Tai Yong Tan
and
Gyanesh Kudaisya

The Aftermath of Partition in South Asia

Rouledge Studies in the Modern History of Asia

The Aftermath of Partition inSouth Asia

'A valuable academic study of the subcontinent which is accessible to the seriousgeneral reader and enhances our understanding of some of its most intractableproblems.'

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The partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 was a defining moment which has powerfully shaped the destinies of people in the South Asian region. The birth of nation-states of India and Pakistan produced reverberations which were both immediate and long-term. This book focuses on the aftermath of partition and takes stock of its long-term consequences.

Earlier works on partition have portrayed it as a tragic and unintended consequence of decolonization, or subordinated it to the larger dramas surrounding the advent of independence. This book sees partition in its own terms. It argues that it was not a single event, but a trigger of processes which have left a deep imprint on state and society in the region. Where other books have looked only at the *causes* of partition, this book broadens the horizon by looking at its *effects*. It is constructed around two key motifs: the dislocations and disruptions, and the long-term impact of partition on peoples, places and institutions.

The Aftermath of Partition in South Asia draws upon new theoretical insights and fresh bodies of data to reappraise partition historically in the light of its long aftermath. It uses a comparative approach by viewing South Asia in its totality, rather than looking at it in narrow national terms. As the first book to focus on the aftermath of partition, it fills a distinctive niche in the study of contemporary South Asia. It will be important reading for scholars and students of the History and Politics of South Asia and to those concerned with decolonization in general.

Tai Yong Tan is Associate Professor in the Department of History, National University of Singapore. **Gyanesh Kudaisya** is Assistant Professor in the South Asian Studies Programme at the National University of Singapore.

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Aizaz Rasul, Begum (1909–) a prominent Muslim League leader from Uttar Pradesh; member of Constituent Assembly of India (MCA); subsequently joined Indian National Congress.

Ali, Chaudhury Mohammad (1905–1980) civil servant before 1947; Secretary-General to Government of Pakistan; subsequently Finance Minister and Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Auchinleck, Field Marshal Sir Claude John Eyre (1884–1981) Commanderin-Chief, India, January-July 1941 and from 1943 to 1947.

Azad, Abul Kalam (1888–1958) scholar and nationalist leader; President of Indian National Congress 1923 and 1939–46; Minister for Education in Government of India 1947–58.

Bhargava, Gopi Chandra (1890–1966) member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA), Punjab; Chief Minister of East Punjab after 1947.

Campbell-Johnson, Alan (1913–) Press Attache to Viceroy, 1946–8.

Caveeshar, Sardul Singh (1886–1963) prominent Punjab leader; President, All India Sikh League 1920; Secretary and later Acting President, Punjab Provincial Congress Committee, 1931–2; President, All India Forward Bloc, 1941–8.

Correa, Charles M. (1930–) one of the best-known Indian architects.

Cripps, Sir (Richard) Stafford (1889–1952) Member of UK Parliament (Labour); carried constitutional proposals to India in 1942; member of Cabinet Mission to India in 1946; President, Board of Trade from 1947.

Darling, Sir Malcolm (1889–1952) member of the Indian Civil Service in Punjab before 1947; well known also for his studies of village life.

Doxiadis, C.A. (1913–1975) internationally known Greek architect; prepared the master-plan for Islamabad and was responsible for many of its buildings; proponent of Ekistics, a new approach to human habitation.

Gandhi, M.K. (1869–1948) barrister from Gujarat who trained Indians in South Africa to resist injustices by non-violent passive resistance; on return to India in 1915 adopted same methods to resist British rule; lauded as 'Father of the Nation' by Indians; assassinated by a Hindu fanatic.

Gidwani, Choithram (1889–1957) President of Sindh Provincial Congress Committee, 1947.

Gupta, Saibal Kumar (1902–1989) member of Indian Civil Service; District and Sessions Judge, 1931–47; Chairman of Calcutta Improvement Trust, 1950–60; Chairman of Dandakaranya Development Authority.

Hamid, Shahid Military Secretary to the Commander-in-Chief, India, till August 1947; subsequently joined the Pakistan army.

Hussain, Altaf (1953–) founder of Muhajir Quami Mahaz; now in exile in London.

Iqbal, Sir Mohammad (1876–1938) an influential Islamic philosopher and poet in Persian and Urdu; widely regarded as the spiritual inspiration behind the idea of Pakistan.

Ismay, Hastings Lionel, 1st Baron Ismay of Wormington (1887–1965) Chief of Viceroy's Staff, 1947.

Jallundary, Hafeez (1900–1980) Urdu poet who composed the Pakistan national anthem.

Jenkins, Sir Evan Meredith (1896–1985) member of Indian Civil Service, Private Secretary to Viceroy, 1943–5; Governor of Punjab, 1946–7.

Jinnah, Mohammed Ali (1876–1948) President of All-India Muslim League, 1916, 1920 and from 1934. Spearheaded the Pakistan movement from 1940 and popularly feted as the *Quaid-i-Azam* (the Supreme Leader).

Jinnah, Fatima (1893–1967) sister of Mohammed Ali Jinnah.

Kahn, Louis B. (1901–1974) well-known Estonian-born American architect; drew the master-plan of the Capitol complex at Dhaka and designed its principal buildings.

Karaka, D.F. (1911–1974) noted Bombay-based journalist and editor; associated with *Bombay Chronicle,* 1938–49 and later with *Current* as its editor.

Kartar Singh, Giani (1905–1974) member of Punjab Legislative Assembly; leader of Akali party and close ally of Akali leader, Master Tara Singh.

Kashmiri, Shorish (1914–1975) a prominent journalist and editor of the journal *Chattan;* born in Kashmir but lived in Amritsar till 1947; migrated to Pakistan.

Khaliquzaman, Choudhary (1889–1973) a prominent member of Indian National Congress in Uttar Pradesh until 1937, when he joined the Muslim League; member, Working Committee of All-India Muslim League, 1947.

Khan, Field Marshal Ayub (1907–1974) Lt. Colonel in the Punjab Boundary Force, 1947; subsequently rose to become Commander-inChief and first military ruler of Pakistan between 1958 and 1969.

Khan, General Yahya (1917–1980) Commander-in-Chief of Pakistan Army under Ayub Khan; subsequently Chief Martial Law Administrator of Pakistan between 1969 and 1971.

Khan, Liaquat Ali (1895–1951) General Secretary of the Muslim League from 1936; member of Interim Government 1946–7; Prime Minister of Pakistan from 1947 until his assassination in 1951.

Khan, Nawab Ismail (1884–1958) son of Nawab Ishaq Khan (a prominent landlord and one of the leading lights of Aligarh University); lawyer and politician;

member of Legislative Council in the 1920s; one of the most prominent leaders of the Muslim League in Uttar Pradesh.

Khosla, G.D. (1901–) member of the judicial branch of Indian Civil Service; subsequently Chief Justice of East Punjab High Court; wellknown writer.

Kripalani, J.B. (1899–1979) President of Indian National Congress, 1946–7; member of Constituent Assembly of India and Indian Parliament; subsequently active as an opposition leader.

Kripalani, Sucheta (1903–1974) wife of J.B.Kripalani; Secretary, Women's Section of Indian National Congress; member of Constituent Assembly of India and Indian Parliament; subsequently Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh, 1963–7.

Lall, Dewan Chaman (1889–1965) Punjab politician; founded All India Trade Union Congress in 1920; MLA, Central 1924–31 and 1945–8; MLA, Punjab 1937–45; MCA 1945–8; Indian Ambassador to Turkey 1949–50; subsequently Member of Rajya Sabha.

Le Corbusier (1887–1965) internationally reputed Swiss-born, French architect; widely acknowledged as the founder of the influential Modernist school; creator of the new capital city of Chandigarh.

Mandal, Jogendra Nath (1906–1956) Leader of the Scheduled Castes' Bloc in Bengal Legislative Assembly; Member (Law), Interim Government, 1946–7; Member of Pakistan Constituent Assembly; Minister for Law and Labour, Government of Pakistan, 1947–50; resigned from Cabinet in October 1950 and returned to India.

Manto, Saadat Hasan (1912–1955) one of the most influential Urdu writers of his generation; belonged to a Kashmiri family of Amritsar; educated at Aligarh; worked in All India Radio, 1941–3; worked in Bombay film industry, 1943–8; moved to Karachi in January 1948; celebrated for his sensitive writings on the human dimension of partition.

Menon, V.P. (1894–1966) Reforms Commissioner of Government of India, 1946–8.

Moon, Sir Penderel (1905–1987) Indian Civil Service 1929–44; minister in the princely state of Bikaner, 1947.

Mountbatten, Rear-Admiral, Viscount Louis (1900–1979) Viceroy of India, March-August 1947. Created Earl Mountbatten of Burma in 1947; became Admiral of the Fleet in 1956.

Mountbatten, Edwina, Lady (1901–1960) wife of Lord Mountbatten.

Munshi, K.M. (1891–1971) Home Minister, Bombay 1937–9; MCA.

Nazumuddin, Khwaja (1894–1973) Bengal Muslim League politician; Prime Minister of East Pakistan, 1947; subsequently Governor-General of Pakistan.

Nehru, Jawaharlal (1889–1964) prominent leader of Indian nationalist movement; President of Indian National Congress 1929–30, 1936, 1937, 1946. Prime Minister of India, 1947–64.

Patel, Vallabhbhai (1875–1950) Congress leader from Gujarat; President of Indian National Congress, 1931; Member, Interim government, 1946–7; Deputy Prime Minister of India, 1947–50.

Poddar, Hanuman Prasad (1892–1971) leader of campaign for cow protection; proprietor of Gita Press and editor of *Kalyan,* a popular Hindi journal advocating *Hindutva.*

Prasad, Rajendra (1884–1963) lawyer and politician from Bihar; President of Indian National Congress, 1934, 1939, and 1947–8; President of Constituent Assembly of India, 1946–9; President of India, 1950–6.

Radcliffe, Sir Cyril John (1899–1977) Director-General, Ministry of Information, 1941–5; Vice-Chairman, General Council of the Bar from 1946; Chairman, Punjab and Bengal Boundary Commissions, 1947.

Radhakrishnan, Sarvapalli (1888–1975) philosopher and educationalist; Professor at Oxford; Vice Chancellor, Benaras Hindu University, 1942–3; MCA 1946–7; subsequently President of India, 1962–7.

Rahman, Sheikh Mujibur (1920–1975) East Bengal politician; leader of the Awami League; Prime Minister of Bangladesh from 1971 until his assassination on 15 August 1975.

Rajagopalachar, Chakravarty (1878–1972); lawyer and politician from Madras; Prime Minister, Madras, 1937–9; Member of Interim Government, 1946–7; Governor of West Bengal, 1947–8; Governor-General of India, 1948–50.

Randhawa, M.S. (1909–1986) member of Indian Civil Service; Deputy Commissioner of Delhi, 1947; subsequently associated with Indian Council of Agricultural Research and Punjab Agricultural University at Ludhiana; writer on Indian paintings.

Rushdie, Salman (1947–) Bombay-born writer in English; well known for his celebrated work, *Midnight's Children.*

Sachar, Bhim Sen (1893–1978) Congress leader from Punjab; Member of Punjab Legislative Assembly, 1945–7; Member of Pakistan Constituent Assembly, 1947; subsequently Chief Minister of East Punjab.

Savarkar, V.D. (1883–1966) President, All Indian Hindu Mahasabha, 1937–44; ideologue of Hindu cultural nationalism; propounded the concept of *Hindutva.*

Short, Major John McLaughlin Indian Army, civil liaison officer, Punjab, 1941–2; personal assistant to Stafford Cripps during Cabinet Mission to India.

Sikander Hayat Khan (1892–1942) leader of Unionist Party and Premier of the Punjab, 1937–42.

Singh, Khushwant (1915–) well-known Delhi-based writer, journalist and historian of the Sikhs.

Singh, Maharaja Hari (1895–1961) ruler of Kashmir, 1947.

Singh, Tarlok (1913–) member of Indian Civil Service in Punjab; posted in Finance Department, Government of India, 1944–6; Private Secretary to Interim Prime Minister, 1946–7; Director General of Rehabilitation, Government of East Punjab, 1947; Member, Planning Commission, New Delhi, 1949–66.

Sri Prakasa (1890–1971) Secretary of Indian National Congress, 1927 and 1931; High Commissioner for India in Pakistan, 1947–8; subsequently Cabinet Minister in Government of India and Governor of Assam, Madras and Maharashtra.

Suhrawardy, Huseyn Shaheed (1893–1963) lawyer and politician from Calcutta; Minister in Bengal Government, 1937, 1943–6; Chief Minister of Bengal 1946–7; worked with Mahatma Gandhi in restoring communal peace during partition; subsequently went to Pakistan; Prime Minister of Pakistan from 1956–7.

Tandon, Purushottam Das (1882–1962) Congressman from Allahabad; speaker Uttar Pradesh Assembly 1937–9 and 1946–50; President of Indian National Congress until 1950; subsequently resigned due to differences with Nehru.

Tara Singh, Master (1885–1967) leader of the Akali Sikhs.

Thapar, P.N. (1903–1982) Indian Civil Service officer in Punjab; Commissioner of Lahore and Jullundur Divisions, 1947–8; Financial Commissioner, Rehabilitation, 1948; Chief Administrator, Chandigarh Capital Project, 1949–53; subsequently Secretary, Ministry of Finance to Government of India.

Tuker, Gen. Sir Francis (1894–1967) General Officer Commander-in-Chief Eastern Command, India, 1947.

Preface

This work has its origins in our years as graduate students at the University of Cambridge when we were both pursuing our individual research which broadly looked at political change experienced by two different regional societies in the penultimate decade of colonial rule in South Asia. While these years did not contribute directly to the writing of this book, they instilled in us a lively interest in the larger subject of decolonization. They familiarized us also with the complexities of debates relating to the prelude to partition, and in some ways prepared us to engage with this theme, although in quite a different way. This work took a more concrete form when we were invited by Professor Anthony Low, who supervised both our doctoral dissertations at Cambridge, to contribute to a Workshop on 'Northern India and Independence' which he organized in 1993. We are greatly indebted to him for this initial stimulus and for providing advice and criticism. We have received his encouragement and generous support unstintingly over the years.

Many institutions have made it possible for us to pursue this work. Financial support for it came in the form of a generous research grant from the National University of Singapore (NUS); a Fellowship at the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi; and a senior award of a Research Scientistship by the University Grants Commission in India. The Centre for Advanced Studies at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, NUS, offered an institutional base as well as a congenial atmosphere for research and writing for which we are grateful.

In the course of our research and writing, we have drawn upon the goodwill and cordiality of many individuals.

We would like to express our gratitude to Tong Chee Kiong, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, NUS, his predecessor, Ernest Chew, and Edwin Lee, Head of History Department, for their support and encouragement in so many ways. Many of our friends and colleagues at NUS have helped with advice, suggestions and kind words of support and to them, in particular, Peter Reeves, Andrew Major, Taj Hashmi, Lily Kong, Teow See Heng, Yong Mun Cheong, Chin Kin Wah, Hank Lim and Brenda Yeoh, we would like to express our heartfelt thanks.

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In Victoria Smith we could not have hoped for a better editor. We are much indebted for her belief in us and in our work, and for her appreciation of the reasons which distract academics from keeping to their deadlines. It has been a pleasure to work with her and Craig Fowlie at Routledge. We have benefited enormously from the comments provided by an anonymous reviewer who offered astute advice for the improvement of the manuscript, while remaining sympathetic to the overall framework and integrity of this work.

We have drawn upon materials for some chapters from pieces that we have published earlier.

Chapter Eight draws upon Tai Yong Tan, 'Punjab and the Making of Pakistan', first published in *South Asia,* vol. 18, 1995. Chapter Five draws upon Gyanesh Kudiasya, "The Demographic Upheaval of Partition: Refugees and Agricultural Resettlement in India, 1946–67', also first published in *South Asia,* vol. 18, 1995. We are thankful to the editors and publishers of this journal for their copyright permission.

Chapter Six draws upon Gyanesh Kudiasya, 'Divided Landscapes, Fragmented Identities: East Bengal Refugees and their Rehabilitation in India, 1947–79', first published in *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography,* vol. 17 (no. 1), pp. 24–39, 1996; and reprinted with permission.

Chapter Four draws upon Tai Yong Tan, 'Prelude to Partition: Sikh Responses to the Demand for Pakistan, 1940–47", originally published in the *International Journal of Punjab Studies,* vol. 1 (no. 2), 1994, which is copyright © Association for Punjab Studies, UK, 1994. All rights reserved. Reproduced with the permission of the copyright holders and the publishers, Sage Publications India Pvt Ltd, New Delhi.

The copyright for W.H.Auden's poem 'Partition', from *W.H.AudenCollected Poems* ed. E.Mendelson, rests with Faber and Faber (London) and Random House (New York), and we gratefully acknowledge their permission to use the poem in Chapter Three.

Many of the maps used have drawn upon the earlier works of O.H.K. Spate. The international boundaries shown in these maps purport to be neither correct nor authentic.

We were able to obtain the services of Davinder Singh Dhillon, Deepti Madhvan and K.Vinaygan, part-time research assistants, who helped in bibliographic work and in searching primary materials on microfilm in the later phase of our research. Ms Kelly Lau was our most invaluable assistant, helping in a multitude of tasks. Her considerable skills with the computer spared us many hours of frustrating tussle with our workstations. We are thankful for Mrs Lee Li Kheng and Mrs Chong Mui Gek, cartographers at the Department of Geography in NUS, for preparing the maps which appear in this work.

This book, from conception to completion, has taken us a number of years. During this time, we were both fortunate to be able to enjoy the love, understanding and sustenance of our respective families. Our deepest thanks go to Sylvia and Medha without whose comments, support and constant encouragement this book could not have been written. Thanks also to Cheryl, Brinda and Ben, three playful and delightful children, for providing welcome distractions through the writing of this book.

While this book is jointly authored, the responsibility for the initial drafts of each of the chapters was taken individually. Chapters Three, Four, Eight and Nine were drafted by Tai Yong Tan, and Chapters One, Two, Five, Six and Seven by Gyanesh Kudaisya. However, both of us are jointly responsible for any errors and omissions and none of the individuals whose assistance we have acknowledged is in any way liable.

Tai Yong Tan
Gyanesh Kudaisya
June 1999

1
Introduction
The place of partition in South Asian histories

> Partition *n.* 1 break-up, division, separation, splitting up. 2 barrier, panel, room-divider, screen, wall. *vb.* cut up, divide, parcel out, separate off, share out, split up, subdivide.
>
> *(Oxford English Dictionary)*

Celebrations: the half-centennial of independence in South Asia

In the autumn of 1997, as these lines are being written, commemorative events are under way in the Indian subcontinent to mark the fiftieth anniversary of independence and partition. Celebrations have been marked with exuberance, enthusiasm and fervour even in remote parts of Pakistan and India and elaborate programmes have been drawn up in both the countries to celebrate the Golden Jubilee Year. The spotlight has turned on the story of South Asia's destiny since 1947: on how the region has fared since the end of colonial rule, and what its people have done with the freedom which they achieved after bitter turmoil and sacrifice.[1] Major international news publications have brought out special issues of great length and television stations across the globe have covered the celebrations in New Delhi and Islamabad in prime-time programmes.[2] In countries outside the subcontinent, particularly in the UK, events of a wide-ranging nature have been planned at both official and unofficial levels to mark the anniversary of this historic turning-point as well as to reinforce and renew links.[3] The Queen of the United Kingdom has visited India and Pakistan and the President of the USA has announced plans to visit the region during the Golden Jubilee Year

In Pakistan, the celebrations were heralded by a special midnight session of the National Assembly in which Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif envisioned a 'glorious future' for the country. He recalled how Pakistan had to face aggression when it had just begun its journey and declared that the nation, having survived the trauma of its birth and the obstacles thereafter, had now become invincible.[4] The following morning at a special ceremony outside parliament in Islamabad the national flag was hoisted with a thirty-one gun salute, and in the provincial capitals of Karachi, Lahore, Quetta and Peshawar similar ceremonies took place with twentyone gun



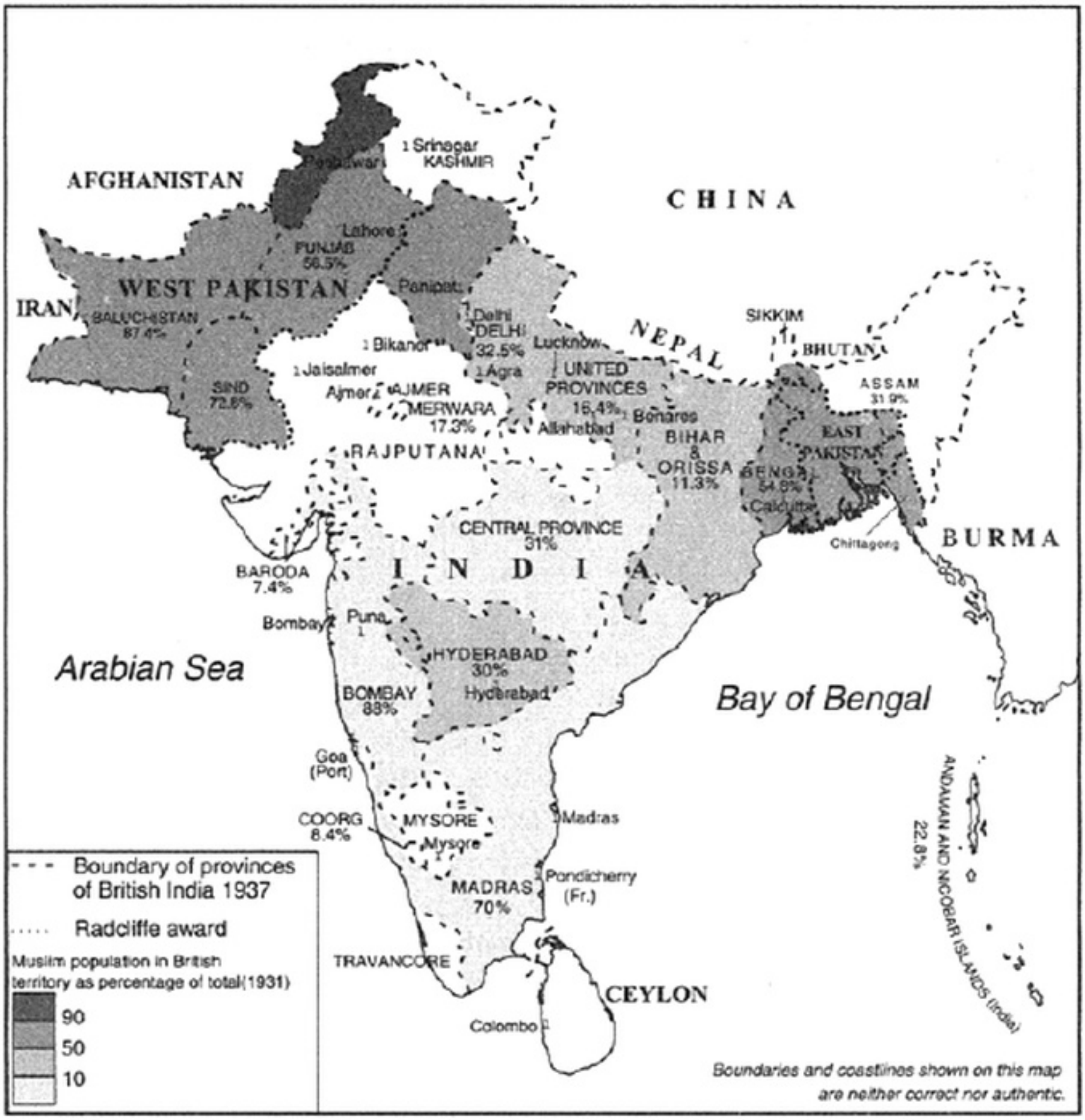
Map 1.1 Political map of the Indian subcontinent

salvos. Sirens alerted the people in all major cities to the ceremonies which included a minute's nation-wide silence in the memory of those who had sacrificed their lives for the creation and preservation of Pakistan. The focal point of the events was the mausoleum of the *Quaid-i-Azam* Mohammad Ali Jinnah in Karachi where an impressive and colourful change of guards ceremony took place. Wreaths were laid and *fateha*prayers offered by dignitaries and common people alike who visited the *mazar*. In Lahore, Nawaz Sharif and other leaders visited the tomb of

poetphilosopher Allama Mohammad Iqbal, widely regarded as the spiritual inspiration behind the idea of a separate homeland for Muslims in the subcontinent. The President and Prime Minister in separate messages urged the people to 'help eliminate prejudice, ignorance and corruption' and contribute to the effort 'to build a modern progressive state with a sound scientific and economic basis and social justice'.

It is extraordinary that in India very similar ceremonials were being enacted with matching fervour. Official functions started with a 'March of the Nation' along New Delhi's Rajpath. Over 25,000 people in costumes of twenty-five different states and in colours of the national flag marched hand-in-hand from India Gate on the 3 km route to reach President's House where Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral received them. At the head of the parade were freedom fighters. The singing of patriotic songs and a display of fireworks followed. Thereafter began the main highlight of the evening, a special midnight session of parliament, with the singing of the national anthem and a two-minute silence to honour the memory of the martyrs of freedom. A short excerpt from a speech by Mahatma Gandhi was relayed and this was followed by the broadcast of Jawaharlal Nehru's 'Tryst With Destiny' speech which was recreated almost to the minute fifty years after it had been delivered. The words *Sare jahan se achcha* ('The best place in the world') by Lata Mangeshkar, the country's best-known artist, rang out as she sang Iqbal's famous *Tarana-i-Hind*. An address by the newly-elected president K.R. Narayanan followed, urging people to build social movements to fight 'poverty, population growth and environmental degradation.' The following morning, on 15 August 1997, the Prime Minister raised the national tricolour over Delhi's seventeenth-century Red Fort, in a tradition dating back to the first independence day. A fly-past of fighter jets produced smoke plumes of white, saffron and green, the colours of the national flag, as the Prime Minster rose to make his speech in which he paid rich tributes to those who had struggled against colonial rule.

While these official functions were the highlights, the celebrations were by no means confined to these, and in both India and Pakistan popular expressions of national pride took diverse forms. In the federal capitals of Islamabad and Delhi there was an explosion of glitter as buildings were illuminated with neon lights, and archways were put up at prominent crossings and markets with salutations and portraits of national leaders. Shops, markets and houses were bedecked with flags, colourful buntings and miniature national emblems. From dawn, volunteer groups went round neighbourhoods collecting people for flag-hoisting ceremonies. Children's choirs sang the national anthem and patriotic songs and bands performed in parks. Concerts, poetry sessions, folk dances and musical extravaganzas were organized in many cities. Floats depicting regional cultural motifs featured prominently in rallies which took place everywhere. Throughout Pakistan special prayers were offered in mosques during congregational worship for progress, solidarity and integrity. Multitudes flocked to the memorials of Jinnah and Gandhi in Karachi and Delhi to pay their homage to the *Quaid-i-Azam* and the 'Father of the Nation' respectively. At many functions pigeons were released to signify



Map 1.2 India in 1947

freedom from bondage. In Delhi's walled city the residents followed the tradition of kite-flying with much fervour. At night tens of thousands of children in both countries lit candles and oil lamps and the sky was rent with deafening blasts of crackers and a massive display of fireworks. Torchlight processions took place in many areas and in at least two cities residents formed human chains as a symbol of unity. Soul-stirring scenes were thus witnessed in both India and Pakistan on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of independence.

However, the celebrations by the Pakistani and Indian people were not being shared by their Eastern subcontinental neighbour, Bangladesh. In the capital Dhaka black flags dotted the skyline and a sombre mood prevailed. The government had declared it a day of 'national mourning' to mark the twentieth anniversary of the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rehman, the 'founder' of Bangladesh. No celebrations took place to mark the end of British colonial rule and the creation of

East Pakistan fifty years before. Official nationalist discourse discounts 14 August 1947 either as a day of no historic consequence for Bangladesh or as a 'false dawn'. It advances the view that when British colonial rule ended the people of East Bengal did not experience freedom. The establishment of Pakistan did not bring about emancipation, as Punjabi civil-military *elites* came to dominate the 'nation' and 'only the masters changed'. What followed, according to them, were twenty-four years of Pakistani subjugation. After a bloody civil war and traumatic separation from Pakistan in 1971, the view of 1947 as a historic event has understandably taken on a complicated series of meanings and associations.

In Bangladesh today, the birth of the country is no longer traced to 14 August 1947. Instead, the nation draws its inspiration from 21 February 1952 whose anniversary is commemorated every year as 'Martyr's Day'. It was on that day that the language agitation, which first challenged Pakistani dominance and later developed into a fully-fledged separatist movement, claimed its first martyrs. For most Bangladeshis now, 1947 is little more than the stuff of history and current celebrations are regarded as 'an event of two foreign countries'. The Bangladeshi case is an extraordinary example of how a new nation, in its recent past, has reinvented its national identity and, in doing so, has invested a historic event with an entirely new set of meanings.

Stock-taking and introspection

As the tinsels and ribbons of the inaugural Golden Jubilee festivities are being cleared away in India and Pakistan, a sense of deep introspection and stock-taking has gripped both the countries. In this collective contemplation two motifs are predominant: the first is an effort to work out a 'balance-sheet' of national achievements and failures since 1947, and the second is to reflect upon the trauma of partition, with its diverse meanings and memories, and to belatedly come to terms with its reality.

The verdict on how India and Pakistan have done in the last fifty years is a mixed one for both the countries: 'fifty-fifty' as a news magazine proclaimed on the cover of its special commemorative issue.[5] Quite predictably, the diverse opinions and viewpoints of citizens and commentators alike have tended to converge into two broad positions which can conveniently be labelled as 'declinist' and 'optimist'. In the case of India, the 'declinist' view expounds the opinion that the hopes and aspirations of the nation's founding fathers have been belied as the majority of Indians continue to be shackled by dire poverty and widespread illiteracy. In this view:

> At 50, the Republic seems to be as mortally wounded in spirit as it is in the body of its ravaged and polluted environment. A third of the country's population precariously subsists below the poverty line; over 20 million children are enslaved in bonded employment, often under life-threatening conditions; the status of women continues to be a pawn on the chessboard

> of patriarchal gamesmanship; deepening fissures of caste, class and creed spew the lava of violence in periodic eruptions, as tragically predictable as they seem fatalistically inescapable. But perhaps the greatest danger lies not in any or even in all of these, not even in the cancer of corruption that is consuming us from within. The most subversive challenge that we face today is our growing cynicism, the reverse face of despair about the polity that we have made.[6]

A dismal picture is painted of the fifty years of India after it emerged from its 'tryst with destiny' in August 1947. The 'declinists' blame the political leadership for its many unforgivable failures: for squandering the legacy of the freedom struggle, for reviving passions of community and caste, for allowing the polity to become corrupt and for lacking a vision of what India's rightful place should be in the global economy.[7]

The 'optimists' challenge such bleak assessments. They argue that the country has attained food-sufficiency for its vast population and is recognized as a stable regional power in the international arena. In the rapidly integrating global economy 'the Indian elephant has begun to lumber, but it is at last moving forward'.[8] The proudest achievement, they claim, has been India's record as a democracy.[9] Democracy—as an ideal and as an institution—has struck deep roots in the Indian soil.[10] A political analyst goes to the extent of saying that, 'the period of Indian history since 1947 might be seen as the adventure of a political idea: democracy'.[11] The country has established universal adult franchise, conducted thirteen free and fair elections and its citizenry—made up of diverse linguistic and religious communities—is increasingly getting used to the idea of a decentralized, coalition-based system of federal governance.

The vibrancy of India's democracy inevitably gets contrasted with the polity of Pakistan and how it has fared since the nation's traumatic birth in 1947. Not unexpectedly, the verdict on the national balance-sheet of achievements and failures remains a mixed one, much like India. On the economic front, Pakistan has out-performed India as its annual growth rates have been faster and its GDP per head is significantly higher than that of its neighbour. On the downside, the failure to establish a stable democracy and the dominance of the political system by the military have attracted widespread criticism.[12] Half of its fifty years of existence have seen military rule, and only in the last decade has there been a jerky, uncertain movement towards an elected democracy. The cost has been enormous in terms of political rights as well as human development. It is reckoned that soldiers outnumber doctors nine to one and almost twothirds of the adult population is illiterate.[13] However, Pakistan's protagonists argue that, notwithstanding these failures, the nation has been an unqualified success in spiritual terms. Its founder *Quaid-i-Azam* Mohammad Ali Jinnah envisioned a separate homeland for the Muslims of the subcontinent and Pakistan's population remains overwhelmingly committed to that vision. At least the majority of Pakistani people believe that the Muslims of the subcontinent are better off now than before partition.[14]

Partition: 'the other face of freedom'

Shot through this introspection and soul-searching which the halfcentennial has triggered across the subcontinent is an attempt to come to terms with the phenomenon of partition—'the other face of freedom'—as the people of South Asia have come to look upon it.[15] It is striking that fifty years after the event took place there is tremendous popular interest in the memories and meanings of partition. To this day the overwhelming memory of 1947 for people across the whole of north India remains that of partition, rather than of independence. This memory has been reinforced by the actual experiences of vast numbers of people during partition which were traumatic as they faced violence, break-up of families and refugeehood. From a recovery of popular memory through oral history, from a reading of contemporary narratives and from a sampling of current reflections, it is impossible to miss the apocalyptic quality of the event. G.D.Khosla, one of the first authors to record the violent event, describes it as 'an event of unprecedented magnitude and horror'. He wrote in his work which was first published in 1949:

> History has not known a fratricidal war of such dimensions in which human hatred and bestial passions were degraded to the levels witnessed during this dark epoch when religious frenzy, taking the shape of a hideous monster, stalked through cities, towns and countryside, taking a toll of half a million innocent lives. Decrepit old men, defenceless women, helpless young children, infants in arms, by the thousands, were brutally done to death by Muslims, Hindu and Sikh fanatics. Destruction and looting of property, kidnapping and ravishing of women, unspeakable atrocities and indescribable inhumanities were perpetrated in the name of religion and patriotism.... Madness swept over the entire land, in an ever-increasing crescendo, till reason and sanity left the minds of rational men and women, and sorrow, misery, hatred, despair took possession of their souls.[16]

Almost fifty years later the view of partition as a cataclysmic event in the history of twentieth century South Asia has not changed. 'Partition', a commentator recently observed, is 'an and term for an event so drenched in blood, mass tragedy'.[17] Salman Rushdie, the Indian-born author, describes it as 'something of colossally horrible proportions' and as 'one of the century's great tragedies'.[18] The historian Mushirul Hasan characterizes it as 'a complex and convoluted tragedy' which 'cast its lengthy shadows on two generations' and marked 'the break-up of centuries' old social order in which communities lived in mutual coexistence'. The literary critic Alok Bhalla looks upon partition as 'the single most traumatic experience in our recent history', an experience which 'coarsened our social sense, distorted our political judgments and deranged our understanding of moral rightness.'[19] The geographer Ranabir Sammadar sees it as 'a concentrated metaphor of violence, fear, domination, difference, separation'. He takes the stance that

'partition still remains an active category in many ways in the life of the sub continent'.[20]

Across national boundaries in South Asia the view is now widely shared that partition was an 'epic tragedy' that changed the destinies of people in the region. Increasingly, as the long-term consequences of partition are becoming manifest, the perception is gaining ground that partition was not just an event but a trigger for a series of reverberations, the tremors of which can still be felt in the region.

The violence that shook northern India in the months before and after partition was dramatic: so were the refugee movements, whose scale even at that time was described as unprecedented in human history. Surely though, the story did not end there. Partition did not provide a 'solution' to the 'communal problem' which many had hoped for: rather, the problems of the 'minorities' were exacerbated. Their persecution continued, as shown by the demographic movements across the borders which continued till the 1960s, particularly in the Bengal region. Refugees whose numbers in the final count are estimated to be over 18 million struggled to resettle themselves and the energies of at least two generations were expanded in rebuilding lives shattered by the violent uprooting caused by partition. The regional tensions and cross-border conflicts which partition engendered continue to take their toll in human and economic terms. Partition continues to leave its imprint on aspects of everyday life in the subcontinent. In a sense, fifty years on, the story of partition is still unfolding. It is this story—of the aftermath of partition in South Asia— which is the subject of this work.

Historiography and its 'silences' over partition

Before we introduce the themes of this work, let us consider how partition has been looked at in the existing historiography and ponder over the 'silences' that feature in it. We could begin by examining the manner in which this historiography has evolved. For almost twenty years after partition took place, the subject was dominated by the reflections of those who participated in the 'event'. Biographies, autobiographies and memoirs held the field, and inevitably they focused the spotlight on 'great men' and their work. Many participants and observers were convinced that they had been witness to historic developments and were tempted to keep a record of their impressions by committing these to diaries. As the last British Viceroy in India, Lord Louis Mountbatten was acutely conscious of the great 'mission' he had been called upon to carry out in India and was particularly anxious that official records subsequently spoke eloquently about his actions.[21] His views, filtered through official papers and the interviews which he generously gave to writers later, have left a strong impression on the early reconstructions of that period.

Thus even as the curtain fell on the Raj, several accounts were brewing. Leading the pack were the memoirs of several distinguished colonial officials, both civil and military. The first of these, *At Freedom's Door,* were the impressions of a journey which Sir Malcolm Darling, a Punjab civil servant, made across northern India in

the early months of 1947. In his travels Darling discovered that 'the burning question was Pakistan, to be or not to be'. In conversations with villagers he could detect 'the smell of blood and hatred in the air' and the widespread apprehension that the British withdrawal would lead to conditions of 'collapse, carnage and chaos'.[22] Then, Gen. Sir Francis Tuker, chief of the Eastern Command at the time of partition, provided a 'ringside view' of 'the last phase of the India Army's watch and ward over the country'. He gave a vivid description of communal violence, particularly during the Bihar riots and the 'Great Calcutta Killings' which his troops were called upon to bring under control. Notwithstanding the widespread and dramatic collapse of law and order and authority which had accompanied partition, Tuker, however, asserted that the British-commanded armed forces were successful in carrying out their functions, in spite of the 'intolerable strain engendered by violent Indian politicians'.[23]

In the early 1950s many more accounts of the events surrounding partition became available, most notably Alan Campbell-Johnson's *Mission With Mountbatten*. Campbell-Johnson was anxious that 'already the fogs of propaganda and political invective are helping to obscure the view of Lord Mountbatten's momentous mission to India'. Not surprisingly, one cannot fail to see the sense of 'mission' in Campbell-Johnson's narrative to secure for Mountbatten his rightful place in history.[24] 'Within seventy days of our arrival the Partition Plan had been announced; a further seventy-two days after that, and the Viceroyalty itself was at an end', he writes. Undoubtedly, in his view, Mountbatten was the man responsible for finding a solution to the intractable 'Indian problem'. Other works in the same *genre* followed, including those by V.P.Menon and Penderel Moon, both connected with the process of partition in their official capacities. Menon, as Constitutional Advisor to the Governor-General, provided a detailed account of Mountbatten's viceroyalty. He took credit for convincing Vallabhbhai Patel (the key figure in the Congress 'High Command') of the futility of the Cabinet Mission Plan. He claimed that once Patel was won over to the idea of partition, he prepared a blue-print as early as in January 1947, much before Mountbatten was anywhere in the picture. Thereafter, Menon continued to lobby for this plan which Mountbatten adopted and later touted as his '3 June plan' and which finally cut the proverbial 'Gordian knot'.[25]Likewise, Penderel Moon in his *Divide and Quit* posed the question whether the terrible massacres and forced migrations which had accompanied partition could have been prevented. He concluded that, 'by the time Lord Mountbatten arrived in India it was far too late to save the situation.'[26]

If accounts of officials provide a partisan view of partition, those of Indian and Pakistani political figures make the story even more complicated. They entrap it within partisan and competing discourses of the nation-state. One example of this is *India Wins Freedom* by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, pre-eminent champion of Hindu—Muslim unity, poet and scholar of Muslim theology, president of Indian National Congress during 1940–6, and a principal figure during the final transfer of power negotiations and, after independence, the icon of 'secular' India.[27] Azad's autobiography provided a poignant narrative of the climacteric years between 1935

and 1948. It highlighted his valiant struggle to uphold the secular principle of Hindu-Muslim unity and his principled opposition, till the very last, to Jinnah's demand for Pakistan. Azad indicted his closest colleagues in the Congress, Nehru and Patel, for their 'mistakes' and 'failings' which led to the terrible denouement of partition. His account portrayed himself as a broken-hearted man when the Cabinet Mission plan, the last British attempt to transfer power to a single undivided Indian authority, fell through after being spiked by his Congress colleagues. He blamed Patel and Nehru for deserting him in his principled opposition to partition and succumbing to Mountbatten's pressure for accepting his 3 June Plan which sealed the fate of undivided India. He charged that Patel was the 'founder of Indian partition', described its acceptance as 'abject surrender on the part of the Congress', and pronounced that the verdict of history would be 'that India was divided not by the Muslim League but by Congress'.

Azad evoked a sharp response from his contemporaries, not just in India, but in Pakistan too. Choudhry Khaliquzzaman, a Muslim politician from Uttar Pradesh in the pre-partition era and subsequently prime minister of Pakistan, in his *Pathway to Pakistan* bitterly attacked the Congress leadership for their 'unimaginative, halting and unsympathetic approach...towards Muslim rights and interests.'[28] His work provided with considerable skill 'the sheer justification of partition as the only solution of one of the most unusual, baffling and stupendous problems of the world'. Further, he accused that Pakistan at the time of its birth was cheated of territory which legitimately should have belonged to it by the sheer manipulation of Mountbatten, that the blame for the violence lay on the British and the Congress who insisted on dividing Punjab and Bengal, thus triggering disorder and uprooting, and led to the intractable problem of Kashmir. His work contained the essential ingredients which later works like *The Emergence of Pakistan* incorporated to formulate a coherent, 'standard' Pakistani position on partition.[29]

In 1967 professional historians, perhaps dissatisfied with what may have seemed an endless stream of didactic autobiographical reflection, took to the field. The initiative came from Sir Cyril Philips and his colleagues who convened a conference in August 1967 to reassess partition on the occasion of its twentieth anniversary.[30] Although the conference brought together, for the first time, historians with wide-ranging concerns interested in developments leading to partition, it took place in a historiographic context that had largely been shaped by the judgments of those who had participated in the event. This was inevitable as several of the leading historical figures were still alive and actively participated in the conference's deliberations.[31] The initiative proved to be successful beyond the expectations of its organizers. It speeded up the British Government's decision to release official documents relating to the end-of-empire which subsequently fructified in the twelve-volume series, *Transfer of Power,* edited by a team led by Sir Nicholas Mansergh. It also led to the deposit and conservation of valuable historical materials in Pakistan such as the *Quaid-i-Azam* papers. Above all, it stimulated a deep interest among professional historians in the penultimate years of colonial rule which were inevitably dominated by problems of transfer of power and partition.[32] The

conference proceedings, distilled in *The Partition of India: Policies and Perspectives 1935–1947*, gave a foretaste of the larger works of historical scholarship which burgeoned in the 1970s and 1980s.[33]

From the 1970s onwards, as a vast array of documentation became available due to the opening up of archives in Britain and the Indian subcontinent itself, historians were now beginning to call the shots. The judgments of men who had been actors in historic events, which they wrote authoritatively about based on their privileged access to official papers, increasingly came to be questioned and even treated with cynicism.[34] The *Transfer of Power* series alone placed in the hands of researchers over 7,500 documents, spanning the last five and a half years of British rule in India. They provide original source material which makes possible a narrative of 'history as it was, and seemed, in the making, not history as written, or rewritten, by its survivors'.[35] Their focus is *haute politique* and their preoccupation 'the Indian problem' as it appeared to the British at the apex level. In the words of Nicholas Mansergh, editor-in-chief of the volumes, the documents in overall provide 'a sustained consecutive narrative of the last historic months of British rule…and an arresting chronicle of great events' which culminated in transfer of power and partition.[36]

In 1972 the Indian Council of Historical Research launched its *Towards Freedom* project in an effort to highlight 'Indian perspectives' on independence and partition by seeking to publish original archival materials. So far two volumes have been published.[37] Other collections of documents have also supplemented materials which present alternative Indian or Pakistani viewpoints. These are, *inter alia*, the selected works of Vallabhbhai Patel (1971–4), Rajendra Prasad (1984–) and Jawaharlal Nehru (1972–), the collected works of Mahatma Gandhi (1958–84) and Mohammad Ali Jinnah (1993–), in addition to a useful selection of documents relating to the partition of Punjab (1984).

All this rich material certainly enabled historians to begin unravelling the knots and tangles which hagiographic and autobiographical accounts in the preceding two decades had sprouted. However, it had another consequence: the chronology and the nature of the material also restricted the researchers in the kind of questions they could pose. The British documents addressed the exalted theme of transfer of power. The Indian and Pakistani scholarly enterprises, on their part, deemed it perfectly legitimate to focus upon the historic movements which culminated in the birth of their nation-states.[38] These works were located firmly within the discourses of decolonization and nationalism, and in their narratives partition was a marginal theme.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the early historiography which benefited from the newly available documentation set up its *problematique* with regard to partition as a problem of reconciling the attainment of freedom with national unity.[39] Its central concern was to answer the question why the process of constitutional devolution was accompanied by communal discord which ultimately concluded in partition.[40] Examples of this *genre* are the writings of Robin Moore, David Page and Anita Inder Singh which deal with the end-games of the Raj and look upon

partition largely in terms of the choices which were eventually made by all the parties concerned in a political context characterized by shrinking options: 'the ever-narrowing funnel of historical causation had reached its virtual tip of inevitability', as Morris-Jones observes.[41] Such works grappled with the 'series of apparent paradoxes' which partition then seemed to present and which confounded the historians. They tried to make sense of the ironies and paradoxes of how:

> the Muslim League which had no social support till the early 1940s, spearheaded a movement which fractured India; Jinnah, known as a secular nationalist till the early 1930s, became the spokesman of the Pakistan demand; the Congress, which had fought for national unity for decades, accepted the Partition plan with unseemly ease. How and why did all this happen?[42]

In retrospect, a major preoccupation proved to be the 'strategy' of the key players, the last three Viceroys, namely Linlithgow, Wavell and Mountbatten, as well as Congress and Muslim League politicians, particularly the enigmatic figure of *Quaid-i-Azam* Mohammed Ali Jinnah. In almost all the accounts relating to the 1940s, Jinnah has been portrayed as the single most important factor in the partition equation. However, his role as the 'architect' of partition has been interpreted by scholars in several ways. In Indian historiography he is portrayed as a 'conventional', liberal-style politician in the 'secular' mould who, after a humiliating electoral defeat in 1937, took to the 'communal path', demanded separate 'sovereign' nationhood for Muslims and was thus responsible for the 'tragedy' of partition. The traditional Pakistani view casts him in the image of a 'father of the nation' figure who fought for safeguarding the 'interests' of the Muslim 'minority' and succeeded in creating a separate Muslim 'nation' in the face of insurmountable barriers put in his path by the Congress and the British. In this view, reinforced by sympathetic Western biographers like Hector Bolitho and Stanley Wolpert, Jinnah is seen as single-mindedly pursuing the goal of separate nationhood for Muslims, especially after the Muslim League's Lahore Resolution of 1940 when, to paraphrase Wolpert, Jinnah lowered the final curtain on any prospects for a single united independent India.[43]

However, Ayesha Jalal's 'revisionist' work has challenged this portrayal of Jinnah, in particular the inflexibility of his political aims. She has argued that Jinnah never 'sought separate Muslim nationhood but deployed the demand to place himself on a par with Congress spokesmen and so achieve equal status in the governance of a united India.' She contends that Jinnah wanted 'a full six-province Pakistan with subordinate Dominion Status under a limited central authority reflecting the principle of parity and secured by British commanded forces.'[44] According to Jalal, the 'idea of Pakistan' for Jinnah was inextricably linked with undivided Punjab and Bengal; had he secured these provinces, the future of Indian Muslims would have been safeguarded, counterpoised as they would have been against Hindus and Sikhs who would have continued to live in the two undivided provinces, and

consequently in Pakistan. In this scheme there would have been no massive population transfers and little of the violence and bitterness which took place.

The Pakistan that emerged on 14 August 1947, then, was vastly different in concept and geography from what Jinnah had imagined. Jalal shows Jinnah to be highly flexible in his approach in what was undoubtedly an extremely fluid political context which saw the British, the Congress and the League inter-locked in tripartite negotiations over power-sharing arrangements.[45] With new interpretations, the debate on Jinnah looks far from reaching a consensus as recent Pakistani scholarship has stoutly challenged Jalal's view of Jinnah.[46] It seems that in the foreseeable future, at least, the issue whether the *Quaid will* be portrayed wearing Savile Row suits, which he fancied, or shown dressed in *sherwani, shalwar* and *karakuli*—clothes symbolizing Muslim cultural identity—will remain deeply contested.[47]

Another 'high politics' issue which has generated endless controversy concerns Mountbatten's role in the events surrounding partition.[48] On the one hand, British accounts have tended to eulogize Mountbatten's Viceroyalty, and some have even gone to the extent of pronouncing him as the 'hero of our time'. On the other hand, Indian scholars have criticized Mountbatten on several counts and Pakistani writers, in particular, have bitterly accused him of Machiavellianism.[49] It has been suggested, *inter alia*, that Mountbatten took advantage of the lack of consensus among Congress, Sikh and Muslim League politicians and imposed his own 'solution' on the so-called Indian problem; that he speeded up the timetable for British withdrawal which led to inadequate administrative preparations and plunged the two dominions, at the time of their very birth, into civil war-like conditions; that his overall plan neglected the future of the princely states (which contributed to the subsequent deadlock over Kashmir); that he failed to make adequate provisions and safeguards for the Sikhs who were, as a result uprooted and driven to desperate violence; finally and perhaps most seriously, that he interfered with the judicial independence of the Boundary Commission chaired by Cyril Radcliffe.[50]

In the last fifty years these issues have been raised time and again and are far from resolved; unfortunately, the level of debate has been lowered rather than raised, as illustrated by some recent works.[51] The issue of Mountbatten's role is a case in point that the *haute politique* approach has not been fruitful in enriching partition historiography. Such an approach abounds with national chauvinism, borders on the hagiographic and tends to spawn conspiracy theories, all of which do a disservice to historical enquiry.

However, one welcome development which took place was that in the 1980s studies of partition became 'regional', imitating a pattern which had earlier marked the progression of the historiography of nationalism. The concerns shifted from 'all-India' perspectives to regional and provincial contexts. The new works addressed a range of themes: they analysed the roots of Muslim 'separatism' and the electoral and mass support it was able to display in the 1980s and 1940s; they looked at how power-sharing arrangements worked, especially in Bengal and

Punjab; and they unravelled how millenarian and peasant movements coalesced with the larger mobilization for Pakistan. Such concerns animated the works of several scholars, among whom may be mentioned Ian Talbot, David Gilmartin, Taj Hashmi, Sarah Ansari and Joya Chatterjee.[52]

Having surveyed the manner in which mainstream historiography has looked at partition, let us think about some of the characteristics and drawbacks that are common to them. A major segment of this literature, as we have seen, addresses the grand theme of the end-of-empire. A common thread seems to run in these works. They all emphasize the intentions of the British till the last to keep India united; how differences among Indian leaders regarding an equitable transfer of power led inevitably to a situation of deadlock; of the intensity of hatred and distrust that existed between religious communities; and finally the untiring efforts the remaining British civilians and soldiers made to control the violence and disorders that then erupted. Their story is mostly about the last days of the British in India and the tribulations faced by them in handing over power and effecting a fair settlement for all the parties concerned. If partition figures in these accounts, it is only as an unintended, sorry consequence of a long process of constitutional devolution. These works thus marginalize partition: their narratives climax with the departure of the British while the curtain was being raised on the tragedy of partition.

If partition exists on the fringes of one set of works dealing with 'transfer of power', other narratives too have circumscribed partition for their own reasons. Such works are located within the discourses of the nation-state and inevitably they tend to focus on independence.[53] They deal with partition as a subordinate theme to that of the emergence of the Indian and Pakistani nation-states, and in doing so marginalize it. Such works valorize national struggles. They are rooted in a discourse which is predominantly univocal and regards other voices as unrepresentative, even illegitimate. While the 'two nation' theory continues to enchant historians in Pakistan, in India the 'secular/composite nationalist' world-view continues to be hailed, though Hindu nationalists are increasingly contesting it. Writings about partition have thus remained trapped within rival paradigms of nation-states. 'Nationalism and communalism', Sumit Sarkar observes,

> far from being definite and stable signifiers, can quickly change and even reverse their signifieds as one crosses the Indo-Pakistan border: Muslim separatism or communalism, pejorative terms in India, become, in Pakistan, laudable nationalism, with a reverse process operative with respect to Indian and Hindu.[54]

It is impossible then not to notice the persistence of 'distinctive national viewpoints' and the contention that exists among them. Such viewpoints, with their deeply imbibed national pride and prejudice frequently resort to the stereotyping of the 'Other'. In Indian writings the status of partition is often that of a footnote to the triumphant, onward march of the nationstate, while in Pakistan it remains

enveloped in the theme of valorous sacrifice with which the nation's birth is associated. Therefore, Indian and Pakistani national discourses, although highly divergent in what they celebrate and what they condemn, remain united in subsuming partition to celebratory accounts about the birth of their respective 'nation-states'. Often the heroes in one 'national' discourse end up as the villains in another; these competing narratives, in a sense, cancel each other out.

Thus in such writings partition remains subsumed under the ideological imperative to assert the credentials of the nation-state at the time of its creation and to justify the achievements of the respective nation's founding-fathers who steered them towards their 'destiny' of freedom. Imbued with such lofty concerns, these narratives have reduced partition to a 'microscript' in the 'metanarratives' of nationalism.[55] As Peter van der Veer has noted:

> As we know, history is the grand narrative of the modern nation-state. Both in the colonizing and colonized regions of the world, it is a story of liberation from oppression. The dark stories of terror and bloodshed are only memorized to be interpreted as either necessary steps toward liberation or 'incidents' that might as well be forgotten. The official history of Indian nationalism, as told in Indian education, is the progressive story of the liberation of the people from foreign domination, thus the narration of patriotic love. But there is also a subtext that tells the story of partition, of hatred and violence between Hindus and Muslims. The subtext is that of events, of incidents that are called 'communal' in order not to let them disturb the text of the emergence of freedom, of a normal, liberated nation-state. They have to be given meaning by the narrative frame of the emergence of a liberal nation-state. It is not so much that their memory is totally obliterated, that they are repressed, but that they are memorized as fragments of a story of which the unitary, rational subject is the liberal nation-state.[56]

Such narratives, by subordinating the theme of partition to the larger dramas of national struggles and the birth of nation-states, have thus failed to capture the centrality of partition in the life of the subcontinent in the twentieth century.

The story gets more complicated when one considers discourses of 'subnational' movements which too, for historical reasons, are deeply implicated in the partition story. In recent years such narratives have powerfully challenged carefully crafted 'national' ideologies. The success of Bengali linguistic nationalism in erstwhile East Pakistan and the establishment of Bangladesh as a separate nation in 1971 is an illustration of at least one 'subnational' discourse emerging triumphant after challenging the received 'national' wisdom about the experience of partition. Several subnational discourses have in recent years jostled for status of parity and legitimacy. In Pakistan, Baluchi, Sindhi and Muhajir discourses differ radically in their interpretations of partition from the standard 'national' Pakistani position.[57] In India also, Kashmiri and Sikh reconstructions of partition are significantly different from those posited in 'national' histories and textbooks.

It is well known that discourses of nation-states are inevitably nurtured by *telos*. In the South Asian case the teleology surrounding independence and partition has been particularly enduring. The chronology of modern histories of India and Pakistan have been set up in such a manner that their narratives reach a climax at independence and partition. Past events and movements are cast in a unilinear movement inching towards their 'tryst' in 1947. They are analysed not in their own terms, but as aiding or impeding the onward march towards nationhood. 'Muslim' politics is always seen through the prism of 'separatism' even though it may relate to a much earlier chronology of Indian history. Events are situated in a time-scale that ends in 1947; entire periods are labelled as 'prelude' or 'foreshadowing'.[58] Independence and partition are seen as the 'fruition' or 'consummation' of processes operating for decades and even centuries before.

The persistence of such a teleology celebrating the idea of the nationstate has created serious difficulties for the study of partition. To begin with, historical narratives terminate at August 1947, the milestone heralding the advent of the nation-state. They fail, therefore, to focus on processes which continued into the 1950s and 1960s and even beyond. As a result, an artificial chronological barrier has been created which historians have so far shown hesitation in crossing. In historiography partition thus remains trapped in a chronological bind which has seriously hindered an assessment of its long-term impact upon state and society in South Asia.

In spite of a lapse of over fifty years, partition still remains deeply implicated in the politics of identities which has reasserted itself since the 1980s with such strength in South Asia. As Sandria Freitag observes, 'the tension between nation-states and competing forms of identity invoked by their citizens has become a central problematic of life in the late twentieth century.'[59] Dominant Indian and Pakistani 'national identities' compete with alternative visions of nationhood put forth by Kashmiri, Mohajir and 'Hindu' cultural nationalists, each with their 'versions' of the past. Anthony Smith, the influential theorist of nationalism, remarks that 'the central question which has divided theorists of nationalism is the place of the past in the life of the modern nations'.[60] In a similar vein, Prasenjit Duara writes that 'the nation seeks its ultimate moorings in history'. He is struck by the paradox that, 'while historical consciousness in modern society has been overwhelmingly framed by the nation-state', there is often an utter lack of consensus on what a nation is, and 'the nation itself remains a highly contested phenomenon'. 'Regimes, politicians, and ordinary people within a nation', he continues, 'do not often agree on what the nation does or what it should mean'.

In a recent critical study of how the idea of the nation-state has influenced the evolution of modern Chinese historiography, Duara unravels 'the deep, tenacious and...repressive connection between history and the nation', and he goes as far as to make the case that there is a need to rescue History from the Nation.[61] The root of the problem, according to him, seems to lie in 'the linear, teleological model of Enlightenment History'. Such a mode of narrating the past, Duara argues:

> allows the nation-state to see itself as a unique form of community which finds its place in the positions between tradition and modernity, hierarchy and equality, empire and nation. Within this schema, the nation appears as the newly realized, sovereign subject of History, embodying a moral and political force that has overcome dynasties, aristocracies, and ruling priests and mandarins.... In contrast to them, the nation is a collective historical subject poised to realise its destiny in a modern future.[62]

Unsurprisingly, in South Asian modes of reconstructing the past, the idea of the nation has occupied a privileged position and partition enjoys a unique status as a 'defining moment', a time when a historic settlement was reached which has since defined the nation-states of the subcontinent and the core ideas around which they were constructed. In India and Pakistan, discourses of dominant nations as well as those of 'nations-ofintent' continue to provide their own contested interpretations of partition.

In redefining cultural and national identities in South Asia today, the theme of partition is continually evoked. For instance, Aitzaz Ahsan, an influential Pakistani public figure, describes partition as 'a Divide that is 50 years young and 5,000 years old'.[63] In a major restatement about the roots of Pakistan's identity, he argues that a distinct cultural zone had existed for centuries in the Indus region which he identifies with present day Pakistan.[64] His work contends that the Indian subcontinent is made up of two civilizations, Indus and Indic or Gangetic, and that 'Indus has been one large, independent, politico-economic zone for the past countless centuries'. There has existed a 'primordial divide' between the two: 'a palpable divide between two lands, two peoples, two civilisations: Indus and India'. Arguing that '1947 was only a reassertion' of this deep divide, he observes:

> Partition can thus be seen, in retrospect, as the logical outcome of the prevailing circumstances, of the communal divide and of the political contests of the last 150 years, as well as the natural culmination of the primordial historical forces, and thus as the inevitability of history. That it was coterminous with the natural and prehistoric divide between Indus and India only strengthens the argument of its inevitability. This Divide had only been blurred, temporarily, by the 100-years' grip of Pax Britannia that seemed to have fused Indus and India into one unit.... The weight of centuries and millennia was behind the Divide.

In Ahsan's view there is need to look upon partition 'as the result of the natural course of a history spread over many centuries and millennia' as well as to take cognizance of 'its historical roots, its physical reality, and its stable permanence.' In reconstructing a narrative of a distinct cultural heritage, Ahsan has traced the civilizational roots of a nation-state that came into being only in 1947, into the distant past. In searching for its spiritual roots, he has shifted the hinterland of this cultural identity away from its South Asian orientation towards the Middle East.

Such attempts to construct beleaguered historical narratives around partition are not confined to Pakistan alone; in India too Hindu cultural nationalists have sought to re-inscribe the past with new meanings to powerfully energize their project of 'making India Hindu'.[65] Such attempts are merely a feature of the politics of cultural anxieties which has surfaced lately across contemporary South Asia.[66]

Lifting the veil over partition

While it was marginalized in the realm of historiography, over the years a substantial corpus of literature—fiction and non-fiction—has developed around the subject which has attempted to lift the veil over partition. Some journalistic and contemporary accounts which appeared soon after partition sought to document the violence and confusion which accompanied it. G.D.Khosla's *Stern Reckoning* is one example of this *genre* of writing.[67] These accounts can be seen as valuable 'tracts on the times', as they give a vivid picture of the horrors of rioting and uprooting which people in the Punjab faced. Many of these, if not all, tended to be partisan, and several were actually compiled for polemical purposes.[68] In a sense they are representative of the period and the locale in which they were written; their documentary biases and predilections are evocative of the bitter polarization which had become manifest in the late 1940s in the subcontinent.

It would, however, be unfair to assert that the entire post-1947 generation of scholars of South Asia failed to take any cognizance of partition. The geographer Oskar Spate, who had witnessed closely the work of the Boundary Commission, analysed the implications of the division in many of his writings, and in the field of geography this interest was reflected in the works of S.P.Chatterjee, Ali Tayyeb and (to a lesser extent) Nafis Ahmad.[69] The economist C.N.Vakil produced, as early as 1950, the first comprehensive stock-taking of the economic consequences of a divided South Asia.[70] Then, political scientist Satya Rai in her study of East Punjab looked at partition, although mainly from an administrative point of view, which somewhat restricted the value of her work.[71] A major breakthrough came in 1967 with the publication of A.A.Michel's study of how partition broke up the integrated irrigation network built around the Indus river and its tributaries. He highlighted the enormous costs involved in building dams and canals to circumvent the disruptions and in working out watersharing arrangements. Here was, in effect, a pioneering environmental study of how the setting up of political boundaries could impact upon natural resources and the contest over their use.[72]

In one field, at least, partition came to exercise an extraordinary hold over the imagination of its practitioners, and this was literature. Writings in Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali and 'Indian English' saw an efflorescence of short stories, novels and poems woven around the complex human emotions which partition had unleashed, and over time a substantial corpus of literature developed around it. In the Punjabi language alone, it is reckoned, that more than 500 texts composed by over a hundred writers exist on this theme. Similarly, in Urdu and Hindi the creative output on the subject has been impressive and several literary figures, like

Saadat Hasan Manto and Khushwant Singh (who writes in English), have built their reputations on their writings on partition.

Literary writings on partition are remarkable in that they articulate almost in unison the sense of anguish and bewilderment which common people experienced.[73] They represent partition as a cathartic moment marked by absolute violence and annihilation. Their *leitmotif* is fear and alienation experienced by an entire generation which survived it and lived through its aftermath. Creative writings have as their themes vivid accounts of violence and its impact on victims and the sexual violation which women experienced and its accompanying trauma. They also describe the loss and uprooting which families experienced and the painful fragmentation of identities which often followed. They convey powerfully the nostalgia for lost homes as well as the helplessness which common people experienced in a situation which was not of their making and over which they clearly had no control. The commonality in the concerns of these works, produced across national boundaries in different languages, is striking.[74] Mushirul Hasan, who has drawn upon this literature for some of his writings, observes:

> What distinguishes them from their contemporary political commentators and analysts is their ability to repudiate 'communal' categories and transcend religious, regional and territorial barriers in their creative moments. Their creative energies were released not because their co-religionists alone were mercilessly slaughtered in the communal holocaust, but because their humanity was wounded and the civilizational rhythm of the Indian subcontinent was being irreparably destroyed.[75]

In recent years some of these creative works have been anthologized and are enjoying renewed popularity.[76]

The medium of cinema too has portrayed with sensitivity the stories of people whose lives were caught up in the human dramas triggered by partition. The films of the Bengali director Ritwik Kumar Ghatak (1927–76) provide powerful visual expression to some of the disruptions caused by partition and the manner in which these came to impinge upon the common people in their daily lives. Most of his films had East Bengal refugees as their subject, their struggle for survival and the sense of loss, frustration and nostalgia which they experienced. Among his numerous films, three in particular are memorable: *Nagrik* (The Citizen, 1953) which depicts the story of a refugee in Calcutta and his struggle to support his family; *Meghe Dhaka Tara* (The Cloud Capped Star, 1960) which gazes at the city of Calcutta through the eyes of a young refugee girl faced with a bleak future; and *Subamarekha* (The Golden Thread, 1965) which shows the rhythm of life in one of the innumerable squatter colonies where uprooted Bengali refugees built their 'homes'. Later cinematic ventures have drawn their inspiration from the 'partition literature' discussed earlier. A particularly moving and sensitive production was M. S.Satyu's feature film *Garam Hawa*.[77] In the late 1980s partition was 'dramatized' in a television serial for Indian audiences.[78]

In recent years historians have begun to look upon partition with renewed interest. Their concerns, however, are different now. The new enquiries are no longer situated within discourses of the nation-state and decolonization, as had been the case with historical scholarship for almost two generations. A range of issues are being looked at now. Scholars are beginning to examine, for instance, the patterns of partition violence. They are seeking to identify the 'faces in the crowd' to meaningfully understand the social groups which 'participated' in this violence and to understand the reasons which impelled them.[79] They are also curious to figure out why violence was particularly acute in certain areas, while other regions escaped its horrors. A major historiographic riddle here pertains to the relative tranquillity of Bengal in sharp contrast to the Punjab which became the epicentre of partition violence. The survivors of this violence, the refugees, and their search for meaningful rehabilitation is a story that is beginning to draw some attention. The different patterns that characterized the scale, character and impact of the refugee movements are being looked at, as is also the manner of their assimilation (or the lack of it) in different regional societies.[80]

The experience of state and nation-building is an area which has begun to be examined, with Ayesha Jalal's pioneering foray into the history of post-1947 Pakistan.[81] In *State of Martial Rule* she highlights the extraordinary trials and tribulations which Pakistan experienced in the decade following its traumatic birth during partition. In a major study, Mushirul Hasan has examined the predicament of the Indian Muslims after partition and the resultant adjustments they have had to make in 'secular' India, especially in the face of the community's tradition of 'separatist politics'. Likewise, in several essays Sarah Ansari has examined the changing fortunes of the Muhajirs in the province of Sindh in Pakistan, from the time they arrived as Muslim refugees from India and were hailed as pioneers in nation-building to their present predicament as an estranged minority in the land of their adoption. Then, in a recent work Shail Mayaram has looked at the experience of partition of a small, syncretic community—the Meos of South-east Punjab—a people who for centuries had defied taxonomic labelling as either Muslim or Hindu as their beliefs and practices drew upon both religions.[82]

It is not surprising that the new concerns have led several scholars to plough intensively a single field and, in the process, reap a rich harvest. Recent studies of the 'gender question at the time of partition' illustrate this very well.[83] So far women's experiences of partition, particularly stories of their sexual violation, had 'just hovered at the edges of history'. Recent studies have unravelled, with imagination and sensitivity, facets of the partition experience for women and feminist scholars are rightfully able to assert that 'the story of 1947, while being one of the attainment of independence, is also a gendered narrative of displacement and dispossession, of large scale and widespread communal violence, and of the realignment of family, community and national identities'.[84]

Family narratives and literary accounts had always alluded somewhat ambiguously to the extraordinary violence specifically targeted against women during partition. Lately historians, with the help of archival and oral records, have

collectively been able to piece together a remarkable account of this sordid underside of partition. Andrew Major argues that women were the 'chief sufferers' of partition and their sexual violation became 'a conscious process of maximising intimidation'. They came to be seen as 'territory' to be 'occupied' and rape became a method to 'demoralise and defeat rival men' in a civil war-like situation. He reckons the total number of abducted women in the Punjab alone to be in the region of 40–45,000.[85] An insight into the gender dimension of the violence unleashed during partition is provided by D.A. Low when he suggests that, while men belonging to the 'other' community were killed, women were not let off in a show of compassion; instead, they were abducted. Thus only the form which the violence took differed.[86]

Many such women were adopted by their abductors and incorporated in family structures; others were simply dumped after being physically abused. Literary accounts reveal that in many instances women's bodies were tattooed: the markings included religious symbols of the 'other' community, the signing of names by aggressors or even the imprinting of 'patriotic' slogans like *Jai Hind!* or *Pakistan Zindabad!* upon their private parts. The social graffiti of partition, it seems, was scrawled upon women's bodies. The anthropologist Veena Das writes that 'woman's body... became as a sign through which men communicated with each other' and she goes on to remark that 'the political programme of creating the two nations of India and Pakistan was inscribed upon the bodies of women'.[87] Kamla Bhasin and Ritu Menon take the story further by showing how the question of the 'rehabilitation' of these women came to be intimately bound with national honour and the state assumed for them the role of *parens patriae*. They reveal how the state looked at these women solely in terms of their religious identity as Hindu or Muslim and accordingly repatriated them to Pakistan or India. Their children were looked upon as born of 'wrong' sexual union and the women's right to decide their own future was denied to them. Many women were thus forced to accept identities and kinship relations which the state now enforced in its role as 'the father-patriarch'.[88] Although there are clearly other issues that require further exploration, these writings illustrate quite convincingly the ways in which narratives of partition are being enriched by gender perspectives.[89]

Concerns such as these are finding expression in seminars and workshops which have lately been organized to incorporate the new findings into historiography. For instance, a workshop organized in December 1993 at the initiative of D.A.Low and Ravinder Kumar brought together a number of scholars to reflect afresh upon 'the hinge years of the 1940s'.[90] This workshop mirrored quite strikingly the change which historians' concerns regarding partition had undergone since C.H.Philips organized his conference twenty-five years before, which had marked the beginning of professional research on the subject. The constitutional questions connected with transfer of power were clearly *passé*, and the concern was widely shared that the subject of partition must be addressed in its own terms. The issues that emerged during the workshop's deliberations centred around partition violence and its patterns, women's experiences, uprooting and refugee

rehabilitation, and the continuities and discontinuities that marked institutional governance. Finally, there were signs that the veil over partition that had existed for so long in the realm of historiography was being pulled away.

Reappraising partition and its aftermath

This book attempts to study the long aftermath of partition and its continuing legacy. It draws upon new theoretical insights and fresh bodies of data in an attempt to reappraise partition and its aftermath in a comprehensive and comparative manner. The overarching frame around which this study has been constructed highlights two key motifs: first, the dislo cations and disruptions caused by partition and the manner in which these were addressed, and second, some of the long-term effects of partition on state and society in South Asia. These are taken up principally in three contexts: peoples, places and institutions of governance. Each of these contexts needs a word of explanation.

At the centre of events which constituted partition stood peoples and communities. They experienced partition in diverse ways: in the manner in which communal violence manifested itself palpably in their vicinities, in the loss of life of family members, kinsmen and friends, in the trauma which young women endured as a result of sexual violation, in the loss of movable and immovable properties and ancestral lands, in the forced uprooting and refugeehood they underwent and, not the least, in the fracturing of identities which they experienced as a result of partition. It is people and communities then who must occupy centre-stage in any meaningful study of partition.

Partition transformed the landscape of the northern parts of the subcontinent, as it uprooted not only millions of people from their habitat but corporate institutions as well. Places experienced transformations due to such displacement and rehabilitation. It is worth stating that places are not merely physical spaces, but arenas where the lives, movements, activities and everyday routines of people are staged. They are not mere 'fragments of physical space' but rather socially constructed entities invested with a range of meanings by the people who inhabit them. Such meanings transform physical space into 'place' by imparting a distinct identity with which a place comes to be associated. Partition transformed these individual identities of places.

Cities and towns, in particular, were transformed in the varied roles they played as capitals, ports, transport hubs, trading marts and pilgrim centres. There are, at least, three distinct aspects of this overall transformation which are worth pursuing. The most obvious was physical, due to the expansion or contraction which cities and towns experienced as a result of refugee movements and the changes imposed by the new boundaries. Such changes were reflected in their spatial structure, land use, and built form. Equally important were social and cultural transformations brought about by change in the composition of the city's inhabitants. As old communities departed and new settlers arrived, the inner *milieu* of cities and towns was altered and their cultural, social and religious rhythms disturbed, and these had

profound implications. Places were transformed in a metaphysical sense too, as people were uprooted from places where they had been born and nurtured and where they had families, properties and associations. This uprooting and dislocation left them with remembrances and nostalgia. Places now existed only in the realm of memory and came to be embedded in the consciousness of the uprooted people and powerfully shaped their subsequent lives in assorted ways. Places thus must merit attention in reappraisals of partition and its aftermath.

Partition also had a profound impact on the institutions which govern both people and places. It changed the context of governance in South Asia and shaped in myriad ways the institutions which emerged in the new states. The drawing of boundaries, for instance, led to rigid definitions of territoriality which now determined people's citizenship and their movements. Partition also created within systems of governance divisions of citizens into majorities and minorities. The state structures which emerged following partition created new configurations of regions and sub-regions and these were integrated as units of the political system. In this process some regions were marginalized while others emerged dominant. All these questions of institutional governance are an essential part of the story of partition and its aftermath.

The story of what partition meant to peoples, places and institutions is central to the overall concern of this work and is reflected in each of its individual chapters. Each chapter seeks to elucidate a particular theme. In Chapter Two an attempt is made to reconstruct the momentous events of 14–15 August 1947 which marked the birth pangs of the new nation-states of India and Pakistan. In literature, historiography, films and popular media, these events are represented by images of stirring speeches by Nehru and Jinnah, the celebrations across the towns and cities of the subcontinent, and the adulation that Mountbatten received when the 'last post' on the empire was sounded. Moving away from these representations, this chapter attempts to recover the experiences of common people. It argues that perceptions of what this historic landmark signified were determined by the location, both physical and social, of the individuals concerned. To an overwhelming number of people in the Punjab and Bengal, the event signified partition (*vibhajan* or *batwara*) rather than the coming of independence *(azadi)*. The construction of nationhood by the newly-independent countries meant the dislocation and violent displacement of the 'minorities'. The divergent voices that emerge here present contested visions of independence, nationhood and citizenship.

The rituals of independence were soon overshadowed by the 'carto graphic anxieties' which came with the award of the Boundary Commission.[91] Chapter Three takes a close look at the manner in which the political boundaries of post-colonial South Asia were drawn. It shows that the Boundary Commission was hampered by its unclear and sometimes contradictory terms of reference, the politically motivated and conflicting claims put forth by the various interested parties and the short time-frame of less than six weeks during which it was expected to complete its task. Chapter Three argues that the 'Radcliffe

Award' created boundaries that were problematic and in many areas illogical, and precipitated the violence which led to the uprooting of the minorities on both sides of the border. The disruptions which the regional societies of Punjab and Bengal suffered in terms of demography, economy, irrigation and infrastructure are discussed.

Chapter Four then focuses upon the fate of one community, the Sikhs, whose fortunes had been intimately connected with the Punjab from historic times. However, in March 1947 Sikh politicians joined in the demand for the partition of their homeland. This was a tragic irony as partition subsequently caused disruptions in which the Sikhs as a community suffered and resulted in large-scale violence in which they played a central role. This chapter examines the attempts made by the Sikhs to safeguard their political future from 1940, when the demand for Pakistan was first made, to the post-partition years when the community had to consolidate itself as a minority in a truncated Punjab within India. The changing fortunes of the Sikhs brought about by the split of the community across the Great Divide of India and Pakistan, and the loss of their agricultural tracts and holy shrines, are discussed.

From the theme of disruptions, the focus shifts in Chapters Five and Six to rehabilitation and reconstruction. Chapter Five presents a detailed picture of the post-partition situation in East Punjab. It examines the manner in which the refugees, who mainly came from the agricultural classes, were resettled on land. It argues that the large-scale land transfers that took place after partition and the manner in which land was redistributed led to the earliest and most comprehensive land reforms in independent India. The political leadership was thus able to turn the crisis caused by partition into an opportunity to restructure rural society. Alongside, the new irrigation infrastructure which the state was obliged to develop to facilitate rehabilitation led to far-reaching changes which laid the foundations of intensive agriculture. These developments were crucial in the emergence of Indian Punjab by the late 1960s as the bread-basket of India.

As a result of partition, Bengali Hindu minorities in seeking refuge in India outnumbered their Punjabi counterparts, a fact not recognized in the existing literature which has been Punjab-centred. Chapter Six considers the predicament of the Hindu communities in East Bengal (now Bangladesh) who were uprooted gradually in the 1950s and 1960s and forced to seek shelter in the Indian province of West Bengal. It looks at the responses of Indian federal and provincial governments to the challenge of refugee rehabilitation. A study is then made of the Dandakaranya scheme which was undertaken to resettle the refugees outside West Bengal. The beleaguered and the long-drawn-out saga of the refugees to secure meaningful rehabilitation is described, and the complex interplay of identity and landscape, of dependence and self-help, that informed the choices which the refugees made in rebuilding their lives, is analysed.

Chapter Seven illustrates the profound transformations which places experienced as a result of partition. It maps the imprint of partition on the landscapes of the capital cities of South Asia. Partition left three newlyconstituted governments—the

federal Government of Pakistan and the provincial Governments of East Punjab and East Bengal—without capitals and they then had to establish themselves anew. The manner in which they set about doing this in Karachi and later in Islamabad, as well as in Chandigarh and Dhaka, is examined. The chapter also surveys the nature of transformations brought about by partition on the older capital cities of Calcutta, Lahore and Delhi in terms of their demography, economy, politics and culture. The common situations and predicaments in which partition placed the South Asian capital cities are highlighted.

Just as partition produced major transformations in South Asia, there were areas of continuity too, as illustrated by Chapter Eight which looks at the political antecedents of the elite groups which came to dominate the post-partition Pakistani state. The extraordinary trials and tribulations which Pakistan as a new nation experienced following partition are well known. Unlike India, Pakistan did not inherit a federal state structure, and territorially was made of two wings separated by a thousand miles. In the absence of a credible state structure and an effective mass-based party which could integrate the ethnic and regional diversities of the new nation, state power in Pakistan was before long usurped by a powerful civil-military oligarchy which had long been established in the Punjab.

Chapter Eight argues that this civil-military oligarchy, which was preeminent in colonial Punjab, survived the uncertainties and turmoil of partition and was well positioned to seize control of the Pakistani state. It looks at the antecedents of this civil-military oligarchy and highlights its social roots and political influence in colonial Punjab. It makes the case that Pakistan could perhaps survive the trauma of partition and the peculiar political legacy it inherited because there had remained intact a military-bureaucratic oligarchy which had existed as a cohesive formation from the colonial period. In the late 1940s this oligarchy was organized and powerful enough to constitute the administrative sinews of the new state. It was this formation in the Punjab that stood at the core of the Pakistani state and saved it from collapse due to regional pulls and pressures. While it ensured the survival of the centralized Pakistani state structure, it restrained institutions of democratic governance and rendered the task of nation-building far more complex.

Finally, Chapter Nine attempts to spell out some of the ways in which the legacy of partition continues to leave its imprint on contemporary South Asia. It is well recognized that the roots of many of the present problems in Karachi and Kashmir lie in events associated with partition. Partition also provides the genesis for the difficult bilateral relations which the three South Asian powers, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, have with each other. In recent decades the question of 'minority' rights, based on religion, ethnicity and language, has resurfaced and perhaps the predicament in which several South Asian minority communities find themselves can be traced to the circumstances of the 1947 partition. In overall terms the continuing legacy of partition is highlighted.

In conclusion it may be prudent to enter a few caveats. It needs to be clarified that the themes elucidated in Chapters Two to Eight are intended to give a sense of the historical change that accompanied and followed partition. It is hoped that

the picture which they collectively draw will enable some appreciation of the scale and quality of transformations— demographic, social, economic and political— which the South Asian region experienced as a result of partition. However, the approach taken in this work has been indicative, rather than exhaustive. Several themes deserve to be taken up for in-depth study; some of the more salient ones are delineated in Chapter Nine to highlight the manner in which they are implicated in the partition story, as well as to attest to their continuing importance in the present context. The breaking-up of the South Asian region and the emergence and consolidation of two (and eventually three) separate nation-states entailed complex and multi-faced changes which cannot be encapsulated within a single work. It is, however, possible to convey some understanding of the several processes of change which partition brought about and the manner in which these affected peoples, places and institutions, as this work has attempted to do in a modest way.

Further, it perhaps needs to be clarified that, while the focus of this work has been on the historical change which partition brought about, it must be offset by the larger continuities that characterized the region. While partition caused major transformations in state and society in South Asia, this work does not make the case that the change which occurred was of an ubiquitous nature. There were strong continuities too, and these need necessarily to be kept as a backdrop to the larger picture. For instance, the point is well recognized that the whole of southern India remained largely unaffected by the turmoil and disruptions which had engulfed the north during partition. In institutional terms too, strong continuities could be seen within both India and Pakistan. As argued in Chapter Eight, for instance, the predominance of a civil-military state for the better part of Pakistan's existence is largely a legacy of the colonial era. Similarly, the strongly centrist character of the Indian state remained unaltered despite the new political configurations brought about by partition. Likewise, the armies of both India and Pakistan, despite division, retained much of the military traditions and ethos of the old British Indian army. Such examples of continuities could be multiplied; these continuities must necessarily be kept as a backdrop against which the changes which partition brought about need to be looked at.

2
'The enigma of arrival'
14–15 August 1947 and the celebration of independence

Introduction

'Clock-hands joined palms in respectful greetings…' When the Bombay-born author Salman Rushdie crafted these words in his celebrated novel *Midnight'sChildren* to signify the countdown to the midnight ceremonies which heralded the advent of Indian independence, he was drawing upon an imagery about the meanings and memories of the events of 14–15 August 1947 which is powerfully embedded in the popular imagination in the Indian subcontinent. Indeed, textbook histories in both India and Pakistan give a prominent place to this historic landmark in terms of signifying the end of British colo nial rule and the emergence of India and Pakistan in the international arena as sovereign nation-states.[1] Not surprisingly, South Asian historians have looked upon it as a twentieth-century turning-point, the moment of 'fulfilment' of a historic movement 'comparable in its sweep, its complexity and its consequences to the Russian Revolution of 1917, or the emergence of a revitalized China in 1949'.[2] These textbook accounts typically focus on the official ceremonies which marked the transfer of power, the stirring speeches of Jawaharlal Nehru and Muhammad Ali Jinnah to mark the occasion and the unprecedented celebrations which took place across the towns and cities of the subcontinent. They also talk about the tragedy of partition and mention in passing the mass violence and large-scale suffering of the uprooted: such events are largely described in terms of the 'birth pangs' of the 'Nation'.

Yet outside history books, the memories of the coming of independence remain deeply etched in peoples' minds. It is ironic that these memories are mostly not about the events which are celebrated in textbook histories but about individuals and family circumstances, their hopes and fears, and about the anxieties which many people, especially from the 'minority' communities, felt about the future. Further, they are characterized by enormous diversity and while attempting to reconstruct the happenings of 14–15 August 1947, one is struck by the epic quality of the events and the sheer futility of narrating them within a single frame as has been done in history textbooks which locate these events within the narrowly-framed univocal narrative of the 'Nation-State'.

The ceremonies and rituals of 14–15 August 1947 were experienced by millions throughout the subcontinent.[3] It is possible to vividly recapture, although only partially, the moods and emotions of people who participated in these events or witnessed them by drawing upon a range of sources such as autobiographical accounts, newspaper reports, memoirs and oral history narratives. There also exist representations of these events in the literature of at least half a dozen Indian languages, besides English, as well as in films and other visual media. From a mere exploration of these, one is struck by the fact that the meanings and memories of the events are constructed quite differently from the narratives which history textbooks convey. It is now well recognized that to an overwhelming number of people across much of the northern part of the subcontinent, the event signified partition (*vibhajan* or *batwara*) rather than the coming of independence *(azadi)*. In the more than fifty years which have since elapsed, this bipolarity in the reconstruction of the event has been accentuated.

The official independence day ceremonies which take place every year in India and Pakistan commemorate the moment of the birth of the Nation.[4] With the raising of the flag and the singing of the anthem, the ceremonies in both New Delhi and Islamabad remind the citizens of the sacrifices of the 'Freedom Fighters' and urge them to realize the lofty vision of the 'Founding Fathers'. In this sense, state rituals have served to perpetuate only one aspect of the momentous events of August 1947. In doing so they have effaced the range of meanings and memories of the events which lurk in popular memory.

Moving away from such representations, this chapter attempts to reconstruct the momentous events of 14–15 August 1947 by adopting a 'slice of life' approach to look at how the occasion was experienced by common people. The discussion begins by looking at how the ceremonies and rituals for independence were planned. The ideas about how to organize the events are discussed, as well as the manner in which the format of the ceremonies evolved. The discussion then explores the notion of 'celebration'. The widely different perceptions of the approaching event are described. The discussion then focuses upon the experiences of those who participated in the consecration rituals performed to mark the birth of the 'Nation'. Here the examples of several important cities are used to convey the moods and sentiments that prevailed then. There appear to be significant differences in the ways in which different cities and towns in the subcontinent celebrated the event. Within these places, different communities responded to the event differently. It is argued that perceptions of what this historical landmark signified were determined by the location, both physical and social, of the individuals concerned. Further, the case is made that there was more to the events of 14–15 August 1947 than can be refracted through the bipolar categorical artifices of *azadi* and *batwara* and an attempt is made to unravel the profusion of complex and ambiguous meanings attached to these terms. In doing so, divergent voices emerge which present contested visions of independence, nationhood and citizenship.

Preparing for the 'appointed day'

We begin this discussion by first looking at how the state ceremonies were planned by top British officials in New Delhi in close consultations with the 'inheritors', the apex leaders of the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League. The action began in New Delhi in the Viceroy Louis Mountbatten's Secretariat. As the pages of his tear-down calendar ran down and the 'appointed day' approached, the attention of Mountbatten's staff turned to planning the official ceremonies to mark the transfer of power.[5] By early July 1947 their plans had evolved and the details for the key events were being finalized. On 18 July the Viceroy reported to London that 'progress has been made on the plans for official ceremonies on the transfer of power'. In his final week as the last British Viceroy of India, Mountbatten's calendar included a day-trip to Karachi on 14 August for the transfer-of-power ceremonies in Pakistan and similar inaugural ceremonies in Delhi which he was much more enthusiastic about (as he was being sworn in as the first Governor-General of independent India). How these ceremonies were to be organized and the form each of these was to take became clear as close consultations took place with Congress and Muslim League leadership. For instance, Mountbatten reported the Pakistani leadership's request that on 14 August, 'as Ramzan will still be on, Jinnah has asked that I should stay to a State Dinner, so that I will defer my departure.'[6] The Viceregal staff had to deal with questions of constitutional propriety as well as sensitive matters of protocol.

In planning the ceremonies a specific assurance that Mountbatten secured from the incumbent leadership was that 'the Ceremony of substituting the new Dominion flag for the Union Jack will not be performed'. Further, it was specifically arranged that 'the Union Jack over the old Lucknow Residency, which has never been lowered by day or night, will be hauled down quite unostentatiously at sundown on 14 August and sent home'.[7] Then, there were several nitty-gritty details which needed to be sorted out. For instance, there was the issue of the alteration of the King's Title by omission of the term 'Emperor of India' and his signature to be 'GR' and not 'GRI'.[8] As these were dealt with over the weeks, London conveyed its approval of the plans generally, and agreed to send a message on behalf of the King for the occasion.[9] It was agreed that 'similar ceremonies will, however, not take place at Residencies in the Indian States where they exist.' This was not surprising, given the ambiguous position of the princely states and the question of how people in these states might take part in the ceremonies being organized throughout the subcontinent. Ian Copland has in a recent study shown that there existed great uncertainty within the princely states in terms of their 'integration' with either India or Pakistan. He notes that, 'contrary to popular belief, Mountbatten did not achieve anything approaching the "full basket" of accessions'. On the eve of independence, a number of states across the subcontinent, including Hyderabad, Kashmir, Indore, Jodhpur and Rampur, had failed to declare their intentions, The sense of disquiet which people in these parts experienced over their uncertain future could well be imagined. As a consequence

the rituals of independence, as they had been planned in the rest of the subcontinent, could not be observed in these areas.[10]

In working out the details of the New Delhi ceremonies, the Viceroy held close consultations with Jawaharlal Nehru and his Congress party colleagues. It was arranged that there were to be three ceremonies with their rather distinct meanings and symbolism. First was a midnight ceremony at which the Indian Constituent Assembly would meet in a special session to declare that it had assumed responsibility of government in Free India. Then, a ceremony next morning where 'a Proclamation will be made by the Governor General, who will be accompanied by Lady Mountbatten to the assembled Constituent Assembly of the Union of India…and a message from H.M. The King would be read.' Finally, an inter-services parade that evening planned as an outdoor event to enable the citizens of the capital to participate in the celebrations. These three key ceremonies set the format which was adopted by those in charge of organizing the celebrations in the provincial capitals and other cities. 'It is intended that ceremonies in the Provinces will be on much the same lines as those at Delhi and Karachi, Provincial Governors reading the King's Message.'

In their dealings with Congress leaders for planning the official ceremonies for the Indian dominion, the Viceroy and his staff came up with vexing problems of astrology. Mountbatten complained that:

> The astrologers are being rather tiresome since both the 13th and 15th have been declared inauspicious days, whereas the 14th is auspicious. I was not warned that I ought to consult the astrologers before fixing the day for the transfer of power, but luckily this has been got over by the GA [Constituent Assembly] deciding to meet before midnight on the auspicious fourteenth and take over power as midnight strikes which is apparently still an auspicious moment.
>
> One or two of the more superstitious members of the Cabinet wished to have all the ceremony done at midnight in the Durbar Hall, but as, fortunately, the older members of the cabinet usually go to bed at 9 o'clock, Sleep won the swearing-in battle over Superstition; and we are now going to have the swearing-in ceremony in the presence of 500 people at 8.30 on the morning of the 15 th, after which we will all proceed to the CA which I am to address in their new capacity as the LA of India.[11]

There were other awkward matters too, such as Mahatma Gandhi's decision to stay away from all state ceremonies. Mountbatten complained that the Mahatma's absence was 'intentional', as he 'has never given the June plan his unqualified blessing'. In view of his well-publicized opposition to partition, his participation in any form of celebrations might be 'difficult'. Further, according to Mountbatten, Gandhi also 'realises that it would not be possible to fit him into the programme in the way to which he would feel himself entitled'.[12]

A major preoccupation of the Viceroy in the planning of these celebrations related to the question of the design of flags of the two new Dominions. He required that 'the Dominions flags should have the Union Jack in the upper canton of their flags as do other members of the Commonwealth'. He felt that, 'as flags were an important outward and visible symbol', they would serve to signify the continuity of the British connection through the Commonwealth. Mountbatten, who had a deep personal interest in the design of heraldry and insignia, spent considerable energy trying to persuade Nehru and Jinnah to agree to this proposal, and personally prepared the design of the flags which he handed over with much enthusiasm to them. However, the idea was rejected by both the Muslim League and the Congress leadership. Jinnah conveyed to Mountbatten that he 'had been unable to find a single supporter for the idea' and claimed that 'it would be repugnant to the religious feelings of the Muslims to have a flag with a Christian cross alongside a Muslim crescent'.[13] When Ismay, the Viceroy's Chief of Staff, followed up the suggestion with Jinnah, the latter 'pointed out that it would be impossible to have the cross and the crescent on the same flag', as 'all the old hatreds and rivalries would be revived'.[14] Likewise and quite predictably, the Congress too rejected the proposal. Nehru explained that 'the general feeling among Congress extremists was that the leaders were pandering far too much to the British' and the incorporation of the Union Jack in the national flag would provoke a strong reaction. Mountbatten realized that the situation had 'reached a point at which it was inadvisable to press the design on them'.[15] Even so Mountbatten was not prepared to simply give up. He suggested an alternative procedure by starting 'the custom of hoisting the Union Jack alongside the Dominion flag, either on the same pole or on two separate poles on all special occasions such as birthdays of the Royal Family, Dominion Days…and on as many occasions as possible'.[16] For this he received only lukewarm support from both Jinnah and Nehru; the latter 'thought that this scheme would be acceptable if it were not publicised'. Both were 'anxious that this should not be publicised but should simply happen as a matter of routine', as 'they [are] worried about their extremists agitating against over-stressing the British connection, although they are quite willing to retain it themselves'.[17]

Although the planning had been initiated by Mountbatten's staff, the question of preparations for the 15 August 1947 ceremonies was raised during the 14–31 July 1947 session of the Indian Constituent Assembly (CA).[18] Given the Congress Party's commitment to the ideals of democracy and republicanism, it was natural that Congress leaders wanted the CA to be the focal point of the transfer-of-power ceremonies, rather than the persona of the Viceroy. Nehru had been very concerned that the ceremonies should not be hijacked by Mountbatten to become a grand finale of imperial ritual for which he had a great distaste. On past occasions, he had heaped bitter scorn on imperial ritual, condemning the British for 'their court ceremonies, their durbars and investitures, their parades, their dinners and evening dress, their pompous utterances'. One way to ensure that the key ceremony had a genuine *nationalist* qualtity to it was to site it away from the Viceroy's House which Nehru had previously depicted as the 'chief temple where

the High Priest officiated'. He assailed the capitol complex in New Delhi itself which provided the setting for the ceremonies as the 'visible symbol of British power, with all its pomp and circumstance and vulgar ostentation and wasteful extravagance'.[19] Nehru and other Congress leaders therefore insisted that the key ceremony should take place not at the Viceroy's House but at the Council House.

