

Minoritization of Pakistani Hindus (1947-1971)

by

Sadia Mahmood

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Approved September 2014 by the
Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Anne Feldhaus, Chair
Richard Eaton
Alexander Henn

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

December 2014

ABSTRACT

This dissertation discusses the processes of post-colonial minoritization of Hindus in Pakistan from the inception of the state in 1947 to the secession of the eastern wing (former East Pakistan, now Bangladesh) from the country after a civil and international war in 1971. The dissertation analyzes the emergence and development of the minority question in Europe and connects it with Colonial India, where it culminated into Partition of British India and emergence of Pakistan in 1947. The dissertation analyzes post-Colonial minoritization of Pakistani Hindus as a gradual process on three different but interconnected levels: 1. the loss of Hindu life from Pakistan, 2. the transference of Hindu property and 3. the political minoritization of Pakistani Hindus. The dissertation does so by approaching the history of Pakistani Hindus in two distinct geographical locations, Sindh and the ex-Pakistani province of East Bengal. It also includes discussion on Pakistani Scheduled Castes and Tribes. The dissertation is based on indepth, detailed fieldwork in Tharparkar district of Sindh province and archival research in Pakistan and Bangladesh.

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INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

N-5,¹ the longest highway connecting three Pakistani provinces, i.e. Sindh, Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, crosses into Sindh from Punjab at Kammun Shaheed.² Here a roadside sign-board put up by the National Highway Authority greets visitors to what it calls “the land of Sufis”- that is, Sindh. Through Sindh, which is the south-eastern province of Pakistan, the River Indus (Eng. Indus, derived from Greek Indós meaning Indian³) flows into the Arabian Sea. The name Sindh, which is derived from the Sanskrit word Sindhu, meaning river or ocean,⁴ is the name of one of the seven Rig Vedic Rivers.⁵ In Pakistani national narratives, Sindh has been acclaimed as bab-ul-Islam, the gateway of Islam in South Asia. Besides being predominantly Muslim today, Sindh is also home to a variety of non-Muslim communities.

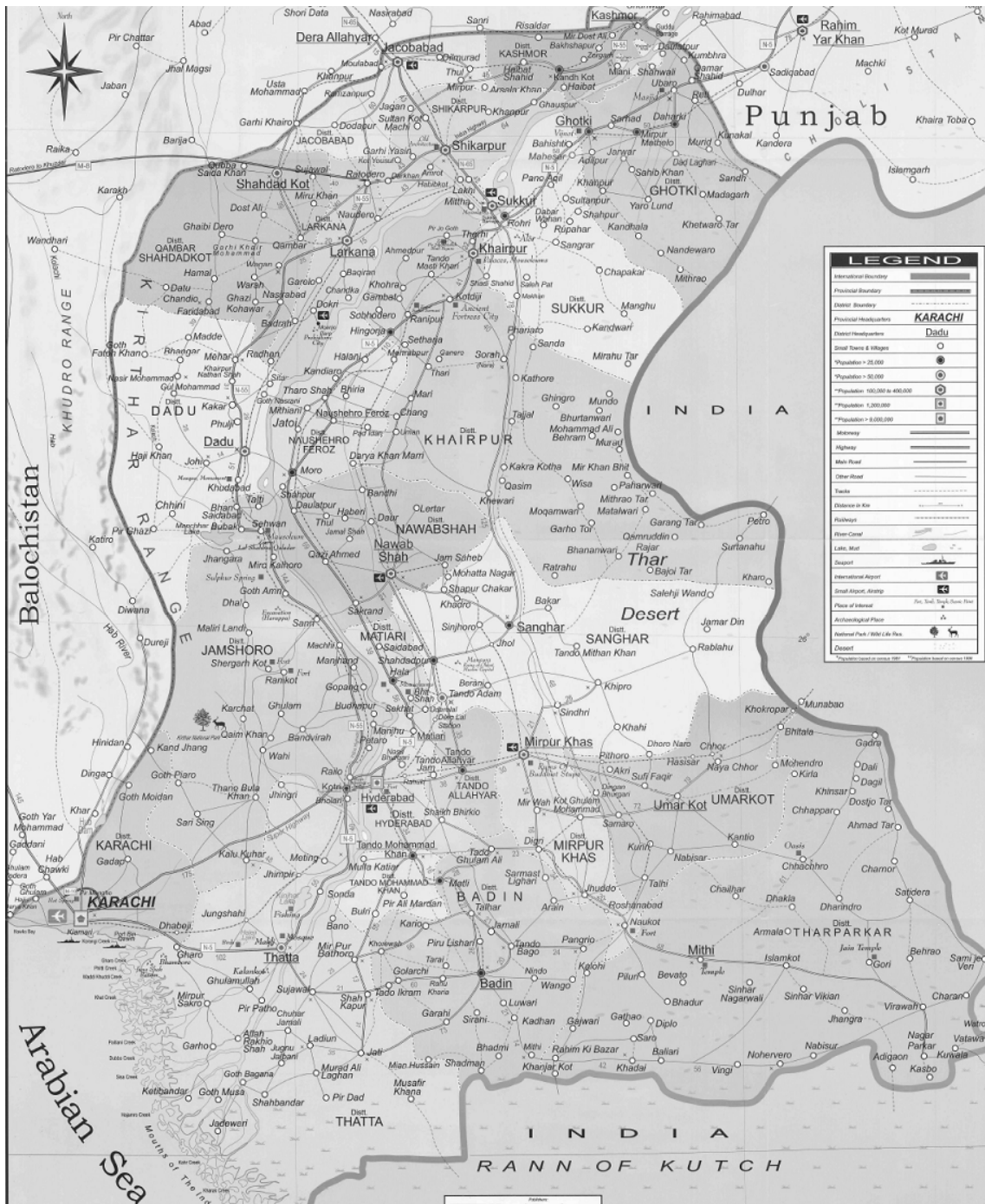
¹ N-5. Karachi-Peshawar-Torakham.

² Ubarou, Sindh.

³ Simpson, J.A. and E.S.C Weiner, editors. 1989. The Oxford English Dictionary. Second Edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press. Vol: XV. P: 509.

⁴ Boivin, Michel, and Matthew A.Cook, editors. 2010. *Interpreting the Sindhi World: Essays on Society and History*. Karachi: Oxford University Press. P. ix.

⁵ Besides the dominant Shaivite Hindu tradition, Buddhist and Jain traditions once also thrived in Sindh. With the Sikh attack on Sindh in the 18th century, the Sikh tradition also attained a foothold there. In northern Sindh as well as elsewhere, the Guru Granth Sahib is an important feature of Shivalo, Shiv temples. The path (recital of Guru Granth Sahib) takes place in Punjabi. At a few places in Sindh, exclusive Sikh Gurdwaras have existed and new ones have recently sprung up. In the 1930's there were 42,000 Sikhs in Sindh, both Khalsa and Sahijdaris. In fact, the January 1948 violence in Karachi began with the killing of 122 Sikh evacuees lounging in a Gurdwara waiting for arrangements to go to India. See: The Sydney Morning Herald: “Riot Deaths in Karachi: Mobs Kill 122.” Friday 9 January 1948. <http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/18056597>. Accessed: 5/14/14.



Map 1 Sindh Province, Pakistan

The largest of the non-Muslim communities of Sindh is Hindus. Hindus in Sindh live on both sides of the Indus. They are not a homogenous community. According to the 1998

Census of Pakistan, 6.5% of the Sindhi population were enumerated as Caste Hindus and 0.99% were counted as Scheduled Castes.⁶ In recent years, the community has remained in the national and international media, mainly for the communal tensions that erupt after allegations of blasphemy or “forced conversions”, especially of Hindu girls, in Sindh.

In February 2012 a heated debate on the disappearance and later conversion of a Hindu girl, Rinkal Kumari (from Mirpur Mathelo, Upper Sindh), to Islam erupted in the national media. Two other Hindu women, Lata and Asha, were also reported missing from their homes. Rinkal’s family blamed Mian Mitho, a local Member of the ruling Pakistan People’s Party, for Rinkal’s disappearance. Mitho is also a spiritual leader of the Dargah Bhirchhondi Shareef, which has been known for converting Hindus in Sindh for the past two hundred years. As the situation grew tense in Mirpur Mathelo, with the followers of Mian Mitho celebrating and cheering the conversion of Rinkal Kumari out on the streets, Rinkal was taken into official custody. After the matter could not be resolved on the provincial level because of mounting protests from the Hindu community, the Supreme Court of Pakistan took a suo moto action on this case. Rinkal, Asha and Lata were produced in the Supreme Court of Pakistan for the final hearing on 18 April 2012. The court left it up to the girls to decide what they desired. While their families awaited meeting the girls, they left with their Muslim husbands, whom they had married right after their disappearance and conversion. Mian Mitho later remarked in a TV program that the girls were now “their girls” (Muslims’) and therefore they would not be allowed to meet their Hindu parents. A representative of the Hindu community, Dr.

⁶ These figures are disputed by Hindu communities in Sindh. See: Population Census Organization, Government of Pakistan. Population by Religion: <http://www.census.gov.pk/Religion.html>. Accessed: 5/14/14.

