

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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Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	vii
Introduction	1
<i>Ali Usman Qasmi and Megan Eaton Robb</i>	
1. Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani and the Jami'at 'Ulama-i-Hind: Against Pakistan, against the Muslim League <i>Barbara D. Metcalf</i>	35
2. The Partition Conundrum: Perspectives, Experiences and Ambiguities from <i>qasbahs</i> in India <i>M. Raisur Rahman</i>	65
3. Choudhary Rahmat Ali and his Political Imagination: Pak Plan and the Continent of Dinia <i>Tabir Kamran</i>	82
4. Differentiating between Pakistan and <i>Napak-istan</i> : Maulana Abul Ala Maududi's Critique of the Muslim League and Muhammad Ali Jinnah <i>Ali Usman Qasmi</i>	109
5. Advising the Army of Allah: Ashraf Ali Thanawi's Critique of the Muslim League <i>Megan Eaton Robb</i>	142
6. The Illusory Promise of Freedom: Mian Iftikhar-ud-Din and the Movement for Pakistan <i>Ali Raza</i>	169
7. Visionary of Another Politics: Inayatullah Khan 'al-Mashriqi' and Pakistan <i>Markus Daechsel</i>	190
8. Nonviolence, <i>Pukhtunwali</i> and Decolonization: Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the Khuda'i Khidmatgar Politics of Friendship <i>Safoora Arbab</i>	220

9. Islam, Communism and the Search for a Fiction <i>Ammar Ali Jan</i>	255
10. Muslim Nationalist or Nationalist Muslim? Allah Bakhsh Soomro and Muslim Politics in 1930s and 1940s Sindh <i>Sarah Ansari</i>	285
11. Dancing with the Enemy: Sikander Hayat Khan, Jinnah and the Vexed Question of 'Pakistan' in a Punjabi Unionist Context <i>Newal Osman</i>	311
12. Religion between Region and Nation: Rezaul Karim, Bengal, and Muslim Politics at the End of Empire <i>Neilesh Bose</i>	338
13. 'The Pakistan that is going to be Sunnistan': Indian Shi'a Responses to the Pakistan Movement <i>Justin Jones</i>	350
14. The Baluch <i>Qaum</i> of Kalat State: Challenging the Ideological and Territorial Boundaries of Pakistan <i>Abdul Majeed</i>	381
<i>Contributors</i>	399
<i>Index</i>	403

Acknowledgements

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'iyat, 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

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

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 *kabristan* (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 (*goṭ*) 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 suzerainty 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

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*

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-vice-roy 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

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.

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

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.

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

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

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 *qasbahs* 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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