This was in the view of the Congress leaders appropriate. In the original plans for New Delhi as imperial capital, the British had not provided for a separate Council House. They had decided that the Imperial Legislative Council did not need a separate building and could meet under the Viceregal roof. Later, it was thought that the space could be found for it in the Secretariat buildings. However, in subsequent years they had to reluctantly change their plans to erect a separate building in keeping with the 'march of constitutional progress'. The Council House was thus built as an 'afterthought' and its designer Herbert Baker had to wage a real struggle to give some stature and prominence to the building, which was sited at a much lower elevation than the Viceroy's House and the two Secretariat blocks. Further, it was placed at the edge of the grand urban layout of the city.[20] Thus in the words of Robert Grant Irving, the architectural historian of Delhi, 'this monument embodied as none other could the fact of India's progress towards constitutional maturity', it was appropriate that 'from a gallery in the great central hall of that very building, a bugler clad in simple cotton khadi would sound a sonorous note on a seashell, a haunting knell for empire and a summons to self-government'.[21]

Once the site was decided, it was agreed that a special midnight session of the Assembly should be held. However, there were some dissenting voices. Mahavir Tyagi, a Congress legislator from Uttar Pradesh (UP), for instance, suggested that the ceremonies of transfer of power should appropriately take place at the Red Fort. Other than the symbolic considerations, a practical reason he offered was that there might be difficulties in accommodating all the people in the assembly chamber. None the less, the overwhelming opinion supported the Council House as the most preferred venue.

Away from official circles, political parties like the Congress and the Muslim League were bracing themselves to mobilize the ground to ensure a befitting popular reception to the coming of freedom. The Congress leadership, for instance, gave much thought to how the ceremonies were to be organized; on 21 July 1947 the Congress Working Committee met at Harijan Colony in New Delhi to work out its plans. The Committee called upon 'the people to celebrate 15 Aug in a fitting and solemn manner'. It characterized the 'ending of British rule in India as an event of historic and world significance which opens the doors of freedom and opportunity to our people and which will have far-reaching consequences in national and international affairs'. At last, the Committee proclaimed that 'the dawn of freedom' was at hand 'for which people have suffered and laboured for generations'. There was also an expression of regret:

> that freedom has come in a manner which does not bring full joy to it, for it is accompanied by the non-accession of some parts of the country and the breaking up of the living unity of India which nature, history and tradition had fashioned and which was firmly tied up with the idea of freedom.
>
> The Committee believe that the destiny of India will yet be realized and that when passions have cooled, a new and stronger unity based on goodwill and cooperation will emerge.[22]

On the practical arrangements for the celebrations, the Working Committee laid down a 'minimum programme' which included several key events: flaghoisting on public and private buildings in the morning, organization of mass meetings in the afternoon to explain the 'significance of the occasion' and a pledge by people to 'dedicate themselves anew to the national cause, and more particularly to the freedom and progress of the backward classes and the common man'.[23] If circumstances permitted, processions and marches could be organized which could converge at mass meetings. The Working Committee called upon 'the people to begin this new era in India's history with courage, discipline and confidence', so as to 'extend full freedom and opportunity to every citizen to whatever religion or class he or she may belong'.[24]

These guidelines for the 'minimum programme' were followed by instructions sent out in a circular to all the Provincial Congress Committees by the General Secretary Shankarrao Deo. Congressmen were urged to observe the day when 'India would be fully free to shape her destiny according to the wishes and genius of her people' with 'solemnity, even though our joy at the dawn of freedom would be mixed with pain at the separation of some of our brethren from us. The separation we hope and believe is temporary and short-lived'.[25] Provincial and subordinate Congress Committees were directed to arrange flag-hoisting ceremonies at which 'people of all communities may gather and salute the flag of the free and independent India'. Congress committees were free to add to the minimum programme 'according to local conditions and desire'. However, it was specified that 'in provinces or parts of provinces where for the maintenance of communal peace or some similar reason there are bans on public meetings, etc., the celebration programme may be adjusted accordingly'. Further, Congressmen were urged to work closely with government authorities in organizing 'joint celebrations' which will be 'a fitting symbol of the growing oneness of the people and the Government.'[26]

In these weeks the Congress leadership was inundated with suggestions about how to commemorate the occasion. For instance, it was suggested to J.B. Kripalani, the Congress President, that a 'New Era be introduced on the 15 August 1947'. This suggestion emanated from Lalta Prasad Saksena of Agra College who proposed that 'the existing eras…Vikram, Hijri, Christian could be blended into the National Era'. This would 'perpetually commemorate the Independence of our Motherland and immortalise a few of the NationBuilders'. He suggested that the twelve months of the new calendar could be named after nationalist leaders and designated

'Noroaji, Lajpat, Ali, Tilak, Gokhale, Moti or Motilal, Ajmal or Ansari, Das or Chitranjan, Malavi or Malaviya, Tagore, Andrews, Bhagat'. According to the author of the scheme, here was 'a novel and noble idea to nationalise the very thing of our daily life …month to month and year after year (sic!)'.[27] Another interesting suggestion came from Chajju Singh, Secretary of the Muzaffarnagar District Congress Committee in Uttar Pradesh, who wanted a rather dramatic extravaganza of ceremonies in order to 'revitalise' the Congress, 'uplift the morale' of its cadres, and 'kill the opposition of Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League'. Singh wrote to Govind Ballabh Pant, the Uttar Pradesh Premier, that 'I see depression and despondency all round which is very injurious for the future of the Congress organisation'. He attributed this mood of dejection to the acceptance by the Congress of partition, as a result of which the party was having to face strong opposition from the extreme Hindu Mahasabha as well as the Muslim League.[28]

Once the details of the programme became known, provincial and local Congressmen were galvanized into action. For instance, the Uttar Pradesh Congress sent out an important circular with detailed instructions to all its subordinate bodies which laid down the 'do's' and 'do nots' for Congress cadres.[29] It also elaborated the form which the key ceremonies were to take. On the appointed day the ceremonies would begin at 7.30 a.m. when, at a designated place fixed by district or local authorities, the 'national flag' would be hoisted by a minister, parliamentary secretary, legislator, or a district official, and this was to be followed by a police parade to salute the flag. Then, at 10.30 a.m. flag-hoisting functions were to take place at prominent public or private buildings. At such gatherings Congress volunteers were urged to mobilize as many people as possible. People were to be asked to stop work and perform *jhandaabhivadan* (saluting the flag). The message was also to be explicitly conveyed that 'the flag under which they struggled and suffered has emerged *victorious* and has *become the flag of the State* and now onwards will be hoisted over courts, district offices, police stations and tehsils'. Then at 4.30 p.m. route marches or processions were to be organized for which all Congress cadres were urged to mobilize large crowds. People were to be encouraged to don the Gandhi cap and, as far as possible, wear *khadi*. The marches were to conclude in a public meeting at 6 p.m. which was to be attended by government servants. At night public buildings were to be illuminated and people encouraged to decorate their dwellings.

Local organizations were given the flexibility, within the format of this 'minimum programme', to 'extend it and go beyond it'. However, it was made very clear that no clash was to be allowed between 'official' and 'party' functions. Local cadres were instructed to work closely with the district and local authorities to ensure that events went off in an 'orderly and punctual' manner. The cadres were warned that 'at this time attempts are being made to vitiate the atmosphere':

> It is a matter of pity that when real responsibility is coming into our hands, some short-sighted people are misleading the public and creating obstacles

> *precisely* at the moment when *the permanent foundations ofthe nation and nationhood* are being laid.[30]

It was regretted that people were being 'excited by communal propaganda and sentiments' when enormous challenges were being faced by all Indians. In the light of this, it was particularly important to celebrate the birth of the 'nation' in a befitting manner:

> We have to celebrate 15 August in such a way that people's psychology is *metamorphosed* into that *befitting the citizens of an independent nation*. We have to explain to them that with the departure of the British our destiny now lies in our own hands. We now have to build a strong and prosperous nation. We have to establish a democratic polity. We have to bestow the means for an abundant livelihood on peasants and working peoples. We have to remove the gross inequities which can be seen in our society and eliminate poverty and unemployment. We have to empower the people. We have to work according to a plan to augment income, provide work, impart universal education and to bring development to the villages. All these aspirations and expectations cannot be fulfilled overnight.[31]

To be able to meet these challenges, people needed to conduct themselves with dignity and honour. In particular, they were warned that 'anyone unwilling to join in this occasion or programme must not be coerced or commented upon' as 'with the coming of freedom our responsibility goes up and we should remember this even more'.

In sharp contrast to the sense of organization and discipline with which the rank and file of the Congress approached the event, the preparations being made by the Muslim League were *ad hoc* and less organized. This was to be expected as Congress cadres were gearing themselves towards inheriting the mantle of an established imperial order, whereas the Muslim League leadership was confronted with the challenge of enacting rituals of consecration in territories which were in the process of seceding from India. Their preoccupation in the weeks preceding the event had been with securing the sinews of the state itself. The sheer problems of logistics involved in establishing the headquarters in Karachi were overwhelming. In the light of such uncertainties the Muslim League leadership could only issue broad guidelines for the celebrations. On 2 August Liaquat Ali Khan, in his capacity as the general secretary of the Muslim League, declared: 'It is up to every citizen and organization to devise their own ways of celebrating according to their means, circumstances and available facilities'. He urged the Pakistan 'National Flag' to be flown on all Government buildings and private dwellings and places of business. He proposed meetings and processions but appealed, in the same spirit as shown by the Congress leaders, that legal restrictions be followed and ban orders not violated.[32]

However, a flag for the new Dominion had not yet been adopted! Less than ten days prior to the inauguration of Pakistan, Muslim League cadres did not know which flag they were expected to hoist. In the last week of July 1947, the Sind Minorities Association had proposed a design of a flag for adoption by the Pakistan Constituent Assembly. It consisted of three diagonal stripes: the central one, which was the biggest, was green with a superscription of crescent and a star indicating the central place of Muslims in the new nation. On top was placed a red band with the superscription of *Om* representing the Hindu 'minority'. The third white strip at the bottom stood for 'other minorities'. The entire flag was embossed with a full-sized balance 'signifying justice and fairness to all the people of Pakistan'.[33] However, on 6 August the special correspondent of *Dawn* based in Delhi claimed to have authoritatively learned that 'the design of the flag of Pakistan has been finally chosen'. It was to be a 'dark green rectangular flag in the proportion length to breadth of 3:2 with a white vertical bar at the mast, the green portion bearing a white crescent in the centre and a five pointed while heraldic star'. Further, it was specified that the 'size of the white portion being one fourth the size of the flag, nearest the mast, the remainder three fourths being dark green'.[34] The green and the crescent were traditional symbols of Islam, while the vertical white band on the hoist side symbolized the role of religious 'minorities'. According to Akbar Ahmed the flag's design is a 'symbol of softness, mystery, magic, romance, compassion, hope and promise'. It was only a week later when the Pakistan Constituent Assembly had met in Karachi that the flag was officially adopted, literally hours before the actual ceremonies! Likewise, the new state did not have a national anthem at the time of its inauguration. Pakistan had to wait for seven years before a suitable anthem was adopted in August 1954. That year, after an open competition, the poem *Paksarzameen shad bad* by Hafeez Jallundhary was chosen as the national anthem. In the light of such uncertainties it was remarkable that the leaders of Pakistan were able to, at all, gear themselves for the ceremonials.

'A day of mourning!'

While these feverish preparations were being made for the transfer-of-power ceremonies, there was gathering in momentum a strong public sentiment which questioned the idea of celebration. Those who subscribed to this mood included diverse groups of people, for instance, the 'Nationalist Muslims', a group of Muslims who were wedded to the 'secular' ideals of the Congress and who had trenchantly opposed the partition demand of the Muslim League. Then, there were the extreme Hindu nationalists who took the view that the coming event signified vivisection of 'Mother India' and was thus an occasion for mourning rather than joy. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, there were ordinary people in Punjab and Bengal—Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists—who were extremely concerned about what their place would be as 'minorities' in the new nation-states. They were worried about the safety of their lives and property, their right of residence in the new dominions and their status as citizens. Let us consider how

some of these groups looked upon the celebrations which were being planned so enthusiastically in Delhi and Karachi.

We begin with the most organized of the groups who interrogated the concept of commemoration. A major campaign against the celebration plans was organized by extreme Hindu nationalist bodies such as the All India Hindu Mahasabha and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). Their chief ideologue was Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, a romantic nationalist figure with terrorist links who had spent long years in British jails. He had in 1923 authored the work *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?*[35] In this text Savarkar propounded an alternative vision of nationhood which he called *Hindutva*.[36] Of the three pillars upon which his notion of *Hindutva* rested —geographical unity, racial features and a common culture—'the notion of territory was at the heart of Savarkar's ideological construct'.[37] In Savarkar's view, 'a Hindu was therefore an inhabitant of the zone between the rivers, the seas and the Himalayas, so strongly entrenched that no other country in the world is so perfectly designed by the fingers of nature as a geographical unit'.[38]

On the eve of independence the Hindu nationalists were a substantial political force, represented not only by organizations such as the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS, but by its moderate adherents who were a part of the mainstream Indian National Congress.[39] Within Congress circles, the Hindu right wing enjoyed sympathy not only at the level of individual leaders such as K.M.Munshi, Purushottam Das Tandon and others, but at the grassroots. In Bengal in particular, the provincial Congress had thrown its lot behind Hindu nationalists and there exists strong evidence of close intermingling at the levels of ideas and organization between the two.[40] Further, the organizational strength of the Hindu extremists on the eve of independence was growing.[41]

Given this strength, the call by the Hindu nationalists to boycott the coming celebrations was a serious challenge to the Congress. Savarkar, the supreme leader of the Hindu right wing, openly declared that celebrations in any form were not called for, as 15 August symbolized not independence but the vivisection of the country. The territorial integrity of *Akhand Bharat* ('indivisible India') which had been 'undivided from times immemorial' was now being destroyed. He urged his supporters never to accept partition, or to recognize Pakistan.[42] Savarkar's call for boycott found an echo among supporters of the Hindu right, growing in numbers due to disillusionment with the Congress over its 'appeasement' of Muslims by 'conceding' the demand of Pakistan. For instance, Vishwa Nath Singh, lawyer from Lakhimpur Kheri in Uttar Pradesh, wrote 'on behalf of the Hindu public of this Town' to enquire from the Congress president J.B.Kripalani why the Congress was making plans for celebrations. 'It is announced that 15 August is to be celebrated as a day of great national rejoicing', he enquired. 'For what should we celebrate? The mother is cut into two and we are asked to rejoice over it', he protested. In his view, instead it 'should be celebrated as a day of great mourning by the Hindus for it was a day of great shame and humiliation'.[43]

Throughout late July 1947, as the celebration plans evolved, the campaign to oppose them also gathered momentum. Its high point was the All India Hindu

Convention organized in Delhi on 10 August, the week the celebrations were to commence. Presiding over the Convention, Savarkar declared that 'Hindus could not rejoice in the coming independence because it meant the establishment of Pakistan over one third of India and because untold suffering had been caused to millions of people by the orgy of plunder, arson, murder and conversion' which are likely to result from this policy of 'appeasement'. Nearly a dozen other speakers at the Convention lent support to the demand that India should declare itself a Hindu state and work for Hindu ideals. Savarkar appealed to 'the Hindus irrespective of party affiliations to unite together, look ahead and be ready to face the dangers of partition'. He pointed out that:

> the Muslims had already begun to make further claims for a Moplastan, a Moestan and other 'stans'; they are also claiming separate districts for themselves in the Hindustan provinces; the Muslim princes are also threatening to establish Pakistans in their own territories; if these threats are not met there will be at least fourteen more Pakistans in the country in the next few years.

The only remedy, according to Savarkar, lay in rejecting the vivisection of 'Mother India', and the boycott of the celebrations was an integral part of this programme.[44]

While open boycott of the celebrations was just one form in which the Hindu right wing expressed itself, its campaign of pursuing its agenda of *Hindutva* also took the form of exerting pressure upon Congress which was now taking control of the state. Pressure was exerted, for instance, to get *Devnagari* official status as 'the *lingua franca* of India'.[45] Further, the suggestion was made to change the country's nomenclature from India to 'Hindustan'. As a Hindu right wing supporter demanded to know from the Congress President, 'You have requested the British to let the name India remain in place of Hindustan. What did you gain by this? You may profess anything, but India is no more India and it is divided and cut into two.'[46] It was demanded that India should declare itself a Hindu state, just as Pakistan was now being established in the name of Islam.[47]

A specific issue which Hindu nationalists took up on this occasion was their long-standing demand of a ban on cow slaughter. They mounted an extremely forceful and broad based campaign to put pressure on Congress leaders to declare on 15 August that cow slaughter would be banned in free India. Hanuman Prasad Poddar, proprietor of Gita Press and editor of *Kalyan,* a Hindi journal devoted to popularizing Hinduism, called upon Congress leaders to inaugurate the Dominion by undertaking the first act of banning cow slaughter, 'now that the British are quitting our land and we are soon going to have a national government of our own'. He claimed that the demand had the sympathy of influential Congress leaders like Rajendra Prasad and even Gandhi.[48] The advocates of cow protection convened the All-India Anti-Cow Slaughter Conference in Delhi which demanded that the Indian Government accept 'protection, preservation and improvement of cow' as a fundamental right of the people.[49] So effective was the

campaign that Rajendra Prasad, president of the CA, was reported to have received about 50,000 postcards, 30,000 letters and thousands of telegrams demanding the prohibition of cow slaughter in the Union of India. Gandhi himself was forced to respond to the issue; he reasoned that it was not possible to concede the demand, as 'Hindu religions prohibited cow slaughter for the Hindus, not for the world'. Thus it could not become a matter of state policy. In his view 'religious prohibition came from within' and 'any imposition from without meant compulsion'. Further, Gandhi reasoned that

> India was the land not only of the Hindus, but also of the Muslims, the Sikhs, the Parsis, the Christians, the Jews and [all those] who claimed to be of India and were loyal to the Union. If they could prohibit cow slaughter in India on religious grounds, why could not the Pakistan Government prohibit, say, idol worship in Pakistan on similar grounds?[50]

Gandhi's strong stance on this issue thus ensured that the demand for a ban on cow slaughter did not gather support.

The opposition to the idea of celebrations was not confined to the Hindu nationalists alone. A groundswell of opinion seemed to be building up which questioned the plans being made for the celebrations. A correspondent of Gandhi, a non-Muslim from a West Punjab district, captured the mood when he wrote in a letter to the Mahatma:

> You people are talking loud about the celebration of Aug. 15 next as independence day. Have you thought how we the non-Muslims of Pakistan are to celebrate the day and with what joy in our hearts? We here shall be afraid about our own safety when you might be rejoicing. Can you direct us as to what we might do? Can it be a day of anything but mourning. Our Muslims neighbours have begun to put fright into out hearts from now.
>
> What the Muslims of Indian union are thinking? Are they not likely to share the same fright? We are frightened to such an extent that we feel we are in danger of compulsory conversions to Islam. It is all very well for you to preach courage and to prattle that everyone's religion is his own keeping. It may be true of sanyasis, not of pure householders having children.[51]

Gandhi himself lent his weight to such expressions of doubt by declaring : 'This much I certainly believe that coming August 15 should be no day for rejoicing whilst the minorities contemplate the day with a heavy heart. It must be a day for prayer and deep heart-searching.' In his view there could be no rejoicing if the 'minorities' felt insecure and unprotected.[52] In Lucknow the influential Muslim League leader Begum Aizaz Rasul openly expressed her apprehensions at the state of affairs. She expressly declared:

> There can be no peace in this vast subcontinent unless minorities are safeguarded in both dominions.... I feel that no assurances, whatsoever, are forthcoming for the Muslims of the Indian Union, though they have a legitimate and reasonable claim for the safeguard and protection of their cultural, social, political, religious and other rights.... This state of affairs will lead to insecurity and frustration, resulting in an anarchic situation for millions of people inhabiting the two Dominions who want to be good citizens of the new States'.[53]

In Calcutta Haji Seth Mohammed Yusuf, a member of the Bengal Legislative Council and Councillor of Calcutta Corporation, painted a 'grim outlook' for Muslims in West Bengal as their future looked 'dark and gloomy'. He complained that no assurances had been given to Muslims about the 'safety and security of their lives, liberties, religion and culture'. He feared that 'on and from August 15th there will be a Hindu rule in West Bengal with a vengeance'. He could see that 'ominous signs are already appearing'; experience of the Great Calcutta Killings of 1946 had convinced him that 'August has not turned out in the past to be a very August month'.[54]

Similar sentiments of apprehension and anxiety were being expressed by Hindus and Sikhs in Sind, West Punjab and the North Western Frontier Province (NWFP). So powerful was the mood against the proposed celebrations that even the Congress president J.B.Kripalani was moved to declare:

> We know that the hearts of all Gongressmen and Congress sympathisers in Sind, East Bengal, West Punjab and the NWFP are lacerated at the division of the country. They are therefore in no mood to rejoice with the rest of India. Under the circumstances, there is no need to celebrate August 15 in the areas which have been separated form India.

He directed the secretary of the Punjab Congress Committee to instruct local Congress committees in West Punjab not to join in the celebrations. A strong protest was made by Liaquat Ali Khan over the Congress president's statement; Muslim League workers complained that he was undermining the celebrations being planned for the inauguration of Pakistan by giving a boycott call. However, Kripalani refused to withdraw his call for the boycott, although the Punjab Congress circular was withdrawn. He insisted that:

> all those who feel the glow of a free Pakistan must participate in its celebrations. But for those who feel no such glow and are not happy over the division of the country, to participate in the celebrations would be an act of hypocrisy dictated by self-interest.[55]

The consecration rituals in Karachi

Notwithstanding such doubts and apprehensions, the curtain on the actual ceremonies marking the British withdrawal from the subcontinent was raised on 14 August in Karachi, the newly-designated capital of Pakistan. For Muslims celebrating the foundation of Pakistan, the day could not have been better chosen. As Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, the prime minister designate, declared:

> Our National State will be inaugurated on a very auspicious day, namely, Jumat-ul-Wida or the last Friday in Ramazan. Therefore the Muslims will have the opportunity of observing the best of all celebrations—offering special prayers after the Jumma prayers, invoking the blessings of God for Pakistan and soliciting Divine grace for all its citizens so that they may prove worthy of the great future which is now theirs.[56]

Many devout Muslims saw it as a particularly propitious beginning for the 'Land of the Pure',

In areas expected to become a part of Pakistan all attention had been centred on Karachi, the capital designate, where the ceremonies connected with the transfer of power were to be staged. The city had begun feverish preparations for the historic role it was now being called upon to play, 'the greatest moment in the Muslim nation's history for the past 200 years' as the *Dawn* described it.[57]

In July 1947 a special committee steered by the top personnel of Sind provincial government and fully backed by its administrative machinery had been formed to draw up suitable plans for the celebrations. This committee had decided that the entire city was to be decorated with flags and buntings; buildings were to be illuminated and sweets distributed in schools. Even a release of prisoners was contemplated as part of the celebrations.[58] A citizens' committee, chaired by the president of the Sind Muslim League Yusuf Haroon, had also been formed. Suggestions had poured in and plans were made to create an atmosphere of 'gaiety and solemnity' on that very special day. Efforts had been made to associate the leaders of non-Muslim communities with the work of the committee; the response, on their part, was encouraging. The Sind Congress leadership, represented by N. R.Malkani and Mukhi Govind Ram, joined the committee and issued an appeal urging all non-Muslims in Sind to participate in the celebrations. 'There must be no sorrowful heart nor hungry mouth on those festive days', they declared.[59] The organizers reported 'phenomenal success' in getting donations from commercial firms, with an 'appreciable predominance of non-Muslims'. The Dalmia Cement Company, for instance, gave Rs 5000 and a similar amount was presented by Tara Chand Gupta of the Iron and Steel Merchants' Association. There were even suggestions that Muslims were complaining that they were 'not having enough say' in the work of the Committee.[60]

For the residents of Karachi, the new occupant of the Government House was a very special person. The celebrations also marked the homecoming of the city's

greatest son, Muhammed Ali Jinnah. His return to the city of his birth, according to *Dawn,* was the end of a journey from a 'cradle room in a nursery to the throne room of the Governor-General's House in the selfsame city' which had 'no parallel in modern history'.[61] Karachi eagerly awaited the return of its greatest son in 'his supreme moment of glory'. The raging popularity of the *Quaid* was evident from the varied types of Jinnah cap which were selling like hot cakes, spoiling the buyers with choice: there was 'Jinnah Popular' made of 'imitation fur' available for Rs 2; then 'Jinnah Jafar' made with 'plush and allied materials' which sold at Rs 10; 'Jinnah Standard' made of 'Indian fur' for the more discerning clientele which sold at Rs 45; and finally, the top of the range 'Jinnah Special' made with the choicest 'Qaraquri fur' priced at Rs 75.[62]

On 5 August an advanced party consisting of Lt. S.M.Ahsan and Capt. Gul Hassan Khan, ADCs to the Governor-General designate, arrived together with Major McCoy, who was to take charge as Comptroller at the Government House. Within two days arrangements were in place for the arrival of the *Quaid* himself. On 7 August Jinnah, accompanied by his sister Fatima, flew in from Delhi on the Viceroy's personal Dakota. Wearing a cream-colored silk *sherwani,* a *shalwar* and his trademark fur cap, Jinnah was received by members designate of the Pakistan cabinet, the Sind premier, the Mayor of Karachi and a Citizens' Reception Committee.[63] Also present were representatives of the Sind Minorities' Association who wished to present a memorandum enumerating their demands to the 'supreme leader' of Pakistan. The enthusiastic crowd of more than 50,000 which had gathered at the Mauripur airfield surged through police cordons when the plane landed, many hoping to catch a glimpse ofJinnah.[64]To mark the 'homecoming', the Sind Government declared a public holiday on that day. Hundreds of cars formed a three-mile procession as Jinnah drove through the streets of Karachi. The homecoming was emotional for Jinnah too. He was presented a Guard of Honour and was attended by attendants dressed in scarlet Upon entering Government House, he was said to have remarked to his ADC, 'Do you know I never expected to see Pakistan in my lifetime. We have to be grateful to Almighty God for this great gift'.[65] For the city the celebrations had already begun.

On 10 August Jinnah attended the first public function which was the inauguration of the Pakistan Constituent Assembly. Feverish preparations had been under way at the Secretariat to put finishing touches to the refitting of the chamber, previously used by the Sind Legislative Assembly. At what was described as 'a simple and dignified' ceremony, the Pakistan Constituent Assembly held its inaugural session where it elected Jogendranath Mandal, a prominent non-Muslim leader from East Bengal, as its temporary chairman. Calling it 'a momentous occasion', Mandal welcomed all those who had come from different parts of Pakistan to Karachi. These included the premiers of Muslim-majority states like Qazi Nazimuddin of East Bengal as well as important non-Muslim leaders like Lala Bhimsen Sachar, leader of the West Punjab Congress, and Kiron Shankar Roy, a Congress leader from East Bengal. Mandal called upon all citizens, especially from the 'minorities', to be 'responsible, loyal and faithful to the State'. Loud cheers

filled the chamber when he came forward to sign the roll as a founder-member of the Pakistan Constituent Assembly. There was much applause again when Kiron Shankar Roy presented his credentials and signed the roll. In all the Assembly had sixty-nine members, made up of fifty Muslim representatives and seventeen Hindu and two Sikh members.[66] The following day the *Quaid* himself addressed the Assembly. In his first speech as leader of Pakistan, Jinnah began by defining his priority 'to maintain law and order so that the life, property and religious beliefs of its subjects are fully protected by the State'. Jinnah was only too aware that the state which he had worked so hard to achieve, though created in acrimonious and unhappy circumstances, should not at its birth be sullied by lingering communal distrust and antagonism. He then went on to warn against 'curses' which the new nation must guard against: bribery, corruption, black marketing, nepotism and jobbery. Such evils must not be tolerated and should be 'put down with an iron hand.' He urged his countrymen to strive together:

> Now, if we want to make this great State of Pakistan happy and prosperous we should wholly and solely concentrate on the well-being of the people, and especially of the masses and the poor. If you will work in co-operation, forgetting the past, burying the hatchet, you are bound to succeed. If you change your past and work together in a spirit that every one of you, no matter what community he belongs, no matter what relations he had with you in the past, no matter what is his colour, caste, or creed, is first, second and last a citizen of this State with equal rights, privileges, and obligations, there will be no end to the progress you will make.

He then went on to declare:

> I cannot emphasise it too much. We should begin to work in that spirit and in course of time all these angularities of the majority and 'minority' communities, the Hindu community and the Muslim community...will vanish.

Then he came to 'the core of his speech...his credo.' He told the citizens of Pakistan in 'a characteristically vigorous fashion':

> You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place of worship in this State of Pakistan.... You may belong to any religion or caste or creed—that has nothing to do with the business of the State.... We are starting in the days when there is no discrimination, no distinction between one community and another, no discrimination between one caste or creed and another. We are starting with this fundamental principle that we are all citizens of one State.

In retrospect, these words spoken by the 'Founder of the Nation' at the inauguration of the Pakistan Constituent Assembly seem ironic. Did Jinnah really mean that religion did not matter as far as matters of State were concerned? Then, what was the 'Land of the Pure' all about? Chaudhury Mohammad Ali in his *The Emergence of Pakistan* speculates:

> Could it be…that as soon as Pakistan was won the *Quaid-i-Azam* abandoned the two-nation theory and invited all its citizens, Muslims and non-Muslims alike, to work together for the state on the basis of territorial nationalism? What then was its *raison d'etre*, and what would be its distinguishing characteristics? Had the two nation theory merely been the scaffolding that was to be discarded once the structure was built?

Jinnah's speech has been interpreted by scholars in several different ways. Chaudhury Mohammad Ali believes that:

> what is overlooked is that Pakistan came into existence not by conquest but as a result of a negotiated agreement between the representatives of the Hindu and Muslim communities to partition the subcontinent. An explicit and integral part of the agreement was that minorities in both states would have equal rights and equal protection of law. In that context the Quaid-i-Azam was wholly right in asserting the fundamental principle that 'we are all citizens and equal citizens of one State'.[67]

For instance, Stanley Wolpert, a biographer of Jinnah, seems confounded when he writes in astonishment at the words uttered by his protagonist:

> What was he talking about? Had he simply forgotten where he was? Had the cyclone of events so disoriented him that he was arguing the opposition's brief? Was he pleading for a united India—on the eve of Pakistan—before those hundreds of thousands of terrified innocents were slaughtered, fleeing their homes, their fields, their ancestral villages and running to an eternity of oblivion or a refugee camp in a strange land?[68]

However, several Pakistani scholars believe that Jinnah's inaugural Constituent Assembly speech represented what he really stood for—his 'creed'—which has been suppressed by ruling vested interests, so much so that 'a distorted, censored version' was supplied to Jinnah's official biographer, Hector Bolitho, for a book commissioned by the Government of Pakistan.[69] The Pakistani scholar Akbar Ahmed has called this speech Jinnah's 'Gettysburg Address'. According to him it was 'an outpouring of ideas on the state and nature of society, almost a stream of consciousness' which reflected the *Quaid's* 'vision for the state he had created'.[70]

Likewise, the historian Ayesha Jalal has noted that, 'although the speech was promptly suppressed by the official guardians of Pakistan's ideological frontiers, it

has served as the *magna carta* for those who…style themselves as the true inheritors of Jinnah's political legacy'.[71] Jinnah's words seem ironic in view of the direction which Pakistan's polity has taken in the fifty years of its post-independence history. However, when they were spoken, Jinnah's declaration revealed his vision of the new nation in which he envisaged an equal place for all citizens, irrespective of religion or creed.

Meanwhile, Karachi continued its feverish preparations for the big day. Unlike the imperial capital New Delhi, the city of Karachi hardly had the physical wherewithal or the necessary political resources to assume the role which it was being called upon to play. Even as preparations were under way to mark Pakistan's birth, a government was literally being created overnight in Karachi. Here was a capital city with hardly any government offices, ministries, office furniture or stationery. Typewriters were regarded as a luxury and, in administrative terms, the situation was described as being utterly chaotic.[72]

None the less, there was enthusiasm in welcoming the birth of Pakistan. The *Dawn* reported that 'Karachi swarms with pioneers picnicking, with an air of excitement'. The 'Pakistan Specials' brought civil servants from India daily, and were full of people who 'alight in the promised land with vociferous cheer'. The administrative machinery of the new state was slowly taking shape. 'Cabinet Ministers of Pakistan use packing cases as desks and crack jokes with painters who drip whitewash on them' and it was reported that even Government House did not possess a telephone directory![73]

When Wilfred Russell, representative of the British firm Killick Nixon and Company, visited the prime minister's house to discuss with him the feasibility of acquiring a fast, long-range Royal Viking aircraft for Jinnah, he found that 'workmen were swarming all over the house unpacking, painting, hanging up curtains and scrubbing floors'. It all seemed quite 'typical of the pioneering atmosphere of Karachi at that time.'[74]

Meanwhile, those expected to arrive for the transfer-of-power ceremonies had begun their journey to Karachi. General Auchinleck, the British army chief and his military secretary, Shahid Hamid, on their way from Delhi, flew over East Punjab and came in very low to watch the columns of refugees proceeding to Pakistan. Hamid recalls, 'We saw areas in smoke that were burning. They were obviously Muslim. Smoke covered the countryside. It presented a grim picture of a battleground.' At Lahore they had met the West Punjab Governor Evan Jenkins, General Peter Rees of the newly formed Punjab Boundary Force and Colonel Ayub Khan who 'did not mince their words and painted a very gloomy picture'. They were told that the Sikhs were behaving with 'pre-medieval ferocity' and felt that the worst had still to come. Hamid arrived in Karachi 'thoroughly depressed after witnessing the carnage of the Muslims which was taking place in East Punjab'. He 'immediately went to the *Quaid* and Liaquat and told them of the happenings and the gruesome sights' he had witnessed.[75]

Not unexpectedly, within Karachi the 'minorities' were growing increasingly apprehensive. Wilfred Russell could observe in the streets that 'the considerable

numbers of Hindus who had lived there peacefully side by side with the Muslims for generations, were obviously a bit worried and were beginning to look over their shoulders into India'. The enthusiastic contributions by non-Muslim business groups reflected a certain nervousness, an attempt by propertied groups to secure goodwill in an environment which could suddenly become hostile. On 12 August 1947, Sri Prakasa, a prominent Congress leader from Uttar Pradesh and a personal friend of Nehru, arrived in Karachi to take charge as India's first High Commissioner.[76] Within a few hours he was met by Choithram Gidwani, the most prominent Congress leader of Sind. Sri Prakasa, who found the latter 'in an angry mood', recalls:

> [he] asked me what I meant by being there at all? He told me that he had been the President of the Provincial Congress Committee continuously for twenty-five years; and when he was available for the job, no body had any business to come. I must confess I was taken aback; and I told him as quietly as I could, that I was not responsible for my presence, and that he should go to the Prime Minister to know why I should have been sent.[77]

Quite clearly, both men had little idea of the nature of bilateral ties which the two dominions were expected to establish. It was interesting that Gidwani, who was undoubtedly the most prominent non-Muslim politician in Sind, viewed himself not as a citizen of Pakistan but as someone who naturally should be the diplomatic representative of India in the capital of Pakistan! When Sri Prakasa invited him to celebrations which he had organized at the Palace Hotel to mark Indian independence, Gidwani refused to attend the function. 'He said he was too upset to come to any such functions for freedom, for freedom was not real freedom for which Sind had been sacrificed'.[78]

In the evening of 13 August 1947 Mountbatten and his party flew in from Delhi and were immediately driven to Government House for a banquet where 'pleasant, mutually complimentary and felicitous speeches were delivered by Lord Mountbatten and Mr. Jinnah'. This was followed by an outdoor reception. To Alan Campbell-Johnson, Jinnah 'the host and hero of the occasion,' appeared to his guests like 'an aloof, almost lonely figure…at this historic moment'. Shahid Hamid, also present at the reception, found him 'quiet and aloof, but he felt 'proud of such a leader. He looked every inch the Father of the Nation and the Founder of the ideological State of Pakistan', he later recalled.

That night at one minute past midnight, as 14 August began, Radio Pakistan came on air to announce the birth of the new nation. A recitation from the *Quran* was followed by a hymn sung by Zafar Ali Khan: *'Quaid-i-Azam,* we are indebted to you.'[79] The next morning Mountbatten and Jinnah were to ride through the streets of Karachi on their way to the Constituent Assembly. However, there had been intelligence reports warning of an impending bomb attack on their motorcade.[80] Jinnah had been alerted to the danger and the suggestion was made that they should either cancel the journey, or at least go in a closed car instead of

an open Rolls Royce. However, both disregarded these reports as alarmist fears and decided to go ahead.[81] The proceedings were carried out according to plans. Right on schedule Jinnah arrived in a state landau and inspected the troops, drawn up in a large hollow square, under the command of their respective British commanding officers. A stately and dignified Jinnah led observers to comment that 'he could have given points in dignity and deportment to the most stately of British Viceroys'.[82] 'A squadron of Tempests roared in salute' and the parade was 'carried out with a precision and smartness which augured well for the future'. After the inspection of troops, Jinnah, undaunted by the bomb threat, proceeded in an open car to the Constituent Assembly with Mountbatten. Gerry O'Neill, a soldier on duty in Karachi during the parade, witnessed the motorcade:

> In the lead car were Mountbatten, looking every bit the *'El Supremo'* in his naval uniform, with about one square foot of medals and Jinnah. Behind them were Fatimah Jinnah and Edwina Mountbatten.... Mohammed Ali Jinnah was...completely at ease and obviously enjoying himself, but not gloating in his role as the new GovernorGeneral. His thin, aquiline features were not fixed in a smile, but showed emotion and concern for the occasion.[83]

In the Assembly the ceremony marking the birth of Pakistan was short and dignified. Mountbatten read out the King's Message. He then went on to express the hope that the minorities in Pakistan would enjoy equal rights as citizens and offered the example of the Mughal Emperor Akbar as a model for the new state. However, according to Akbar Ahmed, this suggestion was particularly inappropriate as 'for many Muslims Akbar posed many problems'.[84] 'To propose Akbar as an ideal ruler to a newly formed and self-consciously post-colonial Muslim nation', comments Ahmed, 'was rather like suggesting to a convention of Muslim writers meeting in Iran or Pakistan that their literary model should be Salman Rushdie'.[85] A reply from Jinnah followed in which he reiterated that the tradition of tolerance and goodwill among the Muslims went back to the days of the Prophet himself, rather than the much later example of Akbar. The short ceremony lasting less than an hour ended with everyone congratulating each other.[86] Jinnah and Mountbatten then went out in procession to Government House. Enthusiastic spectators lined the streets. Though the bomb threat never materialized, the old Rolls Royce which carried the dignitaries borrowed from the ruler of a state caught fire as soon as the occupants disembarked as its engine had overheated.[87] Relieved that they had made the procession unscathed, Jinnah was said to have turned to Mountbatten and said, 'thank goodness I have brought you back safely'.

Outside the Governor's House and the Constituent Assembly, Karachi was in a deceptively festive mood.[88] Campbell-Johnson, private secretary to Mountbatten, noted while passing along the official route that 'neither the scale nor the enthusiasm of the crowds was anything like as great as I had expected...the greetings of the crowd, apart from some lorry loads of hilarious soldiers from the Pakistan

Navy and the usual excitement of children, were decorous rather than ecstatic'.[89] The atmosphere was not 'terribly demonstrative, rather "provincial" and "sober", but not ecstatic as in India'.[90] On the other hand, Shahid Hamid recalls that 'all along the route there was great enthusiasm and wild cheering.... A dream was coming true and a State was being born. The name of Quaid-e-Azam was on everyone's lips as well as their thanks to the Almighty.' Wilfred Russell, then lodged in the Palace Hotel which was crammed with press people, decided to be out in the streets to 'squeeze every drop of experience out of this great day'.[91] The mood of independence was certainly there, as witnessed by the new green and white Pakistan flags that were sprouting from rooftops, balconies and windows. However, he sensed that most of the 'ordinary people in the street had scarcely realised that Pakistan had really come about'. While everyone knew that the challenges facing the new state were immense, the spirit of 14 August was one of goodwill. Russell had a sense of that as he observed the celebrations in Karachi:

> Sitting on an old Ford surrounded by a cross-section of Indian Muslims, all restrained, yet fervently happy, as far as I could tell, I felt the tears coming to my eyes. It was all so sensible and friendly with real comradeship between the new and the old, real understanding on both sides. Pray God it will last.[92]

In the evening, after Mountbatten and his party had left, the Karachi Club hosted a 'grand independence banquet' where the city's *crème de la crème* jostled to felicitate the *Quaid-i-Azam*. The Club had been established in 1934 by the elite Hindu Amil community, mostly from Shikarpur, the Bohri Muslim community and old titled Sindhi families. Ken Mac, the well-known musician and conductor who performed at the Cricket Club of India in Bombay, had been flown by a special Tata airlines plane to perform at this special event. Jinnah arrived with his sister Fatima for the banquet and was received by the Club's president Justice Tyabji and its honorary secretary Jethanand Tandon. They were led to the other guests which included cabinet members, the diplo matic corps, the Commander-in-Chief Sir Douglas Gracey, British civilian and army officers, Pakistani officers like Iskander Mirza, all 'resplendent in cummerbunds or dress suits with the ladies in colourful sarees and evening dresses'. At the sit-down dinner around the teak dance floor they were serenaded by Ken Mac and his band. Haji Bhai Esmail Dossa, a Bombay-based businessman, recalls the highlights of the evening:

> Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah requested Ken Mac to play 'So deep is the night' because on that Chopin tune, Ruttie had taken Jinnah's consent for marriage in the Taj Mahal ballroom, at her birthday party, on February 20th, 1918. Later, the Quaid requested the orchestra for Paul Robson's 'The End' which as a courtesy to the Quaid, was sung in the tenor voice, by the great Ken Mac himself, for it was known that the Founder used to hum the words of 'The End' on Thursday afternoons in Bombay that he devoted to visit the grave of his wife Ruttie, in the Khoja Isna'asheri cemetery of Bombay.

> The finale of the evening, was given to the music 'Happy Birthday Dina' because the Quaid had chosen the Independence Day of Pakistan, on the birthday of his only daughter Dina, whom he had left behind in Bombay, with her two children Nusli and Diana. And when the programme ended the Quaid stood up, the guests followed, and everyone lifted their glasses, to toast 'God save the King'.[93]

While the music played to the august gathering, the mood was changing outside in the streets of Karachi, as news was coming in of the disturbances in Punjab and northern India. The ominous signs were evident for all to see. Campbell-Johnson on his return flight to Delhi noticed the 'large fires in the Punjab [as] beacons of ill omen dominating the landscapes for miles around'.[94] The uncertainties felt by the non-Muslims who had, for the moment, chosen to stay with the new state tempered the mood of independence in Karachi, as elsewhere in Pakistan. If indeed Pakistan marked the creation of a state for the Muslims, would there be a future in the new country for Hindus, Sikhs, Parsis and Christians?

Jinnah and his lieutenants had, of course, on every conceivable occasion sought to allay the fears of non-Muslim communities. The Independence Day Celebration Committee had made it a point to include 'minority' members. Constant reminders had been made by leaders that 'minorities' should 'be loyal to their respective states'. In an editorial published in the *Dawn* on 3 August, the newspaper supported the call by Liaquat Ali, prime minister designate, to observe 15 August as a 'day of deliverance' from foreign subjugation. But the underlying message was for all peoples of the new state to honour their new countries, and not let the 'newly acquired freedom be threatened by violence and blood'. Jinnah's speech on 11 August was the firmest indication yet of Pakistan's commitment to honour the rights and freedom of all its citizens, regardless of their religious beliefs.

Thus the mood in Karachi on 14 August, as the British withdrew from the subcontinent, was ambivalent. For the Muslims, it was a time for rejoicing as the birth of Pakistan marked freedom and the creation of a separate state in the name of Islam. Reactions from non-Muslims were more guarded; they were unsure if the new state would deprive them of their rights. For the moment, they could seek solace in Jinnah's promise that their rights of the 'minorities' in the new state were assured. This feeling was reinforced the following day, when Jinnah attended a Dominion Day Service held in Karachi's Anglican cathedral. In Karachi at 'the first bright dawn of independence', the peace that freedom promised seemed, for the moment at least, to have become a reality.

'It was a lovely time to walk in Delhi'

Meanwhile, the capital city of Delhi had been gearing itself for the coming event which would make it the focus of world attention. Representatives of the press from all over the world had arrived to cover the transfer-of-power ceremonies and

the BBC had sent its best equipment and camera teams for the occasion. In the Delhi Municipal Corporation, both Muslim League and Congress members had in a rare show of unity resolved to celebrate the occasion together. They had urged the citizens of Delhi to forget 'past bitterness and start a new era of mutual cooperation, communal harmony and a wellknit city life.'[95] Only one member of the Corporation, Ran Singh of the Hindu Mahasabha, had opposed the celebrations as, in his opinion, the motherland was being 'balkanized', and 15 August was a day 'not for rejoicing but of mourning.'[96] Elaborate plans had been made for sprucing up the city, arranging for free distribution of sweets to schoolchildren and specially designed 'Independence Medals' inscribed with the national insignia on one side and *'Jai Hind!'* on the reverse.[97]

While these feverish preparations were being made, the Muslim League, for its part, had made special efforts to avoid any controversy. Several of its leaders had repeatedly called upon the city's Muslim residents to come forward and join the celebrations.[98] Other political groups too had been forthcoming in wanting to participate. For instance, the Communists, bitter opponents of the Congress since the Quit India Movement of 1942, had issued an appeal to the 'followers of the Red Flag, all sections of the organized working class and other sections of the people' to join the celebrations.[99] While there was no Muslim opposition to the proposed celebrations, there had been obvious concerns about the place of Muslims in them. There had also been growing concerns about the safety of the community. Activities of extreme communal organizations, the shifting of key officials in the city's law and order machinery, and news of violence against the Meos in the bordering south-western districts had caused much fright among the 'minority' community. In the last week of July, the Delhi Muslim League had been moved to appeal for funds for the relief for Muslims who had suffered. It was reported that 150 Muslim villages in Gurgaon district and over 160 Muslim villages in the princely state of Bharatpur had been burnt to ashes and, as a result, almost 25,000 Muslims had been rendered homeless.[100] A large number of these had evacuated to Delhi and were living in temporary shelters on pavements. They offered a sharp contrast to the decorations and arches which were being put up by Congress volunteers, municipal authorities and young enthusiasts. In the prevailing circumstances, the question of celebrations had become a problematic one from the point of view of Delhi's Muslim residents. While their leaders never seriously contemplated the question of boycott—such a move would have invited hostility and even imperilled the safety of the community—there is considerable evidence to suggest that they now waited upon the event with anxiety, if not apprehension.

On the evening of 14 August a special function was arranged at Rajendra Prasad's residence on Queen's Road 'to give a send-off in the traditional fashion by ladies of Delhi' to Nehru, other ministers and constitution-makers. From Tanjore came priests from the Pandarsannidhi of Thiruvadhurai Adhinam, a special order of Hindu ascetics, who brought 'holy water' which they sprinkled on the leaders. Prasad and Nehru sat around a holy fire amidst the chanting of hymns, and women marked their forehead with *mangal tilak* (holy vermilion). It was traditional in

Hindu custom to derive power and authority from priests. Nehru yielded to such rituals under pressure from close associates who argued that this was the traditional method of assuming power. The leaders then proceeded to the Constituent Assembly.[101] By 10 p.m. huge crowds had assembled outside the building, in spite of a spell of monsoon showers which had failed to dampen their spirits. As the leaders arrived to enter the building, they roared in greeting.

At 11 p.m. the Constituent Assembly began its special midnight session which was chaired by Rajendra Prasad. The chamber was filled with newlystarched *dhotis* and 'Gandhi caps'. The front rows were occupied by Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur and others. Also in the front row sat Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the 'nationalist Muslim' leader whose 'sad face' appeared 'something of a tragedy, sticking out from the sea of happy faces like a gaunt and ravaged rock.'[102] The proceedings commenced with the singing of *Vande Matram* by the prominent Congress leader Sucheta Kripalani who sang the first verse of the anthem. Thereupon, Rajendra Prasad as president of the Assembly commenced his address in Hindi. He recalled the sacrifices of those who had toiled for freedom. He paid a glowing tribute to Mahatma Gandhi, 'our beacon light' who 'represents that undying spirit in our culture and make-up which has kept India alive through vicissitudes of our history'. He then acknowledged the deep sense of sorrow at the partition of the country:

> The country, which was made by God and Nature to be one, stands divided today. Separation from near and dear ones, even from strangers after some association, is always painful. I would be untrue to myself if I did not at this moment confess to a sense of sorrow at this separation.

He had a word of cheer for those 'on the other side of the border' whom he urged to 'stick to their hearths and homes'. To the 'minorities' of India he had a word of assurance that they will receive 'fair and just treatment' and enjoy 'full rights and privileges of citizenship'. Thereafter, a two minute silence was observed in memory of the 'martyrs' in the struggle of freedom.

Then came the moment for which the occasion has always been remembered: the midnight speech by Jawaharlal Nehru. In a soft ringing voice, Nehru began speaking words which have since become memorable:

> Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially. At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance. It is fitting that at this solemn moment we take the pledge of dedication to India and her people and to the still larger cause of humanity.[103]

Nehru went on to speak of how the coming of freedom was 'but a step, an opening of opportunity, to but greater triumphs and achievements that await us'. He then posed the question: 'Are we brave enough and wise enough to grasp this opportunity and accept the challenge of the future?' He made a brief but pointed reference to the country's partition: 'Before the birth of freedom we have endured all the pains of labour and our hearts are heavy with the memory of this sorrow. Some of these pains continue even now.' 'Nevertheless, the past is over', he continued, 'and it is the future that beckons to us now.' The future was one of 'incessant striving' to be able to 'fulfil our pledges' in order to bring about 'the ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity…to wipe every tear from every eye'. He appealed to the 'people of India' to 'join us with faith and confidence in this great adventure' to 'build the noble mansion of free India where all her children may dwell'.

Writers and historians have marvelled at the eloquence with which Nehru was able to capture the feelings and sentiments of millions. His 'Tryst with Destiny' speech has been regarded as a triumph in oratory, an inspired performance which achieved a unique fusion of 'Man, Mood and Moment'. Nehru then moved a formal resolution urging that all Assembly members take a pledge of dedication when the midnight hour approached. Chaudhari Khaliquzzaman, a prominent Muslim League leader from Uttar Pradesh, rose to support the resolution. He and his party colleagues from the Muslim League had absented themselves from the chamber during the singing of *Vande Matram* on grounds that it offended Muslim religious sentiment but had since rejoined the proceedings.[104] In supporting the resolution Khaliquzzaman spoke of the need to be vigilant, as having achieved success in the struggle for freedom, the country was about to embark on 'a new struggle' which is 'not to be fought against any outsider but is to be settled among our own selves'. There lay ahead the challenge of 'framing a Constitution, which would be acceptable not only to the minorities but also to all the people of the country…. This is the greatest task'.[105] When he resumed his seat, there was loud cheering. 'Jawaharlal Nehru came to me direct and embraced me heartily for the sentiments I had expressed', recalled Khaliquzzaman.[106] For seconding the motion Nehru had chosen Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan, a noted philosopher and educationalist, with the 'the specific directive that, once he was called upon to take the floor, he should not stop till the stroke of midnight so that the assembly could then proceed to take the pledge'.[107] Radhakrishnan took the Assembly through the countdown to the moment of midnight for the historic pledge to be taken. His speech was 'an oratorical timebound relay race'. His words echoed the sentiments which Nehru had expressed so lucidly:

> History and legend will grow round this day. It marks a milestone in the march of our democracy. A significant date it is in the drama of the Indian people who are trying to rebuild and transform themselves. Through a long night of waiting, a night full of fateful portents and silent prayers for the dawn

> of freedom, of haunting specters of hunger and death, our sentinels kept watch, the lights were burning bright till at last the dawn is breaking and we greet it with the utmost enthusiasm. When we are passing from a state of serfdom, a state of slavery and subjection to one of freedom and liberation, it is an occasion for rejoicing.

As Radhakrishnan ended his speech precisely at the twelfth chime of the clock, a conch shell was raucously sounded through the chamber. Nehru rose to administer an oath to members of the Assembly who pledged themselves to the service of the people. Thereafter, the 'National Flag' was presented 'on behalf of the women of India' by Hansa Mehta, a prominent women's activist, who expressed the hope: 'May this flag be the symbol of that great India and may it ever fly high.... May it bring happiness to those who live under its protecting care.' The singing of 'national songs' followed. The first was Iqbal's famous *Tarana-e-Hind,* whose first few lines *SareJahan Se Accha Hindustan Hamara,* were sung lustily by all. The ceremony ended with the singing of *Jana Gana Mana,* the chosen national anthem.

Outside the Assembly chamber people were ecstatic. Sham Lal, the veteran journalist, remembers: 'August 1947 was an exciting time; a kind of euphoria had come upon all of us. Delhi was lit up, and we stood around in the streets, waiting for the appointed hour to come.... There was a sense of achievement in the air.'[108] Mani Shankar Aiyar, a former diplomat and parliamentarian, was six when his mother took him to watch the midnight ceremonies. Although his memories of that historic night are faint, he was intensely proud 'to have been there at the creation.'[109] Khushwant Singh, the well-known writer, who was also present outside Parliament House, remembers the 'tremendous sense of euphoria and great hope for the future'.[110] Kapila Vatsyayan, an art historian, recalls 'running from Connaught Place that midnight to Central Hall to cheer that great speech' which was 'a great moment of political consciousness of political freedom'.[111] Mulk Raj Anand, the well-known Indian writer, remembers 'the glow of pride' as 'the Tricolour went up.'[112] People listened with rapt attention to the speeches which were being broadcast to those gathered outside. D.F.Karaka, a journalist, has recalled:

> Delhi's thousands rejoiced. The town was gay with orange, white and green. Bullocks' and horses' legs were painted in the new national colours and silk merchants sold tri-coloured saris. Triumphant light blazed everywhere, even in the bhangi (untouchable) quarter. Candles and lamps flickered brightly in houses that had never seen an artificial light.

A.K.Damodaran, former diplomat, recalls that 'it was a lovely time to walk in Delhi'.[113] There were countless people who had tuned in to All India Radio to hear in the baritone voice of Melville de Mellow a live relay of the proceedings.

Next morning, on 15 August, the focus shifted to Viceroy's House where Mountbatten, resplendent in official dress, and his wife Edwina, in a shimmering

silver gown, entered the Durbar Hall to a fanfare of trumpets. He was sworn in as the new Governor-General by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. He then administered to Nehru the oath of office as prime minister and thirteen others were sworn in as members of the new Cabinet. At 9.40 Mountbatten left in the State Coach at the head of a pro cession for the Constituent Assembly. There he inspected a guard of honour and was received by Rajendra Prasad. The proceedings began with the reading of messages of greetings from foreign countries. Mountbatten addressed the Assembly in his capacity as the new Governor-General. He acknowledged that the 'advent of freedom is tempered in your hearts by the sadness that it could not come to a united India; and that the pain of division has shorn today's events of some of its joy'. Rajendra Prasad then spoke and briefly dwelt upon sentiments of sadness which were being widely felt over partition. He went on to outline his vision of a new India in which 'poverty and squalor and ignorance and ill-health...the distinction between high and low, between rich and poor, will have disappeared' and urged all countrymen to dedicate themselves to the challenge of nation-building. Thereafter, he invited Mountbatten to give the signal for the hoisting of the 'Tricolour'. A salute of thirty-one guns was fired and the national flag was unfurled over the Council House.

According to reports, flag-hoisting ceremonies took place at more than 300 places all over the city. Many prominent leaders such as J.B.Kripalani, Shankar Rao Deo, G.V.Mavalankar, N.V.Gadgil, S.Radhakrishnan, Ammu Swaminathan, Syed Hussain and Maulana Azad were the guests at several of these. The Congress cadres were particularly enthusiastic. A 2,000-strong corps of Congress Seva Dal volunteers held a rally at Kotla Feroz Shah which was inspected by Sucheta Kripalani. Students and youth sympathetic to the Indian National Army held a flag-hoisting ceremony at Asaf Ali Park in Daryaganj and took out a flag march through Chandni Chowk. The Delhi Bar Association unfurled the national flag over the district court premises; all kinds of voluntary bodies held their own celebrations. Religious organizations like the Santan Dharma Sabha and the Arya Samaj held special *pujas* and *havans* at several places.

The Christian community too showed much enthusiasm. All churches affiliated to the Church of North India and the Delhi Diocese organized special services, the largest being held at the Cathedral Church of the Redemption. A multi-denominational service was held at St. James' Church near Kashmiri Gate. Outside the municipal limits reports were received of enthusiastic participation. From the surrounding countryside people poured into the capital on bullock carts, horse carriages and trucks. Those who stayed on organized functions in their own villages; at Mehrauli, for instance, Gopi Nath 'Aman' presided over the flag ceremony and at Badarpur, Dr Sukh Dev, saluted the Tricolour'.

For those who had congregated in the tree-lined streets of Delhi, the highlight of that day was an evening parade organized as an outdoor event to enable the citizens to have a sense of participation. Mountbatten left the Viceroy's House at 6 p.m. in a gold state carriage, descending an undulating 'King's Way' towards Princess Park near the Memorial Arch. He was received by Nehru and the chief

of the army staff. Troops drawn from the three armed services formed a hollow square around the saluting base. A ceremonial Guard of Honour was presented, with military bands in attendance. Mountbatten inspected the troops, took his salute and returned to the flagstaff where he unfurled the 'tri-colour'. A thirty-one gun salvo was fired. Troops marched past the national flag and a fly-past by fighter planes which dipped in salute followed. A sea of humanity watched the event and, according to eyewitness accounts, a million people had turned up that evening. As the national flag was unfurled, a rainbow flashed across the sky which many interpreted as an auspicious omen. As soon as the parade ended the principal buildings in the vicinity were illuminated. A fireworks display followed towards the western end of King's Way near the Secretariat complex. Many of the prominent city landmarks such as the Memorial Arch, the Fountain in the old city and the Qutub Minar were illuminated.

While people in the streets lit up their homes, at places of work, public areas, markets and shops an atmosphere of festivity was visible. Mountbatten that evening hosted a dinner reception in Government House. At the banquet Nehru proposed a toast to the King and Mountbatten reciprocated with a toast to the Dominion of India. After the dinner, Shahid Hamid, then on the staff of General Auchinleck, encountered Nawab Ismail Khan, a prominent Muslim League leader from Uttar Pradesh, the 'heartland' of the Pakistan campaign. He later recalled:

> I was walking through the Moghul Gardens when I noticed a man sitting on a stone bench, with his head bent, smoking a cigarette. To my surprise I found it was Nawab Ismail Khan in deep meditation. I asked him when he was leaving for Pakistan. Very quickly he said that he would stay in India and look after the people who stood by him and voted for him. He felt that such people needed him more now than ever before. He could not let them down. He maintained that some Muslim leaders must stay behind for there were still too many Muslims in India who were not able to dream of going to Pakistan. The simplicity of his statement left me dumbfounded and I admired him all the more.[114]

The next day, on 16 August, the focus shifted to the Red Fort where Nehru addressed a large crowd. An estimated crowd of one million had gathered to see him raise the 'national flag' over the ramparts of the seventeenth-century Mughal citadel. 'We have gathered here', he began, 'on a historic occasion at this ancient fort to win back what was ours. This flag does not symbolise the triumph of individuals or the Congress but the triumph of the whole country.' According to the historian Jim Masselos, this was a highly symbolic act: 'In one swoop he established a new spatial order, a symbolic taking over of space that had been controlled by the former rulers.'[115] In his speech Nehru declared that:

> The first charge of the Government will be to establish and maintain peace and tranquillity in the land and to ruthlessly suppress communal strife.... It

> is wrong to suggest that in this country there would be the rule of a particular religion or sect. All who owe allegiance to the flag will enjoy equal rights of citizenship, irrespective of caste or creed.[116]

Masselos has perceptively alluded to 'the potency in the symbolism of the Red Fort and in its setting'. He notes that its locale established 'references to the imperial grandeur of the Mughals as well as to the flowering of an imperial state system that was indigenous and therefore national'. This served to highlight 'not merely grandeur by association that the Mughal references underscore' but 'also continuity with a past'. In this sense 'the new state was legitimised' as 'locating of the main independence day gathering at the Fort asserts an historical legitimacy to the new nation and implies an identity that does not derive from the British inter-regnum'.

Masselos has also unravelled several other symbolic elements such as the memories of the Revolt of 1857 with which the Fort was associated which, in his view, marked a 'redressing of the balance of justice'. Further, Nehru in his speech recalled Subhash Chandra Bose who had 'sacrificed and suffered' and lamented that though he 'hoisted this flag in foreign countries and when the day came for hoisting it on the Red Fort, he was not there to see his dream fulfilled'. Masselos notes that by remembering Bose, Nehru made an emotional connection to the Indian National Army whose men he had defended in a trial conducted at the Red Fort a few years ago. Above all, the ceremony signified 'the march to freedom' and 'assumptions of power'.[117]

There is evidence, though, that there were different ways in which the symbolism of the events was being interpreted. For instance, many Muslims viewed the ceremony at the Red Fort in a remarkably different way. Ashfaq Alam Khan of Meerut captured some of these concerns when he wrote to the *Dawn* to protest against the use of the Red Fort:

> It is reported that the Union Jack on the Red Fort will be replaced by the Congress flag on Aug. 15. This historic building of red stone and marble stands on the sandy bank of the Jummna in sacred memory of centuries of Muslim rule in India and is held in high esteem by the Muslims all over the country. The Union Jack which was hoisted after bloody hand-to-hand fighting in the streets of Delhi during the Mutiny and which had flown throughout since then will at last be lowered from this memorable fort, and at that hour it is advisable that the over-zealous Congressmen should refrain from playing with Muslim sentiments, especially in the present atmosphere of mutual suspicion and hatred. The flags of both the dominions should be hoisted in the fort or none at all. The Red Fort like other historic buildings is an Archaeological monument and should be placed under joint control.[118]

Two days later the *Dawn* raised the issue in its editorial. It declared that the plan to raise the flag of the Indian union on 16 August at the Red Fort had 'caused considerable agitation among the Muslims'. It was noted that it 'would have been

far more graceful of the Nehru Government if they had respected deeply the sentiments and desisted from hoisting their flag on this historical monument in such haste'. It sounded a note of caution and warning when it observed:

> We trust that there will be no petty-minded jubilation by the Hindus under the mistaken impression that by hoisting the flag of their state on the seat of power of ancient Muslim Kings they have somehow stretched a spiteful hand back into the historic past and dimmed the imperishable glory of Muslim rule.[119]

In fact, the use of the Red Fort as a site for raising the flag was seen by many as controversial, and several Muslim leaders had hoped that such a move would be avoided. For instance, Sham Mohammed Siddique, an honorary magistrate in Delhi, had suggested to the authorities that the 'national flag of Hindustan' should be hoisted on the bandstand at Connaught Place, and that the 'unfurling ceremony should be performed by a prominent Muslim'. Likewise, in the memoirs of Chaudhari Khaliquzzaman, there is lament at the state of 'Delhi of the Mughal emperors in 1947'.[120] Similarly, Begum Shaista Ikramullah recalls that 'for millions of people like myself, Delhi was 'synonyrnous with Muslim culture'.[121] Perhaps such concerns over use of the city's most prominent indigenous building reflected a deeper sense of unease which the ceremony on 16 August caused to Muslim sentiments.

In the evening of 16 August the Red Fort witnessed a brilliant display of fireworks. Over half a million people observed a spectacle which included dazzling items like 'Searchlight' and 'Waterfall by Moon Light' which the organizers proudly claimed were 'purely made with Swadeshi stuffs (sic!) and with Hindustani skill'.[122] While there were many who were ecstatic at such glittery expressions of joy, there was present within the city a significant Muslim population which perhaps took a somewhat different view of what was happening. How did they respond to such extravagant exhibitions of joy? Were they apprehensive about their place in these celebrations, their right of residence, the safety of their families and homes, and their status as citizens of the new nation? To add to their sense of nervousness and foreboding, there were already present in Delhi, on the eve of independence, an estimated 100,000 refugees, who had taken asylum in the capital to escape violence. According to reports thousands were pouring in every day, Hindus and Sikhs from different riot-affected areas in the NWFP and West Punjab as well as Muslims from districts of East Punjab and the princely states of Alwar and Bharatpur.[123] The city's rationing authorities had been inundated by requests for ration cards while civic authorities feared the outbreak of a public health crisis.[124] There refugees provided a stark counterpoint to the burst of fireworks and collective expressions of joy which dominated the celebrations in the capital.

Beyond capitals

We could perhaps look beyond the capital cities to see how other places were experiencing the events of 14–15 August. Bombay was one city where celebrations were particularly impressive and remarkable scenes of popular enthusiasm were witnessed. The city had after all been a stronghold of Congress activity. Moreover, as a metropolis with a population drawn from several communities, regions and classes, it had a composite public culture, invigorated by the presence of a large middle class.

In Bombay preparations had been made for the official ceremonies by Morarji Desai, the home minister, and S.K.Patil, president of the Bombay Pradesh Congress Committee. At a press conference Desai had outlined the programme which mostly conformed to the format prescribed by New Delhi. He declared that *Vande Mataram* will not be sung at public functions. as it had been decided not to 'offend the susceptibilities of any people'. At the precise midnight hour sirens from ships and factories were to alert the people and a military parade was to take place on 15 August. Likewise, the unofficial programme drawn by Patil on behalf of the Bombay Congress had included the hoisting of the national flag on Congress House and other public buildings at five minutes past midnight, garlanding of statues of national 'heroes', observance of a two minute silence in the memory of national 'martyrs', pro cessions and a meeting in the evening to be held at the Oval.

As in other places, the atmosphere in Bombay had been marked by anxieties for the city's Muslim residents. On Friday, 5 August a bomb blast had occurred in Taj Talkies where the film *'Arab-ka-Sitara'* was showing. The explosion killed five persons and injured over 160. The following evening another crude bomb had exploded near a mosque as the congregation was dispersing after prayers. Finally, on Sunday, a third bomb was lobbed at a mosque in the densely populated area of Chindi Bazar, with several casualties. These incidents heightened the sense of apprehension which the Muslim residents felt as they looked to the coming of 15 August.[125] None the less, several prominent Muslim leaders sought to allay these fears and urged the Muslims to ignore calls of boycotting the celebrations and to participate wholeheartedly in them. The lead was given by Hassanally P. Ibrahim, the president of the Bombay Provincial Muslim League, who joined the official committee formed by the Bombay Government to formally associate the Muslims with the programme of celebrations.[126] Likewise, His Holiness Sardar Saifuddin Saheb, the chief of the Dawoodi Bohra community, which had a strong presence in city, issued instructions to his followers to participate in the celebrations.

On 14 August night an impressive ceremony was organized from 9 p.m. onwards at the Congress House on V.J.Patel Road. The function started with the singing of *Vande Matram*. At exactly midnight sirens from factories and ships docked in the harbour signalled the arrival of the 'appointed hour' and crackers and gongs 'announced the arrival of freedom'. Patil, the chief organizer of the function, had wanted a religious ceremony to mark the beginning of the new era and had searched for 'qualified brahmans' suitable for the occasion who would chant *mantras* from

the Vedas appropriate for the occasion. However, he was persuaded to alter his plan and instead to have a multi-faith function in which hymns from the Quran, the Bible, the Zenda Avesta and the Vedas were included. The rituals of the secular state were being invented!

D.F.Karaka, a noted city journalist, recalls that 'there was something different' that evening as 'it was difficult not to be conscious of the moment towards which we were moving'. On his way back from work he saw that 'floral arches spanned the main roads and festoons were strung across streets and lanes. Colourful buntings and streamers waved everywhere'. He could notice crowded streets as people headed home. 'Workmen and common people.... That evening they would bathe and annoint themselves as for a holy fiesta. Caste and out-caste, capitalist and labourer, city man and peasant all had the same idea.' That evening Karaka found himself at a banquet hosted by the Mayor of Bombay at the Taj Mahal Hotel. Close to midnight the place was darkened and, as the clock sounded twelve, the lights came and the 'Tricolour' was illuminated. Outside people thronged the streets:

> that wide open space between the Taj Mahal Hotel and the Gateway of India was one solid block. The bright lights of the illuminations fell on them. From the harbour the ships were throwing searchlights on the land.... What a night it was! With the crowds refusing to go home.[127]

The crowd scenes were equally memorable the next day. Khwaja Ahmad Abbas, a journalist and great grandson of the Muslim poet and thinker Altaaf Hussain Hali, woke up worried whether it would rain on that historic day. The newspapers carried in headlines reports about Nehru's midnight speech. Abbas recalls:

> I did not know then that as he was uttering these stirring words he carried in his sherwani pocket the telegrams from Punjab, UP, Bihar and Bengal about the atrocities that continued to be committed against Hindus and Sikhs, and against Muslims.[128]

He joined the main procession and discovered that 'All Bombay was at Gowalia Tank'. About a million people were present in the three-mile pro cession. Abbas joined a group of writers and artistes; everyone was singing and dancing. Patil recalls that 'the celebrations continued for four days without let or hindrance. There were crowds everywhere in the city streets. Bombay, as only Bombay can, outdid all other cities.'[129]

Jim Masselos notes that in Bombay 'those who participated in the rites of passage were wildly enthusiastic'. His work brings out the strong communitarian spirit in the celebrations at Bombay, expressed in forms such as the holding of special caste dinners and family feasts, large scale distribution of sweets to 'the unprivileged and the down and out, the harijans and the beggars of the city' which was made possible by the donations of wealthy businessmen. This spirit was reflected in the way crowds roamed the city.

> Obviously they were celebrating, and celebrating by being together, a feature common to past religious festivals in the city, but they were also looking at the city in a different way, moving all around it as their own, whereas the space they took over in religious festivals was often limited and demarcated to specific localities. This was not the case in August 1947 as the entire city was re-defined subconsciously as the total territorial bounds of the new nation.[130]

Perhaps it may be useful to look at the celebrations in a different setting, to be able to get a sense of the diverse perceptions of 14–15 August across the subcontinent. The example of Dhaka, over a thousand miles away from Bombay, enables us to do so. In the city of Dhaka, where the East Pakistan Government was trying to establish its base, a sense of unease prevailed. An atmosphere of uncertainty seemed to have enveloped the 'minority' communities there. Although there had been no confirmed reports, the air was rent with rumours of a 'considerable flight of capital'; of properties being sold; and of an impending 'mass exodus'. One especially worrisome rumour doing its rounds was that, with the establishment of Pakistan on 14 August, all Hindu properties would automatically pass into the hands of Muslims.[131] Anxieties mounted even further when news broke that all Hindu government employees had elected to serve the Indian Union and would thus soon be leaving. As they already had an assurance from the Premier of West Bengal that they would be accommodated in the new province, the minorities feared that the city police force would be devoid of a single Hindu police officer.

The widespread sense of anxiety brought together influential Hindu public figures in Dhaka to hold a convention at the Narayanganj Bar Academy to demand protection of the 'minorities' and that steps be taken to 'keep up the morale of the people'. They demanded from the Indian authorities guarantees of help 'including the conferment on the minority of East Bengal the right of citizenship in all areas within the Indian Union'.[132] Another meeting later in the week was held at the Rupmahal cinema hall under the auspices of the Dhaka Congress Committee. Taking note of the panicky situation, Congressmen decided to tour rural areas to allay fears, to form 'strong volunteer corps' and called upon all nonMuslim members of the Pakistan Constituent Assembly and the East Bengal Legislative Assembly to reside in their respective constituencies to 'restore confidence'. However, the sense of panic persisted. By early August monies deposited in banks and commercial houses were being withdrawn in large amounts.

Politicians in East Bengal attempted to allay the panic. On 30 July a large public meeting had been jointly organized at Mymensingh by the Congress and the Muslim League. Appeals had been made to Hindus to stay, as well as to the Muslims not to permit the 'minorities' to leave because of 'foolish acts of aggression' but to seek their 'co-operation in the development of the state of East Pakistan with its poor resources'. Those present had included S.M.Ghosh, president of Bengal Congress and Moulvi Sharifuddin Ahmed, chairman of the district board. The latter had assured that the new state would be governed on principles of justice and

equity and that Hindus and Muslims would have their separate personal laws.[133] Likewise, the Hindu Mahasabha also organized a convention at the University Hall. Its leader S.P.Mookherjee had demanded that Pakistani authorities make constitutional provisions to safeguard the 'political, religious and economic rights' of the 'minorities'. He had wanted the Government of East Bengal to explicitly declare that it had no intention to confiscate capital or properties belonging to non-Muslims. Mukherjee had advised only those Hindus to leave their homes where they were 'hopelessly small in number and to migrate to other places and form pockets'. Hindu landowners were to give land for setting up such pockets; women were to be removed from places where 'their honour might be in danger' and students were asked to give up their studies for a month to go to villages and 'help in maintaining the morale of the rural people'.[134] On 2 August the Dhaka Central Peace Committee had met to take stock of the situation. It reiterated Jinnah and other League leaders' assurances to the minorities that there was no cause for panic.[135]

Such had been the mood in Dhaka when plans for the Independence Day celebrations were being worked out. A twelve member Committee had been appointed by the Bengal Muslim League to organize the inaugural celebrations of Pakistan and to welcome the East Bengal Government to the city. Khwaja Habibullah, the ex-Nawab of Dhaka, had been appointed president of the Committee.[136] Meanwhile, the Bengal Congress had sent out its own specific instructions on how celebrations were to take place in East Bengal. It had directed for the joint hoisting of the Congress flag and the flag of Pakistan. In other matters the initiative had been left to local leaders. All bans on meetings and processions were to be respected and all conflicting situations avoided. Celebrations were to be voluntary and no compulsion was to be exercised. It was, it said, 'advisable to cancel the celebration altogether rather than give opportunity for any unhappy incident'.[137] Four prominent Congress leaders, including J.C. Gupta, a member of the Bengal Legislative Assembly, had been deputed to help the local Congress at Dhaka with regard to the celebrations.[138] Further clarifications followed by Kalipada Mukherjee, Secretary of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee, who made it clear that the minorities 'as loyal citizens of the State in all private houses on any day of State celebration, as on the fifteenth they should give due recognition to the State Flag'.[139]

On 15 August 'Pakistan Independence Day' was marked in Dhaka with the hoisting of the flag by Khwaja Habibullah, formerly Nawab of Dhaka, at the historic Lalbag Fort, an old Mughal palace. Pakistani flags were hoisted on government buildings, many of which were decorated. In a number of Hindu localities the Congress flag flew alongside the new Pakistan flag. Decorated arches named after prominent martyrs were erected at many places. The official ceremonies went off smoothly and no untoward incidents were reported, except one instance of pulling down of a Congress flag.[140] On the same day the swearing in of the new Government took place at Curzon Hall. Justice Akram, Chief Justice of the East Bengal High Court, administered the oath of office to Sir Fredrick C. Bourne, the

new Governor. Also sworn in were the new Premier, Khawja Nazimuddin, and two of his ministers, Nurul Amin and Hamidul Huq Chowdhury. The speeches made at the ceremony alluded to the great responsibilities that lay ahead. Sir Fredrick spoke of East Bengal as a 'young province' in which 'many difficult, many urgent problems will present themselves'; however, he continued, 'you have the advantages of youth, enthusiasm, energy and high ideals'. Nazimuddin admitted the magnitude of the tasks which awaited the new government. He assured the 'minorities' of 'honorable and generous' treatment. The swearing in ceremony concluded with recitations from the Holy Quran and the unfurling of the Pakistan flag by the Governor.[141]

On 16 August there was a public meeting at Victoria Park where Khwaja Nazimuddin unfurled the Pakistan flag. He spoke of communal violence as a 'thing of the past' now that freedom had come. The common rejoicing by members of different communities for independence had filled his heart with 'great hope' and convinced him that confidence was being restored. He further assured the minorities of a 'fair and generous deal'. So confident was he that he was prepared to withdraw all cases, collective fines and to release those convicted in communal affrays, if representatives of Hindus and Muslims jointly put forth the demand. However, he warned that 'he had no Aladin's lamp or a magic wand to transform the country'. Nazimuddin's speech was followed by officials and leaders of opposition parties. B.Das Gupta, Chairman of Dhaka Municipality, assured the cooperation of the minorities and warned that freedom could not be retained if their was any oppression of the minority community. Leela Roy, leader of the Forward Bloc, assured the Prime Minister of the co-operation of her party; D.N. Barori, ex-Minister, extended support on behalf of the Scheduled Castes' Federation, and Nepal Nag spoke for the Communists. In a broadcast which he made later in the day from the Dhaka Station of the Pakistan Broadcasting Service, Nazimuddin expressed similar sentiments and asked all Muslims to work in unison and invoke the blessings of God for the tasks that lay ahead.[142] Following the meeting, a procession was taken through the main streets. Starting from Chowk it passed through Moghultully, Mitford Road, Islampur Road and Johnson Road, and many participants raised slogans such as *'Azad Pakistan Zindabad'*, *'Quaid-i-AzamZindabad'* and 'Hindus-Muslims are brothers'. The procession ended at Victoria Park.[143]

From all accounts it appears that the ceremonies in Dhaka, which had been a backwater in the Muslim League campaign to establish Pakistan, had been confined largely to the staging of state rituals marking the establishment of Pakistan and the assumption of power by a new government. The element of popular participation so strikingly evident in other places, for instance Bombay, was noticeably missing. In retrospect, one could see that events in Dhaka did not go beyond signalling the city's affirmation of Pakistan and its own place in it as a part of that territory.

In looking for divergent responses to the celebrations, it is striking that at many places there was a fusion of official ceremonies and popular elements which produced certain remarkable scenes. One place where a strong popular element

coalesced extraordinarily well with official rituals was in Banaras, one of the holiest cities in India. According to reports, 'flag-bedecked Banaras went riotous with colour and gaiety as India shook off the shackles of slavery at midnight'. The countdown to midnight was greeted with the blowing of conch shells and the incessant ringing of temple bells in the hundreds of temples situated in the holy city. In the morning of 15 August official ceremonies commenced at the Police Lines where Nisar Ahmad Sherwani, a cabinet minister in Uttar Pradesh, inspected the Guard of Honour. Later at another large gathering he hoisted the Tricolour' over the district court in the presence of the district officials. The City Congress organized its own celebrations at the Town Hall where men from the Special Armed Constabulary presented a Guard of Honour to the national flag. Away from the city, the students of Banaras Hindu University, which had been a storm centre in the 'Quit India' movement of 1942, held their own ceremony where the prominent Congress leader Sampurnanand unfurled the flag at the Amphi Theatre.

In the afternoon the focus shifted to the unique Bharat Mata Temple where a highly symbolic ceremony marked the coming of independence. The Temple, dedicated to 'Mother India', is extraordinary in that its inner sanctum contains no deity of the Hindu pantheon but rather a large iconic representation of Bharat Mata depicting the 'bounties of nature bestowed upon the land'.[144] A large relief map shows the key physical features of 'Mother India', rimmed by the Himalayas and watered by the Ganges and 'other holy rivers of heaven'. The 'sacred geography' of Bharat Mata is demarcated by the *dhams* (abodes of gods), located in the four directions, a visit to which is known as *Mahaparikrama* (the great pilgrimage). Visitors to the temple first circumambulate the relief map and then climb to the second floor balcony for the *darshan* of the whole.[145]

In a ceremony marked by enthusiasm, N.A.Sherwani, a Muslim Congressman, unfurled the flag over the Bharat Mata Temple in the presence of a huge crowd. In the evening the focus shifted to Dashashwamedh Ghat, the most popular of the bathing *ghats* along the Ganges where, according to legend, *Brahma* the Creator, had performed *ashwamedh yagna* (sacrifice of ten horses), marking the earliest consecration according to Hindu legends. From this spot, one of the holiest in Hindu religion where a dip in the Ganges destroys the sins of a lifetime for a believer, started a huge torchlight procession. This procession, 'the biggest in living memory' marched through Chowk and the main thoroughfares and terminated at Town Hall, where the local Congress leaders held a public meeting around the Martyrs' Memorial.[146]

A similar pattern was evident in Agra, another city in Uttar Pradesh. Here the highlight was the hoisting of the Tricolour' by the military commandant of Agra on the Mughal Fort. A flag-raising ceremony was also held at the Ram Lila grounds where more than 300,000 people were present At the Police Lines Jagan Prasad Rawat, a parliamentary secretary in the Uttar Pradesh cabinet, inspected a parade and unfurled the flag. At the Municipal office, the programme included recitations from the *Vedas* and the *Bhagwat Gita*. A police parade marched through the city at the head of a two-mile long procession led by local Congress leaders which

terminated at Ram Lila grounds in a public meeting addressed by Seth Achal Singh, president of the city Congress.[147]

'Mahatma's miracle'

Several hundreds of miles away in Eastern India, Calcutta was in a different mood on the eve of independence. It had suddenly become the focus of attention as Mahatma Gandhi had arrived in the city 'to rescue it from the danger of communal violence'. When Gandhi had decided to absent himself from the state rituals being staged in New Delhi, he had hoped to be in Noakhali in East Bengal; a riot-torn area where he had for several months concentrated his energies for bringing about 'Hindu-Muslim unity'. However, as a result of unexpected circumstances he now found himself in Calcutta. For almost a year since the 'Direct Action' day killings of 16 August 1946, Calcutta had been living through a nightmare. For months the city had more than its fair share of communal animosity, with violence erupting frequently in the charged atmosphere. The bitterness and hostility was, to a large extent, compounded by the uncertainty about the future of the city, as rival claims had been made over it before the Boundary Commission (as discussed in Chapter Three). In the context of Bengal, Calcutta had become the epicentre of the boundary disputes. Although the population of the city had a clear Hindu majority, the Muslim League had made an impassioned plea to the Boundary Commission to have Calcutta included in Pakistan.[148] As independence drew near, the signs were ominous, Calcutta was on the verge of a civil war and any spark of trouble on independence day could well trigger it off.

Faced with such circumstances, the leaders of the provisionally divided West and East Bengal knew the urgency of the tasks that lay ahead in the run up to independence. It was not so much planning and organizing the celebratory events, rather that the utmost had to be done by Muslim League and Congress leaders to prevent the occasion from slipping into an ostensible demonstration of communal victory by one group over the other. In their concern of not wanting the independence day celebrations to become an occasion and excuse for communal clashes, Muslim League and Congress organizations in Bengal had issued injunctions to their followers, reminding them to be sensitive to the feelings of 'minorities' during the celebrations. The Bengal Congress circulated instructions to its district committees, particularly in North and East Bengal and in Sylhet district, which were expected to go to Pakistan, that they should raise the Congress flag, and the Pakistan state flag alongside it.[149] While no one was to be forced to take part in the celebrations, the Bengal Congress Committee urged its supporters to make special efforts to maintain 'an atmosphere of communal amity'.[150] Likewise, the Bengal Provincial Muslim League issued its own directions on how independence day was to be observed in East Bengal. The Pakistan national flag was to be raised on all houses and buildings. A special prayer was to be offered to invoke the blessings of Allah for the new state of Pakistan, and processions were undertaken at various places. Jinnah, however, ordained that, while Muslims need

not sing the *Vande Matram,* they should 'continue enthusiastic participation in the celebrations'.[151]

Notwithstanding the political parties expecting to achieve a degree of cordiality with each other, the situation on the ground remained as tense as ever. Muhammad Usman, secretary of Calcutta Muslim League, complained that, despite hopes that the coming of independence would bring about a return to peace and normality, the city was still in a disturbed state, with the Muslim 'minority' bearing the brunt of 'Hindu hatred'. In a press statement he pointed out that 'life [in] the city [was] far from satisfactory' and 'disturbances [were] continuing unabated, with minorities...forced to leave their hearths and homes'.[152] At a meeting on 10 August, Maulana Muhammed Yahya, president of Calcutta Muslim League, claimed that hundreds of *bustees* in Calcutta and Howrah had been 'destroyed by bombs, firearms and arson' and that several hundreds of Muslims had been made homeless.[153] Women and children had been the targets of attacks by Hindu mobs, and several of their places of worship had been defiled and demolished.[154]

Propaganda had begun to gather ground that the new West Bengal administration was bent on an anti-Muslim policy. The glaring absence of Muslim officers from the administrative structure, including the Calcutta police force, gave rise to the charge that a Hindu *raj* was being created in West Bengal. This was seen as a manifestation of the feeling among Congress leaders that they had established a great communal victory over the 'minorities' of Calcutta, who must be treated as their vanquished enemy to be crushed and totally annihilated.[155] The Muslim minority in Calcutta had lost faith in the ability, indeed the willingness, of the West Bengal administration to provide protection and security to the community. For them, the prospects of survival in Calcutta after independence appeared grim. Given the situation, the Calcutta Muslim League threatened that, if such a state of affairs persisted and the safety of Muslim life and property remained threatened, it would issue a call to the Muslims of Calcutta not to join in the celebrations of independence, but instead to mark the day by silence, as a black day of mourning.[156] They promised, however, that the Muslims would not oppose nor obstruct the official celebrations, and there would be no violence or demonstration on their part; the protest would be carried out in a peaceful and dignified manner.[157]

Such was the atmosphere of communal rancour and bitterness in Calcutta that greeted Gandhi when he arrived in the city on 9 August on his way to Noakhali. His coming was regarded by several Muslim leaders as a godsend. Fearing that they would be at the mercy of the majority, come independence day, they begged Gandhi to stay on to use his personal presence and moral influence 'to pour a pot of water on the raging fire' that was consuming the city.[158] Shaheed Suhrawardy, leader of Bengal Muslim League and the man whom many Hindus blamed for precipitating the massacres of 'Direct Action' day in 1946, flew from Karachi, upon hearing of Gandhi's visit, to be able to persuade the Mahatma to stay on until peace could be restored in the city. Gandhi was at first reluctant, claiming that there were more pressing needs in Noakhali. However, the anxieties of Muslims and the tense situation convinced him that he was needed there, and he agreed to stay for a few

days. However, he imposed two conditions. First, he wanted the Muslims in Calcutta to assure him that they would do all they could to maintain peace in Noakhali. He elicited from their leaders a promise that they would send telegrams to their co-religionists in Noakhali to stop them from taking any action against the Hindus there.[159] This was agreed to, with the added promise that personal emissaries would also be sent to Noakhali to keep the peace at the first signs of trouble.[160] Gandhi further insisted that Suhrawardy stay by his side throughout his stopover in Calcutta to work for Hindu-Muslim unity and to show that both the Congress and the Muslim League were working together towards peace. When both these conditions were met, Gandhi took up residence at Hydari Manzil at 151 Beliaghata Road in a filthy predominantly Hindu district. Not far from his house was Miabagan, a Muslim slum, which had recently been raided by young Hindus armed with homemade grenades and sten-guns borrowed from former soldiers.[161]

When he heard the woes of Calcutta and tales of the 'recital of man's barbarism' it made his 'head hang in shame'. He was told that although there were more than 23 per cent Muslims in Calcutta, there were parts of the city which were inaccessible to the Hindus; that the Hindus had begun to feel that they were free to retaliate now that Muslim policemen and officers had almost withdrawn and been replaced by Hindus; and that the 'wretched spirit of communalism' had entered even the police force.[162]

Gandhi's worst fears seemed to be coming true. He had been from the outset, as is well known, opposed to the vivisection of the country. He had vehemently challenged Jinnah's 'two-nation' theory, arguing that India was not a nation but a civilization. He had always maintained that the idea that the Muslims and Hindus constituted separate 'nations' and should have their own states was 'preposterous and impractical'.[163] He pointed out that, even if the subcontinent were to be divided on the basis of religious nationalism, the new state of Pakistan would have to include a large number of Hindus, just as millions of Muslims would be left in India. The solution lay not in division but in finding a way of accommodating the minorities. Despite Gandhi's tremendous moral influence at the time, there was little he could do to overcome a communal estrangement that had become so deep that it ensured that 'all well-meaning constitutional schemes collapsed without a fair trial'.[164] In the end, the only acceptable alternative was the dreaded one of partition. When the Congress Working Committee had decided to accept the 3 June Plan, accepting the 'inevitability' of the country's partition, Gandhi had declared that he would not stand in the way of a decision that had been collectively made, although he disagreed with it. He could see that 'impatience with independence' had driven the Congress to accept the 'evil of partition'.[165] He had on that occasion cautioned:

> should the evil I apprehend overtake India and her independence be imperiled, let posterity know what agony this old man went through thinking

> of it. Let not the coming generations curse Gandhi for being a party to India's vivisection.[166]

Gandhi had resisted partition because the idea, according to him, rested on the inherently evil principle of religious nationalism, 'denying a thousand years of Indian history', with its traditions of plurality, diversity and tolerance. More importantly, he feared that partition would only generate more anger and bitterness between Muslims and non-Muslims which would lead to violence and bloodshed.[167] But because the bulk of the Congress leadership accepted partition, Gandhi had acquiesced in it.

Having accepted the decision, Gandhi interpreted it in a different way. He had taken it upon himself to persuade the people not to look upon the act of partition and the creation of Pakistan with revenge and anger. He portrayed it as the splitting up of a Hindu joint family. As family members could not live together, they were free to set up separate households to avoid constant quarrels. But separation did not mean that these family members should hate and kill each other, and deny their common history.[168] Repeatedly, at prayer meetings over the months, Gandhi had exhorted his listeners not to consider India and Pakistan as two separate countries; the division of land, which was a physical and political act, should not lead to a division of hearts.[169] As long as men's hearts remained true, he urged, they could behave as if there had been no partition of the country.[170] He regarded, in particular, the division of the armed forces as 'an error and a terrible mistake', for it would not lead to mutual peace between the two countries, but was likely to generate mutual fear and mistrust and cause future conflicts.[171] He could accept that India and Pakistan would be two separate states, but to him they would never be two different nations.[172]

Yet Gandhi knew, all along, that he was working against heavy odds.[173] The passions had been aroused to such intensity that, to him, violence and bloodshed seemed imminent. The signs were everywhere: in Lahore Hindus were evacuating in large numbers; elsewhere in northern India 'the pent-up emotions of hundreds of thousands of people were being expressed in acts of casual violence'.[174] In Calcutta he could see that 'young blood is boiling'.[175] As soon as he had taken residence in Hydari Manzil, he had a taste of the undercurrents of rage. As he entered the place he was met with 'cries of traitor and a shower of bottles and stones'.[176] Angry Hindu youths accused him of coming to Calcutta in defence of Muslims. The angry crowds demanded to know why he had not gone to places where Hindus were the victims? They accused him of being a traitor who was interested only in the Muslims and asked him to leave Beliaghata. Patiently, Gandhi remonstrated with the angry deputations that continuously came crowding around the house. Speaking in well-attended prayer meetings, he asked for tolerance; he argued that, although India was getting independence soon, she would not become free unless all its communities could live in peace beside each other. Gandhi's presence somewhat allayed the anger amongst the Hindus, but it was clear that many were still resentful. Their anger dissipated, however, when Suhrawardy,

during a public speech on the eve of independence, admitted that he had been responsible for the killings on 'Direct Action' day. The admission, according to Gandhi, was .the turning point and had a 'cleansing effect'.[177]

The calming influence that Gandhi exerted by his sheer presence in Calcutta was beginning to have its impact. With Suhrawardy by his side, he seemed to have dissipated the anger of the Hindus as well as allayed the fears of the Muslims. On the eve of independence day, the mutual hatred and anger which had prevailed in Calcutta for nearly a year seemed to have evaporated. People started venturing onto the streets, evidently encouraged by the surprising absence of violence, and the whole city suddenly took on a holiday mood, with plenty of demonstrable amity between the two communities.[178] News soon reached Gandhi that over 5,000 Muslims and a similar number of Hindus were marching in peace through the city.[179]

It was a matter of some pride that Gandhi had managed to bring sanity into the city on the occasion when the dream to which he had dedicated his life—the independence of India from colonial rule—was about to be realized. Yet, he confessed that, as India's freedom and her day of deliverance from 'foreign yoke' drew near, he was filled with a sense of foreboding, and all that he saw was darkness everywhere.[180] He knew that at the hour of independence, India would be subjected to the supreme test, as that freedom would contain the seeds of future conflict between India and Pakistan.[181] He would not celebrate, but would mark the occasion with a day of fasting, spinning and praying. He invited everyone to embark on a 'twenty four hour fast and prayer' and to spin 'as much as possible.' On the night of 14 August he went to bed as usual, refusing to await the countdown to the midnight ceremonies. 'At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom': when Nehru uttered these famous words, the 'Father of the Nation' was fast asleep, having deliberately forsaken the glitter of the state rituals being staged with pomp and ceremony in New Delhi.