Lal Chand, then replied asking Mitho if Muslims would tolerate their girls “eloping” even with a Muslim boy.⁷

This debate on honor also revealed the powerless and minoritized status of the Hindu community in Pakistan, as it was not only a conversation within Sindhi society, between Sindhi Hindus and Sindhi Muslims, it was also a conversation between a minority and a majority. On the national level, it highlighted the relatively powerless position of the Pakistani Hindu community, which is not equal to the Muslim community, and their exclusion from national and public space in Pakistan.

Manwer Lal Vaswani, a Hindu member, while addressing the National Assembly, pointed out that while, on the one hand, Hindu men were a favored target of abduction for ransom in Sindh, on the other hand, Hindu girls were being kidnapped to change their faith. He called it a situation faced by the Hindu “minority” community as a whole in Pakistan. He pointed a finger at the police for not facilitating the FIR registration to report the missing Hindu girl. He complained that the land of the Sufis, Sindh, was squeezing out its Hindu population. While referring to the prophetic tradition of tolerance and Mohammed Ali Jinnah’s⁸ statements about minority rights, Vaswani pointed out that the logic of making Pakistan had been to protect Islamic culture from being wiped out after the British departure from India. So why, he asked, in that Pakistan were Hindu minorities being subjected to oppression in Sindh?⁹

⁷ Youtube: Rinkle Kumari Case: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kHkDz7Nk_O4. Accessed: 3/26/2014.

⁸ The founder of Pakistan.

⁹ Youtube: Hindus Politician in Pakistan telling about Pak Hindus Conditions in 2012. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uy6Bee_UitE. Accessed: 3/26/2014.

Besides the question of conversion, another question that motivates this study is that of the continued migration of Hindus from Sindh since 1947 until today. Other than a pull factor involved in this migration, coming from relatives and politicians abroad, the push factor, an environment of fear and a sense of insecurity, prevails among Pakistani Hindus. Many Sindhi Hindus and Muslims expressed to me directly the insecurity and fear on the part of Sindhi Hindus. For example, during my fieldwork in Sindh, the local Muslims expressed a concern about the migration of Hindus, as the out-migration of educated and skilled members of the Hindu community further results in the disempowerment of the remaining Hindus in Pakistan. According to a local Bajeer¹⁰ in Tharparkar, “Hindus continue to hold out in fear as anything can occur anytime.” Also during my field work, some Hindu women asked me, “Kia Pakistan main Hindu ke liye kuch kabhi badle ga?” (“Is anything ever going to change for a Hindu in Pakistan?”), or, as one Hindu intellectual put it, “kia Sindh ke Hindu ke liye Sindh main koi jaga hai?” (Is there any space left for Sindh’s Hindus in Sindh?). In Mithi, during Muharram, a Hindu woman whose father-in-law was in disagreement with her over her Mahabharatic interpretation of what happened in Karbala, dragged me out to observe and pay respects to the passing Muharram procession. She told me, “It used to be a very nice environment before, but now prejudice has grown.”

When I talked with university and high-school students of the Hindu community in different parts of Sindh as well as in Islamabad, they complained about their class fellows asking them repeatedly to convert to Islam. One student had been forced to recite the Bismillah by his professor before a presentation in a university in Islamabad. Being

¹⁰ Bajeer, a Muslim caste.

stereotyped as Indians and Banias was another perception whose effects Hindu students experienced in their educational institutions. “Ask anyone in the hostel about ‘Bania’ and they would lead you to our room,” I was told by Sindhi Hindu students in a local university in Islamabad. A group of Hindu students from Mithi, while playing a cricket tournament at another university in Islamabad, was taunted by shouts that they were Indians and enemies. Finally they were advised to change their names and finish off the match. They did so by taking Muslim names. Earlier, in their hostel, they had been subjected to routine visits from Muslim students who flocked to “see” Hindus for the first time.

This is a post-Partition study. The Partition in South Asian context refers to the splitting up of British India into two daughter nation – states: Pakistan and India. British India was partitioned in August of 1947 to solve the Muslim minority and consequently the communal problem of India. The partition of 1947 serves as an important milestone in modern South Asian history and historical writing. Following the announcement of Partition plans in 1947, within a few weeks “an estimated 10 to 15 million people were displaced and up to one million killed.”¹¹ This Partition, which is commonly understood to involve the emergence of two new countries and the displacement and/or murder of millions of people, did not come to a halt with the passage of time. This Partition was only the beginning of a long process of redefining boundaries, with another independent country emerging in 1971 (Bangladesh). Partition also redefined political positions and power relations between states and communities. Since the main purpose of Partition was

¹¹ Dadi, Iftikhar and Hammad Nasar. 2012. *Lines of Control: Partition as a Productive Space*. London: Green Cardamom. P. 9.

to give the largest Indian minority, i.e. Muslims, a homeland, it meant under the prevalent legislative system that they would be a new majority and that the Hindus who would stay in Pakistan would now become a new minority. What did this becoming a minority for Hindus in Pakistan mean over a period of 24 years? What in terms of power relationships or existential reality changed for Hindus in the post-colonial era such that Pakistan has repeatedly evicted its Hindu population since the inception of the nation-state in 1947? How has public and national space shrunk for Hindus in the post-colonial state?

To answer the above mentioned questions, I try to understand the process of minoritization of Pakistani Hindus from the inception of the state in 1947 to the secession of the eastern wing (former East Pakistan, now Bangladesh) from the country after a civil and international war in 1971. In this dissertation I argue that, along with the modern discourse and vocabulary of minoritarian-majoritarian politics, certain colonial institutions continue to inform national politics in Pakistan and continue producing minorities, religious and ethnic. At the time of Partition, Hindus who wanted to stay in Pakistan as Pakistani nationals were aware that they would be a numerical minority in the country. They had promised allegiance to the nation and state. They were assured of equal citizen rights but were in fact barred from becoming complete members of the new nation. Soon, however, they found their political stature reduced and themselves being transformed into a fifth column.

In 1947, Hindu legislators representing majority Hindu constituencies had presented their vision of Pakistan as a “secular democratic state which will make no difference between a citizen and a citizen, which will deal fairly with all irrespective of

caste, creed or community.”¹² Jinnah, who had earlier led only Indian Muslims, was requested to assume the leadership of the entire nation of Pakistan, including not only Muslims but also Hindus and other communities.¹³ This request was made by not only the Hindu community. Christians and Parsis also looked up to this promise that they considered Jinnah to have made before Partition.¹⁴ Their faith in this promise was compromised by a constitutional struggle in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan and in the public domain, where eventually democrats (Hindu and Muslim) lost their argument for an egalitarian status for non-Muslims in Pakistan. Hindus constitutionally became a non-Muslim minority in Pakistan in 1956. Over a period of 67 years since 1947, the number, property and political stature of Pakistani Hindus (upper and lower castes both) have gradually declined.

This dissertation will take into account how the majoritarian politics of Muslims in Pakistan, who once dreaded becoming a minority in India, who aspired to shape their own political future, and who promised equal citizenship to religious minorities, instead came to exclude them completely from the nation. I exhibit this minoritization as a gradual process whereby Hindus, who had decided to become citizens of Pakistan despite the prevailing anti-Hindu sentiment in Pakistan at the time of Partition, gradually became minor citizens of the post-colonial state. In particular, I discuss three different but

¹² Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates. 11 August 1947. *Congratulations to the President*. Published by the Manager of Publications, Government of Pakistan. Karachi. P. 13.

¹³ Ibid, 13-14.

¹⁴ Jinnah Papers. Pakistan at Last. 26 July-14 August 1947. Marwan G.Edel G. Kundawala’s letter to Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Editor-in-Chief: Z.H. Zaidi. First Series, Volume IV. Quaid-I-Azam Papers Project. Islamabad: Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. P. 92. Also see: Jinnah’s Statement on “Aqliyattain” (Minorities) P. 249.

interconnected processes: 1. the loss of Hindu life from Pakistan, 2. the transference of Hindu property and 3. the political minoritization of Pakistani Hindus. I seek to understand these processes by approaching the history of Pakistani Hindus in two distinct geographical locations, Sindh and the ex-Pakistani province of East Bengal, where the majority of Pakistani Hindus came from at the time of the inception of the state. The following sections further elaborate this point.

Pakistani Hindus

East Bengal and Sindh:

At its commencement, the polity of Pakistan was established in two different geographical locations of the subcontinent and thus had two wings, a thousand miles apart and separated by India in between. One wing of Pakistan, renamed West Pakistan in 1954, was made up of the former British provinces of North Western Frontier Province (NWFP),¹⁵ Baluchistan, West Punjab and Sindh; the other wing came into being in the majority Muslim areas of eastern Bengal, East Bengal (1947), renamed East Pakistan in 1954. This polity, Pakistan, was carved out of British India as a result of the All India Muslim League's campaign for a separate country for Indian Muslims. The areas that were given to Pakistan in 1947 constituted the final scheme on the part of the British to settle contesting claims of power in India. These were primarily between the majority Hindus and the largest minority, Muslims. This Partition was not the ultimate Partition in South Asia. In 1971, East Pakistan ceased to be Pakistan, declaring its independence and becoming Bangladesh. This resulted in an international war which produced new

¹⁵ Currently the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK).

refugees and prisoners, as well as in a further tightening of the borders between India and Pakistan.



