recalcitrant and powerful opponents in the key provinces of Punjab and Bengal, thus consolidating his grip over the ML and emerging as the 'sole spokesman' of the ML if not the Muslim community. Jinnah's public statements did indeed help in clearing some of the initial confusions surrounding the idea of Pakistan even if some (though not all) of his interlocutors in the Congress or the British government may have continued to view it as a bargaining counter. These were followed by an elaborate defense of Pakistan by the ML through its propaganda that was issued under the auspices of the Home Study Circle located at Jinnah's residence in Bombay.

The Lahore Resolution, Jinnah's subsequent clarifications, as also those of his lieutenants in the UP, and the party propaganda on Pakistan evoked critical responses from the Congress and its allies such as the ulama of the Jamiatul Ulama-i-Hind (JUH) with their intimate connections to the Darul Uloom at Deoband. The JUH seized upon what they saw as weaknesses, ambiguities and contradictions in the Pakistan demand and unleashed searing critiques of the Muslim League's new scheme. This led to acrimonious public controversies and contending assessments regarding Pakistan's viability in terms of its economy, security, social and political stability, its place in the international community of nations, its ramifications for Indian Muslims in general and for Muslims from 'minority provinces' like the UP in particular. The 'Islamic' vision of Pakistan too was passionately contested by other Deobandi *ulama* leading to a formal split within their ranks for the first time in their institutional history. Questions

[54] Linlithgow to Amery, 2/4 May, 1943, Linlithgow Papers, OIOC, London.

regarding the problems and prospects of the Partition thus exercised the minds of not only the English speaking political elites but also of a larger public inhabiting the vernacular sphere. These debates came to a head by the time of the elections of 1945–46 which were a referendum on Pakistan. In thus highlighting the extensive public debates which fed popular conceptions regarding Pakistan and the accompanying hopes, apprehensions and questions that confronted the UP Muslims who indeed led the struggle for its creation, this book reiterates that this nation-state was not always 'insufficiently imagined' in the process of its creation as has been assumed thus far in Partition historiography.

The study of how the idea of Pakistan was imagined and contested in a Muslim minority province like the UP is evidently important given the leading role that its Muslims, and indeed those belonging to the 'minority provinces', played in the struggle for its creation. However, a further task awaiting historians of the Partition is to analyse the valence possessed by issues raised in these debates—of sovereignty, territoriality, economy, international relations, Islamic foundations of Pakistan—in the 'majority provinces' where Pakistan actually came into being. Furthermore, while not denying that the imagination of Pakistan became associated with rich sets meanings at multiple sites, the essay argues that its dispersal into several local imaginations of community without the central focus of the state has been overemphasized. The essay therefore makes a case for 'bringing the state back in' if we are to understand the overwhelming popularity of Pakistan among Muslims in all parts of India.

In this context it needs to be remembered that the public sphere, in part comprised of Urdu newspapers and a reading debating public encompassed the whole of India and was not just confined to the UP. Its breadth, depth and reach has been demonstrated by historians who have analyzed popular mobilization during the Khilafat movement to show how its leaders such as Mohammad Ali or Abul Kalam Azad used their pointed pens through the medium of newspapers to successfully whip up popular Muslim sentiment against the British government. Analysis of the Urdu press during the Pakistan movement makes clear that Urdu newspapers from different parts of India

carefully scrutinized each other's reportage, shared and commented on stories and articles appearing in each other's issues, thus keeping up lively conversations on what became the most pressing political issue of the day for Muslims in India. Individual papers too were not just confined to the provinces of their origins. Thus, a newspaper like the *Madina* from Bijnor in the UP which opened up its columns for a debate on Pakistan to its readers—what they understood by it, whether they supported it or opposed it—received responses from places as far apart as Bombay in the west, Chatgaon in the east and Raichur in the Deccan. If indeed we are to take seriously C.A. Bayly's idea of the presence of an informational order in India making it a remarkably informed and argumentative society in spite of its low levels of literacy, we could infer that debates over Pakistan reached a wider public than just the newspaper reading literati.

Finally, the tropes of accidental state formation, secular nationalism, along with that of insufficient national imagination have long dominated explanations regarding not just Pakistan's origins, but also its post-colonial trajectory. Thus, Pakistan has been seen primarily in terms of a bargaining counter never intended to be achieved, whose accidental achievement set the tone for the trajectory of the post-colonial state. Even if one were to discount this idea, the struggle for Pakistan is still seen as a quest, not for the creation of a theocratic state, but for the establishment of a modern liberal democracy.

This idea no doubt owes its existence to the figure of M.A. Jinnah, a modern, anglicized, non-practicing, wine-drinking, pork-eating Muslim. Jinnah's speech to Pakistan's Constituent Assembly in which he made a firm statement regarding Pakistan's secular character has often been adduced as evidence in this regard. But the obsessive attention that has been paid to Jinnah obscures the fact he was not the 'sole spokesman' of the Indian Muslims and that there were other voices which we need to hear. It has therefore led to downplaying of the role of others, most prominently the *ulama* in constructing and articulating the idea of Pakistan as an Islamic state in the run up to the Partition. Moreover it has to be noted that the anglicized ML elite and the *ulama* have thus far been seen as separate groups with separate agendas and vocabularies of politics. However, the run up to the Partition saw a common political vocabulary being forged that

intertwined concepts of modern politics with those of the ulama's political theology in order to make the most persuasive arguments for Pakistan.

Indeed, a symbiotic relationship developed between these two groups based on the understanding that this modern Islamic state would not be established immediately, but emerge in the future as a result of a process of negotiations, consultations between and among these two groups. It is this understanding that accounts for the quest for an Islamic Constitution for Pakistan, soon after its establishment. It also accounts for the salience of Islam as the language of politics in Pakistan even if religious parties in the country have never managed to capture power based on popular vote. And it is perhaps the deferral of the resolution of this question regarding the place of Islam in Pakistan's public life that explains some of the problems that plague Pakistan today. Indeed the collaboration between these two groups needs to be examined much more closely if we are to make sense of postcolonial Pakistan's complex identity.

Pakistan's birth in the trauma of the Partition, the early deaths of Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan, the weakness of the ML's organization in the provinces where Pakistan came into existence, the fractiousness and venality of its second-rung politicians, the insecurities that it experienced vis-à-vis its hostile neighbour India—all these factors are added up to explain the nation-state's structural weaknesses and the consequent rise of the 'ideological' state in Pakistan, often led by the army. This has further been described in terms of a tragic betrayal of Jinnah's vision. While not denying the importance of these factors in explaining Pakistan's postcolonial trajectory, the essay however suggests that the origins of the 'ideological' state in Pakistan lie not just in its post-independent insecurities, but at the very core of its nationalist ideology that developed in the run up to the Partition. Studies of Pakistan that emphasize its 'insufficient imagination' therefore overstate the case. Indeed, it is not insufficiency of Pakistan's imagination but its very plenitude and ambition, coupled with the failures (and successes) of the post-colonial state in matching up to its expectations which accounts for the crises that confront Pakistan today.