The next morning on 15 August Gandhi's thoughts were filled with sorrow: five years earlier on that very day Mahadev Desai, his secretary for twenty-five years and the 'tallest' of his disciples, had passed away suddenly while in detention at the Aga Khan's Palace. Gandhi had personally lit his funeral pyre.[182] His spirits lifted when he saw that the goodwill and peace achieved on 14 August spilled into Independence Day. Calcutta was wrapped in a friendly atmosphere and ecstatic scenes of togetherness were witnessed in the streets which were jammed with people out to celebrate and chant exuberantly, 'Hindu-Muslim *bhai bhai!*' and 'Long live Hindustan and Pakistan!'[183] Gandhi's home at Beliaghata saw a stream of visitors throughout the day: Hindus, Muslims, the new Governor C. Rajagopalachari, the new ministry of West Bengal headed by Prafulla Ghosh, students and Communists. Gandhi advised the new government to be humble and forbearing and to 'beware of power'. He asked them not to be 'entrapped by its pomp and pageantry' but to always remember that they were in office 'to serve the poor in India's villages'.[184] A large congregation awaited him in the evening at his prayer meeting at Rash Bagan Maidan to which he insisted on walking. He

congratulated the city on the fraternization which it was witnessing on that day. Muslims and Hindus were, he noted, meeting in 'perfect friendliness'; they all shouted the same slogans and flew the same Tricolour'; Hindus were being admitted to mosques and Muslims to Hindu *mandirs*. Gandhi was reminded of the days of the Khilafat movement: 'if this exhibition was from the heart and was not a momentary impulse, it was better than the Khilafat days', since, he said, both communities had 'drunk the poison cup of disturbances' and the 'nectar of friendliness should, therefore, taste sweeter than before'. Gandhi hoped this heralded the end to disturbances and that Calcutta could, henceforth, be 'entirely free from the communal virus' and offer an example to other parts of the country like the Punjab.[185] The widespread scenes of celebration in the streets and the mood of the day amazed those present in the city. The American Consul in Calcutta who witnessed many of the events pointed out that 'in view of the delicate balance which had existed only a few hours before' the transformation which had come about was 'miraculous' and was 'in no sense an overstatement'.[186] He noted:

> With the advent of independence, communal peace in Calcutta was miraculously restored. Fraternisation on the friendliest basis and on a tremendous scale erased overnight a full year's heritage of murder, death and destruction has completely transformed the city and the outlook of its people…the whole city was in a holiday spirit…. Dominion flags appeared from nowhere to be flown on every building, bus tram and automobile and many demonstrations of amity between the two communities which only a few hours previously had been engaged in cutting each other's throats were witnessed everywhere…. Gandhi is widely credited with being the wizard responsible for the magical transformation of Calcutta. Vast public meetings are held in Calcutta and vicinity practically every day, at which, after the conclusion of his prayer meeting, Gandhi gives his views…. The attendance at these rallies is tremendous ; one is believed to have attracted half a million people.[187]

Mountbatten publicly commended his efforts in a broadcast, waxing lyrical about his miraculous 'one-man boundary force who kept the peace while a 50,000 strong force was swamped by riots'.

Meanwhile, the key event symbolic of the British withdrawal from Calcutta took place with an unusual burst of popular fervour. Its scene was Government House where on the morning of 15 August had been scheduled a flag-raising ceremony, and a ceremonial farewell to the British Governor, Sir Frederic Burrows. In attendance was 'all the city's great and near great'. Such was the popular enthusiasm that the crowds overtook the place. The American Consul recalled that a 'rabble broke out to take over the Government House, infiltrating into every nook and cranny.'[188] Order broke down and the crowds simply took over the palatial building, one of the grandest examples of colonial architecture in the subcontinent, and they allegedly helped themselves to 'souvenirs'. 'Among the

various stories is one to the effect that Lady Burrows, emerging from the bathroom found three unwashed Indians peacefully reposing in her bed.'[189] Here was one example of what Jim Masselos calls the 'breaking down [of] the boundaries that had marked the separate space and distinct territories of the rulers, the distances that had been established over the past to keep them apart'.[190] Such scenes conveyed the message that 'there was no space, no territory, that was not owned by or accessible to the people of a Free India, and the Government and its territory were now the people's'.[191] The departing Governor, his wife and ADCs had to be 'smuggled out' from the rear entrance, thus marking a finale to the passing of British rule in Bengal and signifying an 'incident free' coming of independence to the city.

From euphoria to aporia

As the celebrations drew to a close it was ironic that 'national leaders' in their speeches during the official ceremonies were indulging in hollow sentimentalism about the minorities which had been left across the border. For instance, Nehru declared with some emotion in his independence day message:

> We think also of our brothers and sisters who have been cut off from us by physical boundaries and who unhappily cannot share at present in the freedom that has come. They are of us and will remain of us whatever may happen, and we shall be sharers in their good and ill fortune alike.[192]

Jinnah expressed similar emotions in Karachi for the millions of Muslims who were to find themselves in Indian territories once the Boundary Commission award became known, as Chapter Three shows. To them he offered these words of solace:

> Those of our brethren who are minorities in Hindustan may rest assured that we shall never neglect or forget them.... I recognize that it is the Muslim minority provinces in this sub-continent who were the pioneers and carried the banner aloft for the achievement of our cherished goal of Pakistan.

He advised them to 'adjust themselves to new and difficult circumstances' particularly because 'they might face resentment from the majority community for having supported the demand for Pakistan'. He counselled them to 'give unflinching loyalty to the state in which they happened to be'.[193]

Other leaders carried such tokenism even further. Vallabhbhai Patel, India's newly-appointed deputy prime minister, in his independence day broadcast said: 'Our hearts go out to those who were with us so long but who are now to be separated.... Few can realise the bitterness and sorrow which partition has brought to those who cherished unity but lived to fashion its details.' He avowed:

> Let our brethren across the border not feel that they are neglected or forgotten. Their welfare will claim our vigilance and we shall follow with

> abiding interest their future in full hope and confidence that sooner than later we shall again be united in common allegiance to our country.

Likewise, on independence day morning, Rajendra Prasad declared in the Constituent Assembly:

> It is undoubtedly a day of rejoicing. But there is only one thought which mars and detracts from the fullness of this happy event. India, which was made by God and Nature to be one, which culture and tradition and history of millenniums have made one, is divided today and many there are on the other side of the boundary who would much rather be on this side. To them we send a word of cheer and assurance and ask them not to give way to panic or despair but to live with faith and courage in peace with their neighbours and fulfil the duties of loyal citizenship and thus win their rightful place.... We feel assured that they all will be treated fairly and justly without any distinction or discrimination. Let us hope and pray that the day will come when even those who have insisted upon and brought about this division will realise India's essential oneness and we shall, be united once again.... It may appear to be a dream but it is no more fantastic a dream than that of those who wanted a division and may well be, realised even sooner than we dare hope for today.[194]

However, the attempt of the new rulers of India and Pakistan to baptise people into becoming citizens of the new nations was a colossal failure, as later events showed so dramatically. As Chapter Three demonstrates in considerable detail, the political inheritors of the British Raj had been preoccupied with carving out territory for their respective nation-states. Their sole concern in the run up to the events of 14–15 August had been how to maximize their advantage in terms of political boundaries. It was extraordinary that in the protracted negotiations which took place among the British, the Congress and the Muslim League, there was a conspicuous lack of concern with the fundamental issue of citizenship. Questions such as what the creation of the new states would mean for the minority communities, their right of residence, and their status in the new nations were not even considered.

Following the outbreak of large-scale disturbances in the Punjab, the violence which erupted there and in other parts of the subcontinent was portrayed as 'religious strife', rather than as an assertion by the people of their right of residence, or an affirmation on their part of their natural citizenship to a land where they had been born or raised. In the event, the outcome was well known, unprecedented violence and mass displacement. This has been poignantly but aptly summarized by Shorish Kashmiri, a poet, journalist and someone who was displaced as a consequence of partition. He offers the following verdict on the events of 14–15 August 1947:

> Conches were blown in India. Drums were beaten in Pakistan. All India Radio proclaimed Independence by broadcasting Bande Matram and Pakistan Radio did so with recitation of the Quran. But as day dawned, both sides began to butcher their minorities in the name of religion.... In India it was the Muslims who were butchered: in Pakistan the Sikhs and Hindus. Now the riots ceased to be communal. On the contrary, it was genocide of the minorities by the majorities.[195]

In conclusion, several useful insights emerge from a reconstruction however partial and imperfect of the events of 14–15 August 1947. First, it is striking that responses to the celebrations were not uniform across the subcontinent. There were distinct ways in which different cities and towns responded to the events. Such differentiation had everything to do with the location of the place itself in the larger territorial reconfigurations which were then under way, a process described in detail in Chapter Three. Second, the diversity of responses was also due to what Edward Shils has called 'cultural centres' and 'peripheries'.[196] Thus the ceremonials in Karachi and New Delhi, which embodied self constituted 'cultural centres' of core national values, played an important part in inviting participation and confirmation on the part of their 'peripheries'.[197]

Quite clearly, as the discussion has tried to show, cities like Delhi were in the forefront of the commemorations, while others like Dhaka were 'backwaters' which had to be integrated into the process of national affirmation. At many places participation in the events was thin or sporadic. In the Punjab, all available evidence seems to suggest a complete absence of festivity, with mere ritual observances involving the salutation of flags and oath taking by leaders. State rituals in that region failed to rally the people into participating in ceremonies which could bring them together into a community—imagined or otherwise—even temporarily.

Upon closer scrutiny it is quite clear that the imagery of rapturous popular expressions of joy across India and Pakistan at the coming of freedom seems no more than a larger than life, blown-up myth. The events of 14–15 August 1947 failed to create a sense of cohesion or consensus among different groups by bringing them together in a common celebration of the birth of the 'nation'.[198] Rather, the consecration rituals which the two nation-states staged with much fanfare and ceremony conveyed meanings which were different to different groups. As this discussion has attempted to highlight, the rituals of independence—as these were experienced by people at that time—had profound ambiguities. However, these ambiguities have either been effaced due to the passage of time, or new meanings have been invested to the events by state rituals which through annual reiteration commemorate only one aspect of the event, the birth of the nation.[199] As a consequence the multiple meanings and the range of experiences of what the coming of independence signified to people in India and Pakistan have been lost, if not significantly altered.

It is noteworthy that a few days before independence, Gandhi expressed his sense of foreboding and aporia about the approaching event. He likened it to one of the

mythical churning of the ocean from which the universe was created according to Hindu beliefs. The *Harijan* in its 10 August 1947 issue noted:

> In the mythological churning of the ocean were discovered poison and nectar along with other valuable gifts. All the gifts were shared by the Devas and the Asuras. The Lord Shiva had to swallow the poison to save the world. The mighty struggle for India's independence might well be compared with the churning of the ocean. It has yielded the nectar of independence and the poison of partition. There are many who have had to swallow the poison of partition. Let us hope like the figurative Lord Shiva they will emerge all the stronger for the deadly drink.[200]

Clearly then, the effects of the events of 14–15 August 1947 were many and long lasting, some of which are taken up in the rest of this work. A metaphor for these is provided by Salman Rushdie:

> Midnight has many children; the offsprings of Independence were not all human. Violence, corruption, poverty, generals, chaos, greed and pepperpots.... I had to go into exile to learn that the children of midnight were more varied than even I had dreamed.[201]

3
Partition and the making of SouthAsian boundaries

Unbiased at least he was when he arrived on his mission,
Having never set eyes on this land he was called to partition
Between two peoples fanatically at odds, With their different
diets and incompatible gods. 'Time,' they had briefed him in
London, 'is short. It's too late For mutual reconciliation or
rational debate: The only solution now lies in separation. The
Viceroy thinks, as you will see from his letter, That the less
you are seen in his company the better, So we've arranged
to provide you with other accommodation. We can give you
four judges, two Moslem and two Hindu, To consult with,
but the final decision must rest with you.' Shut up in a lonely
mansion, with police night and day Patrolling the gardens to
keep assassins away, He got down to work, to the task of
settling the fate Of millions. The maps at his disposal were
out of date And the Census Returns almost certainly
incorrect, But there was no time to check them, no time to
inspect Contested areas. The weather was frightfully hot, And
a bout of dysentry kept him constantly on the trot, But in
seven weeks it was done, the frontiers decided, A continent
for better or worse divided. The next day he sailed for
England, where he quickly forgot The case, as a good lawyer
must. Return he would not, Afraid, as he told his Club, that
he might get shot.

(W.H.Auden, 'Partition', *Collected Poems* 803–4)

Introduction

As millions across the subcontinent enthusiastically celebrated the arrival of independence on 14–15 August 1947, there were many in the Punjab and Bengal who greeted the birth of the new states with uneasy anticipation. Soon, both provinces would be partitioned, and the boundaries of the new states would be

finalized; but on Independence Day, other than the Viceroy and the man who had been charged with the gargantuan task of delineating the frontier between India and Pakistan, no one knew for certain where the boundaries would actually fall. For the people living in the areas most likely to be affected, there was the anxious wait to find out if they would eventually belong to India or Pakistan. Not wishing for the announcement of the boundaries which had already been decided to disrupt the celebrations, the Viceroy deliberately held back the details of the partition until 17 August, but this postponement only delayed the inevitable fallout.

The partitioning of the Indian subcontinent was one of the most complex, yet expeditious, exercises in boundary demarcation ever undertaken. Its impact was also one of the most momentous, having brought about, in the words of Lord Ismay, Chief of the Viceroy's Staff in 1947, 'human misery on a colossal scale… [with] millions…bereaved, destitute, homeless, hungry, thirsty—and worst of all desperately anxious and almost hopeless about their fiiture'.[1] The frontier between India and Pakistan that was created in the final few weeks of British rule in South Asia became a 'border which was to see more tragedy than any frontier conceived before or since'.[2] Yet, in the historiography of the transfer of power the process of boundary-making has somehow been relegated as an administrative-technical procedure once the political decision of partition had been taken. It has, as a result, become a neglected aspect of writings on the transfer of power, overshadowed as it were by the climacteric highlights of de-colonization and independence.

This chapter will set out the process by which the Indo-Pakistan boundaries were created from 3 June to 17 August 1947, when the Radcliffe Award, defining the borders between India and Pakistan, was announced. The creation of new trans-national boundaries in the subcontinent essentially entailed vivisection of the great provinces of the Punjab and Bengal, both unified landmasses endowed with their own natural common characteristics. The boundary-making process was a complex and problematic exercise that was completed in less than two months. As we shall see in this chapter, though, the boundary-making process, the actual act of partition itself, warrants closer scrutiny, as the newly created borders were the source of several of the problems: refugees, resettlement, Kashmir, minorities and water disputes, which in the aftermath of partition continued to plague relations between India and Pakistan.

The 3 June plan

The partition of the Indian Empire became *fait accompli* when Indian leaders accepted Lord Louis Mountbatten's 3 June plan. As Britain's last Viceroy to India, Mountbatten had quickly come to the conclusion that the prospect of transferring power to a unitary India had become, by the time he arrived in India in March 1947, well nigh impossible. His predecessor, Lord Wavell, had explored all possibilities of maintaining an Indian Union, but to no avail. Mountbatten had been sent to India with a clear brief: to dismantle the British empire in India as quickly as possible. From the moment of his arrival in India, Mountbatten came

to realize that what had to be done, had to be done quickly.[3] Not wishing to have his schedule upset by the intransigence of the Congress and Muslim League and the resulting political deadlock, he made it clear at the very outset that he was prepared to countenance a division of the subcontinent if he could not get the two parties to agree on a political arrangement that would enable the British to transfer power to a unitary India.

Within weeks of his arrival, Mountbatten conceived a plan that provided for a division of the subcontinent into two dominions of Pakistan and India. The Mountbatten plan was announced on 3 June 1947 and was publicly endorsed by Nehru, Jinnah and the Sikh leader, Sardar Baldev Singh.[4] The 3 June plan, which formally incorporated a provision for partition, brought together all parties concerned on the principle that communal majorities would provide the basis for a territorial division of the subcontinent.

According to the Mountbatten plan, the Muslim majority provinces of Bengal, Punjab, Sind, North West Frontier Province and Baluchistan would be asked to decide whether they wished to have a future constitution framed by the existing Constituent Assembly (that is for a united India) or by a 'new and separate Constituent Assembly'.[5] A referendum was to be held in the North West Frontier Province, and the views of Baluchistan would be ascertained by consulting the Quetta municipality and tribal representatives. For the Punjab and Bengal, the provincial assemblies would be notionally divided on the basis of Muslim and non-Muslim majority districts. They would then meet separately to vote on whether their respective half of the provinces would join the existing constituent assembly or form an altogether new one which would then frame a new constitution for Pakistan, that is, to decide by a simple majority vote if the province would be partitioned. If Bengal should decide for partition, a referendum would be held in the Muslim district of Sylhet.

Once partition was decided upon by the respective constituent assemblies, a boundary commission would be appointed to demarcate the dividing lines. The commission would operate within a set of terms of reference that would be decided by the Viceroy in consultation with the Indian leaders.[6] The 3 June announcement none the less spelt out that the boundary commissions would be 'instructed to demarcate the boundaries of the two parts of the Punjab [and Bengal] on the basis of contiguous majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims. It would be instructed to look into other factors'.[7]

The responses to the 3 June plan were ambivalent. The Mountbatten plan had offered a way out of the political impasse that had stymied the constitutional process leading to the transfer of power in the subcontinent. Yet, by accepting this, the main political parties had clearly accepted partition as the cost they were prepared to pay in order to end a prolonged constitutional deadlock. Nehru saw the partition plan as an 'advance bid towards complete independence', and the All India Congress Committee accepted it as a final settlement.[8] The Muslim League leadership was jubilant that, at last, its demand for Pakistan had been conceded, while there was much concern about the shape of the new Muslim State that would

be carved out after dividing Punjab and Bengal. Jinnah, in his broadcast response to the plan, simply indicated that it would be left to the League Council to decide whether to accept the plan as a 'settlement or a compromise'.[9] Evan Jenkins, Governor of Punjab, suggested that the Congress also regarded partition as a victory, as it was seen as a 'masterstroke by Patel, who having pushed the Muslims into a corner (or two corners), will be able to destroy them before very long'.[10]

In Bengal, the acceptance of the 3 June plan marked the final demise of the 'United Bengal' scheme for which several important Bengal politicians like Sarat Bose and Hasan Suhrawardy had been clamouring.[11] It also resolved the question that had been uppermost in the minds of the Hindu bhadralok for several years and which had been agitating them for some time.[12] The Bengal Gongress, excluding the Sarat Bose faction, accepted the plan while regretting the principle of division of India. Among Hindu Mahasabha circles there was a sigh of relief, and S.P. Mookherjee described it as 'our first victory'. There was the prospect, at last, that the Hindus of Bengal would no longer be doomed to live under Muslim rule as a minority and denied power-sharing; they could now have a Bengal of their own, devoid of Muslim politicians insistent on denying the Hindus their 'rightful' share in politics.[13]

In the Punjab both the Hindus and the Sikhs, who had borne the brunt of communal violence in western Punjab in 1946, welcomed partition as the only solution to the deteriorating communal situation. They had reached a point where for them a division of the province was an 'immediate administrative problem that should have first priority'.[14]

Not unexpectedly, all the Muslim-majority provinces opted unanimously for joining Pakistan, while the non-Muslim halves of Bengal and Punjab voted decidedly for partitioning their respective provinces. At a preliminary joint meeting of the Bengal Legislative Assembly on 20 June, voting was in favour of joining a new (Pakistan) Constituent Assembly by 126 to ninety votes. Then, in separate meetings, East Bengal voted by 106 to thirty-five to keep the province united and to join the new assembly of Pakistan. The West Bengal representatives, however, voted for partition, and adherence to the existing Constituent Assembly. Consequently, by the decision of the West Bengal Assembly, the Bengal province was to be divided.[15] In a similar fashion, the Punjab legislature met jointly on 23 June where a decision was taken by ninety-one votes to seventy-seven in favour of joining the new Constituent Assembly, or Pakistan. Then, at separate meetings, the East Punjab voted fifty against twenty-seven for partition, while the western representatives voted in favour of Pakistan by sixty-nine to twenty-seven, but without partitioning the province.[16]

However, the decision by East Punjab for partition meant that the division of the province would prevail. On 26 June, thirty-three members of the Sind legislature voted against twenty-six in favour of joining Pakistan.[17] In Baluchistan, all fifty-four members of the Quetta municipality and spokesmen for the *Shahi Jirga* decided in favour of Pakistan.[18] In the North West Frontier Province, despite calls by the pro-Congress Red Shirt leader, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, to boycott the

polls, nearly 51 per cent of the total electorate nevertheless voted for Pakistan.[19] The referendum in Sylhet, which was carried out on 6–7 July, saw 239,619 persons voting in favour of separation from Assam and union with the new East Bengal, while 184,041 voted against.[20]

Getting the various political parties in the different provinces to agree on the principle of partition of the subcontinent was among the easier of Mountbatten's tasks in India. Having done that, he now had to address the much harder job of drawing the actual boundaries that would divide the new dominions.

The process of determining the boundaries that would divide India and Pakistan proved a major challenge, as the territorial basis underlying the partition idea had never been defined. Throughout the 1940s, the All-India Muslim League, which had spearheaded the demand for a separate Muslim state, had consistently refused to define what its concept of Pakistan meant in territorial terms. The Lahore Resolution of March 1940, in which the demand for a separate Muslim state was first formally articulated, laid down the following basic principle in relation to territory:

> That geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Moslems are numerically in a majority, as in the northwestern and eastern zones in India, should be grouped to constitute 'independent States'.

Beyond this vague description, in which the term 'Pakistan' was never used, the actual geographical areas that would form a part of the Muslim states were never defined. The vagueness of the concept of Pakistan was the result of the uncertain political agenda of the Muslim leadership itself. It has been argued that partition was the last thing that Muhammad Ali Jinnah, leader of the Muslim League in the 1940s, actually wanted. His aim was to create a Muslim entity within a unitary India, but having his way blocked by Congress in 1945–6, he reluctantly accepted partition as the final option.[21] On the other hand, leaders of the Muslim-majority provinces of Punjab and Bengal were keen to preserve their local majority, and wanted a federation formula with provincial self-rule and a weak centre. None the less, the notion that the new state would exist in two wings made up of the Muslim-majority provinces of the Punjab and Bengal gained wide currency in political discussions. But whether these units would come into being by the secession of Muslim-majority provinces or would be partitioned to leave out areas with a concentration of non-Muslim populations was a principle that remained unsettled till the last stages.

A partition of territory nevertheless remained a serious option as all major parties agreed that the Muslim-majority provinces which the Muslim League had claimed for the Muslim state contained large areas with significant nonMuslim majorities, and that territorial adjustments had to be made to exclude such areas from becoming part of Pakistan. The idea of partition was thus imprinted by ambiguities with

respect to the most basic issues, and the process of determining the boundaries of India and Pakistan on the eve of British departure from the subcontinent was shot through with immense difficulties.

The administrative mechanism responsible for demarcating the boundaries of the provinces to be partitioned was provided for under Section Nine of the 3 June plan. Under its terms, as soon as the Punjab and Bengal assemblies had taken the decision to partition, a boundary commission would be appointed by the governor-general, 'the membership and terms of reference of which will be settled in consultation with those concerned'.[22] Initially, Jinnah had proposed the setting-up of a commission comprising three impartial non-Indians to be appointed by the United Nations Organization.[23] The proposal was, however, opposed by Secretary of State Lord Listowel who, among other considerations, did not want the problems of empire to be resolved by international bodies, as well as by Congress, which felt that recourse to the United Nations would cause unacceptable delay.[24] The reluctance to accept any further delay in the coming of independence effectively ruled out all other methods of resolving the boundary problem.

Sir Evan Jenkins, the Governor of Punjab, was convinced that the boundary problem could not be solved in any way other than an out of court settlement negotiated by the interested parties.[25] However, the delay that such a process was likely to entail ruled it out as a serious option. Subsequently, Mountbatten opted for a proposal by Nehru on the setting up of two separate commissions, each consisting of an independent chairman and four other persons, two of whom were to be nominated by the Muslim League and two by Congress.[26]

The problems of a commission constituted in such a manner were apparent from the beginning. The fact that the members of the boundary commissions were to be appointed by the political parties suggests that the work of boundary-making would not be merely a technical exercise, but that the commissions' findings would be heavily influenced by partisan political considerations and that the impartiality and professionalism of the commissioners would, at best, be of only academic importance. Despite the fact that the members of the Commissions were all individuals of 'high judicial standing', it was clear that they would represent the communal interests of the party that nominated them, and there was every likelihood that a boundary commission comprising two Muslim and two non-Muslim members would be deadlocked down the middle on disputed issues. According to the 3 June plan, it was not made explicit what would happen in the event of differences of opinion between members of the respective commissions. This ambiguity, in a sense, left the chairman of the commissions with a considerable role to play in the deliberation process.

Mountbatten had decided earlier that one person should be appointed chairman jointly of the Bengal and Punjab Boundary Commissions, and that he would have a casting vote in the event of disagreement between the representatives of the Congress and the Muslim League who would advise him.[27] This made the role of the chairman, with his casting vote, extremely critical. An earlier provision that each commission would elect its own chairman was subsequently modified to

provide for the appointment of a European chairman on the ground that it would expedite the work of the commissions which were to complete their work by 15 August 1947.[28] The individual chosen to jointly chair the commissions was Sir Cyril Radcliffe, Vice-Chairman of the General Council of the English Bar, who was recommended for the job by the Secretary of State as a man of 'great legal abilities, right personality and wide administrative experience'.[29] Mountbatten, who had known Radcliffe when the latter was Director-General of the Ministry of Information, was 'struck by his ability' and fully supported his appointment.[30]

Radcliffe, it seemed, had another important virtue: he apparently had no connections with India or Indian politics, and had absolutely no local knowledge of the territories he was to divide. The fact that no one objected to his appointment, despite Radcliffe's evident lack of knowledge of the Indian problem and his inexperience in arbitration of this nature, suggested that it was probably the promise of his impartiality that was valued above all else.[31] Mountbatten took pains to project this image of impartiality, especially from official influence, by carefully keeping personal contacts with him to a minimum. He insisted that Radcliffe be housed in neither the Governor's residence while at Calcutta, nor the Viceroy's house in Delhi, and refused to entertain any petition related to the boundary question until the chairman had announced his award.[32] These demonstrations of non-interference in the work of the commissions did little, however, to quell the rampant and 'obstinate belief that Radcliffe [would] award as HE [Mountbatten] dictates'.[33]

A detachment from local conditions may have contributed to an impartiality that was an important consideration for a job of the kind that Radcliffe was about to undertake, but it was also a serious handicap. As the final arbiter of the way in which Punjab and Bengal would be partitioned, an awesome responsibility was about to be placed on Radcliffe. Following a subsequent amendment made to the Indian Independence Bill to the effect that 'the expression Award meant in relation to the Boundary Commission the decision of the Chairman of the Commission', Radcliffe was made singularly responsible for the boundaries that would divide India and Pakistan. As an observer of Indian affairs pointed out, it was a task probably too great for one person even if his expertise had lain in boundary-making rather than in constitutional law.[34] Not only was Radcliffe unfamiliar with boundary-making, he was totally unaccustomed to the complexities of the territories he was about to divide. Nevertheless, he was aware of the immense difficulties of the tasks that awaited him, and in his first meeting with Mountbatten on 8 July 1947 he candidly pointed out that, given the vastness of India and its multitudinous populations, it would take 'the most careful arbitrators years to decide on a boundary that would certainly cut across homes and populations'.[35] He was evidently shocked when told that he had only five weeks to complete his work.[36]

The narrow time-frame in which Radcliffe was expected to delineate the boundaries was largely imposed by the impatience of Nehru, who did not wish the transfer of power to be delayed by the work of the Boundary Commissions.

Nehru wanted the Commissions to finish their work as quickly as possible, and was prepared to accept a makeshift border in the belief that once the states were formed, they would mutually consider modifications and variations of their frontiers.[37] Mountbatten thus impressed upon Radcliffe that the work of demarcating the boundaries had to be completed by 15 August 1947. Radcliffe, expecting that his award would constitute no more than hastily improvized boundaries that would subsequently be subjected to bilateral modifications, readily concurred.[38] Subsequently, arising from requests by the Governor of Punjab 'for advance intimation not only of the date of award but also of its contents…in view of the precautions it would be necessary to take in the districts likely to be affected, particularly those of central Punjab', the Punjab Partition Committee requested for the announcement of the award by 10 August 1947, to which Radcliffe could only promise an announcement two days later, on 12 August 1947.[39] The schedule imposed on Radcliffe meant, in effect, that he had approximately four weeks to divide up territories and communities about which he had very little knowledge.

The vagueness and ambiguities of the terms of reference along which the Commissions had to conduct their work further compounded the complexity of Radcliffe's task. The 3 June plan, while it conceded the principle of partition, was filled with ambiguities when it came to defining how the boundaries of the partitioned provinces were to be determined. The terms of reference which had been accepted by the Indian political leaders provided for the making of boundaries by 'ascertaining the contiguous majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims': while demarcating the boundaries the Commission would at the same time take into account 'other factors'.[40] It was a set of terms of references which was as simple as it was vague. Although it was agreed in principle that the lines of demarcation would be determined on the basis of 'contiguous majority areas', whethier these 'areas' meant a district, a *thana* or a *tehsil* was not specified. In short, it was not clear what was to be the unit of territory that was to be partitioned and while the Boundary Commissions were supposed to be guided in their considerations by 'other factors', the clause gave endless scope for interpretation. A Muslim League supporter observed that by not defining what was meant by the term 'other factors', the 'day of reckoning has simply been postponed' and the 'Gordian knot' needed to be cut as soon as possible.[41] There was also the further problem of the relative weighting that was to be accorded to the three criteria of demography, 'contiguous areas' and 'other factors'.

The Commissions' brief was to demarcate the boundaries of the two parts of the province on the basis of ascertaining contiguous majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims, while also taking into account 'other factors'.[42] However, it was not made clear, if all these came into play, which one would gain precedence over the other. The manner in which the boundaries between India and Pakistan were to be demarcated would thus depend on the manner in which Cyril Radcliffe and his Boundary Commissions would interpret the terms of reference.[43]

The complexity of the task was soon made evident by the memoranda and representations submitted by the interested parties. In the Punjab, as in Bengal,

while there was some consensus among the political parties on the principle of communal division of territories, as evidenced by the 3 June plan, there was a wide divergence on how this principle was interpreted and actual claims to particular areas made by the principal players: the Muslim League, Congress, the Sikhs and the Hindu Mahasabha, in their submissions before the Radcliffe Commission.

Submissions to the Boundary Commissions

During the last ten days of July 1947, the Punjab Boundary Commission held a series of public hearings in Lahore and heard the submissions and arguments provided in the main by eminent lawyers like Mohammed Zafar Ullah Khan, M. L.C.Seetalvad and Harnam Singh, each acting as counsel respectively for the Muslim League, Congress and the Akali Dal, the main political party claiming to represent the interests of the Sikh community. A number of other interested parties appeared and argued their cases before the Commission. Radcliffe, who at the same time had to preside over the Bengal Boundary Commission, absented himself from all these public sittings in Lahore.

The various communities and interests in the Punjab that submitted their lengthy memoranda and representations to the Boundary Commission all had different ideas as to how the boundary in the Punjab should be demarcated.[44] The claims were divergent and competing, as each community tried to influence a demarcation of the boundaries that would secure maximum benefits for themselves.

The case of the Muslim League in the Punjab rested mainly on the basis of demography. They claimed that the fundamental principle on which the division of the Punjab had been agreed was that of contiguous areas for Muslims and non-Muslims. Based on this criterion, the Muslims must, they argued, be given all the districts in Lahore Division, Rawalpindi Division and Multan Division, which according to the 1941 census were all Muslim-majority districts, the majority determined simply by the 'counting of heads and by no other means'. In addition to these Muslim-majority districts, Justice Din Muhammud, summing up the case for the Muslim League, claimed for the West Punjab, Ferozepur and Zira *tehsils* in the district of Ferozepur, the Nakoda and Jullundur *tehsils* in the district of Jullundur and the Ajnala *tehsil* in Amritsar district, together with some smaller *tehsils* from the district of Ambala, and finally Hoshiarpur on the bases that Muslims constituted a majority in these *tehsils* and that they were contiguous with the Muslimmajority areas of western Punjab. The Muslim League claimed also the *tehsil* of Pathankot, although not a Muslim-majority area, on the argument that it contained the Madhopur Headworks, which irrigated the Muslim-majority *tehsils* of Gurdaspur, Batala, Ajnala, Lahore, Kasur and Chunian.[45]

The Congress, on the other hand, attempted to make its claims on the basis of 'other factors'. Justice Mehr Chand Mahajan, arguing the case for the Congress, pointed out that although the population factor 'was undoubtedly the main factor in the division', he could not agree that 'in no circumstances could it be overridden'. He emphasized that 'if the population factor was... the sole basis of

division', then there was no need for the Commission to take into account 'other factors' in its demarcation of the boundary separating East and West Punjab. Based on this, the Congress case represented an attempt to push the boundary as far west as possible, following the Chenab river in the east and then continuing south-westwards across the northern sections of Lyallpur and Multan districts. Many of the districts that were claimed for East Punjab were, in fact, Muslim-majority districts. But the Congress justified its claims on the basis that although they were outnumbered by the Muslims, the Hindus and other non-Muslims had a greater economic stake in the Punjab. The city of Lahore, for instance, was claimed for East Punjab because of its 'historical associations with Hindu and Sikh history', and because its economic life in industries, insurance and commerce, had been developed and was owned by the non-Muslims. It was further argued that the city of Lahore should belong to East Punjab because of its situation on the east of the river Ravi, which could serve as a natural boundary line between East and West Punjab. Congress also claimed Gurdaspur, a Muslim-majority district, on the basis of 'other factors'. Gurdaspur, it was argued, was part of the Sikh-dominated 'Manjha' tract and that 'the whole system of communications, such as railways, roads, telegraph, telephone, hydroelectric wires, of the Kangra district, passes through this district'. Furthermore, the economic interests of this district were mainly controlled by non-Muslims and the Sikhs had one of their holiest shrines— the famous Kartarpur shrine—there.[46] The Congress demand was clearly aimed at securing for East Punjab the bulk of Punjab's irrigated land, as well as its canals and irrigation headworks.

A partition of the Punjab on the basis of contiguous areas of Muslim and non-Muslim districts as provided by the 3 June plan offered the Sikhs perhaps the grimmest prospects. Concentrated in the central divisions of Lahore and Jullundur, the Sikhs were threatened with a split down the middle should a partition line be drawn on the basis of Muslim and non-Muslim-majority districts. Lahore, Rawalpindi and Multan divisions, all Muslim-majority areas, but containing a sizeable Sikh population and many of Sikhism's most sacred places, including the birthplace of Guru Nanak, would go to Pakistan should the Punjab be divided simply on a population basis. Their fertile colony lands in the south-western districts of Montgomery and Lyallpur would certainly be lost once a partition on a population basis was effected. The Sikhs were among the most ardent advocates of partition following the communal violence that erupted in the Punjab in 1946.[47] Now, having pushed for partition, Sikh leaders began to realize that any partition line that did not go as far west as the Chenab river would be gravely detrimental to the integrity and interests of the Sikhs in the Punjab.

Not unexpectedly, Sikh representatives submitted a lengthy memorandum to the Boundary Commission, arguing for inclusion into eastern Punjab of portions of Muslim-majority districts, including significant portions of Lahore, Lyallpur, Gujranwala and Sialkot. They claimed that these regions should rightly be given to the Sikhs in consideration of the land revenue paid by Sikh peasants, the position of Sikh historical and religious sites and the landholdings of the Sikhs in those areas.[48]

Desperately aware that the fate of the community rested on the decision of the Boundary Commission, the Sikhs did all they could to impress the Boundary Commission that 'any partition that did not secure the integrity and solidarity of the Sikhs would be unacceptable and would create a difficult situation'.[49] The Governor's office in Lahore was flooded with calls from Sikh representatives, asking that Nankana Sahib be included in East Punjab, and at least one canal system from Montgomery district be left in eastern Punjab, and arrangements be made to transfer Sikhs from western Punjab to eastern Punjab. The Sikhs were told that there was little the Governor could do for them. Partition had been conceded at their request; the fate of the community now hinged on the findings of the Boundary Commission.

In deciding the boundary that was to divide Bengal, the absence of the Sikh factor made the communal problem simpler. However, the problem in the east was that the boundary to be awarded was six times as long as the one in the Punjab.[50] Public sittings of the Bengal Boundary Commission, comprising Justices C.C. Biswas, Bijan Kuman Mukherjea, Abu Saleh Akram and S.A.Rahman, took place at Calcutta from 16–24 July 1947.[51] At these sittings, arguments were presented by numerous parties on both sides, with the 'main cases presented on behalf of the Indian National Congress, the Bengal Provincial Hindu Mahasabha and the New Bengal Association, on the one hand, and the Muslim League on the other'.[52]

A committee of fourteen, headed by lawyer Atul Gupta as chairman and Nirmal Kumar Bose as secretary, was formed to prepare and present the case for the non-Muslims. The committee included experts such as S.P. Chatterjee, a geographer, and Samar Ray, a statistician from Presidency College.[53] There were, however, differences among the four parties when they got togedier to formulate their case to be presented before the Commission. The three smaller parties, adopting a more extremist approach, argued for the maximum possible extent of territory for West Bengal. The New Bengal Association, for instance, called for the 'minimum irreconcilable demand' of a territory that could contain an area capable of accommodating 27 million people.[54] They made the claim for roughly 57 per cent of the total area of Bengal, including the ten Hindu-majority districts (Burdwan, Midnapore, Birbhum, Bankura, Howrah, Hooghly, twenty-four Parganas, Khulna, Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri) as well as two entire Muslim-majority districts (Malda and Murshidabad), large parts of Nadia, Faridpur and Dinajpur and selected *thanas* in Rangpur and Rajshai.[55] This demand was, however, regarded as too extreme by the members of the four-party co-ordination committee. Convinced that such an extreme demand would not be taken too seriously by the Commission, Atul Gupta, who represented the Congress in the committee, prepared an alternative Congress claim which was based for the most part 011 the principle of contiguous majority areas.[56]

As it turned out, the Congress demand, as embodied in the memorandum which it submitted alongside the non-Muslim parties' case before the Radcliffe Commission, claimed, in addition to the Hindu-majority districts, several chunks of Muslim-majority areas, including parts of Faridpur, the whole of Jessore, Nadia,

Murshidabad districts, and the better part of Dinajpur district.[57] It was quite clear, therefore, that in addition to the communal criterion, the Congress demand was also motivated by the need to secure a protective belt for the Calcutta-Burdwan industrial region. The Congress also claimed the eastern part of the Muslim-majority Sylhet district in Assam on the grounds that the boundary thus demarcated would be more rational, as it followed a natural boundary provided by the Surma river. In addition, the Chittagong Hill Tracts were also claimed on the grounds that non-Muslim populations inhabited them. In north and east Bengal, with the exception of Sylhet, the Congress' claim was confined to the communal criterion and restricted mainly to areas with predominantly non-Muslim populations. The political geographer, Ali Tayyeb, has observed that, in overall terms, the Congress' case for territories in Bengal was 'modest, yet not entirely justified'.[58]

The delimitation of boundaries, as proposed by the Congress scheme, would have placed 46.57 per cent of the total population of undivided Bengal in West Bengal, while leaving 53.33 per cent in East Bengal. West Bengal would have got 55.41 per cent of the total area, with East Bengal obtaining 44.59 per cent of the share. Likewise, the Congress scheme would have placed 77.06 per cent Muslims in East Bengal, leaving behind roughly 23 per cent in West Bengal. By attempting 'a very nearly equal' demographic redistribution of the minorities, the Congress claimed that its scheme was the 'most equitable' as it 'satisfies the main purpose of the partition'.[59] The main thrust of the scheme was its attempt to place Calcutta and its surrounding areas within West Bengal. To further secure the position of Calcutta, it even claimed Murshidabad and Nadia districts that had Muslim majorities of 56 and 61 per cent respectively, 'for the most compelling factor of essential necessity for requirements and preservation of the Port of Calcutta'.[60] The objective was to provide a protective buffer around the Calcutta-Burdawn industrial belt and to strategically secure the port.

As far as the Muslim League's demand was concerned, Tayyeb remarked that while the League's case in the Punjab was 'moderate to the point of tactical folly', in Bengal it was 'clearly extravagant'.[61] Mountbatten, too, had observed that the Muslim League seemed to have taken a 'good deal less interest in East Bengal than in West Pakistan'.[62] Disregarding a realistic approach in making its claims on the basis of contiguous majority areas, the League's single objective, it seemed, was to extract as much territory for East Bengal as possible.[63] In the west, the League argued that the Hooghly, Bagirathi and Brahmini Rivers constituted a natural frontier for the demarcation of boundaries. In addition, the League completely disregarded the communal criterion when it made its claim over Khulna and twenty-four Parganas districts, both with non-Muslim majorities. Further, as has been pointed out by Tayyeb, the League's territorial claims in the western areas, 'overstepped the communal criterion in the northern districts of Bengal, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri, Goalpara and the Garo Hill, none of which had a Muslim majority'. As he points out,

> Inclusion of these latter would have joined East Pakistan to Sikkim and Bhutan, encircled Cooch Behar, and completely isolated the Indian province of Assam, which did not even have access to the sea. Similarly, the claim for Cachar (37.9 per cent Muslims) or for the Lushai Hills, which had no Muslims at all, was also untenable, as this would have encircled Tripura, another Indian state.[64]

None the less, these were claimed by the Muslim League on the basis of 'contiguity' by putting forth an argument that if a Hindu-majority area was not contiguous to any Hindu-majority outside Bengal, the territories should go to East Bengal.[65]

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the League's case before the Radcliffe Commission was its claim over Calcutta. It proposed the division of 'Greater Calcutta' into two parts, and then leaving only the western part of the city to India. A large part of its most populous residential and industrial sections and the port area would be incorporated into East Pakistan, despite the fact that the Muslims were a minority in Greater Calcutta, forming only 23 per cent of its population.[66] This was obviously an appeal to the 'other factors' clause of the Boundary Commission's terms of reference, as Calcutta was clearly a Muslim non-majority city.[67] The League based its claims on the argument that the exclusion of Calcutta from East Pakistan would jeopardize its economy, which depended so overwhelmingly on jute, and that its food supplies, which also came from the same area, would be hampered. The argument, however, ignored the fact that jute was not the only industry in the city, and that 'its finances, fuel, and other minerals and its labour force came from West, and not East Bengal'.[68] As Tayyeb points out, the League's claim was understandable, given that the exclusion of the industrially rich Calcutta would leave East Pakistan a 'grossly over-crowded agrarian state'.[69] On this issue, the League's case was a weak one, and made on 'compassionate rather than logical grounds, and as no one was in a compassionate mood at that time, it was ignored'.[70] Although the League later modified its original claim by proposing that Calcutta be declared a 'Free City' under the joint administration of the two new governments, its claim over Calcutta was strongly challenged by the Congress.[71]

Rebutting the League's case, the Congress argued that the population of Calcutta city was made up of only 23.59 per cent Muslims, while that of the twenty-four Parganas district in which Calcutta lay was made up of 67.53 per cent non-Muslims. It marshalled figures to show that the Muslims made up only 14.8 per cent of persons on the electoral rolls, and out of 81,159 premises within the city, owned only 6,886 (8.45 per cent). They contributed less than 6.2 per cent of the municipal rates collected by the Calcutta Corporation. Describing Calcutta as 'the heart of West Bengal', the Congress argued that 'the life of the province of West Bengal is mostly dependent on Calcutta, and with the partition it will become almost wholly so dependent'.[72]

The League, in its scheme for the division of Bengal, leaving out Calcutta, claimed 82.64 per cent of the population and 80.64 per cent of the area of undivided

Bengal. Under its proposed scheme of dividing the province, the population of West Bengal would comprise no more than 5 per cent of all of Bengal's Muslim population, with the rest of them concentrated entirely in East Bengal. However, the League's proposed boundary would have left the bulk of the non-Muslim population of Bengal in East Pakistan. This clearly defeated the very purpose of partition, and it prompted Congress to denounce the scheme as 'absurd'.

In addition to the key differences with regard to the territory and populations claimed by the Congress and the League, a further crucial problem lay in the distinct overall units that they proposed for dividing the territories. The Muslim League demanded that the division should ideally take place according to districts. However, as we have noted earlier, its own case diverted in several important respects from the principle of communal majorities. It further said that, as an alternative, sub-divisions should be taken as a unit for division. This was opposed by the Congress, which instead wanted police stations or *thanas* to be the basis for dividing the territory. The Congress attacked the League's concept of the 'economic and cultural unity of sub-divisions' as 'pure fiction'.[73]

The submissions and arguments of the political parties and the leaders of various communities in both Bengal and Punjab were based essentially on different interpretations of the Boundary Commission's terms of reference as set by the 3 June plan, and agreed upon by the Indian political parties. Both the Commissions had been instructed under these terms simply to 'demarcate the boundaries of the two parts of the Punjab on the basis of ascertaining the contiguous majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims. In doing so, [they] will also take into account other factors'. In both provinces, 'other factors' included the consideration of economic imperatives, territorial integrity and, not the least, narrow party-political interests. Depending on the situation that prevailed, the respective parties put up cases that went beyond the agreed principles of contiguity and communal majority. In the Punjab, for instance, the Muslim League had demanded that the boundary be based on the basic principle of 'majority contiguous areas', while the Congress and the Sikhs argued that a counting of heads alone must not be allowed to override the more important consideration of 'other factors'.

Mountbatten received his fair share of memoranda and petitions as well from the representatives of the various communities and interest groups in the Punjab and Bengal, suggesting that he influence the decision of the Commission to their respective benefit. As we mentioned earlier, however, throughout the course of the Boundary Commission's work, Mountbatten made a public and conscious effort to project the image that he had no intention of influencing the Commission's findings, though evidence suggests that there had indeed been consultations between Radcliffe and Mountbatten over the boundary awards. To a stream of notes he received from people like Nehru, Liaquat Ali Khan and the Maharaja of Patiala, among others, Mountbatten's official, and public, response was always consistent: he was not prepared to do anything that would prejudice the judicial independence of the Boundary Commission.[74] Mountbatten made it clear that the issue of the boundaries was to be resolved in the way that was provided for in the

3 June plan. It was now up to Radcliffe and members of the Commissions to decide how to reconcile these divergent and conflicting demands, and to eventually formulate an award for the demarcation of the boundaries.

As both the Commissions retired after the close of the public hearings, the Chairman realized that the 'divergence of opinion among the members of the Commissions was so wide that an agreed solution to the boundary problem was not be obtained'.[75] In his report to the Viceroy, Radcliffe pointed out that

> differences of opinion as to the significance of the term 'other factors', which we were directed by our terms of reference to take into account, and as to the weight and value to be attached to those factors, made it impossible to arrive at any agreed line.[76]

As Radcliffe saw it, the main difficulty of deciding where the boundaries should lie came from interpreting the meaning of the term 'other factors', and the relative weight and importance to those *vis-à-vis* the principle of majority contiguous areas. Faced with the conflicting arguments put forward by the members of the respective Commissions, Radcliffe was very much left to his own to decide on the final award.

In both the provinces, there were certain special difficulties with which Radcliffe had to contend. In Bengal there were the topographical problems of dividing a rain swept delta with its undependable water channels and frequent floods that increased the difficulties of determining the exact placing of the political boundary.[77] The problem in the East was further compounded by the fact that two provinces were involved, Bengal and Assam, and a major issue that had to be faced was that access to Assam was possible only through Bengal. Assam had a Muslim population of only 33.72 per cent, but it could not be expected to exist as a detached province of India, completely cut off from it with no access to the sea, and surrounded by the new state of Pakistan. Then, there were considerations over Calcutta: whether it was plausible to divide the city between two states, as well as the Chittagong Hill Tracts, which both the Congress and Muslim League laid claims over.[78] On the other hand, in terms of communal distribution, there was one helpful factor: the absence of the Sikhs. There were, as a result, fewer claims to contend with, and this made the problem of boundary delimitation less complicated than in the Punjab.

In the case of the Punjab, the disputed and 'debatable areas [lay] around the region between the Beas and the Sutlej Rivers on the one hand, and the Ravi on the other', an area which covered the districts of Lahore, Amritsar, Gurdaspur, Hoshiarpur and Jullunder. These districts presented special problems because of their complex demographic make-up, with Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus more or less equally spread out over the various *tehsils* in the districts. The area was also bound up by an integral system of canals, 'so vital to the life of Punjab but developed only under the conception of a single administration…and of a system of road and rail communication, which had been planned in the same way'. Situated in this disputed area were Lahore and Amritsar, the two most important cities in the

Punjab, to which both the Muslim and non-Muslim communities had vigorously laid claims.[79]

The Radcliffe Award

Despite the complex claims and counter claims which both the Boundary Commissions had to contend with, Radcliffe completed his work on the schedule to which he had agreed, and in his submission to the Viceroy, he pointed out that he 'was conscious that there would be legitimate criticisms to his decision of the [boundaries] as there would bound to be any other line that would be chosen'. As he himself admitted:

> The many factors that bore upon each problem were not ponderable in their effect upon each other. The effective weight given to each other was a matter of judgement, which under the circumstances threw it upon me to form; each decision at each point was debatable and formed of necessity under great pressure of time, conditions, and with knowledge that, in any ideal sense, was deficient.[80]

Radcliffe knew only too well that his had been a butcher's job, and not a surgeon's operation, and that his rushed job of an award would please no one. Writing to his stepson on the eve of his departure from India, Radcliffe revealed his feelings about the awards he had made:

> Nobody in India will love me for the award about the Punjab and Bengal and there will be roughly 80 million people with a grievance who will begin looking for me. I do not want them to find me.[81]

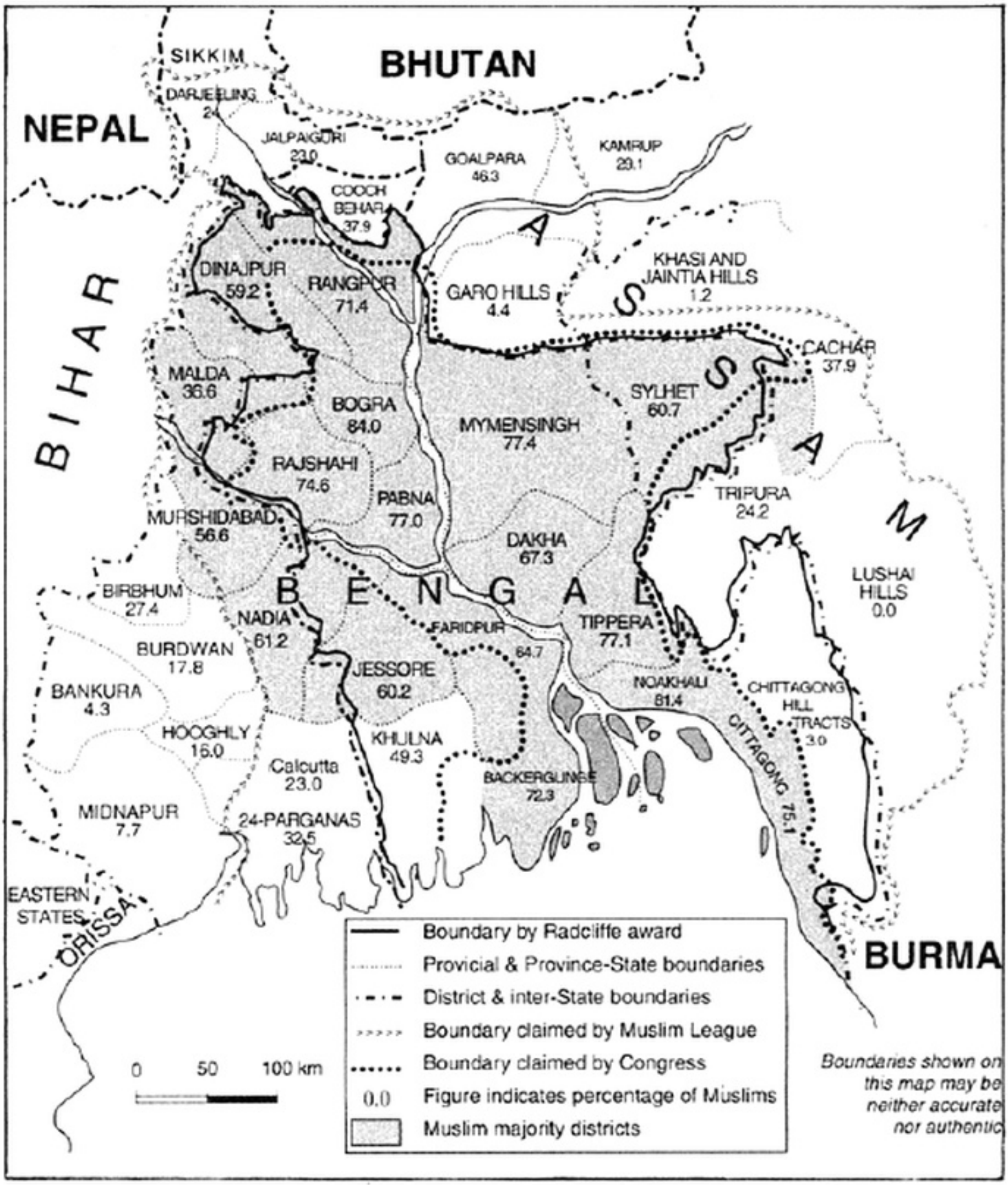
The Radcliffe Award for Bengal 'followed no consistent criteria' and was regarded as being equally 'unfavourable to both communities, although the Muslim loss was greater'.[82] The Radcliffe Award ensured that the two parts of Bengal would contain an almost equal ratio of majority to minority populations.[83] It gave East Pakistan an area of 54,501 sq. miles for a population (based on the 1941 census) of about 40 million, of which 11.4 million, or about 27 per cent, were non-Muslims, while West Bengal was given an area of 28,000 sq. miles, with a population of 21.19 million, of which 5.3 million, or 29 per cent, were Muslims. (See Map 3.1.) Not unexpectedly, Calcutta went to India, which also benefited by the inclusion of the whole of Murshidabad, and parts of Jessore, Nadia and Sylhet districts, which were all fertile areas. By doing so, more than a million Muslims were left out of East Pakistan.[84] As if to 'trade off the Muslims' loss, the Radcliffe Award gave the southern part of Jalpaiguri and whole of the Khulna district to East Pakistan. However, as Tayyeb pointed out, the loss of the former did cause the disruption of a main road, but the loss of Khulna, a district of 'mainly ill-drained soils, extensive swamp, and impenetrable wet forests' was of little consequence for India.[85]

As in Bengal, the boundary line that bisected the Punjab was as illogical as it was problematic. Radcliffe chose not to follow a consistent principle in determining the boundary that cut across the Punjab. In the main, he adopted the demographic principle but applied it inconsistently. In some cases, he included an entire district in Pakistan because it had a Muslimmajority population. With the exception of Lahore and Gurdaspur, all Muslim-majority districts were allotted to West Punjab. The thirteen nonMuslim districts which made up Jullundur and Amballa divisions, including Amritsar district, and Pathankot, Gurdaspur and Batala *tehsil* of Gurdaspur district and a part of the Kasur *tehsil* of Lahore district went to East Punjab. In the cases of Lahore and Gurdaspur, however, Radcliffe divided on the basis of demographic majority at the *tehsil* level, allowing 'other factors' to suppress the communal criterion. Although Lahore had a Muslim-majority population, the awarded boundary meandered diagonally across Kasur *tehsil,* with the south-east half of it shorn away and given to East Punjab, possibly to minimize disruptions to railway communications and water systems. On the other hand, the entire district of Amritsar, which had a bare majority of nonMuslims (53.5 per cent), was allotted in its entirety to East Punjab, despite the fact that its northern *tehsil,* Ajnala, had a Muslim-majority population. (See Map 3.2.)

Perhaps the most controversial aspect of the Radcliffe Award in the Punjab was the allotment of the major part of Gurdaspur district to India. Like Lahore, Gurdaspur district had a marginal Muslim-majority population of 50.2 per cent. All four *tehsils* forming the district also had clear Muslim majorities. Yet the Radcliffe boundary allotted to India the whole of Gurdaspur, Batala and Pathankot *tehsils,* as well as a slice of Sharkargarh *tehsil.*

It was generally believed that the Gurdaspur award was made to provide India with access to Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistanis have since alleged that this was an instance where Radcliffe might have been influenced by Mountbatten, who wanted to get even with Jinnah for the latter's refusal to offer him the post of the first Governor-General of independent Pakistan.[86]However, as Michel has pointed out, although the strategic importance of Gurdaspur as a passage between East Punjab and Kashmir could not be overlooked, linking the Gurdaspur award to the Kashmir situation may represent *ex-post facto* reasoning as until October 1947 no one expected Kashmir, with its overwhelming Muslim-majority population, to decide against acceding to Pakistan.[87] It could more plausibly be argued that the Gurdaspur award represented Radcliffe's arbitrary and inconsistent use of 'other factors'—irrigation, communication, strategic—to determine where the boundary would fall.

The upshot was that the awarded boundary gave West Punjab an area of nearly 63,000 sq. miles, containing a population of about 16 million, of which 4 million, or 25 per cent, were non-Muslims. East Punjab acquired an area of some 37,000 sq. miles and a population of about 12.5 million, of which 4.4 million (almost 35 per cent) were Muslims. The resultant boundary dividing West and East Punjab actually created Muslim enclaves in the territory awarded to India and *vice versa,* left large blocs of Hindu and Sikh enclaves in Pakistan.



Map 3.1 The partition of Bengal

Partition and disruption

When the Radcliffe Awards were published, there were claims, particularly from the Muslims, that the awards had been tempered, and that Mountbatten had a hand in them. Evidence suggested that these allegations were not entirely without basis. Although he took pains to present an outward image of total impartiality when the boundaries were being decided, Mountbatten was known to have advised Radcliffe on some of the interpretations of the terms of reference, and it has been revealed that the former had also influenced Radcliffe into making last minute changes to

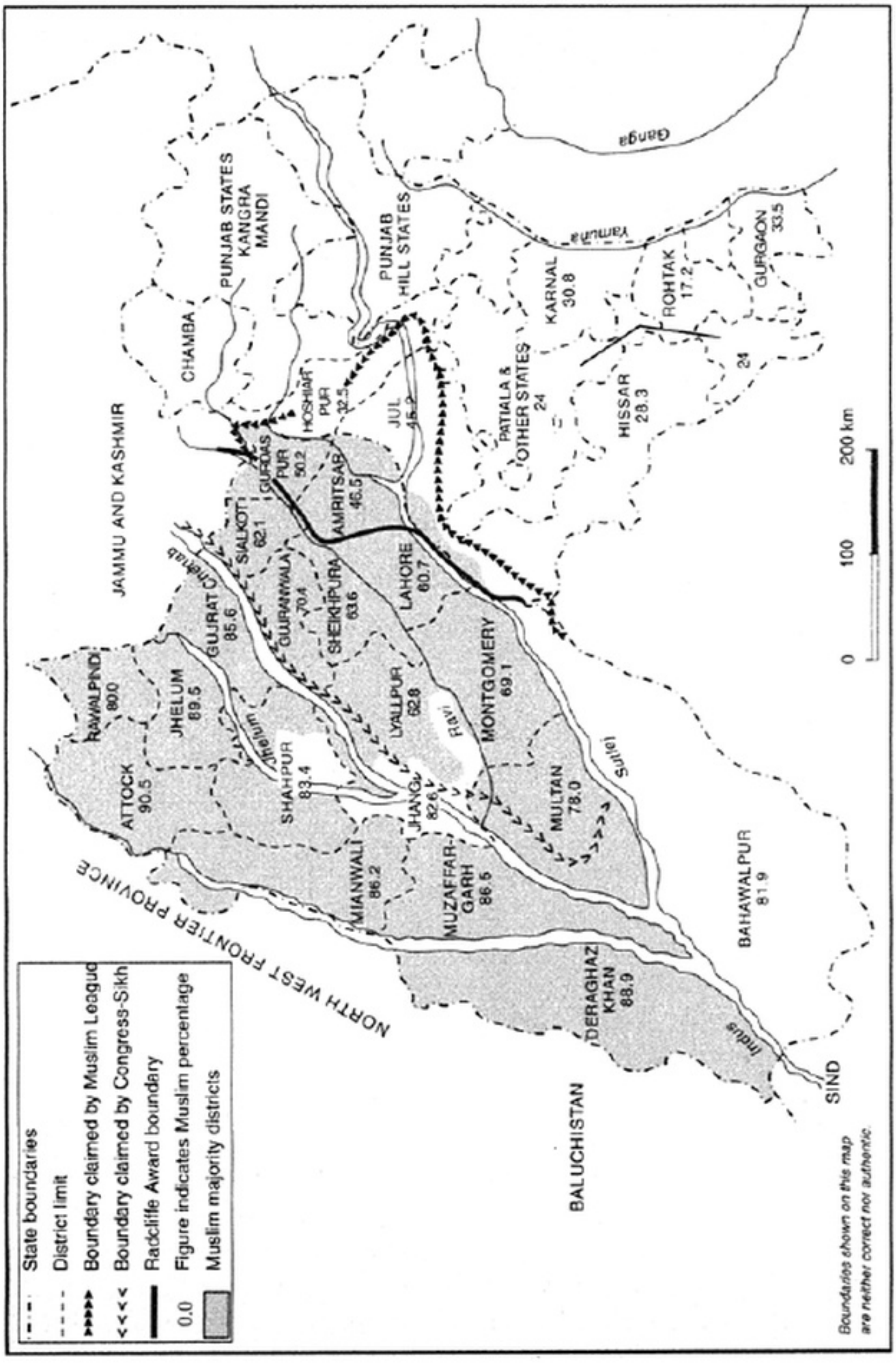
the Punjab borderline, in favour of India.[88] It was even alleged that Mountbatten and Nehru had a spy in the person of Rao Sahib V.D.Iyer, an assistant commissioner working on the Punjab and Bengal boundaries with Radcliffe. 'Leaks were definitely drifting across the Viceregal garden to Mountbatten, and Iyer was the leading suspect.'[89] There was also little doubt that Mountbatten had influenced some of the broader features of the award, by advising, for instance, that Radcliffe compensate each party's gain on one border with losses on the other.[90]

Although Mountbatten had received the award on 12 August 1947, he chose to announce the newly-created boundaries in Bengal and Punjab two days after independence, on 17 August 1947. It has been suggested that, having seen Radcliffe's award, he had suddenly developed cold feet as he realized that the newly-created boundaries 'would cause anguish to many millions of people on one side or the other of the new frontier, and [would be] unsatisfactory to both governments'. He therefore, decided to withhold announcement of the award until after the ceremonies marking the independence of India and Pakistan had taken place.

Mountbatten may have been motivated by a number of factors to delay the announcement of the award, but the impact of this delay was momentous. By keeping everybody guessing where the boundary line was going to fall, and not providing enough time and arrangements for mutual transfer of population, or for the governments of the two new dominions to provide the necessary security of life and property in the newly-created border areas, the boundary award, announced after 15 August so that 'there would be no British responsibilities in the matter', contributed to the violence and widespread destruction that followed, particularly in the Punjab.[91] In the affected parts of the province, rumours about the decisions of the Boundary Commission had sparked off large-scale riots and violence.[92] The new boundary in the Punjab had caught everyone, including the provincial administration, by surprise. Several thousands of people, especially those in the central districts of the Punjab, suddenly found themselves on the wrong side of the border after 17 August 1947. There were neither provisions nor preparations for the affected populations to be evacuated, until it was too late. Mountbatten and his team were aware that there would inevitably be displacement of population, but felt that they would be 'on a relatively minor scale, and spread over a long period'.[93]

The magnitude of the displacements and disruptions caused by the new boundaries far exceeded this original estimate. In the Punjab, an estimated 4.5 million Sikhs and Hindus were uprooted from their homes in West Punjab and migrated, under appalling conditions, to the east of Punjab which became part of India, while almost 5.5 million Muslims moved in the opposite direction under the same conditions.[94] The loss in property as a result of migration of communities to either side of the new border was tremendous. Some estimates have indicated that the loss could have amounted to over Rs 1.5 billion.

By cutting across the inter-fluve between the Sutlej and the Ravi rivers, the Radcliffe Award in the Punjab essentially severed many of the canals from their



Map 3.2 The partition of Punjab

headworks, thus damaging the integrity of the province's irrigation system which had been designed and built as a unitary system under a unified control. (See Map 3.3.) West Punjab was left with an area that depended on the tail branches of

the Upper Bari Doab Canal that takes water from the Ravi river in East Punjab.[95] Two of the province's canal headworks were allotted to India, although the bulk of the areas irrigated by the canals from the headwork lay in Muslim-majority areas. The Dipalpur canal, which irrigated Lahore and Montgomery districts which now lay in Pakistan, received its water from the Ferozepur weir, which controlled water entering the Pakpatten canal in Montgomery and Multan districts in Pakistan found itself in no-man's land, as adjustments to the border were still undergoing negotiations. While the headwork lay in Pakistan, its protective embankments, which were an essential part of the headwork, were in Ferozepur in East Punjab.[96]

In an attempt to solve the problems that were created by the severance of the canal systems, India and Pakistan signed a stand-still agreement on 18 December 1947, which provided for the maintenance of the pre-partition allocation of water to West Punjab.[97] However, when the agreement expired on 31 March 1948 and was not renewed as a result of the hostilities which had broken out over Kashmir, the Indian authorities cut off the water supplies on the canals leading to Pakistan. The disruptions caused to the river networks in the Indus Basin were to be a major cause of dispute between India and Pakistan for several years, and it eventually took more than a decade and the mediation of the World Bank before the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 finally settled the conflict.[98]

In Bengal the boundary award created large pockets of minorities on either side of the border, with each state having an almost equal proportion of majorities to minorities. In the north, the new boundary created 'three obtruding salients of Pakistani territory into the Indian side', causing major disruptions to roads and railways in West Bengal.[99] The creation of a new international boundary over the Ganges river also led to conflicts over water rights between India and Pakistan (later Bangladesh). The inability effectively to harness the Ganges and the Brahmaputra rivers for the benefit of 400 million people living in their basins due to disagreements between the two countries has had long-term implications.[100]

Conclusion

The desire of the British to disengage rapidly from the Indian subcontinent created for them a rather tight schedule for the transfer of power. Mountbatten's plan for the partition of the subcontinent into two states of India and Pakistan was agreed by the major parties on 3 June 1947. But before the two states could come into being, boundaries had to be demarcated in Bengal and Punjab to delimit the new frontiers between India and Pakistan. The task of defining the boundaries was entrusted to two Boundary Commissions, one for the Punjab and one for Bengal. Both were chaired jointly by Sir Cyril Radcliffe, who arrived in Delhi on 8 July 1947. He was given no more than six weeks in which to complete the task of dividing the two great provinces, about whose character and composition he knew nothing prior to his arrival in India. Both commissions, whose terms of reference were vague and at times contradictory, received divergent and conflicting claims from the various communities and political parties. The composition of the



Map 3.3 The Radcliffe Award and Central Punjab

commissions did not help matters: with two Muslims and two non-Muslims on each, the interests and opinions of the commissions were evenly divided. Consequently, the demarcation of the boundaries came down to the decision of one man, its chairman.

The Radcliffe Award for the Punjab, a six-paragraph document describing the dividing line between the east and west of the province, 'wobbled from communal to economic to strategic factors', followed no natural dividing features such as rivers or mountain ranges, cut across villages, canal systems and communication lines, in the process separating communities and bisecting homes. Large populations of Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs found themselves on the wrong side of the border. It was the same for Bengal, where the boundary created large pockets of minorities in East Pakistan as well as West Bengal. Its impact was tremendous, and the trauma of partition has left an indelible mark not only on Indo-Pakistan relations but upon the lives of millions of Indians and Pakistanis.

4
A community in crisis
Partition and the Sikhs

Introduction

The 1940s was a period of great crisis for the Sikh community in the Punjab. During the climacteric phase that culminated in the dissolution of the British Raj, the Sikhs regarded with consternation the Muslim League's Pakistan demand that threatened to convert the Punjab, a Muslim majority province, into an Islamic state. In their frantic attempts to prevent themselves from becoming 'a helpless minority' at the mercy of a 'Muslim tyranny' should Pakistan become a reality, the Sikhs eventually agreed to a partition of the province. The upshot was that, in August 1947, when the Punjab was partitioned, half the community found themselves with their large tracts of valuable canal colony lands and many important holy shrines on the Pakistan side of the border. This led to a massive uprooting and abandoning of land and property as the Sikhs fled Western Punjab to avoid being killed by the Muslims.

The traumatic experience of the 1940s had an enormous and lasting impact on Sikh communal perception. In that period of uncertainty leading to independence and partition, the Sikhs had sought to secure for themselves the best possible safeguards for their rights and interests as a religiouspolitical minority community, only to have to suffer the tragedy and ignominy of partition. After independence, despite being consolidated as a significant minority in a truncated Punjab, the Sikhs could not totally eradicate the perception that they remained in the shadow of Hindu majority domination. This led them to demand the creation of a Sikh majority state and eventually saw the Punjabi *suba* in 1966. Yet, even with a Sikh state, the sense of being a beleaguered minority prevailed, especially with the Punjab's strained relations with New Delhi in the 1970s and 1980s.

This chapter examines the enduring impact of partition on the Sikh community by looking at the continuing crisis that confronted them from 1940, when the demand for Pakistan was first raised, to the period after 1947, when in the aftermath of partition the Sikhs, traumatized by their tragic experience, continued in their search for a political solution that could sufficiently safeguard their interests as a community.

Sikhs and the Lahore Resolution

In March 1940 the All-India Muslim League passed its famous Lahore Resolution, demanding the creation of a separate state from Muslim majority areas in India. The Lahore Resolution was a vague statement, with a glaring absence of details. No mention was made of the nature and substance of the proposed Muslim state, and except for the vague term of 'Muslim majority areas', the Lahore Resolution made no specific definition of the areas which were to constitute the 'autonomous and sovereign units' that were to form the Muslim state. Its ambiguity notwithstanding, the Lahore Resolution sparked off an enormous furore amongst the Sikhs in the Punjab. The Sikh reaction was not unexpected. The creation of a Muslim state, already dubbed 'Pakistan' by the popular press, was perceived to threaten the very existence of the Sikh community; the professed intention of the Muslim League to impose a Muslim state on the Punjab (a Muslim majority province) was anathema to the Sikhs.

No sooner was it made public than the Sikhs launched a virulent campaign against the Lahore Resolution. Pakistan was portrayed as a possible return to an unhappy past when Sikhs were the persecuted and Muslims the persecutor. Public speeches by various Sikh political leaders on the subject of Pakistan invariably raised images of atrocities committed by Muslims on Sikhs and of the martyrdom of their *gurus* and heroes. Reactions to the Lahore Resolution were uniformly negative and Sikh leaders of all political persuasions made it clear that Pakistan would be 'wholeheartedly resisted'.[1] The Shiromani Akali Dal, the party with a substantial following amongst the rural Sikhs, organized several well-attended conferences in Lahore to condemn the Muslim League.[2] Master Tara Singh, leader of the Akali Dal, declared that his party would fight Pakistan 'tooth and nail'.[3] Not to be outdone, other Sikh political organizations, rival to the Akali Dal, namely the Central Khalsa Young Men Union and the moderate and loyalist Chief Khalsa Dewan, declared in equally strong language their unequivocal opposition to the Pakistan scheme.[4]

The Akali Dal criticisms soon shifted from the Muslim League to the Unionist government. Master Tara Singh had opposed the Unionist chief, Sikander Hayat Khan, since the Shahidganj Affair in 1931, and was quick to seize the opportunity to use the Pakistan issue to embarrass the Unionist government. Sikander, who had signed a pact with Jinnah in 1937, was accused of collusion with the Muslim League and its scheme to impose a 'Muslim Raj' in the Punjab. Sikhs in the Unionist government were not spared either; members of the Khalsa National Party who had joined the government were denounced as a bunch of traitors.[5]

Knowing that Sikander's government was built on an inter-communal alliance of agricultural interests, and that Sikander would be hard pressed by his Hindu and Sikh allies to distance himself from the Lahore Resolution with its avowed expression of Muslim nationalism, the Akali Dal started to apply pressure on the Unionist government, using the Lahore Resolution to wring out political concessions for the Sikhs. In the months following the announcement of the Lahore

Resolution, the Akali Dal launched a series of highly publicized attacks on the Unionist government, accusing it of pursuing a communal policy aimed at subverting the political and cultural rights of the non-Muslims in the Punjab.[6] In particular, the Akali Dal pointed out that Sikhs had been especially discriminated against by the Unionists in matters of *gurdwara* management, recruitment and promotion in government services, and other religious matters.[7] Sikhs were told to distance themselves from the Unionist government, and those serving in the legislative assembly were told to resign their posts as long as the Unionists remained associated with the Muslim League.[8]

Throughout the Punjab in the summer of 1940, the Akali Dal whipped up popular opposition to the Muslim League and the Unionist Party by a feverish campaign. Rallies were held to coincide with well attended *melas*, where speakers denounced the idea of Pakistan. A 'Ghallurgara Day' was observed by the Akali Dal to remember the massacre the Sikhs had suffered at the hands of the Muslim invader, Ahmad Shah Abdali, in 1762.[9] During these months Akali Dal leaders not only succeeded in whipping up an atmosphere of general nervousness amongst the Sikh population, as was revealed by the feverish purchase of arms and ammunition, but at the same time generated tremendous popularity for the Akali Dal itself, seen now as the champion of the Sikh cause against Pakistan.[10]

By the end of 1941, however, the initial excitement generated by the Lahore Resolution had begun to subside, and the anti-Pakistan campaign began to lose momentum. Despite their fierce rhetoric, the Sikh leadership knew that for the moment, Pakistan posed no immediate threat; the British were too busy prosecuting the war to concern themselves with the constitutional future of India.

By 1941 Sikh politics had come to focus on the question of war recruitment and Sikh-Congress relations. Since the 1880s the Sikh community had been a favourite 'martial race' and was heavily recruited for the Indian Army. But following the Akali Dal agitation in the 1920s, the British became suspicious of the continued loyalty of the Sikhs and their numbers in the army consequently dwindled. In 1939, when war broke out and the British began a recruitment campaign in the Punjab, the reaction of the Sikhs was divided. Sikhs loyal to the Congress were committed to the official Congress policy of sympathy to the anti-fascist struggle, but no support for the war. The loyalist Khalsa Nationalist Party, on the other hand, followed its traditional line of full support for the King-Emperor, while communists were actively propagating the war as an imperialist one in which the Sikhs should remain uninvolved.[11]

The Akali Dal's attitude towards the war was ambivalent. While it was generally sympathetic to the nationalist movement, it realized that the Sikh community would lose their favoured position in the army, and the economic advantages that went with it, if they boycotted British recruitment drives. This ambivalent attitude soon had its political fall-out. Unable to come to terms with Congress insistence of non-cooperation in the war effort, Master Tara Singh finally decided to break rank with the Congress. On 12 September 1940, he resigned from the Congress and came out in open support of the British war effort. He and his supporters

subsequently played a major role in the creation of the Khalsa Defence of India League, set up with the sole object of encouraging Sikhs to join the Indian army.[12] Master Tara Singh's resignation from the Congress precipitated a rift in the Akali Dal; a strongly anti-British faction led by Baba Kharak Singh broke away in October 1940 to revive the Central Sikh League which remained closely associated with the Congress throughout the 1940s.

Sikhs and the Cripps offer

In March 1942 the spectre of Pakistan once again surfaced on the horizon of Sikh politics when Sir Stafford Cripps, Lord Privy Seal of the British Cabinet, arrived in Delhi with a draft declaration concerning India's political future. The draft declaration represented a radical British initiative, which signalled very clearly that the British government was serious about granting Indians the right to rule themselves in the near future. The declaration contained a 'local option' clause which meant that, should the Muslims decide to, Muslim-majority provinces could secede from the Indian Union. To the Sikhs, the Cripps proposal, with its 'local option' clause seemed to imply that the British were prepared to concede Pakistan in principle.[13]

Cripps was well aware of Sikh anxiety towards the draft declaration. He met various Sikh representatives, including an all-parties Sikh delegation led by Master Tara Singh, and assured them that there were enough safeguards embodied in his proposal to protect the interests of their community.[14] He pointed out that the Congress, should it eventually emerge as the major party in India, would require the support of all the minorities to form a constituent assembly at the centre, and the Sikhs could take advantage of this and press the centre for safeguards. If this was not forthcoming, the Sikhs could join the Muslims of the Punjab and vote in the legislative assembly or through a plebiscite for the secession of the Punjab from the Union, and then in return for their support for the Muslims demand for certain protection clauses in the non-acceding constitution. They could, for instance, set up a semiautonomous Sikh dominated unit within the non-acceding province.[15]

Cripps' assurances, however, failed to allay Sikh fears. As far as the Akali Dal was concerned, the safeguards which Cripps talked about could not be guaranteed, and as long as the Muslim majority in the Punjab had the deciding say in secession, there was every likelihood that the Sikhs, being the powerless minority, could be brought, regardless, into Pakistan. The Sikhs instantly rejected the draft declaration and announced that they would 'resist by all possible means the separation of the Punjab from the All-Indian Union'.[16]

The Sikh community was thus relieved when both the Congress and the Muslim League rejected the draft declaration brought by Cripps. The failure of the Cripps mission had momentarily lessened the threat of Pakistan, but the lesson of the episode was not lost on the Sikhs. The Cripps mission showed that the only way the Sikhs could hope to be taken seriously in any future constitutional process was for them to have a dominant say in the politics of the Punjab. The Sikhs knew

they could not look beyond the Punjab for deliverance; their numbers were concentrated in the province, and unlike the Hindus and Muslims, were hardly a factor anywhere else in India. Master Tara Singh highlighted the problem when he said: 'the Hindu and Muslim majority of India could always look to those provinces wherein their co-religionists were in a majority; but the Sikhs can never do this'.[17]

The Akalis were also worried that the Congress, in its desire to achieve independence quickly, would eventually sacrifice Sikh interests to realize its objective. Master Tara Singh had already fallen out with the Congress leadership, and the Congress Working Committee seemed less than unequivocal in its rejection of Pakistan when it resolved that 'it could not think in terms of compelling people to remain in the Indian Union against their declared will', a view echoing that of the Madras leader, C. Rajagopalachari, who had earlier called for Congress to 'acknowledge the Muslim League's claims for separation as the lesser evil' to sacrificing the chances of Congress forming a national government.[18]

Consequently in 1942, soon after the dejected Cripps had left India, the Akali Dal took a political about-turn and proceeded to close ranks with the Unionist government. The way was cleared for a *rapprochement* between the Akali Dal and the Unionists by the death of Master Tara Singh's old political rival, Sunder Singh Majithia, the Khalsa Nationalist Party leader who had been closely associated with the Unionist Party since its formation in 1923. Secret negotiations were started between the Akali Dal through its representative, Baldev Singh, a wealthy Sikh industrialist, and Sikander Hayat Khan. On 15 June 1942 an agreement was reached, and the Sikander-Baldev pact was sealed. Under the terms of the pact, the Unionist government promised to give special consideration to Sikh demands and Baldev Singh was appointed to the provincial cabinet as the sole Sikh representative. As a *quid pro quo*, the Akali Dal undertook to refrain from further anti-Unionist activities.[19]

The pact was well received by the majority of the Sikh community, although some sections, particularly Congressite and Communist Sikhs as well as rivals of Tara Singh, showed dissatisfaction.[20] Tara Singh was accused of selling out Sikh interests for his own political gains. Such criticism notwithstanding, the general feeling was that with the pact the religious rights of the Sikhs could be preserved.[21] The pact thus brought about an improvement in the tone of communal politics in the Punjab. Akali-Unionist relations became less contentious as both the parties were obliged to refrain from polemics against each other. With the Sikander-Baldev Singh pact, the Pakistan issue in the Punjab was marginalized, and Sikh criticisms of the Unionist government for the moment ceased.

This state of affairs was, however, disrupted in November 1942 by Jinnah's visit to the Punjab. Not wishing to create an open rupture with the Muslim League that might unsettle the Muslim ranks in his party, Sikander had to concede that he saw 'eye to eye with the champion of Pakistan'.[22] The statement immediately raised the ire of the Akali Dal. They began to suspect that Sikander was playing a double game with them, but before recriminations started, Sikander suddenly died of a

heart attack in December 1942. The Akali Dal once again found themselves in a fix. They had been uneasy with Sikander's relationship with Jinnah but, at the same time, Sikander's pact with the Sikhs offered the best guarantee that their interests were protected in the Punjab. With the premier now dead, the pact could no longer be taken as a guarantee of Sikh interests. The Akali Dal then decided that a new strategy had to be evolved to protect their community. By early 1943 the Akali Dal started talking about a re-demarcation of the Punjab province, and an idea that had first been raised in 1931 hardened into a concrete demand.

The demand for 'Azad Punjab'

At the Round Table Conference in London in 1931, the Sikh delegate, Sardar Ujjal Singh, had suggested that if the existing boundaries of the Punjab were re-drawn, and the Muslim-dominated western districts of the province be detached, the respective proportion of the communities in the reconstituted Punjab would be more balanced, and there would be no need to introduce unpopular devices such as communal weighting or separate electorates to solve the 'communal problem' in the province.[23] The Sikhs would benefit from this scheme as under a reconstituted Punjab shorn of the Muslimmajority western districts, the Sikhs would form a substantial community, and thus have a bigger say in the politics of the province. This scheme had not made much headway at the Round Table Conferences in the 1930s, but the idea was suddenly revived and given credence during a debate in the British House of Commons in April 1942. Leo Amery, Secretary of State for India, mentioned that the British government was willing to consider alternative methods 'which offered a better basis for the definition of boundaries... which might give representation to the smaller elements, such as the Sikhs'.[24] The Akali Dal quickly latched on to the idea and in March 1943 decided to embrace the demand of 'Azad Punjab'—the definition given to the new territory after the boundaries had been readjusted—as a policy.[25]

In essence, the 'Azad Punjab' scheme involved the demarcation of the boundaries of the Punjab by detaching the western Muslim-majority areas away from it. In 'Azad Punjab', the Akali Dal claimed, the proportion of the three communities would be more equitable and no single community would be in a dominating position. The Akali Dal thus saw 'Azad Punjab' comprising Amballa, Jullundur, Lahore divisions, and out of the Multan division, Lyallpur district and some portions of Montgomery and Multan districts.[26] In 'Azad Punjab', Muslims were to constitute 40 per cent of the population, Hindus 40 per cent and the Sikhs 20 per cent. This demographic pattern, the Akali leadership hoped, would thus enable the Sikhs to hold the balance of power between the Muslims and the Hindus, and thus maximize their political leverage in the province.[27] The Akali Dal tried to justify the vivisection of the Punjab by arguing that the northwestern parts of the province, west of the River Jhelum, did not belong to Punjab proper, but were only added to the Punjab by Maharaja Ranjit Singh.[28]

'Azad Punjab' was not intended to be a Sikh state carved out of the Punjab. Unlike the Muslims, the Sikhs were not sufficiently localised or self-contained to realistically demand a separate state of their own. There was not a single district in the Punjab where the Sikhs commanded a majority. However, if future constitutional developments were to proceed along the lines of the 'Cripps offer', a provincial plebiscite could ultimately determine the future of the Punjab. In that eventuality, the Sikhs would want to be in a position to determine the outcome; in 'Azad Punjab', their numbers would ensure that things would go their way. The 'Azad Punjab' proposition was essentially a means by which the Sikhs hoped to offset their permanent disadvantage as a minority in the Punjab.[29]

The Akali Dal was convinced that the 'Azad Punjab' scheme offered the best way out of the political impasse, not only for the Sikhs, but for the British and Hindus as well. Sir Stafford Cripps was told that 'if the British government was prepared to accept this proposal...there [was] a likelihood of a final solution to the communal problem, at least in the Punjab'.[30] The Hindus were told that 'Azad Punjab' would 'free both Hindus and Sikhs from the shackle of Muslim domination'. Even if the Muslims insisted on Pakistan, they would have to settle for a country deprived of the valuable resources of central Punjab.[31]

Outside the ranks of the Akali Dal, however, enthusiasm for the 'Azad Punjab' scheme was more muted. The general sentiment was that a redrawing of Punjab's boundaries was too problematic, and certainly not worth the trouble for just trying to placate the Sikhs. Sir Bertrand Glancy, governor of the Punjab, pointed out that 'the practical objections to the scheme were even greater than those which lie in the path of Pakistan'.[32] The Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, shared his views. Although he admitted that the Sikhs were a nuisance worth placating, they were nevertheless a 'small nuisance'. He cautioned that the British should be careful not to give substance to even a 'shadow of such a preposterous claim'.[33]

Within the Sikh community, the proCongress Central Akali Dal criticised the scheme for its intention to vivisect India and its failure to take into consideration the Sikhs living in the Rawalpindi division. The Congressite and Communist Sikhs called the scheme communal, anti-national and reactionary.[34] The leaders of the Sikhs in the western districts of Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Campbellpore, Maedan, Kohat and Peshawar, all of which would be shorn off from the Punjab under the 'Azad Punjab' scheme, insisted that a referendum be taken by the entire Sikh community in the Punjab, and only if more than two-thirds wanted 'Azad Punjab' should the demand be pressed.[35] The opposition notwithstanding, the Akali Dal embarked on a strident campaign to press its demand for 'Azad Punjab'. A pamphlet was published to explain the scheme in greater detail, and several local conferences were held throughout the province to propagate the idea. Master Tara Singh personally led a delegation to the western districts of the Punjab to assure the Sikhs there that their interests would not be sacrificed.[36]

Sikhs and the 'CR formula'

The Akali Dal's enthusiasm for 'Azad Punjab' seemed vindicated when news was released of a series of correspondence between the veteran Congress leader, C. Rajagopalachari, and Jinnah. In July 1944 Rajagopalachari had intimated to Jinnah that Gandhi and the Gongress were prepared to concede Pakistan if the Muslim League would support the Congress in calling for complete independence and cooperate in the formation of a provisional government. Once the Congress had achieved its goal, it would establish a commission to demarcate 'contiguous districts in the northwest and east of India' with an absolute Muslim majority, and a plebiscite would then be held in those areas to decide whether they should separate or remain part of Hindustan.[37] The 'CR formula', as it came to be known in the popular press, was ostensibly an attempt by a section of the Congress leadership, frustrated by the lack of constitutional progress, to break the political stalemate with Jinnah. It was also, though, an attempt by the shrewd Rajagopalachari to draw Jinnah out into the open about his Pakistan scheme and to demonstrate the weaknesses and inherent contradictions of his demand. Through his formula, Rajagopalachari was trying to point out to Jinnah that the provinces that he claimed for Pakistan contained large portions of non-Muslims, such as the Sikhs and the Hindus of the Punjab, who would loathe inclusion into the Muslim state. If Jinnah persisted in his demand, then the existing provinces of the Punjab and Bengal would have to be partitioned, leaving him, at best, a truncated Pakistan of the 'less fertile parts of northwest India and the swamps of east Bengal'.

The Akalis were outraged by the formula and felt betrayed. The Congress had all along been opposed to vivisection of the country but now, by apparently agreeing to a division of the Punjab, it was in effect sanctioning a proposal which threatened to divide the Sikh community into two. If the 'CR formula' was accepted as a basis of settlement between the Congress and the Muslim League, there was a strong likelihood that the seventeen Muslimmajority districts in the Punjab would go to Pakistan, while the remaining twelve districts would remain in Hindustan. The Sikh community, scattered across the central districts without a majority in a single district, would consequently be dissected.[38]

The unpopular 'CR formula' provided Master Tara Singh with yet another opportunity to vilify his pro-Congress political rivals. At an Akali-dominated All Parties Sikh Conference, Master Tara Singh, who had earlier left his posts in the Akali Dal and the SGPC (Shiromani Gurdwara Porbandhak Committee), was recalled to steer the community out of its present crisis. With the help of his lieutenant, Giani Kartar Singh, Master Tara Singh proceeded to discredit the pro-Congress factions of the Akali Dal and to strengthen his hold on the party.[39] In characteristic fashion, he raised the spectre of the community's annihilation by the Muslims in connivance with the Hindus.[40]

Meanwhile Gandhi's attempts to come to an agreement with Jinnah after his release from jail in 1944 served to confirm Sikh fears that the Congress was prepared to sacrifice the Sikhs for an agreement with the Muslim League. Gandhi's assurances

to the Sikhs that their interests were safe in his hands and his plea that he represented himself and not the Congress, were loudly derided and abusive epithets against him resounded at every Akali-held or sponsored meeting.[41] The Akali Dal exploited these well-attended meetings to rally the Sikhs to oppose the Gandhi-Jinnah talks by emphasizing the need for the community to be vigilant against the revival of the Pakistan demand.[42] Master Tara Singh threatened that, 'should a settlement be reached over the heads of the Sikhs, the reaction amongst [them] will be terrible'.[43]

Thus in 1944, Sikh leaders found themselves in a rather desperate situation. They were extremely anxious about the apparent reversal of Congress policy with regards to Pakistan. What was more disconcerting for the Sikhs was that Jinnah's position and his demand for the vivisection of the country could no longer be taken lightly by anyone. The Congress had to negotiate with him as an equal, and the British knew too that no constitutional plan was workable without Jinnah's approval. By 1945 Jinnah seemed in no mood for compromise over the issue of Pakistan. For the first time since the Lahore Resolution, Jinnah openly claimed for Pakistan the six full Muslim majority areas of the North-Western Frontier Province (NWFP), Sind, Baluchistan, Punjab, Bengal and Assam and rejected outright any talk of altering the existing boundaries of any of these provinces.[44] Wavell's attempts at the Simla Conference of June 1945 to bypass Pakistan and proceed with the formation of a national government consequently foundered on the rock of Jinnah's intransigence. For the Sikhs now, the prospects of a 'Muslim raj' in the Punjab seemed to loom larger than before.

The rising popularity of Jinnah among the separate Muslim constituencies was revealed by the 1946 general elections. The results of the provincial elections confirmed the Muslim League's status as the party most popular among the Muslims of India. It won the majority of seats in all the Muslim-majority provinces, except the NWFP. Its victory in the Punjab, which had all along eluded its grip, was most remarkable. In a complete reversal of the 1937 fiasco, the Muslim League captured seventy-five of the eighty-six seats reserved for Muslims and became the largest single party in the 175-strong provincial legislative assembly. In contrast the Unionists, who had held ninetysix seats previously, could this time manage only eighteen seats.[45] The League's victory proved to be a complete endorsement of the Pakistan demand by the Muslim electorate in the Punjab, and also an indication that Punjabi Muslims were more prepared to identify with the wider political currents at the expense of local Punjabi parochialism. Communal differences in the province, which had hitherto been successfully contained, now threatened to intensify.

The implications of the League's victory in the Punjab were not lost on the Akali Dal. It was clear that the Unionist party was a spent force in the province and the Akali-Unionist pact could no longer afford the Sikhs any protection. The 1946 election results also showed that their future partners in the Punjab government would either be the Muslim League or the Congress. Fortunately for the Sikhs, though both parties did well in the elections, neither was in a position to form a government in the Punjab. The Akali Dal now proceeded to use the twenty-three

seats that it had won as a bargaining chip to secure its guarantee of political safeguards in the province.