Map 2 East and West Wings of Pakistan

After the Partition, in 1947, the majority of the Pakistani Hindu population was limited to the provinces of Sindh and East Bengal,¹⁶ as the vast majority of Hindus had migrated out of Punjab and NWFP.¹⁷ Historically, Sindh and East Bengal both had strong connections with the Pakistan movement. The All India Muslim League, which became the founding party of Pakistan, was established in Dhaka in East Bengal in 1906, and the Lahore Resolution, now called the Pakistan Resolution, was first endorsed by the Sind¹⁸ Legislative Assembly in 1940. Both provinces had majority Muslim populations and became strongholds of the Pakistan movement. From 1947-1971, Pakistan, which now

¹⁶ Bengal was split by the British in 1905 into East and West for administrative purposes, and later into two countries in 1947.

¹⁷ A tiny Hindu community still resides in these provinces, also in Baluchistan.

¹⁸ Sind is the Colonial spelling of Sindh.

belongs to a past era in Bangladesh, continuously produced Hindu refugees who moved from East to West Bengal. Sindh too has been evicting Hindus since the Partition.

Although today the majority of Pakistani Hindus live in Sindh, any account of Pakistani Hindus would be incomplete without considering the history of East Pakistani Hindus. Out of a population of 39 million in East Bengal in 1947, 11 million were Hindus.¹⁹ They were a heterogeneous community including upper-caste people (Brahmans/Kayasthas) and depressed or Scheduled Castes (over four million people). Hindus were spread unevenly in East Bengal, with traditional Hindu majority localities in Khulna, Jessore, Dhaka and southern Barisal and Faridpur.²⁰ Connecting the history of East Pakistani Hindus with that of Pakistan as a whole helps us understand the construction of the category “Hindu” in Pakistan. In addition to this, another reason for including East Pakistan in this study is that a significant Hindu voice in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan²¹ from 1947-1956²² was East Pakistani. Only one Hindu legislator, Seth Sukhdev, from Sindh represented Sindh’s Hindus in this constitutional body on the national level.

Sindh went under British rule in 1843 and was part of the Bombay Presidency until 1936. In that year, to retain a Muslim majority province, as result of the All India Muslim League’s demand, Sindh was separated from Bombay and restored as a distinct province. In 1947, Sindh joined Pakistan as one of the Muslim majority provinces of

¹⁹ Chatterji, Joya. 2007. *The Spoils of Partition: Bengal and India, 1947-1967*. Cambridge; Cambridge University Press. P. 107.

²⁰ Ibid, 108.

²¹ A body for making the Constitution.

²² Pakistan adopted an Islamic Constitution in 1956.

India. It is now the second-largest province of Pakistan, following Punjab, in terms of population.

From the 1930's onwards, colonial Sindh had become a particularly lively center for engaging with Indian discourses on identity, caste and religion. In addition to other venues, the Census of India had become a space for various communities of Sindh to establish their own political identity and move upward in the social hierarchy. The Census correspondence on Sindh shows that a sense of trans-regional caste identity preceded religious identity.²³ While gearing up for the 1941 Census of the province, H.T. Lambrick's hand-written notes show, he distributed Sindh's population according to professions (Zamindar, Haris, Herdsman, Artisans or Shopkeepers); all these categories included members of both Hindu and Muslim castes.²⁴ But, since the 1930's, communal differences among communities had also started mounting, mainly between Muslims and Hindus and between Hindus and Sikhs.

In various localities of Sindh, there were Hindu Sabhas, Arya Samajis and Singh Sabhas.²⁵ After Partition, Hindus and Sikhs had to emigrate from all of Sindh, yet today

²³ Census Correspondence. Ethn-18 1941. Acc # 20415. Representation of Kuleen Brahman Maha Sabha Bharat (Registered) to enter Kuleen Brahmans in the Enumeration Slips of those who are Kuleen Brahmans. Sindh Archives, Karachi. Pakistan. Also: Census Correspondence. Census, 1941. Ethn -3. Acc # 202821. Representation of the Akhila Bharatiya Nayi Brahman Sabha that Nais may be shown as Nayi-Brahmans in the Census Records. Sindh Archives. Karachi.

Also: Official Correspondence. File No: 19/7 1932. Acc # 15723. Apptt of Hindus in [illegible] Govt Services. Sindh Archives, Karachi.

²⁴ Census Correspondence. Census 1941. Ethn - 8 1939. Acc # 20300. Ethnological Survey of the Province of Sind. Sindh Archives. Karachi.

²⁵ Census Correspondence. Census 1941. Ethn -11. Acc # 20185. Representation of the Arya Prathinidhi Sabha Sind, for recording their tribe Aryasamajists separately and including in the general total of Hindus. Sindh Archives. Karachi.

Hindus are present in almost all districts of Sindh. Broadly categorizing, Sindh's Hindus fall into three linguistic groups: Sindhi, Dhatki and Gujarati-speaking. The Sindhi-speaking Hindus are locally known as Diwan or Vaanyo. Dhatki-speaking Hindus, who hail from desert Tharparkar, are a diverse population. Gujarati or Parkari speaking mainly include the population living in and around the Parkar range of Tharparkar district as well as indigenous tribes such as Bheels and Kohlis. In this dissertation, I approach the post-colonial minoritization of Pakistani Hindus from the current district of Tharparkar in Sindh province.

Tharparkar

At the time of Partition, Sindh did not get carved up. An international boundary simply replaced the provincial boundary in the east of the province, partitioning Sindh from the present-day Indian states of Rajasthan and Gujarat. Today various Hindu communities make up 49-50% of the population in the Tharparkar²⁶ region of Sindh and are visible in services and in socio-cultural and political life. Historically and culturally, this region was part of Rajputana, and it was connected with Gujarat, Kutch, Bhuj and beyond. Rajputs, once strong allies of the Mughals, have co-existed in this area with Muslims and with other Hindu and tribal communities. The international boundary,

Also: Census Correspondence. 1940. Ethn -16. Acc # 20413. Representation of Bhagatsingh regarding Sahajdhari Sikhs. Sindh Archives. Karachi.

Also: Census Correspondence. Ethn-15. Acc # 20195. 1940. Representation of all India Sainik Kshatriya Mahasabha to record their Community as Sainik Rajput. Sindh Archives. Karachi.

Also see: Census Correspondence. Ethn-19. Acc# 20416. Representation of President Sriguru Singh Sabha, Karachi for recording the Sikh Community. Sindh Archives, Karachi.

²⁶ In this study Tharparkar stands for the current administrative district of Sindh named Tharparkar. It is one of the 28 administrative districts of the Sindh province.

which remained porous for many years after the Partition, was gradually sealed after the wars of 1965 and 1971. A gradual and slow process redefined this region and the power relations within it. Whereas Partition had divided Hindu families between India and Pakistan, the Tharparkar-Rajasthan border specifically divided the Rajput clans in the region, weakening their domination in Tharparkar.



Map 3 Sindh - Rajasthan International Border

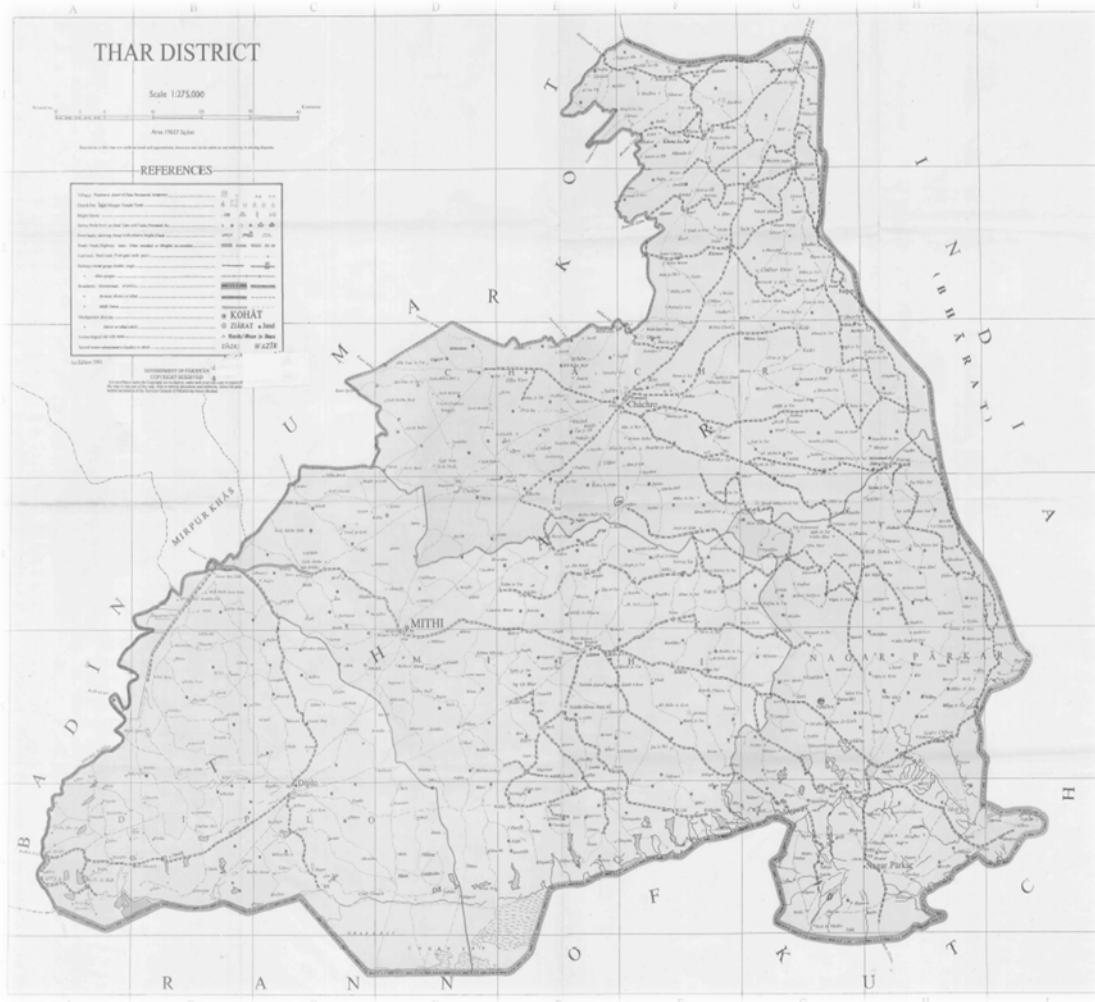
Although an International boundary separated Tharparkar from the present day Indian state of Rajasthan and it was a port of entry and exit for refugees to leave Sindh or enter Pakistan in 1947,²⁷ the demography of the current Tharparkar district (since 1990) did not change significantly in 1947. It has been on the periphery of Sindh for centuries and remains so today. Despite three military conflicts in this border region between India and Pakistan, after Partition, a large population of Hindus continued living in Tharparkar.

²⁷ The British District of Tharparkar included the current Sanghar and Mirpurkhas districts.

After the 1971 war, many Rajput clans, predominantly Sodha Rajputs, moved to India. After the war was over, then Pakistani Prime Minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, a Sindhi himself, dispatched a delegation to bring the Hindus back from refugee camps in India.

Ashvin Kumar's short film *Little Terrorist* (2004) and Mehreen Jabbar's film, *Ram Chand Pakistani* (2008), show the life of people in this region after Partition, while highlighting the issues of belonging, citizenship and the boundary. In India, Rajasthan has been reduced to a destination of culture and tourism. In Bollywood movies, Rajputs have been depicted as a warrior people. In Sindh, trying to adjust to modernity and a new polity, they struggle to maintain their ties with the land. They are part of a larger diverse Sindhi society, with many social systems and classes. Despite being a caste most of whose members have become Muslims in Sindh and Punjab, Rajputs live on the geographical as well as social periphery of Pakistani society.

Partition studies, as well as studies on Sindh's Hindus, have been dominated by the study of urban Sindh and Sindhi Hindus. I focus on the experiences of Hindu communities in Tharparkar, including those of Hindu Rajputs. Tharparkar also houses Scheduled Castes (such as Meghwar and others) and Tribes (such as Bheel, Koli and others), which also struggle with similar challenges. The study of Pakistani Scheduled Castes and Tribes forms an integral component of this work.



Map 4 Tharparkar District, Sindh, Pakistan

Tracing the Trajectory of Minoritarian-Majoritarian Political Discourse in Colonial India

Besides introducing the geographical location of Pakistani Hindus, it is also important to sketch the world-historical context of their minoritization, which I turn to after discussing the Indian scene. The discourse of minoritarian and majoritarian politics entered Indian soil mainly via the British Census. Along with the Census, the question of the Muslim minority in India developed in the context of modern European nation-states’

struggle to resolve the problem of national minorities towards the conclusion of WWI. The zenith of national and religious minorities' problem in Europe was the Jews' struggle for the recognition of their human, political and cultural rights. With the rise of the nation-state and the availability of a new political vocabulary including, such terms as, "provision of self-determination," "sovereignty" and "autonomous self-governance" for various ethnic groups, the Jewish leadership campaigned that they also be recognized as a nation and be granted an independent role in an independent territory. After the discussions on the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, further discussions on Arab minorities within the proposed Jewish state took place. A similar discourse was then reproduced in Colonial/British India, where some sections of Indian Muslims, who thought of themselves as 'Muslim India', as opposed to 'Hindu India,' argued that they were a separate nation.²⁸ This was the origin of the two-nation theory in India.

The Indian Councils Act of 1909 played an important role in this regard. This act involved Indians in the Viceroy's ruling council and instituted separate Muslim electorates²⁹ in India. The Act led to communal electorates in 1919 and finally resulted in the Communal Award of 1932, with allocations for Muslims, Hindus, and caste-based electorates, institutionalizing the politics of minority in India.³⁰ The expansion of this democratic and parliamentary form of politics in India had European and British baggage emanating from the humanistic revolution, ideas about citizenship, the rise of

²⁸ YouTube: Pak Broad Cor : Muhammad Ali Jinnah speech about the making of Pakistan between 1 to 13 December 1946.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZAx3cxLVAIQ>. Accessed: 5/17/2014.

²⁹ Accepting that Muslims could have their own body of voters which would elect its own representatives.

³⁰ D'Souza, Radha. 2014. "Revolt and Reform in South Asia: Ghadar Movement to 9/11 and After." *Economic and Political Weekly*. Vol - XLIX No. 8, February 22, 2014. P: 68.

secularism and the expansion of the electorate³¹ in Britain. As in Britain, in India too the idea of who could vote was gradually extended. The British voting system was based on the “First Past the Post” (FPTP) system, which meant that victory went to the candidate who scored the majority of votes. This system was introduced in India and was institutionalized via a Constitution for India.

The Question of European National and Religious Minorities, Right of Self-Determination and Demand of a Nation-State for a Minority

For this dissertation, I have borrowed Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari’s redefinition of “minority” as someone who is a minor, is marginal, in his or her relation to power, and not someone whose group is small in number.³² It is a group’s relation to power that makes it a minority or majority, not its number. Pakistan’s majority, statistically gathered, is an imagined majority. It classifies all Muslim denominations and schools of thought in one category, “Muslim”, against all other religious minorities, whom it categorizes as “non-Muslims.” This assumes that all Muslims constitute one community, hence making them a homogenous single majority, despite the fact that they are theologically or denominationally and politically different. It also assumes all “non-Muslims” as one group or community. This too is not the case on the ground.

³¹ The whole body of voters.

³² Deleuze, Gilles, and Felix Guattari. 1986. *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, translated by Dana Polan. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

The use of the English noun “minority,” derived from Latin minor, dates back to 1533. The word “minor” refers to something smaller, lesser or junior.³³ “Minority” signifies “the condition or fact of being smaller, inferior, or subordinate.”³⁴ Its meaning then evolved into “the state of being minor or under age,”³⁵ and then into “smaller number or part, a number which is less than half the whole number.”³⁶ Its use to refer to a “small group of people separated from the rest of the community by a difference in race, religion, language, etc” emerged in 1919, in the context of Eastern Europe and the Paris Peace Conference.³⁷

In pre-modern European polities, the religious other always had a secondary position. Expulsions too were not uncommon. The legal foundations for the status of non-Christians in Christendom derived from Roman legislation of the 4th and 5th centuries. The sixteenth book of the Theodosian Code, promulgated in 438 AD, marked the institution of Christianity as a state religion. It granted privileged status to Christians. First Jews and later Muslims, could stay and practice their faith in Christendom but Christianity was the superior religion. Social status was limited for both Jews and Muslims in a Christian polity. From the 12th century onwards, Jews and Muslims endured violence and evictions from Christian countries, and towards the end of the Middle Ages, the rate and violence of the evictions became amplified.³⁸ The nation-states and the idea

³³ Simpson, J.A. and E.S.C Weiner, editors. 1989. The Oxford English Dictionary. Second Edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press. Vol: IX. P. 823.

³⁴ Ibid, 825.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid, 825.

³⁷ Ibid, 825.

³⁸ Jews were expelled from France in 1182, 1306, 1394, from England in 1290, from Spain in 1492 and from Portugal in 1497. Muslims started getting expelled from Sicily in

of nation-states emerged and developed in Europe in the wake of the First World War; along with them came the idea of the rights of national minorities.

The treaty signed and adopted by the Allies at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 was the first “constitutional” guarantee of equal citizenship and protection for national minorities.³⁹ The League of Nations functioned as a supervisor to assure the implementation of minority rights as agreed on by some countries of Eastern Europe. This was the first international accord for the rights of religious and national minorities of Europe. The treaty dissolved with the end of the League of Nations after the Poles denounced the treaty in 1934.

Jewish National Councils appeared in Eastern Europe during the Second World War. These councils sought traditional minority rights, the right to education in their own language and often territorial autonomy and statehood. The councils operated parallel to the Zionist movement. European Jews eventually became the most prominent group

the thirteenth century and then gradually from the entire Iberian Peninsula. See: Tolan, John. *The Legal Status of the Jews and Muslims in the Christian States in Meddeb*, Abdelwahab and Stora, Benjamin, editors. *A History of Jewish Muslim Relations: From the Origins to the Present Day*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013.) P. 145-149.