Ever the political opportunist, Master Tara Singh explored possibilities of alliances with parties having the larger numbers of seats in the province. Despite its rhetoric against the Muslim League, the Akali Dal responded to overtures from League leaders in the Punjab. League leaders, notably Mian Mumtaz Daultana, Raja Ghazafar Ali and Shaukat Hayat Khan met with Akali representatives. Discussions centred upon the formation of a possible Muslim League-Akali cabinet in the Punjab.[46]

Akali responses to League overtures probably signalled a pragmatism with which Sikh politicians like Master Tara Singh now approached the political problems confronting the Sikh community. The Sikhs had indeed been unsettled by the Muslim League's communal stance during the elections campaign. Confronted now, though, with the distinct possibility of being a minority in a Muslim League dominated province, the Akalis knew that partnership with the Muslims in government was probably the best guarantee of safeguarding their interests in the uncertain political future that lay ahead, and there was evidence that Congress-League negotiations were already in progress. Could the Congress, still seen by many Sikhs as a purely Hindu organization, ever be trusted to protect Sikh interests?[47]

Punjab Muslim League leaders, apparently with approval from Jinnah, had been meeting with Akali representatives and had assured them that the League's demand for a Muslim homeland of Pakistan was merely an electoral device for the winning of Muslim votes. The Sikhs had nothing to fear as the Pakistan that was going to come into being would essentially be different from that promised to the Muslims during the elections.[48]

The Akalis, however, were not prepared to accept such vague promises and they needed more concrete assurances. A list of demands was drawn up and sent to the Muslim League. The Sikhs demanded reservation of seats in the provincial administration; recognition of *Gurumukhi* as an official language; and a promise that the Muslim League would not arrive at settlements which affected the Sikhs without first consulting the Akalis.[49] The Akali leadership further insisted that the Muslim League denounce all talk of Pakistan if it wanted the Sikhs as partners in government. On the last point, the Akali-Muslim League negotiations stalled. The Muslim League, having come so far in pursuit of their demand for Pakistan, were not prepared to denounce it just to please the Sikhs. In exasperation, the Punjab Muslim League leaders announced that the Sikhs were not prepared to contemplate the issue of Pakistan at this stage.[50] This stalled further talks between the Muslim League and the Sikhs. As far as the latter were concerned, they could 'hardly maintain in power a party whose avowed policy was to treat them [the Sikhs] as inferiors in a Muslim country'.[51]

Having tried and failed to come to an agreement with the Muslim League, the Akalis then turned to the Congress. Baldev Singh consequently held a series of informal negotiations with local Congress leaders, together with the Unionist

leader, Khizar Hayat Khan Tiwana, to secure a basis for a tripartite coalition government in the Punjab. The Congress seemed keen for a coalition government in the Punjab. Mindful of the recent excitement caused by the 'CR formula', the Congress assured the Akalis that its commitment to the community as expressed in the Lahore Resolution of 1929 still remained intact. Finally, on 6 March it was announced that a Congress-Akali-Unionist coalition had been effected in the Punjab. The Akalis had momentarily sorted their position in the province, but this proved to be only a temporary respite, as elections and the formation of new ministries in the provinces merely postponed a final settlement of the Indian constitutional problem. The Sikhs now had to gear up in preparation for the next stage of constitutional talks which would eventually determine the future of India as well as their own fate.

Sikhs and the Cabinet Mission

In March 1946 a three-man Cabinet Mission arrived in Delhi to attempt to settle India's constitutional problem. The Sikhs greeted the Cabinet Mission with apprehension. The presence of such a high powered commission, comprising Pethick-Lawrence, Secretary of State for India, Sir Stafford Cripps, President of the Board of Trade and A.V. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty, could only mean that the British were now finally serious in bringing an end to colonial rule in India. While the Raj had lasted, the Sikhs could, at least, be assured of minority protection as a favoured 'martial race' in the Indian army. Now that their patrons had at long last signalled their earnest desire to leave, the last remaining prop that had secured Sikh interests in the Punjab was about to be removed.

Fearful that the Cabinet Mission, in its attempt to break the Congress-Muslim League deadlock, might evolve proposals that would prove detrimental to the Sikhs, the Akali Dal, on 22 March 1946, confronted the Mission with a demand for a separate Sikh state, subsequently dubbed 'Sikhistan' or 'Khalistan'. The demand for a separate Sikh state to be carved out of the Punjab had first been floated in the middle of 1944, at an All Parties Sikh Conference in Amritsar, in response to the 'CR formula'. Not much notice was then taken of such a demand and 'Sikhistan' had not featured at all in the 1946 election campaign of the Akali Dal.

The demand for 'Sikhistan' marked a significant departure from the 'Azad Punjab' scheme which had been propagated by the Akali Dal in 1943. The latter had been perceived merely as a re-drawing of the existing boundaries of the Punjab by leaving out the Muslim-majority areas. 'Azad Punjab', in which no community would dominate numerically, was therefore in no way to be constituted as a Sikh state. 'Sikhistan', on the other hand, was to be a Sikh federation, comprising districts in eastern and central Punjab with large Sikh populations, and was to include the Sikh states of Patiala, Nabha, Jind, Faridkot, Kalsia and Kapurthala. In brief, 'Sikhistan', unlike 'Azad Punjab', was to have a distinct Sikh complexion.

The demand for 'Sikhistan' was clearly a desperate attempt by the Akalis to press their case with the British. What the Sikh leaders really wanted was to impress

upon the British their fear of being subjected to a 'Muslim Raj', and to emphasize their need for sufficient representation in a post-independent government within the Punjab. So they decided to emulate the Muslim League and forwarded an incredible demand. Akali leaders knew that the demand would not be taken seriously. The Sikhs as a community were scattered across the whole of central Punjab and did not constitute a majority in a single district. Cripps was quick to point out, when the demand was brought to his attention, that the 'demographic compulsions…and the inescapable geographical facts make it impossible to evolve [any such] scheme'.[52] The Sikhs themselves were uncertain how 'Sikhistan' was to be constituted. Master Tara Singh would only make a vague mention of 'a separate independent state' with the right to federate with Pakistan or Hindustan.[53] Giani Kartar Singh told Cripps that 'Sikhistan' would include the whole of Lahore, Karnal, Simla, Montgomery and Lyallpur districts, while Baldev Singh had in mind the entire area covered by Ambala, Jullundur and Lahore divisions.[54]

While members of the Cabinet Mission lent a sympathetic ear to Sikh representatives, they were not prepared to take the Sikh demand seriously. The Sikhs were regarded as an important minority, but not important enough for their demands to sidetrack the primary objective of the Cabinet Mission, to secure agreement between Congress and the Muslim League, the parties seen as the main arbiters of the political future of India. However, both the parties remained deadlocked in a political stalemate. The Muslim League clung adamantly to its demand for an independent and fully sovereign Pakistan, while the Congress remained pledged to a unitary India.[55] After lengthy discussions which failed to effect any form of agreement between the two contending parties, the Cabinet Mission decided to put forward what it considered to be the 'best arrangements possible to ensure a speedy setting up of the new constitution'.[56] Accordingly, on 16 May, the Cabinet Mission issued a statement of its proposed settlement.

The Mission proposed the setting-up of a Union of India, but in recognition of the acute anxiety felt by the Muslim minority it prescribed a constitution based on a three-tier model. The Union, comprising both British India and the princely states, would deal with foreign affairs, defence and communications; the remaining subjects and all residual powers would rest with the provinces and the states. The provinces would also have the right to form groups, which would have legislative and executive powers, and each group would determine the provincial subjects to be taken in community. A constituent assembly would be set up, comprising elected representatives from the provincial legislatures in the ratio of one to a million of their population. Such an assembly thus constituted would meet first to settle the business at the all India centre, after which the representatives would divide into sections: Section A comprising the provinces not claimed for Pakistan, Section B consisting of Punjab, the NWFP, Sind, and British Baluchistan, and Section C made up of Bengal and Assam. Each of these sections would then proceed to settle the constitution for the provinces under their respective groups.[57] The Cabinet Mission proposal was an attempt at finding a *modusvivendi* for the Congress and Muslim League, to enable them to get together to frame India's future

constitution. It proposed an Indian Union, thus preserving the geographic unity of India and satisfying Congress aspirations. Though Pakistan was rejected, the formation of groups of provinces which had the right to frame their own constitution was a concession to Muslim interests as it offered them the right to direct their 'own essential interests... in their own way and to their own advantage'.[58]

Although the details of the proposals were aimed at meeting the demands of the Congress and the Muslim League, the interests of the Sikhs seemed to have been a factor in the Cabinet Mission's deliberations, particularly on the issue of Pakistan. The Cabinet Mission pointed out that it had rejected the proposal for Pakistan to prevent an injustice to the Sikh community. A larger Pakistan comprising the provinces of Punjab, Sind, the NWFP and British Baluchistan and including the northeast provinces of Assam and Bengal was not justifiable because it would include large portions of non-Muslims.[59] The case for a smaller truncated Pakistan was also ruled out as it would involve the a cutting up of the Punjab and would divide the Sikh community and leave substantial clusters of their populations on both sides of the boundary.[60] By insisting on the unity of the Punjab, the Mission hoped that the Sikh community would remain iritact and continue to play an influential role in the Punjab.[61]

Those assurances notwithstanding, the Sikh leaders remained unhappy with the proposals. They pointed out that although the Cabinet Mission proposals had made a token gesture to the Sikhs by recognizing them as one of the 'major communities in India', they had not provided specific safeguards for the community as were being offered to the Hindus and Muslims. Also, though the Mission had rejected the demand for Pakistan, the Sikhs were, without their consent, thrown into a Muslim dominated group, and faced the danger of being subjected to Muslim majority rule. They pointed out that the compulsory grouping of the provinces 'had made it possible for the Muslims to secure all the conditions of Pakistan without incurring the dangers in it'.[62] They complained that, with only four seats in an assembly of thirty-six, they would be put entirely at the mercy of the Muslim majority.

The Sikh leaders thus considered the Cabinet Mission proposals 'injurious to their interests' and decided to boycott the proposed constituent assembly.[63] In the meantime, the Akali Dal convened a Panthic Pratinidhi Board, headed by an ex-colonel of the Indian National Army, to direct Sikh opposition to the Cabinet Mission proposals. Akali Dal leaders traversed the province giving anti-British speeches and Sikh *jathas* pledged to oppose the implementation of the Cabinet Mission scheme. Thousands of volunteers took vows to defend the honour of the Panth, and donations poured in to support a campaign against the Cabinet Mission plan. Such strident behaviour began to worry the British administration and the Governor of the Punjab, Evan Jenkins, expressed concern about the possibility of another disturbance similar to the Akali movement two decades earlier.[64] The Panthic Pratinidhi Board reiterated the call to all Sikh legislators to boycott the constituent assembly and the interim government. Meanwhile, Akali leaders began

exploring possibilities of alliances with either the Muslim League or the Congress. They knew that unless they secured support from one of the main political parties in India, their protests were going to have little impact upon the British.

A Sikh-Muslim *rapprochement* at that stage seemed at best a very remote possibility. Though the Muslim League had made approaches to the Sikh leaders for cooperation in Group B by offering the community generous weighting in the civil service, they were nevertheless suspicious of this 'superficially attractive' offer'.[65] The Muslim League at this stage was not prepared to offer the Sikhs any concrete assurances. The Muslim League was not prepared to agree to a partition of the Punjab to carve out a 'Sikhistan', nor would it agree to drop the demand for Pakistan.[66] The Sikhs were told that they would have to trust the good faith of the Muslims. Further, attempts at negotiating with the Muslim League were hampered by the forthcoming *Gurudwara* elections. Not wishing to draw flak from the proCongress camp, Giani Kartar Singh, who had all along been inclined to favour an alliance between the Sikhs and the Muslims, wisely decided against consorting too closely with the Muslim League.[67]

The Congress, though, had displayed a markedly more positive attitude towards the Sikhs. It had been reluctant to accept the Cabinet Mission's proposals because of the fear that the formation of groups dominated by the Muslim League could be a major hindrance to the effective functioning of a central government. Nehru had confidently predicted that there was a four to one chance that the NWFP would decide against grouping, making the Muslim-dominated Group B untenable.[68] By wooing the Sikhs, the Congress was evidently trying to raise the odds against the survival of the Muslim-dominated Group B.

Encouraged by sympathetic messages from Congress leaders, the Panthic Board began negotiations with the Congress on possible co-operation in the interim government. The Congress Working Committee on 9 August 1946 pledged all possible assistance to help the Sikhs redress their grievances and in securing safeguards for the protection of their interests in the Punjab. It also agreed that the defence portfolio in the interim government should go to the Sikhs in recognition of their martial traditions.[69] On the basis of the Congress resolution, the Sikhs were finally persuaded to reverse their earlier decision to boycott the interim government and the Constituent assembly, and on 14 August announced that they would participate in the constituent assembly.

Partition and holocaust

Meanwhile, communal relations between the Muslims and the Sikhs in the Punjab had steadily deteriorated. All previous attempts in the preceding months to bring about an understanding between the Muslim League and the Akali Dal had come to nought. Patience with Muslim leadership was also wearing increasingly thin. Fed with stories of communal carnage in parts of north India and irritated by the constant acrimony in the interim government, as well as the Muslim League's

decision to boycott the constituent assembly, the Sikhs were beginning to feel that the break up of India might become a reality after all.

Developments in the Punjab in the later months of 1946 and early 1947 had not given the Sikhs much cause for optimism. The Muslim League, denied the opportunity of forming a government despite winning the largest majority of Muslim seats, had started a campaign of open hostility against the coalition government. The Muslim League organized boycotts, protests meetings, processions and demonstrations throughout the Punjab. There were increasing signs that both Muslim and non-Muslim communities at the grassroots were preparing themselves for civil war. Intelligence reports revealed that the membership of private armies like the Hindu Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh and the Muslim League National Guards had increased significantly after the 1946 elections.[70]

The general atmosphere of tension and 'communal ill-feelings' deeply disturbed the Sikhs. They saw the agitation not simply as targeted against the coalition government, but proof of Muslim animosity against the Sikhs, a feeling which was reinforced when Sikh policemen were occasionally singled out for brutal attacks by Muslim mobs.[71] Believing that the Muslims had developed a widespread and well-trained semi-military organization to forcibly secure the province of Punjab for Pakistan, Sikh leaders began calling for the formation of a Sikh army to be prepared for an eventual showdown with the Muslims.[72]

The sense of desperation felt by the Sikh community was heightened by Clement Attlee's announcement on 20 February 1947 that the British would transfer power by a 'date not later than June 1948'. The announcement increased the tempo of communal activities in the Punjab. The Muslim League now felt that it was imperative for it to secure control over the Punjab, if it was to make a serious bid for Pakistan. The deteriorating communal conditions in the Punjab proved too much of a strain for the premier Khizar Hayat Khan, and in March 1947, he announced his resignation. With his resignation the coalition government collapsed, snapping the fragile peace in the Punjab.

In the months following Khizar's resignation, violent clashes between the Sikhs and Muslims erupted with disturbing regularity. The Sikhs were especially hard hit in districts where they were hopelessly outnumbered by the Muslims, especially in western Punjab. The Sikhs now began gearing themselves for civil war. Akali leaders got in touch with rulers of the Sikh princely states for possible assistance, and *jathedars* were briefed to get their *jathas* ready for the defence of the community.[73] Preparations were made for the regimentation and arming of Sikh militias for purposes of self-defence and exacting revenge from the Muslims when the opportunity came.[74]

Resigned to the fact that Pakistan could no longer be avoided and convinced that conciliation with the Muslim League was now out of the question, Sikh politicians began clamouring for a partition of the province. If they could not prevent Pakistan, then they were going to make sure that the Muslims would not get the entire Punjab. When the Congress Working Committee passed a resolution

on 8 March 1947 calling for a division of the Punjab into 'two provinces, so that the predominantly Muslim part may be separated from the predominantly non-Muslim part', the Sikhs quickly latched on to the idea and began pressing the view that the only solution to the communal problem lay in the partition of the province.[75] In early April, Sikh and Hindu members of the Legislative Assembly called for a partition of the Punjab as the 'immediate administrative problem which should have first priority'.[76]

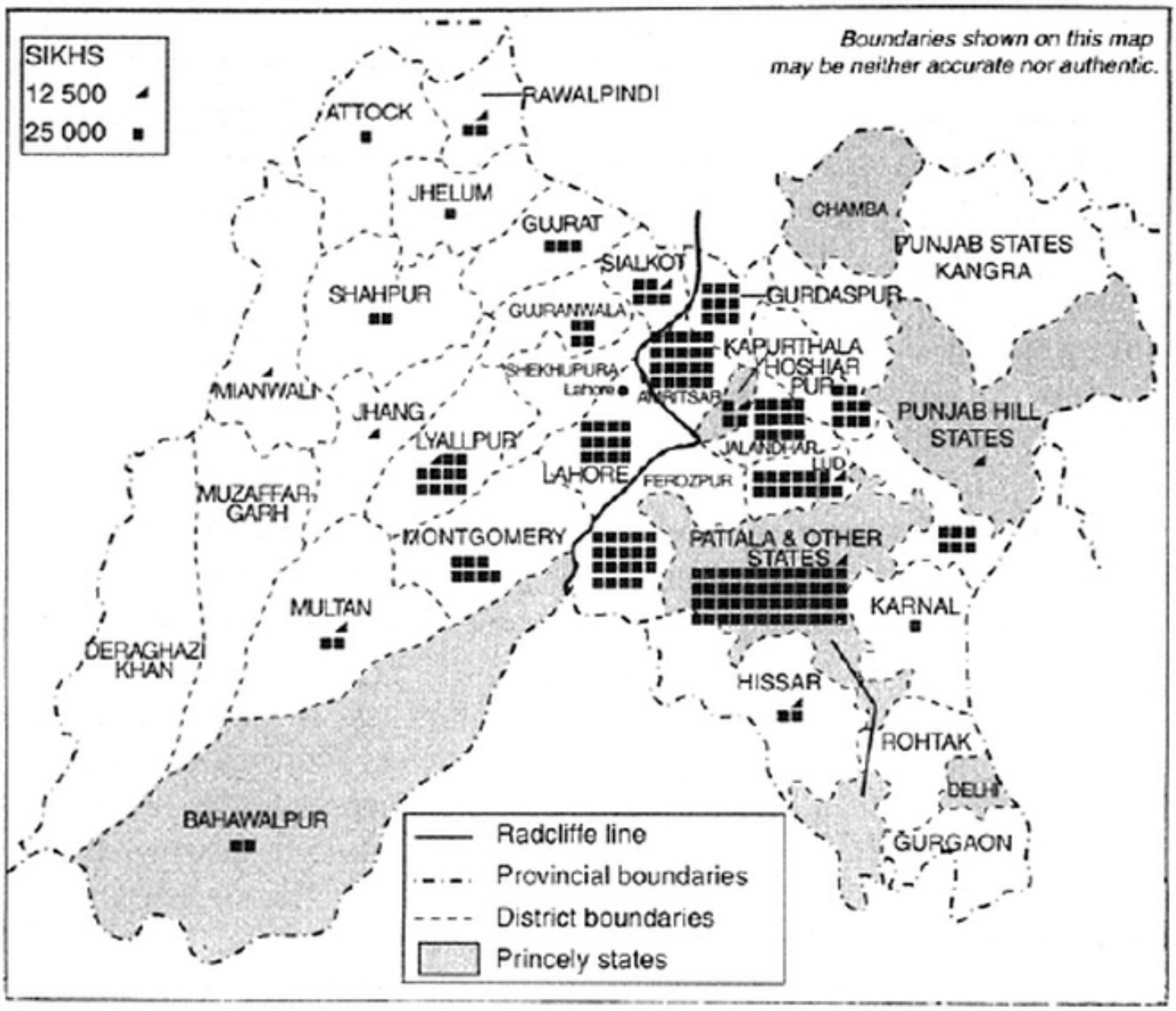
As Chapter Three has shown, it did not take Mountbatten, British India's last Viceroy, long to accept the inevitability of partition. In his mind antipathy between the Congress and the Muslim League was such that the prospect of a unitary India had become simply impossible. Mountbatten thus formulated his 3 June plan which was publicly accepted by Nehru and Jinnah on behalf of the Congress and the Muslim League respectively, and by Baldev Singh who represented the Sikhs.[77]

The implications of a partition of the Punjab on the basis of contiguous areas of Muslim and non-Muslim districts, as provided by the 3 June plan, were horrendous for the Sikhs. Concentrated in the central divisions of Lahore and Jullundur, the Sikhs faced the prospect of a split down the middle, should a boundary line be drawn on the basis of Muslim and nonMuslim-majority districts. (See Map 4.1.) Lahore, Rawalpindi and Multan divisions, all Muslim-majority areas, but with half a million Sikhs and many of Sikhism's most sacred places, including the birthplace of Guru Nanak, would go to Pakistan. The fertile canal colony lands in the southwestern districts of Montgomery and Lyallpur would also certainly be lost to the community, if a partition based on population basis was to be effected. Having pushed for partition, Sikh leaders were then quick to assert that the only partition line acceptable to the community would be along the Chenab river.[78]

Akali leaders met Lord Ismay, the Viceroy's Chief of Staff, and insisted that partition of the Punjab should not be done 'merely on the basis of [a] counting of heads'. They insisted that landed property and the location of holy shrines were factors that should be borne in mind while delineating the boundary. According the Sikh leaders, the Muslims could have Rawalpindi and Multan divisions, while Amballa and Jullundur divisions should go to the non-Muslims. They further agreed that the Lahore Division, although a Muslim-majority area, should not be given to the Muslims but administered by a joint council until the Boundary Commission was able to finalise matters on frontiers and population transfers.[79]

However, there was little in the 3 June plan that gave cause for the Sikhs to be sanguine that the ultimate line of division across the province would be drawn in their favour. A provisional boundary line had already been drawn dividing the province between Muslim and non-Muslim-majority districts. The Sikhs were indeed wary that the Boundary Commission would not depart very much from the provisional line in its final award.

Mountbatten, for his part, had not given the Sikhs any assurances. He had earlier stated that once the question of the partition of Punjab was decided upon, it would indeed require a miracle to keep the Sikh community intact.[80] The Sikhs were much too scattered in the Punjab, and although they formed 10 per cent of the



Map 4.1 Distribution of Sikhs in Punjab, 1947

population in eight districts west of the Beas-Sutlej, Muslims dominated in six of these districts.[81] Mountbatten made it quite clear that Sikh claims of property qualifications as a factor in the demarcation of boundaries could not be given much weighting, as the British could hardly be expected to subscribe to a partition on the simple basis of landed property.[82]

Perhaps the biggest obstacle preventing the Sikhs from influencing the course of events in their favour was the urgency and haste with which Mountbatten had approached his task of winding up British rule in India. After much cajoling and arm twisting, Mountbatten had achieved the rare feat of getting the Muslim League and the Congress to agree to his plan. Having secured this, he was certainly not prepared to see it wrecked on account of the Sikhs. Jinnah, who had already grudgingly agreed to the partition of the Punjab and Bengal, could hardly be expected to accept the idea of excluding Muslim-majority districts in the Punjab from Pakistan to appease the Sikhs.

So after accepting the 3 June plan, the Sikhs found themselves caught, not for the first time, in a quandary. Partition would divide the community and leave them as weakened minorities in both Pakistan and Hindustan. At the same time, while

the Sikhs were strongly opposed to Pakistan, they did not relish the prospect of absorption by a Hindu majority in Hindustan either.

At this point the Sikhs, advised by some British sympathizers, began to explore a third possibility. The Sikhs could cast their votes with the Muslims and take their place in the new state of Pakistan. This would ensure that the Sikh community would remain, by and large, intact and, at least within Pakistan, the Sikhs could form a fairly significant community made up of 14 per cent of the population.

Penderel Moon and Major J.M.Short, two British officers who were asso ciated with the Sikhs, vigorously pursued this scheme. Penderel Moon, a Minister in the Muslim princely state of Bahawalpur and a former member of the Indian Civil Service who knew the Punjab intimately, was convinced that a division of the Punjab would be 'fatal. to the Sikh community' and that the best option remained for the Sikhs to throw in their lot with the Muslims and take their place in Pakistan.[83] He suggested that the Sikhs secure from the Muslims special privileges as a minority in western Punjab or in Pakistan as a whole. He reasoned that the Muslims would, in consideration of their own interests, be amenable to such suggestions.[84] Major Short, a retired officer of the Indian army who had served the Sikh regiments and knew them well, wrote to Cripps urging him to use his influence with Nehru to get the Congress to persuade the Sikhs into Pakistan. He argued that by keeping the Sikhs intact as a unit in Pakistan, the Congress would have its surest guarantee of a strong Indian Union.[85]

The exhortations of Penderel Moon and Major Short found a receptive ear in Giani Kartar Singh, who had not yet given up hope of arriving at some form of agreement with the Muslim League. By this stage, though, Giani Kartar Singh was a lone voice in the Sikh community. Anti-Muslim sentiments within the Sikh community were running high after the events of the past months; Sikh-Muslim *rapprochement* simply seemed out of the question at that point in time. The approaches of Punjab Muslim League leaders to the Sikhs, indicating that they would be given special considerations if they threw in their lot with the Muslims were rebuffed.[86] Their intransigence was only equalled by Jinnah's coldness towards any form of agreement with the Sikhs. He reportedly told Sikh leaders that 'they could go to the devil in their own way. It was they who had demanded the partition of the Punjab. They could now take the consequences'.[87]

With that, the final opportunity of finding a place for the Sikhs in Pakistan evaporated. The partition of the Punjab was endorsed on 23 June 1947 when the East Punjab Assembly voted decisively for a division of the province. Thereafter the Sikhs knew that the fate of the community rested on the decision of the Boundary Commission. The Akali Dal and other Sikh organizations subsequently channelled their energies into rousing the Sikhs to bring pressure on the Boundary Commission. On 8 July, a province-wide protest day was organized by the Sikhs to greet Sir Cyril Radcliffe's arrival in India. Reports were received that the Sikhs were making active preparations for resistance, and an oath to resist was being taken.[88] These activities were evidently carried out with the intention to impress the Boundary Commission that 'any partition that did not secure the integrity and

solidarity of the Sikhs would be unacceptable and would create a difficult situation'.[89]

As was shown in Chapter Three, Sikh representatives submitted a lengthy memorandum to the Boundary Commission, arguing for the inclusion into eastern Punjab of portions of several Muslim-majority districts, including significant portions of Lahore, Lyallpur, Gujranwala and Sialkot. They claimed that these areas should rightfully be given to the Sikhs, in consideration of the land revenue paid by Sikh peasants who owned lands there, and because of the location of historical and religious sites.[90]

The Governor's office in Lahore was flooded with calls from Sikh representatives, asking that Nankana Sahib, the Sikhti shrine, the birthplace of the founder of the faith Guru Nanak, be conceded to the community, at least one canal system from Montgomery district to be left in eastern Punjab, and arrangements made to transfer Sikhs from western Punjab into eastern Punjab. In one meeting with the Governor, Giani Kartar Singh broke down and cried, which Jenkins noted 'was the nearest thing to an ultimatum yet given on behalf of the Sikhs'.[91] Despite such emotional appeals, the Sikhs were invariably told that there was little the British could do for them. Partition had been conceded at their request; the fate of the community now hung in the balance waiting the award of the Boundary Commission.

Meanwhile, civic order in the Punjab was crumbling rapidly. Communal unrest was particularly rife in the districts of Amritsar and Lahore. In a fortnight in May, communal clashes resulted in more than a thousand casualties.[92] Having been caught unawares during earlier riots, the Sikhs were determined to be prepared this time. The Akali Dal began organizing guards to protect their holy places. Sikh *jathas* were organized, militias strengthened and weapons stockpiled.[93] The Akali Sena and Shahidi Jatha, two private armies, went on a recruiting drive and established branches in all Sikh villages throughout the Punjab.[94]

Meanwhile, on 18 July 1947, the Indian Independence Act was passed by the British parliament. The transfer of power had been effected, but the settlement of the boundary in the Punjab had been postponed. This naturally caused tremendous confusion to the Sikhs, especially those in the Muslimmajority districts. They were not sure if they were now on Pakistan or Indian territory. As confusion, fear and anxiety set in, 'the alert went from one Sikh settlement to the next'.[95] Frustrated by the failure of their leaders at the negotiating table and craving for revenge upon the Muslims, Sikhs started to make plans to face partition on their own terms. This time they had resolved that they were not going to be caught off guard.

The British received intelligence indicating plans for large scale violence directed against the Muslims in eastern Punjab, while in western Punjab, Sikh saboteurs, mainly ex-soldiers trained in explosives and firearms, were reportedly producing bombs to blow up trains and destroy canal headworks.[96] Intelligence reports even implicated Master Tara Singh in plots to blow up trains and assassinate Jinnah during the latter's inauguration as the Governor-General of Pakistan on 14 August.[97]

Mountbatten had received early warnings of the intentions of the Sikhs. Pamphlets had been circulating amongst the Sikhs, telling them to exact revenge on the Muslims and appealing for contributions to a 'war fund'.[98] Evan Jenkins, Governor of the Punjab, had repeatedly warned Mountbatten that the Sikhs were getting ready for a showdown with the Muslims.[99] Despite these warnings, Mountbatten chose to do nothing. He decided not to aggravate matters by arresting suspected Sikh leaders at this juncture, preferring to pin his hopes on the Punjab Boundary Force.[100] As events turned out, though, the 23,000-strong Boundary Force could do little against the dispersed but coordinated attacks by Sikh *jathas* on Muslim villages and unescorted Muslim refugees fleeing across the frontier.[101] These well-organized jathas operated almost with impunity in the new border areas of Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Hoshiarpur and Jullundur.[102]

In August 1947, it was quite clear that the Sikhs had put themselves in a corner. Driven by uncertainty about Muslim intentions towards minorities, should Punjab become a part of Pakistan, the Sikhs had demanded a partition of the Punjab. However, when partition had been accepted and endorsed by the British, the Congress and the Muslim League, the Sikhs found that their community actually stood to lose most from a division of the Punjab. Still, there was a way out for them: negotiate for a deal with the Muslim League under which non-Punjabi speaking areas would be left to Hindustan, while the rest of the Punjab, with the Sikh community intact, would be incorporated into Pakistan. However, despite the counsel and effort of their British sympathizers, the Sikhs had refused to strike a deal with the Muslim League. The last hope of salvaging the integrity of the Sikh community was now left to the departing British as they would decide where the boundary between east and west Punjab would lie. The distribution of the Sikhs across any likely dividing line, however, negated the possibility of preserving the unity of the community, and while such negotiations were going on, Akali propaganda continued to keep tempers within the community inflamed. Many of them seemed convinced that, sooner or later, they would have to fight to protect what they deemed to be their rights. In the countryside across the Punjab the Sikhs got organized to strike when the opportunity came.

Post-1947 conundrums

With the announcement of the Radcliffe Award, half the Sikh community, together with large tracts of their valuable farm lands and several holy shrines, found themselves on the side of the border that became Pakistan. The Sikhs had agreed to partition as a desperate measure to prevent the whole of the Punjab from being absorbed into the Muslim state of Pakistan, and in the event paid a heavy price for that decision. Communal violence, displacement and mass migration accompanied the political confusion that followed. Tens of thousands of Sikhs were killed in the communal violence that erupted in the anarchic weeks of August-September 1947, and many more became refugees, as they fled their homes for the safety of East Punjab. The mass migrations of the Sikhs out of the western districts of Punjab

were driven essentially by fear. News of the dreadful slaughter of Sikhs and Hindus by Muslims had reached their ears, and they were fearful that they would be the next victims. When official agencies such as the Military Evacuation Organization were activated to arrange the movement of evacuees across the border and to offer them protection *en route*, the migration of non-Muslims out of West Punjab turned into a flood.[103]

Penderel Moon has suggested that while fear and danger had prompted the migration of the Sikhs from western Punjab, there was, hidden as the original source of the impulse, a 'rational objective' behind the Sikh migratory movements. This factor', he has argued, 'was none other than the determination of the Akali leaders to ensure the survival of the Sikhs as a compact, coherent, undivided community'.[104] According to Moon, Akali propaganda had, as far back as 1942, spoken of the need for the Sikhs to preserve their cohesion as a community. 'When, therefore, Pakistan became inescapable and the Mountbatten plan for dividing the Punjab—and so the Sikhs—was announced, [the Sikhs] accepted it...[and] privily perfected their own plans for Sikh concentration'.[105]

Whether the Sikh migration from West Punjab was spontaneous and instinctive, or prompted by a calculated rational motivation, as Moon has suggested, partition fundamentally altered the political configuration in East Punjab by bringing about their concentration on the Indian side of the border. With the Muslims all but removed from East Punjab, now known as Punjab (I), the Sikhs by 1951 (when the first Census took place after partition) constituted about 35 per cent of the state's population, while the Hindus now became the dominant majority, making up almost 61 per cent of the population.[106] Although a substantial minority community in East Punjab, the Sikhs had lost that critical role they had always played as a balancing force between the Hindus and the Muslims in pre-partition Punjab. According to the census of 1941, the Sikhs had comprised only 13 per cent of the population of the undivided province. Consequently, although the Sikhs had increased their proportion in the population of East Punjab, the need to safeguard their political interests remained a lingering concern, this time against perceived fears of domination by the Hindus, who outnumbered them almost two to one.

Soon after partition, Sikh members of the Punjab Legislative Assembly submitted to the Constituent Assembly, then framing the constitution of independent India, a memorandum demanding that the Sikhs be given special communal representation 'to the extent of 50 per cent in the Punjab legislature and 40 per cent in government services'.[107] The memorandum further demanded that, if these arrangements were not possible, the Sikhs should be allowed to form a separate province comprising the districts in which they formed a majority.[108] However, in a free India still reeling from the trauma of partition, the Sikh demands for separate communal political representation to be written into the Indian Constitution or for a separate province were disregarded by the Constituent Assembly. The Sikhs found that Nehru, committed to establishing a secular state in India, was reluctant to grant weighting and separate electorates to Sikhs or

Muslim minorities, believing that such political devices 'did little good for the minorities but only created separatist tendencies'.[109]

Failing to receive any sort of assurance from the central government, the Sikh leadership, who felt that the community was owed a debt for the tragedy they had suffered as a result of partition, began reviving their old demand for a Sikh state, and started a campaign seeking to re-draw Punjab's boundaries again, to create a territorial unit in which the Sikhs could be a majority. Akali leaders claimed that they had been promised that the Sikhs would be given a compact region of their own, in recognition of their special status and the sacrifices that they had made in independent India during partition. No documents exist, however, to support such a claim.[110] The creation of a Sikh majority state within the Indian Union, the Akali Dal argued, was the best solution for preserving a Sikh cultural identity and ensuring their political leverage as a community.

In February 1948, Master Tara Singh asserted that the Sikhs wanted a 'province where [they] can safeguard [their] culture and tradition.'[111] The Akali leadership was, however, well aware that a 'second division of the Punjab along communal lines would be totally unacceptable to the government of India', and consequently cloaked their demand for a Sikh majority province by calling for a state on the basis of Punjabi language and culture.

The Akali Dal presented its case for a Punjabi-speaking state to be formed by the amalgamation of the Punjabi-speaking districts with PEPSU (Patiala and the East Punjab States Union), to the States Reorganization Commission established by the Government of India in 1953. Despite fairly widespread pressure by the Akali Dal, the Commission rejected the demand for a Punjabi *suba*, on the 'ground that a minimum measure of agreement necessary for making a change did not exist'.[112]

The demand for the Punjabi *suba* spanned some two decades. During this period, it met with resistance from the Punjabi Hindus who saw in the scheme an attempt to establish a Sikh-dominated Punjab. Within the Sikh community, the demand drew varied responses, conditioned essentially by the intense inter-factional rivalry among different Sikh political groups and personalities. The Government of India, which regarded the demand for a Sikh state, although couched in linguistic terms, as running counter to the principles of a secular state, continued to resist the Akali demand.

In March 1966, however, the Central government finally relented. Following a change in the leadership of the Akali Dal and after the 1965 IndoPakistan War in which Sikh soldiers played a valiant role and the Sikh population in the Punjab showed strong support, the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi acceded to the longstanding Sikh demand. The Punjab State Reorganization Bill of September 1966 provided for a trifurcation of Punjab (I). The southern districts, mainly Hindi-speaking and predominantly Hindu, were detached to form the new state of Haryana. In the north, the Hindispeaking districts were merged with the neighbouring state of Himachal Pradesh and what remained was the core of the

Sikh dominated districts which were re-constituted and now form the present day state of Punjab in the Indian Union.

Thus the Sikhs seemed finally to have achieved a state in which they constituted a majority.[113] However, far from assuaging Sikh anxieties, the unfinished business of Punjabi *suba* created further opportunities for the Akali Dal to reinforce the impression that the Sikhs had remained disadvantaged. To begin with, there was unhappiness that several Punjabi districts had not been included in Punjabi *suba,* despite being Punjabi-speaking territories. Further, the status of the capital city of Chandigarh, which became the shared capital between Punjab and Haryana, as well as the issue of sharing river waters that run through the two states, remained unresolved.

These unresolved issues arising from the reorganization of the Punjab, coupled with the Government of India's centralizing impulses as manifest in such issues as procurement of wheat, water resources and power, generated disaffection among the Sikhs and fanned the belief that New Delhi was attempting to impose a 'political brake' on the economic and social advancement of the community. This led, throughout the 1970s, to a persistent campaign for greater autonomy for the Punjab. The tension between the centre and the state remained unabated and would lead eventually to the 'Punjab crisis' of the 1980s.

Conclusion

In retrospect, throughout the 1940s, as the reality of the British departure loomed large, the Sikhs, led mainly by the Shiromani Akali Dal, sought various ways to safeguard their political future. Their virulent rhetoric against Pakistan was prompted less by their innate hostility to the abstract idea of a Muslim state than by a genuine fear of becoming a politically subjugated minority in a Muslim or Hindu dominated post-independence Punjab. From 1940 to 1947 Sikh responses, shaped by ideological, factional and personality factors, swung from one position to another as the community itself struggled to keep abreast of the rapidly changing political situation, not only in the Punjab but also at the all-India level. The Baldev-Sikander Pact of 1942, the concept of 'Azad Punjab' developed in 1943, the Akali-Congress-Unionist electoral alliance of 1945–46, the Akali-Muslim League negotiations of 1946, and finally the acceptance of partition in the wake of the collapse of the Khizar ministry in March 1947, all attest to the attempts of Sikh leaders to secure sufficient political safeguards for the community as the curtain began to fall on the British Raj.

Having decided on partition, the Sikhs found that what was to ultimately determine their fate was a counting of heads. The brute force of demography not only sidelined the Sikhs, but also presented them with a boundary award that split the community across the Great Divide of India and Pakistan. Faced with this awful verdict, the Sikhs responded to partition of their homeland by initiating and participating in the widespread communal violence that erupted in 1947.

Yet the partition of 1947 failed to allay Sikh fears of being a subjugated minority. In a truncated Punjab within India in which the Sikhs now formed a sizeable minority, the old fears of Muslim dominance were replaced by concerns about Hindu majority control. As they had done in the early 1940s, the Sikhs first asked for political safeguards from the Nehru government, and when these were not forthcoming, then raised the demand for a Sikh state, couched in the rhetoric of a Punjabi-speaking linguistic unit. For two decades the Akali Dal campaigned for a compact region for the Sikhs, and finally succeeded in 1966 in securing the creation of a Sikh majority province. This did not, however, totally allay Sikh misgivings of their position as a deprived minority in India. Rather, prompted by the persistent perception that the Sikhs and the Punjab were not getting their due share from the Centre, Sikh politicians returned to their familiar theme of demanding greater autonomy as well as protection of minority and communal interests.

5

From displacement todevelopment

East Punjab countryside after partition, c. 1947–67

Introduction

In April 1951, more than three years after the traumatic events of partition, Diwan Chaman Lall, a pre-eminent public figure from Lahore and a parliamentarian and diplomat in independent India, was asked to speak on the subject of The Fate of the Punjabee Nation'. In his speech he declared:

> We have not only been uprooted—seven million of us—but all that we cherished has been destroyed, the sanctity and refuge of our homes, the little soil most of us owned, whitened in the past with the sacred bones of our ancestors, the tradition of the mohalla, the city, the village, the biradari and the leadership—all things which were part and parcel of our existence, nay, which made our existence endurable and pleasant and happy—all that is finished for us. Like the fallen autumn leaves in the wind or bits of stray newspaper flying hither and thither in the blown dust, those who have come away safe in limb and mind are without any bearings and without any roots.[1]

His speech echoed the sentiments of loss and despondency, which most Punjabis experienced after partition. His words, in particular, had a ring of truth for the several million refugees who were faced with the challenge of rebuilding their lives and overcoming the diminished circumstances in which they found themselves. However, as these words were being spoken, processes of reconstruction and rebuilding were well under way to restore to the truncated province some of its lost glory. This chapter makes an attempt to study how these processes of reconstruction and resettlement worked in East Punjab in the years following partition. The discussion focuses on the situation in the countryside, as the vast majority of the refugees were agriculturists and their resettlement was a problem of an enormous magnitude that needed to be resolved urgently if a social upheaval was to be avoided. This chapter, therefore, provides an account of how this problem of rural rehabilitation was addressed and the manner in which the East Punjab countryside was resettled after the upheaval of partition. As problems of urban rehabilitation were of a somewhat different character and complexity, they

are not being addressed here: these are taken up in Chapter Seven which conveys a sense of the manner in which partition transformed the urban landscape of north India.

Post-partition East Punjab countryside

Although communal violence began to intrude into the Punjab countryside several months before partition actually took place, and by March 1947 the scale and ferocity of the violence was such that several thousands in the Lahore and Rawalpindi districts were forced to leave their villages for refugee camps in towns, there was still very little talk of migration among the agricultural classes. To them the idea of leaving their hearths and homes appeared to be fantastic and incredible. From several accounts it becomes apparent that for most of the rural population which was displaced, the traumatic period of uncertainty of whether to go or not was relatively short and the ultimate decision was often made abruptly. M.S. Randhawa of the Indian Civil Service, who in 1949 became the Director General of Rehabilitation in East Punjab, recalls that:

> the fatal decision was not delayed as the ring of death and destruction closed in from all sides.... The hand that was sowing the seed in the fields in the morning was hurriedly packing in the afternoon.... When at the time of evacuation the farmers yoked their bullocks to the carts which formed their miles long caravans they looked wistfully at their houses, granaries full of wheat, and orchards of oranges which they had planted with so much care.[2]

When their world turned upside down, the refugees, especially in the villages, were completely unprepared for the enormous calamity of displacement which had befallen them.[3]

To East Punjab they headed for safety and rehabilitation, but East Punjab was not well positioned to offer help and succour. Land for cultivation was in short supply in that recently truncated province, and its economic resources were weak compared with those of West Punjab, which made the problem of rural rehabilitation even more daunting. Partition left East Punjab with severe disabilities in the areas of irrigation, roads, commerce and so on.[4] Perhaps the most serious was the disadvantage it faced in irrigation.[5] West Punjab retained the prosperous canal colonies which included about 70 per cent of the fertile canal irrigation tracts of undivided Punjab and the huge revenue that accrued from these. West Punjab also retained 55 per cent of the population, 62 per cent of the land area and controlled over 69 per cent of the income of undivided Punjab. The best cotton and wheat producing areas of the canal colonies went to Pakistan and, in terms of food-grains alone, East Punjab was faced with an annual deficit of 35,000 tonnes.

While the 'exchange of population' had almost been even between the two parts of the Punjab, there existed a wide disparity in the land that became available for cultivation in East Punjab. As against the sixty-seven *lakh* acres of land abandoned

by Hindu and Sikh landholders of West Punjab, only forty-seven *lakh* acres of evacuee land were available in Indian Punjab, including the princely states.[6] However, what was still worse from the point of view of East Punjab was the great disparity that existed in the quality of land and the lack of irrigation facilities there.[7] The Hindu and Sikh refugees had left behind forty-three *lakh* acres of irrigated land, against which existed only thirteen *lakh* acres of irrigated land evacuated by the Muslims of East Punjab.[8]

The rural refugee population, which came from West Pakistan, was made up of a number of groups and castes. It was estimated that one out of every five rural refugees who migrated into East Punjab came from the canal colonies, while the other four came from other areas of West Punjab, Sind and the North West Frontier Province. Out of these four, two were self-cultivators, while two belonged to non-cultivating groups which possessed land. The refugees from the canal colonies included the Doaba Sikh Jats, the Kambohs, Dogras and, not the least, the Jat Sikhs who were traditionally regarded as industrious, sturdy and capable farmers. Among the non-canal colonists were the Jat Sikhs of the Manjha region, the Wirk Jats from Sheikhupura, the Manns from Gujranwalla, the Bawjas and Kehlons from Sialkot, the Rai Sikhs from Montgomery and the Sainis from Sialkot. A significantly large section of the refugees also came from the non-cultivating groups of Khattris and Aroras, who were scattered widely across the Punjab as shop-keepers and money-lenders.[9]

As we have seen, almost 20 per cent of the rural refugees came from the canal colonies. Here it may be worthwhile to recall briefly the story of the canal colonies in the years between 1885 and the 1940s when a massive expansion of agriculture took place in West Punjab due to the construction of canals in the districts of Lyallpur, Montgomery, Lahore, Multan and Sargodha.[10]This led to large-scale colonization of land by the 'martial races' and, in turn, to the creation of what Imran Ali calls 'a truly hydraulic society, whose patterns of dominance and subordination are pervaded by the fact that the water that sustains cropping comes not from the heavens but from human agency and human control.' (Ali 1989:viii) This expansion of agriculture triggered a process of migratory settlement in the districts of West Punjab and provided 'a major demographic outlet' to the less fertile areas of East Punjab.

From the 1890s onwards, in particular, large groups moved from East Punjab to the canal colonies to take advantage of the unprecedented growth in agricultural production in what became one of the largest irrigation systems in the world. Ali estimates that from 1885 till the end of British rule, the amount of canal-irrigated land, the bulk of which was situated in West Punjab, increased from under thirty *lakh* acres to around 140 *lakh* acres. He shows that from 1891 to 1941 the overall average rate of growth of population for the entire province was 52 per cent. However, in the case of the canal colonies, the rates of population increases were significantly higher. For instance, the population of Jhang, Multan, Shahpur and Sheikhupura districts rose by over 100 per cent, while that of Montgomery by 219 per cent and that of Lyallpur district by a massive 2,215 per cent.[11]

The canal colonists thus had a history of migration and had proved their mettle as pioneers by breaking virgin soil and transforming it into what Malcolm Darling called 'one of the richest agricultural tracts in the whole of India, perhaps even in Asia'. Because large-scale migrations took place between the late 1880s and the 1920s, there remained a very large number among the partition refugees who had themselves been a part of the earlier wave of migrations or whose fathers had moved from East Punjab for the canal colonies. They had, therefore, been the great beneficiaries of the agricultural growth encouraged by irrigation. It was thus a great irony that they were in 1947 forced to abandon the prosperity for which they had worked hard, and found themselves returning to their ancestral villages in East Punjab as refugees.[12]

Early relief measures

Even while refugees were pouring into East Punjab in the latter part of 1947, it became apparent that the two-way migrations would be permanent. Initially, the contingency plans that were drawn up by administrators addressed problems of decongesting relief camps where most refugees were sheltered and dispersing them not only within East Punjab but also in the surrounding provinces and princely states.[13] It was decided on 15 September 1947 that rural refugees should be temporarily settled on evacuee land and that each family be given a plough unit, regardless of its holdings in Pakistan.[14] It was also decided that refugees from particular districts of Pakistan should be settled together, as far as possible, in districtwise clusters. These steps, it was hoped, would avoid over-population in the border districts and would lead to a somewhat even distribution within the province. These measures were widely publicized, and even before a large number of refugees actually crossed the boundary line fixed at partition, they were told which particular district of East Punjab they should go to for temporary settlement. It thus became possible, at least temporarily, for displaced persons to be surrounded by their kinsmen and village folk and this contributed in some measure to their 'psychological rehabilitation'.[15]

At the same time it was also decided that the temporary allotment of evacuee land should be made on the basis of groups of families, rather than single households or individuals.[16] During the migrations there had been a tendency among friends, relatives and kinsmen to collect together in small groups to cope with the prevailing insecurity and uncertainty. Relief administrators found it beneficial to deal with groups rather than individuals. Working in groups also created a sense of *biradiri* and provided a semblance of security to the uprooted, in their new and insecure surroundings. It also enabled individuals and families to pool together family labour, bullocks, ploughs and other agricultural implements.[17] This temporary allotment of evacuee land came as a measure of relief for the rural refugees. Its unique feature was that no discrimination was made between landholders and tenants who were entitled to equal treatment. A large number of landless labourers and village artisans

also got possession of land under this scheme, and this led to a certain levelling of hierarchies in rural society.

Mere allotment of land was, however, not enough either for restoring the shattered agricultural economy of the Punjab or for rehabilitating the refugees. The cultivators who had been put on land still needed help, and their first need was to buy food which was no longer easily available in rural areas. Since it took almost six months for the raising of their first crops, they needed cash help to buy food. They were therefore provided with food loans, which were disbursed at the rate of Rs 3½ per adult and Rs 2 per child per month. However, due to the dislocation of trade, conditions of scarcity widely existed in the countryside. Relief administrators, therefore, had to open retail shops in the larger villages for the supply of wheat. This help was provided until 1949 by which time Rs 8.2 million had been disbursed in the form of food subsidies. Finance was also provided for the purchase of bullocks for cultivation, and camels in the dry districts of Hissar and Gurgaon. In all, over Rs 11 million were disbursed from 1947 to 1951 to enable the farmers to acquire livestock. Assistance was given too for the purchase of fodder for animals, and for seeds which were made available through government seed depots. Likewise, credit was provided for the purchase of agricultural implements, Persian wheels and well gears. Artisans such as cobblers, carpenters, ironsmiths, weavers and leather workers received loans for re-establishing their old trades and restoring the supply of goods produced by them.[18]

The refugees also needed help in the area of housing. The partition disturbances had caused such extensive damage to houses, public buildings and wells that the authorities were forced to 'regard housing as a national problem of utmost urgency'.[19] It was estimated that 34 per cent of evacuee homes in East Punjab villages had been damaged beyond repair while only 47 per cent were intact. In the case of wells, only 62 per cent were found to be in working order.[20] Loans and grants were given to villagers to undertake repair of wells and to reconstruct houses. In overall terms, all these measures went a long way towards rebuilding the rural economy of the Punjab.[21]

A field survey undertaken in early 1948 in a village near Ludhiana provides us with a snapshot of the conditions that prevailed in the East Punjab countryside following the temporary allotment of land.[22] This survey conducted at Jamalpur village on the outskirts of Ludhiana city highlighted the enormous difficulties which the refugee settlers experienced in the new lands allotted to them. According to the survey, the village of Jamalpur had 2,536 acres of evacuee land, which was distributed under the group allotment scheme among 189 families resulting in an average holding of 12.67 acres. However, as only 1,600 acres were of cultivable quality, in actual terms the average size of holding per family came to only 8.4 acres. As each holding was typically made up of four types of land—*bet chachi, bet darani, budhi and dhatur*—it was of uneven quality and was scattered in several places.

The survey further reported that group allotment created problems of cohesion and conflict of interest among the members. It also led to difficulties in the equitable distribution of workloads and the sharing of responsibility. Additionally, the survey

found a severe shortage of livestock, which greatly hampered the cultivation effort.[23] Overall, it reported conditions of extreme hardship and urged the Government to provide a fuller supply of livestock and agricultural implements and to evolve 'some effective machinery of self-administration within each group' to ensure the success of temporary allotment.

From the findings of this survey and from the thousands of petitions which it had received from the refugees, the Government of East Punjab knew that temporary allotment of land could only be a crisis response, and that longer-term measures for rehabilitation were urgently needed.[24] The Government wanted to decongest the refugee camps which had sprung up in practically every town. Moreover, there existed the threat of a serious food crisis, especially at a time when the Government was faced with the direct additional responsibility of providing food for the several *lakhs* of refugees who were sheltered in its relief camps. Government officials were naturally anxious that the fields abandoned by the Muslims in East Punjab should not lie uncultivated during the autumn and they, therefore, implemented the scheme of temporary allotment on a war footing.[25]

Towards permanent resettlement: 'standard acres' and 'graded cuts'

When the initial allotment of land was made to refugees, no consideration was given to their previous land-holdings, and it soon became clear that a revised scheme had to be formulated for the long-term settlement of the refugees. In February 1948 the East Punjab Government announced its intention of formulating a new scheme which aimed at a semi-permanent allotment of land.[26] However, different approaches existed to the problem of resettlement, and at least two divergent viewpoints were presented before the Government. There was one school of thought which argued that, given the grave crisis which Punjab faced after partition, the only real solution to the problem of rehabilitation lay in redistributing evacuee land to the refugees based on the principle of co-operative farming. According to this viewpoint, the Government should disregard, in view of the shortfall which existed in the supply of land and the prevailing circumstances in the province, the refugees' claims of compensation based on their previous ownership of land. Sardar Mangal Singh, a former member of the Central Legislative Assembly and a prominent politician, expounded this viewpoint as follows:

> We should keep in view that this resettlement should not be undertaken only as an act of compensation to the land owners from Pakistan, but we should proceed to do this job in the spirit of rebuilding afresh our whole agricultural economy.... We must plan our new life and thus rebuild a new Punjab on broad principles of social justice and equity.[27]

As opposed to this, most landholders were of the view that the principle of compensation should be the basis of resettlement, and in future schemes of land allotment, the extent of their earlier holdings must determine the size of the land to be allotted to them.[28] While a large number of refugees were in possession of evidence regarding their lands, the Government had either no revenue records or only incomplete records for most of the villages which had been evacuated during the partition massacres. In such a situation the only source of information on land ownership and claims to land were the refugees themselves, who were, therefore, invited to submit claims upon which a permanent scheme of resettlement could be drawn.[29]

The filing of these claims took place during March–April 1949, and in all 517,401 households or families submitted claims.[30] Inevitably, in the absence of revenue records, these claims contained a measure of exaggeration. To get the true picture, it was decided to convene *panchayats* of particular villages. By a due process of enquiry, the revenue staff was finally able to obtain a fairly accurate picture of the precise extent of land ownership.[31] Randhawa, who was closely involved with the process of rural rehabilitation, recalls that 'in this work of verification of land claims, the panchayats played an extremely useful role' and 'displayed their traditional honesty and fearlessness'.[32]

By the middle of 1949 relief administrators in East Punjab had done the necessary groundwork to formulate the blueprint of a scheme of permanent rehabilitation.[33] Central to this scheme was the concept of the 'standard acre'.[34] This concept was devised to evolve a common measure that could facilitate the allotment of the land in East Punjab where there was great diversity in terms of soil, irrigation, rainfall and productivity. In view of this diversity there existed a compelling need to evolve a common measure to facilitate the allocation of land. It was with this in view that the concept was evolved by Sardar Tarlok Singh of the Indian Civil Service, who was Punjab's first Director-General of Rehabilitation.[35]

The 'standard acre' represented a unit of value based on the productivity of land. An acre which could yield ten to eleven *maunds* of wheat was given the value of sixteen *annas* and termed one 'standard acre'.[36] The physical area of the 'standard acre' thus varied, and every piece of cultivable land in rural Punjab was given a valuation in *annas*, so that it could be measured easily in 'standard acre' terms.[37] In the dry districts of Hissar and Gurgaon where the valuation of one acre was only four *annas*, four physical acres went to make a 'standard acre', while in the canal-irrigated parts of the province where the value of an acre was full sixteen *annas*, an ordinary physical acre was the equivalent of a 'standard acre'.[38]

Another feature of the scheme was the attempt, as far as possible, to collectively resettle persons from particular areas in Pakistan in specific districts.[39] Many canal colonists who had originally migrated from East to West Punjab were thus able to return to their ancestral districts. Landholders from Lahore and Montgomery were settled in Ferozepur, while those from Rawalpindi, Sheikhupura and Gujranwalla were settled in Karnal. The refugees from Shahpur and Gujarat were allotted land in Ambala, while those from Multan, in the south-eastern districts of present day

Table 5.1 Basis of permanent allotment of land to refugees

Grade (Standard acres)	*Rate of cut (%)*	*Net allotment (Standard acres)*
Up to 10	25	7.5
10 to 30	30	21.5
30 to 40	40	27.5
40 to 60	55	36.5
60 to 100	70	48.5
100 to 150	75	61
150 to 200	80	71
200 to 250	85	78.5
250 to 500	90	103.5
500 to 1000	95	128.5

Source: Randhawa, *Out of the Ashes:* 99

Haryana. Those from Jhang found themselves being settled in Rohtak, while refugees from Dera Gazi Khan and Mianwali were given land in the dry district of Gurgaon. Similarly, provision of land for people from Sialkot was made in Hoshiarpur, Gurdaspur and Amritsar districts.

There was a great urge among the refugees to re-create their old village conditions and to revive the social ties which had bound them together.[40] Although this demand for villagewise allotment was incorporated in the new scheme of permanent settlement, practical considerations nevertheless dictated that, as far as possible, those already settled on temporary allotments should not be disturbed. Administrative expediency dictated this freezing of temporary allotments which became a sort of guiding principle in the new scheme.[41] While the refugees were broadly settled in districts, and within these districts, as far as possible, in villages, village communities, as they had existed before the partition, could never really be fully re-created and their disruption was a serious social and cultural loss to Punjab.

Another key feature of the new scheme was the application of a concept called 'graded cuts'. Underlying this concept was the desire of resettlement administrators, not to provide direct compensation to the refugees, but to enable them to rehabilitate themselves economically and socially. They were inspired by the ideal of creating peasant proprietorship and encouraging the agriculturists to work hard to stand on their own feet. They therefore formulated a scheme of 'graded cuts' incorporating the concept of the 'standard acre'.[42] According to this scheme, refugees were classified on the basis of their holdings in Pakistan expressed in 'standard acre' terms. Each category was then subjected to a scale of 'graded cuts', based on which the net entitlement of the refugee was arrived at. The scale of 'graded cuts' was worked out as shown in Table 5.1.

By late 1949 the scheme of permanent allotment was ready for implementation, and in the winter months of that year 250,000 allotment orders were issued.[43] The relationship between the cultivator and his land is, at the best of times an intense

one, and, not surprisingly, a very large number of applications were received containing appeals and requests for redressal of grievances.[44] Efforts were made to consider these sympathetically. Subsequently, allotment orders were revised, whenever possible, and the actual delivery of land was completed in early 1951.

Long-term effects

The vast scale upon which these land transfers took place had long-term repercussions for the rural society of the Punjab and Haryana region. According to Randhawa the innovation of 'graded cuts' merely represented a compromise between the extreme socialist views, which totally ignored the ownership of land and emphasized only the rehabilitation aspect, and the views of the displaced landholders themselves who desired full compensation for the land which they had been forced to abandon. None the less, the changes which took place as a result of the massive land redistribution were very significant. Among other things, they led to a levelling of large holdings and the eradication of absentee landlordism. Very large land-holdings in the East Punjab countryside were almost eliminated. A few examples of this may be considered. The largest landowner among the displaced persons was Mrs Vidyawanti who lost a total area of 11,582 acres in thirty-five villages, in lieu of which she got an allotment of only 835 acres in Karnal district, while Trilok Chand, another big landlord, left behind 5,328 acres in Lyallpur district for which he was given only 313 acres. Big landlords were thus substantially dispossessed of their large holdings.

The middle farmers also suffered, particularly with respect to the quality of land upon which they were settled. The planners of the scheme knew from their past experience that it was the middle farmer, with an average holding of ten to thirty 'standard acres', who represented the best skills of the Punjabi peasantry and that he, therefore, needed to be protected. The cuts worked very harshly on the resources of the small farmers. In overall terms the new scheme acted as a sort of 'shock therapy' to the agricul-turists.[45] It forced the large big farmers to take to cultivation themselves rather than live as absentee landlords, and made the middle and small farmers more industrious. At the same time, it provided an opportunity for mobility at the lower end of the spectrum, as efforts were made to give small plots to even the poorest rural households.[46]

In a technical sense, the rural refugees in East Punjab had been settled upon land on a permanent basis by late 1951, and we can conveniently conclude the Punjab story with that year.[47] However, these land transfers had far-reaching consequences which we must consider. What follows, therefore, is a survey in very broad terms of some of the developments of the 1950s and 1960s.

Consolidation of holdings

The immense scale of property transfers from 1947 to 1951 gave an irreversible impetus to another development which again had a far-reaching result, that of

consolidation of agricultural holdings or *chakbandi*. Before partition, agricultural holdings in the Punjab, as in other parts of the country, were scattered and fragmented.[48] A farmer owning a few acres of land may have his holdings scattered in ten or twelve tiny pieces. In some cases the plots were so narrow that, because of insufficient space, even bullocks could not be harnessed to plough them. Much land was also wasted in embankments and boundaries. Canal irrigation was impossible on scattered plots and wells could not be sunk because of their small size. The laws of succession were such that, after each generation, further subdivision of holdings occurred.

This process had continued for several generations and had produced severe fragmentation of agricultural holdings. Although the British had tried to promote consolidation for several decades, and in 1936 had even enacted the Punjab Consolidation Act, progress in this area had been extremely slow. By 1948, only about 700,000 acres of land had been consolidated. However, the disruption caused by the partition and the pressing need to rebuild the rural economy of the Punjab necessitated that the work of consolidation of holdings be speeded up, and indeed undertaken on a war-footing.[49] As a result, the East Punjab Holdings: Consolidation and Fragmentation Act was enacted in 1948 which introduced an element of compulsion.[50] Thereafter, progress in consolidation work was rapid.[51] In 1951–2 alone over 1.7 *lakh* acres of land was consolidated, and by 1965–6 over 220.84 *lakh* acres of land had been consolidated across the Punjab.[52]

The manner in which consolidation of holdings transformed the Punjab countryside can be seen in Map 5.1 which shows the changed landscape of a village before and after consolidation. From the two maps the advantages which consolidation offered are fairly obvious: it enabled villages to reclaim waste land and install tube-wells. It was reckoned that the increase in agricultural production from consolidation alone, without involving any change in technology, was in the region of 25 per cent. In particular consolidation enabled a large area of waste land to be brought under cultivation and be given to landless groups, Harijans and village artisans.[53]

The most beneficial effect of consolidation was, however, that it enabled farmers to sink tube-wells on their holdings. In 1950 Punjab had practically no tube-wells, but by 1978 their number had risen to over 570,000. Consolidation of holdings therefore led to significant changes in the pattern of irrigation, as farmers were able to use sub-soil water for cultivation, and were also able to enjoy the benefits of canal irrigation. In addition, the total cultivated area, which had previously been lost in embankments and field-bunds, increased substantially. All these changes provided a sound basis for the introduction of intensive agriculture in the Punjab. By 1969 both Punjab and Haryana had already achieved 100 per cent targets in the consolidation of holdings of their cultivable land.[54]

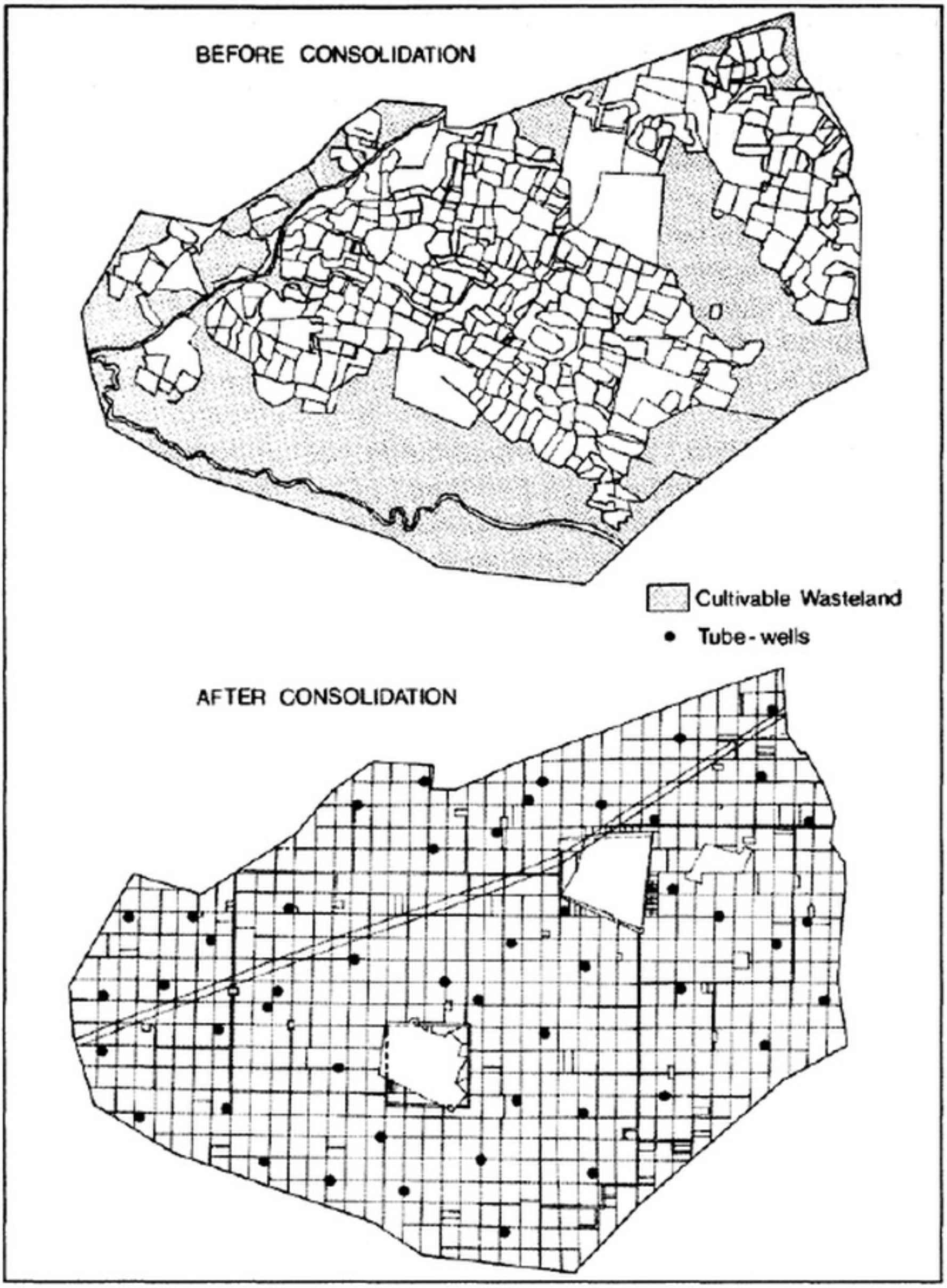
New irrigation infrastructure

A parallel development which took place in the 1950s with far-reaching consequences for agriculture stemmed from the building of the Bhakra-Nangal dam. The idea of the Bhakra project had a long history. In November 1908 Sir Louis Dane, the then Lieutenant Governor of Punjab, had felt that Nangal could be an ideal site for a dam. The first plan in this regard was made in 1911 and later revised in 1919. Following this, in 1927 an expert committee was set up to further examine the question but no real progress could be made. The idea of the Bhakra dam was then revived by the Unionist Party politician Chhotu Ram when in 1938 South-East Punjab faced a severe drought but again nothing happened. Later in 1945–6, detailed feasibility and design studies were carried out, but the idea of the Bhakra dam, at least four decades old, did not even then get off the drawing board. It was only after partition and the consequent displacement of millions of people was it recognized that an ambitious multi-purpose project like the Bhakra dam could help mitigate the sufferings of refugees and facilitate the rehabilitation process.[55] After 1948, the implementation of the Bhakra project was, therefore, undertaken as an urgent task.[56] The construction of the dam, the second highest in the world, took fifteen years, and when it was completed in 1963 it had cost Rs 2,385 million.[57]

Let us briefly consider the tremendous impact which the Bhakra-Nangal project had on the agricultural economy of the region. It provided surface irrigation by means of canals to over 3.5 million acres of land. More importantly though, it created the capacity to supply over 4,000 million units of electricity.[58] The power which became available as a result gave an impetus to the large-scale installation of tube-wells in the whole of the Punjab and Haryana region. It is estimated that by 1990 there were about 7.5 million tube-wells in the country, of which the largest number was concentrated in Punjab and Haryana. Farmers found that tube-well irrigation based on the exploitation of groundwater had many advantages over surface irrigation, as it did not involve expenditure on storage of water and its transport. It avoided the loss of land needed to build canals and distributaries, and saved costly and complicated systems of water distribution and drainage which are needed in canal irrigation. Tube-well irrigation also gave the farmer total control over the availability of water and farmers did not have to depend upon large bureaucracies. Further, the rapid progress of rural electrification played a key role in transforming the economy of the Punjab region. It aided greater mechanization of agriculture, with the farmers relying increasingly upon the use of pumping sets, threshers and fodder-cutters.

Punjab on the threshold of prosperity

From this survey it can be seen that the Punjab countryside staged a remarkably early recovery after the violence and dislocation it had experienced in 1947–8. On the second anniversary of independence-partition, in August 1949, officials were



Map 5.1 Consolidation of agricultural holdings in a Punjab village

reporting that 'a mood of subdued optimism' was prevailing in the province. They claimed that in the past two years:

> a good deal of solid constructive work has been accomplished though we are not yet out of the woods yet. The grave problems confronting the

> province have been tackled to a considerable extent and are nearing solution. The campaign against scarcity of foodgrains has succeeded beyond our most sanguine expectations…. The quasipermanent allotment of land is being effected at a fast pace…. The accelerated construction work at Bhakra and Nangal projects is indeed a land-mark in the history of post partition.[59]

So effective had been government measures at restoring the agricultural economy that the following year the Punjab—which had been reduced to a food deficit region after losing its fertile areas to Pakistan following partition —declared itself to be a food surplus province.[60] This could become possible, to an extent, because the political leadership had shown the determination to implement a scheme of land allotment which aimed, not only at rehabilitating the refugees, but also introducing substantial land reforms which had far-reaching consequences. An influential agricultural economist observes that that the post-1947 land reforms 'resulted in the abolition of "intermediaries", removing thus a major institutional constraint', and paved the way for 'the emergence of self-cultivation as the most dominant mode' of agriculture in the Punjab.[61] Further, the massive public investments made in irrigation infrastructure gave a boost, not only to agricultural productivity, but also to the confidence of the newly-rehabilitated refugee farmers.

From this survey it can be seen that by the early 1960s most rural refugees had not only settled in the Punjab and Haryana region but had also attained a certain level of prosperity.[62] The process of their rehabilitation had transformed the face of agriculture in the Punjab and led to what may be regarded as the earliest and most comprehensive land reforms in India after independence. The immense land transfers which took place due to partition gave rise to new patterns of land-holdings. The concepts of 'standard acre' and 'gradedcuts' ensured that people ended up with economically viable holdings located at single sites which could be used for intensive cultivation. Alongside that was the remarkable progress in the consolidation of fragmented holdings, which led to a substantial increase in agricultural productivity. The overall result was that most farmers ended up with sizes of holdings which permitted economies of scale. The sizes of their holdings also permitted the exploitation of sub-soil irrigation methods in an area of Punjab where canal irrigation was minimal. Furthermore, the Bhakra-Nangal scheme provided means of surface irrigation to an additional 3.5 million acres of land. More importantly, though, it generated electricity which the farmers were able to harness for energizing their tube-wells. All these developments firmly laid the foundations of intensive agriculture in the Punjab.

In this narrative of rural rehabilitation, one last point needs to be made. This relates to the spirit of enterprise and energy displayed by the refugees in rebuilding their lives and restoring their shattered fortunes. Behind the transformation of agriculture in the Punjab lay the tremendous creative energy which the Punjabi farmers displayed after partition. On the third anniversary of independence-partition in August 1950, Dr Gopi Chandra Bhargava, the first Chief Minister of East Punjab, could proclaim that, 'the tragic story of the partition is

now a matter of history'. 'The brave Punjabis', he declared, 'by their 'unremitting toil and steadfastness of purpose…are now pulling themselves together through a unique effort of will'. Bhargava affirmed that 'time has healed many a wound and soothed many a sore', and proudly declared: 'A new Punjab is rising on the ruins of the old'.[63] Others closely associated with rehabilitation work echoed similar views. For instance, Dr Lehna Singh, the East Punjab Rehabilitation Minister, expressed the optimism that with hard work and determination, 'Brave Punjabees can turn dust to gold'.[64] Likewise, P.N.Thapar, ICS, who as the Financial Commissioner of the Punjab Government closely monitored the progress of rehabilitation work, noted in October 1951 that the newly-settled farmers 'are working harder and producing more than they were doing in West Punjab'. He observed that 'a visit today to an average refugee tract fills us with deep admiration for the Punjab peasantry', whom he complimented for 'the robust common sense and the determination…to stand on their own feet again'.[65]

Kusum Nair, who in 1958–9 conducted a field survey of agriculture, found great misery and poverty in the different states of India which she visited, but what struck her was the contentment of the people with their lot. However, in a sharp contrast, during her visits to Punjab she found that the refugee farmers were energetic and restless.[66] It was this restlessness, together with the risk-taking and innovative ability of the refugee farmers, which enabled them to make significant changes in their methods of irrigation and farming.

Thus in 1966–7, when the 'miracle seeds' of the 'Green Revolution' arrived in India, it was in the Punjab that they found fertile fields and farmers with eager faces ready to sow them. Not surprisingly, it was the Punjabi farmers who pioneered the 'Green Revolution' in the Indian subcontinent. The story of the 'Green Revolution' is all too well known to be recounted here.[67] Basically, the production of wheat increased from 11.39 million tonnes in 1966–7 to 16.54 million tonnes in 1967–8, and to 26.40 million tonnes by 1970–1. It continued to increase throughout the 1970s, and in 1978–9 stood at 30.58 million tonnes. However, this prosperity could be achieved by the Punjabis only because they had been driven by the circumstances of partition to effect a fundamental reorganization of their rural society. Between 1952 and 1964–5, in the decade *prior* to the 'Green Revolution', Punjab experienced an average agricultural growth rate of 4.56 per cent as compared to 4.90 per cent during the period 1964–5 to 1981–5, that is, the period *after* the 'Green Revolution'.[68] The remarkably high rate of growth achieved during the 1950s and early 1960s provided the foundations for the dramatic and sustained agricultural growth achieved after the 'Green Revolution' which firmly re-established the Punjab, once again, as the bread-basket of the country. In bringing the Punjab to the threshold of unprecedented rural prosperity, the refugee farmers had undoubtedly played a remarkable role.

Conclusion

In retrospect it would appear that the refugees who came into East Punjab could be settled on land with considerable success. The process of their settlement involved large-scale land transfers which led to the earliest and most comprehensive land reforms that took place in independent India. The reconstruction of the agricultural economy, the creation of an irrigation infrastructure and, above all, the enterprise and energy shown by the refugee farmers laid the foundations of intensive agriculture in East Punjab. In less than two decades, the region stood at the threshold of the unprecedented rural prosperity ushered in by the 'Green Revolution'.

It is important to recognize how distinctive were the developments that took place in East Punjab following partition. The achievements relating to reconstruction and resettlement in East Punjab appear even more remarkable when set against three contexts which were comparable but produced divergent outcomes. The first context is that of land reforms in independent India. The land redistribution measures implemented during the crisis situation which East Punjab faced after partition were unique. They stand in sharp contrast to attempts at land reforms in other states of India, most notably Bihar.[69] Several studies have shown that elsewhere in India the implementation of land reforms proved to be highly problematic and, in many instances, could never fully be carried out. The East Punjab experience of land redistribution and consolidation stands in sharp contrast to the rest of India in this regard.

The second context is provided by the experience of West Punjab in the aftermath of partition, and it is worthwhile to examine the parallel experience of this 'twin' from which East Punjab was separated in 1947. The earlier discussion has shown how in the decades following partition, East Punjab was able to overcome the disadvantages it faced in natural and infrastructural resources, and was substantially able to rebuild its rural economy. Recent research has shown that, in sharp contrast, West Punjab lagged behind in comparative agrarian performance and development.[70] In spite of the fact that West Punjab was more richly endowed at the time of partition, it was overtaken by East Punjab in almost all key areas such as the overall rate of agricultural growth, farm output, degree of mechanization, *per capita* consumption patterns and literacy levels.[71] Undoubtedly, the foundations of the prosperity which East Punjab has enjoyed since the late 1960s were laid in the struggle against the hardships which had accompanied partition.

Finally, it is possible to set this story against another context which relates to the challenge which West Bengal faced after partition in the area of refugee rehabilitation, a theme addressed in detail in Chapter Six, which shows how official attempts to resettle the Bengali refugees failed appallingly.

6

Divided landscapes, fragmentedidentities

East Bengal refugees and their rehabilitation in India, 1947–79

Introduction

The partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 was followed by the forced uprooting of an estimated 18 million people belonging to minorities who sought shelter across the newly-created boundaries in the two nation-states of India and Pakistan. When one considers the major communities that were uprooted from the regions which became a part of Pakistan and sought shelter in India—Sindhis, Sikhs, Bengalis, Punjabis, and North West Frontier Province Hindus—in aggregate terms the largest numbers were of those who came from East Bengal. Yet, it is ironic that accounts of partition have tended to be Punjab-centred and Bengal has not received the scholarly attention it deserves.

This chapter makes an attempt at rectifying, to some extent, this historiographic imbalance by looking at events that took place in Bengal following partition. It focuses on the predicament of the minority communities in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) who were uprooted and forced to seek shelter in the truncated Indian province of West Bengal. It considers the manner of the refugee exodus and discusses the responses of the Indian federal and provincial governments to the challenge of refugee rehabilitation. A study follows of the Dandakaranya scheme which was undertaken after 1958 to resettle the refugees by colonizing forest land in an area far away from Bengal (Map 6.1). The difficulties experienced in resettling the refugees outside Bengal are examined and the complex interplay of identity and landscape, of dependence and self-help, that informed the choices which the refugees made in rebuilding their lives discussed.

Partition marked the high point in the fragmentation not only of Bengal's landscape but also of the identities of its people. Several elements made up this identity: language, religion, climate, soil, customs, food. Prior to partition, the distinctions in the identities of people inhabiting the two states that were subsequently carved out of undivided Bengal were 'fuzzy'. The religious distinctions that existed were subsumed under the larger panoply of a Bengali cultural and linguistic identity.[1] Bengalis spoke the same language, although its usage and idiom in the west was closer to that of Sanskrit, while in the east it was embellished by Urdu terminology which was increasingly being preferred. There



Map 6.1 Major Bengali refugee rehabilitation sites in India

were, of course, differences in accents, in the way the spoken word was used. Yet these linguistic differences were superficial, the two being dialects of the same language. In education, commerce and business, the medium of communication was the same Bengali language. In the eastern districts, Islamic influence was far greater due to a more dense concentration of Muslim communities, a fact that provided the subsequent basis and justification for the territorial division of Bengal.[2]

A strong commonalty also existed in terms of marriage and social customs, although there were some differences in finer details.[3] Foodhabits and entertainment patterns were also characterized by a high degree of similarity. The caste and class structures were similar, though East Bengalis were engaged in certain

occupations typical of their ecology. Ecological variation in the two regions was not appreciable: East Bengal was riverine and received higher rainfall, and was criss-crossed by canals and rivers which played an important part in people's lives. The whole of Bengal', observed the geographer Oskar Spate, 'has a common structural history and a very similar way of life based on rice'. In his view, Bengal 'had for some centuries possessed an historical entity' and was until the 1947 partition 'a linguistic and cultural unit focused on Calcutta'.[4] It was this distinctive cultural landscape which was celebrated in verse by the Bengali poet and Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941) in his famous song *Amar Sonar Bangla* ('My Golden Bengal').[5]

Writing on the integrity of Bengal as a unified cultural landscape, the distinguished Bengali historian Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar observed on the eve of the partition:

> Here in the two halves of Bengal the population is absolutely one by race, language, and manner of life, they differ only in religion…. Religion keeps the people of East Bengal internally divided, exactly the same way as in West Bengal by forbidding dinner, marriage and worship together. Both sects in both areas speak the same language, write the same alphabet, and have so long read and composed the same literature. The Hindus and Muslims of Bengali origin have lived together side by side in peace for so many centuries that it is now impossible to draw a clear cut geographical line dividing the Hindus from the Muslims.[6]

However, as the political mobilization for a separate Muslim state gathered momentum in the late 1930s and 1940s, the larger Bengali cultural and linguistic identity increasingly became fractured along sectarian and religious lines.[7] It is beyond the scope of this work to show how this process of fragmentation of identities took place in pre-partition Bengal, but when partition occurred in 1947 most people increasingly looked upon themselves as Hindus or Muslims first and Bengalis afterwards.[8]

This fragmentation of identities was accompanied by a division of the Bengal landscape by the partition of 1947. Let us consider the manner in which this division took place and the nature of the boundaries that were set up between the two Bengals. The Radcliffe Commission drew up a boundary line across undivided Bengal, which had a total area of 78,389 sq. miles, to create two separate entities: East Bengal which formed the eastern wing of Pakistan, and West Bengal which became a province of independent India. The resulting 2,736 km long boundary line cut across Jessore, Nadia, Malda, Dinajpur, and Jalpaiguri districts of Bengal and Sylhet district of the neighbouring Assam. This boundary line was drawn arbitrarily, mostly ignoring factors such as communications and railway links, water channels, cultural and pilgrimage sites, location of industries and vital strategic factors.

Partition left neither of the two Bengals a strong unit. West Bengal was left as a rump of about 34,000 sq. miles with a major portion of Sylhet appended to it from the neighbouring Assam to bolster its overall land size. It had a population of 24,320,000 of which nearly 17 per cent were Muslim, and it became India's smallest and most overcrowded province, with a high degree of urban concentration around the Calcutta area.[9] With its enormous urban concentration on Hooghlyside, soon to be swollen by the tide of incoming refugees, West Bengal became a food-deficit area, its agriculture being qualitatively as well as quantitatively inferior to that of East Pakistan.[10] As far as East Bengal was concerned, the Radcliffe Award gave it an area of 54,501 sq. miles and a population of 41.8 million (based on the 1941 census), which constituted only 40 per cent of the area, but almost 60 per cent of the population of the pre-partition Bengal and Assam provinces.

Refugees in West Bengal

Partition left 11.4 million, or 42 per cent, of undivided Bengal's Hindu population in East Bengal. In 1947, at the time of partition, only 344,000 Hindu refugees came into West Bengal, and the hope lingered among the minorities of East Pakistan that they could continue to live there peacefully. However, these hopes were dashed as the East Bengal minorities increasingly experienced persecution and intolerance.[11] The year 1948 saw an influx of 786,000 people into India, and in 1949 over 213,000 Bengali refugees crossed over the border into West Bengal. In this context, it must be noted that the policy of the Indian government in Bengal aimed not at evacuating the minorities, as had been done so effectively in Punjab with the help of the army, but in negotiating with the Pakistani authorities for creating conditions of security, so that a mass exodus could be averted.

While in Punjab the Indian government had facilitated an 'exchange of population', in Bengal it wanted to prevent precisely such an exchange, and took a number of initiatives to this end. An inter-dominion conference was held at Calcutta in April 1948 where K.C.Neogy and Ghulam Mohammad, the rehabilitation ministers of the two states, made a joint declaration 'that they are determined to take every possible step to discourage such exodus and to create such conditions as would check mass exodus in either direction'. It was also decided to establish minority boards as a confidence-building step at the provincial and local levels in both the countries. Another inter-dominion conference met in Delhi in December 1948 to follow up on these measures.

These initiatives, however, failed to stem the tide, and the refugees continued to pour into West Bengal. In early 1950 serious riots engulfed the whole of East Pakistan, and the number of incoming refugees again surged to alarming levels. To deal with the situation, a pact was signed in April that year between the prime ministers of the two countries. The Nehru-Liaquat Pact aimed at creating a sense of security among the minorities to discourage their exodus from either side, by jointly reaffirming the right of equality in matters of citizenship. To some extent the Pact made movement freer, reduced harassment by enforcement officials and

enabled people to bring in their movable assets. However, in reality it failed to create the much-needed sense of security among the East Bengal Hindus, who expressed the fear that the Pakistan authorities were so intolerant that, 'the pact on which rests so much of hope in a dismal situation' may be 'reduced to a nullity'.

Several months after the Pact was signed, a Minority Convention of East Bengal Hindus held at Mymensingh challenged the Pakistani authorities to declare their intent of 'whether the minorities are wanted here at all or not'.[12] The Convention, *inter alia,* demanded: special courts to punish culprits of communal violence; compensation for victims of riots; action against officials involved in abetting communal violence; halting the requisition of Hindu homes by authorities; stopping the economic boycott of minorities; exemplary punishment for offences against women; protection and upkeep of Hindu temples; adoption of a rational and scientific educational policy; and finally a secular democratic constitution for Pakistan which would safeguard the rights of minorities. The minorities in East Pakistan, the Convention unequivocally declared, 'desire to live in the land of our birth with our honour unsullied and with our rights asserted'.

In West Bengal too, strong protests were raised against the harassment of Hindu minorities across the border, which was made evident by their continued influx into the province. The Pact was denounced as 'the hour of national humiliation' and 'surrender' to the 'dark and dismal forces of aggressive, anti-Indian and anti-Hindu communalism'.[13] The Bengal Hindu Maha Sabha launched a strong campaign to highlight the plight of the East Bengali minorities by publicizing evidence of attacks on Hindu properties and temples as well as crimes against women. The more secular Bengal Rehabilitation Organization, which enjoyed the support of eminent public figures such as the economist Radha Kamal Mukherjee and the scientist Meghnad Saha, also criticized the Pact which, it declared, 'has not at all helped to create confidence or a sense of security in the minds of the Hindus'. 'The clear rational object of the Government of Pakistan', in its view, 'is to establish a homogenous State based on Islamic Law by squeezing out the Hindus from their hearths and homes'.

The Pact thus failed in preventing an exchange of populations. The harassment of minorities to leave East Bengal continued but then took more invidious forms.[14] Instead of actual violence, it was alleged that 'the Majority community are pursuing the methods of boycott of Hindu traders and artisans and the Islamisation of Education' as 'weapons…in their armoury'.[15] In October 1950 J.N.Mandal, who had been the most prominent non-Muslim in Bengal to support the Pakistan movement, and after partition naturally came to be seen as the spokesman of East Bengal Hindus, resigned from the Pakistan central cabinet.[16] Mandal, according to one account, 'felt horrified and completely bewildered' by the intensity of the 1950 riots and 'migrated to India in disgust, shame and sorrow'.[17] Samar Guha, a prominent political worker in East Bengal, conveys the sense of insecurity which the minorities there experienced:

> A more frustrated and demoralised people could hardly be imagined than the non-Muslims of eastern Pakistan as they are today. Freezed in a morass of utter helplessness, only a ghost of their former self exists. Physically, in a state of perpetual insecurity, morally pulverised, spiritually having no value to claim as their own, socially routed, economically shattered and politically non-existent remnants of a formerly predominant non-Muslim Society are now maintaining a precarious existence in the eastern wing of Pakistan.[18]

In view of the prolonged conditions of insecurity, an estimated 1,575,000 people left East Bengal in 1950 to seek refuge in India. The following year another 187,000 refugees came, and the figure of incoming refugees stood at 200,000 during 1952. This influx continued throughout the 1950s and even beyond, with 76,000 persons coming to India in 1953, 1.18 *lakhs* in 1954 and 2.40 *lakhs* in 1955.[19] In the following year the number of incoming refugees again increased to 3.20 *lakhs* when Pakistan adopted an 'Islamic' constitution.[20] The refugee influx fluctuated quite considerably, depending upon changing bilateral ties between India and Pakistan as well as upon community relations between Hindus and Muslims in East Bengal.[21] This process of gradual displacement continued throughout the 1960s.[22] In 1981 the Government of West Bengal's Refugee Rehabilitation Committee estimated the number of East Bengal refugees within the state to be at least eight million or one-sixth of the population of the state.[23]

The East Bengal refugees looked upon themselves as the 'victims of partition', and as Bengalis, regarded it as their basic right to seek refuge in that part of Bengal which now lay in India. Having faced persecution and intolerance in East Bengal, they believed that it was their legitimate claim to seek rehabilitation within West Bengal, which they now felt was their natural habitat. Most of them, therefore, initially came to Calcutta which had always been the region's metropolis and the seat of the provincial government.

The West Bengal Government's response to the refugee influx was, however, criticized for being 'tardy and half-hearted'.[24] It was also conditioned by the class character of the refugees. Among the first to leave in the late 1940s had been the Hindu upper and middle classes. Most of them already had contacts in Calcutta, through educational and kinship links, and could look forward to pursuing professions and trades in their new surroundings. These groups were able to rent or buy properties in and around the Calcutta area with their own resources and did not really need to depend upon the government. In the 1940s, when it was mainly these groups who came into West Bengal, the authorities did not feel seriously burdened by the refugee influx. Although relief camps were opened, only less than 10 per cent sought shelter there.

However, from the early 1950s onwards the authorities were faced with a different class of refugees, who either belonged to the lower urban strata or came from the East Bengal countryside. This change in the character of the refugees aggravated the problem for the authorities, not just in terms of the sheer numbers

who now made claims upon the government's resources, but also in the resourcefulness which they displayed in rebuilding their own lives.[25]

As the 1950s dawned, the West Bengal Government's 'refugee problem' increasingly became worse and assumed crisis proportions. Accommodation in government-run camps became cramped and scarce, the dole queues grew longer and the sight of refugee families living on Calcutta's pavements became commonplace.[26] The provincial government found itself simply unprepared to deal with the crisis.

The West Bengal Government, as a result, increasingly took the view that the refugees were not its sole responsibility but rather a burden which ought to be shared jointly among the federal government and those of the neighbouring states. Extensive deliberations were, therefore, held among officials to prepare plans for the dispersal of refugees outside West Bengal. The West Bengal case was that post-partition demographic changes and disruptions had made it the smallest and the most densely populated state within India, its population density rising by over 12 per cent.[27] Its regional economy, particularly the jute sector, had suffered great disruptions and it did not have the resources to bear the additional burden of relief and rehabilitation.[28] Moreover, the land-person ratio in West Bengal was already precarious and could endure no further agricultural colonization or expansion. Muslim emigration resulting from partition had been negligible, and in any case there was very little evacuee property which could be redistributed among the incoming refugees, as most of the Muslims who had left West Bengal belonged to the poorer strata. The West Bengal Government therefore claimed that, in overall terms, it did not have the necessary resources at its disposal to take on the additional demographic burden caused by the refugee influx.[29] The responsibility for the refugees, argued the political leadership of West Bengal, must be equitably shared. This could be done by the federal government making adequate financial provisions, and by the neighbouring states agreeing to host and resettle the refugees within their territories.[30]

However, in spite of extensive official consultations, the plans for the dispersal of refugees outside West Bengal did not fructify. Certain states, in particular Assam, showed open reluctance to the proposal of hosting Bengali refugees.[31] The states of Bihar and Orissa showed some willingness, and there was also talk of resettlement in faraway areas like Hyderabad and Mysore. Such talk, however, was not matched by positive action, and often amounted to nothing more than lamenting the inherent difficulties involved in the dispersal of the refugees. The official discourse on the issue tended to be tinged with unjustified assertions about the 'inordinately parochial' character of the Bengalis and their unwillingness to be rehabilitated outside Bengal.[32]

Within West Bengal there developed a strong public campaign against turning the refugees out of the Bengali-speaking areas. A large and influential section of Bengali intellectuals and public figures criticized the official attempts to disperse the refugees. They argued that the resources existed within West Bengal for the

successful rehabilitation of all Bengalis who had sought refuge there after being persecuted in East Pakistan.

In 1950 the Bengal Rehabilitation Organization formulated a detailed plan which claimed to have the potential to 'restore the economic and social life of the displaced community and to reconstruct the economic life of West Bengal'. The plan expressed optimism that 'refugee rehabilitation, scientifically planned and implemented, may give a new lease of life to the decadent, truncated state' and called for mechanized and cooperative farming through large scale land colonization.[33] It was claimed that 1.5 million acres of cultivable waste land existed within West Bengal which could be profitably used for agricultural colonization and settlement of refugees. The plan further suggested that possibilities existed for land colonization schemes to be undertaken in proximate areas like Manipur, Bihar and Tripura. The economist Radha Kamal Mukherjee in his intro duction to the non-official plan estimated that 'the uncultivated land (excluding current fallow) amounted to 173 *lakh* acres in Assam, 64.5 *lakh* acres in Bihar and 28 *lakh* acres in West Bengal'. He demanded that Bengali refugees should be settled in 'contiguous Bengali speaking areas'. He claimed that East Bengali farmers possessed 'the sturdy spirit of individualism, courage and enterprise' which was needed for land colonization. It was, after all, 'the pioneer settlers', the forefathers of the refugees, 'who fought the tiger and the crocodile, and who overcame the hazards of the forest and the flood that created in East Bengal the granary of rice and jute in India'. It was their toil which, Mukherjee asserted, had made 'East Bengal one of the most flourishing gardens of Asia'.[34]

To address the problems faced by the urban refugees, the non-official plan envisaged the development of satellite towns and industrial centres within a radius of fifty miles from Calcutta to create auxiliary and small-scale industries to generate the necessary employment opportunities for the refugees. These measures, it was claimed, would 'lead to a proper balancing and redistribution of population' and thus 'refugee rehabilitation and regional developments can aid each other'. Such a plan, it was asserted, 'will be much sounder economically than sending the refugees to distant and unfamiliar agricultural zones'. The authors of the plan warned that:

> in the absence of planned integration between refugee rehabilitation and general economic progress of West Bengal, we may sow the seeds of fresh cleavages and conflicts in a poverty and disease-ridden, truncated state, with a density of rural population and visible and invisible unemployment far greater than anywhere else in India.[35]

The proposal of sending the refugees outside West Bengal was denounced as 'banishment' and the strongest language was used to criticize the authorities:

> The present plan of rehabilitation without making classifications of different categories of refugees and haphazardly distributing them to different states of India, in an atmosphere not congenial to their health and spirit…is sure to

> result in a large number of physical and spiritual deaths and even those who will survive will not be able to preserve their language and culture as Bengalis.[36]

Overall, the authorities were urged to take a humane view of the problem of refugee rehabilitation. The uprooted people, it was pointed out, 'represent one of the richest, artisan and trading and intellectual groups of India' who due to the tragedy of partition 'have been suddenly rendered helpless and even destitute'. They need not be looked upon as a liability, it was urged, but should be seen as constituting a rich pool of human resource from which West Bengal could benefit immensely if only its government could harness it properly.