³⁹ “The Minorities Treaties were drawn up between the Principal Allied and Associated Powers (the United States, the British Empire, France, Italy, and Japan), on the one hand, and 14 newly created or expanded states in Europe and the Middle East (Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Iraq, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Turkey, and Yugoslavia), on the other hand, governing eligibility for citizenship in the latter states and granting citizens belonging to racial, religious, or linguistic minorities certain collective rights. Among the provisions granted by the treaties were the right to equal treatment and protection by the state for their members; to use minority languages for specified public purposes, including in courts and elementary schools; to establish and control educational, religious, and social welfare institutions for their groups; and to receive a proportional share of state expenditures for educational, religious, and welfare services.” See: The Yivo Encyclopedia of the Jews in Eastern Europe. *Minorities Treaties*.

http://www.yivoencyclopedia.org/article.aspx/Minorities_Treaties. Accessed: 3/25/2014.

campaigning for minority rights to maintain their cultural and religious identity; hence they were the most disappointed section when the treaty was called off. This was especially true in the case of Poland. In Turkey, with the rise of nationalism in Turkey, the Jews' freedom to operate in the public sphere began to fade.⁴⁰

As far as the development of Jews as national minority is concerned, in 1843, Karl Marx had published his *On the Jewish Question*, arguing for the civic and political emancipation of Jews and explaining the theological and religious nature of Jewish persecution in a Christian state.⁴¹ However, Theodor Herzl was the first to conceive of Jews as possessing a nationality and therefore of a homeland for Jewish people. He presented these ideas in his *The Jewish State* (1895). In this book, Herzl's idea of a Jewish nation did not include Arabs or other minorities in the potential Jewish State. Nevertheless, in *Altneuland*, written in 1902, he proposed a pluralistic democracy in Palestine, where Arabs and Jews would have equal rights.⁴²

In India, the leadership of the All India Muslim League was not only aware of the Jewish national struggle and the Palestine issue as it developed in Europe and the Middle East, but was also politically supporting the Palestine, representing "Muslim India" on an international level. Jinnah, who was vouchsafed the title "leader of Muslim India," had received a copy of *The Palestine Problem and Its Solution: A New Scheme* directly from

⁴⁰ Jewish Virtual Library. Minority Rights.
https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0014_0_13953.html.
Accessed: 3/25/14.

⁴¹ Marxist. Org. *On the Jewish Question*.
<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1844/jewish-question/>. Accessed: 3/25/14.

⁴² Encyclopedia Britannica: Theodor Herzl.
<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/264012/Theodor-Herzl>. Accessed:
3/25/2014.

the author, Dr. Siegmund Kaznelson, in Palestine. This book discusses both the Jews' argument for their right to have a state and also a formula for co-existence with Arabs in the Middle East. It maintains that the Jewish people demanded a nation-state within a democratic political system, arguing for the opportunity to place their fate in their own hands by demanding self-determination and national freedom, legal and real security, freedom from fear, national equality, the right to make autonomous decisions, freedom from slavery, and the right to resist subjugation.⁴³ The report of the Peel Commission⁴⁴ in 1937 portrayed the Palestinian problem as “a conflict between two national ideals”:

An irrepressible conflict that has arisen between two national communities within the narrow bounds of one small country... What each party wants most, is freedom and security.... What the Arabs fear, is being “swamped” by the Jews and the possibility of ultimate subjection to Jewish rule... What the Jews fear, is the possibility of being subjected in the future to Arab rule... The primary objective of Zionism is a Jewish nation, planted in the Palestine, giving its nationals the same status in the world as other nations give theirs. They will cease at last to live a ‘minority life’.⁴⁵

Kaznelson thus reduced the Palestine problem to: “The Arabs do not want to become a national minority eventually, nor do the Jews wish to remain one now. It is the problem of national minorities, familiar in Europe and Asia since the beginning of the

⁴³ Kaznelson, Dr. Siegmund. 1946. *The Palestine Problem and Its Solution: A New Scheme*. Jerusalem: The Jewish Publishing House Ltd. P. 31.

⁴⁴ This was the Palestine Royal Commission of Inquiry set up in the wake of 1936-39 disturbances in Palestine to investigate the roots of the conflict and to suggest solutions. The commission was headed by Lord Robert Peel. The commission collected testimonies in Palestine, and in July 1937 recommended partition of Palestine between the two nations, Jews and Arabs.

⁴⁵ Kaznelson 1946, 32.

19th century.”⁴⁶ The conflict of Arab and Jewish rights to freedom and self-determination provided further occasion for the discussion of national minorities in Zionist literature. The Jewish philosopher Moses Hess named the Jewish question, “the last nationality question” (in 1862); therefore, he held, Jewish thinkers had come to re-define the Jewish Question not as a religious, economic or social problem, but only as a national problem.⁴⁷ “The Jews are a people, a nation, deserted and disowned unfortunately too often by its own children.”⁴⁸ In *The Jewish State*, Herzl wrote: “It is a national question, which can only be solved by making it a political world-question to be discussed and settled by the civilized nations of the world in council. We are a people – one people.”⁴⁹ The Jews were persecuted as fifth columnists during Hitler’s regime in Germany, which further resulted in demanding a Jewish state that was their own. The Balfour declaration (1917) was rejected by the Jewish leadership because it promised a Jewish home but not a state, and hence meant that Jews would be a minority in an Arab state.⁵⁰ To end the centuries-old persecution and minority status of European Jews, solutions of national separation combined with territorial partition were put forward by Jewish thinkers⁵¹ as well as by the aforementioned Peel Commission Report.

While Europe and the Ottoman Empire were being re-carved into nation-states, the European Jews used the new political vocabulary to become part of those nationalities and to get a state of their own. In 1914 separate religious registers, instead of national

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 33.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 45.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 46.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 47.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 51.

⁵¹ *Ibid*, 53.

ones, were suggested for the Arabs and Jews in Palestine.⁵² According to the Peel Commission report, the cardinal problem in Palestine was the minority question. Therefore the principal of national separation and the solution of territorial partition was accepted. The goal was to produce three states and three national registers, and it was left for people to choose their nationality and be issued a certificate of citizenship. These national or religious registers were then to be used as electoral registers.⁵³

The new scheme presented in Kanzelson's book offered a "non-minority-status" for Arabs in the Jewish state, a principle based on human dignity that pledged to abide by the new conception of the national struggle. It declared: "No more minorities!" An independent state for Jews was thus a solution to the centuries old Jewish minorities' problem in Europe. However, the solution eventually led to the Israeli/Jewish - Arab/Muslim conflict in the Middle East.

India's Muslims, Muslim India and a Muslim Nation:

The idea of Pakistan arose in the context of debates over the formation of a Jewish state in Palestine. In India, It was not until 1930 that Muhammad Iqbal (the national poet of Pakistan) presented his idea of a territorial nation-state for Indian Muslims. He did so in his presidential address to the Muslim League at Allahabad in 1930. Iqbal's idea of an autonomous territory in India focused on maintaining a Muslim majority in already-Muslim-majority provinces of India. It also carried the modern Islamist ideal of no separation between religion and politics. Iqbal also thought that the European political

⁵² Ibid, 112-113.

⁵³ Ibid, 104.

solution of territorial partition for nations was not implementable in India because of its heterogeneous population. He stated:

The units of Indian society are not territorial as in European countries. India is a continent of human groups belonging to different races, speaking different languages, and professing different religions. Their behaviour is not at all determined by a common race-consciousness. Even the Hindus do not form a homogeneous group. The principle of European democracy cannot be applied to India without recognizing the fact of communal groups.

While Iqbal appreciated the Protestant revolution against the Church in Europe, he was critical of the modern European political idea of the separation between Church and State and of the separation of “man” along national lines. Commencing from a universal understanding of Islam and how its history differed from that of Europe⁵⁴, he imagined

⁵⁴ Sir Muhammad Iqbal’s 1930 Presidential Address to the 25th Session of the All-India Muslim League Allahabad, 29 December 1930.
http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00islamlinks/txt_iqbal_1930.html Accessed : 3/25/2014.

“The transformation of a human into a national outlook, requiring a more realistic foundation, such as the notion of country, and finding expression through varying systems of polity evolved on national lines, i.e. on lines which recognise territory as the only principle of political solidarity. If you begin with the conception of religion as complete other-worldliness, then what has happened to Christianity in Europe is perfectly natural. The universal ethics of Jesus is displaced by national systems of ethics and polity. The conclusion to which Europe is consequently driven is that religion is a private affair of the individual and has nothing to do with what is called man's temporal life. Islam does not bifurcate the unity of man into an irreconcilable duality of spirit and matter. In Islam God and the universe, spirit and matter, Church and State, are organic to each other. Man is not the citizen of a profane world to be renounced in the interest of a world of spirit situated elsewhere...A Luther in the world of Islam, however, is an impossible phenomenon; for here there is no church organisation similar to that of

Indian Muslims as an independent community in India. While rejecting the idea of nationality and stressing the need for recognition of communal groups in India, he put forth his idea of solving the constitutional problems of India by putting forth the All India Muslim League's demands for a fair share in power. Iqbal stated:

The Muslim demand for the creation of a Muslim India within India is, therefore, perfectly justified... I would like to see the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single State. Self-government within the British Empire, or without the British Empire, the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim State appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims, at least of North-West India. The proposal was put forward before the Nehru Committee. They rejected it on the ground that, if carried into effect, it would give a very unwieldy State. This is true in so far as the area is concerned; in point of population, the State contemplated by the proposal would be much less than some of the present Indian provinces. The exclusion of Ambala Division, and perhaps of some districts where non-Muslims predominate, will make it less extensive and more Muslim in population – so that the exclusion suggested will enable this consolidated State to give a more effective protection to non-Muslim minorities within its area.⁵⁵

This, in Iqbal's view, was the Indian Muslim answer to India's communal problem as well as to the grievances of Indian Muslims. Iqbal did not view Indian Muslims and other Indian communities forming one Indian community or nation. In his view, Indian

Christianity in the Middle Ages, inviting a destroyer. In the world of Islam we have a universal polity whose fundamentals are believed to have been revealed but whose structure, owing to our legists' [=legal theorists'] want of contact with the modern world, today stands in need of renewed power by fresh adjustments. I do not know what will be the final fate of the national idea in the world of Islam. Whether Islam will assimilate and transform it, as it has before assimilated and transformed many ideas expressive of a different spirit, or allow a radical transformation of its own structure by the force of this idea, is hard to predict. Professor Wensinck of Leiden (Holland) wrote to me the other day: "It seems to me that Islam is entering upon a crisis through which Christianity has been passing for more than a century....Therefore the construction of a polity on national lines, if it means a displacement of the Islamic principle of solidarity, is simply unthinkable to a Muslim. This is a matter which at the present moment directly concerns the Muslims of India....The unity of an Indian nation, therefore, must be sought not in the negation, but in the mutual harmony and cooperation, of the many..."

⁵⁵ Ibid.

Muslims were a political group that was clearly distinct from the rest in India. Muslim India, since it was co-existing with Hindus, was also distinct in nature from other Muslim countries in the world. Iqbal ultimately sought to present a proposal to solve India's communal problems. Like Theodore Herzl, he went on proposing a state for Muslims and inclusion of minorities in the proposed state. He insisted that there was no separation between "Church" and "state" in Islam and that the nature of new polity would not be religious.⁵⁶

One of the main references made by Iqbal in his 1930 address was to the constitutional problem of India and the demands of representation by the All India Muslim League. If Muslims' demand for territorial sovereignty was rejected, then the following bargain of power was to be pursued, according to Iqbal, in order to protect their numerical strength. He stated:

The Muslims of India cannot agree to any constitutional changes which affect their **majority rights**, to be secured by separate electorates in the Punjab and Bengal, or [which] fail to guarantee them 33 percent representation in any Central Legislature. There were two pitfalls into which Muslim political leaders fell. The first was the repudiated Lucknow Pact, which originated in a false view of Indian nationalism and deprived the Muslims of India of chances of acquiring any political power in India....I am glad to be able to say that our Muslim delegates

⁵⁶ Ibid. "Nor should the Hindus fear that the creation of autonomous Muslim states will mean the introduction of a kind of religious rule in such states... Islam is not a Church... The character of a Muslim State can be judged from what the Times of India pointed out some time ago... "In ancient India," the paper points out, "the State framed laws regulating the rates of interest; but in Muslim times, although Islam clearly forbids the realisation of interest on money loaned, Indian Muslim States imposed no restrictions on such rates." I therefore demand the formation of a consolidated Muslim State in the best interests of India and Islam. For India, it means security and peace resulting from an internal balance of power; for Islam, an opportunity to rid itself of the stamp that Arabian Imperialism was forced to give it, to mobilise its law, its education, its culture, and to bring them into closer contact with its own original spirit and with the spirit of modern times."

fully realise the importance of a proper solution of what I call [the] **Indian international problem**....⁵⁷

Ten years later, the All India Muslim League endorsed the Lahore Resolution at its annual conference in Lahore, which later came to be known as the Pakistan Resolution.

A.K. Fazlul Haq, then Chief Minister of Bengal, had forwarded the following demand on behalf of the All India Muslim League:

That the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the Northwestern and Eastern Zones of India should be grouped to constitute "Independent States" in which the Constituent Units shall be autonomous and sovereign.⁵⁸

Here, then, we clearly find the idea of becoming a majority based on numerical strength and securing some political will and power in Colonial India in the context of Constitutional democratic politics. Also, as quoted earlier, Iqbal had argued that the Indian Communal problem was an international problem; thus, the All India Muslim League's politicians were placing themselves in the larger global context while at once minoritizing and alienating themselves in India.

The Quest for an "Islamic" Pakistan:

After Partition, Pakistan's Muslim politicians saw it as a continuation of Islamic rule in India and an heir to the Mughul Empire in the subcontinent. The Aga Khan called it the world's greatest Muslim country and the greatest victory of Muslims since the fall

⁵⁷ Sir Muhammad Iqbal's 1930 Presidential Address to the 25th Session of the All-India Muslim League Allahabad, 29 December 1930.
http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00islamlinks/txt_iqbal_1930.html Accessed : 3/25/2014. Highlight mine.

⁵⁸ Binder, Leonard. 1958. "Pakistan and Modern Islamic-Nationalist Theory". Part II. *Middle East Journal*. 12:1. P. 50.

of the Ottoman Caliphate.⁵⁹ When Pakistan identified itself as a continuity of the Mughal and Islamic era in India, it used Islam as the basic identifier of its nationality. The Islamists continued viewing India as a country for Hindus, and consequently viewed all Hindus as Indians and all Indians as Hindus. This following conversation took place in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan while discussing the Islamic nomenclature for the state in 1956:

Mian Abdul Bari: Turkey –that is an empire of the Turks. Persia is an empire of the Persians... After Khalafat-i-Rashda, after the Prophet’s time, after those first four Califs, after 1,300 years, Pakistan is the only empire which has been well founded....

Mr. Zahiruddin: Not “empire”.

Mian Abdul Bari: What is it?

Mr. Zahiruddin: It is a Republic.

Mian Abdul Bari: What is it?

Mr. H.S Suhrawardy (East Bengal: Muslim): State!

Mian Abdul Bari: Pakistan is neither based on any nationality nor was established by any dynasty... Pakistan is the first State which was established in name of Islam, Islam and nothing but Islam...

Mian Abdul Bari: Now, the question is that Pakistan is the only kingdom which has been established—empire, republic—whatever you may call it..., which has been founded on the basic ideology of Islam... We have put that word [Islamic Republic of Pakistan, in the Constitution] to keep the whole fabric together... Even in the days of Muslim rule, when they ruled that country for eight hundred years, Muslims bore with patience not only with patience but perseverance—the name of Hindustan. What does Hindustan mean—country of the Hindus.

Dr. S.K. Sen (East Bengal: General): No. Indians!

Mian Abdul Bari: It means Hindus!⁶⁰

The early years of Pakistan’s constitutional politics were marked by a struggle over power between a majority (East Pakistan) and a minority (West Pakistan). Various political ideologies were presented to determine the nature of the polity. The democrats,

⁵⁹ Jinnah Papers: Pakistan at Last. 26 July-14 August 1947. Aga Khan(‘s cable) to Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Editor-in-Chief: Z.H. Zaidi. First Series, Volume IV. Islamabad: Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. P. 92.

⁶⁰ Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates. 21 February 1956. *The Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan*. Karachi. P. 3384-3385.

traditional Islam and right wing Muslim groups struggled to get a Constitution of their own. In due course, Pakistani polity also alienated the sections of the Hindu population that had been the Muslim League's allies in United India.⁶¹

Pakistan, although largely Muslim at the time of its founding, was not homogenous. In the context of parliamentary politics, other schools of thought prevalent in the subcontinent at that time, represented by many Islamic religious and right-wing Muslim parties, also became part of a parliamentary democratic system. Some of these parties, such as Jamia't Ulema-e-Islam, Jamat-e-Islami and Majlis-e-Ahrar-e-Islam, had moved their political struggle to Pakistan or were fractions of their Indian counterparts focusing on laying down the structure of the new Islamic state despite being opposed to Partition. In a sense they took on themselves the task of assuring that the new country became Islamic. Often these parties were joined by workers of national parties and national politicians, most of whom were Muslim. These organizations, registered as jamats (assemblies), jami'ats (organizations), majalis (societies), tehreeks (movements) or anjumuns (groups), were communities of Muslims who believed in particular political ideologies based on their respective understandings of Islam.

The Traditional Ulema, the right-wing parties, and some mainstream Muslim political parties continued the stance that Islam was both a religion and a state - an idea coined in the phrase "al-Islām dīn wa dawlah" [Islam is a religion and a state, hence no separation between the political and the religious] by 'Abd al-Razzāq al-Sanhūrī in

⁶¹ Ibid, 3381.

1929.⁶² Along with many other smaller parties, the major proponents of this idea in West Pakistan were the All Pakistan Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI, Assembly of Islamic Clergy)⁶³ and Jamat-e-Islami (JI, Islamic Party). These parties became part of the democratic process as well as directors of the Constitution, despite not being members of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. JUI imagined Pakistan as a millat (one religious nation), wanted to implement an Islamic system in Pakistan to gradually return to the ideal community of the early Caliphate, to establish brotherhood among Muslims, to achieve Milli wahdat (unity on a religious basis) and finally to unite the Ummah.⁶⁴ On the other hand, JI wanted an ideological Islamic state run by true believers. JUI joined JI in demanding the implementation of the Khawārij-inspired concept that al-ḥākimīyah (absolute sovereignty) should be for Allah alone, not for the law or any human authority, in Pakistan.⁶⁵ The Pakistani state, viewing itself as the continuation of Islamic rule in India, replaced the nomocracy⁶⁶ of empires and dynasties which had functioned by expanding Fiqh/jurisprudence to govern their jurisdictions,⁶⁷ with a Sunni theocratic Constitutionalism supported by traditional Ulema and right-wingers in Pakistan. A

⁶² 1895–1971. A jurist who codified Egyptian, Iraqi, and other Arab civil laws combining sharī‘ah and European principles.