However, by the mid-1950s nothing had been done by the authorities towards formulating a long-term plan for the rehabilitation of Bengali refugees within or outside West Bengal: government efforts had not gone beyond providing relief to the incoming refugees.[37] In the absence of any meaningful plan for their rehabilitation, a large number of refugees started organizing themselves in all kinds of 'cooperative' activities which aimed at establishing refugee colonies in and around Calcutta by encroaching upon vacant public land. The manner in which these endeavours at self-rehabilitation transformed the metropolis of Calcutta is looked at in Chapter Seven.

While the setting up of squatter colonies provided one alternative to a large number of East Bengal refugees, there were clearly limits to the numbers which the Calcutta Urban Agglomeration could absorb, both in terms of physical space and livelihood opportunities. To a sizeable section of the refugees, especially those who had been engaged in agricultural occupations before being uprooted, Calcutta proved to be a harsh environment to make a new beginning. As rural folk they did not possess any skill or capital which could be used for gainful employment, and naturally craved land for resettlement. These agricultural refugees came mainly from backward caste groups like the Namasudras who were primarily engaged in paddy cultivation besides boating, fishing and carpentry. Colonial ethnographers describe the Namasudras as a nonAryan caste which followed the *Vaishnavite* tradition of Hinduism.[38] It was the coming of groups such as the Namasudra agriculturists in the 1950s that aggravated the situation in West Bengal. The impoverished state of these refugees, their lack of contacts and skills and weakened physical condition left them with no choice but to join the dole queues and seek shelter in government-run relief camps.

Right from the beginning, the dominant political leadership of the ruling Congress party as well as the officialdom displayed an ambivalent attitude towards the incoming refugees. The West Bengal elites believed that the refugees were a severe economic liability and that their rehabilitation would make enormous demands upon the meagre economic resources of the province, jeopardizing its prosperity and future. Moreover, they increasingly took the view that generous relief and compensation on the part of official agencies would act as a magnet attracting more refugees from across the border. Those crossing the border were

perceived by them as economic migrants and not as minorities who were being forcibly displaced due to persecution and harassment.

Refugees in Dandakaranya

It was in this context that the Dandakaranya project was conceived as a long-term solution to the problem of rehabilitation of Bengali refugees. Its genesis lay in the consultations that took place in early 1956 at the Rehabilitation Ministers' Conference where, for the first time, it was officially announced that refugees would get state help and relief only if they opted for resettlement outside West Bengal.[39] A high-level committee was constituted to report on the feasibility of land colonization schemes outside West Bengal for refugee rehabilitation. This committee reported in 1957, and in June that year, its recommendations were accepted by the National Development Council. As a result, a special government agency called the Dandakaranya Development Authority (DDA) was set up in 1958. The plan contemplated the development of an area of 78,000 sq. miles, known as Dandakaranya, in Koraput and Kalahandi districts of Orissa, and Bastar district of Madhya Pradesh. This area lies in a low plateau ranging from 600 to 3,000 ft above sea level and is thickly forested. It is marked by hill ranges and rocky outcrops and its indigenous population is predominantly tribal. While the region as such is characterized by extreme backwardness, it is rich in unexplored mineral resources and forest produce. The plateau dominates the region's landscape, and the two main rivers which criss-cross it are the Mahanadi which cuts through its northern part and the Godavari which flows through the southern part. Although these rivers are perennial, only a small portion of their water is used for irrigation. In spite of its rich forest and mineral wealth, Dandakaranya had always been isolated due to its poor internal and external accessibility and the self-sufficient nature of its tribal inhabitants.

As Dandakaranya lies within the tropics, its climate is hot and humid. Over 80 per cent of the mean annual rainfall—about 60 to 80 inches— falls within 100 days spanning June to September. This results in an unevenness of rainfall, making all agricultural ventures dependent upon the vagaries of the monsoon. The local brooks and streams are seasonal, drying up after the rains. The region is deficient in underground water resources, and the soil is porous with a small clay content which makes it lacking in plant nutrients and, as a result, unable to sustain doublecropping. As Dandakaranya had a low indigenous population, the planners banked upon the availability of large tracts of virgin lands for colonization by the Bengali refugees. In spite of the region's unpromising physical features, its low population density was a crucial factor in its choice as a site for refugee rehabilitation.[40]

Within the Dandakaranya region, four resettlement zones were earmarked at Umerkote and Malkangiri in Koraput district and at Paralkote and Kondagaon in Bastar district. In these zones, villages were earmarked for forty to sixty refugee families. Refugees were sent from camps in West Bengal by special trains to Raipur.

From there they were taken to the Mana transit camp, and then to work-site camps where they had to work on land reclamation, road building and so on. The idea was to get them used to hard labour before they took the plunge into fullscale agriculture. From the work-site camps they were finally taken to villages for 'permanent settlement'. Upon reaching the village each household was given a plot of roughly 6.5 acres for cultivation and half an acre for gardening and a homestead. Loans were disbursed to facilitate their settling in: these included a sum of Rs 1700 for house-building; Rs 1115 for the purchase of bullocks and implements; and Rs 150 for digging a well. In addition, a maintenance grant was given for twelve months until the harvesting of the first crop.

From the late 1950s onwards, land colonization was pursued vigorously in Dandakaranya. By 1965, significant progress had been made in achieving project targets, and the West Bengal leadership was optimistic that a solution to the 'refugee problem', at last, seemed in sight.[41] Over 270,000 acres of forest had been cleared and over 7,500 refugee families settled in over 184 villages that had been 'developed' by that year. These developments transformed the landscape of the region. As an official account put it:

> *Modernism* came with a bang and a clatter into this vastness. Monstrous engines roared into the jungle, ripping up earth, splintering giant trees that had defied a thousand storms as if they were match wood. The beasts of the forest fled helter-skelter, and the sleepy inhabitants of the villages snuggling among the clearings rubbed their eyes in wonder. What new breed of demons were these creatures belching smoke, filling the skies with their clamour?[42]

With the clearing of land came the refugee settlers, and by 1973 about 25,209 families had been moved to the region. However, of these, only 17,217 families stayed and the rest returned to West Bengal, having failed to make Dandakaranya their home. Of these, 16,197 households were engaged in agriculture and 1,020 in non-agricultural occupations. By the early 1970s there existed 302 villages with 10,750 houses, and another 1,600 houses were under construction. In all, 462 km of main roads and 669 km of link roads had been built. The total expenditure on the project had been Rs 53.70 *crores*.

In spite of this substantial expenditure, the project was beset with difficulties.[43] Foremost among these were the problems faced in persuading the refugees to relocate from West Bengal to Dandakaranya. A study suggests that:

> the Bengali farmers, less mobile and more deeply anchored in the unique ecological setting of their deltaic homeland, perceived the distances involved as a great deterrent. From the very beginning they had little desire to move into the ecologically contrasted territory of peninsular India to reconstruct their life there.[44]

The refugees' perception of the distance of Dandakaranya from Bengal and their deep rooted reluctance to move out of Bengali-speaking areas impeded further resettlement.[45]

Another factor which seriously hampered the refugees' move to Dandakaranya was the persistent campaign by the Communists, who urged them not to go out of West Bengal but to take to the path of agitation to demand resettlement within Bengal. The influx of refugees and their concentration in and around the Calcutta area had transformed the configuration of politics in West Bengal. The cause of the refugees had been taken up very strongly by the Communists in West Bengal, and Communist cadres encouraged the refugees to occupy public spaces for shelter, colonize land in the villages, and resist the stopping of doles and the closure of camps by the government. They also opposed government plans for the dispersal of these refugees to neighbouring states. Several important studies have drawn attention to the close link between the refugees' agitations and the ascendancy of the Communists in West Bengal politics since the late 1960s. Donald S.Zagoria observes:

> In the urban areas of West Bengal, Communist strength does not appear to be based on any particular caste or community. Rather, one of the main bases seems to be the several million 'declassed' Hindu refugees who fled their homes in East Bengal after partition. These refugees constitute about one-fourth of the West Bengal population and a substantial portion of the Calcutta population. They apparently vote for the Communists overwhelmingly. Here, it would seem is a classic example of uprooted and declassed individuals supporting an extremist party in accordance with the model put forth by the proponents of the concept of mass society.[46]

A recent study by Prafulla Chakrabarty also presents very substantial evidence which shows that the political ascendancy of the Left in West Bengal owed a great deal to the refugees and their struggles for rehabilitation in the 1950s. Chakrabarty argues that, while the Communists provided the refugees with leadership in their struggle for rehabilitation, the refugees, in turn, became the striking arm of the Communists and provided them with the mass support which enabled them to entrench themselves in the city of Calcutta, of which the whole of the truncated West Bengal became merely a hinterland after partition.

Chakrabarty maintains that it was the refugees who performed the 'vanguard function' in West Bengal of catapulting the Communists to power and that 'the refugee movement coalesced in a broad movement of the left and democratic process which reached a point of crystallization during the general elections of 1967.'[47] As the refugees were largely centred around the Calcutta area, they tended to provide potential vote banks to the Left parties. This is plausibly borne out by the electoral performance of the Left parties between 1951 and 1967, when it was the city of Calcutta, rather than the Bengal countryside, which was their stronghold, a trend which has been reversed since 1967.

Communist influence, however, was just one of the factors in the refugees' reluctance to go outside West Bengal. This unwillingness to go to culturally unfamiliar areas for resettlement must be understood in terms of the state of the mind of the refugees themselves. The groups of refugees who were targeted for settlement in Dandakaranya were those who had come to India in the mid-1950s and early 1960s. As mentioned earlier, most of these belonged to low caste Namasudra groups. Prior to their displacement, these groups had suffered long spells of persecution and harassment. An observer in 1964 described the minorities on the eve of their displacement as being 'in a hopeless and hapless situation. … They are dehumanized, demoralized and degenerated human beings, having been denied the right of citizenship and elementary human rights to live a peaceful social life…. Worries are writ large on their faces.'[48]

Settlers' experiences

The experiences of the refugees after being uprooted, and upon their arrival in West Bengal, were far from pleasant. They were forced to live in cramped government-run relief camps. There small sums were handed out to them as doles and they were given meagre family rations. Overall they were treated as no better than beggars.[49] No efforts were made to create employment opportunities to enable them to eke out a living. They were, at the same time, subjected to all kinds of pressures to agree to move out of West Bengal for rehabilitation in Dandakaranya. Additionally, there were threats by officials of stopping rations and doles, and shutting down camps in an attempt to force them to go to Dandakaranya.

Lack of alternatives in West Bengal and persistent cajoling by the authorities forced a sizeable number of families to move to Dandakaranya in the late 1950s and throughout the 1960s. Once in Dandakaranya, these settlers experienced a number of difficulties. An extraordinary account of the settlers' life is provided by S.K. Gupta who was, in 1964, the chairman of the DDA for a brief tenure of ten months.[50] Gupta wrote a series of articles claiming that:

> what I saw myself and learnt on further enquiry caused me profound disquiet. I have decided to share my disquiet with the public, not to cast reflections or start a polemic, but so that if things are what I believe they are, immediate action may be taken to set things right. Human distress on a large scale is much too serious a matter to be passed over in silence either to feed official complacency or to save reputations.[51]

His private papers as well as his public writings provide a fascinating account of the untiring efforts made by the refugees to stand on their own feet as well as the flaws inherent in the Dandakaranya project which frustrated these efforts.[52]

He observed that the 'emphasis of the DDA has been largely, if not exclusively, on agriculture', as almost 97 per cent of the refugee families were recorded as agriculturists. Although these families were given 'not an inconsiderable area for

an agricultural holding on East Bengal standards', he expressed serious doubts about the quality of the allotted land and its potential to yield sustainable crops. In his view, it was not the quantity of land, but its quality which was important and this depended upon a number of factors such as soil texture, climatic conditions, irrigation facilities, seeds and implements used, and the farming skills and energy displayed by the settlers.[53] To begin with 'settlers had to make do with the worst quality of lands, hitherto regarded as uncultivable'. Soil surveys revealed that in the Pharasgoan sub-zone, for instance, '6 per cent of the plots were basically unfit for agriculture, 32 per cent were poor and submarginal, 53 per cent could be of medium quality if their moisture retention quality could be improved, and only 9 per cent were of good quality'. The overall finding of the soil surveys came as a revelation, and Gupta discovered 'lands [are] not ideally suitable for the production of a satisfactory paddy crop except where the soil is of a heavy texture and low in situation'. This was particularly distressing to agriculturists from East Bengal to whom paddy cultivation represented, not only a mode of subsistence, but an entire way of life.

The poor soil quality was aggravated by an absence of irrigation facilities which made agriculture 'a gamble in the rains'. Gupta recognized that 'irrigation in Dandakaranya is an absolutely imperative necessity without which any expectation of agricultural rehabilitation in the majority of cases will prove a mirage'. However, he lamented the 'DDA's preference for big and costly irrigation schemes and its complete indifference to minor irrigation'. The full irrigation potential of these big hydroelectric schemes could not be realized due to project delays and their non-completion. Inadequate irrigation facilities thus adversely affected agricultural yields. Gupta found, from a detailed analysis of agricultural output between 1960–1 and 1963–4, that yields had been extremely poor. He discovered that 'in Paralkote about 50 per cent of the families were producing paddy which was less than what was needed for food and other requirements'. In one zone, he found that 'agriculture was so poor that people gave it up as a bad business' and sought alternate means of survival. He concluded that 'poor yields made it difficult to sustain an agricultural economy even on a minimum level of subsistence'.

In such conditions the settler families desperately sought other sources of livelihood. 'Where casual labour was available people whose yield was poor eked out a sub-standard living somehow; where it was not, they starved', noted Gupta. Poor yields affected the fortunes of almost each household. Instead of addressing this very serious problem, the DDA officials chose to lay the blame on the Bengali refugees by criticizing their 'bad husbandry or laziness', their 'camp sluggishness' and their sentimental preference for paddy cultivation. Gupta's own experience in Dandakaranya had, however, been quite different. He found that, 'there are undoubtedly a few slackers, especially among those who were not traditionally agriculturists, but by and large the cultivators are inherently hard-working when there is at all any prospect of wrestling a fair yield even out of reluctant soil.' He found the settlers 'receptive to suggestions and enthusiastic in work' and even

willing to experiment with broadcast, rainfed short duration varieties of paddy and other crops like groundnut, tobacco and mesta.

If the agricultural prospects for the refugees were bleak, the opportunities for alternative sources of employment were equally hopeless. 'In Dandakaranya', according to Gupta, the planners' 'imagination did not go beyond agriculture'. Non-agricultural rehabilitation was 'foredoomed to failure' as it was limited to providing a loan for starting a trade, and some cash advance for building a house, both of which had to be made good Within three months. Gupta observed:

> It is obvious that industries run by the DDA have been extremely amateurish, uneconomical, reckless about wastage of time and raw materials, and unconcerned about costs, with losses mounting up annually, with employment at a low level and sporadic because of occasional closing down of units, and with wages scandalously low for the large majority of employees.[54]

In addition, there was growing evidence from early days that the Dandakaranya project was flawed in other respects too. No efforts were made, for instance, to generate urban or semi-urban employment. Nor was a master plan ever prepared for the region as a whole and the entire planning process was *ad hoc*. Infrastructural development proceeded slowly and even basic facilities like electricity were not made available to the settlers. Also, there was slippage of project targets, especially in house building and road construction activities.[55] The shortage of drinking water in a large number of villages became a major grievance of the settlers against the DDA authorities. To make matters worse, the refugees were not given *patta* (title) rights to the land and the homestead which had been allotted to them. More seriously, the families which had moved into Dandakaranya discovered that they could not practise fish culture which was important to them. The lack of medical facilities and the rudimentary public health services provided by the DDA led to frequent epidemics and consequently a high incidence of mortality among infants and children, factors which greatly unsettled the refugees in their new environment.[56]

Within the region, movement had to be mostly along jungle tracks and seasonal roads. There was also the imagery of the 'dark forest' (which is what Dandakaranya literally means), the fear of wild animals, and the unaccustomed topography of dark forested hills, all of which further deepened the settlers' sense of alienation. Dandakaranya increasingly appeared as a land of banishment rather than the haven of hope it had been made out to be by rehabilitation administrators. In Hindu mythology too, it was to Dandakaranya that Lord Rama was exiled in the epic *Ramayana*.

Yet another factor contributing to the settlers' sense of unease was the adversarial relationship in which they found themselves *vis-à-vis* the indigenous *adibasi* (tribal) population. When the project was conceived, the planners did not take into account the ecological and cultural setting of the tribals who had for centuries lived

in the region.[57] The very choice of Dandakaranya as a resettlement site within the heart of a tribal homeland showed a lack of regard and foresight on the part of policymakers. The planners assumed that the settlement of agricultural communities like the Namasudras from East Bengal, who were well versed in paddy cultivation, would have a 'demonstration effect' on the 'primitive tribals' of the region.[58] One study suggests that rehabilitation plans and their implementation by official agencies,

> ignored the inherently contradictory nature of tribal and peasant outlooks. The peasants had a vested interest in land while the tribals regarded the forest as a common resource. The settlement operations encroached on tribal lands and succeeded in driving the tribals out.... The little tribal world of Dandakaranya had escaped centuries of social development and had survived as a partially closed ecosystem.... The region came into limelight...when it was picked out, all of a sudden, as one of the potential areas for the resettlement of displaced persons.[59]

There is considerable evidence which suggests that the policies of the DDA were such that they 'destroyed the tribal social and economic formations without replacing them by a viable alternative basis for their rehabilitation'. In a study of seventeen villages, Ajaizuddin Ahmad reports the incidence of substantial land alienation and depopulation of tribal villages, with about 30 per cent decline in the tribal population.

Desertions and return to Bengal

Long-standing grievances of neglect, apathy, and unsympathetic treatment against local agencies and officials therefore contributed to the overall sense of alienation which the refugees experienced in Dandakaranya.[60] Desertions by refugee families from the project had started right from the beginning.[61] In 1965, 1,040 families left and the following year another 862 families. Between 1966 and 1972 there were 1600, and between 1972 and 1978 another 10,923 families deserted the settlement.

In 1978–9, however, certain events occurred which were almost apocalyptic as far as the Bengali refugees were concerned. Between January and June 1978 a wave of desertions took place from Dandakaranya, as a large number of refugees sold off their cattle and belongings to return to West Bengal where a Leftist government had recently returned to power, which they hoped would take up the 'unfinished task' of their rehabilitation in West Bengal seriously. Under the leadership of an organization called Udavastu Unnayansheel Samiti about 14,388 families or 120,000 people sold off their belongings to return to West Bengal. Reporting this massive desertion of the Dandakaranya settlement, a news report described the process as 'migration in reverse gear'. The returning refugees, the report observed,

> present a picture of gloom at the Jagdalpur bus stand and at the Raipur railway station. Men, women and children in torn rags have a look of infinite sadness on their faces. Heavy the sorrow, as the poet has said, that bows the head when love is alive and hope is dead. They say that their love for West Bengal is alive as their hope about Dandakaranya is dead. The refugees say that all their Dandakaranya days were dark and dreary.... Refugees say they are deserting 'because of the humiliating conditions in which they lived'.[62]

However, the refugees found to their utter dismay that the Left Front which now controlled the reins of state power in West Bengal turned its back upon them. 'The chickens have now come home to roost', was how the situation was described by an observer. The Left Front leadership looked upon these returning refugees as a potential liability that would damage the prospects of an economic recovery and divert scarce resources. The Government attempted to stop the refugees' trek to West Bengal. The chief minister Jyoti Basu appealed to the refugees to go back. Interception points were set up *en route* to persuade and, if necessary, coerce the refugees not to persist in their journey from Dandakaranya to West Bengal. A large number attempting to re-enter the state were forcibly sent back: in August 1978 the West Bengal Government claimed that it had succeeded in sending back 63,213 refugees who had 'deserted' Dandakaranya by 'persuading' them that their demand for resettlement in West Bengal was not realistic, and that their problems would be solved in Dandakaranya itself.

However, in April 1978 about 25,000 Namasudra refugees managed not only to return, but also to set up a co-operative settlement on the island of Marichjhanpi which lay in the Ganga-Bramhaputra delta in the Sunderbans region in West Bengal. Marichjhanpi was reported to be an uninhabited island 39 miles long and 8 miles wide. There the refugees showed exemplary enterprise in creating a settlement of their own. They reportedly established fisheries, workshops, small-scale and cottage industries, bakeries, a dispensary and a primary school. They built roads, a water treatment plant to ensure the supply of drinking water, set up shops and tried, in as many ways as possible, to be completely self-reliant of all outside agencies.

The West Bengal Government, however, looked upon the initiative of the refugees at Marichjhanpi unfavourably and was not inclined to tolerate the existence of their settlement. The refugees' initiative was declared an illegal encroachment on forest land in an area earmarked for the protection of endangered tigers. The Government gave an ultimatum to the 'illegal' occupants of Marichjhanpi to leave the island by 31 March 1979. This was accompanied by intensive patrolling by police launches. When these warnings were not heeded, the authorities started an 'economic blockade' of the settlement on 26 January 1979. All movement of goods and people was stopped and even the supply of drinking water and essential food was not permitted. When the refugees tried to go to the mainland to procure food and drinking water, their boats were scuttled by police launches. The inhabitants of the settlement were teargassed, their huts

razed to the ground, and their fisheries destroyed in several encounters that took place between the police and the refugees.[63] Inevitably, violent clashes followed, leading to several deaths and a large number of casualties. While the police claimed that only two people died as a result of firing, there were reports that in all thirty-six refugees had been killed. The refugees themselves claimed that 239 died of eating food unfit for human consumption as a result of the police blockade of the island, 136 died of starvation, 128 went missing in 'police action', 150 were injured in baton attacks, 500 were jailed and twenty-four women were subjected to 'humiliating abuse'.[64] Eventually, the West Bengal Government ordered a forcible evacuation of the island in which a 1,500-strong police force took part between 14 and 16 May 1979. At last the Left Front Government was able to claim that it had succeeded in 'freeing' Marichjhanpi from the illegal encroachment of 'deserters' from Dandakaranya.

Conclusions

With the suppression of the Marichjhanpi settlement and the forcible return to Dandakaranya of the East Bengali refugees, yet another chapter had ended in the refugees' continuing quest for rehabilitation. While the refugees could not succeed in holding on to the settlement, the message that resounded from Marichjhanpi was loud and clear: that statesponsored rehabilitation of Bengali refugees had been nothing short of a farce, culminating in the appalling failure of Dandakaranya. A committee of the Indian Parliament which investigated the project in 1979 after the Marichjhanpi violence deprecated the authorities for 'the callous neglect and unimaginative, lackadaisical and bureaucratic approach displayed by the DDA in handling problems of displaced persons and in executing the development projects taken up for their resettlement'.[65] While there was confession of failure, the political will to meaningfully take up the unfinished challenge of rehabilitation was, however, still lacking.

In retrospect, the conclusion seems inescapable that official policies in West Bengal did not go beyond providing relief for the refugees. This relief mainly took the form of providing temporary shelter in government-run camps and handing out doles and rations on a daily basis. Government policies clearly lacked a long-term perspective. Till the Dandakaranya scheme was formulated in 1957 as a panacea for all the troubles of Bengali refugees, nothing was done to colonize land for agricultural resettlement, or to create rural employment opportunities, or to provide training and vocational skills to absorb the refugees in new occupations.

An overall developmental ethos was lacking in the Government's approach to the problem of rehabilitation. Faced with such a situation, Bengali refugees across the social spectrum were forced to find their own solutions for rebuilding their lives. The several millions who poured into West Bengal in the late 1940s and 1950s and thereafter, had to rely on selfrehabilitation. The upper and middle classes, who possessed capital, skills and contacts, were able successfully to rebuild their lives without depending upon official agencies. However, refugees from the poor

strata and those from the countryside had no choice but to depend upon government agencies for succour and relief. When their expectations of help and support from the Government were not adequately fulfilled, the disadvantaged refugees had no option but to find their own solutions. Squatting on public land and the setting up of slums in and around Calcutta was just one creative solution which they worked out, and undoubtedly it represented to them a method of self-rehabilitation. As it turned out, it became the most widespread form of self-rehabilitation in West Bengal, and the most visible proof of this is to be found in the squatter colonies which are found everywhere in urban West Bengal.

An alternative for the Bengali refugees lay in their taking advantage of the opportunities that existed outside West Bengal. In their quest for rehabilitation, the refugees naturally showed a preference to be settled in Bengali-speaking areas, but if meaningful opportunities existed outside West Bengal, they certainly welcomed them. Several successful pockets of rehabilitation outside the province testify that the Bengalis could be as enterprising and mobile as any other displaced group and were not averse to going outside Bengal. One example of this successful rehabilitation was in Tripura, where about 88,000 Bengali refugee families were able to settle down: Tripura could, in a way, be regarded as a cultural extension of the Bengal landscape, having been a part of undivided Bengal in colonial times.

A second major rehabilitation site lay at a great distance in the Terai and Ganga *khadar* in the Uttarakhand region of Uttar Pradesh. Here, due to the initiative of the provincial political leadership, an ambitious scheme of land colonization was undertaken to rehabilitate partition refugees, mainly from West Pakistan. Although Bengali refugees constituted a relatively small proportion of the beneficiaries of this scheme, nevertheless an estimated 4,000 families settled there.[66] The third area where Bengali refugees settled quite successfully was in the faraway Andaman and Nicobar Islands. Between 1951 and 1961, over 10,110 acres of forest land was cleared and 2,576 Bengali refugee families settled on the islands of Betapur and Neil in the Middle Andamans where they were able to integrate quite successfully with the local inhabitants.[67]

These examples of successful rehabilitation outside Bengal contest the stereotype embedded in official discourse which attributes the failure of refugee rehabilitation to the inherent parochialism of the refugees, their unwillingness to settle outside Bengal and their lack of mobility and enterprise. In a study of contemporary East Bengali migration, Katy Gardner provides a fascinating account of the trials and tribulations that characterize migrant lives. In her account, Bengalis are described as 'global migrants' and emerge as energetic, highly adaptable individuals who transcend cultural barriers to successfully carve out niches for themselves even in faraway alien lands.[68]

It is appropriate here to address the question of 'ethnic' stereotyping which is so strongly embedded, not only in official discourse, but also in uninformed stories about the partition refugees.[69] The official history of the Ministry of Rehabilitation depicts the Bengali refugee 'as a creature apart' who is described as 'a bundle of apathy, impervious of the rehabilitation effort bestowed upon him'; he is

caricatured as 'rebellious and obstructive' and demands 'the impossible—rehabilitation in West Bengal itself'.[70] The Punjabi refugee, though—also a victim of partition—is portrayed as having qualities of enterprise, resilience and self-esteem; someone too proud to depend upon others and willing to travel anywhere to seek a better life. 'Phoenix-like the displaced Punjabi farmer has risen out of the ashes', described M.S.Randhawa in his account of the Punjab refugees.[71]

In Chapter Five it has been argued that the contexts of uprooting and refugee rehabilitation were strikingly different in Punjab and Bengal, and it is these differences, rather than the ethnic stereotypes, that need to be explicated. In Punjab the rehabilitation effort was successful precisely because the energy and creativity which the refugees displayed in rebuilding their lives could be harnessed by the state into patterns of rehabilitation that harmonized with integrated social development. The Bengali refugees too showed tremendous dynamism and zeal but there was no matching effort on the part of the state to rehabilitate them. The 'failure' of refugee rehabilitation in Bengal was, in fact, the failure of the state: whatever rehabilitation took place in the province was largely selfrehabilitation by the refugees.

On their part, the refugees made colossal efforts to rebuild their lives though, in the absence of any integrated planning, these inevitably entailed considerable social dislocation and environmental costs, the blame for which can hardly be fixed on them. It may also be observed that the exodus from Dandakaranya and the 'freeing' of Marichjhanpi are mere markers rather than terminal points in the Bengali refugees' continuing search for survival.[72] This struggle continues to this day, not only in the squatter colonies of Calcutta or the villages of Dandakaranya, but in the Sunderbans delta, the Assam valley and Tripura where, without any government assistance, the refugees have cleared forests, colonized agricultural tracts and created settlements based on cooperative enterprise and self-help.[73]

What about Dandakaranya, however, and the refugees' flight to Bengal? Why could the refugees, after all, not settle in Dandakaranya? Was it their cultural identity and their sentimental attachment to the Bengal landscape that proved to be the impediment? We have already seen the difficulties that Dandakaranya presented as a rehabilitation site. It is important to recognize that the refugees' overall experience of state-sponsored rehabilitation was alienating. The 'desertion' from Dandakaranya must be seen as a positive choice by the refugees towards self-rehabilitation, rather than enduring the endless humiliation and frustration which state-sponsored rehabilitation entailed. The withdrawal from Dandakaranya showed a search for self-rehabilitation and for dignity by the refugees. It represented, above all, their desperate attempt to build a home and to recreate a world that lay in shambles. The landscape on which this home was to be built was naturally conditioned by images of *Sonar Bangla* ('Golden Bengal'). 'This landscape was the work of the mind' and was imprinted in the collective memory of the refugees. The El Dorado which the Bengal landscape represented to them, and their desire for an abode *within* it signified, not so much a precise geographical location, but a state of mind.[74]

7
'Capitol landscapes'
The imprint of partition on South Asian capital cities

Introduction

On 27 July 1947, just two weeks before partition, Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar, a prominent Punjabi politician and President of the All India Forward Bloc, put forth a remarkable proposal at a press conference in Lahore.[1] He suggested that Calcutta, Delhi, Karachi and Lahore be constituted as independent city-states. In his view 'the population or influence of Hindus and Muslims in these four cities is very near each other'. Why could these four most important cities of the Indian subcontinent not be ruled by governors elected on the basis of free adult franchise with the principle of alternative representation to Hindu and Muslim communities? He asked the Muslim League and the Congress leaders why it was not possible to 'have the capital of Hindustan and Pakistan in Delhi, and of East and West Bengal in Calcutta, and of East and West Punjab in Lahore'. 'This shall save a tremendous amount of money', he reasoned, 'which poor Indians shall have to spend on the luxury of new capitals'.[2]

Unsurprisingly, Caveeshar's proposal was dismissed as quixotic by the politicians, especially as it came at the time when they were anxious to perform the consecration rituals of two sovereign nation-states being established on the principle of narrow territoriality. The question of sharing capitals simply did not arise. Just a few weeks earlier Mohammed Ali Jinnah had wanted to use the Council House (now called the Parliament House) in New Delhi to convene the inaugural session of the Pakistan Constituent Assembly. Despite Lord Mountbatten's support for this idea, the proposal was vetoed by the Congress leadership.[3] Even the one-time use of the facilities of the Council House, let alone the sharing of the capital city, was disallowed. Likewise, another proposal put forth vigorously during May-June 1947 to grant to Calcutta the status of a 'Free City' and to hand it over to authorities jointly responsible to both to the governments of India and Pakistan was rebuffed.

Caveeshar's proposal had been animated by a concern to preserve the integrity and character of four of the foremost cities of the subcontinent from the uncertain consequences which awaited them as a result of partition. In the event, the landscape of these cities saw transformations— physical, demographic, social and

cultural—which were profound and long-term.[4] This chapter examines the story of South Asian capital cities and what happened to them in the aftermath of partition. The argument proposed here is simple enough: that partition transformed the landscapes of these capital cities and placed them in similar situations with common problems. Partition and the political processes which it triggered, while disrupting life in these cities and deeply dividing their inhabitants, also united them in a common thread of experience as these cities found themselves in comparable situations which they then addressed with remarkable similarities. The imprint of partition is thus writ large on the landscapes of South Asian capital cities as they now exist. We look at the seven capital cities of Dhaka (formerly Dacca), Calcutta, Delhi, Chandigarh, Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad (Map 7.1).

A word of explanation is useful regarding the selection of these cities.[5] Delhi, Islamabad and Dhaka are the national capitals of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, while Chandigarh, Lahore and Calcutta are the capitals of the political units carved out of undivided Punjab and Bengal, the regions which were partitioned in 1947. Karachi is included in the discussion because it had the distinction of becoming the national capital of Pakistan in 1947, a status which it lost in 1959 when the federal government was moved to the new capital of Islamabad.

The approach adopted here looks at these seven cities in unison and its advantages are obvious. It enables us, for instance, to appreciate the distinct characteristics which mark out a capital city. A capital city is the focal point of a nation-state as vital legislative, judicial and political decisions are made there. It is the locus of political activity within a country. Its architecture, institutions and culture are often seen as symbols of national identity.[6] It typically enjoys an extraordinarily high concentration of commercial, cultural and recreational activities, as compared to any other urban centre in the rest of the country. These attributes naturally make capital cities places of extraordinary importance and prestige. Further, several South Asian capital cities also share a common legacy as colonial capitals. These common characteristics make it worthwhile to consider the seven cities together.[7]

Before we proceed it might be worthwhile to remember the important distinction made by Lawrence Vale between 'Capital City' and 'Capitol Complex'. The expression 'Capital', as is commonly understood, refers to the city where the government of a nation-state or its provincial unit is sited, whereas the term 'Capitol' refers to the building that houses the parliament or the legislature of that government; it is also used to refer to 'the assemblage of structures…designed to house the means of government and to communicate this government visually to the governed'.[8] In this chapter both these categories have been used in the sense made explicit here. An attempt has been made to focus, not only on the Capitol complex of each of the cities, but on its relationship with the larger city as well as the country or the province as a whole. In this sense each Capitol Complex is seen as an organic part of the larger Capital City. However, the focus is not on architecture, but rather on the larger social, political and economic forces which have shaped the capital cities. At the outset, a disclaimer perhaps needs to be made:



Map 7.1 South Asian capital cities

what is being attempted here is not urban history on a mega-scale; rather, it is to see the precise ways in which the imprint of partition can be mapped on the landscapes of South Asian capitals.

Dhaka: from *Muffosil* town to national capital

The city of Dhaka provides a suitable starting point for this discussion, as Bengal has not received the attention it deserves in the larger accounts of partition which have tended to be Punjab-centred. As is well known, Dhaka is a city that pre-dates Calcutta, which has been its rival for over two centuries. In fact, the two cities

have always shared a love-hate relationship and this is reflected within the Bengali cultural landscape in diverse ways. Medieval accounts reveal Dhaka to be 'a flourishing city long before the days of British rule, and was best known as the emporium of its fine Muslin which was in great demand all over Europe especially in France'.[9] In the seventeenth century it emerged as an outpost of the great Mughal empire when in 1608 Islam Khan, the Governor of the *subah* of Bengal, moved his capital from Sonar Goan to the present site of Dhaka. The new capital was then called Jahangir Nagar after Emperor Jahangir, whose proconsul Islam Khan was in Bengal. The new capital provided him a convenient base for his operations against the Ahom tribes of Assam. Thereafter, Dhaka, as the new city came to be known, developed rapidly and its prosperity grew as the English, French, Dutch and Portuguese established their trading factories there. It was during this period that the historic core of the city— now known as Old Dhaka—emerged under successive Mughal governors like Mir Jumla and Shaista Khan (1663–79). Many of the city's monumental buildings that survive today such as the Lalbagh Fort (1678), Satgumbaz Mosque (1680), and Paribibi's Tomb (1678) were built in this era, reflecting Dhaka's emergence as the historic capital of Bengal. Spread over an area of 5.6 sq. miles along the Burhi Ganga river, present day Old Dhaka comprises several important markets, buildings and lanes of that period such as the Bara and Chhota Katras and Sankari Bazar.

Dhaka's eminence, however, proved to be short-lived. In 1704 Nawab Murshid Kuli Khan moved his residence to another site which came to be known as Murshidabad. The shift of the capital turned out to be calamitous for Dhaka: 'its glory departed with the removal of the court', and over the centuries few traces of its former magnificence have remained.[10] Dhaka, however, continued to be an important centre of artisanal production, and the distribution of agricultural produce. The fertility of the surrounding East Bengal countryside and its proximity to several great rivers ensured Dhaka's continued importance as an inland mart, and its artisans, engaged in weaving, gold and silver work and shellcarving, continued to flourish.[11] However, in the mid eighteenth century when the British gained ascendancy over Bengal they established their capital 187 miles away from Dhaka at a place which later became famous as Calcutta. Dhaka's fortunes then began to decline. It could never compete with Calcutta, which increasingly began to monopolize trade, and over the next century became the primate city, not only of Bengal, but of the entire Eastern Indian region. Calcutta's pre-eminence in administrative, commercial, social, educational and cultural terms totally eclipsed Dhaka. In the nineteenth century observers described Dhaka 'as the city of the great sleep' and travellers spoke of it as 'a city of ruins'.[12] Its population remained stagnant, and even declined.

The beginning of the twentieth century saw Dhaka's fortunes soar again. In 1905, following the first partition of Bengal, Dhaka was reincarnated as the provincial capital of the newly constituted Muslim-majority province of Eastern Bengal and Assam. With its elevation as a provincial capital, the city's profile was raised in several spheres. The pulse of public activities quickened too, and in 1906

the All-India Muslim League was founded there at the initiative of the Nawab of Dacca. The British set about developing its infrastructure by laying out a 'formal' city adjacent to Old Dhaka. A civil lines type administrative quarter was developed around the Ramna area north of the railway line which served to demarcate Old Dhaka from the new enclave. Big colonial-style bungalows and several important administrative buildings were constructed, interspersed with open spaces which were criss-crossed by straight roads and winding avenues. A race course was laid out and Government House built. Among the other important buildings constructed in this period were Curzon Hall (which initially became the Town Hall and was subsequently taken over by Dhaka University), the High Court Building, and the Museum. However, this expansion came to a frustrating halt in 1911 when, in the face of growing Bengali nationalism, the partition was annulled and the provincial capital moved back to Calcutta. Dhaka once again became relegated to the obscure position of a mere divisional headquarters. Its population, which between 1901–11 had increased by 21 per cent, saw its rate of growth halved after the capital was removed.[13] Although the physical and demographic expansion of Dhaka was arrested, the city did continue to experience limited growth in certain respects. In 1921 a university was established, and this gave a boost to the intellectual profile of the city and led to the building of a campus close to the Ramna area which evolved as the educational and administrative hub of Dhaka.

Such had been the antecedents of Dhaka when partition took place in 1947 and it became the capital of the Government of East Bengal which formed the eastern wing of Pakistan. In 1947 Dhaka could at best be described as a quiet provincial town whose importance lay in being a divisional headquarters and a university centre. Unlike most other major colonial cities, Dhaka did not even boast of a cantonment. The city's physical boundaries were confined to a small municipal area of 7.8 sq. miles. It had no commercial banks and few industries lay within its urban limits; there was only one glassworks, two match factories, one textile mill, one general engineering works and a pharmaceutical unit.[14] Its population overwhelmingly spoke Bengali and did not possess cosmopolitan characteristics. In fact, an air of rusticity pervaded the whole of Dhaka. This was somewhat typical of towns in East Bengal, which in the words of the geographer Nafis Ahmad 'seemed to be over grown villages in appearance and in fact'.[15] These towns functioned primarily as collecting and distributing centres for agricultural produce and other commodities from the surrounding rural areas. Dhaka was no different; but it was bigger in scale.

The first transformation that Dhaka experienced as a result of partition related to its demography. Basically, two aspects of this need to be noted. One was the sheer growth in the size of its population, and the other was the significant change that took place in the communities that inhabited the city. The city's population grew by 53.3 per cent between 1941–51, and in the decade 1951–61 by a staggering 168.6 per cent. With its elevation as a capital city, Dhaka's urban characteristics became sharpened. The very high rate of population growth was also due to the fact that, with the drawing of trans-national boundaries, the traditional destination

of the rural poor which used to be Calcutta now became Dhaka. Before partition, peasant migration 'by-passed the towns of Eastern Bengal for the metropolis of Calcutta. When the route to Calcutta was closed after partition, Dhaka became the major recipient of migrants'.[16] Pushed out of the tight agrarian labour market, it was to Dhaka that the poorest of the poor came in the hope of finding work and survival. In a sense, one notices a time lag here, as Dhaka experienced the kind of migration which Calcutta had seen in late nineteenth century and the early decades of this century. All these factors subsequently increased Dhaka's population.

However, it would not be too sensational to suggest that this population growth was accompanied by an unfortunate and invidious process of 'cleansing' the city of its Hindu inhabitants. There is an irony here, as on the eve of partition when Dhaka became the capital of East Pakistan, it was a Hindu-majority city. Hindus made up 58.5 per cent of the city's population. They owned an overwhelming majority of buildings, shops and *bazars:* according to one estimate their ownership extended to over 85 per cent of immovable properties in the city.[17] Dhaka society's richest stratum was made up of Hindu mercantile groups who controlled much of the economic activity in the city.[18] However, this picture changed dramatically following partition, especially in the 1950s and 1960s, as Hindus came to be displaced from the city. Particularly vulnerable among these minorities were propertied groups who were systematically dispossessed from their assets.

In December 1950 the East Bengal political activist Samar Guha carried out a survey of property holdings in some Hindu neighbourhoods of Dhaka. He found from this limited survey that out of 7,175 owned by Hindus before 1947, only 920 still remained in Hindu hands.[19] The rest had been abandoned due to fear of violence or requisitioned by the government, or forcibly occupied by incoming non-Bengali Muslim refugees. The loss of properties belonging to Hindus had also been strongly protested against by the members of the Council for Protection of Rights of Minorities when they visited Dhaka in April 1948. They were flooded by representations and petitions asking for help in restoring requisitioned or illegally encroached properties. The Council discovered that, between August 1947 and March 1948, the Government alone had requisitioned over 1,100 houses from Hindu 'evacuees' mainly to provide housing to government officials who had converged on the new capital.[20] Often high-handed methods had been used while requisitioning these properties, and furthermore, non-Bengali Muslim refugees also conducted forcible, unauthorized occupations of Hindu properties.[21] As a result of these measures and the overall sense of insecurity that prevailed in Dhaka, the minority communities were gradually displaced from the city and its demographic composition underwent a dramatic transformation.[22] Due to these developments the inhabitants of present day Dhaka are overwhelmingly Muslim: Hindus constitute just 4.6 per cent of the city's population while Muslims make up over 94 per cent of its inhabitants.[23] While there was substantial Hindu out-migration, the influx of Muslim refugees who came to Dhaka from West Bengal, Bihar, Assam, and parts of Eastern Uttar Pradesh was not on a corresponding scale. Overall, the number of refugees who came into the whole of East Bengal probably did not

exceed 1.5 million, and these were dispersed across several urban centres such as Narayanganj, Khulna and Chittagong.[24] As the numbers were relatively small, and there was an abundance of evacuee houses, the authorities were able to rehabilitate the refugees without much difficulty.

As well as these demographic changes, the city experienced a transformation that came about as a result of the coming of the Capitol function which it was now called upon to perform. Hasty preparations for this began in June-July 1947 when it increasingly became clear to the Muslim League leadership that its claims over Calcutta were not likely to find favour with the Boundary Commission headed by Sir Cyril Radcliffe. In July 1947 the League leadership charged Fazlul Rahman, the provincial Revenue Minister, and A.A.Khan, an ICS officer, with the responsibility of making arrangements for establishing the capital at Dhaka.[25] The new rulers had little choice but to make use of the rudimentary physical infrastructure that existed in the city. It was initially decided to take over the buildings of several educational institutions to house the civil secretariat: these included the Dacca Medical College, Eden Hall and the central buildings of Dacca University. Some of these buildings were expanded and various semi-permanent shelters constructed to house government departments. For residential accommodation, the Plassey Barracks in the Azimpura and Nilkhet areas were used. These provided emergency accommodation to the 300 officers and about 2,000 clerks who converged on Dacca in July-August 1947 to establish Pakistan in its eastern wing.[26]

Long-term measures to develop the capital followed. In February 1948 a special committee headed by Coleman Hicks, a reputed architect, began to make detailed plans. The first priority lay in securing the capital from the ravages of floods from which it suffered seasonally, as Dhaka was surrounded almost on three sides by the Burhi Ganga river and its subsidiaries. As a result embankments were built and measures taken to control floods. Although the city's physical infrastructure was grossly inadequate to cater to the Capitol function, there were two redeeming features that enabled Dhaka to survive. One was the legacy of its short-lived tenure as a capital city in the first decade of the century. Many of the buildings of that period proved handy and enabled the East Pakistani leadership to improvise and build upon the rudimentary infrastructure that already existed. The second feature was the availability of substantial evacuee property which was used to accommodate senior functionaries of the state. Among the old buildings that came in handy were the Governor's House and the High Court building. The old secretariat building, however, could not be used as it had been given over to the Medical College and, in any case, could not meet the needs of an enlarged bureaucracy. Thus Dhaka still lacked accommodation for the civil secretariat and the legislative assembly. Initially, the East Pakistan Assembly had to make do by meeting in Jagannath Hall, an educational institution built in the 1880s. Much later a high-rise 'matchbox' style secretariat was built in the Ramna area to house the new provincial government.

Dhaka had all along lacked a cantonment of its own, which is also a comment on its status as a colonial city.[27] The Pakistani leadership set about establishing a

separate cantonment area in the north over an extended area of 14.4 sq. miles. Aviation facilities were upgraded to facilitate inter-unit communication and to put Dhaka on international airroutes. Developments in the 1950s led to the expansion of residential and administrative accommodation in the Azimpur, Purana Paltan and Dhanmandi areas. This was followed by the building of the Gulshan and Mohammandpur suburbs in the 1960s. The architectural glory of this period of Dhaka's growth was the Al-Baitul Mukarram, the largest mosque in East Pakistan, which could accommodate 40,000 devotees for congregational worship.[28]

In the 1960s, as Bengali nationalism became more insistent, the rulers in West Pakistan made efforts to appease East Bengali sentiments. Under the 1962 constitution adopted under Ayub Khan, Dhaka's status was enhanced by designating it as the 'Second Capital' of Pakistan. The Constitution stipulated that the Pakistan National Assembly would hold its sessions alternatively in Dhaka and Islamabad. The Pakistani leadership set about developing the Second Capital plan in earnest and entrusted its design to the eminent architect Louis I.Kahn. In the colonial 'civil lines' tradition, the new capital complex was to be set up at a good distance north of Ramna almost 7 miles from Old Dhaka to segregate the seat of the government from the bustle of city life as the common folk of Dhaka knew it. Kahn drew up an elaborate plan for the new complex and by August 1964 was ready with its detailed drawings and principles. His master plan included an assembly building, the supreme court, a stadium, housing for ministers and legislators, and a number of auxiliary buildings.[29] Its focal point lay in the design of the National Assembly (subsequently the *JatiyaSansad Bhaban*). The assembly building was grouped with the supreme court and in the middle lay a mosque with a minaret towering over the surrounding buildings: Kahn's symbolism emphasized Islam's power over legislators and judges and he described this ensemble as the 'Citadel of the Assembly'. Likewise, Kahn grouped the other institutional buildings according to functions and called it the 'Citadel of Institutions'. Mostly designed as functional red-brick structures, these included the President's House and Square, an Esplanade, the large archway to the capital complex called Ayub Gate, hostels for legislators, and housing for speakers and ministers.[30] Kahn was also charged with the responsibility of designing several other buildings in the proximity which included a museum of science and technology, a meteorological station and the huge complex of the Ayub Hospital (later renamed Suhrawardy Hospital). Although many of the designs were monumental, the entire new development extended just over an area of one thousand acres, making it the smallest capital complex in South Asia.

The development of the Second Capitol expanded Dhaka's overall physical area to 29.9 sq. miles by 1969.[31] Many of the buildings which Kahn designed were constructed between 1964–9. However, in March 1969 Ayub Khan lost power and the political turmoil which engulfed East Pakistan brought all building work to a grinding halt. Although the building of the Second Capital was significant in urban and architectural terms, it offered too little, too late to redress the overall Bengali sense of alienation. Bengalis did not feel that it signified a real shift in the

balance of power relations between East and West Pakistan. As late as 1969, in his final negotiations with Ayub Khan, Shaikh Mujibur Rehman demanded a real transfer of Pakistan's federal capital from Islamabad to Dhaka as an additional demand to his 'six-point' formula. As is well known, events that followed were so dramatic that, instead of the shifting of the capital, what followed was a bloody civil war and eventual separation, leading to Dhaka's emergence as the federal capital of the independent nation-state of Bangladesh.

In the 1970s many of the projects of the 'Second Capital' era languished due to the turbulent political situation and chronic shortage of money and materials. Yet, Kahn's basic plan for the new capital was not abandoned: indeed his contract was renewed and he carried on his work till January 1974.[32] It was only in the late 1970s and early 1980s, under Generals Zia-ulRehman and Ershad, that several of his unfinished buildings, including the *Jatiya Sansad Bhaban*, were completed. Not unexpectedly, a number of buildings were renamed: the entire complex had initially been called Ayub Nagar: its new name was Sher-i-Bangla Nagar after Fazlul Haq; the National Assembly became Jatiya Sansad Bhaban; Ayub Gate became Asad Gate (after a martyr during the language agitation of the 1950s); Ayub Hospital became Suhrawardy Hospital.[33] In addition, monuments symbolizing the new national identity were erected. The earliest of these was the Central Shahid Minar which had come about spontaneously in 1952 at the Dhaka University campus during the students' agitation for Bengali as the national language. By their tributes and vigil the students created a sort of sacred space to commemorate the site where the language martyrs had laid down their lives. In 1954 this was given official sanction when the Fazlul Haq ministry came to power and an official Shahid Minar was erected.

The other national symbol was the National Martyrs' Memorial which was built in 1973 by Shaikh Mujibur Rehman at Savar on the outskirts of Dhaka to honour the martyrs of the nine-month long War of Liberation of 1971. Together, these monuments express Dhaka's new identity as the national capital of Bangladesh. After being forsaken on at least two occasions by the political whims of its overlords, and after being worsted for almost two centuries by Calcutta with whom it could never really compete, the circumstances of partition, at last, transformed the fortunes of Dhaka.

Calcutta: the 'dying city'

From Dacca let us move to Calcutta. Partition transformed the face of Calcutta and its surrounding areas, transfixing to the image of the city the attributes by which it is now best known, of poverty, over-population and urban chaos. Traditionally, the poor man's city, Calcutta has been described as the great magnet for survival-seekers, the 'primate city' to which people have flocked from one of the poorest and most populous hinterlands of the subcontinent to earn a living. Among all the capital cities affected by partition, it was Calcutta which suffered the most severe disruptions and received the largest number of refugees.

Partition left 12 million Hindus or 42 per cent of the total Hindu population of undivided Bengal in East Bengal. However, these people did not come all at one time, as had happened in Punjab.[34] Instead, they came in waves. It is reckoned that between 1947 and 1958, over 4.17 million refugees came from East Bengal, while in the period between 1959–71 another 1.5 million sought refuge in India. In 1981 the West Bengal Government estimated the total number of East Bengal refugees in the state to be almost eight million people, which meant that one-sixth of the population of West Bengal was made up of refugees from Bangladesh, or the erstwhile East Bengal. The influx of such large numbers put considerable strain on the resources of West Bengal.[35] The 1951 Census observed that the rise in population which took place between 1946–51 in West Bengal because of refugee influx amounted to more than fifty years' of population increase due to normal growth.[36] As a consequence the population density of West Bengal increased by over 12 per cent, and this was particularly reflected in the landscape of Calcutta where the increase was of the order of 20 per cent.

As mentioned in Chapter Six, these refugees came in waves and their displacement was principally determined by the sense of insecurity which different classes of Hindus experienced at any given time in East Bengal. Among the first to leave were the Hindu upper and middle classes, as most had kinship and educational ties with Calcutta, and could look forward to picking up professions and trades there in the new surroundings. They left owing to fear of violent riots, persecution, and an overall sense of insecurity. However, after 1950 the problem of refugee rehabilitation acquired a somewhat different character. Most of those now crossing the border belonged to the agricultural classes. They came with few possessions, capital or skills and naturally craved for land upon which they could resettle.

However, there was very little evacuee property, as the number of Muslims who had left for East Bengal was far less than the Hindu refugees who were now seeking rehabilitation in West Bengal. The emigrating Muslims were also relatively poor and did not possess substantial immovable properties or land. Government responses to this influx were complex and did not go beyond providing relief which took the form of opening refugee camps to provide shelter and to hand out doles on a daily basis. In the absence of any concrete government plans for long-term rehabilitation, most refugees began to converge around the Calcutta area. Many no longer sought admission to government-run camps and before they could be identified, simply mingled with the vast crowd of humanity living in Calcutta, where an estimated 70 per cent of the total East Bengal refugees came to be concentrated. They sought out shelter according to their means and opportunities. The rich bought properties at offered prices. Those who could not afford such prices simply encroached on vacant land and built houses of sorts on their own. The even humbler strata set up squatter colonies on public land, which vastly extended the city's suburban areas and completely transformed its landscape. The poorest of the poor occupied Calcutta's parks, pavements and public buildings, and became the underclass and floating population of the city.[37]

Let us look closely at the squatter colonies which, in retrospect, provided the main form of rehabilitation for the bulk of the refugees who converged upon Calcutta. The squatter colonies started springing up in 1948 when groups of refugees collectively started a campaign to take over public land for shelter *(jabar dhakhal andolan)*. Such groups usually worked at night and encroached upon vacant public spaces. Under the cover of darkness huts would be built with incredible speed, plots earmarked and thatched shacks erected.[38] Colony 'committees' thereafter supervised the laying and cleaning of drains, the provision of water supplies and the overall management of the affairs of the colony.

The squatter colonies represented a common form of self-rehabilitation by the refugees. A typical example of such self-rehabilitation was the Manohar Colony near Calcutta. The colony exemplified initiative and enterprise: the refugees organized the reconstruction of all aspects of their lives on a cooperative basis.[39] Upon arrival each refugee family was 'registered' by the colony's 'central committee' on payment of a fee of Rs 10 per household. Plots were then allotted to enable each family to construct a hut. Hut making was carried out as a collective activity. The day to day management of the colony was carried out by its central committee which co-ordinated its activities with 'committees' of other squatter colonies in the vicinity.[40] Another such colony, fairly typical of refugee enterprise, was at Madhyagram, nineteen miles from Calcutta.[41] In this colony the 'committee' ran an upper primary school and organized co-operatives of carpenters and weavers. Residents helped each other in building houses and making available locally produced goods and services at cheap rates. So successful was the Madhyagram enterprise that a press correspondent expressed the optimism that it had the 'chances of developing into a prosperous suburban town'.[42]

By the early 1950s squatter colonies such as Manohar and Madhyagram occupied a large part of the landscape of greater Calcutta. They stretched from Kalyani in the north to Sonarpur in the south. Then, in the 1960s the squatter colonies spread to the west bank of the river Hoogly and to the surrounding districts of Nadia, Malda, Jalpaiguri and West Dinajpur. As a result the countryside around Calcutta was transformed in less than two decades into a huge urban sprawl. It is estimated that there are now 2,000 *bustees* or slums listed in the Calcutta Municipal Area: counting Howrah, the total exceeds 3,500 with some 2 million occupants. In the Calcutta Urban Agglomeration as a whole, the number of slum dwellers exceeds more than three million people. It is reckoned that each square kilometre of space in Calcutta is occupied, on an average, by 28,571 people. Over 51 per cent of the people live in thatched or semi-permanent dwelling, while the lowest income quartile occupy only 7 per cent of the city's land.[43] In all 49 per cent of the city's population live in its slums.[44] Of these slum dwellers, about 87 per cent are migrants, with the East Bengal refugees constituting a large part of the population.

Having seen how the physical landscape of Calcutta was transformed by partition, let us briefly look at the city's political landscape. The influx of refugees into metropolis transformed the configuration of its politics. As shown in Chapter Six, the refugees played a critical role in propelling the Communists to

power in West Bengal. Calcutta provided the foothold from where their bid for provincial power started. At the time of partition the Communists had been marginal players in Bengal politics. However, in the late 1940s and 1950s, they increasingly managed to expand their support base largely because of the strength gained by their championing the causes of marginal social groups like students and refugees. By the 1960s this support increasingly translated into electoral performance, and eventually led to political power. Thus a reconfiguration of Calcutta's political world occurred due to underlying demographic and physical changes which the city experienced following partition.

Certain aspects of the economic disruptions which Calcutta experienced merit a comment. The example of the jute industry is well known. Partition meant that all the jute mills which lay in the vicinity of Calcutta were cut off from their supply of raw jute, 90 per cent of which came from East Bengal.[45] Another example would be that of the Calcutta port. Calcutta's pre-eminence as a commercial city in the pre-partition period derived from its unique status as a seaport situated on a navigable river and linked by an elaborate network of rail and road connections.[46] These communication links gave Calcutta a command over a vast and densely populated hinterland which extended from the fertile Gangetic plains to the Brahmaputra valley.[47] Partition meant that the primary hinterland of the Calcutta port was cut by one-third. The implications of this for the city's fortunes can well be imagined.[48]

The overall results of these transformations were experienced in the 1960s when the realization grew that the city was in a state of deep crisis. With a chronic shortage of basic utilities such as water supply and drainage, and inadequate community facilities such as schools and hospitals, and an antiquated transport system, the city became irredeemably dysfunctional and overcrowded. Proliferating slums and squatter settlements aggravated its urban crisis and it became what has been described as an example of a 'working anarchy'.

Lahore: from Punjab's pride to border town

Of all the capital cities caught in the drama of partition, it was Lahore that experienced the worst of the violence and carnage that took place in 1947. It became the most disputed territory in the claims and counter claims that were made before the Boundary Commission. All three communities of the Punjab—Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus—staked a claim to it. The violence which Lahore experienced was unprecedented even by the horrific standards of 1947, and when it had subsided, what emerged was a city which had been completely 'cleansed' of its 'minority' communities.

Legend attributes the founding of Lahore to the times of the Hindu epic *Ramayana*. Written records, however, show that the city came to prominence from the eleventh century onwards and steadily rose in importance under the Mughuls who made it one of their royal residences. Jahangir established his court there and Shah Jahan constructed many of his monumental buildings.[49] Following the

collapse of the Mughal empire, the Sikhs under Ranjit Singh established an empire which extended from Afghanistan to Kashmir, with Lahore as its capital. When the British annexed the Punjab before the Mutiny, Lahore naturally became their headquarters and emerged over the nineteenth century as the undisputed first city of colonial Punjab. This historic importance of Lahore over the centuries derived from its strategic location on the Grand Trunk Road on the main route from Delhi to the Khyber Pass. It lay in the centre of the main food-producing belt of the Punjab and developed as the main commercial and manufacturing centre of the province.

On the eve of partition, Lahore found itself deeply divided in the communal antagonisms that entangled the three major communities of the Punjab. According to the 1941 census, the city had a majority of Muslim inhabitants who constituted 66 per cent of its population, while Hindus and Sikhs accounted for the rest. This figure was, however, contested by Congress and Sikh politicians who, in a bid to claim 'nearparity' status, produced before the Boundary Commission evidence based on 1945 ration card enumeration figures to show that Muslims constituted only 54 per cent of the city's population and that their claims of being an overwhelming majority were 'fictitious'.[50] Furthermore, they put forth the case that the notion of a demographic majority should not be considered paramount in deciding the fate of the city: instead what the Boundary Commission needed to do was to apply the principle of 'stake in land'. The Sikhs asserted that 'the claim of the non-Muslims on grounds of ownership of property, payment of taxation, trade and business and contribution to the development of education and other cultural institutions in the city of Lahore by far outweighs the population factor in the case of Lahore city'. 'The historic, cultural and linguistic affinities of Lahore', in their view, 'go with the Eastern Punjab'.[51]

The Hindu and Sikh communities jointly made the case that Lahore owed its economic, industrial and educational status to their enterprise and efforts expanded over several generations. They claimed that immovable properties in the city were predominantly owned by nonMuslims who paid 70 per cent of the urban property tax, and that their economic contributions were reflected in their 67 per cent ownership of shops and 80 per cent of all registered factories.[52] Further, it was asserted that non-Muslim traders paid eight times as much sales tax as Muslim traders. The banking and insurance sectors as well as the stock exchange, they pointed out, were dominated by non-Muslim communities.[53] These communities also claimed a substantial stake in cultural and educational spheres. Out of the forty private schools, only thirteen had been established by non-Muslims, and of the sixteen colleges of higher education, thirteen were run by non-Muslims. Similar assertions were made with regard to hospitals, libraries and other public institutions.[54] These claims were made, not just as bargaining counters, but with a certain degree of conviction. Chowdhury Mohammad Ali, the Pakistani civil servant, recalls in his memoirs that, so stubbornly did the Hindus and Sikhs cling to these claims, that they refused to prepare an alternative capital for East Punjab until the fate of Lahore was known.[55] However, there was something

fundamentally flawed with these arguments, as the Sikhs and the Congress seemed to confuse ownership of land and property with sovereignty over territory.[56]

Given these disputes, it was inevitable that Lahore experienced some of the most horrific acts of violence on a scale which shook the city to its foundations. Between March and December 1947, episodes of large-scale appalling violence and rioting took place in the city. The March-April riots which engulfed Lahore and its surrounding countryside proved to be a mere dress-rehearsal for the larger carnage that came after partition.[57] During the March-April riots Lahore became a city of murders and fires.[58]It is estimated that, out of a total of 82,000 houses within the Lahore municipal area, over 6,000 were burned down in these disturbances.[59] One reason why violence was particularly intense in Lahore was partly because of the great uncertainty that hung over the future of the city. Oskar Spate, who appeared before the Radcliffe commission on behalf of the Ahmadiya community in July-August 1947, found that 'Lahore was in the grip of that uncanny feeling of tension, half a breathless silent waiting, half a fever which preludes revolutionary events'.[60] Notwithstanding the curfew and the armoured vehicles which patrolled the main streets, he found that incidents of bombing and violence were on the rise. It was a city waiting to explode. Eye witness accounts remember that the night following the independence day celebrations in Lahore was marked by a crescendo of noises of *Allah Ho Akbar!* and Hindustan Zindabad! being heard intermittently.[61] All sorts of rumours about the fate of the city were floating around, and as the Boundary Commission award became known, the fate of the minorities was inevitably sealed.[62]

By late August 1947 over two-thirds of Hindu and Sikh families had evacuated the city. As 1947 drew to a close, the Hindu and Sikh communities were completely uprooted from Lahore. Their place was taken by Muslim refugees from East Punjab, Delhi and parts of Uttar Pradesh. Given its location, the city became the point of entry of refugees into West Pakistan. Its population increased, but Lahore was able to absorb the shock because of the large number of evacuee houses which existed. However, the breakup of the Punjab took away much of the political importance of Lahore. This diminished political status of the city was reflected in various spheres. For instance, its university, secretariat and high court, medical colleges and hospitals and research and technical institutions were divided. Its cultural and social life, which had been much invigorated by the energies of Hindu and Sikh communities, received a setback in the late 1940s.

The economic consequences of partition for the city were severe too. Many institutions, banks and corporate organizations relocated from the city. The majority of its factories closed down and their plant and buildings were destroyed or abandoned in the disturbances. The bulk of the skilled manpower left, banks and financial institutions ceased functioning, and there was a massive flight of capital.[63] A survey carried out in 1950 revealed that Lahore as a centre of economic activity was a shadow of its former self: even after three years only 27 per cent of its manufacturing units were working, and then only partially; their working capital had shrunk by almost 60 per cent, and the industrial force employed in them had

declined by 73 per cent. Industrial output, in spite of the authorities' vigorous efforts, stood only at one-third of pre-partition levels. As Lahore became a border district, it saw a flight of capital and a relocation of industry.[64] Its relative economic position within the regional economy weakened: before partition 40 per cent of the total factories in the 'Pakistan areas' had been located in Lahore but this declined to less than 33 per cent by 1950. Lahore lost out in the race for industrialization, as its proximity to an active and hostile border made investors reluctant to set up business there.

This geographical handicap had another profound implication for the political fortunes of the city. It meant that Lahore lost out as a serious contender for selection as the national capital of Pakistan, because it lay only seventeen miles away from the Indian border. Its historic importance within the region that constituted West Pakistan was disregarded and the federal capital taken to faraway Karachi. This was ironic, as it was in Lahore's Minto Park in 1940 that the Muslim League had adopted its famous Pakistan Resolution. Lahore's continuation as the provincial capital of West Punjab did little to alleviate its status. In 1955 Lahore's position was somewhat redeemed when all the provinces of West Pakistan were integrated into a 'single-unit' and Lahore made its capital.[65] However, in April 1970 the concept of single-unit West Pakistan was given up and it was split up again into the four provinces of Punjab, Sind, Baluchistan and NWFP. Lahore reverted once again to becoming the provincial capital of a truncated Punjab. Having been the heart of undivided Punjab and historically the most important city in the whole of Pakistan, it could not overcome its handicap of proximity to the Indian border.

Today Lahore's erstwhile historic importance remains enshrined in architectural monuments of marble and sandstone built by its successive Mughal, Sikh and British overlords. These stand testimony as mute witnesses to the glorious times experienced by the city. The new masters of Lahore, in recognition of the city's loss of status, have nonetheless sought to compensate it at least symbolically by adding three 'national' memo rials. The first of these is the Iqbal Mausoleum, which honours Alama Mohammad Iqbal (1873–1938), the poet-philosopher who provided the spiritual inspiration for the idea of a separate Muslim state of Pakistan. Built in 1951, its white marble dome reflects a mixture of Afghan and Moorish styles and occupies a prominent site next to the famous Badshahi Mosque. Not far away stands the *Minar-i-Pakistan* (Tower of Pakistan) which marks the spot where on 24 March 1940 the All India Muslim League passed its historic resolution demanding a separate state of Pakistan. The *Minar,* which was completed in March 1968, rises above a platform shaped like a five-pointed star enclosed by two crescent-shaped pools and provides a panoramic view of the city. Marble slabs in its central shaft have inscriptions narrating a brief history of the struggle for Pakistan and contain the text of the Lahore Resolution in English, Urdu and Bengali. Finally, the latest national monument to embellish Lahore's skyline is the *Summit Minar* which commemorates the Second Islamic Summit held in February 1977. A 48 m. high tower built in front of the Punjab Assembly chambers, the *Minar*

celebrates Islamic brotherhood and unity and symbolically asserts Pakistan's place within the international Islamic community.[66]

While these architectural symbols have embellished the landscape of Lahore, they have failed to compensate for the loss of status which the city has undergone after partition. Prior to partition Punjabis made sense of the region's urban order according to a familiar hierarchy in which Lahore was often described as the *Raja* (king) and Amritsar as the *Vazir* (prime minister), symbolizing their close ties as twin cities, while Ludhiana was somewhat uncharitably referred to as the *Fakir* (literally mendicant), a comment on its low status. Partition displaced Lahore from its undisputed 'royal' status as the first city of undivided Punjab, and at present the city seems reconciled to its situation as a border town.

Karachi: from 'stop-gap' capitol to 'city of the dead'?

Karachi represents yet another instance of a dramatic landscape transformation brought about by partition. Originally a fishing village facing the Arabian sea, it was discovered by the British and came under their possession in 1843.[67] Because of its splendid natural harbour, it soon developed into a major commercial hub serving the large hinterland of Sind and Punjab.[68] During the two World Wars, its strategic importance grew both as an imperial naval base and as a refuelling halt for civil and military aircraft. Although a major commercial city by the 1940s, Karachi had not been administratively important and had been no more than a district town. However, when in 1937 Sind was separated from Bombay and became a province in its own right, Karachi was elevated to the status of the capital of the new province. This accelerated its growth and led to the expansion of its infrastructure. However, in the mid-1940s nobody could predict that Karachi's fortunes would rise so high that it would become the federal capital of Pakistan, with its jurisdiction extending over both the wings of the newly-independent nation.

Following partition the decision to establish Pakistan's federal capital at Karachi was not an easy one. The Muslim League leadership carefully weighed its options and considered several other cities before deciding in favour of Karachi. Dacca had been mentioned as a possibility and Bengali politicians reportedly tried hard to advance the argument that, based on East Bengal's numerical strength, the honour should go to Dacca.[69] Bengal though had always been a backwater in the movement for Pakistan, whose core undoubtedly lay in its western wing. Dacca's case, in a sense, had been doomed from the very start. Besides Dacca there were other serious contenders as well. For instance, Mohammad Akram Khan, editor of the *Daily Shams*, urged Jinnah in June 1947:

> Now that the establishment of the sovereign Muslim State of Pakistan is practically settled, the selection of a capital for it becomes an urgent question. Formerly, Lahore was often mentioned as the probable choice but the partition of the Punjab, and especially the exclusion of Amritsar District,

definitely rules out Lahore geographically, strategically and politically. It would be situated in an unsafe extremity of Pakistan.

Recently the name of Karachi has been frequently mentioned. No doubt Karachi is the largest city in Pakistan and from climatic point of view, perhaps the most suitable place, but geographically, Karachi is also situated at another extremity and does not command a central position. It can appropriately be called the 'Gateway of Pakistan'; but surely it cannot claim to be its heart. Moreover, until Pakistan builds a strong Navy, it would not be strategically sound to have the capital of the State in a coastal town.

Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar and Quetta will remain the capitals of the four Provinces. Obviously, it would not be desirable to have the headquarters of Pakistan at any of these provincial capitals. Ruling out Karachi and on that score the other three as well, the two largest cities of Pakistan are Rawalpindi and Multan. Rawalpindi again lies near another extremity and, therefore, Multan is left as the only choice.

Geographically, Multan occupies the most central position in Pakistan and is almost equidistant from all the four provincial capitals. While Karachi is the 'Gateway', Lahore the 'Corner-stone', and Peshawar and Quetta the 'Sword-arms', Multan is literally the 'Heart of Pakistan'—and a warm heart no doubt. It lies in a predominantly Muslim and strategically safe area.[70]

Khan went on to extol the virtues of Multan as 'the most ancient and historical city in Pakistan', with long traditions of having remained a capital city of earlier kingdoms. Popularly known as Multan Sharif, it was in his view the 'holiest city in Pakistan' as it had tombs of *pirs* and divines and was an important centre of pilgrimage. It was, he continued, a commercial centre for internal and central Asian trade and was 'situated in the most fertile agricultural tract in Pakistan'. In overall terms, Khan was convinced that it was the 'most suitable place to become the capital of Pakistan'. He, therefore, urged Jinnah to designate it as the new capital and build a new city adjacent to it to be called 'Multan-i-Jadeed' (New Multan) in the same way that the British had developed their imperial capital at New Delhi. The selection of Multan, Khan claimed, would 'obviate inter-provincial jealousy' and 'offer a very convenient solution' to the problem of finding a suitable site for the capital city. He asserted that his proposal was actuated not by 'territorial patriotism', but based on 'solid logical grounds'.

In terms of real calculations, however, Multan was never in the reckoning. Lahore certainly proved to be a strong contender and enjoyed excellent credentials for the job; indeed its inhabitants pleaded that, notwithstanding short-term difficulties, the city be designated the new national capital.[71] The whole of Punjab was now in turmoil, and the epicentre of the troubles seemed to lie in the districts surrounding Lahore. At a time when the armed forces themselves were being divided, nobody could guarantee that the seat of the new government, if it were to be established in Lahore, would not collapse amidst anarchy and chaos. Most significantly, as we have seen, Lahore had been a contested city in the claims and

counter claims made in the submissions to the Radcliffe Commission. In a legal sense, the fate of the city hung in balance till the Boundary Award was announced. Lahore's close proximity to the Indian border though, above all, foreclosed the option of its selection as Pakistan's federal capital.

Karachi, on the other hand, had remained a relative haven of tranquillity when violence engulfed other parts of West Pakistan. Its dryer climate and cosmopolitan atmosphere born out of being a city of commerce also commended it. The city could boast of a nucleus of administrative buildings, which was what a central government suddenly faced with the problem of housing the offices of an entire state needed. It also had room for expansion, and building materials readily available for further construction. Its port and aviation facilities were as good as any Asian city could boast at that time. Lying half-way between Istanbul and Kuala Lumpur, Karachi lay almost at the centre of the Muslim world with ease of access not only to South Asia but also the Middle East.[72] These considerations were uppermost in the minds of Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan when they announced that 'the Muslim League has decided to locate the headquarters of the Pakistan Government temporarily at Karachi'. They, however, urged Mountbatten to provide military assistance in making arrangements for transportation, provision of housing, telephones, and so on.[73] Desperate 'to get Karachi going as capital of Pakistan as quickly as possible', Jinnah demanded that British military units put up hutments on an emergency basis in the new capital.[74] To prepare Karachi as the federal capital of Pakistan was, Liaquat Ali Khan declared, 'a matter of great importance and of the highest urgency' and he wanted 'the whole weight of the Government machinery [is] put behind this project'.[75]

However, in reality the burden of establishing the federal Pakistani Government fell on the Muslim League provincial ministry in Sind. In Ayesha Jalal's words, 'the Sind League ministry, whether out of patriotism or plain calculation, offered to house the Pakistan central government.' The Sind cabinet visited Jinnah in Delhi for consultations and to fully understand the requirements. It was decided that the Sind provincial government would vacate its buildings in Karachi and move to Hyderabad, which had been the capital of Sind in pre-British days.[76] Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah, the Sind premier, took personal responsibility for overseeing the arrangements.[77] However, as Jalal points out, when the new government assembled in Karachi, it had to begin its existence not in portals of magnificence commonly associated with capital cities, but in tented accommodation. Mountbatten had casually remarked that the new government of Pakistan would have to make do with a 'tent'. In Jalal's words, 'in the desperate search for a suitable camping ground to pitch the Pakistan government's proverbial "tent", Karachi was an obvious choice, as it was 'the closest thing to a cosmopolitan centre in the areas constituting Pakistan'.[78] Pakistan's machinery of government, according to her, thus began its existence 'without any ground under its feet or a roof over its head'.[79] The government, according to those who were present in the 1947–50 period, literally operated out of packing crates and in hastily constructed hutments.

Somehow, the new government managed to survive administrative anarchy in this makeshift capital.

Karachi's new status was confirmed when on 22 May 1948 the Constituent Assembly resolved that the city would be Pakistan's permanent capital and that it would be taken out of Sind to become a centrally-administered area.[80] No compensation was offered to Sind. Karachi's separation, according to Ayesha Jalal, led to 'Sindhi outrage' and soon became 'the symbol of Sindhi antagonism towards the new centre.' 'The wave of anger that swept through Sindh helped embitter relations between Sindhi and non-Sindhi speakers'.[81] The seeds of the bitter strife that was later to divide the city between Sindhis and Muhajirs had been sown.

Partition clearly came as a turning-point in the fortunes of Karachi. Karachi became a city of subcontinental importance and even politicians from East Bengal maintained houses there.[82] Its population increased dramatically as a result of the influx of refugees. At the time of the 1941 census, its population had stood at 435,000 people. Four years after partition, when the 1951 census was taken, Urdu-speaking refugees who came to be known as Muhajirs made up 55 per cent of its population, which had swelled to over 1.12 million, reflecting a 144.2 per cent increase. The surge in population continued throughout the 1950s, albeit at a slower decennial rate of 79 per cent growth, and its population in 1961 stood at 2.04 million. By 1981 6 per cent of Pakistan's total national population and 24 per cent of its urban population came to be concentrated in Karachi: on current estimates, this is reckoned to be about 11 million.

Although Karachi had provided a foothold to the Pakistani federal government, a sense of unease persisted throughout the 1950s regarding its suitability as the national capital. Even almost a decade after partition, the city remained ill-fitted to discharge its overwhelming job as many government offices and important ministries remained unsuitably housed in temporary buildings or private houses apportioned by the government. Throughout the late 1940s and much of the 1950s, plans were made to decongest Karachi, and to develop its physical infrastructure by building at a new site at Gadhap, 23 miles away from the old city.[83] Based upon several studies by renowned architects, including one by Sir Patrick Abercrombie, these plans envisaged a government suburb of parliament and administrative buildings, together with a diplomatic enclave and residential quarters. A distinctive feature of the plan was a proposed link which would connect the old and new cities and serve as a unifying element. The axis of the plan lay in a huge open space with a capacity for one million people to congregate for prayers and national events. In its centre, as a symbolic focal point, was to be placed the monument to *Quaid-i-Azam* Mohammad Ali Jinnah. A parliamentary complex was planned on a hill called Dharam Tal, and blueprints were made for other buildings too. It was expected that Karachi would 'in time coalesce with Gadhap, much as New and Old Delhi have recently done'.[84]

Political developments jeopardized this plan however, and only certain buildings like the Quaid-i-Azam Memorial were constructed. Furthermore, Karachi's status as the federal capital came under threat In October 1958, following a military coup,

General Ayub Khan took over the government, and in less than three months he appointed a commission to consider the relocation of the federal capital. After four months of deliberations this commission, headed by General Yahya Khan, pronounced that Karachi was not suitable to continue as the federal capital of Pakistan. It recommended a new site adjacent to Rawalpindi in the Punjab.[85] In October 1959, on the first anniversary of the military takeover, Ayub Khan announced that the federal capital would be shifted to a new city which was to develop as a twin city of Rawalpindi.

What were the reasons behind the shift? Ayub Khan himself remarks in his autobiography that Karachi 'has an enervating climate which saps ones energy and efficiency. This, along with the unhygienic conditions prevailing throughout the city, had a serious effect on the health of the government servants. The whole administration looked worn out in the first few years.' Karachi, he observes:

> became a centre of agitational politics: politicians found that they could collect mobs with the help of industrialists and businessmen and bring all kinds of pressures to bear on the government. A time came when one large public meeting attended by a riotous mob could determine the fate of the government. Constant contact with businessmen had a corrupting influence on government servants and many of them succumbed to temptation. Also the Central Government servants got embroiled in the affairs of Karachi's local administration.[86]

A real insight into the reasons underlying the shift is, however, provided by Sir Morrice James who was the then British High Commissioner in Pakistan. Sir Morrice recalls that Ayub Khan:

> hated the Karachi climate, both moral and meteorological. He believed that Pakistan should be run from somewhere else. Moreover, as a general who had made himself the president and who depended for his continuance in office on the support of the Army, he had the strongest of motives for keeping in close touch with his colleagues, the other generals at Army Headquarters in Rawalpindi. What one army commander and chief had done some other very senior officer might one day be tempted to try...To remove himself permanently to a city 900 miles away would be the height of imprudence.[87]

Already in 1948 some army commanders at Rawalpindi had unsuccessfully attempted to stage a coup, and in 1951 Liaquat Ali Khan, the first prime minister, had been assassinated in a conspiracy which could never be unravelled. In the light of these, Ayub could take no risk. He thus decreed that, rather than wait for the new capital to be built, the seat of government be moved forthwith to Rawalpindi. This, in the view of Sir Morrice, was 'like trying to fit a bureaucratic quart into a military pint pot'. Jalal's work on the origins of martial rule in Pakistan provides

hints of a 'shift in the balance of advantage in favour of the general headquarters in Rawalpindi.' She writes that:

> Ayub found it cumbersome to get clearance from Karachi—'a hotbed of intrigues'—for military decisions he took sitting 800 miles away. The telephone network in Pakistan was not the most efficient or the safest way of communicating. As for traveling in poorly maintained military aircraft to Karachi, that was an experience one could do without.[88]

It may be suggested that this shift of the capital was symbolic of a deeper transformation which Pakistan's polity was experiencing at that time. At one level, it marked the end of Muhajir domination of the country's leadership. It is worth recalling that the top leaders in the initial years of Pakistan had all been Muhajirs. These had included Liaquat Ali Khan, Chundigar, Mahmud Hasan, Iskandar Mirza, Hasan Suhrawardy, Ibrahim Rahimtoola and others. In the 1950s, particularly after Liaquat Ali Khan's assassination, Muhajir influence began to decline.[89] The erosion of the Muslim League as a party of the 'old guard' was itself symptomatic of this diminished influence. Ayub Khan's 'basic democracy' constitution of 1962 'disadvantaged the Muhajirs by providing an outlet to the vernacular elite'.[90] The shift of the capital away from Karachi, in a sense, reflected these larger changes. It cost the Muhajirs jobs and cuts in government subsidies and reduced the easy access which they had all along enjoyed to the federal government. Overall it meant a shrinking of state patronage for the Muhajirs.

All these developments coincided with the growing clout of the Punjabis who have since dominated the politics of Pakistan. The military takeover of 1958 formally inaugurated the era of this dominance. Over the years it is the Punjabis who have acted as the 'Prussians' within the Pakistani polity and the Punjabi-military nexus is now well documented in the works of several scholars.[91] It can therefore be said that by the late 1950s, due to the stresses and strains which Pakistani politics had experienced, there had been a tendency towards centralization and greater civil-military integration. The shift of the capital away from Karachi could be seen as another manifestation of this civil-military integration. It is extremely significant that the capital was shifted to a site next to Rawalpindi, which was not just the headquarters of the Pakistani army, but lay in the very heartland of Punjab. The selection of a site in Punjab symbolized that the seat of the government would henceforth lie in the core area of Pakistan, that is Punjab, rather than in the insular and peripheral Karachi. It also meant greater patronage to the Punjabis, and by implication it implied the withdrawal of patronage to the Muhajirs. The Punjabi civil-military ruling elite stood to gain from turning its back on the Muhajirs, as it now suited its interests in appeasing the rising aspirations of Sindhi nationalism which was gaining strength and which potentially could become its subordinate partner.

Before we pursue the story of how the new Pakistani capital developed, it would be worthwhile to reflect on the serious social and political consequences which the

shift of the capital have caused for Karachi. We have already taken note of the demographic explosion which Karachi experienced due to the influx of the refugees following partition. Between 1941–61 its population grew by an astounding 432 per cent, a rate of growth which, the geographer Oskar Spate remarks, no other city any where else in the world at any time in human history has ever experienced.[92] As Urdu-speaking refugees from India, who came to be known as Muhajirs, increasingly came to dominate the city, it was inevitable that competition and rivalry with the local Sindhi communities would follow.[93] With their claims for preferential treatment, their higher levels of education and skills, their representation in the bureaucratic and political systems, and their assertions of cultural superiority, the Muhajirs could not assimilate themselves with the original inhabitants of Karachi. With changing equations in Pakistan's politics, their feelings of estrangement, which had remained somewhat muted in the 1960s and 1970s, increasingly began to find a political expression.[94] A single episode symbolically captures the change in the position of the Muhajirs: in August 1979 Altaf Hussain, then a twenty-five year old youth, went to the Quaid-i-Azam Memorial where before a small crowd, he unfolded the green and white Pakistani flag with the crescent symbol and, in a statement of defiance, set fire to it.[95] The act was symbolic of renouncing the old Muhajir identity for which the *Quaid-i-Azam* had stood, which emphasized national unity within an overarching Islamic faith and repudiated linguistic and regional distinctions. Altaf Hussain, who later was to found the *Muhajir Quami Mahaz* (Muhajir People's Movement or the MQM), declared that the Muhajirs were a separate and distinct people who should be recognized as a separate ethnic entity constituting the 'fifth nationality' within Pakistan much in the same way as the Sindhis, Punjabis, Baluchis and Pathans.

As the 1980s dawned, the 'ethnic' divide in the city increasingly turned violent, and in the 1990s it broke out into open insurgency. In recent years violence has been on such a scale that more people have been killed in Karachi than in Bosnia.[96] *'An Explosion Waiting to Happen', 'Cityof Death'* are headlines of news reports which give details of the grim state of affairs in present-day Karachi, and all these inevitably trace the roots of the crisis to the events of 1947.[97]

Islamabad: the 'super cantonment'

To return to the story of the new capital, the decision to build at the new site, which was seven miles from Rawalpindi, was taken in February 1959 and was made public in June that year. Once the site of the new city had been settled, planning and construction work progressed at a frantic pace.[98] The Greek architect and town-planner C.A.Doxiadis, who had been involved with planning the Korangi refugee colony at Karachi, was entrusted with the responsibility for preparing the master plan. Spread over an area of 2,210 acres, the new capital was to be a statement of Pakistan's nationalist aspirations and its quest for modernity, while reflecting its Islamic spirit and character. The Federal Capital Commission loftily declared:

> The capital of a country is not merely another city, it is a leader amongst cities. To this city come leaders of administration and politics, of commerce and trade, of literature and art, of religion and science. From this city flows the inspiration which pulsates life into the nation. It is the symbol of our hopes. It is the mirror of our desires. It is the heart and soul of the nation. It is, therefore, essential that the environments of the capital should be such as to ensure continued vitality in the nation.[99]

Initially, the city had not been given a name and was referred to as the 'new federal capital', although several suggestions had been made about its new name, including Ayubabad![100] However, Ayub Khan chose to call it 'Islamabad' (City of Islam) in a conscious attempt to emphasize the unifying symbolism of Islam. 'Utility is important', Ayub Khan declared

> but at the same time the capital of a country has to encompass much bigger vistas, and provide light and direction to the efforts of the people. With the two provinces of Pakistan separated as they are, there is greater need to bring the people to a common platform. The thing to do was to take them to a new place altogether.

To him Islamabad signified 'not just the building of a city' but 'an opportunity to unite the people of Pakistan, and to give them the right environment in which to produce the right results'.[101]

Psychological and symbolic factors played a paramount part in the building of the city and the form it took. Ayub Khan and his colleagues assembled world-class experts to give shape to their vision of Pakistan's national capital. Among the 'big names' drafted for the Islamabad project were Doxiadis and Associates for the overall master plan, Sir Robert Matthew and Partners for regional planning, Derek Lovejoy for landscaping and Arne Jacobsen, Louis Kahn and Gio Ponti for important individual buildings.[102] The Doxiadis plan, submitted in October 1960, conceived a 'dyna-metropolis' extending over 17 sq. miles. It envisaged that Islamabad and Rawalpindi would develop as 'twin cities serving each other in complementary ways. Islamabad will be the capital of the nation and will serve mainly administrative and cultural functions' while 'Rawalpindi will remain the regional centre serving industrial and commercial fimctions'.[103] The plan was 'of a city expanding in a linear fanshape from an initial focal point' and took into account the uncertainty of dynamic growth, with population projections left open for upward revision.[104] At its core lay the sectoral concept with a hierarchy of functions. Each sector spread over 1.5 sq. miles and comprised a shopping centre, school, mosque and other facilities for a self-contained community.

Naturally, the core of the Doxiadis plan lay in the administrative sectors which included the president's palace, secretariat, parliament house, national library, an armed services' museum, ministerial buildings, and a diplomatic enclave. The buildings of all the ministries were aligned on a single main highway. The focal

point of this administrative megalopolis undoubtedly was the 'President's House' which sprawled over a 40,000 sq. yd estate. 'From the top of its red mound of earth it is supposed to dominate Capitol Avenue, and its nearest surroundings: the secretariats on the northern side, and a group of cultural buildings in the south'.[105] The position and the scale of the presidential palace is such that the resemblance with Viceroy's House in New Delhi is striking, and this according to one observer merely reflects 'the political reality the project was based on', as the president's status under the 1962 Constitution was 'quite comparable with that held by the Viceroy in British India before the reforms of 1919: the president was not responsible to the general assembly and he had the right of veto'.[106]

The city's overall spatial arrangements and its buildings amply reflected its bureaucratic character. The 'enormous amount of space allotted to the offices, amounting to 1 million sq. ft, is a clear indication of the power exercised by the bureaucracy'. Housing in the city reproduced the hierarchies of officialdom which corresponded strictly to income and status; inhabitants were assigned a residence according to their salary and twelve different types of houses served to distinguish the 'peons from the Nabobs'. As economic and social considerations had largely been ignored while planning the city, it was to be expected that Islamabad would become 'a one-industry city of Government'.[107] Given these features, it is hardly surprising that 'most people find Islamabad depressing and rigid, and would be unable to find their way except for the mass of signposts.' Notwithstanding these criticisms, Islamabad has been successful in achieving the singular objective which underlay its creation. The federal government of Pakistan, after establishing itself amidst unprecedented anarchy and upheaval in a city which could only be a makeshift capital, has at last found at Islamabad a base which it could call a home.

Chandigarh: 'Temple of New India'

> Oh Chandigarh
> Brave new Chandigarh
> Born in the harsh plains of the Punjab without umbilical cord.
> (Charles Correa, 'Chandigarh: The View from Benaras')

Like Islamabad, Chandigarh is another city that was called into existence directly because of circumstances created by partition.[108] When the partitioners' axe truncated the Punjab into two, among the dispossessed was the newly-constituted provincial government of East Punjab, which had to move from Lahore, undivided Punjab's capital city, to find a base somewhere east of the Radcliffe line in Indian Punjab. In the midst of the violence which engulfed the region during partition, the Government of East Punjab initially took refuge at Simla, which had been the provincial summer capital, while many of its subordinate offices reassembled at Jullundhur, Ambala, Kalka and other locations. However, these arrangements proved to be grossly inadequate, and the absence of a permanent headquarters

seriously hampered the government's effective functioning. For some months, the idea persisted among Indian leaders that the Capitol function could be added to one of the existing cities in East Punjab. Several cities like Amritsar, Ambala, Jullundhur and Ludhiana were considered but each of these was rejected on the grounds of poor physical infrastructure and limited potential for the scale of expansion needed for establishing a capital city.[109] Moreover, the municipal infrastructure of these had been over-stretched due to the massive refugee influx and even basic facilities like water and sanitation were lacking. The case for building a new, fully-fledged capital city, increasingly seemed persuasive, even though to some it appeared to be an extravagant enterprise.

To the unsuitability of the old towns were added several arguments which favoured the building of a new capital. The city would provide a healthy and conducive environment for the several million urban refugees waiting to be resettled; it could in some ways compensate them for the loss of Lahore, which many of them felt acutely. Construction and public works would generate employment and stimulate the province's economy, which had been ravaged by the dislocations caused by partition.[110] To these rather practical considerations were added compelling psychological reasons. Norma Evenson, in her architectural study of Chandigarh, observes that, more than the practical considerations influencing the decision to build the new capital, was the overwhelming psychological need at that time to make a dramatic, symbolic gesture. She writes:

> Of more significance than practical considerations in influencing the decision to build a new city, however, may have been the need at this time for such a symbolic gesture. India, filled with new national pride, needed focal points for unity; the Punjabis needed a lift for their morale. The new city, coming into existence in a time of disorder and uncertainty, could stand as the tangible embodiment of the will to maintain a stable society. Above all, the creation of a new city is a gift to the future. The colonial yoke had been thrown off, and the moment had arrived for India to show the world she could stand alone, that she could command her own destiny and govern her own house, and that against the brutality of nature and the vastness of her continent she could impress an ordered yet viable pattern of human life—proof that Indian civilization, though ancient, was still vigorous and creative.[111]

The need to anchor the fledgling new Government of East Punjab, to uplift the morale and pride of Punjabis who had been traumatized by the experience of partition, and to focus people's hopes and aspirations to help them overcome the difficulties they were facing, all these considerations coalesced to persuade the Indian leadership to persist in their dream of building a new capital.[112]

Once the decision to build a new city was taken, events moved swiftly. In March 1948, after an extensive aerial survey, a site for the new capital was selected 240 km north of Delhi in Ambala district at the foot of the Shivalik hills. A tract of 114

sq. km of land was acquired for the new capital.[113] The site was an agricultural tract full of mango groves and its takeover itself entailed the displacement of about 21,000 people settled in twenty-four villages. One of these villages had a shrine dedicated to the Goddess Chandi, which gave the new city its name (*Chandi,* Goddess of Power+ *Garh,* fortress). Although the city is linked with the name of Le Corbusier, the Swiss-born French architect and exponent of the Modernist school, the responsibility of designing Chandigarh was first given to Albert Mayer, an American architect who had been active for some years in India in various developmental schemes.[114] Mayer's brief was to prepare a master plan for a city of half a million people, with designated areas for residence, business, industry and recreation as well as the drafting of detailed building plans for the Capitol Complex. Acutely aware of the complex nature of the project, Mayer inducted several American experts to assist him, including Matthew Nowicki, then head of the North Carolina State College of Architecture. Mayer and Nowicki soon became the key American planners for Chandigarh. Together, they evolved a master plan which conceived of a fan-shaped outline for the proposed city spreading gradually to fill the site which lay between two seasonal river beds. At the head of the plan, they situated the Capitol Complex, while they placed the city centre in its heart.