⁶³ Sherkoti, Muhammad Anwar-ul-Hasan, ed. 1973. *Khutbat-e-Usmani (Sheikh-ul-Islam Allama Shabbir Ahmed Usmani ke Milli aur Siasi Khutbat- A Encyclopedia of Ideology of Pakistan)*. Lahore: Nazar Sons. (in Urdu).
<https://ia601607.us.archive.org/13/items/KhutbaatEUSMANIALLAMASHABBIRAHMEDUSMANIRh.a/khutbaat%20E%20USMANI%20%28ALLAMA%20SHABBIR%20AHMED%20USMANI%20rh.a%29.pdf>. Accessed: 3/25/2014.

⁶⁴ YouTube. Maulana Mufti Mehmood historic speech to the nation lignum Radio TV. (Election 1970 Manifesto). <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHjgqtjdV3A>. Accessed: 2/27/14.

⁶⁵ Oxford Islamic Studies Online. “Islamic State.”
<http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t236/e0394>. Accessed: 3/25/2014.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

critical element in this respect was majoritarian politics combined with a modern fascist interpretation of Islamic polity. In order to define itself as a modern Islamic State, Pakistan incorporated the first clause in its Objective Resolution (“Sovereignty belongs to Allah alone”) and came close to the political stance of a sect from the early Islamic period, Khawārij (“Judgment belongs to Allah alone” [Quran 6:57]). It thus, unlike the traditional Sunni or Shi’ite institutions of the Caliphate, Imamate, empires and princely states, removed the spiritual and political authority from a single human authority. Pakistan declared itself an Islamic Republic on 23 March 1956, 16 years after the passage of the Lahore Resolution, assigning a secondary political citizenship to its “non-Muslim” citizens. Pakistani Hindus (caste and scheduled-caste) were left out of the process of Constitution making after being alleged to be anti-Islam and anti-Pakistan elements. Gradually they were made to quit the mainstream political realm in Pakistan.

JUI also emphasized the need to get an official definition of who was to count as a Muslim officially and to include the proclamation of Islamic faith in the oath of the President and Prime Minister offices in Pakistan to ensure that no “non-Muslim” could become the head of state.⁶⁸ The JI, going a step further, wanted to establish an ideal society of the faithful, excluding from their definition of Islam every Muslim who did not believe in the JI’s political ideology. Thus, the Pakistani state not only moved away from

⁶⁸ YouTube: Hazrat Maulana Mufti Mehmood (RA) (Amir JUI F) Speech History of Pakistan. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3KICsXlrKXc>. Accessed 2/27/14. The oath for the office of President and PM of Pakistan reads as follows: “I, (name), do solemnly swear that I am a Muslim and believe in the Unity and Oneness of Almighty Allah, the Books of Allah, the Holy Quran being the last of them, the Prophethood of Muhammextad as the last of the Prophets and that there can be no Prophet after him, the Day of Judgment, and all the requirements and teachings of the Holy Quran and Sunnah.”

the minimal definition of a Muslim, but also made it compulsory upon its citizens to declare their faith.

Although all non-Muslim religious communities were counted as minorities from the beginning of Pakistan, Pakistan also crafted its own minorities, both ethnic and religious, out of the Muslim majority. The declaration of Ahmadi Muslims as a non-Muslim minority is a significant event in the history of Pakistan. Pre-partition theological and political discord among Muslim Jamats (unions/ parties/ organizations) finally resulted in the state's 1974 declaration of Jamat-e-Ahmadiyya as a "non-Muslim minority." Jamat-e-Ahmadiyya Pakistan was criminalized for practicing Islam in public. One of the specific demands of the opposing groups such as Majlis-e-Ihrrar-e-Islam (The Society of Free Muslims) was to get Ahmadis declared a non-Muslim minority.⁶⁹ The purpose of this demand was to settle the theological doctrine not agreed upon by the rest⁷⁰ as well as to prevent Ahmadi Muslims from becoming politically prominent and powerful in Pakistan. In 1974, the state declared Ahmadis a non-Muslim minority in a classified in-camera session of the National Assembly of Pakistan.⁷¹ Then Prime Minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto later declared in a public meeting that this legislation had

⁶⁹ Syed Muhammad Kafeel Bukhari. *Majlis-e-Ihrrar-e-Islam. Tarrekh-o-Taaruf, Khidmat wa Ahdaaf*. Majlis-e-Ihrrar-e-Islam, Multan. 2012. (in Urdu).

http://ahrrar.org.pk/urdu_books/1929.pdf. Accessed: 2/27/14.

⁷⁰ Ahmadiyya Muslim Community believes that the long-awaited Messiah has come in the person of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (1835-1908). Mirza Ghulam Ahmad claimed to be the metaphorical second coming of Jesus of Nazareth, whose coming was foretold by the Prophet of Islam, Muhammad. This doctrine became contentious for other Muslim groups. See for more details: Al-Islam: The Official Website of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. <https://www.alislam.org/introduction/index.html>. Accessed: 5/30/14.

⁷¹ The proceedings were made public in 2011.

brought a 90-year-old problem to closure.⁷² This was the peak moment in the legislative and constitutional history of Pakistan, where it functioned like a theocratic state, convening a council and defining the tenets of Islamic faith in the fashion of the Christian synods/Councils beginning in the 4th century AD. The members of Jamat Ahmadiyya are to date persecuted by other religious groups for not submitting to the Constitution of Pakistan that declares them non-Muslims.

Sources

Individuals and the official records which could have been of help in this research are now spread over three different countries in South Asia and elsewhere in the world. Records related to the 1971 war remain classified in Bangladesh and Pakistan, which makes it difficult to understand the political conditions which prevailed in East Bengal in 1971 through the eyes of governments.

The foundational source for this research is my fieldwork conducted in different regions of Sindh (Ghotki, Dharki, Karachi, Mirpurkhas, Umerkot and Tharparkar district), which I began in 2009/10, as well as interviews which I conducted in Dhaka, Bangladesh. I have tried to include as many sections of Pakistani Hindus in this work as possible. While I was living with the members of the community in Sindh, elderly members of the Hindu community, journalists, lawyers, doctors, housewives, students, teachers, local Intellectuals, political workers and young girls (Hindu, Muslim, from all backgrounds) expressed their views on the issue. Intellectuals at Dhaka University and

⁷² Youtube: Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto claims credit for solving '90-years-old Ahmadi Question' and sowing Islamism
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GXoB2Z2e7Hk>. Accessed: 5/30/14.

BIDS (Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies) as well as friends in Dhaka also helped this work grow. Although I do not include any female political narratives in this work as such, my discussions with Hindu and Muslim women alike inform this work greatly. Hindu women and girls in Sindh who guided me to understand their religion, culture and rituals, especially those performed by young girls, helped me understand the meaning of being a female minority member in a society. Their experiences as Hindu women in a Pakistani society makes an entire different area of study which was too large to take on here.

As I proceeded with my fieldwork anywhere in Pakistan or in Dhaka, discussions took a political form. These discourses then became entangled and at times heavily loaded with historical baggage. In Sindh, fieldwork has been particularly difficult as members of the Hindu community hesitated to discuss certain issues openly. Also the regional and generational disconnect or suspicion that I was a government undercover agent left certain topics undiscussed. Although I was accommodated to a great extent, there were queries which were left blank by the persons talking to me. They instead insisted that I provide them an answer. There were also instances where persons and communities differed from each other about incidents and since I had no way to confirm or disprove what I had been told, I either leave them out or narrate them as they were narrated to me. There were also community members (male) who refused to narrate their experiences to me. Therefore, I had to turn to archives for the missing links.

Official records from the colonial and post-colonial periods, available through state and provincial archives in Pakistan and Bangladesh, have helped weave the history for this dissertation. The Sind Legislative Assembly Debates (1937-1947) and the

Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates (1947-1971) are major contributors in finding the missing narrative of Pakistani Hindus. These debates are massive and spread over many years. I only refer to segments of these debates in my work to fill in the missing voices. Other than the assembly debates, the Governor General of Pakistan Papers, the Correspondence of the First Governor of Sind Province, the Muslim League Papers, the Quaid-e-Azam Papers, the Government of Pakistan's official correspondence concerning Sindhi and East Bengali Hindus, correspondence between the Sindh and Central Governments of Pakistan, and official records of the Ministry of Rehabilitation (Refugee and Evacuee property), all available at National Archives or National Documentation Centre, Islamabad, are employed in this research. The Sindh Archives helped in accessing the colonial-period records of the province. The personal collection of Professor Jhumman Das, Home/Political Department records, and H.T Lambricks' ethnography of Sindh helped me understand colonial period politics in Sindh. I believe that there is much more available in the holdings, which was either not organized or was being held at the Hyderabad office in preparation for being sent to the Karachi office. I have also used the Home / Political Department's records of the Government of East Bengal, available at the National Archives in Dhaka, Bangladesh. These are an important source for understanding the post-Partition political and administrative situation between the two dominions. I have also used British Foreign Office Correspondence on the Bengal Disturbances of the 1950's, available through the Arizona State University Libraries.

Another important source for this dissertation, other than field work and official correspondence, is newspapers. Colonial period Sindhi language newspapers from pre-

Partition Sindh, although not yet organized at Sindh Archives; East Pakistani Newspaper collections at Dhaka University, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (previously Pakistan Institute of Development Economics); and West Pakistani (1947-1971) newspapers help me understand a great deal about the early Pakistani period politics. The Pakistan Times, Lahore's coverage of the minority debate in India and Pakistan immediately following the Partition is one of the major sources in this regard.