In its first phase, Chandigarh was to accommodate 150,000 residents while in the second phase, another 350,000 people who were to be located in the south-western side. Their plan for the Capitol Complex included a monumental piazza containing the legislative assembly, the governor's palace and the high court, all three to be placed along a visual axis. For the Assembly, the centrepiece in their composition, Mayer and Nowicki created a design topped by a parabolic dome inspired by the *stupa,* a powerful motif in traditional Indian religious architecture. Ironically, their master plan did not see fruition due to a sudden and tragic twist of events. Nowicki died in a plane crash, and later that year Mayer withdrew on the plea that he felt unable to handle the monumental project alone. The stage was set for Le Corbusier to appear on the scene.

Unlike Mayer who intimately knew Indian conditions, Le Corbusier had never set foot in India. When he was approached by R N.Thapar and P.L. Verma, the two officials in charge of the Capital Project Administration, Le Corbusier had offered his services off-site, and reportedly even expressed some reluctance to come to India. He believed that, sitting in his studio in Paris, he could design the buildings; in his view the site and 'local conditions' did not really matter. In February 1951, when he did visit the site and camped there with his colleagues, he redesigned the city, based on the Mayer-Nowicki sketches, in four days of feverish activity.

Le Corbusier's modernist stance in approaching the design of Chandigarh found ready support in no less a person than the Indian prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. Nehru and the entire Congress leadership had deeply felt the tragedy caused by partition in the Punjab, and the prime minister took a keen personal interest in the new capital. He recognized the importance of building new institutions and creating modern housing for the refugees. He envisaged a modern and efficient

city, with up to date services, sewerage and transport, which would liberate Indians from the overcrowded and filthy urban environment of colonial cities. Le Corbusier, who created some of his most dramatic and monumental works in Chandigarh, felt that his mandate came from Nehru himself who spoke of Chandigarh as 'reaching beyond the existing encumbrances of old towns and old traditions' and as 'the first large expressions of our creative genius, founded on our newly earned freedom'. Through all stages in the building of Chandigarh, much of the impetus came from the enthusiasm of Nehru who said: 'Let this be a new town, symbolic of the freedom of India, unfettered by the traditions of the past.... an expression of the nation's faith in the future.' For Nehru the new city's name was 'symbolic of the valiant spirit of the Punjabis. Chandigarh is rightly associated with the name of Goddess Chandi; Shakti, or power.' It was to be a showpiece of liberal and modern India, to be eulogized by Nehru as a 'temple of New India'.[115]

The focal point in Le Corbusier's plan for the city lay in the Capitol Complex, which received his maximum attention. From several accounts it appears that he spent his utmost energies on the design of the Capitol Complex, while giving minimal attention to the city itself. The distinguished Indian architect Charles Correa writes that 'Le Corbusier was not really a planner at all, but an architect *manqué*. According to Correa, Le Corbusier

> decoupled the four buildings of the Capitol Complex from the city and placed them against the foothills of the Himalayas, thus setting himself an intriguing architectural exercise, perhaps the most exquisite architectural exercise of all, one that took him back to his student voyages to Greece and to the Acropolis of Athens'.[116]

The original plan of the Capitol Complex had included four principal buildings: the Governor's Palace (which was never built), the Secretariat, the *Vidhan Sabha* and the High Court, each of which was designed on a monumental scale in the unabashedly Modernist style which was a Corbusian hallmark. Each was unique in the boldness of the architectural statement it seemed to be making. The Secretariat building, for instance, is described by Correa as 'a monumental façade that was its own justification, the ramp on the roof acting as an immense backbone, holding the marvellously long, fractured ungainly heap together'. In making such dramatic architectural statements he showed himself to be 'not really concerned with the Indian psyche'. Correa writes of Le Corbusier:

> After all, he was a Mediterranean man, and the Capitol buildings were part of that astonishing series of consecutive steps that make up his oeuvre complete. Thus, both as an architect and as a person, Le Corbusier remained one whose deepest instincts were intensely European. Take, for example, the High Court in Chandigarh with its great entrance recalling, among other things, the fantastic Buland Darwaza at the entrance to Fatehpur Sikri. With these monumental, superscaled spaces and volumes, Le Corbusier (perhaps

> unconsciously) projects an ambience conducive not to any Indian sense of justice but to the Napoleonic code: that is, justice that is suprahuman, justice that is blind, justice that is beyond the individual.[117]

Beyond the Capitol Complex, Le Corbusier's major contribution lay in his concept of the sector around which he evolved a formal grid-pattern and evolved the city's masterplan. He regarded the sector as the 'key of modern urbanism, the container of modern life'. Each sector was to be a neighbourhood unit which, according to Norma Evenson, ' issued from an ancestral and valid geometry established in the past on the stride of a man, an ox, or a horse, but hence to be adapted to mechanical speeds'. The city was divided into twenty-nine sectors, each of which was conceived as a selfcontained community with facilities for daily human routines. Le Corbusier liked to compare the city's design to a biological entity: the head was the Capitol; the city centre was the heart and work areas were the limbs. These corresponded to the four basic functions of a city which were identified as: living, working, circulation and care of the body and spirit. For 'circulation' among these 'bodily functions' he worked out a seven tier hierarchy of roads which he looked upon as arteries. Thus, roads and traffic flows were planned to avoid congestion and to prevent future urban problems.

The housing that was planned, however, followed a strict social hierarchy, as thirteen different classes of houses existed. This classification was based on official status, and in this regard Chandigarh could not make a break from the tradition of New Delhi whose spatial arrangements were dictated by rank and status in the imperial ceremonial order.[118] In those sectors where the elite housing was situated, 'criminally low densities of building were planned' giving the city an ambience which, in the words of Correa, is 'positively feudal in its iron-clad separation of rulers and the ruled, in the caste-ridden patterns of its sectors'.

Chandigarh was planned essentially as a government city to be exclusively devoted to administration and education, with a maximum target of half a million residents. Of the 114 sq. km, the Capitol Complex and its buffer constituted 75 sq. km. The master plan envisaged that, in the first phase the city was to be developed on the northeastern side to accommodate 150,000 residents and the during the second phase on the southwestern side for another 350,000 people. By the early 1950s, as building works for the first phase came to be completed and the Punjab Government took up residence, its population grew rapidly, reaching 89,000 in 1961; by 1971 it stood at 218,000. According to the latest census of 1991, the city's population is 576,000, making it the third largest city in Indian Punjab after Ludhiana and Amritsar. Two important townships of Mohali and Panchkula have grown in its proximity, and by the year 2000 Chandigarh's population is projected to be in the region of 1 million people.

Finally, a word about the rich symbolism which Le Corbusier created in Chandigarh, which has been the subject of much controversy.[119] The Capitol Complex, for instance, stands aloof and dominates the city's landscape. It has been remarked that the size and the solidity of their structures symbolizes power, the

power of the state over its citizens. These buildings, according to Ravi Kalia, 'provoke a feeling of awe' as 'the structures have come to represent concrete figures of authority, separated from the people'.[120]

Perhaps the point needs to be made that Chandigarh was, after all, created to provide a seat to the Government of East Punjab. The project was undertaken in a region where the state had virtually disintegrated during the turbulent period of partition. When the city was being planned, public memory of the collapse of law and order was still vivid; the administration was grappling with the challenge of resettling the refugees; economic hardships and even the risk of food shortages loomed on the horizon; the state looked fragmented, feeble and fragile in the face of the enormous challenges it faced. The bold decision to build a capital city, and sink valuable financial resources in the venture, was made precisely to overcome the vulnerability of the state. Chandigarh was not only to provide the accommodation for the government; it was also to serve as a symbol of the state. Its architecture had visually to communicate this symbolism to the governed. The monumentality of Chandigarh's Capitol Complex arose not only from Le Corbusier's architectural megalomania; it stemmed from the deep vulnerability of Punjab's new rulers and their attempt to mask their own fragile control, given the memories of partition.

In the words of Sunil Khilani, Chandigarh was to be a 'a glorious stage set where tableaux of state might be enacted'.[121] Nehru's acceptance of Corbusian architecture was rooted, not in a blind faith in 'modernity', but in the attempt to create edifices of government. The only available precedents in Indian soil were either colonial or drawn from the princely order, both of which he abhorred. It made sense then to draw upon symbols of genuine, universal modernity. However, in doing so, Chandigarh, like New Delhi, 'reproduced the same fetishism of the capitol'.[122] Unsurprisingly, then, the city's design placed the Capitol Complex at an elevation to ensure maximum visibility, super-scaled its buildings to monumental proportions, segregated it from the rest of the city, and ensured that it radiated its dominance for miles. All these were intended to create 'imposing and powerful images of the institutions of authority of the new State' and, overall terms, 'affirming the imperious presence of the Corbusian government citadel'.[123]

Yet, among the many edifices which Le Corbusier created in Chandigarh, there are two which are highly symbolic. The first is the 'Open Hand' monument, a giant 26 m. hand cast in sheet metal which rotates freely in the wind from a high concrete pedestal, conveying the symbolic message: 'Open to give, Open to receive'; it is the city's official emblem. The second is the Martyrs' Memorial, giving Chandigarh the unique distinction of having the only memorial in the entire subcontinent which commemorates the victims of partition. Located adjacent to the Assembly building in the heart of the Capitol Complex, it consists of an enclosure where symbolic sculptures have been placed. The two monuments are evocative of the circumstances in which Chandigarh came about and symbolize the city's genesis and preoccupations.

Delhi: from Islamic city to refugees' 'wild west'

The story of the impact of partition on Delhi's landscape is many faceted and we can only focus on one or two aspects. Partition did little to diminish Delhi's pre-eminent position as a capital city. Indeed, if there was one single advantage which the government of the newly-independent dominion of India enjoyed over its counterpart in Pakistan, it was that its feet were firmly established in the city of Delhi.[124] Of all South Asian capitals, Delhi has enjoyed, except for short periods, a continuous and unbroken status as a capital city for almost a thousand years, and some historical records show it to be prominent for almost 2,000 years before that. Robert Frykenberg has remarked that Delhi is 'so inextricably bound up' with the 'political energies' of Indian civilization that it has become 'down the ages [is] the symbol of empire', of 'pan-Indian nationalization and unification.[125] Rhodes Murphy has described it as the 'the only capital in the world at once so old, so big, and so exclusively devoted to administration.[126] Historical works are replete with references to Delhi describing it as the 'Eternal Capital', whose origins go back to grey legends which identify it as Indraprastha, the capital of the Pandavas of the epic *Mahabharata,* said to have been enacted in 1400 BC.[127]

However, archaeological evidence does not support this portrayal of Delhi as a flourishing city of the so-called classical age of Hinduism. In fact, it was the coming of Islam to India which brought Delhi into history. Delhi's career as an imperial capital began with the arrival of Qutub-ud-din Aibak in the twelfth century. He built the *Quwuat-ul-Islam* ('Power of Islam') mosque—one of the earliest places of Islamic worship in India— and adjacent to it erected the *Qutub Minar*. Its subsequent rulers established their citadels successively at Kilokheri, Siri, Tughlaqabad, Jahanpanah, Firozabad, Khizrabad, Mubarakabad, Purana Qila (during Sher Shah Suri and Humanyun's times), and finally at Shahjahanabad in the seventeenth century.[128] Throughout this period Delhi enjoyed a unique status as the foremost Indo-Islamic city of the subcontinent. The establishment of their capital by the Mughals only served to enhance this status. Despite the eclipse of Mughal power, the attacks of invaders and plunderers like Nadir Shah, and British domination, Delhi's reputation as an Islamic city continued to flourish. It survived even the shock of the Mutiny of 1857 and the draconian changes imposed by the British upon its physical landscape. Although the British never forget its role as a storm centre of the Mutiny and made it a part of the Punjab, they could never disregard its lure as an imperial city. Even though Calcutta remained their capital, they staged *durbars* in Delhi in 1877 and 1903, with all the trappings of royal ceremony designed to portray to their subjects that they now carried the mantle of the Mughals. Then, in 1911 at the grand *durbar* held to mark the visit of the British monarch, King George V dramatically announced that Delhi would henceforth be the new capital of the Raj. The British were inspired by the rich symbolism which Delhi had continually evoked, as the then Viceroy Lord Hardinge explained:

> The political advantages of the transfer it is impossible to overestimate. Delhi is still a name to conjure with. It is intimately associated in the minds of the Hindus with sacred legends which go back even beyond the dawn of history.... To the Mahomedans it would be a source of unbounded gratification to see the ancient capital of the Moguls restored to its proud position as the seat of Empire. Throughout India, as far south as the Mahomedan conquest extended, every walled town has its 'Delhi Gate', and among the masses of the people it is still revered as the seat of the former Empire. The change would strike the imagination of the people of India as nothing else could do, would send a wave of enthusiasm throughout the country and would be accepted by all as the assertion of an unfaltering determination to maintain British rule in India.[129]

The British henceforth moved their headquarters to Delhi to a temporary site between 1912–29, while they constructed 'New Delhi', adjacent to the old city, which they formally inaugurated in 1931.

Given such a strongly entrenched tradition, the events of partition could not disrupt the capitol function of the city. However, there were some who in the euphoria of freedom felt that the capital of independent India should be moved away from Delhi to make a clean break from its legacy of empire. Some members of the Constituent Assembly, for instance, wanted a new capital, to be established in Central India in the vicinity of Nagpur, to be called 'Gandhipura'.[130] They based their argument on the central location of Nagpur and made much of its proximity to Wardha which Gandhi had made famous as 'the capital of nationalist India' by establishing an *ashram* and taking up residence there. Then, a rival claim was put forth by Allahabad, which lay at the core of north India's political heartland and regarded itself as a bastion of the Congress during the freedom struggle, a development which had so upset the British that they had shifted the provincial capital of Uttar Pradesh to Lucknow, a move remarkably similar in its motivations to the earlier removal of the imperial capital from Calcutta to New Delhi.[131]

The Allahabad District Congress Committee passed a resolution demanding that their city, rather than Delhi, be made 'the capital of Hindustan'.[132] As 'Delhi has been the grave of empires and Allahabad all along the seat of Hindu culture and religious unity', it was desirable, according to the Allahabad Congress, that the capitol of independent India be sited there.[133]They argued that, in view of the leading role played by the city in the freedom struggle, its importance as a religious centre of Hinduism and 'its ideal situation being equidistant from the provinces comprising the Union', it would be befitting that Allahabad be designated the capital of independent India. If Allahabad was to be chosen as the seat of the Government of India, they argued, Delhi could then be utilized as the headquarters of the East Punjab Government.[134] When this call of the Allahabad Congressmen failed to evoke support from any quarter, they shrewdly scaled down their bid, demanding that, at least, the Supreme Court of the Union be located at Allahabad,

given its reputation of producing several legal luminaries who had played a part in the country's constitutional development.[135]

However, Delhi's status as the political centre of India remained unshaken. The new leadership did not feel motivated to mark the coming of freedom with the construction of a new capital; the appropriate combination of political and financial resources necessary to do so simply did not exist. Moreover, the temptation to use and expropriate the opulent colonial edifices of power proved too strong. The capitol complex at New Delhi provided the *terra firma* in which the new regime, inaugurated amidst anarchy and disorder, found itself firmly anchored. Lutyens' monumental architecture provided the stage upon which the midnight rituals of independence were enacted, imparting dignity to the ceremonies and enhancing their historic importance. Delhi's new masters seized control over the visual and architectural symbols of power almost effortlessly; they had, after all, rightfully inherited the Citadel.

While they took charge of the Citadel effortlessly, they lost complete control over the city. Within weeks Delhi witnessed a virtual collapse owing to the strains caused by partition. It needs to be remembered that, on the eve of partition, the city had a dual character. As W.H.Morris-Jones, then a member of Mountbatten's staff recalled, Delhi

> was obviously two cities, the civil and military station of the British, on a grand imposing scale, in keeping at once with the relevance of India to Empire and the traditions of earlier Raj; and the old city built out of the local soils in materials, architecture and social structure.[136]

It might be appropriate at this stage to take a closer look at some of the specific characteristics of Delhi as they then existed. The structure of the old city was made up of elements which constituted a typical 'Islamic' city.[137] Delhi's landscape was defined by its mosques, *havelis*, *bazars*, and religious shrines where the routines of everyday life—both secular and religious—were carried out by its residents. The foci of the city was the Jama Masjid, the largest mosque in the country, built by Shahjahan in the seventeenth century on top of a hill to convey symbolically the exalted status of Islam over the city's landscape.[138] The Jama Masjid stood at the apex of an elaborate hierarchy of mosques which existed in the city. The royal mosques, endowed by members of the Mughal court, came next. These were constructed along the city's main boulevards—eight in number—and are collectively known as *begami* or *amiri masjid*.[139] At the lower spectrum came the neighbourhood mosques—about 200 in number—scattered all over the city. These were constructed within *mohallas* by major occupational groups or guilds each of which endowed their own mosque. For example, mosques existed for washermen, butchers, weavers and so on, where each group performed its daily worship and carried out rites of passage under the supervision of the local *alim* or the hereditary holy man.

Delhi was also a major centre of Sufi culture, full of *dargahs, khanqahs,imambaras,* and *idgahs*. Some of the holiest shrines of popular Islam lay within or around the city, widely reputed throughout the Islamic world as *Baaees Khwaja ki Chaukhat* ('the threshold of twenty-two saints'). These included the *dargah* of Shaikh Bakhtiyat al-Qaki (1325–1354) and Shaikh Nizam-ud-din Aulia (d. 1325) as well as the *Qadam Sharif* shrine, reputed to contain the footprint of Prophet Muhammad. These were religious centres of great sanctity for pious Muslims, who converged from all over north India in large numbers on the death anniversaries of their revered saints to participate in *urs,* which symbolized devotional worship and piety.[140] Jamal Malik perceptively remarks that given that, 'Indian Islam was essentially a holy-man Islam', these places of worship were 'microcosms of an indigenous Islamic culture with regular celebrations and rites'.[141] It was these religious institutions which endowed Delhi with a unique status, such that Islamic texts referred to the city as *Dar-ul-mulk* ('seat of empire') of the great Sultans and *Markaz-i-daira Islam* ('centre of the circle of Islam').[142]

In other respects too, Delhi carried the stamp of being an Indo-Islamic city *par excellence*. Its centrally located Friday mosque, its *bazars* with their highly specialized forms of commodity production, its *chowks, katras* and *kuchas* where manufacturing, retailing and living formed a close symbiosis, its walled structure, its *havelis* and socially cohesive *mohallas* which honeycombed the city, its institution of *waqf,* all these gave it a distinct character. A recent study by Eckart Ehlers and Thomas Krafft concludes that 'a formal analysis of the city and its morphology leaves no doubt' that the walled city of Delhi 'has all the elements and ingredients of a typical "Islamic city"'.[143]

The events of partition shook the city to its foundations. Even when the rituals of independence were being enacted, Muslims from Delhi's rural hinterland in the neighbouring districts of Gurgaon, Rohtak and Meerut were pouring into the city to escape the violence they had faced there. By late August 1947 the situation was aggravated as the capital came to be flooded with Hindu and Sikh refugees from Punjab, looking for safety, shelter, rehabilitation and, in many cases, revenge. Serious violence erupted in the walled city on 25 August and a curfew was promulgated.[144] The situation increasingly got out of hand as Muslims became a particular target of attack. 'Delhi became a prison for the Muslims', recalled Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, then Dean of the Arts Faculty in Delhi University.[145] 'What was happening in the city was a nightmare', he continued, as 'the fortified mohallas (as the quarters were called) developed into arsenals. One could see that an unofficial war was in the offing.' Qureshi was anxious about his family's safety. 'Women hastily put on Hindu caste marks on their foreheads and put on Hindu clothes', and he evacuated his family to the safety of Purana Qila which had become a refugee camp for Muslims prior to their transit to Pakistan.[146] By the first week of September, the situation had become alarming. When Morris-Jones visited Old Delhi on 7 September to help rescue a Muslim friend's family which had been trapped there, he was horrified to find that 'the lanes were eerily deserted but not

completely so; corpses lay uncollected, animals roamed and little gangs of running killers played grim hide and seek with the police in the maze of alleys'.[147]

The violence that occurred in Delhi in August-September 1947 shook the Nehru government almost to its foundations as it seriously challenged its secular claims of protecting the minorities in independent India. The authorities, until then struggling to cope with the situation, took contingency measures to rescue and protect the Muslims who were fleeing the city at an alarming rate. Mountbatten, in Shimla, was urgently recalled to chair an 'Emergency Committee' set up to restore order in the capital. By a fortuitous coincidence Gandhi arrived in Delhi on 7 September *en route* to Punjab but was so shocked at the state of affairs that he cancelled his plans and stayed on to help restore peace in the capital.[148] Gandhi visited Muslim refugee camps which had sprung up in several places across the city. He was distressed to note that mob rule was dislocating everything and even distribution of food had become impossible. At Jama Masjid he found that over 30,000 Muslim refugees had huddled together in a camp, while at Purana Qila another 60,000 had taken refuge without a roof over their head. Had Delhi suddenly become the City of the Dead, Gandhi wondered?[149] He repeatedly declared at his evening prayer meetings that he had embarked upon a 'Do or Die' mission to save Delhi and the life and property of all its residents, particularly the Muslims.

While serious violence was brought under control in due course, the harm had already been done. Delhi's reputation as an Indo-Islamic city had suffered an irreparable damage. Nowhere was this more apparent than in the attacks that Muslim places of worship had faced. According to official sources, as many as 137 mosques in the city had been more or less damaged during the disturbances. Gandhi took up this issue in his prayer speeches which were broadcast nationwide on the radio. He expressed his distress that many of these mosques had been 'converted' into Hindu temples and gave the example of one near Connaught Place where idols had been installed and even the national tricolour hoisted. He denounced such desecration as 'a blot upon Hinduism' and called it 'an wholly ungodly act'. He lamented that one of the holiest of the Islamic shrines in the city—the tomb of Shaikh Bakhtiyar Qaki near the Qutub—had been desecrated and its costly marble trellis damaged. He visited the shrine and urged all concerned 'to wipe out this disgrace and reinstate the place to its original glory'. He declared repeatedly that the 'squeezing out' of the Muslims was 'crooked and ungentlemanly', rebuked the Hindu and Sikh refugees from Punjab for eyeing Muslim properties in the city, and asserted the right of the Muslims of continued residence in the capital as full citizens of independent India.

Notwithstanding Gandhi's valiant efforts to protect the Muslims for which he sacrificed himself in January 1948, the loss of Muslim life and property in Delhi had been considerable. According to unofficial estimates, about 10,000 Muslims were massacred in the capital.[150] Muslim neighbourhoods particularly in the walled city suffered a great deal of violence and about 44,000 houses occupied by Muslims in these neighbourhoods were abandoned or forcibly evacuated. A stage had come

when more Muslims lived in refugee camps in places like Idgah, Nizamuddin and Purana Qila than in the safety of their own homes.[151] In these camps they contemplated what the future held in store for them. Many frantically made arrangements for their departure to Pakistan while others wondered that, if such could be the scale of violence which could rock the capital city of the new republic, what could they expect in the future as a minority. From the adjacent Nizamuddin railway station, family after family boarded trains which took them away from the insecurity and violence which they had experienced in Delhi.[152] Almost two-thirds of Muslim inhabitants abandoned the city—an estimated 329,000 Muslims left Delhi following partition—and in 1951, when a census was taken, the city had just 99,000 Muslim residents. Delhi's Muslim population had declined from 33.22 per cent in 1941 to a negligible 5.71 per cent by 1951.

Partition brought about other transformations too which became palpable to the city's residents in diverse ways. From a centre of Indo-Islamic culture, Delhi became a city of refugees. Rajiv Kapur, chief of the United Nations' agency for refugee welfare characterizes Delhi as 'a Wild West boomtown' where 'everybody's on the make, anything goes'.[153] The city's physical boundaries, the composition of its inhabitants, their cultural preferences and spoken dialects bear this out. Delhi's population registered a dramatic 90 per cent increase as a result of the influx of Punjabi refugees displaced by partition.[154] Further, its physical boundaries expanded tremendously, as its physical urban area grew tenfold and its population density per square kilometre rose from 3,470 in 1941 to 7,169 in 1951, registering a 106 per cent growth. The boundaries of Greater Delhi expanded too, from 198 sq. km in 1951 to 323 sq. km in 1961, to envelop neighbouring towns where refugees increasingly took up residence.

With the help of government agencies Punjabi migrants (almost half a million of them) created refugee colonies through the city's municipal area. With this demographic invasion came significant alternations in cultural and political profiles too. Delhi was 'invaded' by *Punjabiyat* (Punjabi culture). As an old resident recalled:

> Every aspect of our lives became Punjabi. The food became increasingly Punjabi or Punjabi Mughlai, our cultural tastes became Punjabi, even our demeanour and values became Punjabi.[155]

Punjabi refugees, while transforming the cultural life of the city, invigo rated and energized it in commercial and economic terms. 'The hardy Panjabi, displaced from Pakistan, has made a world of difference to the development of the city', observes V.N.Datta.[156] The coming of the refugees, in his view, has made the city 'more energetic, more inventive, and more spirited than ever before', as Punjabi refugees have 'gained a commanding influence in Delhi, and are a directing force in the life of the city'.[157] Yet, there are those who lament the loss of a composite culture which had evolved for several centuries, the slow pace of life, the elegance of Urdu, the common language which cut across religious and class barriers, and

the graciousness with which old-established communities lived together and cherished many of the proud traditions of their city.[158]

Conclusion: capitol transformations

Scholars of political geography have traditionally classified capital cities into two basic types: 'natural' or 'permanent' capitals and 'introduced' or 'artificial' capitals.[159] They have identified several factors as influencing the fortunes of capital cities such as centrality, nodality, portality and defensibility. However, a study of capital cities in the postcolonial world suggests the primacy of political, rather than geographical factors.[160] A survey of African capitals, for instance, concludes that 'Africa is the continent of eccentric capitals' where ever-changing political considerations, rather than geography, have powerfully shaped its capital cities.[161]

If we recognize that political factors play a vital part in the fortunes of capital cities, then the foregoing discussion convincingly shows that it has been the politics surrounding partition and 'nation-building' which has left a deep imprint on the existing landscapes of South Asian capital cities.

At the outset, there is a need to comprehend the scale of changes which the capital cities experienced following partition. There are, at least, three distinct aspects of the overall transformation which these cities underwent which warrant consideration. The most obvious aspect was physical: the expansion or contraction which the city experienced due to refugee movements and the changes imposed by the new boundaries and the manner in which these were reflected in the spatial structure, land use and built forms of the city. Equally important were the sociocultural transformations brought about by changes in the composition of the city's inhabitants. As old communities departed and new settlers arrived, the inner milieu of the city was altered and its cultural, social and religious rhythms disturbed, and these had profound implications. Finally, the city was transformed in a metaphysical sense, as people were uprooted from the places where they had been born and nurtured and where they had families, properties and associations. This uprooting and dislocation left them with remembrances and feelings of nostalgia. Cities for them now existed only in the realm of memory and, as all memory is inseparable from places, they came to be deeply embedded in the consciousness of the uprooted people and powerfully shaped their subsequent lives in assorted ways.

Having considered the scale of the transformations which they witnessed, it is interesting to note that, although divided by the bitterness and violence which had accompanied partition, these capital cities were ironically united in that they faced common situations and predicaments following partition. It is striking that a common thread seems to run through the stories of these seven capitals, and it may be worthwhile, in conclusion, to pursue this.

The first commonality to be noted is a demographic one. Except for Chandigarh and Islamabad, which did not exist at the time of partition, all the five other capital cities experienced a demographic upheaval in which their 'minority' communities

were either completely uprooted or their numbers substantially reduced. The most dramatic instances were Dhaka and Karachi which were Hindu-majority cities but following partition ironically became the capitals of East and West Pakistan respectively. The uprooting took its most violent form in Lahore and, to some extent, in Delhi. Processes of displacement were more invidious in Dhaka, Calcutta and Karachi, but the results were inevitably the same: the decimation, dissipation and displacement of the city's 'minorities'. The demographic upheaval which these cities saw also had related outcomes. With the exception of Islamabad, all South Asian capitals can be called refugee cities. The extreme cases here are Karachi and Calcutta whose populations have a preponderance of refugees. Chandigarh, Delhi, Dhaka and Lahore also have substantial communities of refugees amongst their inhabitants.

Another commonality relates to the physical expansion of the cities: new forms of mass housing, which they had to improvise to deal with the refugee influx. 'Model towns', *kacchi abadis* (slums), co-operative societies, and squatter colonies proliferated; as did 'satellite towns' built by government agencies to act as counter-magnets in their attempts to decongest the capitals. It is interesting to see that this proliferation of housing also led to a fundamental change in city form: the typical landscape of a South Asia city had originally been shaped by the old 'bazaar-style' Indian quarter and the newer, civil lines-type 'formal' city developed for administrative purposes by the colonial rulers.[162] Following partition, this 'dual' character of capital cities was altered, as newer 'informal' cities developed to provide housing to the refugees either by official agencies or by 'self-help' cooperative efforts. Much of the present landscapes of South Asian capital cities is defined by the built environment created to shelter the refugees.

A further commonality relates to the economic dislocations which several of these capital cities suffered. Perhaps the worst victim in this regard was Calcutta, as the foregoing discussion has shown; Lahore comes a close second as it became a border town and saw a major relocation of economic activity. In almost all instances, economic disruptions were accompanied by what may be called 'over-urbanization', a situation in which an increasingly large number of people flock to cities which do not see a corresponding expansion of their economic base. This kind of migration, economists have pointed out, leads to all sorts of distortions, particularly an over-supply of labour which creates heightened competition in the informal sector.[163] The net result is the 'footloose' effect, with large floating populations somehow struggling hard to survive by finding some sort of work. A typical example here is that of the rickshaw-pullers in Dhaka. It is estimated that the national capital of Bangladesh has about 150,000 rickshaws, and an estimated 1 million people are dependent, directly or indirectly, for their livelihood upon their plying, production and maintenance.

Yet another common element in the transformations brought about by partition relates to the changes in the political configuration of the capital cities. The exceptional story here is that of Calcutta, where the refugees provided a mass base for the Communists to build their ascendancy within West Bengal politics, as

Chapter Six has shown. However, a similar radicalization of politics did not take place in other cities where refugees converged in significant numbers. In other cities across South Asia refugees—in spite of their subaltern status as disadvantaged and persecuted people—have not extended support to Leftist or radical parties. The refugees have, instead, tended to support communal and fundamentalist parties. Having experienced religious persecution and intolerance, they have shown a propensity to become 'vote banks' for communal and sectarian parties. In Karachi the rise of the Mohajir Quami Mahaz (MQM) is an example of this kind of support by the refugees. In Delhi too, the Punjabi refugees have proved to be a consistently solid vote bank for Bharatiya Janata Party, a fundamentalist organization which has pursued an aggressive agenda of *Hindutva* after its top leadership was taken up in the late 1980s by individuals whose formative experiences were of being uprooted from Pakistan.[164]

Capital cities also provide us with an exceptional window into surveying the nature of power-sharing arrangements that evolved in the post-colonial states and the manner in which different regional political units came to be structured *vis-à-vis* the centre. A stroll through downtown Calcutta— marginalized both economically and politically after partition—and starved by New Delhi of vital funds for maintaining its infrastructure (especially after the Communists came to power), is an experience which gives an insight into centre-state relations post-1947 as perhaps no other encounter can. In a similar manner, the refusal of the Government of India to hand over Chandigarh to Punjab, its continued hold over it as a centrally-administered territory, and its ambiguous status as the headquarters of three different authorities (the provincial Governments of Punjab and Haryana and the Union Territory of Chandigarh) are illustrative of the complexity of power-sharing arrangements in India. Likewise, the manner in which the Pakistani leadership neglected Dhaka symbolized the subordination of Bengalis in Pakistan throughout the 1947–71 era. In a similar manner, the decay and neglect to which Karachi has been subjected after the shift of capital to Islamabad is yet another instance of how capital cities mirror the larger consensus (real, imagined or fractured) which underpins the nation-state.

Another commonality relates to the architectural symbolism of the Capitol Complexes and their imagery as citadels of power designed to impress, if not intimidate the citizenry. Lawrence Vale explains this symbolism in the following terms:

> The haughty reliance on hillside ascents, the calculated drama of long, broad axes, the fearful arrogance of protected cantonments, the coveted security of massive structures set off by water, and the hierarchical distribution of residence according to courtly rank are all too familiar features of a premodern Western urbanism which seem to linger in the designed capitals and capitols of the twentieth century.[165]

This description readily fits in with the experience of anyone who has walked through any of the Capitol Complexes located in the South Asian capitals.

Finally, it should be pointed out that this survey of capital cities could only be seen as part of the larger transformation which places experienced as a result of partition. Chapters Five and Six, in a sense, address this aspect with regard to East Punjab and West Bengal respectively, but there are other dimensions too which merit attention. For instance, cities and towns other than the capital cities were affected in the variety of roles they played as ports, transport hubs, trading marts and pilgrim centres. The processes of boundary-making, refugee resettlement and the larger restructuring of regions into the nation, and the cumulative results these produced were often on a colossal scale. They included the turning upside down of urban and settlement hierarchies, the altering of city sizes and functions, and the downsizing of hinterlands of ports and transport hubs. There was much reconstruction and development too: in India alone, at least a dozen new refugee towns were built after partition.[166] It is within this larger setting that the changing fortunes of the seven capital cities studied here must be viewed.

8
Punjab and the making of Pakistan

Punjab in post-colonial Pakistan

Pakistan began life as a fragile nation-state. Formed by the partition of the subcontinent, the new country was a geographical oddity to begin with. Comprising two wings that were separated by over a thousand miles of hostile Indian territory, partition had given Jinnah what he had dreaded most, 'a mutilated and moth-eaten Pakistan'. Its westem wing comprized the erstwhile British provinces of the North-West Frontier Province, Sind, Baluchistan, and the western half of a divided Punjab, while its eastern wing was made up of a truncated Bengal. Consisting of territories that had long been the backwaters of colonial India, Pakistan, unlike its neighbour neither inherited a credible federal structure which had the necessary wherewithal to tackle the many challenges facing the new state, nor did it possess a political machinery sophisticated and extensive enough to integrate the ethnic and regional diversities of the new nation.

The character of Pakistan's post-colonial state was consequently shaped by two divergent, yet mutually reinforcing political processes in the first decade after independence. The first was the failure and eventual collapse of the experiment with parliamentary democracy. Although the trappings of representative political institutions were evident at the creation of Pakistan, the intended democratic process failed to materialize. The country's two key political institutions, the law-making National Constituent Assembly and the Muslim League, (the party which had successfully spearheaded the Pakistan movement and was expected to play a role similar to that of the Indian National Congress in India by providing the leadership and organizational machinery to ensure and facilitate mass participation in the political structure), both failed dismally. The National Assembly quickly degenerated into a forum for factional in-fighting and petty intrigues, while the Muslim League, weakest precisely in the areas which became the constituent parts of Pakistan, failed to develop into a national, democratic party capable of integrating the ethnic and regional diversities within a workable political structure.[1] Politics in Pakistan from 1947–58 was, as one author has pointed out, 'marked by non-consensus, embittered further by the wreckage of successful attempts at institution-making, including three constitutions'.[2]

The second process, which developed in sharp contrast to, and because of, the failure of political institutions, was the increasing concentration of state power in the hands of the Punjabi-dominated bureaucracy and army. As weak and ineffectual politicians squabbled in post-independence Pakistan, the task of governing was taken over by the bureaucracy, which quickly assumed control of the state machinery. The powerful position of the governor-general, the office from which Jinnah exercized absolute control over the nascent state until his unfortunate premature demise in September 1948, facilitated bureaucratic dominance over parliamentary politics. In addition to having to deal with the urgent business of setting up a government almost from scratch, Jinnah had to address a whole host of immediate problems which included communal riots, refugee resettlement, establishment of law and order, undefined borders, economic and social disruptions arising from partition and, not least, war with India over Kashmir. Under the circumstances, it was quite natural that he decided to place his trust and authority in the central and provincial bureaucratic apparatus, rather than the faction-ridden institutions of the cabinet or the Muslim League. In summary, from very early on, as a short-term exigency to meet the needs of the moment, Pakistan's founding father had decided to adopt the old style 'viceregal' system of the British Raj for the newly-independent country. As it turned out, the system of bureaucratic supremacy that Jinnah chose to adopt for Pakistan in its early years, however, far outlasted its founder. Within four years of independence, when Jinnah's political heir, Liaquat Ali Khan, met his own untimely demise at the hands of an assassin, political power in Pakistan came to be concentrated in the hands of the governors and bureaucrats.

In managing the state and ensuring its very survival, the governors and bureaucrats were solidly backed by the military elite in Pakistan.[3] The conjoining of the country's civil-military authorities was an outcome as much of tradition as of necessity. In the British administered provinces that Pakistan had inherited, notably the Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province, the military had always been a vital partner in government, especially after the north-west region became the main recruiting ground for the Indian army.[4]

As one of the few cohesive and organized institutions that Pakistan had inherited from the Raj, the army was, from the very inception of the country, entrusted with responsibilities in areas that are traditionally regarded as outside of a highly professional army's boundary.[5] By the middle of the 1950s, the army in Pakistan was already playing an active role alongside the civil administration, aiding in the maintenance of law and order, control of sectarian riots and the management of natural or man-made calamities such as floods, epidemics, food shortages and famines.[6] In 1953, the military made its presence felt particularly when martial law was imposed in the city of Lahore following the riots in the Punjab.[7]

The climate of hostility between Pakistan and India that started over Kashmir in 1947, and has since largely defined bilateral relations, made the presence of the military all the more conspicuous. The hostility stemmed in part from Pakistan's belief that India had not really come to terms with the reality of partition, and that

a reintegration of Pakistani territories into India was an unstated, but major aim of Indian policy. The state of tension with India not only propelled the military elite into the centre of decision-making in Pakistan, it has allowed the military to assert control and virtually seek priority over the country's resources for defence purposes. Between 1947–53, Pakistan's defence expenditure increased every year. As a percentage of total government expenditure, the military budget has not dropped below 50 per cent In 1949–50, on average, 75 per cent of the government's annual spending was on the military.[8]

Consequently, in the conditions then prevailing in Pakistan, the bureaucracy and the military emerged as the principal institutions in the country, especially salient in the need to build a young, fragile country, emerging in the wake of partition, and in meeting the perceived external threat from India.[9] The takeover was complete when governor-general Ghulam Muhammud Khan, with the backing of the military, dismissed the Constituent Assembly in October 1954. With the dissolution of the assembly, and the formation of a new cabinet which included the Commander-in-Chief General Mohammad Ayub Khan as Defence Minister and several other civil servants, the civil-military oligarchy assumed direct political power in the country. The political dominance of the civil-military oligarchy in Pakistan was also evidence of the pre-eminence of Punjab in the post-colonial state of Pakistan.

In the post-1947 political readjustments, Punjab completely overshadowed the other constituent units of Pakistan, not only by the size of its population and economic potential, but mainly by its preponderance in the military and the bureaucracy.[10] Punjabis accounted for two-thirds of the Pakistani army's rank and file and overwhelmingly dominated its officer corps. The province's landed aristocracy, with its close collaboration with the military and civil service, also remained among the most powerful elements in post-partition Punjab.[11] By virtually monopolising the bureaucracy, military and landed aristocracy, the three key institutions that were to dominate the political landscape of the country after partition, Punjab was able to place itself as the core of the new state of Pakistan. The triad formed by the Punjabi landed elite, the civil service and the military was an arrangement that had its antecedents in colo nial Punjab. The partition of the Punjab might have brought about tremendous disruptions and changes as discussed in the earlier chapters. In many ways, though, despite the physical and social upheaval brought about by the division of the province, continuities were evident. The preservation of the old order in western Punjab and its continuance in Pakistan was one such example.

Roots of a civil-military state

While it is important to recognize that 'an interplay of domestic, regional and international factors' in the post 1947 period had allowed the bureaucracy and the military to dominate the evolving structure of the Pakistani state, it can be suggested that the rise of a Punjabi controlled military-bureaucratic oligarchy which was

organized and powerful enough to wrest control of, and dominate, the post-independence state of Pakistan preceded the birth of the country.[12] The roots of the civil-military state in Pakistan can be traced to developments in colonial Punjab during the first half of the twentieth century, especially related to its position as the principal recruiting ground of the Indian army.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the Punjab had became the major recruiting ground for the Indian army, supplying roughly half of all the soldiers recruited from India. The dominance of the Punjabis in the respective arms of the army was significant: just before the First World War, Punjabis accounted for 66 per cent of all cavalrymen in the Indian army; 87 per cent in the artillery; and 45 per cent in the infantry.[13] These figures indicate the highest rate of military participation from a particular province ever experienced in colonial India. Yet paradoxically, while the Punjabis dominated the Indian army, the military labour market in the state was an extremely limited one. As British recruitment policies came to be informed by the 'martial races' doctrine, only a select group from the Punjab, mainly Sikhs, Muslims and, to a lesser extent, Dogras and Hindu Jats, were eligible for recruitment, while all other groups of Punjabis not considered of sufficient 'martial' qualities were automatically excluded. In their selection of recruits, the military invariable limited its choices to dominant peasants and aristocratic landowning types. For instance, over 90 per cent of the Sikhs recruited from the Punjab into the army were from the dominant Jat caste from central Punjab.[14] Similarly, recruitment of Punjabi Muslims was limited to those who belonged to tribes of high social standing or reputation: the 'blood proud' and once the politically dominant aristocracy of western Punjab. Consequently, socially dominant Muslim tribes such as the Gakkhars, Janjuas and Awans and a few Rajput tribes, concentrated in the Rawalpindi and Jhelum districts of the Salt Range tract of western Punjab, accounted for more than 90 per cent of Punjabi Muslim recruits.[15] The upshot was that, the entire military labour market of the Punjab comprized a small group of landowning classes: Jat Sikhs from Amritsar and Lahore, and to a lesser extent, from Hoshiarpur and Ludhiana, and aristocratic Muslim tribes from the Salt Range tract, mainly from the districts of Jhelum and Rawalpindi, as well as a small proportion of Hindu and Muslim Jats from the districts of Rohtak and Hissar and Dogras from the Kangra hill district.[16]

The small size of the military labour market notwithstanding, the Punjab administration took special care to ensure that the military districts were constantly kept pacified. The concern was understandable, given that the province not only supplied more than half the combatants of the Indian army, but in the villages where the army had traditionally recruited, an enormous number of men had, at one time or another, received military training. If the province came to be racked by unrest, the stability of the army could become adversely affected and a full-scale military revolt might erupt. It was not surprising, therefore, that the Punjab Government was particularly sensitive to the conditions of its military districts. At the heart of its desire to maintain a contented rural population lay the fear of a rural-military revolt at the base of the Indian army. The passing of the Land

Alienation Act of 1900 was intended to safeguard the 'martial peasantry' from rural indebtedness, while the repeal of the Canal Colonies Bill seven years later was clearly an attempt to placate the military classes in central Punjab. More specifically, the military labour market in the Punjab was secured by the 'prizes' that military service offered: regular pay, pension and other privileges such as free travel on railways. These made military service an attractive option, especially in districts where agricultural and economic opportunities were limited.

Military pay and pensions, though, were sometimes insufficient in themselves to procure the services and loyalty of these military allies. Often, the colonial state found that it had to resort to other means of encouragement, to provide a 'pull' factor to encourage recruitment. Consequently, in a manner and on a scale not replicated anywhere else in India, the Punjab authorities made generous use of its landed resources for the purpose of strengthening its bonds with the military districts.[17] Large tracts in the newlyopened canal irrigated wastelands were reserved for allotment as *Fauji* grants to soldier-settlers, pensioners, and ex-soldiers.[18] The bulk of the military grantees were settled in the four large canal colonies: Chenab, Jhelum, Lower Bari Doab and Nili Bar. The magnitude of the entire settlement exercise was phenomenal: in the canal colonies as a whole, the total amount of land allotted to military grantees was almost half a million acres.[19] The use of land as a form of reward was aimed not only at strengthening the appeal of military service, but also ensuring the loyalty of the military classes to the state. Ex-soldiers were eligible for grants only after completing twenty-one years of service, and grants were made on conditions of continued loyalty. Grantees were usually chosen by the recommendations of their regimental commanders, and their military record was usually the sole criterion for eligibility for land grants. The promise of land was, therefore, a great incentive for pro longed and loyal military service.

In addition to lavishing state resources as rewards for their military allies, the Punjab administration and military authorities had to ensure that the military districts were properly monitored and managed. For this, the British had always relied on the rural elites as military intermediaries and contractors. The tribal landlords of western Punjab were particularly well-suited to play the part of military intermediaries for the British government. They exercized considerable influence in their respective localities by virtue of their control of scarce resources such as land, water and credit, and through the domination of *biradari* (kinship) networks. These were effective means by which tenants and kinsmen could be goaded into enlisting. Their military value had been evident at the very outset of British involvement in the Punjab.

During the Anglo-Sikh wars, several chieftain families from the Punjab provided military assistance to the British. One such family was that of Malik Fateh Sher Khan, who provided 400 horsemen to Colonel Herbert Edwardes during the Sikh rebellion at Multan in 1848.[20] During the 1857 rebellion, several Sikh and Muslim chieftains in the Punjab responded quickly to John Lawrence's call for soldiers by raising their own armed men and mounted levies to fill the ranks of the moveable column to Delhi. To reward the military classes and the military contractors, the

state provided pay and pensions and other prizes, most notably grants of land in the canal colonies opened in the 1880s. The state was especially generous towards its rural intermediaries. Many of them, like the Mitha Tiwanas of Shahpur district, received large land grants and *jagirs* and were incorporated into the Indian army as honorary officers and appointed to civilian posts as honorary magistrates and subregistrars in the district administration.[21]

The rural elite's military value was best exemplified in the First World War. During the War, the Indian army was substantially expanded to meet the demands of operations in various war theatres. As the bulk of recruiting for the Indian army had, by the turn of the century, come to concentrate mainly in the Punjab, the province came to bear the brunt of raising the necessary manpower needed to meet this expansion. The requirements of rapid mobilization demanded by the War, however, showed the inadequacies of peace-time recruiting arrangements. These arrangements had been adequate for the needs of a small peacetime army that had been very selective in its recruits. But with the massive expansion of the army, the pre-war recruiting arrangements in the Punjab simply could not cope. Consequently, the entire bureaucratic structure in the province was militarized, as nearly all aspects of its activities were geared towards the provision of men and material for the war effort.

To meet the crisis of manpower and to stimulate and facilitate recruiting in areas hitherto untouched by the army, the civil and military structures in the province, which had hitherto functioned separately, coalesced into a formidable machinery, dedicated to generating cannon fodder for the war effort.[22] During the war, recruiting areas were redrawn to correspond with the administrative divisions of the province. Each of the newly-constituted recruiting areas was under the charge of a divisional recruiting officer, a military person who was expected to work very closely with his civilian counterpart in the divisional headquarters. In each district, a recruiting officer was appointed by the civil authorities to function as a civilian link to the military recruiting staff. Under this system, the military function of recruiting was integrated into the civil administrative structure, thus pro viding the framework for the civil administration to assume direct control of recruiting operations in the province.[23]

This civil-military integration entailed not just the interlinking of the provincial civil structure with the military command, but more importantly involved the full support of the rural-military elites as well. The Punjab government decided that the most effective way of raising manpower during the war was to mobilize the landed elites to persuade their tribal followers and tenants to enlist themselves. These rural notables (tribal chiefs, landlords, religious leaders, clan and caste leaders) not only functioned as military contractors, but were also instrumental in propping up an administration weakened by the departure of several officers and soldiers for the war front. During the war, the rural notables demonstrated another dimension of their importance to the colonial state in the Punjab, that of intercessors and contractors in the all-important military districts of the province. The civil society which they dominated was to a large extent militarized. Accordingly, they now

constituted a rural-military elite whose importance to the state, and hence their position in the provincial polity, had been greatly enhanced.[24]

The process of mobilization during the war thus laid the foundations of a militarized bureaucracy in the Punjab, whose administrative/military tentacles were able to reach every level of society and the economy. The direct assumption of a military function by the Punjab Government, and its intrusion into society on behalf of the military during the war, was to mark the beginnings of a quasi-military state in the Punjab.

This civil-military integration in the Punjab continued during the interwar period, as the civil administration and the military authorities co-operated closely to ensure that the military districts were carefully secured against economic and political discontent. The maintenance of the military districts during the inter-war period was mainly achieved through the merging of the civil and military authorities in the province, particularly through the instrument of the District Soldiers' Boards.[25] These boards sprung up all over the Punjab and their structural organization facilitated civil-military penetration deep into the military districts. However, their viability as institutions of control and communication ultimately depended on the support and cooperation of the local elites. In districts where landlords and tribal chiefs were present and were willing to lend their support, such as in the western districts of the province, soldiers' boards tended to be very effective. In such districts, the rural elites became an integral part of the district's civil-military machinery. However, where there was an absence of a social or landed elite to provide the required leadership, as in the Sikh districts of central Punjab, soldiers' boards tended to be relatively weaker as institutions of control. This explains why, during the years 1922–4, when the Akalis gained some influence in the countryside through their claims to religious leadership, the loyalists elements among the Sikhs were effectively marginalized, and soldiers' boards generally failed to contain the spread of anti-government sentiments in the Sikh districts.[26]

None the less, through the district soldiers' boards, which were associated with the interests of the military classes, the *sircar* in the military districts came to assume a dual civil and military image. The government came to be identified as a quasi-military state that was committed to preserving the interests of the military classes. This had an important socialising effect on the military districts as the military classes, (especially amongst the Muslims in western Punjab, which became the mainstay of the military labour market in the Punjab following the army authorities' decision to restrict the recruitment of Sikhs as the result of the Akali movement), came to accept government by a militarized bureaucracy, or by the military itself as the norm rather than an aberration.[27]

Political entrenchment of the civil-military lobby

The position of the civil-military formation that had emerged from the First World War in the Punjab was further reinforced by the political entrenchment of the rural-military elites in the provincial legislatures created by political reforms after

the war. When post-war constitutional reforms created new opportunities for political power, the Punjab government sought to ensure that this power would be devolved to their traditional rural-military allies.[28] Their concerns were clear enough: to have future legislative bodies in the Punjab dominated by the urban classes could have certain adverse military implications. Successive Punjab governments in the past had successfully nurtured its military districts, on whose active co-operation the reliability, and ultimately, the security of India depended. Policies had been adopted that not only aimed at shielding the military districts from external political influences but, at the same time, protecting the economic, social and religious interests of the military classes, thus keeping them contented.

However, Punjab's role as the military bulwark of the Raj could be seriously jeopardized if urban politicians were to be elected and became uncooperative partners in government, especially in dealing with the interests of the rural military classes. O'Dwyer, the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab, felt this concern most strongly. To him, it was a matter of the utmost importance that a province as militarily important as the Punjab be spared the fate of being run by an 'elected majority…of irresponsible politicians…in the legislature'.[29] Consequently, during the early stages of the constitutional reform process, while the Secretary of State and the Government of India were prepared to carry out the promise made in the August Declaration of 1917, O'Dwyer was intent on preventing the introduction of reforms in the province, prompting Motilal Nehru to accuse him of turning 'the Punjab into a kind of Ulster in relation to the rest of India'.[30] In a sense, one could see O'Dwyer attempting here to save the military districts of the Punjab from the urban politicians just as Ibbetson had earlier saved the Punjab peasantry from the Hindu urban money-lenders through the debates on the Land Alienation Act of 1900.

Despite his strong objections, however, O'Dwyer was never really in a position to stop the momentum of change that had already been set in motion. Realizing that he could not prevent the devolution of power to Indian hands, O'Dwyer decided that if political changes were to be brought about, then he would bring in the 'Old world to redress the New'.[31] If actual power was to be devolved into Indian hands, and if his government were to work with local politicians, it would be in the former's interests to ensure that such power passes on to the government's allies in the province, the rural-military elites. His government accordingly submitted a set of proposals to the Franchise Committee in 1918, which clearly showed its intention to 'fix the terms of reforms' so as to marginalize the urban politicians and ensure the political entrenchment of the rural-military elites.

The Punjab Government's proposals regarding the franchise were designed to establish a small, and overwhelming rural and conservative electorate in the Punjab. Its calculations about franchise suggested that the provincial electorate would consist of approximately 230,000 votes, of which 161,000 would be rural votes and only 70,000 urban. At the same time, the Government tried to ensure that only the rural notables, landlords and dominant zamindars were eligible to vote. This was clearly aimed at creating a conservative electorate with a strong

rural-military bias. The rural classes which the Punjab Government intended to enfranchise were mostly beneficiaries of state patronage, whose interests were closely connected to maintaining the status quo. Most importantly, in a predominantly rural electorate those to be enfranchised were the very elements who were the mainstay of the Indian army, had supported the government during the war and were in a position to maintain the military machinery of the province in the future. According to the calculations of the Punjab Government, of a projected total of 161,000 rural votes, more than 150,000 (above 90 per cent) would come from government officials, the military, rich landholders and peasant-proprietors.[32]

In November 1918, in an interview with the Franchise Committee, O'Dwyer explained the rationale behind the proposals of his government. He stressed that conditions in the Punjab were such that, in formulating a scheme for the reforms 'local conditions rather than logical precision or theoretical completeness were of primary importance'. He pointed out that the urban-rural dichotomy was a central feature of the Punjab, and it was the rural population that was predominantly important in terms of its numbers and the revenue it contributed, as well as its overall predominance in the Indian army. According to O'Dwyer, the unique position of the Punjab as the major recruiting ground for the Indian army as well as its location as the crucial military base for operations across the North West frontier made it imperative for the government to ensure that the political power be devolved to its rural-military allies.[33]

The rural-military elites of the Punjab regarded the promise of constitutional reforms in the post-1919 India with a degree of trepidation. Prior to 1919, in return for their support of the military structure of the Punjab, their position in the province had been assured. To protect their interests they needed to secure a major share of the power to be devolved under the reforms, but they were apprehensive that representative power would not favour them. They knew that, as things stood, they were in no position to successfully wage an electoral contest against the better educated and organized urban politicians. Their influence as rural notables was essentially localized; each of them exercised influence only over his immediate caste, tribe or locality, and the source of such influence revolved around economic dominance and kinship ties.

These rural elites furthermore lacked an effective local structure with which they could mobilize popular support in the general elections, their power and position were also state sponsored, and depended on state patronage. During the period preceding the reforms, fearing that their position in the provincial state structure would be usurped by the 'advanced politicians', the rural-military elites decided to make a collective effort to influence the reforms in their favour. They realized that the only way in which the process could be made to work in their favour was to use their influence in the administration and the military to pressure the British into acquiescing to their political demands for special provisions that would safeguard their interests. What emerged out of the fears and anxieties of this period was a loosely constituted rural-military lobby within the Punjab which was able to

use its importance in the rural administration and in the military as leverage with which to stake a claim in the newly-emerging reformed political structure.

During the Secretary of State's tour of India in the winter of 1917–18, the rural-military elites in the Punjab, represented by two organizations, the Punjab Muslim Association and the Punjab Zamindar Central Association, submitted proposals on how the reforms should be implemented in the Punjab. Although organized on a communal basis, both associations shared a common concern; their objectives, like those of the Punjab Government, were to secure special representation for landholders and to obtain a predominant share of political power for the rural-military classes. The proposals of the rural-military elites were very similar to those of O'Dwyer's, indicating the extent to which the interests of the colonial state and its rural-military allies had become integrated.

The Punjab Muslim Association, whose members were mainly heads of military families or retired military officers who held honorary British ranks, emphasized the contributions made by Punjabi Muslims to the military, especially during the war, and expressed concern that the political reforms should not be allowed to adversely affect the special relationship between the Muslim rural classes and the state.[34] Its leader, Malik Umar Hayat Khan Tiwana, Honorary Lieutenant-Colonel and influential spokesman for the military classes in the province, submitted a memorandum to the Secretary of State in 1918 in which he warned that if political reforms were to replace British rule with a 'bania oligarchy', the outcome would be one of potential danger for the Punjab as a whole. He called for certain constitutional provisions to be made to ensure the protection of the landed and military interests which included, *inter alia*, the creation of a second chamber in the legislative council for representatives of soldiers and landholders and for the extension of the franchise to all soldiers.[35]

The Punjab Zamindar Central Association, originally known as the Jat Sikh Association, was also representative of the province's rural-military interests. About one-third of its members consisted of retired soldiers, many of whom had long connections with the military, and had assisted in recruitment during the war.[36] Like the Muslim Association, the Zamindar Association was concerned that constitutional changes should be made in such a way as to safeguard the interests of zamindars and peasant-proprietors, who had consistently supplied combatants to the army as opposed to 'the town bred educated people'.[37]

The terms of the Government of India Act of 1919 for the Punjab eventually incorporated much that had been proposed by the Punjab Government and the province's rural-military lobby, while mostly rejecting the proposals made by the urban parties, which perhaps indicates how urban considerations had become marginal in the politics of the Punjab. The electorate in the province was a small and restrictive one, about 3 per cent of the total population. It was also heavily biased towards the countryside; of the total electorate, rural voters accounted for 423,192 and urban voters, 77,797.

One of the most important features of the 1919 reforms related to the provision for the military vote. In its original proposals, the Punjab Government had

recommended that only retired and pensioned Indian officers above the rank of *jemadar* should be enfranchised, while the rural-military representatives had demanded that the vote be extended to all ex-soldiers. It was finally decided that all ex-soldiers, irrespective of their rank be given the vote.[38] Although the military vote generally formed a negligible portion of the electorate in other provinces, it constituted a very substantial element in the Punjab electorate, well beyond what the Government had originally envisaged. Indeed, the military vote in the Punjab was estimated to be 190,000, or 31.6 per cent of the entire provincial electorate.[39] The significance of the military vote in the traditional military districts in the Punjab such as Jhelum, Rawalpindi, Attock, Shahpur, Amritsar and Rohtak was even more pro nounced. It is difficult to calculate with any accuracy the percentage of the military vote in any particular constituency, given the lack of definitive figures of retired personnel in the districts. However, if we assumed that one-third of those recruited during the First World War were demobilized soldiers the proportion of voters with military connections in such districts would average over 70 per cent of the total district electorates.[40]

The real substance of the Punjab Government's proposals, which had also been the main demand of the rural-military lobby, was that power be devolved to traditional allies to the exclusion of urban politicians. This was embodied in the Government of India Act of 1919. The terms and conditions of the Act were very much skewed in favour of the rural-military elites. More than 70 per cent of the rural voters in the Punjab were landlords, dominant zamindars, rural notables, minor officials and ex-soldiers, and their interests subsequently dominated the Legislative Council.[41] The significance of the first constitutional reforms for the subsequent political development of the Punjab cannot be underestimated. By providing for the overwhelming dominance of the landed and military vote in the Punjab electorate, the Act set the stage for the political domination of the very classes whose cooperation was always crucial for the Punjab's position as the military bulwark of the Raj.

Subsequent elections in the Punjab under the 1919 Act, which took place in 1920, 1923, 1927 and 1930, all returned legislative councils which were dominated by the 'old world'. These councils comprized mainly landlords, peasant-proprietors, ex-army officers and only a sprinkling of traders and lawyers. The Punjab administration was comfortable with the councils, claiming that 'it was the best instance of the right kind of provincial government, based broadly on the landlords, peasants and soldiers.[42] While loyalist in their basic political orientation, these rural-military elites constituted themselves into an informal lobby in the councils, aimed at promoting the interests of the landlords and the landholding peasantry, the very stratum of agrarian society that had constituted the overwhelming bulk of Punjab's restricted electorate. High on the agenda of this rural-military lobby was the attempt to place the procedure for assessment for land revenue on a statutory basis, so that it would exert a direct influence in the council on the revenue administration of the province, particularly in the fixing of revenue. The lobby was also constantly on guard against any attempts by the government

to raise taxes or canal rates, the two things which would work against its own as well as its rural supporters' interests. It was this rural-military lobby which towards the end of 1923 was constituted into the Punjab National Unionist Party and which in turn, dominated Punjab politics right up to 1937, when a new set of reforms were introduced under the Government of India Act of 1935.[43]

With the entrenchment of the Unionists in Punjab politics, a paradoxical relationship seemed to have emerged between the government and its allies. Prior to 1920, the old aristocratic landlords and rural notables had been entirely dependent on official goodwill for the preservation of their special status. They had to show active loyalty, as they had during the Great War, to earn continued patronage from the state. Although successive Punjab governments had been careful not to alienate this important group of people and lose their active support, these elites had seldom been in a position to dictate terms, and had virtually no direct influence on government policies. However, changes following post-war reforms brought about, perhaps inevitably, a shift in this relationship. The elites were no longer entirely dependent on the state for their political position, but on the support of their electoral base. This meant that they had to cultivate their interests in the legislature, sometimes at the expense of official interests. Yet, despite their constant jockeying against the government for advantages in terms of land revenue and taxation, these elites realized that, in the last resort, their interests were still predicated upon the overall maintenance of British rule, which they could not afford to challenge or jeopardize.

The reforms had therefore brought about a new breed of collaborators who, although they emphasized their continued loyalty to the Raj, were able to use their newly-found leverage to assert greater control over affairs which affected them and their constituents. It was an indication of their paradoxical relationship that, in the early 1930s, the Unionist Party was regarded by the British as an official opposition party within the legislative council, frequently voting against the government.

The political dominance of the rural-military elites, now symbolized by the Unionist Party, was not undermined by the political changes brought about by the Government Act of 1935: if anything, it emerged stronger than before. Of the 175 seats in the newly constituted Punjab Legislative Assembly the Unionist Party won ninety-five seats in the 1937 elections. The Congress, which had elsewhere, most notably in the United Provinces and Madras, defeated erstwhile politically powerful landlord parties, was trounced at the polls by the Unionist Party, and could secure less than 10 per cent of the seats in the Punjab.

The continued dominance of the Unionist Party was, of course, assisted by a provincial franchise that was only marginally altered by the new political reforms. The 1935 Act did provide for a significantly extended franchise in the Punjab, from about 745,000 voters in 1930 to almost three million in 1935, an increase of nearly 9 per cent of the provincial population. As in 1919, though, under the influence of the Punjab government and the increasingly powerful rural-military lobby in the council, the rural character of the legislative assembly and the provincial

electorate was preserved. Consequently, in the 175 seat Punjab Assembly, 143 were rural seats.[44]

The qualifications for enfranchisement, although lowered in most cases, were not, however, radically altered. With the exception of special constituencies, the voting qualifications were still based on land and property ownership, land revenue or income payment, official appointments and titles.[45] Of the extended franchise provided by the 1935 Act 70 per cent was constituted by members of the agricultural classes, as defined by the 1900 Land Alienation Act.[46] Only 17 per cent of landholders and 50 per cent of tenants enfranchised in the Punjab in 1935 belonged to non-agricultural classes.[47] On the advice of the provincial government and the army department, the military vote was retained.[48] This vote, as mentioned earlier, formed a significant bloc in the number of constituencies and its proportion was a continually growing one, as soldiers who were pensioned or discharged from the army were automatically given the vote. The provincial electorate eventually approved for the Punjab was, therefore, predominantly rural, with a strong conservative element, dominated by the landowning classes, whose interests were closely tied to the state. What all this implied was that the electoral base, on which was predicated the continued rural-military elite domination in the provincial legislatures prior to 1935, had remained largely unchanged.

The terms of reforms, both in 1919 and 1935, therefore fixed the political focus firmly in the countryside, strengthening the hands of the rural-military elites at the expense of the urban politicians. What emerged out of the political development of colonial Punjab during the inter-war years was therefore the political entrenchment of the landlord politicians who were not only able to operate comfortably in a civil-military regime, but very much held it together. Once in government, the rural-military elites acted as the bond between the locality (the military districts) and the legislative council in Lahore, thus reinforcing the civil-military structure at every level in the Punjab.

War, independence and partition

Between 1939 and 1945, the Punjab was mobilized once again to support Britain in a major war in which India was only involved because she was a part of the British empire. This time, however, the Unionist-led government undertook the initiative for mobilization in the Punjab. In September 1939, Sikander Hayat Khan, the Unionist premier of the Punjab, issued a statement calling on the people of the Punjab to 'maintain their splendid traditions as the swordarm of India' by giving full-hearted support to the British war effort.[49] In a manner reminiscent of O'Dwyer during the First World War, Sikander and his Unionist ministry committed themselves to gearing the province for a massive contribution to the war effort.

At the outbreak of war, Sikander and his ministers personally toured the districts to drum up enthusiasm for enlistment in the Indian army and, at the same time, to warn their detractors that the government would brook no opposition to its policy

of co-operation in the War.[50] A provincial civil guard, comprizing some 30,000 men, was raised to prepare the province for full scale mobilization as well as to help maintain law and order during the period of war.[51] Throughout the war years (even though Sikander died of a heart attack in December 1942), the Unionist Government was fully behind the mobilization process, during which more than 800,000 combatants were recruited from the Punjab and Rs 25 *crores* raised through war loans and donations.[52] Rural notables eagerly supported the war effort, as they saw it as an opportunity to increase rural employment and raise the prices of agricultural products.[53] Hopeful of obtaining rewards of cash and land grants from the British, as many of them did in the First World War, the landowning elites actively encouraged recruitment in their respective districts.

As the war wore on and the demands of manpower to be cannon fodder remained high in a province already depleted of eligible recruits, the military, civil service and provincial arms of the Raj once again coalesced into an integrated structure to direct recruitment operations in the Punjab.[54] During the First World War the mobilization process had been coordinated by an integrated civil-military bureaucracy, with the assistance of the rural-military elites. In the early 1940s, a civil-military bureaucracy similarly facilitated the mobilization process in the Punjab. But this time the process was smoothed by the conjoining of the bureaucratic edifice and a local political structure dominated by the rural-military elites.

At the end of the war, the Muslim elements within this larger rural-military elite pressured by the increasingly popular appeal of Pakistan, made a tactical shift from the Unionist Party to the Muslim League. This swing, according to Imran Ali:

> provided the basis for maintaining major continuities…[for] the Muslim landed elite chose to use the League as its vehicle for carrying over its authority into the post colonial period.[55]

With the partition of the Punjab, the Muslims maintained their control of their power bases in western Punjab. Nearly all Muslim majority districts, including Lahore, were allocated to Pakistan under the Radcliffe Award.[56] The valuable agricultural tracts in the canal colonies were now claimed solely by the Muslim landlords as the entire Jat and Sikh population there emigrated in the wake if partition. The military districts in the Salt Range Tract, from where the preponderant bulk of the Muslim soldiers had been recruited in the past, remained in Pakistan, and continued to supply over 60 per cent of the soldiers in the Pakistan army.[57]

The entire superstructure that had been the basis of Muslim political dominance in pre-partition Punjab had remained intact, and was largely unaffected by partition. The upshot was that, although the partition brought about major socioeconomic disruptions, caused mainly by the violence and migrations, the political disruption in western Punjab was minimal. The migration of the Hindus and Sikhs from the western districts of Punjab did not fundamentally change the social and political

relations in the countryside. As Ayesha Jalal has suggested, 'if anything, the transfer of population saw the landed notables tightening their grip over rural society further'.[58] It was conceivable that many of the big landowners used their influence and patronage to augment their already large landholdings with the arable land abandoned by non-Muslims. The attempts at land reform in the 1950s failed to diminish the power of the landed aristocracy as many of the big landlords were able to retain their large holdings through their ability to influence the state and to exploit loopholes in the land reform rules. Consequently, the average landholding of large family estates still averaged over 11,000 acres.[59] Many of the Muslim gentry were also well-placed to take over the credit and distribution activities formerly performed by the Hindus and Sikhs.

The old political-civil-military alliance in the Punjab was thus able to reassert its pre-eminent position without much difficulty in post-1947 Pakistan. It became for the new state the 'strategic centre of population, political authority and basic sinews of economic life'.[60] As we have already seen, with the decline of parliamentary and party politics, the powerful Punjabi bureaucrats and army officers whose alliance had already been perfected in the past, assumed total control of the centralized state apparatus, laying a firm foundation for the 'state of martial rule' in Pakistan.

The dominance of a Punjabi-centred civil bureaucracy and military, with its emphasis on the centralization of authority, considerably strengthened the hands of the state. This was perhaps fortuitous for Pakistan during the first few years of its existence as the new state had to grapple with a series of problems and challenges that threatened its well-being. In many ways, a nascent Pakistan was saved from collapse precisely by a civil-military regime that had itself survived partition. However, while the dominance of this very formation provided for the consolidation of the state, it became the major stumbling block that has repeatedly frustrated attempts to restore the democratic process in Pakistan. Furthermore, owing to the uneven distribution of power and patronage between Punjab and the other provinces, the problems of national integration have been exacerbated. The refusal of General Yahya Khan to transfer power to the eastern half of the country after the elections of 1970 stemmed from the concern of the military and the bureaucracy that their dominance would be circumscribed, should the locus of political power be shifted to the Bengalis. It was this attempt to consolidate the civil-military state that led to the collapse of the Yahya regime, and the disintegration of the country.

Conclusion

Following its birth in August 1947, Pakistan as a new nation experienced extraordinary trials and tribulations. Consisting of two wings of territory separated by more than 1,000 miles, and lacking a credible state structure, the young Muslim country began a precarious existence 'marked by something very near to social chaos'.[61] The day to day administration of the state, resetdement of the millions of

refugees flooding in from India, rehabilitation of the disrupted economy and the maintenance of law and order were some of the immediate problems that needed urgent attention.

In the prevailing conditions, an organized and powerful military and bureaucratic oligarchy was able to effectively take over power, and prevented the Pakistani state from collapse and disintegration. This civil-military oligarchy, an 'organic collaboration' between a Punjabi- dominated bureaucracy and army on the one hand, and the Punjabi landed families on the other, had its roots in colonial Punjab. The alliance among the three most powerful groups in Pakistan—the military, bureaucracy and landlords—was an arrangement that had been worked out and perfected in the past, in colonial pre-partition Punjab.

Throughout the period of colonial rule, the Punjab had been closely asso ciated with the Indian army. It was, for more than half a century (from about 1880–1947), the main recruiting ground for the Indian army. One of the outcomes of this close association was the militarization of the administration of the Punjab, characterized by the conjunction of the military, civil and political authorities into a unique civil-military regime. This development was not replicated anywhere else in British India, nor indeed the empire. Military exigencies, namely the mobilization and control of the province's important military districts during the First World War, brought about the integration of the civil and military structures of the province. This distinct nexus between the military and the state was maintained during the inter-war period as the provincial administration and the army co-operated closely to insulate the important military districts from external political influences. The closely integrated civil-military structure was then reinforced by the establishment of a local political structure dominated by rural-military elites, following constitutional reforms in 1920 and 1937. This civil-military regime remained essentially intact despite major political developments and upheaval in the 1940s, and was inherited thereafter by Pakistan. In the period after 1947, it was this powerful and well-entrenched civil-military alliance that took over the state apparatus and ensured the survival of the 'moth-eaten' and fragile state of Pakistan. Not only did the disruptions and upheaval caused by the partition of the Punjab and the post-1947 adjustments fail to dislodge this formation, but these very conditions in post-partition Punjab enabled the eventual re-emergence of this powerful civil-military bureaucracy which was able to usurp state power in the new country, and which remains the real force in Pakistan's politics to this day.

9
Contemporary South Asia and the legacies of partition

Introduction

On 14–15 August 1998 the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of Independence in India and Pakistan were concluded. Valedictory ceremonies were organized with fanfare in the capitals Islamabad and Delhi. In Islamabad Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif declared that, while '14 August will be remembered as independence day for Pakistan, 28 May will be remembered as the day when the security of the country is guaranteed forever'. In his address to the nation he justified Pakistan's nuclear explosions of 28 May 1998 as essential for the nation's survival and well being. 'We have that power which only six other nations in the world have', Sharif declared. 'This strength has given us protection and confidence', he claimed.[1]

In Delhi, at the traditional flag-hoisting ceremony at the Red Fort, Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajapeyi brought the Golden Jubilee Celebrations to an end by highlighting the achievements of Indian science and its promise of ushering the nation into the new millennium with a vast scientific network and a strong scientific manpower. Yet, in both countries the enthusiasm, exuberance and fervour, which had marked the inauguration of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations just a year before, were noticeably absent. The hope had been sadly belied that the half-centennial would lead to soul-searching and introspection by the region's political elites about the nature of partition, its tragic aftermath, its long-term consequences and its debilitating legacies.

Unfortunately, the Golden Jubilee Year will be remembered in history as inaugurating an era of armed nuclear hostility in the region, as both India and Pakistan tested nuclear weapons with several explosions which were carried out in May 1998. As a result, the prospects of peace and stability in the region have been dramatically altered and, yet again, it has been demonstrated that the bitter legacies of partition continue. As a political analyst observed:

> The nuclearisation of India and Pakistan is…an extraordinary moment in the narrative of Partition : both its *telos,* in that it confirms that national jingoism and the bloodthirsty hatreds that propelled the mass slayings and movements of populations in 1947 and after, and its inversion, in that it reminds us that

> our fates as nations have never been separate, that when we look across our borders we look into a mirror, that we are locked in an embrace so close that we must draw the same fetid breath.
>
> As the bombs exploded first 'ours' over two days, then 'theirs' over a few more, it seemed hard to avoid a feeling of *deja vu:* you kill one of ours, we'll kill two of yours, you explode five, we'll explode six. Hadn't we heard this vocabulary in 1947, and suffered its apocalyptic effects even then (perhaps a million dead, ten million dislocated)? An eye for an eye, a neighbourhood for a *mohalla,* a population for a population, and now potentially a nation for a nation.[2]

While those in power lauded the coming of age of nuclear arms-based 'security', informed citizens in both the countries strongly condemned the explosions as populist, self-seeking and phobia-driven. Ashis Nandy, a well known political commentator, describes the ideology of nuclear armsbased security as 'the most depraved, shameless and costly pornography of our times' which 'cannot be judged only by the canons of international relations, geopolitics, political sociology or ethics'. Instead, Nandy looks upon nuclearism as 'a well known, identifiable, psycho-pathological syndrome'.[3] He and many other scholars do not hesitate to trace the nuclear stand-off in the region to the fault-line created between India and Pakistan at the time of partition.

Outside the sphere of the nuclear arms race, the legacies of partition continue to manifest themselves in a variety of ways. As has been argued throughout this book, partition engendered processes that went beyond its immediate consequences and continue to influence developments in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Far from resolving the 'communal' problem, partition aggravated the difficulties of minorities in several instances. Overall, its legacies are still evident as they have cast their long shadows on aspects of state and society in the region. In this concluding chapter, a survey spells out some of the ways in which partition continues to leave its mark on South Asia.

The Kashmir *imbroglio*

Of the many legacies of partition that continue to leave a debilitating impact on the South Asian region, the unresolved issue of Kashmir is undoubtedly the most bitter and intractable in the present context.[4] Fifty years after independence, Kashmir continues to occupy centre-stage in a long-drawn bilateral dispute between India and Pakistan, with each

> laying claim to the former Dogra Kingdom of Jammu and Kashmir in its entirety, despite border adjustments between China and Pakistan, and despite the 1972 Simla Accord which implicitly recognised the partition of the former princely state between the two successor states of the British Raj.[5]

Lying in the north-western corner of the Indian subcontinent, the territory occupies approximately 85,000 square miles and is controlled by three countries. India controls almost half of Kashmir, comprizing the mainly Muslim-dominated Kashmir valley, the Hindu-dominated Jammu and the principally Buddhist region of Ladakh across the Himalayan divide. Pakistan has control over a third of Kashmir, which is divided into two administrative units, known as 'Azad Kashmir' and 'Northern Areas'. Onefifth of Kashmir, comprizing the Aksai Chin region in north-eastern Ladakh, is under Chinese control. During the past fifty years, three major wars have been fought in which Kashmir has been a direct or indirect cause, two between India and Pakistan in 1947–9 and 1965, and one between India and China in 1962. As a source of persistent low-level cross border conflict and as the subject of protracted negotiations between the two states, Kashmir remains the key agenda in India-Pakistan relations. Security analysts look upon this territory as one of the most dangerous flashpoints in the world today, as both the antagonists now openly brandish nuclear weapons. The conflict has provided a justification to governments in both countries for increasingly higher levels of military expenditure.

The conflict in Kashmir has been further complicated by the eruption of a popular movement by the Muslims in the Kashmir valley, coupled with armed insurgency which has gripped the territory since 1987. The 'rebellion', which the Indian authorities believe has been receiving arms and other help from Pakistan, has spawned several militant groups with their own political agendas and strategies. While some groups are fighting to break away from India and raising the separatist banner of a sovereign Jammu and Kashmir, other groups are demanding Kashmir's merger with Pakistan. The unrest, which shows few real signs of abating, poses a serious challenge to India's federal structure and its democratic and secular polity.

It is well understood that the roots of the Kashmir problem, both internationally and domestically, lie in the events following partition in 1947. When the British resolved to quit India, they had to decide on the future of more than 500 princely states of varying sizes which occupied almost two-fifths of the Indian empire. As remnants of local kingdoms and fiefdoms which they had conquered in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, these territories were preserved as princely states by the British under a system of indirect rule in which the princes enjoyed political autonomy in their respective states, while 'surrendering foreign policy and defence to the supremacy of British imperial interests'.[6] Unlike the directly governed provinces, the princely states continued to function more or less autonomously, with their relationship with the Crown defined by the Doctrine of 'Paramountcy' under which the British were unquestionably accepted as the political overlords.

As the British prepared to end their rule in India, the future of the princely states became the subject of much uncertainty. When Lord Mountbatten, last British Viceroy of India, formulated the 'partition plan' to divide the Indian empire on the basis of contiguous, communal majority areas, his plan failed to adequately take into consideration the vast areas occupied by the princely states, of which Kashmir was one of the largest. Although technically independent following the lapse of

'Paramountcy' on 15 August 1947, the princely states were advised by Mountbatten to choose between India and Pakistan. By July 1947, a newly established Department of States set out the procedures for transfer of power to take effect for the princely states. As an interim measure, these states were to initially sign a 'stand still agreement' with the Dominions of India and Pakistan. This was to enable the princely states to continue 'business as usual' in areas such as transport and trade and communications until each individual princely state signed a permanent 'Instrument of Accession' with either India or Pakistan.

In deciding whether to accede to Pakistan or India, the princely states were advised by the British to proceed on the basis of geographical contiguity. As they were excluded from the 3 June Plan (which had required the Muslim majority provinces to decide whether to join Pakistan as a whole or be partitioned) the choice of whether to accede to India or Pakistan could not be determined on the basis of the religious composition of the minority population in the princely state. The option of a boundary demarcation, as the Radcliffe Commission was implementing for the international boundary between India and Pakistan, was therefore not applicable for the princely states. In any case, to impose boundaries on the princely states was simply impossible, given their haphazard geographical spread across the subcontinent. Furthermore, the situation in many princely states was compounded by the fact that Hindu rulers often presided over Muslim populations and *vice versa*.[7]

Although the British had advised the rulers to consult their populations before signing the 'Instrument of Accession', they were none the less concerned that the decisions of some princely states might jeopardize the territorial integrity of India and Pakistan. The neatest solution, according to the British, was for the princely states to join the Dominion with which their territories were contiguous. Such a prospect created a conundrum for Kashmir, which had the singular advantage of being geographically contiguous with both India and Pakistan and, on that basis, could accede to either.

By 15 August 1947, most princely states, except Hyderabad, Junagadh and Kashmir, had acceded to India. Hyderabad and Junagadh, both with Muslim rulers and Hindu majority populations, did not hold out for long and were forcibly 'integrated' within months of independence as a result of police action started by the Congress-led Indian government.[8] In the case of Kashmir, its Hindu ruler, Maharaja Hari Singh, showed open reluctance to accede to either of the two new dominions. Although he was caught in the unenviable situation of being the Hindu ruler of a Muslim majority state, he still entertained thoughts of making his kingdom an independent country in its own right. Following the 'logic' of partition, Kashmir, with a Muslim population outnumbering the Hindus three to one, should have gone to Pakistan. Yet, Hari Singh as a Hindu ruler naturally felt a greater sense of affinity with India.[9] Therefore in 1947 he found himself in a difficult position, having to decide upon the future of his state by joining either India or Pakistan. Prem Shankar Jha, a political analyst, offers the following explanation for the difficulty of the Maharaja's position:[10]

> Prior to July-August 1947, Hari Singh was unable to make up his mind not so much because he was indolent or weak, but because he was being pushed powerfully in two opposite directions. He was drawn to India by his own religion and antecedents, but was being impelled towards Pakistan not only by preponderance of Muslims in the state, and its close geographical and economic links with that dominion, but by everything that was important to him personally—power, status, and prestige.

In the prevailing circumstances the Maharaja held out. As he weighed his options, Hari Singh worked out a 'stand still' agreement with Pakistan, but delayed signing the 'Instrument of Accession'. For its part, India decided against entering into any agreement with Kashmir, perhaps not wishing to have its hands tied by a 'stand still' agreement. However, the situation changed dramatically in October 1947 as trouble broke out in the district of Poonch close to the Pakistani border when Pathan tribesmen invaded Kashmir. Thinking that this was a Pakistani plot to start a rebellion in his state to overthrow him, the Maharaja panicked and turned to India for help. On 26 October 1947, in return for India's assurance for military aid to help stem the tribal attack, the Maharaja signed the 'Instrument of Accession' and, as a result, Kashmir joined the Indian Union. Pakistan protested by sending its troops which challenged the Indian army on Kashmiri soil, therefore starting the first armed conflict between the two countries.

This sequence of events (which led to Kashmir's merger with India) has been challenged endlessly by Pakistani interpretations which argue that the so-called tribal invasion was actually an internal popular revolt against the Maharaja, evidently in protest against the actions of his troops involved in 'ethnic cleansing' against the Muslims. Some other non-Pakistani scholars have also lent support to this interpretation. For instance, Alastair Lamb has argued that Kashmir's accession was the result of connivance between Mountbatten and Nehru.[11] Lamb has asserted that the British were keen to keep Kashmir within India for geo-strategic reasons. He has cited the Radcliffe Commission's award of three Muslim majority *tehsils* of Gurdaspur district to India as proof of British complicity in preventing Kashmir from acceding to Pakistan. The Gurdaspur award gave a land link to Kashmir, making its accession to India possible. The validity of the 'Instrument of Accession' signed between India and Kashmir has also been questioned. It has been alleged that the document was fraudulent, as the Maharaja had been forced to sign it under duress.[12]

There remains no doubt that political leaders in both India and Pakistan regarded Kashmir as a territorial prize too important to be lost to the other side. To both the countries the option of an independent Kashmir was simply unacceptable. The Maharaja's right to independently decide the future of his state was given little heed, as both countries harboured their own territorial ambitions for Kashmir. As Robert Wirsing explains:

> It is clear…that the contention that India's intervention in Kashmir at the end of October was entirely reactive, unpremeditated and entailed no territorial ambitions whatsoever—and that it was as implied in the White Paper (which India published on Jammu and Kashmir soon after her intervention in the state) essentially an afterthought—is not worth a moment's consideration. Neither, however, is the contention that Pakistan was an innocent bystander, the unfortunate victim of an Indian plot.[13]

Eventually, Indian troops were flown into Kashmir after the signing of the 'Instrument of Accession'. They were able to quell the rebellion and push the armed tribesmen out of Srinagar, the capital. The Pakistani troops, however, retained control over a thin slice of the valley in the west as well as large tracts of mountainous wasteland in the north along the borders of Afghanistan and China. Kashmir was therefore divided along the 'line of control' where the troops stood when a 'cease-fire' agreement was imposed by the United Nations on 31 December 1948 in response to growing international pressure. At present these 'lines of control', instead of formally demarcated and internationally recognized borders, held by Indian, Pakistani and Chinese troops, determine the geography of Kashmir as well as the fragile peace which exists there.

The stalemate that was created in 1948 has defied a solution over the past fifty years, despite endless rounds of diplomacy, repeated attempts at mediation and constant international pressure. Ideological constraints and domestic politics within India and Pakistan have conspired against a compromise on this issue. While India maintains that the relinquishing of the predominantly Muslim territory would weaken her secular polity, Pakistan fears that giving up its claims over Kashmir would be tantamount to compromizing the very ideological basis of Pakistan as the homeland of Muslims in South Asia.

India has continued to maintain her hold over Kashmir on legal grounds, citing the 'Instrument of Accession' signed by the Maharaja in 1947 as an irrevocable and final settlement of the issue. The validity of this claim has, however, been challenged as the 'Instrument of Accession' was conditional upon a plebiscite which was promised but never took place. Pakistan thus considers Kashmir as an 'unfinished business of partition', arguing that if Hyderabad and Junagadh, both Hindu-majority states with Muslim rulers, had gone to India, it was only logical that Kashmir, a Muslim-majority state with a Hindu ruler, should have come to Pakistan.[14]

The refusal of either country to concede has created a virtual deadlock which belies hopes for a peaceful solution at least in the foreseeable future. Kashmir continues to remain a stark and poignant reminder that after half a century the 'unfinished business of partition' continues to exact a heavy toll on peace and stability in the region.

Security concerns in South Asia

The conflict in Kashmir, the primary cause of continuing hostility between India and Pakistan, has led to 'institutionalising in a microcosm all the historical irritations between the two countries'.[15] It has also led to the perception that India-Pakistan relations are congenitally flawed. The circumstances of partition, the hostile environment which Pakistan faced as a new nation and the debilitating conflict over Kashmir have coalesced to create an atmosphere which has 'made normal relations between India and Pakistan well nigh impossible'. As Gowher Rizvi explains:

> the rivalry between India and Pakistan is built into the political structure of the two countries. The existence of one threatens the other…the dispute of Kashmir, a legacy of partition, reactivated all the issues and the traumas which partition was intended to stop…the establishment of Pakistan merely transformed the communal fight into an international rivalry.[16]

Furthermore, the antipathy between India and Pakistan is exacerbated by the sharply contrasting self-images of both countries. While Pakistan sees itself as the homeland for all Muslims in South Asia, India takes pride in regional and international forums in proudly affirming the secular nature of its polity.

None the less, bitter memories of the past have lingered. The acrimonious pre-partition politics, the controversial division of territories, the violent massacres and the forced uprooting of millions which marked the birth of India and Pakistan as nation-states have left behind a legacy of suspicion and distrust. Even following partition, the formative phase in which relations between the two countries evolved came to be haunted by extraordinarily inauspicious circumstances.

Perhaps the dispute over the sharing of the waters of the Ravi and Sutlej rivers, which took place in the wake of the Kashmir *imbroglio,* illustrates the peculiar nature of the adversarial relationship in which the two countries have found themselves locked. India's control of the headwaters of the Indus river and four of its tributaries threatened the economic survival of West Punjab, whose source of irrigation vitally depended upon India turning on the tap in its canal head-works, as discussed in detail in Chapter Three. The shutting off of water supplies to the canals leading to Pakistan in 1948 was indicative of the damage that India could inflict upon Pakistan if she so desired.[17]

Shaped by such experiences, the Pakistani political leadership looks upon India as its major security threat. It harbours the fear that India, with its overwhelming superiority in terms of size, economic resources and conventional military power, has intentions of subjugating it into a dependent client-state.[18] For a long time, the belief persisted among Pakistani leaders that India had always regarded partition and the coming into existence of Pakistan as a 'historical aberration', and that India's ultimate aim was to 'undo' the 1947 partition and re-assimilate the young Muslim nation into her body-politic.[19]

In light of such perceptions, Pakistan has consistently committed a sizeable portion of its national resources to defence to augment its military preparedness in the eventuality of an armed engagement with India. At the same time, appreciating its limitations in size and resources, Pakistan has looked for outside military assistance to counter Indian military power. In the mid-1950s it entered into strategic alliances with the USA, ostensibly to check Communist advances in Asia, but in reality to secure arms to strengthen its position against India. After the 1962 Sino-Indian war, Pakistan drew closer to China and received Chinese military equipment and technical help in establishing defence production facilities. In the 1970s and 1980s, with financial assistance from the oil-rich Middle Eastern bloc, Pakistan was able to go on a shopping spree and acquire sophisticated military hardware from Western Europe.[20]

In view of the continuous tensions with Pakistan, with which it fought three wars and has a continuing low-intensity conflict in Kashmir, the question of defence spending for India has been a significant one. In the last thirty years, India has committed between 3 and 4 per cent of its Gross National Product to defence.[21] Clearly, India does not take the security threat from Pakistan lightly, as shown by its ambitious and relatively independent weapons production programme. Its traditional defence posture has been to maintain a 'slight edge', both quantitative and qualitative, in ground, air and naval forces against Pakistan. Strategic analysts look upon India's military build-up as an attempt to neutralize:

> Pakistan's conventional military capability to the point where states beyond the subcontinent would find it increasingly cost-ineffective to encourage, or seek the creation of a military balance between India and Pakistan'.[22]

Constantly fearful of a surprise attack by Pakistan and interference by external powers in a regional conflict, India has felt committed to maintaining at all times an advanced military capability, whatever the cost.[23]

Such antipathy and distrust have made the question of arms control in South Asia increasingly vexed in the light of the strained relations which exist between the two adversaries. Currently both countries are among the most heavily armed states in the world, as they have been stockpiling arms for quite some time. For over three decades between 1950–85, India was the foremost arms producer in the developing world.[24] Between 1988–92 India and Pakistan ranked first and seventh respectively among major arms importers in the developing world. Clearly, the size of their military arsenals are huge and are a matter of grave concern to the international community.

The stakes have been raised considerably, as India and Pakistan recently joined the ranks of 'known nuclear weapons' or 'nuclear weapons threshold' states. It is believed that both countries are now capable of assembling and delivering nuclear weapons in a matter of days'.[25] It is estimated that 'India has a large quantity of bomb-grade plutonium and Pakistan's enrichment plant in Kahuta is believed to have produced enough weapons grade uranium for several nuclear bombs'.[26]

It is widely believed that Pakistan's pursuit of nuclear weapons started in the wake of its defeat in the 1971 war with India and its loss of East Pakistan.[27] The resulting sense of insecurity prompted Pakistan to seek the nuclear option as a possible deterrent against India in a future crisis. India successfully tested its first nuclear device in 1974.

Although both countries continue to be beset with problems of economic backwardness, they are none the less committed to further developing their nuclear programmes. Both have been conspicuous in their refusal to accede to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, signed in 1996 by 149 governments, including all declared nuclear powers.

On 11 May 1998, the strategic environment in South Asia changed dramatically when India successfully exploded three nuclear devices in the Thar desert of western Rajasthan.[28] Not to be outdone, Pakistan gave a tit for tat response and within weeks exploded several nuclear devices in the Chagai hills. The Pakistani Prime Minister, Nawaz Sharif's reply to USA President Bill Clinton's exhortation against going nuclear was telling: he would be thrown out of office if he did not act, he told the American president.[29] Domestic political pressures therefore overrode international calls for restraints by Pakistan.[30] Clearly, the possession of nuclear capability is seen by both Indian and Pakistani political leaders as crucial symbols of national sovereignty, revealing the bitter legacies of conflict which were engendered by partition and which have been festering like a wound ever since.

Environmental costs of partition: water-sharing between Bangladesh and India

Just as the relations between India and Pakistan had been marred after partition by difficulties which arose over the sharing of river waters in the Indus basin, the problem of an equitable distribution of river waters in the Eastern region has strained relations between India and Bangladesh.[31] The roots of this problem go back to 1947 when an arbitrary boundary line divided Bengal and East Pakistan emerged as a territory comprizing one of the largest deltas of the world, with several river networks criss-crossing its terrain. It is reckoned that as many as fifty-seven rivers flow through this territory, some even forming the international borderline with India. Of these the three largest are the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna rivers and their drainage basins and tributaries cover over 80 per cent of the total land area. Of these rivers, the head-works of fifty four rivers, including the three largest ones, are located upstream outside the territory which being lower-riparian has little control over them.[32]

As shown in Chapter Three, the boundary line demarcated in 1947 defied all logic of geography and introduced a new dimension in the South Asian region, 'hydro-politics' or conflict over water. While this conflict was resolved in the case of the Indus rivers after protracted negotiations and costly solutions, the discord over the management of water resources in the Eastern region has not only continued, but has become aggravated. It has created differences and antagonism

between the two states over issues such as equitable sharing of water, shifting courses of rivers, flood control, harnessing of hydroelectric power and related ecological and developmental issues. While water resources are important to both countries for irrigation, drinking water, fisheries, forestry and navigational purposes, India's neighbour in the East is far more dependent upon them, given the natural landscape of the region.

Notwithstanding this inter-dependence, it is striking that the two states failed to co-operate in the years after partition. A potentially difficult situation emerged in 1951 when disagreements surfaced over the stretch of the Ganges which had been awarded to India under the Radcliffe Award, and which India wanted to use to divert water to the port of Calcutta. The Government of India claimed that there was a problem with the silting of the water channels leading to Calcutta port, which was then the largest centre of sea-borne trade in the Indian subcontinent. India asserted that a solution lay in diverting water down the Bhagirathi-Hooghly tributary to Calcutta. Protracted negotiations failed to produce an amicable solution. Then, in 1961 India took the decision to construct a barrage at Farakka on the Ganges, just 18 km upstream from the international border, to divert the flow of the river to Calcutta. The aim was to flush silt from the lower reaches of the river to ensure the continued viability of the port.[33] This threatened to aggravate the already complex problems of water management. However, India largely ignored protests by Pakistan and continued its plans of constructing a barrage.

In 1971 East Pakistan gained independence after a bitter civil war and emerged as independent Bangladesh. As is well-known, India played an important role in expelling Pakistani troops at the climax of the liberation struggle. Given India's role in the events and the gratitude which the new nation felt towards it, India was able to persuade Bangladesh to agree to the Farakka barrage proposal. By 1975 construction work over the barrage had been completed.

The construction of the barrage has adversely affected Bangladesh. Its reported consequences include a drastic reduction in the flow of Ganges water into the country, downstream morphological changes in the river, intrusion of sea water into surface water, serious damage to crops which require intensive irrigation due to 'green revolution' technologies, and related environmental changes.[34] Over the years Bangladesh has raised these problems in regional and international bodies but both countries have failed to find a mutually acceptable solution, in spite of rounds of protracted negotiations. However, owing to political problems, the prospect of achieving a 'cooperative, multinational development' of the Ganges remains elusive.[35] The failure to arrive at an agreement over the equitable sharing and management of water resources is exacting a heavy environmental cost in the region.

The effective utilization of river waters, particularly for flood control and development of hydroelectric and irrigation potential, are matters of grave concern for the 400 million people living in the Ganges and Brahmaputra basins in Bangladesh.[36] In a sense their livelihood is dependent upon the region's ecological stability which cannot be guaranteed without an equitable sharing of river waters.

Yet, the roots of this conflict go back to partition and the controversial boundary award which imposed artificial trans-national borders over a unified natural landscape formed by one of the largest deltas in the world. In a sense, these boundaries continue to exact a heavy toll in terms of environmental and social costs, which have imposed extraordinary hardships on the people of the region, especially in Bangladesh.

Partition and the South Asian diaspora

Partition left an imprint on peoples, places and institutions not only within South Asia but also beyond it. The massive demographic upheaval which it triggered uprooted an estimated eighteen million people. The bulk of the refugees came from the North-West Frontier Province, Punjab and Sindh in Pakistan and parts of northern India.[37] Although most of the demo graphic flows occurred during 1947–9, refugees continued to move across the India-Pakistan borders throughout the 1950s. For instance, the two countries reported a movement of over a million people across the borders between 1951 and 1957.[38]

There is much evidence which suggests that this uprooting led to a chain of migrations, as individuals and families looked for safety, shelter and livelihood. Families moved from one place to another in search of opportunities for meaningful rehabilitation. This resulted in a widespread diffusion of refugees across large parts of India and Pakistan and to countries beyond the subcontinent. As shown in Chapters Five and Six, different communities caught up in the demographic upheaval triggered by partition responded to their uprooting in a variety of ways. Some were able to rehabilitate themselves with remarkable success such as the farming groups which settled upon land in East Punjab, while others like the Namsudra agriculturists from East Pakistan could never meaningfully settle down in West Bengal. Some communities showed an extraordinary capacity to migrate to countries further afield to rebuild their lives.

Two communities which showed a remarkable propensity of increasingly becoming diasporic, particularly after 1947, were the Sikhs and Sindhis. The Sikhs, having being classified as a 'martial race' in the nineteenth century by the British, had a tradition of migration. They had been recruited in large numbers in the colonial army, resettled in fertile canal colonies in West Punjab and deployed continuously in military service on the far-flung frontiers of the British empire. They had also been transported to other colonies like Malaya, Singapore, Hong Kong and even parts of Africa, mainly for watch and ward duties. Therefore, in the prepartition period a significant number of Sikhs had developed overseas links and many had been exposed to the larger world beyond the Punjab.

As shown in Chapter Four, the Sikhs as a community were among the worst victims of partition. Large numbers fled the districts of Western Pakistan to seek safety and shelter all over northern India. Arriving with hardly any possessions except their personal belongings, they were welcomed and supported by their co-religionists in East Punjab where they initially took refuge. By the early 1950s,

as a result of redistribution of evacuee land by the authorities in East Punjab and support from family and clan networks, the majority of Sikh refugees were able to stand on their feet again. The community could boast that its members had not drifted into destitution due to the economic hardships which came with uprooting.

Yet it took years of struggle for families to re-establish levels of economic well-being to which they had been accustomed before being uprooted. Often, it entailed moving from one place to another in search of livelihood. The Sikhs showed remarkable mobility in looking for opportunities beyond the Punjab, which traditionally had been their home prior to partition. According to estimates between 8 and 10 per cent of all Sikhs had migrated overseas by the end of the 1950s and another 30 per cent were living within India but outside Punjab in towns and cities of adjacent provinces and in the capital of Delhi.[39] Furthermore, census data reveals the incidence of heavy out-migration between 1951 and 1961 from the three predominantly Sikh districts of Jullundur, Horshiarpur and Kapurthala in East Punjab. Much of this out-migration involved displaced Sikh families uprooted from Pakistan.[40]

The post-partition emigration of Sikhs beyond the Punjab was influenced largely by two sets of factors. The first related to the social and economic dislocations brought about by partition. Although the Sikhs initially took refuge in the culturally and socially familiar environment of East Punjab, many could not convince themselves that it was a case of returning home. To them home lay in the western districts of Punjab which had now become a part of Pakistan. The feeling of being uprooted lingered on for a large number of individuals and families and their sense of restlessness persisted. Thus, whenever opportunities presented themselves for migration further afield, the Sikhs took full advantage of them.[41] Conditions for emigration were especially propitious for the Sikhs in the post-Second World War period. Many of the war ravaged Western economies were faced with the challenge of economic reconstruction. At the same time, their manpower resources stood severely depleted because of the war and they badly needed immigrants who could take up semi or unskilled jobs. The Sikhs benefited enormously from these circumstances which facilitated their settlement in large numbers in the UK, other West European countries and the USA.[42] The majority of Sikh immigrants in Britain, for instance, arrived in the late 1940s and 1950s.

Elsewhere in places such as Singapore, Malaya, Hong Kong and Northern California, the Sikh diaspora was facilitated by the presence of already established immigrant communities. These communities had settled overseas due to their own enterprise and as a consequence of circumstances brought about by colonial rule and the deep involvement of the Sikhs with the British Indian army. Following partition, as large numbers of displaced Sikhs looked for economic opportunities, family, kin and marriage networks acted as powerful 'pull' factors for overseas migration. Thus, overall, partition led to the immigration of Sikhs to newer destinations in the UK and Western Europe. At the same time, it quickened the pace of Sikh out-migration to countries where the community already had a presence, specially in South East Asia and Northern California.

Like the Sikhs, the Sindhis are also well known as a diasporic South Asian community. They have been described as a 'global tribe of dispersed people' who are inter-connected by an extensive business network which operates on the basis of kinship and trust.[43] The roots of this traditional Hindu trading community lie in the present day Sind province in Pakistan. For several centuries its members had ventured overseas as traders and merchants in search of economic opportunity and profit.[44] They had established over time a highly successful trading network which covered parts of East Africa and Central Asia and was particularly well entrenched in all the major Asian port cities such as Singapore, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Jakarta and Manila.

Partition came as a turning point in the fortunes of the Sindhi community. Unlike Punjab, which witnessed unprecedented violence in the second half of 1947, Sind remained relatively quiet in the initial months of independence as its premier city Karachi became the federal capital of Pakistan. However, as Muslim refugees from various parts of India started arriving in large numbers into the province, the Hindu Sindhis felt increasingly insecure, as their properties and lives came under attack. The Sind government, while sympathetic to the local Hindu population, felt obliged to accommodate the incoming Muslim refugees. This led to inconsistent official policies that further unnerved the Hindus. The Sindhis experienced commercial discrimination and boycott and, as a propertied social group, felt particularly vulnerable. However, as the political leadership showed itself to be unable to control the growing incidence of violence, especially after the serious riots which erupted in Hyderabad and Karachi, the Sindhis felt uncertain of their own future in Pakistan and decided to leave their homes. Their migration from Sind was largely a planned evacuation which used the safer sea route. The bulk of the Sindhis sailed from the port of Karachi, while others travelled by rail through Rajasthan and Gujarat to reach Bombay. Although they escaped the violent uprooting which the Sikhs had experienced in West Punjab, their loss in overall terms was no less. Partition meant that, with the inclusion of Sind in Pakistan, they had lost their 'homeland' to the new Muslim state and had been reduced to refugee status with no territory which they could call their own, or with which they could identify in cultural terms.

Unlike the Sikhs who were able to move from West to East Punjab, 'the areas to which the Sindhi Hindus were to migrate remained undefinable as such'.[45] As a trading community, the majority of Sindhis found it advantageous to use Bombay, the business capital of India, as their base. Many were remarkably successful in establishing themselves in Bombay, where they were able to fit into the new environment. However, a large number looked for opportunities abroad. Their already-established kinsmen overseas provided an impetus for further migration and facilitated their settlement and acculturation in the countries to which they migrated.[46]

In retrospect, the overseas migrations by the Sindhis and the Sikhs can be seen as essentially family strategies pursued to deal with the loss of material wealth and status that most refugees faced after partition. As the resources and opportunities

for rehabilitation within India were scarce, migration beyond South Asia was increasingly seen as an honourable alternative to cope with reduction of status and to overcome the dependence associated with refugeehood: a strategy which has proved to be remarkably successful, not only in helping the migrants to rebuild their lives after being uprooted, but also in establishing a visible and distinct Indian presence in different parts of the world.

Problems of 'minorities': the Muhajirs in Pakistan

Since the early 1980s the Muhajir community in Karachi has raised the banner of revolt against federal Pakistani and provincial Sindhi authorities. This conflict has transformed Karachi into one of the most violent cities in South Asia. News media have often used descriptions such as 'City of death', 'City in flames' and 'Explosion waiting to happen' to report events of ethnic strife in Karachi. The roots of Karachi's troubles go back to partition. The incessant political unrest in recent years in Karachi and Hyderabad, the most important cities in Sindh, can be 'related to the changes which the province underwent in the late 1940s and early 1950s, in the wake of the influx of migrant Muslims from India following partition'.[47] The problems of assimilation and integration were most telling, and:

> one of [the] more unavoidable long term legacies [of partition] has been the creation of circumstances in which ethnic tension has been the hallmark of the relationship between the original population of the region and the newcomers.[48]

It is clear that the ethnic strife that has turned the streets of Karachi and Hyderabad into veritable battlegrounds since the early 1980s stems from unresolved issues of ethnic difference and assimilation due to the circumstances of the 1947 partition.

The term 'Muhajir' in present-day Pakistani politics refers to Urduspeaking people, mainly concentrated in Karachi and Hyderabad, whose families came as refugees from northern India during partition. 'Muhajir' was originally used to describe followers of Prophet Muhammad who had converted to Islam and faced religious persecution in Medina. To escape this persecution, the Prophet initiated the *hijrat* (migration) and those who joined him were called the Muhajirs. In 1947, as the new Federal Government of Pakistan struggled to establish itself in Karachi, a large number of Muslim refugees from northern India came and settled down in the city. The local Sindhi population welcomed them. The refugees looked upon themselves as the 'founding fathers' of Pakistan, having performed *hijrat* for the sake of the new Muslim nation. In the early years of Pakistan, Muhajir was an all-inclusive category used by people with pride. Migration was represented in terms of pilgrimage and the existing ethnic and regional differences were played down to emphasize the unity and brotherhood which the new nation symbolized.

However, at a practical level, the large scale influx of Muhajirs transformed the landscape of Karachi as Chapter Seven has shown. Karachi became the preferred

destination of northern Indian Urdu-speaking Muslims who hoped to find white-collar employment opportunities in the cosmopolitan commercial and port city.[49] As the designated federal capital of Pakistan, Karachi had a natural attraction for educated, urban-based migrants from Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Bombay, Bihar and Hyderabad in the Deccan. As a capital city Karachi offered migrants from India the best promise of access to jobs and financial security. It was also attractive, as the city was full of evacuee Hindu houses, which the refugees could receive as compensation for the property they had given up in India.[50] Due to the influx of the Muhajirs, Karachi's population, which was less than 350,000 in 1941 rose to 1,119,598 in 1961. Sind province itself became a centre of Muhajir immigration, with 57 per cent of the population of Karachi, 65 per cent of Hyderabad and 55 per cent of Sakkur made up of refugees.

Unlike the Punjab, the refugees who settled in Sind were of a heterogeneous mix and had little in common with the local Sindhi population.[51] The Muhajirs and the Sindhis were distinct in a number of ways. To begin with they spoke different languages, the Muhajirs being mainly Urdu-speakers, while the locals spoke their native Sindhi dialect. Furthermore, 'the migrants who settled in the cities of Sind were more educated than the province's original Muslim population which had lagged behind its former Hindu population in terms of education and the jobs which accompanied it'.[52] There was also a sharp urban-rural divide, as most migrants were city-dwellers who looked upon the local Sindhis as a backward, illiterate people 'who bowed their heads to the all-powerful landlords and religious leaders'.[53] Such differences set the migrants apart from the host community, and gradually the boundaries which emphasized these differences became more rigid.

As the boundaries became more inflexible, it was inevitable that a sense of competition and hostility between the two communities would develop. As the Muhajirs made their presence felt in the civil service the local Sindhis began to feel threatened. They believed that they were losing out in terms of access to education, employment, land, political power, and even in terms of their cultural identity.[54] In the early years of Pakistan, the Muhajirs dominated the commercial, administrative and service sectors of the province. From very early on, Muhajirs from Uttar Pradesh and Hyderabad began dominating the bureaucracy and important positions in federal and local institutions came to be controlled by them.[55] It has been pointed out that:

> the modern and urbanised Muhajirs with official patronage alongside their entrepreneurial skills quickly established themselves. From Sindhi perspectives, it was a problem of a new group of adversaries replacing the old Hindu elite in the province and restricting opportunities for them once again'.[56]

On their part, the Muhajirs, although well-represented in the bureaucracy, were growing restive with the Pakistani government as well as the local Sindhis for failing

to adequately recognize their contributions to the new nation and to give them the preferential treatment which they felt they deserved. They had, after all, made the ultimate sacrifice by foregoing all they had in India for the Islamic nation, for which they had fought so hard.[57] However, the almost simultaneous welling-up of frustration by the local Sindhi population in that they were becoming second-class citizens in their own homeland, together with the Muhajirs' growing resentment at being treated as aliens in the new nation, created a gulf between them, which widened particularly in the 1960s.[58]

From the 1960s onwards, due to significant changes in Pakistan's politics, as the country came under martial law and the federal capital itself was shifted from Karachi to Islamabad, the Muhajirs began to experience a decline in their political and economic status. In the 1970s Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's pro-Sindhi policies, especially his decision to impose Sindhi as the official language in the province and his attempts to increase the proportion of local Sindhis in the provincial and federal bureaucracies were viewed as being detrimental to Muhajir interests. They evoked an angry reaction leading to riots when the language bill was passed in 1972.[59] This growing alienation and frustration resulted in the formation of student and youth organizations like the All Pakistan Muhajir Students Organization, which later provided the nucleus for the Muhajir Quami Mahaz (MQM), a separate political party formed in 1984 to champion 'Muhajir interests'.

Since the early 1980s the Sindhi-Muhajir conflict has erupted in extreme violence. The formation of the MQM was a response to the increasing frustration felt by the younger generation of Muhajirs who felt that their interests had not been taken care of by older nationalist parties like the Muslim League and the Jamiat-i-Islami.[60] The MQM leader Altaf Hussain, now exiled in London, controls the grassroots organization. His demands include the recognition of the Muhajirs as a separate 'fifth nationality' of Pakistan, alongside the Punjabis, Baluchis, Sindhis and Pathans.[61]

The Muhajir issue, which poses a major challenge to nation-building in present day Pakistan, demonstrates that the country has yet to come to terms with the changing long-term political implications of partition.[62] The state of affairs in Karachi is a poignant reminder that religion, which was to be the basis for forging a new nation, has failed to provide a cohesive unifying element, and Pakistanis continue to remain divided along lines of class, region and ethnicity. The Muhajirs provide an example of how heterogeneous people from all over India have forged a new 'ethnic' identity. The boundaries of the Muhajir identity have constantly changed, as also their allies and adversaries, in the larger context of Pakistani national politics, in which their relative position has fluctuated dramatically. Overall, the old divisions which existed prior to partition have merely been replaced by new ones.[63]

Problems of 'minorities': the Muslims in India

It is one of the tragic ironies of partition that the birth of the Muslim state of Pakistan brought about a division of the Muslims of the subcontinent. What was worse:

> there were areas in UP, Bihar and Bengal which were the [Muslim] League strongholds and where large segments of the Muslim population had spearheaded the movement…who were left in midstream …for the new nation simply provided a homeland for Muslims living in majority areas but not elsewhere.[64]

At the birth of Pakistan, about 35 million Muslims, roughly one-third of its pre-partition population, remained in India, either by choice or circumstance. The migration of significant numbers of Muslims from India, as well as the influx of Hindu and Sikh refugees from Pakistan, further diluted the proportion of the community in the overall demography of post-partition India. In undivided India, the Muslims had made up roughly one quarter of the population. In the period after partition, the Muslims become a smaller minority in India, constituting approximately 10 per cent of the country's population.[65] However, the implications of partition for the Muslims who stayed back in India went beyond a mere diminishing of numbers. Rather, partition and its aftermath were fundamentally to affect the 'politics and political leadership [of the Muslims in India], and in their objective circumstances as a minority community'.[66]

The immediate effects of partition were catastrophic for the Muslims in northern India. Together with bloody massacres and uprooting, the community as a whole saw a loss of prestige and suffered setbacks in the economic and political spheres.[67] The loss of the Muslim majority provinces meant that there were no longer any Muslim majority states in independent India, and 'everywhere the Muslim minority was a minority'.[68] Although the professional and commercial classes remained in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, as a result of their 'skimming off' by migration, there were 'hardly any Muslims left in the senior or middle level positions in armed services, police, universities, law courts and the vast Central Secretariat in Delhi'.[69] As a result of the dramatic political and demographic changes:

> the Muslim elites of northern India in the post-independence period (have been) removed from their previous position of political privilege to one of under-representation in many respects, including in political and administrative positions.[70]

The position of the community in India was not merely determined by its numbers and status. The Muslims were very much affected by the changed political context and the prevailing communal mood in the country. The creation of Pakistan and

the bitter communal violence that had accompanied partition had created an environment in which the antipathy between Hindus and Muslims had deepened considerably, and it had given a 'spurt to the pressure of the Hindu communal groups…upon the Indian National Congress'.[71] Although Jawaharlal Nehru remained avowedly secular in his political outlook and commitment, there were several in the senior ranks of the Congress who unapologetically harboured deep anti-Muslim bias. For instance, in 1948 Vallabhai Patel, one of the key Congress leaders, told a gathering of Muslims that 'mere declarations of loyalty to the Indian Union will not help them at this critical juncture. They must give practical proof of their declarations.'[72] Many others with more extreme views took it for granted that the Muslims were inherently disloyal to India, and that they should be 'treated as hostages to be held in security for the treatment of Hindus in Pakistan'.[73]

It is therefore hardly surprising that in the aftermath of partition, the prevailing mood amongst the Muslims was one of insecurity. Their loyalty to India was suspect and the more rabid Hindu communalists did not hesitate to propound the theory that the Muslims in India were 'fifth columnists', quietly mobilizing and preparing for the day when they could simultaneously raise an internal revolt to coincide with an external aggression by Pakistan. Matters were not helped by India-Pakistani hostilities, as well as Pakistan's determined effort to portray India as a state which was intolerant of its minorities. It was particularly embarrassing for the Muslims who feared that such charges laid them open to attacks by extreme communal groups such as the Hindu Mahasabha, the Jan Sangh and the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSSS), which, in their propaganda, openly blamed the Muslims for partition and its traumatic aftermath. Although these communal groups had lain dormant following the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, Muslims in north India remained fearful of the latent hostility of such groups. As a community, they felt vulnerable in a society for long traumatized by communal rancour and violence, and by the painful memories of partition.[74]

The Muslims in India also suffered significant political losses after 1947. The privileges of separate electorates and reservations of seats which they had enjoyed under the British were abolished, as these ran contrary to the principles of the secular state which Nehru was determined to establish in India. They could no longer organize themselves politically as a community, given the risks that such activities would entail. Thus Muslim attempts to establish themselves as a political force remained relatively weak after partition.[75] Consequently, as Paul Brass explains, 'the conditions of the Muslims in north India and the nature of Muslim demands underwent a profound change.'[76] Although there was a sense of communal consciousness and solidarity, there was a striking absence of a 'unified structure of political activity'. Muslim political leaders, whether in the Congress, the Jamaat al-ulama or the Jamaat-i-Islami, were mindful that political mobilization along communal lines was no longer acceptable in secular India. The Muslims had to avoid functioning as a political pressure group and find ways of making use of the existing political parties to safeguard their interests.

Thus, in the dramatically different political context in which they found themselves after partition, the Muslims have had to find ways and means to protect their rights as a community, to ensure effective electoral participation and secure for themselves a fair measure of political representation.[77] All this has not proved to be easy. Clearly, in the post1947 context Muslim leaders, anxious about the protection of minority rights, have been on the defensive:

> forced to defend not only their rights but their loyalties, which were called into question by Hindu communalist leaders whenever Muslim demands became assertive.[78]

As a result Muslim concerns have centred around minority rights based on issues of culture and language, particularly the preservation and protection of Urdu.[79] The state of Urdu, in particular, symbolizes the plight of Muslims in independent India.

Although spoken by millions of non-Muslims in northern India, Urdu has come to symbolize for the Muslims in India their inheritance and their cultural identity. To Hindu chauvinists, however, Urdu is seen as the official language of Pakistan, 'a foreign script and an alien culture supported by a communal minority whose loyalties to India are suspect'.[80] They demand that Hindi alone, written in the Devanagari script, should be the official language in the north Indian states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, and that Urdu has no right to claim a position alongside Hindi as the second official language. For more than two decades after independence, the decline of Urdu in northern India has made it into one of the most tangled political issues concerning the Muslims.[81] As Mushirul Hasan laments:

> Today, the language of Mir and Ghalib survives lazily in the alleys and by-lanes of Muslim localities and is gasping for breath in government-sponsored academies. Both in the Nehruvian and post-Nehruvian era, Urdu has been deliberately stifled, nay destroyed by prejudices against a language as well as a community.[82]

Since the late 1940s Muslim political leaders have realized that 'partition proved positively injurious to the Muslims of India, and on a long term basis for Muslims everywhere'.[83] However, since the 1980s, the community has faced new challenges to its political status as political parties, raising the banner of Hindu majoritarian cultural nationalism, have questioned the very basis of India's secularism. The Ramjanmabhoomi—Babri mosque controversy and the larger, continuing mobilization for *Hindutva* have profound implications for the future of the community, as several scholarly studies have shown.[84]

Problems of 'minorities': the Biharis in Bangladesh

Of the many minority communities in South Asia who continue to be victims of the adverse circumstances imposed by partition, the plight of the Biharis in Bangladesh is perhaps one of the most tragic and deplorable. Concentrated in enclaves all over Bangladesh, the Biharis migrated to East Pakistan following partition and have continued to pay a heavy price for electing at that time to become Pakistani citizens. Unlike Bengali Muslim refugees from India for whom East Pakistan was a culturally familiar landscape, Muslim refugees from Bihar (which had 4 million Muslims in 1947, of which less than 1 million came to East Pakistan) and the eastern districts of Uttar Pradesh and the north-eastern province of Assam, who spoke Urdu—the language associated with Muslim culture all over north India— found it difficult to assimilate in East Bengal, which was predominantly Bengali-speaking. The estimated 1.3 million non-Bengali speaking Muslim refugees were given the omnibus label of 'Bihari', even though many of them did not originate from Bihar. This linguistic difference led to boundaries which increasingly became rigidly defined and the label itself came to signify an 'outsider' status.

In addition to these differences were the complexities of East Pakistani politics. From 1947–71 when the region was a part of Pakistan, Urdu had a privileged status and enjoyed official patronage from the West Pakistani political overlords. Nationalist sentiments against this domination, whether seeking greater political autonomy or raising the banner of separatism, inevitably found expression in linguistic nationalism. Although tensions existed between the local Bengali population and the Biharis, these did not lead to any serious cases of discrimination or violence.[85]

The majority of the Biharis who arrived in East Pakistan during partition and after the communal riots in Bihar in 1950, 1959 and 1964 found their way into major cities like Dhaka and Chittagong where they took up employment as petty traders, clerks, doctors and railway and mill workers.[86] Although initially welcomed as fellow Muslims who had made sacrifices for the new Muslim nation, the Biharis (as they established niches in the local administration and economy) soon evoked resentment and envy from the local population and became the target of the emergent nationalism represented by the Awami League.

In 1971 when the Pakistani ruler General Yahya Khan reneged on his promise to convene the National Assembly, which would have been dominated by East Pakistan's members following the Awami League's electoral success, the Biharis were attacked as 'stooges' of Pakistani domination. Just prior to the military crack-down in March 1971, several thousands of Biharis were reported to have been killed in attacks by alleged supporters of the Awami league. Further, reprisals were committed against them when the Awami League was outlawed and its leader Sheikh Mujibur Rahman arrested.[87] As the civil war continued, tens of thousands of Biharis fled to India.

For those Biharis who remained in East Pakistan, a frightful fate awaited them. The establishment of Bangladesh as an independent nation in December 1971 inaugurated an era of unprecedented hostility towards the Biharis. Bangladeshi 'freedom fighters' targeted the Biharis for their alleged acts of collaboration with, and abetting the Pakistani army during the 'liberation struggle'. In a hate-charged atmosphere fuelled by a chauvinistic local press, reprisals against the Biharis took the form of arrests, dispossession of properties, and even corporal punishment. Many ended up in enclaves, where they were segregated, and have remained there to this day.

The future of the Bihari minority in Bangladesh remains bleak. Treated as 'pariahs' or 'stranded Pakistanis', they continue to elicit hostile treatment from the local population. Many Bangladeshis believe that the Biharis deserve their plight because of their acts of collaboration with West Pakistani authorities. However, this resentment is generated also by selfinterest, as many jobs and homes that belonged to the Biharis have been forcibly occupied. Unwanted by India and Pakistan, the Biharis seem condemned to live as a stateless and forgotten minority.

Building people-to-people bridges

The South Asian region has been likened to a rainbow-coloured tapestry woven by threads drawn from different religions, languages and traditions, yet linked by an underlying civilizational unity that goes back at least two millennia. However, over fifty years ago, this civilizational unity was undermined as separate (and some would argue even arbitrary) boundaries were erected across what was once a unified cultural landscape to create nationstates based on narrow principles of religious sectarianism and territoriality.

However, at the threshold of the twenty-first century, South Asia as a region is experiencing dramatic change. Factors as diverse as the end of the Cold War, the disengagement from the region by the super-powers, the maturing of democratic forms of governance, the changing gear by national economies as they chalk up higher rates of growth to meet the challenge of globalization, have all coalesced to accelerate the pace of change in the region. In this dynamic context, new forces and initiatives are emerging which have shown the potential to critique and challenge the legacies of distrust and conflict which have threatened the fabric of civil societies in India and Pakistan. Intellectuals, artists, and concerned citizens drawn from the increasingly robust non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the region are openly questioning the official policies of armed confrontation, of barricading all forms of contact between peoples, of censorship and restriction on travel. As official diplomacy has failed in the last fifty years to resolve any of the outstanding issues of conflict, non-official 'multi-track' dialogues have been initiated for building bridges between peoples.

The response to such dialogues has been overwhelming as they concern a very large number of families which were divided at the time of partition and have cultural and family links across the borders. Physical boundaries cannot barricade

such links. Moreover, the people of India and Pakistan share a special, unique relationship, after all they relish the same cuisine, resonate to the same music and share many languages and dialects. Meetings between Indians and Pakistanis inevitably open the floodgates of nostalgia, of sharing of memories as well as a profound sense of regret over partition.

Recent years have seen a mushrooming of several types of people-topeople dialogues. It is estimated that there are now more than forty dialogue channels which are active in South Asia. Although their overall aim is to promote people-to-people contact, their approach, concerns, organization and sources of funding have varied. Many such multi-track initiatives have representatives from Pakistan and India with diverse backgrounds such as former diplomats, military generals, academics, and representatives from business. Overall there is greater realization that in such people-to-people contact lies the key to moving away from ingrained enemy images that sustain an adversarial relationship towards greater confidence-building.

Several initiatives have been noteworthy. The first have been meetings and conventions of the Pakistan-India Peoples' Forum for Peace and Democracy which was inaugurated in Lahore in September 1994. Since then, this Forum has regularly met and highlighted issues relating to peace and mutual tolerance. In its Calcutta convention held in December 1996 the Forum adopted the following resolution:

> The most fundamental interest of the people of Pakistan and India, as also of the South Asian region as a whole, demands that both countries celebrate the Fiftieth Anniversary of Independence by taking a solemn pledge to devote the second half century of freedom to realizing the shared aspirations of the people for peace, democracy, justice, tolerance, and equal opportunities for all citizens regardless of belief, ethnicity, gender, and social status.[88]

Groups such as these have played a major part in mobilizing popular sentiments across both sides of the border against the nuclear explosions which took place in May 1998.

Another significant initiative has been the Neemrana dialogue, sponsored among others by the Ford Foundation. All such initiatives have called for immediate and drastic steps which inevitably must begin with simplification of travel between India and Pakistan. They have drawn attention to conditions which restrict free movement of citizens across the borders and harassment of applicants and visitors by bureaucratic requirements like delay in the granting of visas, reporting at police stations, barring of entry into all but specified areas, etc. The demand has been made that both governments remove all restrictions, so as to allow as many people as possible to visit each others' relatives, ancestral homes and places of worship. The need to remove restrictions on visits by students, cultural groups, journalists and scientists has also been highlighted. Student exchange programmes at the school and university levels, cooperative ventures between women's organizations, joint

programmes for rural development, environmental protection, AIDS awareness, drug abuse and population control are all ideas which have been proposed and merit serious consideration.[89]

A particularly worthy idea is to promote cultural exchange which can include visits by musicians, artists and literary figures and can extend to sport as well, an area that has suffered from the freeze in relations. Above all, such initiatives have called upon both countries to promote the values of tolerance among their citizens and decision-making elites. A process of *rapprochement* and reconciliation seems to have begun but how far this will go remains uncertain. It will bear fruit only if mutual goodwill and the determination to proceed ahead on both sides of the deep divide are demonstrated.

However, building bridges and connecting across borders remains a political task and is charged with a high degree of sensitivity as it encounters inherited prejudices and stereotypes created by partition and nurtured by hostile governments. People-to-people contact must overcome the prejudices and stereotypes created as a result of partition and its long aftermath which transformed 'permeable identities' into 'bunkered mentalities'.[90] Will concerned citizens rise to this challenge of overcoming narrowness and prejudice and strive towards a genuine South Asian identity? Only the early decades of the new millennium will reveal the answer.

Glossary

adibasitribal
Akali sixteenth-century warrior ascetic; a militant follower of Guru Gobind Singh
akhand bharatindivisible India
akhand-pathuninterrupted reading of the Adi Granth, the Sikh holy scriptures, by a team of readers
Allah ho Akbar Muslim war cry
annaone quarter of a rupee
ashramhermitage
ashwamedha yagnaconsecration ritual performed by ancient Hindu kings
azadifreedom
baees khawaja ki chaukhatthreshold to the shrine of twenty-two Muslim holy men
batwaradivision; partition
bazaarmarket-place
bet chachisuperior class of land based on fertility
bet daranisecond category of land classification based on fertility
Bhagwat Gita Hindu ethical text
biradariliterally brotherhood; often used to denote body of caste or kinsmen
budhiinferior class of land based on fertility
busteehabitation; neighbourhood
chakbandiconsolidation of agricultural holdings
chowkmeeting-point; junction; city centre
croreten million
dargahMuslim shrine
darshanliterally to view
devnagari 'Language of the Gods'; also script in which Sanskrit and Hindi are composed
dhaturinfertile land
dhotigarment for the lower body
doabtract between two rivers
durbarroyal court or levee
faqirmendicant; Muslim holy man
fatehathanks-giving prayers
ghatslope, incline, especially to water; hence burning ghats
gurdwaraSikh temple
gurureligious leader in Sikhism; leader of the religion
Gurumukhiwritten script of the Sikhs
harijanterm coined by Mahatma Gandhi for 'unclean' or ex-untouchable castes; literally 'children of God'
havelimansion; stately home
hawanHindu ritual involving fire-worship

hijri Islamic calendar
Hindu-Muslim bhai bhai Hindu-Muslim brotherhood
Hindustan Zindabad Long live Hindustan
hindutvaliterally 'Hinduness'; term popularized since 1920s by campaigners exhorting Hinduism as India's true national faith
idgahmosque for *Id* prayers
imambaramosque where an Imam (Muslim preacher) leads congregational worship
jabar dakhal andolancampaign to establish squatter colonies (in West Bengal)
jagirassignment of land revenue
jagirdarholder of a jagir
Jai Hind!long live India
jathaa band of Sikh volunteers
jathedarleader of a jatha
Jana Gana Man Indian national anthem composed by Rabindra Nath Tagore
jhandaabhiwadansalute to the flag
jummaFriday
jumut-ul-widalast Friday of the month of Ramzan
kacchi abadislums/squatter colonies
karakulicap worn by Muslim men styled in a Middle Eastern fashion
katrasspecialised market
khadihand spun cloth
Khalsareligio-military fraternity instituted by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699; also used to refer to Sikh community as a whole
kirpandagger
kuchasstreet; neighbourhood
lakh100,000
lambardarvillage headman
mandirHindu temple
mangal tilak Hindu ceremony of marking the forehead with holy vermilion
Manjharefers to the Central Punjab
markaz-i-daira-islamliterally, centre of ,the circle of Islam
mazaarMuslim shrine
mohallaneighbourhood
muffosil small town/locality
muhajiroriginally, used to denote early followers of the Prophet who performed *hijrat* (migration) from Mecca to Medina with the Prophet to escape religious persecution; term also used by Urdu-speaking refugees in Sindh from India as a mark of self-identity
namsudratitle of low status rural Bengalis, mainly agriculturists and artisans, formerly known as Chandalas
OmHindu invocation of God
Pak Sarzamin Shad Bad Pakistan national anthem
Pakistan Zindabadlong live Pakistan
panchayatcourt of arbitration (properly of five persons)
pattatitle deed
pirMuslim holy man
pujaprayer

punjabiyatPunjabi culture
Quaid-i-Azamthe supreme leader
Quranthe sacred book of the Muslims consisting of oral revelations of the Prophet
rajaking
RamayanaHindu epic of ancient India
ramzaanninth month of Muslim yearly calendar during which all faithful fast between sunrise and sunset
Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sanghliterally national volunteer corps; a political body established in the 1920s to promote *Hindutva*
sanyasinHindu holy man
shahidi jathaliterally, 'Army of Martyrs'; Sikh militia
shalwara Muslim garment for the lower body
sherwania Muslim north Indian garment/coat
sircargovernment
sonar bangalbeautiful Bengal
stupadomed architecture typically used in temples
subahprovince
Tarana-I-Hind Iqbal's well known anthem beginning with *Sare jahan seaccha*
tehsilsub-district or revenue division
vaishnavitefollower of Hindu God, Vishnu
Vande Matramanthem composed by Bankim Chandra in late nineteenth century
vazirchief minister
VedasHindu sacred texts
vibhajandivision; partition
Vidhan Sabhalegislative assembly
vikramHindu calendar
waqfa Muslim religious or charitable trust; also commonly a way of obtaining tax exemption for property
zailunder British rule, a group of villages amalgamated for revenue purposes
zamindarin the Punjab, a peasant proprietor

Notes

1
Introduction

1 Throughout this work the term 'South Asia' has been used to refer to India, Pakistan and Bangladesh which prior to 1947 formed a single political entity under colonial rule. Other countries in the region, that is Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and Maldives, have been left out of the discussion.

2 For example, see the special issues brought out by *National Geographic,* 'India at 50' (May 1997), *Time,* 'India: 50 Years of Independence' (11 August 1997), *Newsweek,* 'India, The Next 50 Years' (4 August 1997), *Economist,* 'India at 50 and Beyond' (16 August 1997) and *Asiaweek,* 'A Golden Opportunity 1947–1997, Can India and Pakistan Finally Make Peace' (8 August 1997). Also see The Promise of Pakistan', a special feature in the October 1997 issue of *NationalGeographic.*

3 R.Abidi (ed.), *India and Pakistan Fiftieth Anniversary: Guide to UK Events,* London (1997).

4 *Dawn,* Karachi, 14 August 1997.

5 *India Today,* 18 August 1997.

6 'We, the People', editorial, *Times of India,* New Delhi, 15 August 1997.

7 See for instance, H.Karkekar, 'India's Fate: Darkness at Fifty', *Pioneer,* 15 August 1997; P.Joshi, 'Azadi Ki Ardhshati: Lekin kahanh hua niyati se satshatkar?', *Jansatta,* 15 August 1997; and *Statesman* which observed in its 15 August 1997 editorial: 'We abandoned merit, set in concrete the divisions of caste and community and created a vested interest in being backward.... Politics became the full-time occupation of criminals, the unscrupulous and the dishonest and our legislatures sheltered the dregs of society.' Also see J.Bhagwati, 'A Machine for Going Backwards', *Times Literary Supplement,* 8 August 1997:11–12.

8 M.J.Akbar, *Asiaweek,* 8 August 1997. Also see V.N.Narayan and J.Sabharwal, (eds), *India at 50: Bliss of Hope and Burden of Reality,* Delhi (1997) and S.S.Singh and J. Sabharwal (eds), *The Fiftieth Milestone: A Feminist Critique,* Delhi (1997).

9 The Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral observed: 'We had inherited a fragmented country; a subjugated economy and a nation in turmoil. Eleven general elections have been held.... If I were to choose one achievement, I would choose the maintenance of the secular unity of India through democratic means,' *Far Eastern Economic Review,* 21 August 1997.

10 Salman Rushdie writes that 'despite the sorrows and cynicisms of the subcontinent's modern history, bountifully diverse India has a billion reasons to celebrate: the so-called idea of India has survived'; see 'A Land of Plenty', *Time*, 11 August 1997.
11 S.Khilnani, *The Idea of India*, London (1997):4.
12 J.Bray, 'Pakistan at 50: A State in Decline?', *International Affairs* 73, 2(1997):315–32.
13 A.Clifton, 'A Jubilee Without Joy', *Newsweek*, 4 August 1997.
14 This is the verdict of an opinion poll conducted by the Karachi-based *Herald* news magazine. For detailed findings of the poll, see *India Today*, 18 August 1997.
15 The phrase was coined by Mushirul Hasan: see his edited work, *India Partitioned: The Other Face of Freedom*, vol. 1, New Delhi (1995).
16 G.D.Khosla, *Stern Reckoning, A Survey of the Events Leading Up To and Followingthe Partition of India*, Delhi (1989) (reprint of 1949 edition): 3. Khosla served in the judicial branch of the Indian Civil Service and rose to become Chief Justice of East Punjab High Court. His account drew upon the work of a Fact Finding Commission set up by Government of India to enquire into partition-related violence in Punjab. Although its report was later regarded too sensitive and never published, Khosla had access to its records and personnel.
17 A.Spaeth, The Price of Freedom', *Time*, 11 August 1997.
18 S.Rushdie, 'A Fantasy Called India', *India Today*, 18 August 1997 and 'A Land of Plenty', *Time*, 11 August 1997.
19 A.Bhalla (ed.), 'Introduction', *Stories About the Partition of India*, vol. 1, New Delhi (1994):vii.
20 R.Samaddar (ed.), *Reflectitions on Partition in the East*, New Delhi (1997):xi and 4.
21 For instance, for every one hour of interview with Indian leaders, Mountbatten spent a quarter of an hour 'recording' his minutes before seeing his next visitor.
22 M.L.Darling, *At Freedom's Door*, London (1949):xi and 299–307.
23 Sir Francis Tuker, *While Memory Serves*, London (1950):3. A later edition of this work has been reprinted as *Partition and Human Debasement*, Delhi (1988).
24 A.Campbell-Johnson, *Mission With Mountbatten*, London, Hale (1951):xiii. This work was based on a diary narrative written from 'the position of privileged eyewitness [about] events in which I was taking part' which the author kept as Press Attache to Mountbatten. 'If this is a hurried, breathless narrative,' the author confesses, 'this is because we all worked at the highest pressure and with an acute sense of urgency'.
25 V.P.Menon, *The Transfer of Power in India*, London (1957):358. As Menon claimed, 'a united India under the Cabinet Mission plan was an illusion' and 'the three-tier constitutional set-up envisaged was unwieldy and difficult to work.... My personal view was that it was better that the country should be divided, rather than that it should gravitate towards civil war.'
26 V.P.Menon continues:

> The creation of Pakistan had become unavoidable, and this in turn in the circumstances which had developed was bound to involve a conflagration in the Punjab—indeed the first premonitory outbursts had occurred shortly before his arrival.... The vigour and speed with which Lord Mountbatten acted had at least the merit of confining it to the Punjab.
>
> (P.Moon, *Divide and Quit*, London 1961)

H.V.Hodson's account, published in 1969, endorsed this position. It was written at the initiative of Lord Ismay to rescue the last Viceroy's reputation from the 'dirt' and 'mass of inaccuracies' which Leonard Mosley's 1961 work was said to have produced. Ismay had told Mountbatten:

> There is a serious risk that history will do you a grave injustice unless very early steps are taken to establish the fact that there is no substance in the charge that your decision to transfer power in India as early as 15 August 1947 was responsible for the carnage that took place.

27 M.A.K.Azad, *India Wins Freedom,* New Delhi (1988). First published in 1959, Azad's book was highly controversial and he himself had felt obliged to withhold about thirty pages of its text and to ban their publication for three decades after his death. Azad was particularly critical of Nehru and Patel. Nehru's intransigence during 1937 in his refusal to accommodate Muslim League in sharing power in the United Provinces, according to Azad, so bitterly disappointed League's leadership that it was now determined to pursue a separatist path. Nehru, in the words of Azad, 'gave the League a new lease of life' and 'it was from the UP that the League was reorganized'. Vallabhbhai Patel is blamed for embittering relations with Muslim League which marred the working of the Interim Government during 1946–7. The book started several controversies which have raged to this day, fuelled in the late 1980s by the publication of the thirty pages which Azad had suppressed. For a criticism of Azad's charges, see R.Gandhi, *India Wins Errors, A Scrutiny of Maulana Azad'sIndia Wins Freedom,* New Delhi (1988). Also see R.M.Lohia, *Guilty Men ofIndia's Partition,* Allahabad (1960).

28 C.Khaliquzzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan,* Lahore (1961). Khaliquzzaman particularly targeted Mountbatten, blaming him for 'haste, impetuosity and inexperience' as a result of which the 'lives of about a million men [were] lost on both sides of the border'.

29 C.M.Ali, *The Emergence of Pakistan,* New York (1967). Ali was a civil servant in undivided India who became the first Secretary General of the Government of Pakistan, and rose to be Finance Minister in 1951–5 and later Prime Minister during 1955–6.

30 Professor Philips was then Director of School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London. For an account of his work in these years, see his memoirs *Beyond the Ivory Tower: The Autobiography of Sir Cyril Philips,* London (1995).

31 There were present at the conference: Lord Mountbatten, Sir Claude Auchinleck (the last British Commander in Chief of Indian Army), Cyril Radcliffe (who had chaired the Boundary Commission), the Earl of Listowel (the last Secretary of State for India), and Lord Sorensen. Several others who had published their own memoirs such as Ian Stephens, B.Shiva Rao, G.D. Khosla, Sir Francis Tuker, Alan Campbell-Johnson and Sir Conrad Corfield also attended. The Conference also attracted influential participants from the subcontinent, including the Raja of Mahmudabad, Mr. M.A.H.Isphani, Abdul Quiyum Khan, J.B.Kripalani and Dr Zakir Hussain.

32 See some of the early reviews of the *Transfer of Power* volumes by D.A.Low in *Journal of Comparative and Commonwealth Politics* (1972) and R.E.Frykenberg in *American Historical Review*, 77, 2 (1972). These give an idea of the kind of questions which historians could now address with the help of the documents that had became available.

33 C.H.Philips and M.D.Wainwright (eds), *The Partition of India: Policies andPerspectives 1935–47*, London (1970).

34 W.H.Morris-Jones, 'The Transfer of Power, 1947: A View from the Sidelines', *Modern Asian Studies* 16, 1 (1982):1–32. He observes:

> Mine is in part an undisguised personal tale. But the matter is rather complicated. For one thing, while I was certainly a spectator I was also able for a couple of months in 1947 to scamper on to a segment of New Delhi's field of fateful play, even to get a touch or two of the ball, before returning to my place on the terraces.

35 For an insight into the origins of the project and its editorial brief see Sir Nicholas Mansergh, 'The Transfer of Power in India: Editorial Problems and Perspectives', *India Office Library and Records Report*, January 1982–March 1983: 8–17. As editor in chief Mansergh was ably assisted by a team which had included E.W.R.Lumby and Sir Penderel Moon as assistant editors and David Blake, Stephen Aston and Lionel Carter as researchers.

36 Ibid.:14.

37 P.N.Chopra (ed.), *Towards Freedom Documents on the Movement for Independencein India, 1937*, Delhi (1986) and P.S.Gupta (ed.), *Towards Freedom: Documents onthe Movement for Independence in India 1943–1944*, Delhi (1997). At the time of writing three volumes were in press.

38 For an excellent survey of such writings, see H.V.Brasted and C.Bridge, The Transfer of Power in South Asia: An Historiographical Review', *South Asia* 17 (1994):93–114.

39 For a lucid statement of this viewpoint see R.J.Moore, 'India in 1947: The Limits of Unity', in A.J.Wilson and D.Dalton (eds), *The States of South Asia,Problems of National Integration, Essays in Honour of W.H.Morris-Jones*, London (1980).

40 N.Mansergh, Transfer of Power: British Policy-Making Processes and Their Part in the Shaping of Events', *International Studies* 20, 34 (July-December 1981):515–26. Also see his earlier 'The Partition of India In Retrospect', *International journal* 21(1) (Winter 1965–6):1–19.

41 See R.J.Moore's transfer-of-power 'trilogy' consisting of *The Crisis of IndianUnity, 1917–40* (1974), *Churchill, Cripps and India, 1939–45* (1979), and *EscapeFrom Empire: The Attlee Government and the Indian Problem* (1983); and A.I.Singh, *The Origins of the Partition of India 1936–47*, New Delhi (1987). For the latter work, partition 'symbolised the successful culmination of the Muslim League's campaign for a sovereign Pakistan, while it was the antithesis of the Congress wish to achieve a secular, united, democratic and independent India'. Looking upon partition typically in terms of the tensions inherent between freedom and unity, Singh observes in her preface:

One of the questions raised by this book is why agreement eluded the Congress and Muslim League to the point of civil war. Was it because of irreconcilable political differences between them? What alternatives did the Congress, which did not want partition, have which might have enabled it to defeat the League's claim for a sovereign Pakistan?

42 In the words of B.Chatterji, N.Bhattacharya and C.A.Bayly (gen. eds), 'Themes in Indian History', in their preface to M.Hasan (ed.), *India's Partition:Process, Strategy and Mobilization,* New Delhi (1993):vii.

43 R.J.Moore, Towards Partition and Independence in India, A Review Article', *Journal of Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* 20(2) (July 1982):189–99.

44 A.Jalal, 'Introduction', *The Sole Spokesman, Jinnah, the Muslim League and theDemand for Pakistan,* Cambridge (1994, pbk edn).

45 For a 'stock-taking' of this debate see A.Roy, 'The High Politics of India's Partition: The Revisionist Perspective', *Modern Asian Studies* 24(2) (1990): 385–415.

46 See, for instance, 'Fifty Years of Pakistan: A Tribute to its Founders', special issue *of Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies* 21(1) (1997), especially S. Muhjahid, 'Jinnah and the Making of Pakistan: The Role of the Individual in History'.

47 Akbar Ahmad has taken upon himself the challenge of rescuing Jinnah from the distortions and stereotyping to which he has been subjected in historical writings and the media. A historical novel, a full-length feature film, a book on 'the making-of-the-movie' and a biographical study are part of his project to restore the *Quaid* to his rightful place in Pakistan's history. In his biographical study he has portrayed Jinnah as a modern-age Saladin whose ideas could inspire the 'Islamic world' and lead it towards reconciliation with the West. See A.S.Ahmad, *Jinnah, Pakistan and Islamic Identity, The Search forSaladin,* London (1997).

48 On these issues see, for instance, W.H.Morris-Jones, 'Thirty-six Years Later: The Mixed Legacies of Mountbatten's Transfer of Power', *International Affairs* 59(4) (Autumn 1983):621–8, and 'Dividing the Jewel: Mountbatten and the Transfer of Power to India and Pakistan', *Pacific Affairs* 58(4) (Winter 1985–6):653–62.

49 See, for example, L.A.Sherwani, *The Partition of India and Mountbatten,* Karachi (1986).

50 Among the more significant recent writings on these issues, see the works of A. Lamb, C.Beaumont and R.Shankar Jha. The Dhaka-based news-weekly *Holiday* has devoted over two dozen articles in 1997 which analyse, without much historical evidence, Mountbatten's alleged role in influencing the Boundary Commission award.

51 See, for instance, A.Campbell-Johnson, 'Mountbatten and the Transfer of Power', *History Today* 47(9) (September 1997):34–9, A.Roberts, 'Lord Mountbatten and the Perils of Adrenaline', in *Eminent Churchillians,* London (1994), and A.S.Ahmad, *Jinnah, Pakistan and Islamic Identity, The Search forSaladin.* Ahmad has restated with solemnity rumours about Nehru's alleged relationship with Edwina Mountbatten. His narrative reduces political decision-making about partition to the Edwina-Nehru-Mountbatten 'triangle' from which Jinnah stood excluded and he leads his reader to believe that the 'raw deal' which Pakistan got stemmed from this.

52 I.Talbot, *Provincial Politics and the Pakistan Movement: The Growth of the Muslim League in North-West and Narth-East India 1937–47,* Karachi (1988); S.F.D. Ansari, *Sufi Saints and State Power: The Pirs of Sind, 1843–1947,* Cambridge (1992); D.Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam: Punjab and the Making of Pakistan,* London (1988); J.Chatterjee, *Bengal*

Divided: Hindu Communalism and Partition,1932–1947, Cambridge (1994); T.I. Hashmi, *Pakistan as a Peasant Utopia, TheCommunalization of Class Politics in East Bengal, 1920–1947*, Boulder (1992).

53 On these issues, see G.Pandey, The Prose of "Otherness"', in D.Arnold and D. Hardiman (eds), *Subaltern Studies IX*, New Delhi (1994):188–221. C.f. A.Jalal, 'Secularists, Subalterns and the Stigma of "Communalism": Partition Historiography Revisited', *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 33 (1) (1996): 93–103.

54 S.Sarkar, 'Indian Nationalism and the Politics of Hindutva', in D.Ludden (ed.), *Making India Hindu, Religion, Community, and the Politics of Democracy in India*, Delhi (1996):271–2.

55 We borrow this terminology from S. Krishna, 'Inscribing the Nation: Nehru and the Politics of Identity in India', in S.Rosow, N.Inayatullah and M.Rupert (eds), *The Global Economy as Political Space*, Boulder (1994):189.

56 P.van der Veer, 'Writing Violence', in D.Ludden (ed.), *Making India Hindu*. 250.

57 On these issues, see A.Jalal, 'Conjuring Pakistan: History as Official Imagining', *Intemational Journal of Middle East Studies 27* (1995):73–89.

58 Many examples can be given of the tendency to look upon earlier periods in Indian history in terms of what they meant for partition. For instance, Rafiuddin Ahmed in his study of Bengali Muslims in the late nineteenth century highlights the bitterness that had marred communal relations by the turn of the century when his study ends. He concludes his otherwise scholarly work with the observation that 'by 1905 the building blocks which eventually went into the making of Pakistan were already there' (R.Ahmed, *The Bengali Muslims, 1871–1906: AQuest for Identity*, Oxford, 1981). Another example of analysing an entire period in the light of the later emergence of the nation-state is Harun-or-Rashid, *TheForeshadowing of Bangladesh: Bengal Muslim League and Muslim Politics, 1936–47*, Dhaka (1987).

59 S.B.Freitag, 'Contesting in Public: Colonial Legacies and Contemporary Communalism', in D.Ludden (ed.), *Making India Hindu:* 211.

60 A.D.Smith, 'Gastronomy or Geology? The Role of Nationalism in the Reconstruction of Nations', *Nations and Nationalism* 1(1) (1995):3.

61 P.Duara, *Rescuing History from the Nation, Questioning Narratives of Modern China*, Chicago (1995).

62 Ibid.:4.

63 Senator Aitzaz Ahsan, 'The Partition in Retrospect: A Primordial Divide', paper presented at Seminar on 'Partition in Retrospect', National Institute of Punjab Studies and India International Centre, New Delhi, 8–9 August 1997, (mimeographed).

64 Ahsan writes:

> Indus (Pakistan) has a rich and glorious cultural heritage of its own. This is a distinct heritage, of a distinct and separate nation. Out of the last 6000 years Indus has remained distinct and separate from India for almost 5,500 years (temporarily united by Maurayan, Mughal and British empires)... For the remainder, from pre-history to the nineteenth century, Indus has been Pakistan. 1947 was only a reassertion of that same reality.
>
> (Ibid.)

For a major statement, see A.Ahsan, *The Indus Saga and the Making of Pakistan,* Karachi (1996).

65 In the words of David Ludden, op. cit.

66 On these issues see, for instance, A.Nandy *et al.* (eds), *Creating a Nationality: TheRamjanmanbhumi Movement and Fear of the Self,* New Delhi (1995); V.Dalmia and H.von Stietencron (eds), *Representing Hinduism: The Construction of ReligiousTraditions and National Identity,* New Delhi (1995); K.Basu and S.Subramanyam (eds), *Unravelling the Nation: Sectarian Conflict and India's Secular Identity,* New Delhi (1996).

67 G.D.Khosla, *Stern Reckoning,* A.N.Bali, *Now It Can Be Told,* Jullundur (1949); J. Nanda, *Punjab Uprooted, A Survey of the Punjab Riots and Rehabilitation Problems,* Bombay (1948); and G.S.Talib (compiled) *Muslim League Attack on Sikhs andHindus in the Punjab 1947,* New Delhi (reprint 1991).

68 For instance, Talib's account was commissioned by the Shri Gurudwara Prabandhak Committee to refute the Pakistani charge that the Sikhs had a plan at partition for the annihilation of Muslims in Punjab. Khosla's account drew upon the material collected by a Fact Finding Commission established by Government of India in 1948 to refute the Pakistani charge of Muslim genocide during United Nations debates over the Kashmir crisis.

69 O.H.K.Spate, The Partition of India and the Prospects of Pakistan', *Geographical Review* 38(1) (January 1948):5–29 and his larger work (with A.T. L.Learmonth) *India and Pakistan, A General and Regional Geography,* London (1954). In 1947 Spate, then a Lecturer in Geography at the London School of Economics, was engaged by the Ahmadiya community to represent their case before Boundary Commission. His experiences are recounted in his memoirs, *On the Margins of History: From the Punjab to Fiji,* Canberra (1991). For discussion of partition in geographical literature see S.P. Chatterjee, *Bengal in Maps: AGeographical Analysis of Resource Distribution in West Bengal and Eastern Pakistan,* Bombay (1949); Ali Tayyeb, *Pakistan: A Political Geography,* London (1966); N. Ahmad, *An Economic Geography of East Pakistan, London* (1958).

70 C.N.Vakil, *Economic Consequences of Divided India: A Study of the Economy of Indiaand Pakistan,* Bombay (1950).

71 S.M.Rai, *Partition of the Punjab: A Study of its Effects on the Politics andAdministration of the Punjab (I) 1947–56,* New York (1965).

72 A.A.Michel, *The Indus Rivers: A Study of the Effects of Partition,* New Haven (1967).

73 M.U.Memon, 'Partition Literature: A Study of Intizar Husain', *Modern AsianStudies* 14(3) (1980): 377–410. C.f.S.S.Hans, 'The Partition Novels of Nanak Singh', in A K.Gupta (ed.), *Myth and Reality,* New Delhi (1987).

74 Alok Bhalla, who has compiled an anthology of short stories on partition, writes 'a single, common note which informs nearly all the stories written about the partition and the horror it unleashed—a note of utter bewilderment'. He looks upon these stories as 'witness to a period in which we fell out of a human world of languages, customs, rituals and prayers into a bestial world of hatred, rage, self-interest and frenzy'; see A.Bhalla (ed.), *Stories about the Partition of India,* vol. 1:xxxiii.

75 M.Hasan (ed.), *India Partitioned: The Other Face of Freedom,* vol. 1:10.

76 See A.Bhalla (ed.), *Stories about the Partition of India*. 3 vols, S.Cowasjee andK. S. Duggal (eds), *Orphans of the Storm: Stories on the Partition of India,* New Delhi (1995) and M.Hasan, *India Partitioned: The Other Face of Freedom,* 2 vols.

77 M.S.Sathyu, *Garam Hawa* (1973), Hindi-Urdu, 146 minutes, Shama Zaidi, B-3, Nehru Nagar, Juhu Tara Road, Bombay, India.

78 G.Nihlani, *Tamas* (Darkness), 1987, Hindi-Urdu, 297 minutes, New Delhi, Blaze Films.

79 G.Pandey has drawn pointed attention to some of the problems involved in studying partition-related violence in 'In Defense of the Fragment: Writing About Hindu-Muslim Riots in India Today,' *Representations* 37 (Winter 1992): 27–55. While Pandey takes the issue of violence to be his point of entry to reexamine the subject of partition and to critique its historiography, he seems to overly focus on the *physicality* of violence to the relative detriment of other 'kinds' of violence (including epistemic violence) which constituted and accompanied partition.

80 Sarah Ansari has delineated the contours of one such pattern by tracing the historical circumstances that lie behind the violent assertion of self-identity by Muhajirs in contemporary Pakistan. See her 'Partition, Migration and Refugees: Responses to the Arrival of Muhajirs in Sind During 1947–8', in D.A.Low (ed.) Special Issue of *South Asia* 17 (1995):95–108 and The Movement of Indian Muslims to West Pakistan After 1947: Partition-Related Migration and its Consequences for the Pakistani Province of Sind', in J.Brown and R.Foot (eds), *Migration: The Asian Experience,* New York (1994).

81 A.Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule, The Origins of Pakistan's Political Economy ofDefence,* Cambridge (1990). Also noteworthy is Y.A.Samad, *A Nation in Turmoil:Nationalism and Ethnicity in Pakistan, 1937–58,* New Delhi (1996).

82 S.Mayaram, *Resisting Regimes, Myth, Memory and the Shaping of a Muslim Identity,* New Delhi (1997), ch. 7. The field surveys conducted for the Anthropological Survey of India's 'People of India' project reveal that, out of the 2,800 communities identified as Hindus or Muslims in India today, as many as 350 cannot be labelled as exclusively belonging to either of the two religions: for a summary of the project's scope and its major findings, see K.S.Singh, *People of India, AnIntroduction,* vol. 1, New Delhi (1992). Seen in this light, the Meos are not at all exceptional.

83 U.Butalia, 'Muslims and Hindus, Men and Women: Communal Stereotypes and the Partition of India, in T.Sarkar and U.Butalia (eds), *Women and RightWing Movements, Indian Experiences,* New Delhi (1995).

84 R.Menon and K.Bhasin, 'Abducted Women, the State and Questions of Honour: Three Perspectives on the Recovery Operation in Post-Partition India', Gender Relations Project, ANU Working Paper Series no. 1, Canberra, 1995 (mimeographed). Their larger findings are presented in *Borders and Boundaries, Women in India's Partition,* New Delhi (1998).

85 A.J.Manor, '"The Chief Sufferers": Abduction of Women During the Partition of the Punjab', *South Asia* 17, Special Issue (1995).

86 D.A.Low, 'Introduction—Digging Deeper: Northern India in the 1940s', *SouthAsia* 18, Special Issue (1995).

87 V.Das, *Critical Events, An Anthropological Perspective on Contemporary India,* Delhi (1995):56. She writes:

> Men raped and tortured the women of the 'enemy' country as a means of controlling the future. Even if women were not actually marked by the writing of slogans on the body…male fantasies certainly represented Muslim women abducted by Hindus and Sikhs as carrying the marks of Jai Hind on them. These would act as reminders to their own men that the future of this 'pure' *(pak)* country was forever marked by the impurity of their women, Similarly, there was the claim that the name of Pakistan was inscribed painfully on Hindu and Sikh women to show their men that the enemy had claimed their most precious 'possession'. The bodies of the women were then the signs on which the violent dialogue between men was conducted.
>
> (Das 1995:186)

88 R.Menon and K.Bhasin, 'Recovery, Rupture, Resistance: Indian State and Abduction of Women during Partition', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 24 April 1993 and op. cit.

89 The impact of partition on family strategies is, for instance, an issue that requires further exploration. A recent survey looking for evidence of change in the status of women over three generations of refugee families in Delhi observes:

> Partition narrowed the physical spaces and enlarged the social spaces available to women thereby affecting the practice of 'parda' or seclusion, modified the impact of caste and regional culture on marriage arrangements, and widened the channels of educational mobility and employment for girls and women.

See K.Chanana, 'Partition and Family Strategies, Gender-Education Linkages among Punjabi Women in Delhi', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 24 April 1993.

90 D.A.Low, 'Introduction—Digging Deeper: Northern India in the 1940s', *SouthAsia* 18, Special Issue (1995):12.

91 We borrow this phrase from Sankaran Krishna: see his 'Cartographic Anxiety: Mapping the Body Politic in India', in M.J.Shapiro and H.R.Alker (eds), *Challenging Boundaries: Global Flows, Territorial Identities*, Minneapolis (1996): 193–218. This article is also reprinted in J.Agnew (ed.), *Political Geography: AReader*, London (1997).

2
'The enigma of arrival'

1 B.Chandra, M.Mukherjee, A.Mukherjee, K.N.Panikkar and S.Mahajan, *India's Struggle for Independence*, Delhi (1988) and R.Jeffrey (ed.), *Asia: TheWinning of Independence*, London (1981).

2 R.Kumar, *Essays in the Social History of Modern India*, Calcutta (1983):1. Professor Kumar regards it as 'a stupendous achievement which opened the possibility of transforming the human condition within the country.' See his 'Partition Historiography: Some Reflections', in R. and R.Mahan (eds), *India's Partition, Prelude and Legacies*, Jaipur (1998):52.

3 The historian Jim Masselos has done interesting work on nationalist and state rituals. See his J.Masselos, 'The magic touch of being free', in J.Masselos (ed.), *India Creating a Modern Nation,* New Delhi (1988). While the stimulus provided by his work is gratefully acknowledged, the issues raised in this chapter and the argument canvassed here are quite different. Also see his 'India's Republic Day: The Other 26 January', *South Asia* 19, Special Issue (1996):1–14.

4 For an interesting study of political ritual in another context, see L.Kong and B.S.A. Yeoh, 'The Construction of National Identity Through the Production of Ritual and Spectacle: An Analysis of National Day Parades in Singapore', *Political Geography* 16 (1997), (3):213–39.

5 For a run-up to the event, based on newspaper reports, by a BBC radio journalist, see M.Upadhyay, *50 Days to Freedom: A Reconstruction,* Delhi (1997).

6 Viceroy's Personal Report, 18 July 1947 in N.Mansergh (ed.), *ConstitutionalRelations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power* 1942–47, (henceforth *TP*) London (1983) 12:230.

7 Cabinet, India and Burma Committee, Paper I.B. (47) 147, Ceremonies in India on 15th August and Flag, Memorandum by Secretary of State for India, 26 July 1947, L/P&J/10/136., *TP* 12:362–3. The manner in which the flag at the Residency in Lucknow was removed and the precautions which the British took to ensure its safety is recounted in detail in Sir Francis Tuker, *While MemoryServes.*

8 CRO to Dominion High Commissioners, 1 August 1947, in TP 12:466.

9 Cabinet, India and Burma Committee, Paper I.B. (47) 43rd Meeting, Ceremonies in India on 15 August and Flag, Minutes, 28 July 1947, R/30/1/12, in ibid.: 381–2.

10 I.Copland, 'The Integration of Princely States: A "Bloodless Revolution"?', *South Asia* 18, Special Issue (1995).

11 Viceroy's Personal Report, 8 August 1947, *TP* 12:595.

12 Viceroy's Personal Report, 8 August 1947, ibid.: 594.

13 Record of Interview between Mountbatten and Jinnah, 12 July 1947, ibid.: 122.

14 Interview Ismay and Jinnah, 24 July 1947, ibid.: 323–4

15 Viceroy's Personal Report, 18 July 1947, ibid.: 231

16 Interview Mountbatten-Jinnah, 15 July 1947, ibid.: 164.

17 Viceroy's Personal Report, 18 July 1947, ibid.: 231.

18 The Constituent Assembly met for the first time in New Delhi on 9 December, 1946 in the Constitution Hall which is now known as the Central Hall of Parliament House. It was boycotted by the Muslim League and its first three sessions which took place in December 1946 and January and April 1947 were held amidst controversy about its representative character in view of the Muslim League boycott.

19 Cited in R.Grant Irving, *Indian Summer, Lutyens, Baker, and Imperial Delhi,* New Haven (1981):295.

20 Ibid.:295.

21 Ibid.:311.

22 *Hindustan Times,* 21 July 1947.

23 AICC Papers, G-8 (KWI)/1947–8.

24 Ibid.

25 *Hindustan Times,* 22 July 1947.

26 Shankarrao Deo, General Secretary, to all PCCs, 21 July 1947, Circular no. 28 (a), AICC Papers, G-8 (KW-I)/1947/8.

27 Lalta Prasad Saksena, Lecturer, Agra College, Agra, to Acharya Kripalani, 13 August 1947, AICC Papers, G-19, 1947–8.
28 Chhajju Singh, Secretary, District Congress Committee, Muzaffarnagar, to G.B. Pant, Premier, United Provinces Government, Lucknow, 16 July 1947, AICC Papers, G-19, 1947–8.
29 Mangla Prasad, Secretary, UPPCC, Lucknow, to all District, City and Town CCs, 30 July 1947. Source: AICC Papers, G-19, 1947–8.
30 Ibid., emphasis added.
31 Ibid.
32 *Dawn,* 3 August 1947.
33 *Dawn,* 28 July 1947.
34 *Dawn,* 6 August 1947.
35 First published in Nagpur in 1923, and reprinted in Bombay in 1969.
36 In the words of Christophe Jaffrelot, 'the Hindutva of Savarkar was conceived primarily as an ethnic community possessing a territory and sharing the same racial and cultural characteristics, three attributes which stemmed from the mythical reconstruction of the Vedic Golden Age'. C.Jaffrelot, *The HinduNationalist Movement in India,* New Delhi (1993):26–7.
37 Jaffrelot writes that 'for Savarkar the territory of India cannot be dissociated from Hindu culture and the Hindu people'. 'In his eyes, Hindus are pre-eminently the descendants of the "intrepid Aryans [who] made it [the subcontinent] their home and lighted their first fire on the banks of the… Indus", a river which he considers to be the western border of the Hindu nation.'
38 Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India:* 26–7.
39 According to Bruce Graham, in 1947 the Congress

contained within its ranks representatives of three important intellectual groups with quite different but divergent views of what form the new polity should take. Of these the first wished to see India as a liberal-democratic state with a constitution that was both secular and parliamentary in character; the second hoped for the formation of a socialist state in which collectivist principles governed social and economic organization; and the third was working to realize a state which embodied Hindu traditions and values. Each of these groups exerted considerable influence within the Congress and yet none was fully enclosed within it. For each one was generating its own distinctive pressure groups outside Congress boundaries.

(B.Graham, *Hindu Nationalism and Indian Politics,* Cambridge (1993):4)

40 See for instance, J.Chatterji, *Bengal Divided: Hindu Communalism and Partition,1932–1947.*
41 At the end of 1947 RSS cadres of *swayamsevaks* stood at 600,000. The largest concentrations were in Uttar Pradesh (200,000), Greater Punjab (including Delhi and Himachal) (125,000), Bombay (60,000), Bihar (50,000), and Punjab where numbers had risen from 46,000 in January 1947 to 59,200 by June 1947; see Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India:* 26–7.
42 D.Keer, *Veer Savarkar,* Bombay (1966).

43 Vishwa Nath Singh to J.B.Kripalani, 16 July 1947, AICC Papers, G-19, 1947–8.
44 *Daun,* 11 August 1947.
45 The Hindu right-wing activists disrupted the Convention of the Hindi Sahitya Samelan, held at Diwan Hall in Delhi on Sunday. They shouted anti-Congress slogans, broke the microphone and prevented Congress leaders from speaking. The Convention ended in disorder. It was presided over by Pandit Balkrishna Sharma and prominent delegates included Pandit Ravi Sankar Shukla, Premier of the CP, Babu Purshottanmdads Tandon, Speaker of the Uttar Pradesh Assembly, and Mr. Govind Malaviya, a member of the Consitutent Assembly.
46 Vishwa Nath Singh to J.B.Kripalani, 16 July 1947, AICC Papers, G-19, 1947–8.
47 There existed the 'need for rejuvenating our ideals in these turbulent times in the light of our religion and traditions', observed Adwait Kumar Goswami of Brindaban in Uttar Pradesh in a letter to Kripalani on the significance of the approaching event. 'Only religion can be the source of our eternal inspiration and religion must not be divorced from politics but should be its beacon'; he urged pressing his case to get India to declare itself a 'Hindu nation'. Adwait Kumar Goswami, Brindaban, 15 August 1947, to J.B.Kripalani, AICC Papers, G-19, 1947–8.
48 Hanumanprasad Poddar, Gita Press, Gorakhpur, to J.B.Kripalani, 5 August 1947 and his reply dated 19 August 1947, AICC Papers, G-19, 1947–8.
49 The Conference was inaugurated by the Maharaja of Bharatpur, and attended by Sir Datar Singh, Shibban Lal Saxsena, Congress leader from Eastern Uttar Pradesh, and Seth Ramakrishna Dalmia. *Hindustan Times,* 9 August 1947.
50 *Harijan,* 'Gandhiji's speeches', 25 July 1947.
51 Reported in *Hindustan Times,* 22 July 1947
52 Ibid.
53 Interview with Begum Aizaz Rasul, Lucknow, 1989. Also see her statement in *Star of India,* 12 August 1947.
54 *Star of India,* 24 July 1947.
55 On this controversy, see *Hindustan Times,* 8–12 August 1947.
56 *Daun,* 3 August 1947.
57 *Daun,* 30 July 1947.
58 *Daun,* 26 July 1947.
59 *Daun,* 30 July 1947.
60 *Daun,* 8 August 1947.
61 *Daun,* 30 July 1947
62 *Daun,* 5 August 1947.
63 *Statesman,* 9 August 1947.
64 *Daun,* 8 August 1947.
65 S.Hamid, *Disastrous Twilight,* London (1986):227–8.
66 *Daun,* 11 August 1947.
67 C.M.Ali, *The Emergence of Pakistan:* 239–40.
68 S.Wolpert, Jinnah *of Pakistan,* New York (1984):301.
69 A.Cowasjee, 'The great betrayal', *Daun,* 10 August, 1997.
70 A.Ahmed, *Jinnah, Pakistan and Islamic Identity.* 173–6.
71 A.Jalal, 'Conjuring Pakistan: History as Official Imagining', *International Journalof Middle Eastern Studies 27* (1995):73–89.
72 S.Hamid, *Disastrous Twilight* 228.
73 *Daun,* 11 August 1947.

74 Wilfred Russell was an important British businessmen who joined Killick Nixon and Company in Bombay in 1935 and was elected to the Bombay Legislative Council in 1937. See his *Indian Summer,* Bombay (1951):123–30.
75 S.Hamid, *Disastrous Twilight.*
76 As a prominent Congressmen and personal friend of Jawaharlal Nehru, his memories of Karachi came from earlier associations such as the historic Congress session of 1931 when he was the General Secretary.
77 S.Prakasa, *Pakistan: Birth and Early Days,* Meerut (1965):12.
78 Ibid.
79 S.Kashmiri, 'Humiliated and Harassed They Left', in M.Hasan (ed.), *IndiaPartitioned,* vol. 2:166.
80 A.Campbell-Johnson, *Mission with Mountbatten:* 135.
81 Ibid.
82 Russell, *Indian Summer.*
83 Cited in A.S.Ahmed, *Jinnah, Pakistan and Islamic Identity.* 23–4.
84 Akbar Ahmed observes: 'Although a great king, he was far from a ideal Muslim ruler. His harem had 1000 wives, he drank, introduced *din-e-ilahi* a hotchpotch of some of the established religions, with himself as a focal point, which made the *ulema* unhappy.' Ibid.: 176.
85 Ibid.: 176.
86 S.Hamid, *Disastrous Twilight* 229.
87 A.S.Ahmed, *Jinnah, Pakistan and Islamic Identity.* 186.
88 T.Royle, *The Last Days of the Raj,* London (1989):168.
89 Campbell-Johnson, *Mission with Mountbatten:* 155.
90 Ibid.
91 See Royle, *The Last Days of the Raj:* 58–9.
92 Cited in ibid.: 172–3.
93 M.A.Dossa, 'Karachi Club: August 1947', *Dawn* 14 August 1997.
94 Campbell-Johnson, *Mission with Mountbatten:* 156.
95 *Dawn,* 29 July 1947.
96 *Dawn,* 1 August 1947. Bawa Bachittar Singh, a prominent Sikh member, suggested that the Corporation should organize a procession. Mrs Ansari called upon Hindus and Muslim residents of the city to 'meet each other with the same feelings of brotherly love as one Muslim shows towards another on the day of Id'. Dr Yudhvir Singh, Junior Vice President of the Municipal Committee, said that on that solemn day they shall have to remember the great responsibility that devolved on a free people as Indians 'have attained their freedom after undergoing the baptism of fire, blood and tears'. Singh claimed that

> 60 lakhs of people had suffered imprisonment for one to 20 years in His Majesty's prisons in the struggle for freedom. Thousands had sacrificed their lives in the cause. Many of them were hanged by the Government of the day. Others had suffered penal servitude and died in prison.

97 *Dawn,* 3 August 1947.
98 For instance, see the appeal of Begum Noor-us-Sabah, Secretary of the Women's Muslim League, Delhi, in *Dawn,* 5 August 1947.

99 *Dawn,* 5 August 1947.
100 *Dawn,* 29 July 1947.
101 *Hindustan Times,* 13 August 1947 on preparations for these ceremonies; also *Statesman* 15 August 1947.
102 Syed Mahmud cited in I.Douglas, *Abul Kalam Azad: An Intellectual and Religious Biography,* Oxford (1988):28. Shorish Kashmiri (1914–1975), a prominent Muslim journalist and editor of the journal *Chattan,* recalls the occasion in the following words:

> Abul Kalam Azad—which means literally master of oratory—was not himself. He had become someone else. His heart was pounding. In his subconscious, his eloquence had conceded defeat. All his joys seemed fictitious. His cheerful countenance was struck with sorrow. He was overcome by depression Abul Kalam Azad wept in solitude. Lakhs of Hindus in the country were rejoicing. With them a throng of Nationalist Muslims, indulging in hollow laughter. But the hearts of crores of Muslims were seized with fear at the approaching morrow about to dawn, with daggers drawn and knives aimed at them.
>
> (S.Kashmiri, 'Humiliated and Harassed They Left', in M.Hasan, *India Partitioned,* vol. 2:155)

103 *Independence and After. A Collection of the Move Important Speeches of Jawaharlal Nehrufrom September 1946 to May 1949,* New Delhi (1949):3–4.
104 For a valuable textual analysis of the anthem and its symbolism, see T.Sarkar, 'Imagining Hindurashtra: The Hindu and the Muslim in Bankim Chandra's Writings', in D.Ludden (ed.), *Making India Hindu:* 162–84.
105 *Constituent Assembly Debates, Official Report,* vol. 5, New Delhi (1947):4–6.
106 C.Khaliquzzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan:* 395.
107 S.Gopal, S.*Radhakrishnan, A Biography,* Delhi (1989):189.
108 U.Butalia, 'Blood, India! The Golden Jubilee', *Granta* 57, Spring 1997:24–36.
109 'India : Fifty Years of Independence', *National Geographic* 191 (5) (May 1997):56.
110 The Scars of Partition', *The Hindu Folio* (Special Supplement of *The Hindu*) August 1997:16.
111 'The creative flow should not be contained', ibid.: 25.
112 M.R.Anand, 'Pride, despair, hope…', ibid.: 10.
113 Cited in Royle, *The Last Days of the Raj:* 216.
114 S.Hamid, *Disastrous Twilight:* 231. Nawab Ismail Khan (1884–1958) (son of Nawab Ishaq Khan, a prominent landlord and one of the leading lights of the Aligarh University) was a lawyer and politician, a member of the Legislative Council in the 1920s, and one of the most prominent leaders of the Muslim League in Uttar Pradesh.
115 J.Masselos, The magic touch of being free': 45.
116 *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru,* 2nd series, vol. 4:2–3.
117 J.Masselos, 'The magic touch of being free': 45–6.
118 Letter to the Editor, *Dawn,* 12 August 1947.
119 Editorial, *Dawn,* 15 August 1947.
120 C.Khaliquzzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan:* 396.

121 Begum S.S.Ikramullah, *From Purdah to Parliament,* London (1963):135–6.
122 Jaluan Fire Works Co, Yahiaganj, Lucknow, to Acharya Kripalani, President, AICC, 26 August 1947, AICC Papers, G-19, 1947–8.
123 For a discussion of the context of violence in the princely states of Alwar and Bharatpur during 1947, see I.Copland, The Further Shores of Partition: Ethnic Cleansing in Rajasthan 1947', *Past and Present* 160 (August 1998): 203–39.
124 *Hindustan Times,* 13 August 1947.
125 *Dawn,* 7 August 1947.
126 *Bombay Chronicle,* 7 August 1947.
127 D.F.Karaka, *From Betrayal in India,* London (1950), cited in M.Hasan, *IndiaPartitioned: The Other Face of Freedom,* vol. 2:246–8.
128 Although he went to Gowalia Tank from where the procession organized by the Congress was due to start, his thoughts were about his family in Panipat in East Punjab. There the Muslim residents which numbered 25,000 out of the town of 35,000 which included his mother and sister, had been threatened with forcible eviction to Pakistan.
129 S.K.Patil, *My Years With Congress,* Bombay (1991).
130 J.Masselos, 'The magic touch of being free': 44–5.
131 *Hindustan Standard,* 24 July 1947.
132 *Hindustan Standard,* 23 July 1947.
133 *Hindustan Standard,* 2 August 1947.
134 *Hindustan Standard,* 4 August 1947.
135 *Star of India,* 6 August 1947.
136 *Star of India,* 9 August 1947.
137 *Hindustan Standard,* 6 August 1947.
138 *Hindustan Standard,* 7 August 1947.
139 *Hindustan Standard,* 11 August 1947.
140 *Hindustan Standard,* 17 August 1947.
141 *Hindustan Standard,* 17 August 1947.
142 *Hindustan Standard,* 18 August 1947.
143 *Star of India,* 20 August 1947.
144 For an insightful study of the powerful 'mother' symbolism in the context of Indian nationalism, see S.Bose, 'Nation as Mother: Representations and Contestations of "India" in Bengali literature and Culture', in S.Bose and A.Jalal (eds), *Nationalism, Democracy and Development, State and Politics in India,* Delhi (1997).
145 Diana Eck in her study testifies to the popularity of the Bharat Mata Temple among pilgrims to Banaras, see her *Banaras, City of Light,* New Jersey (1982).
146 *Leader,* 16 August 1947.
147 *Hindustan Times,* 16 August 1947.
148 See Chapter Three for details.
149 *Dawn,* 6 August 1947.
150 Ibid.
151 *Dawn,* 9 August 1947.
152 *Star of India,* 10 August 1947
153 *Star of India,* 13 August 1947
154 Ibid.
155 Ibid.
156 Ibid.

157 Ibid.
158 *Harijan,* 9 August 1947:293. Also see R.Payne, *The Life and Death of MahatmaGandhi,* London (1971):533.
159 Ibid.: 533–4.
160 Ibid.
161 Ibid.: 534.
162 *Harijan,* 10 August 1947:293–4.
163 B.Parekh, *Gandhi,* Oxford (1997):20.
164 Ibid.: 21.
165 Talk of Manu Gandhi, 1 June 1947, in *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi,* vol. 88, Ahmedabad (1983):52.
166 Ibid.: 52
167 Parekh, *Gandhi:* 21.
168 Ibid.: 21.
169 See for example speeches at prayer meetings, 16 June and 24 June 1947, in *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi,* vol. 88:164 and 204 respectively.
170 Letter to Munnalal G.Shah, 11 June 1947, ibid.: 130.
171 Ibid.: 341.
172 Speech at prayer meeting, 10 June 1947, ibid.: 125.
173 Interview with Arthur Moore, a former editor of the *Statesman,* 10 July 1947, ibid.: 311.
174 Payne, *The Life and Death of Mahatma Gandhi:* 532.
175 R.Gandhi, *The Good Boatman,* New Delhi (1995):351.
176 M.Green, *Gandhi: Voice of a New Age Revolution,* New York (1993):377–8.
177 *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi,* vol. 89:43.
178 Charles O.Thomson, American Consul to Secretary of State, 27 August 1947, US State Department (Confidential) Papers on South Asia.
179 Payne, *The Life and Death of Mahatma Gandhi:* 536.
180 See H.S.Polak and P.Lawrence, *Mahatma Gandhi,* London (1949).
181 Speech at prayer meeting, 20 July 1947, in *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi,* vol. 8:380.
182 *Harijan,* 10 August 1947.
183 Payne, *The Life and Death of Mahatma Gandhi:* 537.
184 R.Gandhi, *The Good Boatman.*
185 *Harijan,* 18 August 1947.
186 Charles O.Thomson, American Consul to Secretary of State, 27 August 1947, US State Department (Confidential) Papers on South Asia.
187 Ibid.
188 Ibid.
189 Ibid.
190 J.Masselos, 'The Magic Touch of Being Free': 44.
191 Ibid.
192 J.Nehru, 'The Appointed Day', A message to the Press from New Delhi, 15 August 1947, in *Independence and After.* 5.
193 Cited in C.M.Ali, *The Emergence of Pakistan:* 239.
194 *Constituent Assembly Debates, Official Report,* vol. 5, New Delhi (1947):1–22.
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201 S.Rushdie, *Midnights Children:* 291.

3
Partition and the making of South Asian boundaries

1 P.Ziegler, *Mountbatten: The Official Biography,* London (1985):437.
2 R.Herschy, *Disputed Frontiers: A Prelude to Conflict?* Lewes, Sussex (1994):75.
3 Minutes of Viceroy's Meeting with Indian Leaders, 2 June 1947, in N.Mansergh and E.W.R.Lumby (eds), *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: TheTransfer of Power, 1942–47* (hereafter *TP),* vol. 11, London (1983): 39.
4 See Statement of 3 June Plan, 3 June 1947, ibid.: 94–101; texts of broadcasts by Nehru, Jinnah and Baldev Singh, ibid.: 94–101.
5 Ibid.: 90.
6 Ibid.: 89–92.
7 Ibid.
8 See Nehru's broadcast on 3 June 1947, ibid.: 94–7; All India Congress Committee's resolution, 15 June 1947, ibid.: 397–8.
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11 B.Chakravarty, 'The United Bengal Movement and the 1947 Great Divide', paper presented at workshop on Northern India and Indian Independence, 6–9 December, 1993, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi (mimeographed).
12 J.Chatterjee, *Bengal Divided.*
13 'Reactions to HMG's Plan', report by K.N.Ahmed, Director of Publicity, Bengal, 6 June 1947, in file IOR/R/3/1/156, India Office Library and Records, London.
14 Letter from Hindu and Sikh Members of Legislative Councils to Nehru, 2 April 1947, *TP* 10:88.
15 Mountbatten's Personal Report no. 10, 27 June 1947, *TP* 11:681.
16 Ibid.:681
17 Ibid.

18 However, three members of the *Shahi Jirga* and five of the ten members of the Quetta municipality were absent from the proceedings: Mountbatten's Personal Report no. 11, 4 July 1947, *TP* 11:896
19 Mountbatten's Personal Report no.14, 25 July 1947, *TP* 12:333
20 See Mountbatten's Personal Report no. 13, 18 July 1947, *TP* 12:227.
21 For this argument, see A.Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman.*
22 Statement of 3 June Plan, para 9, *TP* 11:94.
23 Mountbatten to Listowel, 9 June 1947, ibid.: 226.
24 Listowel to Mountbatten, 31 June 1947, ibid: 328.
25 Jenkins to Mountbatten, 10 July 1947, *TP* 12:71.
26 Minutes of Viceroy's Miscellaneous Meeting, ibid.: 328.
27 Listowel to Mountbatten, 13 June, 1947, *TP* 11 182.
28 Extracts of Proceedings of the Special Committee of the Cabinet, 26 June 1947, ibid.: 64.
29 Educated at Haileybury and Oxford, Cyril Radcliffe was called to the Bar at the Inner Temple in 1924. During the Second World War, Radcliffe held various appointments in the Ministry of Information and became its Director-General when the war ended. See biographical data submitted by A.H.Joyce to Campbell Johnson, 3 July, for release to the Indian press. See ibid.: 99. Listowel to Mountbatten, 13 June 1947, ibid.: 336.
30 P.Ziegler, *Mountbatten:* 402.
31 At a Partition Council Meeting on 27june 1947, leaders of both the Congress and the Muslim League readily agreed that Cyril Radcliffe be asked to be chairman of both Boundary Commissions. See Mountbatten's Personal Report no. 17, 16 August 1947, *TP* 12:759. See also H.Tinker, *Experiment with Freedom,India and Pakistan 1947,* London (1967):139.
32 Abbott to I.D.Scott, telegram dated 5 July 1947, *TP* 11:931.
33 Major Short to Stafford Cripps, 3 August 1947, *TP* 11:326.
34 O.H.K.Spate, *On the Margins of History.* 53.
35 L.Mosley, *Last Days of the Raj:* 195.
36 Ibid.
37 Nehru to Mountbatten, 12June 1947, *TP* 11:158.
38 Viceroy's Personal Report no. 12, 11 July, 1947 *TP* 12:93.
39 Abbott to Abell, 16July 1947, ibid.: 191. Mountbatten to Radcliffe, 22 July 1947, and Radcliffe to Mountbatten, 23 July, 1947, ibid.: 291.
40 On 12 June Nehru sent in the proposed terms of reference to the Boundary Commissions, and these were accepted by Jinnah on 23 June 1947. See Mountbatten's Personal Report no. 17, 16 August 1947, *TP* 12:759.
41 'Note on Partition between Pakistan and Hindustan', by Professor A.Sadeque, enclosure to Tufton to Jinnah, 20 June 1947, in *Quaid I Azam Muhammud AliJinnah Papers,* First Series, vol. 2, Islamabad (1994):369.
42 Statement of His Majesty's Government, 3 June 1947.
43 Radcliffe was told by the Partition Council that no further directive was intended in addition to the terms of reference already spelt out. The Boundary Commissions should be left to interpret the terms of reference. See Meeting of Partition Council, 30 June 1947, *TP* 12:65.
44 For the complexities involved in the deliberations on the demarcation of the boundaries in the Punjab, see Tan Tai Yong, 'Sir Cyril Goes to India: Partition,

Boundary-Making and Disruptions in the Punjab', *International Journal of PunjabStudies* 4(1) (1997), India.

45 See Report of Mr Justice Din Mohammad, 5 August 1947, in *Select Documents:* 374–406.

46 Report of Justice Mehar Chand Mahajan, 3 August 1947, ibid.: 301–41.

47 For an elaboration of Sikh responses to the communal violence in 1946–7, see Chapter Four.

48 'Sikh Memorandum to the Punjab Boundary Commission', July 1947 in Sadullah, *The Partition of the Punjab, 1947,* vol. 1:347–97.

49 Reuter Indian Report, 8 July 1947, *TP* 12:17.

50 A.Tayyeb, *Pakistan: A Political Geography:* 85.

51 Mountbatten to Listowel, 16 August 1947, App. II, *TP* 12:750.

52 Ibid.

53 *Amrita Bazaar Patrika,* 24June 1947.

54 Points raised by Maj-Gen. A.C.Chatterjee, President of the New Bengal Association, in *Amrita Bazaar Patrika,* 2 July 1947.

55 Memorandum for the Bengal Boundary Commission. Submitted by the Bengal Provincial Hindu Mahasabha and the New Bengal Association. Papers of S.P. Mookherjee, subject file 17 (Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi).

56 J.Chatterji, 'The Making of a borderline: the Radcliffe Award for Bengal', Paper presented at the 14th European Association of South Asian Studies Conference (mimeographed), 21–24 August 1996, Copenhagen, Denmark.

57 'Memorandum on the partition of Bengal presented on behalf of the Indian National Congress before the Bengal Boundary Commission', filed on 15 July 1947, AICC-I/CL-14(D), 1947–48. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi, India.

58 Tayyeb, *Pakistan: A Political Geography:* 85.

59 Congress Memorandum to Bengal Boundary Commission, 15 July 1947:7 and 19–23.

60 Ibid.:27.

61 Tayyeb, *Pakistan: A Political Geography:* 87.

62 Mountbatten's Personal Report, *TP* 12, 11 July 1947:93.

63 For Muslim League representation before the Bengal Boundary Commission, see 'Report of the Muslim Members before the Bengal Boundary Commission', *Partition Papers* vol. 6, Reports of the Members and awards of the Chairman of the Boundary Commission, West Bengal Government Press, Alipore (1950): 71–82.

64 Tayyeb, *Pakistan: A Political Geography:* 88.

65 Muslim League Memorandum to Bengal Boundary Commission, *PartitionPapers,* vol. 6.

66 *Tayyeb, Pakistan: A Political Geography:* 87.

67 Muslim League Memorandum to Bengal Boundary Commission, *PartitionPapers,* vol. 6.

68 Tayyeb, *Pakistan: A Political Geography:* 88

69 Ibid.

70 Ibid.

71 Ibid.

72 Congress Memorandum to Bengal Boundary Commission, 15 July 1947:7 and 19–23.

73 Ibid.:27

74 See for instance L.Collins and D.Lapierre, *Mountbatten and the Partition of India,* Colombo (1982): 70, M.N.Das, *Partititon and Independence of India,* New Delhi

(1982):142 and 151, Mountbatten to the Maharaja of Bikaner, 11 August 1947, *TP* 12:662.

75 Report by Cyril Radcliffe, 12 August 1947, *TP* 12:744–9.
76 Ibid.
77 Tayyeb, *Pakistan: A Political Geography:* 86–7.
78 Mountbatten to Listowel, 16 August 1947, App. 2 in *TP* 12:751.
79 'The Radcliffe Report', 12 August 1947, *TP* 12:744–9.
80 Personal communication with A.A.Michel, 28 March 1965, as cited in Michel, *The Indus Rivers:* 194.
81 Cyril Radcliffe to Mark Radcliffe, cited in S.Khilnani, *The Idea of India:* 201.
82 Tayyeb, *Pakistan: A Political Geography*. 91.
83 Report of the non-Muslim members, *Partition of the Punjab*, vol. 6:30.
84 Tayyeb, *Pakistan: A Political Geography*. 91
85 Ibid.
86 See Michel, *The Indus Rivers:* 191.
87 Ibid.
88 See Abell to Radcliffe, 2 August 1947, *TP* 12, nos 318 and 326; Christopher Beaumont, Private Secretary to Radcliffe revealed that Radcliffe had been pressured by Mountbatten into awarding the Ferozepur tehsil in the Punjab to India instead of Pakistan, evidently at the bidding of Nehru. Statement by C. Beaumont, App. 6, in A.H.Khan, *The Rediscovery of India, A New Subcontinent*, Hyderabad (1995).
89 T.McGirk, 'Making the Cut', *Time*, 11 August 1997:31.
90 Meeting of the Special Committee of the Indian Cabinet, 26 June, 1947, *TP* 11: 311; see also H.V.Hodson, *The Great Divide: Britain, India and Pakistan*, Karachi (1985):355.
91 Notes by I.D.Scott and G.Abell, 16 July 1947, *TP* 12:194.
92 Mountbatten's Personal Report no. 17, *TP* 12:762.
93 P.Ziegler, *Mountbatten:* 403.
94 For a useful study on the impact of partition in Punjab, see S.Aiyar, 'August Anarchy: The Partition Massacres in Punjab, 1947', in *South Asia* Special Issue, vol. 18, (1995):13–36.
95 F.J.Fowler, 'Some Problems of Water Distribution between East and West Punjab', *Geographical Review* 49(4) (October 1950):586–7.
96 See Michel, *The Indus Rivers* and Tayyeb, *Pakistan: A Political Geography.*
97 S.M.Rai, *Partition of the Punjab:*
98 Michel, *The Indus Rivers:* 8.
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100 For this story, see B.Crow, A.Lindquist and D.Wilson, *Sharing the Ganges: ThePolitics and Technology of River Development*, New Delhi (1995).

4
A community in crisis

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2 *The Tribune* (Lahore); 27 March 1940. Other major Sikh political groups in the 1940s included the loyalist Chief Khalsa Diwan, and its legislative wing, the Khalsa

Nationalist Party, the Congressite Sikhs, and the Communist Sikhs. There was also the pro-Congress Central Akali Dal led by Baba Kharak Singh, a rival of Master Tara Singh. See I.Banga, The Crisis of Sikh Politics (1940–1947)', in J.T.O'Connell, M. Israel and W.G.Oxtoby (eds), with W.H. Mcleod and J.S.Grewal (visiting eds), *Sikh History and Religion in the TwentiethCentury* (S. Asian Studies Papers 3), Toronto (1988):233.

3 Statement from the Working Committee of the Shiromani Akali Dal in *TheTribune,* 30 March 1940.
4 *The Tribune,* 2 and 3 April, 1940.
5 S.Oren, 'The Sikhs, Congress and the Unionists in British Punjab, 1937–45', *Modern Asian Studies (MAS)* 8, 3 (1974):397–418.
6 FR, 31 March 1940.
7 Note by Major J.M.Short on Sikh-Unionist Relations, n.d., in *Papers of MajorJohn McLoughin Short,* IOL&R: MSS.EUR.F. 189/3–4.
8 *The Tribune,* 5 April 1940.
9 *The Tribune,* 28 May 1940.
10 *FR,* July 1940; *The Tribune,* 11 April 1940; 27 May 1940; 9 June and 27July 1940.
11 For a study of the effects of the communist movement in the Punjab on the Indian army, see Bhagwan Josh, *The Communist Movement in the Punjab,* Delhi (1979):148–61.
12 S.Rai, *Legislative Politics and the Freedom Struggle in the Punjab,* Delhi (1984):269, fn.250.
13 Linlithgow to Amery, 6 March 1942, in N.Mansergh and E.W.R.Lumby (eds), *Constitutional Relations between Britain and India: The Transfer of Power 1942–47* , vol. 1, London (1970):328 (hereafter *TP,* references are to volume and page numbers). See also note by Sir Herbert Emerson, Governor of the Punjab from 1933–8, who warned of Sikh trouble if 'local option' was included in the draft declaration, in 'Memorandum by Secretary of State for India', 3 March 1942, *TP* 1:302–3.
14 In addition to a meeting with the All Parties Sikh delegation, Cripps interviewed K. S.Majithia of the Chief Khalsa Diwan and members of the Khalsa Defence of India League. Cripps was advised by Glancy that the all-parties delegation represented only a section of Sikh political opinion. 'Report on Mission to India: Memorandum by Lord Privy Seal', 6 July 1942, *TP* 2:230.
15 Note of Cripps interview with Sikh delegates, 27 March 1942, *TP* 1:496.
16 Sikh All Parties Committee to Cripps, 31 March 1942, *TP* 2:582.
17 Quoted in S.M.Rai, *Partition of the Punjab.*
18 A.R.H.Copley, *The Political Career of Chakravarty Rajagopalachari,* Delhi (1978):36.
19 For details of the pact, see N.N.Mitra (ed.), *Indian Annual Register* (hereafter *IAR*), Calcutta (1942) 1:344–6; and *The Tribune,* 16 June 1942.
20 Notably Baba Kharak Singh of the Central Akali Dal Party, who, in an Akhand Conference in Ludhiana, criticized the Akali leadership and called on Baldev Singh to resign. See *IAR* (1942) 2:299.
21 'Note on the Sikhs', 14 July 1942, IOL&R: L/WS/2/44.
22 Glancy to Linlithgow, 28 November 1942, in *TP* 3:319.
23 *The Tribune,* 24 October 1931.
24 *Parliamentary Debates* (Hansard), Fifth Series, House of Commons, vol. 379 (1942).
25 Presidential Address, 'All India Akali Conference' 14 March 1943, *IAR* (1943) 1:294.
26 *IAR* (1943) 1:298.
27 B.S.Tangh, *Pothari Viewpoints Concerning 'Azad Punjab',* Amritsar (1943): 16–21, as cited in B.R.Nayar, *Minority Politics in the Punjab,* New Jersey (1966):85.

28 Sikh All Parties Committee to Cripps, 31 March 1942, *TP* 1:582.
29 Glancy to Linlithgow, 1 May 1942, *TP* 2:8.
30 Master Tara Singh to Cripps, 4 May 1942, *TP* 2:26–7.
31 All-India Akali Conference, 14 March 1943, *IAR* 1:294.
32 Glancy to Linlithgow, 1 May 1942, *TP* 2:8.
33 Linlithgow to Amery, 5 September 1942 *TP* 2:913.
34 Indu Banga, 'Crisis of Sikh Politics, 1940–47':242.
35 All-India Sikh Youth Conference, 1943, *IAR* 1:298.
36 *The Tribune*, 22 January 1943.
37 Rajagopalachari's proposal as quoted in *IAR* (1944) 2:130.
38 Proceedings of All-Parties Sikh Conference, Amritsar, 22 August 1945, *IAR* 2: 210.
39 Although Master Tara Singh had a substantial personal following in the Akali Dal, there was a faction of avowedly anti-British Akalis, led by Udham Singh Nagoke and Ishar Singh Majhail, who were opposed to his leadership. See 'Note by the Governor of Punjab on Sikh Organizations' in Appendix of Interview between Governor of Punjab and Lord Ismay, 3 April 1947, in K.Singh (ed.), *Select Documentson the Partition of Punjab 1947: India and Pakistan: Punjab, Haryana and Himachal India and Punjab—Pakistan* (hereafter *Select Documents*), Delhi (1991):38.
40 Press Statement by Master Tara Singh, *The Tribune* 11 August 1944.
41 Proceedings of Akali Conference, 14–15 October 1944, *IAR* (1944) 2:218–9.
42 FR, 30 September 1944.
43 Statement by Master Tara Singh, *The Tribune*, 11 August 1944.
44 R.J.Moore, *Escape from Empire: The Attlee Government and the Indian Problem*, Oxford (1983):56.
45 IAR (1946) 1:230.
46 *The Tribune*, 25 February 1946.
47 FR, Punjab, 15 February 1947.
48 Account of Mian Mumtaz Daultana cited by Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman:* 151.
49 *The Tribune*, 3 March 1946.
50 Ibid.
51 Jenkins to Wavell, 15 February 1947, in *TP* 9:271.
52 Stafford Cripps, Statement in the House of Commons, 18 July 1946, *Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, vol. 425.
53 Meeting between Cabinet Mission, Wavell and representatives, 5 April 1946, *TP* 7:139.
54 Ibid.: 140. Meeting between Cabinet Mission, Wavell and Baldev Singh, 5 April 1946, *TP* 7:141.
55 Jinnah to Pethick-Lawrence, 12 May 1946, *TP* 7:516; Maulana Azad to PethickLawrence, 6 May 1946, *TP* 7:496.
56 Broadcast by Secretary of State for India on Cabinet Mission's Proposals, 16 May 1946, *TP* 7:592.
57 Statement from Cabinet Mission, 16 May 1946, *TP* 7:582–94.
58 Wavell's broadcast, 17 May 1946, *TP* 7:611.
59 Ibid.
60 Ibid.
61 Ibid.
62 Proceedings of the Sikh Panthic Conference, 10 July 1946, *IAR* (1946) 2:205–6.
63 Ujjal Singh to Ismay, 22 May 1946, *TP* 7:724–5.

64 Jenkins to Wavell, 29 May 1946, *TP* 7:724–5.
65 Jenkins to Wavell, 27 May 1946, *TP* 7:710–11.
66 Notes of Meeting between the Cabinet Mission and the Nawab of Mamdot, 12 April 1946, *TP* 7:91.
67 Jenkins to Colville, 5 December 1946, *TP* 9:285–6.
68 Nehru's Statement, 10 July 1946, in Gwyer and Appadorai (eds), *Speeches and Documents,* 2:613.
69 *The Tribune,* 10 August 1946.
70 FR, 15 January 1947.
71 FR, 28 February 1947
72 S.G.S.Talib (compiler), *Muslim League Attacks on Sikhs and Hindus in the Punjab, 1947,* Delhi (1991):21.
73 Note by Governor of Punjab on Sikh Organizations, 3 April 1947, *Select Documents:* 38.
74 FR, 31 March 1947.
75 Resolution of Working Committee of the Shiromani Akali Dal, 16 May 1947, *Select Documents:* 42–3.
76 Letter from Sikh and Hindu members of Legislative Council to Nehru, 2 April 1947, *TP* 10:88.
77 Statement of 3 June Plan, 3 June 1947, TP 11:94–101; texts of broadcast by Nehru, Jinnah and Baldev Singh, *TP* 11:94–101.
78 Statements by various Sikh leaders, *The Tribune,* 4 June 1947.
79 Ismay to Mountbatten, 30 April 1947, *Select Documents:* 51.
80 Mountbatten's Broadcast, 3 June 1947, *TP* 11:87.
81 O.H.K.Spate, The Partition of the Punjab and Bengal', *Geographical Journal* 110 (1947):205.
82 Campbell-Johnson, *Mission with Mountbatten:* 109.
83 Moon to Sujan Singh, 8 June 1947, *J.M.Short Papers.*
84 P.Moon, *Divide and Quit,* London (1962):84–6.
85 J.M.Short to Cripps, 18 June 1947, *J.M.Shart Papers.*
86 Moon to Ismay, 27 June 1947, *Select Documents:.* 122.
87 Thompson to Corfield, 2 June 1947, *TP* 11:38.
88 Proceedings of the Partition Council, 10 July 1947, *Select Documents:* 151–2.
89 Reuter Indian Report, 8 July 1947, *TP* 12:17.
90 'Sikh Memorandum to the Punjab Boundary Commission', July 1947, in M.M. Sadullah, *The Partition of the Punjab, 1947: A Compilation of Official Documents,* Lahore (1983) 1:347–97.
91 Record of Interview between Jenkins and Giani Kartar Singh, 10 July 1947, *TP* 12:71–4.
92 FR, 15 May 1947.
93 Ibid.
94 FR, 31 May 1947.
95 H.Tinker, *Experiment with Freedom:* 132.
96 Record of interview between Jenkins and Kartar Singh, 10 July 1947, *TP* 12: 71–4; Interview of Mountbatten with Jinnah, Liaquat Ali Khan, Vallabhai Patel and Captain Savage, 5 August 1947, *TP* 12:538–9.
97 Ibid.
98 Jenkins to Mountbatten, 9 April 1947, *TP* 10:172, and enclosures, pp. 174–5.

99 Jenkins to Mountbatten, 7 June 1947, *TP* 11:194–95; Jenkins to Mountbatten, 10July 1947, *TP* 12:71.
100 Note to Abell, 21 July 1947, *TP* 12:278.
101 See R.Jeffrey, 'The Punjab Boundary Force and the Problem of Order in August 1947', *Modern Asian Studies* 8(4) (1974): 491–520.
102 Jenkins to Mountbatten, 13 August 1947, *TP* 12:700–2.
103 J.S.Grewal, *The Sikhs of the Punjab:* 181.
104 Moon, *Divide and Quit* 279–80.
105 Ibid.: 280–1.
106 R.Kapur, *Sikh Separatism: The Politics of Faith,* London (1986):208.
107 Ibid.: 210.
108 Ibid.
109 Nehru to Mountbatten, 7 July 1947, *Select Documents:* 148.
110 See P.Brass, 'The Punjab Crisis and the Unity of India', in A.Kohli (ed.), *India'sDemocracy: An Analysis of Changing State-Society* Princeton (1988):169–213.
111 B.R.Nayar, *Minority Politics in the Punjab:* 98.
112 Khushwant Singh, *History of the Sikhs, vol 2, 1839–1974,* Delhi (1976):296–7.
113 In the re-constituted Punjab, the Sikhs formed 54 per cent of the population, while the Hindus formed 44 per cent.

5
From displacement to development

1 'The Fate of the Punjabee Nation', speech on 30 April 1951, in Diwan Chaman Lall Papers, Subject File 1A 'Speeches', Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML), New Delhi. Diwan Chaman Lall was born in 1892 and was educated at Oxford and qualified as a barrister from Middle Temple. He founded the All India Trade Union Congress in 1920. He was MLA (Central) 1924–31 and 1945–8; MLA, Punjab 1937–45; Member of the Constituent Assembly of India 1945–8; Indian Ambassador to Turkey 1949–50; and thereafter Member of the Rajya Sabha in the 1950s and 1960s.
2 M.S.Randhawa, *Out of the Ashes, An Account of the Rehabilitation of Refugees fromWest Pakistan in Rural Areas of East Punjab,* Bombay (1954):25 and 33.
3 For vivid accounts of the trauma and human tragedy that faced the refugees, see their numerous petitions available in several collections of private papers, for example Syama Prosad Mukherjee Papers, File Nos. 158, 183, 186A in NMML. Also see M. Bourke-White, *Halfway to Freedom: A Report on the New India in theWords and Photos of Margaret Bourke-White,* New York (1949). Accounts of individual and family misfortunes are best reflected in Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi and Sindhi literature. For anthologies of these, see M.Hasan (ed.), *India Partitioned:The Other Face of Freedom,* vol. 1 (1995) and A, Bhalla (ed.), *Stories About thePartition of India,* vols. 1–3.
4 In this discussion the area described as Punjab or East Punjab includes the province of East Punjab and PEPSU (the Patiala and East Punjab States Union) formed after partition in 1947. At the time of the linguistic reorganization of the states in 1956 PEPSU and Punjab were merged, and thereafter in 1966 two separate states of Haryana and Punjab were formed. In other words, the term Punjab or East Punjab refers to the region constituting the present day Indian states of Punjab and Haryana.

5 Aloys Arthur Michel observes that, as a result of partition, 'each country was forced to devise a fundamental reordering of the irrigation system' of what was one of the largest integrated irrigation networks in the world; see his *The IndusRivers: A Study of the Effects of Partition*.
6 A *lakh* is the equivalent of 100,000.
7 On these aspects, see V.V.S.Tyagi, 'Economic Impact of Partition on Indian Agriculture and Related Industries', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, American University, Washington (1958).
8 The precise figures are 2,711,386 hectares abandoned by Hindu and Sikh landholders in West Punjab as against 1,902,024 hectares evacuated by the Muslims of East Punjab and PEPSU. In terms of irrigated land, the precise figures are 1,022,044 hectares of land left behind by Hindus and Sikhs in Pakistan as against 308,990 hectares of irrigated land left behind by the Muslims in East Punjab. Also see C.N.Vakil, *Economic Consequences of Divided India,* especially chs 2 and 3.
9 For a detailed description of the various communities and groups displaced from West Punjab, see Randhawa, *Out of the Ashes,* chs 4 and 5.
10 I.Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism, 1885–1947,* Delhi (1988):viii. This paragraph largely draws upon Ali's work.
11 Randhawa observes that 'at the time of partition Lyallpur was swimming in plenty, and had a population of over a million inhabitants and the landowners paid land revenue and water rates amounting to Rs 2 *crores* to the Government.'
12 For a narrative of how a family from one of the canal colonies was affected by displacement, see D.S.Tatla, The Sandal Bar: Memoirs of a Jat Sikh Farmer', paper presented in the Panel on Partition of Punjab and Bengal at the 14th European Conference on Modern South Asian Studies, August 1996, at Copenhagen (mimeographed).
13 'A Skeleton Scheme for Rehabilitation' dated 3 November 1947, by S.K.Kripalani, ICS, Secretary, Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation, Government of India.
14 T.Singh, 'Rural Resettlement in Punjab (I): The Background: A Transfer of Population', *Statesman,* New Delhi, 25 July 1950.
15 Randhawa, *Out of the Ashes:* 5.
16 See T.Singh, *Land Resettlement Manual for Displaced Persons in Punjab and Pepsu,* Simla (1952) especially ch. 1.
17 However, group allotment did not enjoin individual allottees to cultivate their lands jointly. If an individual wanted to cultivate his share separately, the person was given the right to do so.
18 See Randhawa, *Out of the Ashes,* especially pp. 120–31 for details.
19 'A Plea for Improved Structures', Note by K.L.Luthra, 14 January 1948, Diwan Chaman Lall Papers, Subject File 2B.
20 'East Punjab's Scheme for Building New Houses', *Tribune* 7 July 1948.
21 In all, Rs four *crores* and forty *lakhs* were disbursed by the Government in the form of loans, grants and *accavi* advances: T.Singh, 'Restoring an Economy Dislocated by Partition—Changing Social Conditions', *Statesman* 28 July 1950; also see his *Land Resettlement Manual:* 7 and 25–6.
22 'Settlement of Evacuees on Land', Note by K.L.Luthra, Research Officer, Economic Advisor's Office, Punjab, no date, Diwan Chaman Lall Papers, Subject File 2B.
23 Before partition Jamalpur village had 294 bullocks, whereas at the time of the survey, no more than 100 bullocks were found. Likewise, before partition there were 121

dry and 119 milch cows, whose number had now been reduced to only twenty-five milch cows.

24 'Rebuilding a New Punjab', *Tribune* 1 March 1948.

25 By December 1947 as many as 190,155 families had been temporarily allotted 2,072,852 acres of cultivable evacuee land, and by February the number of beneficiaries had increased to 238,216 families who had been settled on 2,581,819 acres of land: *Land Resettlement Manual:* 5.

26 'Press Communique by the East Punjab Government, 7 February 1948', cited in T. Singh, ibid.: 28–9. It was announced that land would be allotted under the new scheme only to those who were either owners, occupancy tenants or tenants. The intention of the Government to impose 'graded cuts' was also made clear and the deadline of 31 May 1948 was set. Also see 'New Scheme of Rehabilitation in East Punjab', *Tribune* 12 March 1948 for details of the Government's plans.

27 Sardar Mangal Singh, ex-MLA (Central), 'Rebuilding A New Punjab', *Tribune* 1 March 1948.

28 For a typical argument of this kind see, for instance, K.G.Dutt, 'New Approach to Rehabilitation: Compensation Without Reference to Pakistan', *Tribune* 20 February 1950.

29 In the mean time, the Governments of East Punjab and West Punjab also took steps to exchange copies of the surviving revenue records of the evacuee villages on both sides of the border. These provided some statistical basis for the formulation of the new scheme of rehabilitation in East Punjab.

30 Severe penalties were imposed for making false claims. A person making a false or exaggerated claim was liable to punishment with rigorous imprisonment extending up to five years, or to a fine up to Rs 5,000 or both.

31 The technical and procedural aspects involved in the exercise of land claims and their assessment and verification are described in great detail in T.Singh, *Land Resettlement Manual:* 30–78.

32 Randhawa, *Out of the Ashes:* 74.

33 For details see S.T.Singh, Director, General Rehabilitation, 'Quasi-Permanent Allotment of Land in East Punjab', *Tribune* 7 July 1949.

34 See T.Singh, 'The Standard Acre: Unit of Value for Land Allotment', *Statesman* 26 July 1950.

35 Born in 1913, Tarlok Singh was educated at the London School of Economics and joined the ICS in 1937. In 1940 he conducted a field survey of nine villages of Hissar district, and in 1943 was posted as the Colonization Officer of Nilli Bar Colony in West Punjab. Between 1944–6 he worked for the Finance Department of Government of India, and thereafter served briefly as Private Secretary to the Interim Prime Minister during 1946–7. In 1945 he published *Poverty and SocialChange: A Study in the Economic Reorganization of Indian Rural Society,* London. With such a background, he perhaps became a natural choice in 1947 for the newly-created position of Director General of Rehabilitation in the Government of East Punjab. He continued in this position till December 1949 and then joined the Planning Commission where for the next seventeen years he was involved in the formulation of several five-year national plans, first as a civil servant and then as a full-fledged Member.

36 *Anna* i. e. 1/16 fraction of an Indian Rupee.

37 See T.Singh, 'Valuation of Fields: Methods of Allocation', *Statesman* 27 July 1950.

38 The characteristics and elements incorporated in the criteria adopted for the valuation of land are explained in T.Singh, *Land Resettlement Manual,* ch. 3. The details about the grading of land and its valuation in 'standard acres' for each *tehsil* are also provided in pp. 283–304 of the *Manual*.

39 For details see, 'Where Do You Get Your Land? Allocation and Sub Allocation in Land Allotment', *Tribune* 15 August 1949.

40 See, for instance, 'East Punjab—Today and Tomorrow: Need to Emphasise Cultural Unity', *Tribune* 2 June 1948.

41 On these issues, see Randhawa, *Out of the Ashes:* 109–18.

42 See 'Principles of Allocation': 80–9 and, pp. 321–2 in T. Singh, *Land ResettlementManual* on the technical aspects of the scheme of graded cuts.

43 'Keystones of E. Punjab Govt's Land Resettlement Policy: Text of Communique by the Rehabilitation Department of East Punjab', *Tribune* 1 December 1949.

44 In all over 100,000 applications were received requesting for revisions in allotments: out of these 33,000 requests were admitted and the necessary modifications made.

45 Consider the change in the circumstances of Gobind Ram Sikka, a refugee from Sargodha. In a memorandum entitled 'Miracles of the Punjab Re-habilitation in the Indian Republic', Sikka complained bitterly against the diminished circumstances in which he found himself. He claimed that, prior to partition, his family jointly owned 186 acres of agricultural land in West Punjab in lieu of which he had been allotted ninety-nine acres on a quasi permanent basis in Ambala district. He previously had several wells in addition to non-perennial channels to irrigate his lands, but had now been given *barani, banjar jandid, banjar qadim* and even *ghair-mumkin* lands. Further, Sikka claimed that, while his family previously exercised full proprietary rights, such rights were denied now. To aggravate the situation, the land allotted to him belonged to evacuee Indian Muslims who contested possession and refused to relinquish their claims. See Memorandum by Gobind Ram Sikka, Mochpura Bazar, Ludhiana, no date, in *S.P.MookherjeePapers,* File no. 161.

46 See T.Singh, 'Rural Resettlement in the Punjab after Partition', in his *TowardsAn Integrated Society: Reflections on Planning, Social Policy and Rural Institutions,* New Delhi (1969):213–35. Also see Randhawa, *Out of the Ashes:* 202–17.

47 It is significant that by the early 1950s most refugee grievances in East Punjab related not to agricultural resettlement but to compensation for lost property, both movable and immovable. See, for example, Resolutions of the All India Refugees' Convention, Ludhiana, 3–4 June 1950, organized by Sharnarthi Sabha, Ludhiana, and the Resolutions of the All India Refugee Convention, 29–30 July 1950, Delhi, held under the Presidentship of Purshotam Das Tandon, *S.P.Mookherjee Papers,* File no. 37.

48 On the benefits and consequences of land consolidation, see J.P.Bonner, *LandConsolidation and Economic Development in India, A Study of Two Haryana Villages,* New Delhi (1987).

49 'Compulsory Consolidation of Holdings in East Punjab', *Tribune* 12 March 1948.

50 See M.S.Randhawa, 'Consolidation of Holdings', June 1954, in *Kurukshetra, ASymposium on Community Development in India (1952–55),* New Delhi (1955): 124–30.

51 Under the 1948 Act village advisory committees were formed to advise on all matters concerning consolidation of land and, in particular, on the classification and valuation of fields and the preparation of village consolidation schemes.

52 See *Punjab on the March*, Chandigarh (1967).
53 See *Resurgent Punjab*, Government of Punjab (1956).
54 This was in sharp contrast to many other states such as Bihar where, as late as by 1969, only 6.77 per cent of the total cultivable area had been consolidated. For details see F.T.Jannuzi, *Agrarian Crisis in India, The Case of Bihar*, Boulder (1974).
55 'Demand for the Completion of Bhakra Dam', *Tribune* 14 March 1948. Also see 'Economic Plans for East Punjab: Nangal and Bhakra Projects to Give 11,000 KW', *Tribune* 3 March 1948 and 'Multi-Purpose Projects', *Tribune* 22 August 1948.
56 *Tribune* 15 August 1950. Also see K.N.Raj, *Some Economic Aspects of the BhakraNangal Project*, New Delhi (1960). Raj observes:

> The considerations advanced in favour of the project were many. The most important of them were that it would assist in the drive to expand food production in the country, compensate to some extent for the loss of the irrigated areas of the Punjab as a result of the Partition, help to re-establish the refugees in this area, and promote the economic development of the whole of the region extending beyond the Punjab.
>
> (op. cit.: 2)

57 V.Shiva, *The Violence of the Green Revolution, Third World Agriculture, Ecology andPolitics*, London (1991):122.
58 K.N.Raj concluded his 1960 study with the observation:

> Apart from the desirability of promoting regional development, without going too much by calculations of costs and returns, the Bhakra Nangal project has given hope and confidence to the millions of people who were uprooted by the partition of India and had to be rehabilitated in this region.
>
> (Raj, *Some Economic Aspects of the Bhakra Nangal Project* 125)

59 'East Punjab Not Out of the Woods Yet: A Retrospective View of Govt's Activities', *Tribune* 15 August 1949.
60 'Punjab: Surplus Food Province', *Tribune* 15 August 1950.
61 G.S.Bhalla, 'Political Economy since Independence', in I.Banga (ed.), *FivePunjabi Centuries, Essays in Honour of Professor J.S.Grewal*, New Delhi (1996):378.
62 We are conscious that refugee rehabilitation in north India was not confined to the states of Haryana and Punjab. For instance, in the Terai region in Uttarakhand in Uttar Pradesh, large-scale agricultural colonization was undertaken to resettle Punjabi refugees. Constraints of space prohibit us from considering this story in detail and restrict our focus to the Punjab region where the main challenge of rehabilitation lay. For details of Terai colonization, see B. H.Farmer, *Agricultural Colonization in India Since Independence*, London (1974).
63 *Tribune* 15 August 1950.
64 *Tribune* 24 January 1950.
65 P.N.Thapar, 'Foreword', in T.Singh, *Land Resettlement Manual:* ii-iii.
66 K.Nair, *Blossoms in the Dust, the Human Element in Indian Development*, London (1961).

67 The literature on the 'green revolution' is fairly large. For an early view, see F. R. Frankel, *India's Green Revolution, Economic Gains and Political Costs,* Bombay (1971). M.S.Randhawa's *Green Revolution: A Case Study of the Punjab,* New Delhi (1974) provides an optimist's view. The best introduction to the field is B.H. Farmer, 'Perspectives on the "Green Revolution" in South Asia', *Modern AsianStudies* 20(1) (1986):175–99. For analyses of changes brought about by the Green Revolution in different regional contexts, see T.P.Bayliss-Smith and S. Wanmali (eds), *Understanding Green Revolutions, Agrarian Change and DevelopmentPlanning in South Asia, Essays in Honour of B.H.Farmer,* Cambridge (1984).

68 G.S.Bhalla, 'Political Economy since Independence', op. cit.

69 On the problems which India has faced in the area of land reforms, see F.T. Jannuzi, *India's Persistent Dilemma: The Political Economy of Agrarian Reform,* Boulder (1994). More generally, on the crucial importance of land reforms for agricultural development, see C.T.Smith, 'Land Reform as a Pre-condition for Green Revolution in Latin America', in Bayliss-Smith and Wanmali (eds), *Understanding Green Revolutions*. The extreme case here is that of Bihar where land reform measures have failed completely. Tom Jannuzi in his study of land reforms in Bihar observes: 'Nowhere in contemporary India is the gulf between articulated ideals with respect to agrarian reforms and accomplishment more conspicuous than in Bihar.' He further writes:

> Not only has Bihar failed to implement agrarian reforms, the misery and poverty of her landless labourers, share croppers and small farmers are extreme even in a country where per capita incomes are less than one hundred dollars per annum. To live at the margins of subsistence is the way of life for the majority of Bihar's peasantry. In real terms this means that some customarily need to consume undigested grain picked from the excrement of cattle as they struggle for survival.
>
> (Jannuzi, *Agrarian Crisis in India, The Case of Bihar:* 7–9)

70 In her study Holly Sims remarks: 'The Punjabs provide almost laboratory-like conditions of comparability, for they share virtually identical agro-ecological conditions, a common language and cultural traditions, and a legacy of institutions developed under colonial rule' (H.Sims, *Political Regimes, Public Policy andEconomic Development: Agricultural Performance and Rural Change in Two Punjabs,* New Delhi (1988):18).

71 Holly Sims shows that for two decades after partition, agricultural productivity was modest in both Punjabs and crop production grew by about 3 per cent annually. However, from the mid-1960s East Punjab showed a dramatic increase in growth rates: between 1965–6 and 1984–5 agricultural growth rates averaged 8.3 annually for East Punjab and only 4.3 for West Punjab. In the same period East Punjabi farmers reported significantly higher yields for major crops like wheat, rice sugarcane, gram and maize than their counterparts in West Punjab. Striking disparities also came to be noticed between the two Punjabs in literacy levels and a number of other social indices. For a similar argument, also see S. S. Thandi, 'The Unidentical Punjab Twins:

Some Explanations of Comparative Agricultural Performance since Partition', *International Journal of Punjab Studies* 4(1) January-June 1997):63–84.

6
Divided landscapes, fragmented identities

1 On these issues, see R.M.Eaton, *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier,1204–1760,* Berkeley (1993) and R.Ahmed, *The Bengal Muslims 1871–1906: AQuest for Identity,* Delhi (1981).
2 S.Ahmed, *Muslim Community in Bengal, 1884–1912,* Dacca (1974).
3 Some of these issues are discussed in their complexity in A.Roy, *The IslamicSyncretic Tradition in Bengal,* New Delhi (1983).
4 O.H.K.Spate and A.T.A.Learmonth, *India and Pakistan, A General andRegional Geography,* London (1967).
5 A translation of the full poem can be found in P.R.Greenough, *Prosperity andMisery in Modern Bengal, The Famine of 1943–1944,* New York (1982):9.
6 *Amrita Bazar Patrika,* 8 July 1947.
7 For an interesting discussion of these issues, see L.A.Gordon, 'Divided Bengal: Problems of Nationalism and Identity in the 1947 Partition', *Journal ofCommonwealth and Comparative Politics* 16 (1978).
8 For accounts of communal mobilization in pre-partition Bengal, see J. Chatterjee, *Bengal Divided: Hindu Communalism and Partition, 1932–1947,* Cambridge (1994), S. Das, *Communal Riots in Bengal, 1905–1947,* Delhi (1991), and T.I.Hashmi, *Pakistan as a Peasant Utopia, The Communalization of ClassPolitics in East Bengal, 1920–1947,* Boulder (1992).
9 A. Sen and A.Banerjee, 'Migrants in the Calcutta Metropolitan District 1951–71', CSSS Occasional Paper no. 62, Calcutta (1983).
10 C.N.Vakil, *Economic Consequences of Divided India: A Study of the Economy of Indiaand Pakistan,* Bombay (1950).
11 S.Guha, *Non Muslims Behind the Curtain of East Pakistan,* Calcutta (1950).
12 Proceedings of Minority Convention held at Mymensingh, 12–13 June 1950, *S.P. Mookherjee Papers,* File no. 160, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML), New Delhi.
13 N.C.Chatterjee in foreword to *The East Bengal Tragedy, the Delhi Pact andThereafter,* Calcutta (n.d.).
14 For instance, see memorandum to Chairman, District Minority Board, Chittagong, by Mrs Nellie Sen Gupta, M.B.Dutt and J.M.Rakshit, 19 June 1950, *S.P.Mookherjee Papers,* File no. 160. This lists out various instances of persecution and violence, molestation of women and police indifference in the district. Also see Rai Sahib Monomohan Das, ex MLA, Kishoreganj, to Members of the Minority Commission, no date, citing cases of persecution of Hindu minorities, *S.P.Mookherjee Papers,* File no. 160.
15 *Face Facts,* Calcutta: Bengal Rehabilitation Organisation (n.d.): 27. Also see *TheTragedy of East Bengal Hindus and how to Resettle and Rehabilitate Them* (*AnExamination of the Working of the Indo-Pakistan Agreement*) Calcutta, Bengal Rehabilitation Organisation (n.d.). Both these publications present detailed evidence

to show an increase in crime against Hindus, in particular cases of abduction and rape, defilement of temples and attacks on properties.

16 See Mandal's letter of resignation to Liaquat Ali Khan dated 9 October 1950 cited in *Recurrent Exodus of Minorities from East Bengal and Disturbances in India,* New Delhi (1965), appendix iv.

17 P.C.Lahiri, *India Partitioned and Minorities in Pakistan,* Calcutta (1964):27.

18 S.Guha, *Non Muslims Behind the Curtain of East Pakistan,* op. cit: 23.

19 K Singh, *The Unending Trail,* New Delhi (1957) and *Not Wanted in Pakistan,* Delhi (1965). A *lakh* is the Indian equivalent of 100,000 and one *crore* is made up of 10 million.

20 Government of India: Ministry of Rehabilitation: *Annual Reports, 1948–58,* New Delhi (1949–59).

21 Lahiri, *India Partitioned and Minorities in Pakistan,* op. cit.

22 There exists a serious problem with the accuracy of official data regarding migrations in Eastern India. Unlike Punjab where most people migrated between 1947 and 1949, there was no fixed period here as migrations started before partition and continued almost till 1970. Further, the concept of border in Eastern India was such that most refugees crossed on foot at countless unmanned points. No serious attempt was made to enumerate them and to ascertain the real magnitude of the refugee influx. However, official statistics, while not totally reliable, are certainly indicative of the overall trend: official sources give the following figures of incoming refugees in West Bengal: 6,000 in 1957, 64,898 in 1958, 7,348 in 1959, 9,712 in 1960, 10,847 in 1961, 13,894 in 1962, 16,295 in 1963, 693,142 in 1964, 107,906 in 1965, 7,665 in 1966, 24,527 in 1967, 11,614 in 1968, 9,763 in 1969, and 251,160 in 1970, Ministry of Rehabilitation: *Annual Reports, 1948–58,* op. cit.

23 Government of West Bengal, *Refugee Rehabilitation Committee's Report, 1981*:1, Calcutta (1981).

24 See, for instance, the statement of Ashutosh Lahiri, General Secretary, All India Hindu Mahasabha, 27 November 1948, *Ashutosh Lahiri Papers,* Subject File: 'Statements', NMML. Lahiri accused the authorities of adopting a 'policy of drift' and not facing the 'deep psychological question' that needed to be addressed about 'the fate of the Hindus in East Bengal'. He saw a 'proportionate exchange of populations' with Pakistan as 'the only way out'.

25 For an account of prevailing attitudes in West Bengal to the refugees, see B.S. Guha, *Studies in Social Tensions Among the Refugees from East Bengal* (Department of Anthropology, Government of India Memoir no. 1), Calcutta (1959).

26 N.Chatterjee, 'The East Bengal Refugee. A Lesson in Survival' in S.Chaudhuri (ed.), *Calcutta: The Living City, vol. II: The Present and Future,* Calcutta (1990).

27 The Bengal Rehabilitation Organization acknowledged that after partition West Bengal's population density stood at 1,200 persons per square mile, which was 'four times greater than the average density in the Indian Union, and the highest record in the world for an agricultural state.' See 'Summary of the Refugee Rehabilitation Plan Drawn up by the Rehabilitation Board formed by Bengal Rehabilitation Organisation' (Chairman: Radha Kamal Mukherjee), *S.P. Mookherjee Papers,* File no. 38:10.

28 Lahiri, *India Partitioned and Minorities in Pakistan,* op. cit.

29 See, for instance, speech by Mrs Renuka Ray at Dum Dum Rajerghat Rehabilitation and Welfare Board, 7 August 1953, *Renuka Ray Papers,* File no. 27, NMML. In her

speech Mrs. Ray declared: 'We have reached a saturation point. ...It is beyond the capacity and powers of this state to provide land for cultivators and even homesteads in urban areas for the newcomers.'

30 B.C.Roy, *Towards A Prosperous India: Speeches and Writings of Dr Bidhan ChandraRoy*, Calcutta (1964).

31 On some of the difficulties faced in the resettlement and assimilation of Bengali refugees in Assam, see the report of Sri Prakasa, who had been personally deputed by Jawaharlal Nehru to go to Assam to report first-hand the conditions there: Sri Prakasa to Nehru, 14 August 1953, in *Ajit Prasad Jain Papers*, Subject File no. 1, NMML. Also see the views of K.Samaddar of Nowgong, Assam, in his letter to S P Mookherjee, 6 August 1952, in *S.P.Mookherjee Papers*, Subject File no. 165. On these issues, also see Nehru to Gopinath Bardoloi, Chief Minister of Assam, 29 May 1948 *in Jawaharlal Nehru Selected Works* (new series: henceforth *JNSW)* vol. 6:118 and Nehru to Bardoloi 18 May 1949 in *JNSW* vol. 11:70–2. Also see note by Nehru entitled 'Migration from East Bengal to Assam' 21 July 1948 in *JNSW* vol. 7:67–8.

32 See, for instance, *Statesman* 29 July 1952.

33 'Summary of Refugee Rehabilitation Plan' by the Bengal Rehabilitation Organisation, *S.P.Mookherjee Papers*, File no. 38, p. 1.

34 Ibid.: 4.

35 Ibid.: 9–10.

36 R.K.Mukherjee, 'Introduction' to M.Chaudhary, *Partition and the Curse ofRehabilitation*, Bengal Rehabilitation Organisation, Calcutta (1964):16.

37 This was in sharp contrast to the situation in Punjab where the Government had already distributed about 47 *lakh* acres of land for refugee resettlement. For a statement highlighting the sharp disparities in the official rehabilitation effort between West Bengal and Punjab, see R.Roy, 'The Refugees: The Privileged and the Deprived', in his *The Agony of West Bengal*, Calcutta (1971): 63–9. The disparities were clearly reflected in the expenditure on rehabilitation. For instance, the total expenditure on displaced persons from West Pakistan during the period 1947–8 to 1956–7 was Rs 236.88 *crores* (including grants, loans, compensation and expenditure on housing), while the expenditure on East Bengal refugees during the same period was only Rs 109.29 *crores*. See *Report of the Ministry ofRehabilitation for 1956–57*, New Delhi (1957) for a detailed breakdown.

38 R.Mukherjee, *The Dynamics of a Rural Society*, Berlin (1957):101–6.

39 *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 29 January 1956.

40 For an early view of the scheme, see 'Dandakaranya Can Be Developed for Benefit of DPs' by a Special Correspondent in *Statesman*, New Delhi, 15 August 1957, Independence Day number.

41 See, for example, Padmaja Naidu, Governor of West Bengal, to S.K.Gupta, 23 October 1963, expressing the hope that the Dandakaranya project will provide a lasting and meaningful rehabilitation solution for the East Bengal refugees, *S.K.Gupta Papers*, File doc. DS: 'DDA-Official Documents', NMML.

42 U.B.Rao, *The Story of Rehabilitation*, New Delhi (1967):202, emphasis added.

43 S.K.Gupta to P.C.Sen, Chief Minister, West Bengal, 2 September 1963, expressing his concerns about the state of affairs in Dandakaranya before taking up the Chairmanship of the DDA, and in particular his misgivings about the complicated structure of the DDA. *S.K.Gupta Papers*, File doc. DS: 'DDA-Official Documents'.

44 A.B.Mukerji, 'A Cultural Ecological Appraisal of Refugee Resettlement in Independent India', in L.Kosinski and K.Maudood Elahi (eds), *PopulationRedistribution and Development in South Asia,* New Delhi (1985):110.

45 Note on 'Rehabilitation of Displaced Persons', by Sh. Ren.Ray, MP, in *RenukaRay Papers, File no 2* (n.d.), NMML. The Note discusses in detail 'desertions' by the refugees and their 'tendency' to return to West Bengal and attributes it to 'psychological' factors.

46 D.S.Zagoria, 'The Social Bases of Indian Communism', in R.Lowenthal (ed.), *Issues in the Future of Asia: Communist and Non Communist Alternatives,* London (1969):97–124.

47 P.K.Chakrabarti, *The Marginal Men,* op. cit: 405.

48 Lahiri, *India Partitioned and Minorities in Pakistan,* op. cit.: 74.

49 See, for example, the representation by Radhakanta Mandal, Shyambada Vaidya and Benode Kaviraj of Umarkote and Paighar resettlement zones to the Chairman, DDA, 10 February 1964, complaining about the apathy of DDA officials, *S.K.Gupta Papers,* File DS: 'DDA-Official Documents'.

50 Saibal Kumar (S.K.) Gupta (born 1902), graduated from Calcutta University and joined the Indian Civil Service in 1923. He was District and Sessions Judge, 1931–47; Secretary to the West Bengal Government 1947–50; and Chairman of the Calcutta Improvement Trust, 1950–60, a position which gave him a firsthand experience of the problems of refugees. Following his retirement, he was Chairman of the DDA during 1963–4. His private papers, recently acquired by the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library in New Delhi, provide rich material on several aspects of contemporary Bengal.

51 S.K.Gupta, 'Dandakaranya: A Survey of Rehabilitation I—The State of Agriculture', *Economic Weekly* 17(1), 2 January 1965.

52 'Memo on the Dandakaranya Development Project for the Rehabilitation of East Bengal Refugees' by Sri S K Gupta ICS (retd), (n.d.), *S.K.Gupta Papers,* File no. doc. 13: 'Personal and Confidential File on DDA'.

53 On the difficulties involved in agricultural colonization in the Dandakaranya scheme such as rainfall variability, aridity, land reclamation, soil and hydrological problems, see B.H.Farmer, *Agricultural Colonization in India SinceIndependence,* London (1974), especially chs 7 and 9. Farmer conducted indepth fieldwork in Dandakaranya in 1963 and 1972 and his study provides valuable details about the project.

54 S.K.Gupta, 'Dandakaranya: A Survey of Rehabilitation II—Industries', *EconomicWeekly* 17(3), 9 January 1965.

55 'Note on the Dandakaranya Project for the Use of the Estimates Committee by Sri S.K.Gupta, Chairman, DDA'(n.d.), *S.K.Gupta Papers,* File no. doc. D11: 'Material supplied to Estimates Committee vol. I'.

56 Confidential letter by Dr S. Ghosh Dastidar, Medical Officer, to Director of Heath Services, Kondagoan, n.d. (late May/early June 1964 ?), *S.K.GuptaPapers,* File no. doc. D 16: Papers on East Bengal Refugee Rehabilitation'.

57 Gupta was concerned as Chairman of DDA that the Dandakaranya region should not be swamped by Bengali refugees; he urged both the West Bengal Chief Minister and the Union Rehabilitation Minister to limit the proportion of refugees in relation to the tribals and to 'stop sending further people to Dandakaranya', see his letters to P. C.Sen, 10 January 1964 and to Meher Chand Khanna, 16 February 1964, *S.K.Gupta Papers,* File no. D16:'Papers on East Bengal Refugee Rehabilitation'.

58 The Dandakaranya region was largely inhabited by the Gonds who practised shifting cultivation. The planners of Dandakaranya believed that Bengali cultivators could inspire the tribals to take to settled paddy cultivation. In the event, it was the Bengali farmers who learned that tribal practices like sowing of sprouted paddy seeds, ploughing of valley-bottoms rather than sloping fields and the use of early maturing varieties of paddy were far superior to those which the Bengali farmers practised. Ben Farmer observes:

> Ironically enough, farms established partly in the belief that the local tribal people were "poor cultivators" from whom little could be learnt (and who, indeed, needed instruction when they became settlers in the scheme) found themselves observing tribal agricultural technology and copying it in certain respects.'
>
> (B.H.Farmer, *Agricultural Colonization in India,* op. cit:. 217–8)

59 A.Ahmed, 'Regional Development Process and Redistribution of Tribal Population in mid-India', in Elahi and Kosinsky (eds), *Population Redistributionand Development in South Asia,* op. cit: 74. Ahmed further observes:

> The state policy on land redistribution, allocation of development funds and mode of payment of grants and loans was clearly discriminatory against the tribals. It was certainly disadvantageous to the tribals who faced an unprecedented influx of non-tribal elements on the one hand and the arrival of development agencies on the other. The organized encroachment on the forest land interfered with the normal tribal way of life. Considering the fact that the tribal mode of life and economy was intrinsically linked with the forest, the new conflict engendered by this systematic intervention was both economic and psychological...the [Dandakaranya Development] Authority's functioning within the tribal fastness of Bastar and Koraput created conditions which favoured the disintegration of the tribal mode of economy.

This view is endorsed by Ben Farmer when he comments:

> In Dandakaranya colonization has meant the intrusion of an alien Bengali-speaking people into the former forest fastness of the Gonds, Koyas, and other peoples.... There is no doubt that under the surface in Dandakaranya have long smouldered the fires of resentment at the intrusion of alien immigrants from the plains.
>
> (Farmer, op. cit: 272)

60 See S.K.Gupta's deposition before the Commission of Inquiry (Exodus of Minorities from East Pakistan) (N.Vittal, Secretary), dated 9 November 1965, especially pp. 1–

26, *S.K.Gupta Papers,* File no. doc. D 16: 'Papers on East Bengal Refugee Rehabilitation'.

61 'A Note on the Present Situation by Sri S.K.Gupta, Chairman, DDA', 2 March 1964, *S.K.Gupta Papers,* File doc.: DS: 'DDA—Official Documents'. The Note analyses some of the reasons for the desertions from Dandakaranya. Also see S. K.Gupta to Mahavir Tyagi, Union Minister for Rehabilitation, 2 June 1964, enclosing his 'Note on Conditions at Mana Group of Camps after New Migration' in *S.K.Gupta Papers,* File doc. D16: Papers on East Bengal Refugee Rehabilitation'.

62 'Exodus from Dandakaranya', *Secular Democracy* 11(8) (April 1978).

63 For one account of this highly controversial event, see R.Mallick, *DevelopmentPolicy of a Communist Government: West Bengal since 1977,* Cambridge (1993): 97–103.

64 *Statesman* 14 May 1979.

65 Indian Parliament, Estimates Committee Report, 30th Report, *DandakaranyaProject: Exodus of Settlers,* New Delhi (1979): 88.

66 Parliamentary Proceedings (Lok Sabha) 14 November 1957, p. 555. For details of the Terai colonization scheme, see M.S.Randhawa, *A History of Agriculture inIndia,* vol. IV, New Delhi (1984): 51–61.

67 A.Bose, 'Migration in India: Trends and Policies', in A.S.Oberai (ed.), *StatePolicies and Internal Migration, Studies in Market and Planned Economies,* London (1983).

68 K.Gardner, *Global Migrants, Local Lives, Travel and Transformation in RuralBangladesh,* Oxford (1995). Recent research shows Bangladeshis to be highly diasporic: remittances from overseas migrants contribute greatly to the economy, not only at the household level, but also nationally. In 1981, for instance, remittances contributed 4.1 per cent of the country's GNP.

69 For an interesting discussion about ethnic stereotyping and unfair comparisons of Bengali and Punjabi refugees, see T.Zinkin, 'Focus on the Bengali Refugee', *Economic Weekly,* Annual Number, January 1957:89–90.

70 U.B.Rao, *The Story of Rehabilitation:* 141–3.

71 M.S.Randhawa, *Out of the Ashes, An Account of the Rehabilitation of Refugees fromWest Pakistan in Rural Areas of East Punjab,* Bombay (1954):111.

72 In 1981 the Government acknowledged that out of the 'official' figure of 8 million displaced persons, over 70 per cent or 5.6 million still lived below the 'poverty line'. Government of West Bengal, *Refugee Rehabilitation Committee'sReport* 50.

73 On the demographic upheaval caused by the gradual influx of population in the North-Eastern States and the resulting problem of ethnic reassertion, see M. Weiner, *Sons of the Soil, Migration and Ethnic Conflict in India,* New Delhi (1978), especially ch. 3.

74 Simon Schama has in a recent work argued that landscape is perceived through the 'mind's eye'. He observes:

> For although we are accustomed to separate nature and human perception into two realms, they are, in fact, indivisible. Before it can ever be a repose for the senses, landscape is the work of the mind. Its scenery is built up as much as from strata of memory as from layers of rock.
>
> (S.Schama, *Landscape and Memory,* New York 1995)

'Capitol landscapes'

1 Born 1886 at Amritsar; educated at Punjab University; in 1913 started the *SikhReview,* Delhi, and in 1918 the *New Herald,* Lahore; President, All India Sikh League 1920; joined Non-cooperation Movement in 1919 and sentenced to five years' transportation; Secretary and later Acting President, Punjab Provincial Congress Committee, 1931–2; resigned from Congress to join Forward Bloc in 1939; President, All India Forward Bloc, 1941–8. During partition was uprooted from Lahore and became a refugee in Delhi.

2 *Dawn,* 28 July 1947.

3 The Congress leadership told Lord Mountbatten when he pleaded Jinnah's case that the latter could convene the inaugural session of the Pakistan Assembly in the new capital of Karachi.

4 Perhaps the earliest attempt to address this theme was made by V.S. Gananathan, The Effect of the Division of India on the Distribution, Orientation, and Functions of the Major Political Centres', in his unpublished MA dissertation, June 1948, Syracuse University.

5 Although Simla was the summer capital, not only of undivided India but also of undivided Punjab, and it was there that the Government of East Punjab initially took refuge, it has been left out of this discussion. This is because its fortunes were transformed, not so much by partition, but by the passing of the Raj, with which the tradition of summer capitals has ended in South Asia.

6 For an excellent study focusing on post-colonial capital cities, see L.J.Vale, *Architecture, Power, and National Identity,* New Haven, (1992).

7 On the common colonial origins of South Asian capitals, see S.Nilsson, The *NewCapitals of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh,* Lund (1973). While Nilsson's work provides an excellent account of the architectural ideas that informed the builders of capital cities, it ignores the larger historical context in which these capital cities developed, and the political circumstances that shaped their fortunes.

8 L.J.Vale, *Architecture, Power, and National Identity.* 10–11.

9 *The Imperial Gazetteer of India 1911,* Oxford (1911) vol. 11:116

10 Ibid.: 117.

11 For an authoritative account of eighteenth and nineteenth century Dhaka, see S.U. Ahmed, *Dacca: A Study in Urban History and Development,* London (1986).

12 Ibid.:xi

13 K.Siddiqui, S.R.Qadir, S.Alamgir and S.Huq, *Social Formation in Dhaka City,* Dhaka (1990):6–8 and 18.

14 N.Ahmad, 'Urban Centres in East Pakistan', in R.L.Park (ed.), *Urban Bengal,* EastLansing(1969):121.

15 Ibid.: 118.

16 *Social Formation in Dhaka City:* 16. On the issue of rural-urban migration, see A. H. Faraizi, *Bangladesh: Peasant Migration and the World Capitalist Economy,* New Delhi (1993).

17 S.Guha, *Non Muslims Behind the Curtain of East Pakistan,* Calcutta (1950):2–11.

18 *Social Formation in Dhaka City.* 175.

19 Similarly, a survey of shops revealed that out of 1,499 Hindu shops in areas like Shambazar, Mitford Road, Farashganj, only 157 were still under Hindu control.: S. Guha. op. cit: 13.

20 Council for Protection of Rights of Minorities, *Review of Condition and Treatmentof Minorities in East Bengal,* Calcutta (1949).

21 See, for example, representations of Mrs Hena Rani Ghosh regarding her house 'Matrismriti', 38 Hathkhola Road, Dacca, in ibid.: 15–18.

22 On these issues, see S.G.Dastidar, 'Demographic Change in Bangladesh 1941–1981' in *Communal Discrimination in Bangladesh: Facts and Documents,* Dhaka: Bangladesh Hindu Buddhiststian Unity Council (1993):110–23. Also see N.C. Bhowmik, 'Exodus of Minorities from Bangladesh' in ibid.: 124–6.

23 *Social Formation in Dhaka City:* 19.

24 H.A.Zaman, 'Population Trends and Urbanization in East Pakistan', in *Problemsof Urbanization in Pakistan,* Karachi (1976).

25 Charles O. Thompson, American Consul, Calcutta, 15 July 1947/Dispatch no. 1691 'Political Developments in the Calcutta Consular District', *US StateDepartment Confidential Papers on India.* Also see Viceroy's Personal Report no. 15, dated 1 August 1947, in N.Mansergh (ed.), *Transfer of Power,* vol. 12, Item 302.

26 Ibid.

27 Ayub Khan, who was GOC in East Pakistan in January 1948, recalls in his memoirs: 'We had very poor accommodation: at Headquarters there was no table, no chair, no stationery—we had virtually nothing at all; not even any maps of East Bengal': A. Khan, *Friends Not Masters, A Political Memoir,* London (1967):23–30.

28 Dhaka has been described as a 'city of mosques': there are reckoned to be 1,650 mosques in the city.

29 S.Nilsson, *The New Capitals of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh:* 183–214.

30 *The Louis I. Kahn Archive: Personal Drawings: The Completely Illustrated Catalogue ofthe Drawings in the Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania andPennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, vol 3 National Capital ofBangladesh, Dacca,* New York (1987).

31 M.Choudhury, 'Problems of Urbanization in Dacca', in *Problems of Urbanizationin Pakistan,* op. cit.

32 *Louis I.Kahn Archive, vol. 3, National Capital of Bangladesh, Dacca:* 650.2

33 We owe details of this phase of Dhaka's growth to conversations with D.Taj Hashmi, whose kind assistance with information and references is most gratefully acknowledged.

34 For an analysis of the reasons for the refugee influx in the 1950s, see 'Refugee Situation in Eastern India', dispatch no. 86, dated 5 August 1952 by Evan M. Wilson, American Consul General, Calcutta, to the US State Department, in *USState Department Confidential Papers on India.*

35 On these issues, see Chapter Six.

36 A.Mitra, *Census of India 1951, West Bengal, Sikkim and Chandernagore,* vol. 6, Part IA Report, Calcutta (1953).

37 D.K.Roy, The Supply of Land for the Slums of Calcutta', in S.Angel, R.W. Archer, S.Tanphiphat and E.A.Wegelin (eds), *Land for Housing the Poor,* Singapore (1981):99–108. There is need to take cognizance of the different types of squatter housing which the refugees created for themselves. In this context the use of the term 'slum' is inadequate as a broad category because it does not convey the variety of refugee

housing situations. In Calcutta poor refugee housing could be divided into three types: 'legal' refugee colonies for which the title of land on which squatting occurred was given to the occupants ; 'extralegal' refugee colonies for which the title could not be given for various reasons but whose existence is recognized by the government as it provides water and electricity facilities; and finally squatter settlements which came up through encroachment on public or private land by refugee groups and whose existence is not recognized by the authorities.

38 P.K.Chakrabarti, *The Marginal Men, The Refugees and the Left Political Syndrome inWest Bengal* Calcutta (1990).

39 *Statesman,* Calcutta, 3 April 1950.

40 *Statesman,* Calcutta, 3 April 1950.

41 *Statesman,* Calcutta, 18 May 1950.

42 *Statesman,* Calcutta, 18 May 1950.

43 R.Bandhopadhyay, The Inheritors: Slum and Pavement Life in Calcutta', in *Statesman,* Calcutta, 18 May 1950.

44 For a study of the lives and problems of squatter residents, see A.Sen, *Life andLabour in a Squatters' Colony:* CSSS Occasional Paper no. 138: Calcutta (1992).

45 For a discussion of this aspect, see C.N.Vakil, *Economic Consequences of DividedIndia,:* 142–57.

46 C.A.Bayly, 'Inland Port Cities in North India: Calcutta and the Gangetic Plains, 1780–1900', in D.K.Basu (ed.), *The Rise and Growth of the Colonial Port Cities inAsia,* Lanham (1985). Bayly argues that as a port city Calcutta did not emerge in a vacuum, but was linked in intricate relationships with bulking centres and 'inland port cities' across the north Indian plains.

47 A.K.Dutt 'Delineation of the Hinterland of Calcutta Port', *ProfessionalGeographer23(l)* (January 1971):22–7. Dutt shows through an analysis of freight data that Calcutta port's hinterland extended in the 1960s to 800 miles towards Uttar Pradesh in the north-west, about 640 miles towards southern states like Orrisa and Andhra Pradesh. and about 400 miles towards Nepal and the northeastern Indian states.

48 On these issues, see A.H.Kidwai, 'Port Cities in a National System of Ports and Cities: A Geographical Analysis of India in the Twentieth Century', in F.Broeze (ed.), *Brides of the Sea: Port Cities of Asia from the 16–20th Centuries,* Honolulu (1989):207–22. Kidwai shows a sharp decline in the volume of cargo handled at the Calcutta port: her study reveals that in the decade 1941–51 Calcutta port handled 94.4 per cent of cargo in the eastern Indian sector, which came down sharply to 51.4 per cent in the decade 1961–70. Besides partition, a major contributory factor has been the silting of the approaches to the Calcutta port.

49 A.Schimmel, 'Poetic Visions of Lahore', in S.Quraeshi, *Lahore, The City Within,* Singapore (1988):19–48.

50 *Memorandum Submitted to the Punjab Boundary Commission by the Indian NationalCongress,* Lahore (1947) paras 5 and 6.

51 *The Sikh Memorandum to the Punjab Boundary Commission,* dated 18 July 1947, in K. Singh (ed.), *Select Documents on Partition of Punjab 1947,* Delhi (1991):226–63.

52 Ibid.

53 Out of the twenty-two banks headquartered at Lahore, just seven were owned by Muslims, who controlled only two insurance agencies out of the eighty which functioned in the city.

54 In his survey of social groups in pre-partition Lahore, Ravinder Kumar observes that 'a striking feature of Lahore' was that very few Muslims 'were engaged in business, or in the civil service and the liberal professions': see 'The Rowlatt Satyagraha in Lahore' in his *Essays in the Social History of Modern India,* Delhi (1983):171.

55 C.M.Ali, *The Emergence of Pakistan:* 210.

56 For details of this argument see O.H.K.Spate, *On the Margins of History.*

57 For a vivid account, see J.Nanda, *Punjab Uprooted:* 16–56.

58 For several first-hand accounts by victims and concerned citizens, see the extensive evidence available in *S.P.Mookherjee* and *Hindu Mahasabha Papers,* e. g. Statement by Rai Sahib Laxmi Narain dated 24 March 1947 before Station Officer Rang Mahal thana, *S.P.Mookherjee Papers,* Subject File no. 95 (Instalment II to IV), NMML.

59 *The Civil and Military Gazette,* 17 February 1950, cited in M.Baqir, *Lahore, Pastand Present,* Delhi (1952, rep. 1985):238.

60 O.H.K.Spate, *On the Margins of History:* 53.

61 A.N.Bali, *Now It Can Be Told,* Jullundur (1949). 36–9.

62 Oskar Spate, who participated in the Boundary Commission proceedings, recalls: 'The atmosphere was that of a spy thriller, full of agreeably mysterious eavesdroppings, awkward unpremeditated confrontations, and highly suspicious would-be-secret meetings. Bugging devices were not available, but had they been there would have been a brisk demand': *On the Margins of History*. 57.

63 With the announcement of Partition almost all the non-Muslim factory owners began to migrate deserting their industrial concerns with the result that the majority of the abandoned concerns were either damaged, looted or destroyed. Technical personnel which were mostly non-Muslim also left immediately. Transport system collapsed due to the influx of refugees. Capital fled with the exodus of non-Muslims who were the backbone of the old credit structure. Most of the banking and credit services were suspended. Markets for the disposal of finished goods vanished. Some of the raw materials were found to be heaped up on this side of the border, while most of the important factories making use of these materials chanced to fall on the other side. Muslim workers…crossed over to West Punjab only to add to the existing large volume of unemployed labour.

(A.A.Anwar, *Effects of Partition on Industries in the Border Districts of Lahoreand Sialkot,* Lahore (1953):2)

64 Ibid.

65 The Single Unit came into effect from 14 October 1955 and Lahore became the capital of the entire West Pakistan: M.Baqir, *Lahore, Past and Present,* Delhi (1952, rep. 1985):259.

66 Ibid.: 446–55.

67 *Imperial Gazetteer 1911,vol.* 15:11–19.

68 On Karachi's growth as a commercial centre, see H.Feldman, *Karachi Througha Hundred Years: The Centenary History of the Karachi Chamber of Commerce andIndustry, 1860–1960,* Karachi (1960).

69 A.Tayyeb, *Pakistan, A Political Geography*. 178.

70 Mohammad Akram Khan, Editor, *Daily Shams,* Multan, to M.A.Jinnah, 7 June 1947, *Quaid-I-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah Papers,* vol. 1, no. 1, Islamabad: National Archives: 1994, Item 42, pp. 97–100.

71 For instance, see Badr-ud-din, 2201 Buzurg Shah Street, Lahore, to M.A. Jinnah, 27 June 1947, arguing that 'Karachi will be far distant from Bengal' and that

'Government will have to spend little for erection of buildings both for the Civil and the Military' if Lahore were chosen. *Jinnah Papers,* Item 279, ibid.

72 Mrs K.L.Rallia Ram, a prominent resident of Lahore, a leader of the Anglo-Indian community and a confidant of Jinnah, commended him on the selection of Karachi:

> The shifting of Pakistan capital to Karachi is a wise step. Lahore will become the battleground of future quarrels and conflicts, being a border town. The Sikhs will be perpetually used as tools to keep continually fighting with the Muslims. What is happening in Lahore today is just the beginning of a perpetual internecine warfare created deliberately. It is a sad beginning of a historical and great event.
>
> (Mrs K.L.Rallia Ram to M.A.Jinnah, 25 June 1947, Item 257, ibid.)

73 Liaquat Ali Khan to Mountbatten, 17 June 1947, *TP,* vol. 11, Item 231.

74 Ismay to Auchinleck, 17 June 1947, ibid., vol. 11, Annexure 1 to Item 158.

75 Liaquat Ali Khan, 'Note on Establishment of the Headquarters of the Pakistan Government at Karachi', circulated by H.M.Patel, Cabinet Secretary, on 25 June 1947 in Item no. 256, ibid.

76 *Pakistan Times,* 13 June 1947, *in Jinnah Papers,* Item IV.3 and *Morning News,* 14 June 1947, Item IV.4.

77 Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah to M.A.Jinnah, 19 June 1947, Item 158, *Transferof Power,* vol. 12. He promised Jinnah that 'you will be able to get your house here by the 1st of July' and deputed Aga Shahi, ICS, to Delhi to find out the requirements in connection with the new capital. *Morning News,* 15 June 1947, *Jinnah Papers,* Item IV.6: 'The Sind Premier has set himself to the task of finding accommodation for Pakistan Government Secretariat and also accommodation for the Pakistan Constituent Assembly.'

78 A.Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule.* 29–30.

79 Ibid.:29.

80 A 566 sq. mile area around and including Karachi was taken out of Sindh and designated as the Federal Capital Territory under the direction of an administrator appointed by the Federal Government. See H.M.Kagi, 'Administrative Responses to Urban Growth: Karachi, Pakistan', unpublished dissertation, Syracuse University, 1964.

81 Ibid.

82 Most top East Bengal politicians maintained houses in Karachi. These included Hasan Suhrawardy (see Begum S.S.Ikramullah, *From Purdah to Parliament,* London (1963)) and others like Maulvi Tamizuddin Khan (1889–1963) East Bengal lawyer and politician, president of the Pakistan Constituent Assembly 1948–54 and later Speaker of the National Assembly in 1962 (see his T.Khan, *The Test of Time, My Life and Days,* Dhaka (1989)).

83 Some of the plans to ease urban congestion are discussed in V.Z.Newcombe, 'A Town Extension Scheme at Karachi', *Town Planning Review* 31 (Oct. 1960–61):219–29.

84 R.Murphy, 'New Capitals of Asia', *Economic Development and Cultural Change,* 5 (1956–7): 224.

85 The eight-person commission was charged with the task of reporting on the location of a national capital by considering 'the suitability of Karachi from the point of view of geographical location, communication, defense, climate and availability of a productive hinterland'. If Karachi was to be found unsuitable, the Commission was to recommend another site. It recommended the building of another city 'so that it could grow freely and unhampered by its previous defects'. The Commission claimed that the site chosen 'answered almost all the questions pertaining to landscape, communication, defence, availability of building material and last, but not the least, aesthetics and pure scenic beauty'. Inter-Services' Public Relations Directorate, General Headquarters, *Islamabad,* Rawalpindi (n.d): 1–8.

86 Ibid.:96.

87 Sir Morrice James, *Pakistan Chronicle,* London (1992):58–9.

88 A.Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule,* ch. 4.

89 T.P.Wright, 'Indian Muslim Refugees in the Politics of Pakistan', *Journal ofCommonwealth and Comparative Politics* 12(2) (1974):189–205.

90 J.Rehman, 'Self-Dermination, State-Building and the Muhajirs', *ContemporarySouth Asia* 3(2) (1994).

91 The researches of Clive Dewey, Imran Ali, Ayesha Jalal and Tai Yong Tan have presented ample evidence of this.

92 The qualification must be made that not all of this growth was due to refugeeinflux, and in-migration from other areas of Pakistan also contributed. However, partition-related developments such as the coming of the Capitol function and the influx of refugees certainly invoked the 'law of the primate city' as far as Karachi was concerned, and over the decades it became several times bigger than the second or the third largest cities within Pakistan. Economic activity came to be centred here and it became the financial and business capital of Pakistan. It is reckoned that at present the city generates 60 per cent of the country's total revenue and 90 per cent of the provincial revenue of Sindh.

93 The term 'Muhajir' goes back to the life of Prophet Muhammad and was originally used for those followers of the Prophet who migrated from Mecca to Medina to avoid religious persecution. In the context of partition, the term was used to describe all refugees who had come to Pakistan to protect their religion and to safeguard their interests as Muslims. It was invoked to emphasize the religious solidarity between refugees *(muhajirs)* and the locals *(ansars)* and in recognition of the sacrifices made by the migrants for the cause of Pakistan. However, in the late 1950s and 1960s the term came to acquire a narrow meaning to signify Urdu-speaking refugees in Karachi and Hyderabad. It was now used to demarcate and sharpen boundaries between the local Sindhis and the refugees. In the 1980s, the Muhajirs consciously articulated their new identity to denote urbanized Urdu-speaking groups who regard migration from India as proof of their patriotism and demand to be recognized as a separate 'ethnic' group which constitutes the 'fifth nationality' of Pakistan as they share a distinct common language, history and economic interests.

On these issues, see S.Ansari, 'Partition, Migration and Refugees: Responses to the Arrival of Muhajirs in Sind During 1947–8', *South Asia* 17, Special Issue: 95–108, and her 'The Movement of Indian Muslims to West Pakistan After 1947: Partition-Related Migration and its Consequences for the Pakistani Province of Sind', in J.Brown and R.Foot (eds), *Migration: The AsianExperience,* New York (1994):149–68.

94 T.P.Wright, 'Indian Muslim Refugees in the Politics of Pakistan', *Journal ofCommonwealth and Comparative Politics* 12(2) (1974):189–205.

95 For an excellent account of life in Karachi in the 1990s, see O.Verkaaik, A *Peopleof Migrants, Ethnicity, State and Religion in Karachi,* Amsterdam (1994).

96 It is estimated that in 1994 the number of deaths alone was 1,800 while in 1995 it stood at 2,000.

97 For instance, see *Asiaweek,* 10 February 1995, 'City at War: How Violence is Destroying Karachi', cover story, pp. 30–5, and *India Today,* 15 July 1995, 'City of Death' cover story, pp. 35–47.

98 A Capital Development Authority (CDA) was constituted in 1960. The groundbreaking ceremony took place in October 1961 and by 1963 the first batch of government offices started moving to the city which had been completed in a record time of about four years.

99 Inter-Services' Public Relations Directorate, General Headquarters, *Islamabad,* Rawalpindi (n.d.): 2–3.

100 Piloo Moody, a childhood friend of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (then a Minster in the Ayub government), recalls that he urged Ayub Khan during a visit to Rawalpindi to give the new city 'an inspiring name so that it could fire the imagination of the people'. He claims that within two days the Ayub Government had named the capital 'Islamabad': see P.Moody, *Zulfi My Friend,* New Delhi (1973):80–3.

101 Ayub claimed that the new site had rich historic associations:

> The place has a rich history. It was one of man's earliest homes, dating back four hundred thousand years, as shown by the Stone Age relics of Sohan Culture found in the postwar plateau by Sir Mortimer Wheeler. The first thing I did was to order the building of the Rawal Dam, to recreate the conditions that existed for Taxila some two and a half thousand years ago. We thus went back to Taxila which was a notable seat of civilization and learning, long before the dawn of the Christian era. It was the cradle of Gandhara art.
>
> (A.Khan, *Friends Not Masters:* 96)

102 J. Pott, 'Impressions of Islamabad', *Housing Review* 13(3) (May-June 1964): 49–52.

103 Doxiadis Associates, 'Islamabad, The New Capital of Pakistan', *Ekistics, Review onthe Problems and Science of Human Settlements* (1964):331–4.

104 C.A.Doxiadis, 'Islamabad, The Creation of a New Capital', *Town PlanningReview* 36 (April 1965–6).

105 S.Nilsson, *The New Capitals.*

106 Ibid.

107 'Islamabad, a progress report on Pakistan's new capital city', *Architectural Review* 141 (841) (March 1967):211.

108 The making of Chandigarh is well documented in two architectural histories by Norma Evenson and Ravi Kalia, and the discussion here draws upon both these two works. See N.Evenson, *Chandigarh,* Berkeley (1966) and R.Kalia, *Chandigarh, The Making of an Indian City,* Delhi (1987).

109 The evidence in the private papers of several Punjabi political leaders such as Gopi Chandra Bhargava and Bhim Sen Sachchar available at the NMML suggests that they preferred one of the existing cities to become the capital, and lobbied to safeguard the interest of their constituencies. They were, however, overruled by Nehru.

110 On these arguments and counter-arguments, see *Tribune,* 2 September 1948.

111 N.Evenson, *Chandigarh:* 6.

112 For details see R.Kalia who takes the view that 'Chandigarh was designed to fulfil deep-rooted psychological needs and meet pressing political exigencies facing India'. Madhu Sarin take a similar stance in 'Case Study: Chandigarh, India', in M.Sarin (ed.), *Policies Towards Urban Slums, Slums and SquatterSettlements in the ESCAP Region,* New York (1980).

113 See *Tribune,* 30 January 1949 and 8 July 1949 for detailed reports on the progress of the Chandigarh project.

114 Mayer, a product of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was the founder of the large New York architectural firm of Mayer, Whittlesey and Glass, and had been associated with influential American architects and thinkers such as Lewis Mumford and Clarence Stein. He had come to India during the Second World War as a lieutenant colonel of the US Army, and had helped in building airfields in Bengal and Burma. He stayed on in India and became involved with several American voluntary schemes, including a rural development project at Etawah in Uttar Pradesh, an account of which he provides in his *Pilot Project, India: TheStory of Rural Development at Etawah, Uttar Pradesh,* Berkeley (1958). His close association with Indian political leaders like Nehru and Govind Ballabh Pant, the chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, is revealed by his correspondence available in the *Albert Mayer Papers,* NMML.

115 For the text of Nehru's speech, see *Hindustan Times,* 8 July 1950, cited in R. Kalia, *Chandigarh:* 21.

116 C.Correa, 'Chandigarh: The View from Benares', *Architecture and Design* 3(6) (September-October 1987):73–5.

117 Correa continues:

> Compare this with the decisions that the Emperor Akbar might have reached atop the pillar in the centre of his Diwan-e-Am (also in Fatehpur Sikri) a small masterpiece, exquisitely scaled to human dimensions. I am not saying that the justice of Akbar was preferable, only that it, like the code of Manu and the wisdom of Solomon, sprang from a completely different set of instincts and mode of understanding, and that architecture unconsciously and at a deep level, reflects these differences.
>
> (Ibid.)

118 Like Islamabad, Chandigarh also developed essentially to be a city of the government: in 1971 government employees constituted over 60 per cent of the city's adult working population. Its housing reflected official hierarchies, with at least thirteen different types of houses according to the status of the inhabitants. Another major criticism has centred around the issue that, although Chandigarh was meant to be a national symbol of independent India, there is little Indian about it. Kalia remarks:

> Chandigarh was meant to be something beyond a new state capital. But it lacks culture. It lacks the excitement of Indian streets. It lacks bustling, colorful bazaars. It lacks the noise and din of Lahore. It lacks the intimacy of Delhi. It is a stay-at-home city. It is not Indian. It is the anticity.
>
> (R.Kalia, *Chandigarh:* 152)

119 On the ideas and influences on Le Corbusier, see W.J.R.Curtis, *Le Corbusier:Ideas and Forms,* Oxford (1986) and R.Walden (ed.), *The Open Hand: Essays onLe Carbusier,* Cambridge, Mass. (1977).

120 He further observes: 'There are two cultures in Chandigarh—the culture of buildings and monuments and the cultures of the people. The two cultures are different in content, and the monuments and buildings do not represent the people': R.Kalia, *Chandigarh:* 152.

121 S.Khilnani, *The Idea of India:* 130.

122 Ibid.: 133.

123 L.Vale, *Architecture, Power and National Identity.* 109.

124 For an interesting profile of Delhi at the time of independence, see V. Wentzel, 'Delhi, Capital of a New Dominion', *National Geographic* (November 1947).

125 R.E.Frykenberg, 'Introduction', in his edited volume *Delhi Through the Ages,Essays in Urban History, Culture and Society,* Delhi (1986):xii.

126 R.Murphy, 'New Capitals of Asia': 229.

127 On these issues, see N. Gupta, 'The Indomitable City', in E.Ehlers and T.Krafft (eds), *Shahjahanabad/Old Delhi: Tradition and Colonial Change,* Stuttgart (1993): 27–42. For a counter-argument, see P.Spear, 'Delhi—The 'Stop-Go' Capital, A Summation', in Frykenberg (ed.), *Delhi Through the Ages.* Spear argues that 'there is nothing mystical about Delhi as the capital city of India' and 'Delhi had no special endowment as a religious, economic or industrial centre, but depended for fame and growth on political factors'.

128 On Delhi's historic antecedents several works exist, but particularly useful is T.G. P. Spear, N.Gupta and L.Sykes, *Delhi: Its Monuments and History,* Delhi (1993).

129 Lord Hardinge to the Secretary of State for India, 25 August 1911, cited inH. K.Kaul (ed.), *Historic Delhi, An Anthology,* Delhi (1985):xxix.

130 *Pioneer,* Lucknow, 9 August 1947.

131 For this story, see P.Reeves, 'Lucknow Politics: 1920–47', in V.Graff (ed.), *Lucknow, Memories of a City,* Delhi (1997):213–26.

132 *Amrita Bazar Patrika,* Calcutta, 22 June 1947.

133 *Statesman,* Calcutta, 19 June 1947.

134 *Pioneer,* Lucknow, 25 June 1947.

135 Perhaps they had in mind Pandit Motilal Nehru and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, who both had produced unofficial constitutional drafts in the 1930s and 1940s. The Allahabad lobby succeeded in ensuring that the Uttar Pradesh High Court, which had long existed there, was not moved to Lucknow, the provincial capital.

136 W.H.Morris-Jones 'Changing Delhi Through Changing Eyes', in Frykenberg (ed.), *Delhi Through The Ages:* 441.

137 E.Ehlers and T.Krafft, 'Islamic Cities in India ?—Theoretical Concepts and the Case of Shahjahanabad/Old Delhi', in *Shahjahanabad/Old Delhi: Tradition andColonial Change.*

138 S.P.Blake, 'Cityscape of an Imperial Capital: Shahjahanabad in 1739', in Frykenberg (ed.), *Delhi Through The Ages:* 152–91.

139 For details see, the authoritative study by Stephen P.Blake, *Shahjahanabad: TheSovereign City in Mughal India, 1639–1739,* Cambridge (1991).

140 For details see C.W.Troll (ed.), *Muslim Shrines in India: Their Character, History,and Significance,* Delhi (1989).

141 J.Malik, 'Islamic Institutions and Infrastructure in Shahjahanabad', in *Shahjahanabad/ Old Delhi: Tradition and Colonial Change.* 43–63.

142 J.F.Richards, *The Mughal Empire,* Cambridge (1993): 125–7. Also see S.N. Hasan, 'The Morphology of a Medieval Indian City: A Case Study of Shahjahanabad', in I. Banga (ed.), *The City in Indian History,* Delhi (1991).

143 E.Ehlers and T.Krafft, 'Islamic Cities in India ?—Theoretical Concepts and the Case of Shahjahanabad/Old Delhi', in *Shahjahanabad/Old Delhi: Tradition andColonial Change.*

144 'Weekly Diary of Incidents', 9 September 1947, Special Branch, Delhi Police Records, Manuscript Collection, NMML, New Delhi.

145 Well-known Pakistani historian; Member of the Constituent Assembly; Minister in Pakistan Government, 1949–54.

146 I.H.Qureshi, 'Hindu-Muslim Social Relations, 1935–47, From Miraj to Momes', cited in Mushirul Hasan (ed.), *India Partitioned: The Other Face ofFreedom,* vol. 2, pp. 181–92.

147 W.H.Morris-Jones, 'Changing Delhi Through Changing Eyes', in Frykenberg (ed.), *Delhi Through The Ages:* 438

148 For a narrative of these events, see D.G.Tendulkar, *Mahatma: Life of MohandasKaramchand Gandhi, vol 8, 1947–48,* Bombay (1954).

149 M.K.Gandhi, *Delhi Diary, Prayer Speeches from 10–9–47 to 30–1–48,* Ahmedabad (1948).

150 This figure is provided by Dipankar Gupta, 'The Indian Diaspora of 1947: The Political and Ethnic Consequences of the Partition with Special Reference to Delhi', in K.N.Panikkar (ed.), *Communalism in India: History, Politics and Culture,* New Delhi (1991):80–108.

151 Interview with Mrs Subhadra Joshi, Delhi, May 1993. Mrs Joshi was a prominent Congress activist who carried out relief work among Muslim refugees for several months at the time of partition. She was President of the Delhi Congress in the late 1950s and a Member of Parliament for several terms representing the primarily Muslim Walled City constituency.

152 For a graphic account, see Begum A.Kidwai, *Azadi Ki Chhaon Main,* Delhi (1990) (Hindi translation from Urdu by Noor Nabi Abbasi).

153 *National Geographic,* May 1997:36.

154 V.N.Datta, 'Panjabi Refugees and the Urban Development of Greater Delhi', in Frykenberg (ed.), *Delhi Through The Ages:* 442–460. V.K.R.V.Rao and P.B. Desai have considered in some detail the impact of refugee influx in *GreaterDelhi, A Study in Urbanization 1940–57,* Bombay (1965).

155 Cited in D.Gupta, The Indian Diaspora of 1947', in Panikkar (ed.), *Communalism in India:* 81.

156 V.N.Datta, 'Panjabi Refugees and the Urban Development of Greater Delhi', in Frykenberg (ed.), *Delhi Through The Ages:* 442–60.

157 Not surprisingly, the refugees have also, over the years, provided a solid block of electoral support to the Hindu fundamentalist Jana Sangh (the precursor to the present Bharatiya Janata Party or the BJP). Although successfully rehabilitated under official patronage in refugee colonies named after eminent Congress leaders (e.g., Rajendra Nagar, Patel Nagar, Lajpat Nagar and Malaviya Nagar), the refugees have given their political allegiance to the right-wing communal forces. This is reflected in their voting behaviour; in the first four parliamentary elections, for instance, the percentage of votes polled by Hindu right-wing candidates has ranged from 25 to 46 per cent. The refugee colonies have become the bastion of the BJP and have consistently propelled the party into power during municipal and assembly elections. On these issues, see D. Gupta, The Indian Diaspora of 1947', in Panikkar (ed.), *Communalism in India:* 80–108.

158 Some of this sense of loss is powerfully captured in Ahmed Ali's novel, *Twilightin Delhi,* Delhi (1991).

159 See V.Cornish, *The Great Capitals in Historical Geography,* London (1923). Lawrence Vale has proposed a modification to this traditional twofold classification and has instead suggested that a threefold classification of 'Evolved Capitals', 'Evolved Capitals Renewed' and 'Designed Capitals'.

160 O.H.K.Spate, 'Factors in the Development of Capital Cities', *GeographicalReuiew32 (4)* (1942):622–31.

161 G.Hamdan, 'Capitals of New Africa', *Economic Geography* 40 (1964):418–39. For a discussion of how the continuing rivalry between Cape Town, the seat of Parliament and Pretoria, the administrative hub, has divided the Government in South Africa, see P.Hawthorne, 'A Tale of Two Capitals', *Time,* 9 March 1998.

162 On the 'dual' character of Indian cities, see O.H.K.Spate and E.Ahmad, 'Five Cities of the Gangetic Plain, A Cross Section of Indian Cultural History', *Geographical Review* 40 (1950). Also see A.K.Dutt, 'Cities of South Asia', in S.D. Brunn and J.F.Williams (eds), *Cities of the World,* New York (1993):351–87.

163 For vivid accounts of these, see J.Seabrook, *In the Cities of the South: Scenes from aDeveloping World,* London (1996).

164 The names of Lal Krishna Advani, Madan Lal Khurana, Kidar Nath Sahni and Ram Jethmalani come readily to mind in this context.

165 L.Vale, *Architecture, Power, and National Identity:* 293.

166 This theme is explored in some detail in a forthcoming essay, G.Kudaisya, '"The Music of Muscles": Urban Rehabilitation and the Making of Refugee Towns in North India, 1947–71'.

8
Punjab and the making of Pakistan

1 On these issues, see O.Noman, *Political and Economic History of Pakistan since1947,* Oxford (1989); H.Gardezi and J.Rashid (eds), *Pakistan: The Roots ofDictatorship. The Political Economy of a Praetorian State,* Delhi (1983), T.Ali, *CanPakistan Survive? The Death of a State,* London (1983) and A.Jalal, *The State ofMartial Rule.*

2 V.Kukreja, *Civil—Military Relations in South Asia. Pakistan, Bangladesh and India,* New Delhi (1991):41.

3 K.Bin Sayeed, The Role of the Military in Pakistan', in J.Van Doorn (ed.), *Armed Forces and Society: Sociological Essays,* The Hague (1968):289.
4 See S.Cohen, *The Pakistan Army,* Berkeley (1984).
5 R.A. Moore, *Nation-Building and the Pakistan Army, 1947–1969,* Lahore (1979): 332.
6 In 1950, major floods destroyed crops and disrupted communication lines in the Punjab as the Ravi and Chenab rivers burst their banks. The North West Frontier Province, Sind and Quetta were badly affected by locust invasions in the early 1950s. In the first few years of Pakistan's existence, the country faced a series of natural calamities. East Pakistan was hit by a series of floods and cyclones, with heavy damages to life and property. In all these disasters, which were taxing the limited resources of a government already heavily burdened with the tasks of rehabilitating an endless flow of refugees, the army played a major role in organising and carrying out relief work. V.Kukreja, *Civil-MilitaryRelations in South Asia:* 46–59; H-A.Rizvi, *The Military and Politics in Pakistan,1947–86,* Lahore (1986):56–62.
7 The riots were started by agitators who demanded that Ahmadiyas, a sect of Muslims which did not believe that the Prophet Muhammud was the one and final prophet of the Islamic faith, be declared as minorities, and that followers of the sect who held office be dismissed. The riots quickly got out of control and violence and looting erupted on a serious scale, especially in Lahore. On 6 March, 1953, the army was called in and martial law imposed in Lahore. Within a few days, the army brought the situation back to normal. On 14 May 1953, martial law was withdrawn and Lahore was handed back to the civil administration.
8 Kukreja, *Civil-Military Relations;*. 48–49; H-A.Rizvi, *The Military and Politics inPakistan:* 56.
9 S.Shafqat, *Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan—From Zulfikar Ali Bhutto to BenazirBhutto,* Lahore (1997):4.
10 I.Malik, *State and Civil Society in Pakistan: Politic of Authority, Ideology and Ethnicity,* NewYork(1997):64.
11 Ibid.:55
12 This argument is most convincingly developed in Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule.*
13 Annual caste returns compiled by Army Headquarters in India indicate that by 1900, Punjabis accounted for over 50 per cent of all native soldiers recruited from India. See 'Annual Caste Returns of the Native Army 1800–1910', India Office Library and Records, IOLR: L/MIL/14/221–6.
14 H.D.Craik, *Punjab District Gazetteer, PDG, Amritsar, 1914,* Lahore (1914) XXA: 162.
15 Lt. Col. J.M.Wikeley, *Punjabi Mussalmans,* Calcutta (1915):125.
16 See *Annual Caste Returns* (1900).
17 For a full story of the use of the canal colonies in the Punjab for military purposes, see I.Ali, *The Punjab Under Imperialism,* 1885–1947, Delhi (1989).
18 Ibid.: 110–20.
19 Ibid.:115.
20 See L.Griffin *et al., Chiefs and Famities of Note in the Punjab,* Lahore (1910) vol. 2:179.
21 A.J.Major, 'The Punjabi Chieftains and the Transition from Sikh to British Rule', in D.A.Low (ed.), *The Political Inheritance of Pakistan,* London (1991): 76–7.
22 This was largely achieved at the bidding of Sir Michael O'Dwyer, Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab from 1912 to 1919. See M.O'Dwyer, *India as I Knew It. 1885–1925,* London (1925).

23 'Notes on Recruiting Methods Employed in the Punjab', in Government of India, Home/Political, February 1920, no. 373, National Archives of India.

24 A notable example was Umar Hayat Khan Tiwana, a prominent landlord from the Shahpur district of Western Punjab. At the outbreak of war, Tiwana volunteered for active service and was sent with the first Indian contingent to France. After serving there for fifteen months, he was posted to Mesopotamia on special duties connected with propaganda amongst Muslim troops. Tiwana was later promoted to the honorary rank of Major, and served as an honorary recruiting officer in his home district of Shahpur. From his own estate at Kalra, he managed to get more than 200 men enlisted during the war. For details of the family history of the Tiwanas, see Griffin *et al., Chiefs and Families of Note inthe Punjab,* vol. 2:168–93.

25 See T.Y.Tan, 'Maintaining the Military Districts: Civil-Military Integration and District Soldiers' Boards in the Punjab, 1919–39', *Modern Asian Studies* 28(4) (1994):833–74.

26 Ibid.:859.

27 Ibid.:874.

28 See Memorandum by Michael O'Dwyer on Constitutional Reforms, 10 January 1918, in *Annexure to Enclosure 22 of letter from Government of India,5March 1919and Enclosures of the Question Raised in the Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms* in Parliamentary Papers, hereafter PP, 1919, vol. 37:285. See also O'Dwyer's autobiography, *India As I Knew It...*

29 P.Robb, *Government of India and Political Reforms, Oxford* (1976):12–13

30 M.Nehru, *The Voice of Freedom: Selected Speeches of Motilal Nehru,* Bombay (1961): 22.

31 D.Page, *Prelude to Partition: The Indian Muslims and the Imperial System of Control,1920–1932,* Delhi (1982):47.

32 For details see *Proposals of the Punjab Government,* PP, Cmd 141, vol. 16:668–9.

33 'Note of discussion with the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab', 7 December 1918, in PP 1919, Cmd 141, vol. 16:677.

34 Address presented by the Punjab Muslim Association to the Viceroy and Secretary of State, 1918, Cmd 9178, vol. 18:478–9.

35 Memorandum on Indian Constitutional Reforms by Major Sir Umar Hayat Khan Tiwana of Shahpur District, Punjab, July 1918. IOL and R:L/P and J/9/9.

36 Memorandum by the Punjab Zamindar Association, and accompanying note by W. S.Warris, 20 November 1917, in Montagu Collection. IOL and R: MSS.EUR. D.523/35.

37 Ibid.

38 The Military Service Qualification for Franchise', in Report of the Indian Franchise Committee, Lothian, 1932, in PP, Cmd 4086, vol. 8:641.

39 Report of Indian Franchise Committee, 1932, Cmd 4086.

40 Roughly in Rohtak, the district proportion would be 12,000 of 18,000, 60 per cent; in Jhelum, Rawalpindi and Attock, almost 100 per cent; in Shahpur, 9,000 of 17,000, 53 per cent; Amritsar, 9,000 out of 18,000, 50 per cent. For detailed figures, see M. S.Leigh, *Punjab and the War,* Lahore (1922):59–60; *PunjabElectoral Statistics and Maps, 1920,* Lahore (1921).

41 The electoral statistics of 1920 did not provide a separate count of the ex-soldiers vote in the districts. However, it can be assumed that the bulk of Punjab's ex-soldiers who would have been qualified for the vote under the property or title qualifications.

The numbers who actually qualified under the military vote would thus be a small one. *Punjab Electoral Statistics* (1920).

42 Note by F.L.Brayne, Deputy Commissioner, Gurgaon District, 1920 to 1927, Financial Commissioner and Secretary to Revenue Department, Punjab Government, 1939–40 (n.d.), in Brayne Collections. IOL and R:MSS. EUR.F152/69.

43 The Unionist Party was, therefore, more a caucus of landowing rural-military elites in the Legislative Council than a formal political party with a creed, organizational grassroots support or an effective local hierarchy. It did not contest elections as a political party.

44 The territorial constituencies were divided communally, based on the Communal Award of 1932. The Muslims had eighty-four seats, nine urban and seventy-five rural, the Hindus, under the General Constituencies, had forty-two seats, eight urban, thirty-four rural, and the Sikhs were given thirty-one seats, two urban, twenty-nine rural, In addition, five additional seats were created specially to represent landlord interests. See K.C.Yadav, *Elections in the Punjab,1920–27,* New Delhi (1987):17.

45 Property and status qualifications of voters in the Punjab from 1937 included persons having passed primary and any other higher examinations; literate women, widows or mothers of soldiers who had died during the War, wives of voters, owners/assignee/lessee/tenant of land/Crown land with land revenue assessed at Rs 25 per annum; title holders, retired military personnel and government officials. For the urban vote, the qualifications were similar to the above except that in the place of land revenue and ownership of land, the voter had to be paying an annual income tax of sixty rupees per annum or be in possession of immovable properties worth at least 4,000 rupees. Yadav, *Elections:* 18.

46 See Report of Indian Franchise Committee, Lothian, 1931–2, in PP. Cmd 4086 (1931–32), vol. 8:505–6.

47 Ibid.

48 The Military Service Qualification for Franchise' in Report of the Indian Franchise Committee, 1932, in PP, Cmd. 4086, vol. 8.

49 Craik to Linlithgow, 13 September. *Linlithgow Papers.* IOL and R:MSS.EUR.F.125/88.

50 Ibid.

51 Craik to Linlithgow, 20 June 1940, L/P and J/5/243, IOR.

52 Governor's Reports and Chief Secretary's Fortnightly Reports on the situation in the Punjab, 15 May 1945, in Political Department, L/P and J/5/248.

53 I.Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj, 1849–1947,* New Delhi (1988):143.

54 Fortnightly Reports on the Political Situation in the Punjab, various dates (1945).

55 I.Ali, 'The Punjab and the Retardation of Nationalism', in D.A.Low (ed.), *ThePolitical Inheritance of Pakistan,* London (1991):47.

56 The only Muslim majority district that was not awarded in its entirety to Pakistan was Gurdaspur district. For details. see Chapter Three on boundary-making.

57 Throughout the post-independence period, more than two-thirds of all servicemen were drawn from three districts in the Punjab—Rawalpindi, Jhelum and Attock, and two adjacent districts in the North-West Frontier Province Kohat and Mardan. As Stephen Cohen explains, 'the history of the Pakistan army was the history of the Punjabi Muslim and the Pathans'. S.Cohen, *ThePakistan Army.* 44.

58 A.Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule.* 79.

59 For a useful analysis of the attempts at land reforms in Pakistan, see A.Hussain, 'Pakistan: Land Reforms Considered', in H.Alavi and J.Harriss (eds), *Sociologyof Developing Societies of South Asia,* London (1989):61.
60 Cohen, *The Pakistan Army*. 45.
61 R.D.Campbell, *Pakistan: Emerging Democracy,* Princeton (1963):33.

9
Contemporary South Asia and the legacies of partition

1 *Daun,* 15 August 1998.
2 S.Kaul, 'Pokhran and the Phobia of Partition', *Times of India,* 28 August 1998.
3 A.Nandy, 'The Epidemic of Nuclearism: A Clinical Profile of the Genocidal Mentality', http.//www. mnet.fr/aiindex/nandy2.html
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