I have also used audio archives made available by Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation or other individuals or organizations through YouTube to understand the political rhetoric of Pakistani politicians in the public domain.

Scheme of chapters

Using all these source materials, I have distributed this dissertation into three further chapters. The chapters are arranged in an order of three main themes, i.e. loss of Hindu life from Pakistan, transference of Hindu property to state and Muslim ownership, and the political minoritization of Hindus in Pakistan. I approach these themes as interconnected processes. I begin discussing the loss of Hindu life from Sindh and East Bengal, as Partition resulted in an exodus of Hindu population from these regions and continues to remain so. This is followed by a discussion on the eviction of Hindus from their properties in Pakistan, which also resulted in the minoritization and loss of Hindu life from Pakistan. A gradual process of legislation and politics in post-Partition Pakistan also resulted in the reduction of Hindus' political stature and power, contributing to their minoritization.

Thus, chapter two discusses the loss of Hindu life, due to coerced and less coerced removal, from Pakistan by discussing the political context and the situation on the ground. I describe the situation in Sindh province and the policies of the Government of Pakistan and Sindh regarding the Hindu population of the province at the time of Partition. As mentioned earlier, I approach Sindh province from the Tharparkar-Rajasthan border. Currently, Tharparkar is one of twenty - eight districts of Sindh province. Then I explain the actions and official policies of the Government of Pakistan in the province of East Bengal, which later became East Pakistan. I explain the reaction of the Pakistani and Indian Governments to the migration of Hindus who wanted to stay back and did not intend to migrate from Sindh and East Bengal.

Chapter Three discusses the transfer of Hindu land to Muslim ownership in Pakistan through the legal frameworks of the Evacuee and Enemy Property Acts of 1948, 1965, and 1971. The land-based aspect of minoritization of Pakistani Hindus is related not only to the loss of landed property and businesses (economic factors) but also to divided families and the emotionally debilitating loss of homeland.

In Chapter Four, I examine the processes of political minoritization of Hindus in Pakistan and how they were converted from a mere numerical minority into people viewed as fifth columnists. During its first seven years, the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan downgraded its Hindu (both caste and scheduled-caste) members from the “political and communal other” to “enemies of the state and fifth columnists,” and finally it constitutionally excluded them from the affairs of the state. I explain how the state policies, majoritarian democratic politics and the parliamentary system, which had been re-shaping communities in colonial India, giving power to the numerical majority,

prevented certain communities from sharing power or getting equal admittance to it, including the religious minorities in Pakistan. I argue that modern European parliamentary notions of the rule of the numerical majority became institutionalized in colonial India through colonial channels and that these constitutional, legal and electoral frameworks played an important role in Pakistani politics, shaping the discourse on religious minorities in this modern nation-state.⁷³

I demonstrate that the parliamentary system of governance introduced by the British in colonial India continues to define majorities and minorities on communal lines and prevents numerically small and powerless religious communities from becoming equal to the majority ones in Pakistan. Insistence on numbers, especially in the case of religious minorities reduces them to mere statistical entities, assigning them an inferior status. During my fieldwork, I found a strong antipathy to the use of the word “minority” among all sections of Pakistani Hindu society. To be a minority, for the constitutional minorities, means being existentially inferior, politically unequal and powerless, whereas in their own view they are natives, holding a strong bond with their native land despite being overwhelmed by the majoritarian-hegemonic politics in Pakistan.

Before Partition, in Sindh in particular, despite facing discrimination on religious grounds, Hindus had remained an important part of the political and cultural milieu. Hindus were routinely invited to Islamic religious gatherings. However, this was discontinued gradually. The politics of exclusion, a close nexus between clergy and the state, and the anti-Hindu mindset that dominated Pakistan’s political scene from the outset (as the majority of politicians from Sindh and Dhaka were Muslim Leaguers who

⁷³ As well as ethnic.

had adopted an anti-Hindu policy in their pre-independence struggle) engrained the “Hindu” as an enemy in the future politics of Pakistan.

The first stage of minoritization of Pakistani Hindus was a decrease in their number. In next chapter I discuss the reduction in the mass of Hindu community in post-colonial Pakistan. I discuss the situation the community had to face arising after Partition. I also introduce the making of the post-Partition Tharparkar-Rajasthan border and of East Bengal.

LOSS OF HINDU LIFE FROM PAKISTAN – SINDH AND EAST BENGAL

Introduction

Following the arrest on 12 September 1948 of some Marwari merchants who were accused of insulting Jinnah's picture in Sirajganj, East Bengal, Ganshem Dass Birla⁷⁴ sent a letter to Khawaja Nazimuddin, the Governor General of Pakistan. The letter read as follows:

My dear Khawaja Sahib,
....Take the case of exodus of Hindus from East Bengal. This is assuming a gigantic proportion. And I fear this may lead someday to a great burst up. It will be very dangerous if such a thing at all happens...the Hindus are fleeing to India from East Bengal. And the Sindhis and Punjabi Hindus who migrated from Pakistan are finding it impossible to go back. I do not for a moment suggest that all those who had migrated from Pakistan or vice versa should be resettled in their original homes...I think it would be to the economic interest of Pakistan to encourage Sindhi Hindus to go back and settle down in Sind. Similarly, I think it is the duty of the Government in Eastern Pakistan to create a re-assuring atmosphere which will enable the Hindus to stay there peacefully. Things, I am told, have very much deteriorated since you left Bengal.”⁷⁵

Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy, (1892- 1963, a Muslim League politician, Bengal's Chief Minister in 1946, and later the fifth Prime Minister of Pakistan from 1956-1957), who happened to be in Calcutta at that time, also wrote a letter to the Premier of East Pakistan, Nur-ul-Amin, on 18 October 1948, informing him that the East Bengal government had stopped him from going to Dacca on the 15th. He wrote:

My dear Nurul Amin,

⁷⁴ A prominent Marwari Indian businessman. The letter is dated 18 October 1948.

⁷⁵ Government of Pakistan. File No: F.245/I/GG 47. GG 65. Arrest of Hindu Merchants in Sirajganj, East Bengal for Insulting Quaid-i-Azam's Picture. National Archives of Pakistan Holdings. Islamabad.

... The exodus restarted very soon thereafter. The position now is that the Hindus of East Bengal have come in such large numbers that a very serious situation has been created here, and the future of the Muslims of West Bengal and thereafter the future of the Muslims of India is at stake...it has not been possible to absorb the refugees in West Bengal...apart from the fact that such an exodus will be disastrous for human life, it will also create a problem for Pakistan which will be impossible to solve. The situation is growing more and more acute, acrimonious, and threatening every day and something has got to be done about it...as you know many top ranking Hindu leaders left Pakistan though quite a number of local influential Hindus remained behind. The recent searches of responsible Hindus for reasons that are best known to your government, have certainly had repercussions here on the general Hindu mass mind...These searches will lead to further exodus of leading Hindus which will be followed by an exodus of Hindus in general. ...but the fact remains that the exodus is there, it is continuing and even increasing in volume.⁷⁶

In West Pakistan, Jinnah had directed the Emergency Committee of Cabinet on 6 November 1947 to “investigate the truth or otherwise of the information that there was a deep laid and well organized conspiracy among non-Muslims particularly in the Province of Sind to leave Pakistan with the object of disrupting the normal economic, commercial and business life of the province which was hitherto largely in their hands.”⁷⁷ After the disappearance of religious relics from Hazrat Bal Shrine located in Indian Kashmir stirred agitation in East Pakistan against its Hindu population in 1964, in West Pakistan, the Ministry of Interior’s fortnightly note reported:

The events in Kashmir seem to have caused another wave of panic amongst the local Hindus, and there is again a rush for the port. Even before the Kashmir incident, the evacuation of Hindus from Sind continued daily. It is difficult to

⁷⁶ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No: F.245/I/GG 47. GG 65. Arrest of Hindu Merchants in Sirajganj, East Bengal for Insulting Quaid-i-Azam’s picture. National Archives Holdings. Islamabad.

⁷⁷ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No: 118/CF/47. Investigation by Intelligence Bureau into Reasons for Mass Exodus of Non-Muslims from Sind. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

understand the reason for this exodus when the Province has been so peaceful throughout....⁷⁸

The arrest of Marwaris of Sirajganj and the letters written by Suhrawardy and Birla as well as the Ministry of the Interior's report indicate three issues faced by an immediate post-Partition Pakistan: i) the state of humiliation and insecurity for Hindus, ii) the continued expelling of Hindus from East Bengal and Sind, and, iii) the mistrust on the part of Hindus. The Marwaris in Sirajganj were arrested on false accusations and were later paraded in the streets with ropes and handcuffs. According to Birla's letter, they were humiliated in every possible way. He also stated that, after the arrest of the Marwaris, some Muslim groups were blackmailing the other Hindu businessmen of the area and were extracting money from them in the name of protection. The first arrests happened on 12 September 1948. More Marwari merchants were arrested on 29 September 1948. By that time, 51 Marwaris had been arrested and others had been disarmed and had had their guns taken away.

Certain groups of people from the regions that now included Pakistan or India had no option but to cross over the Indo-Pak boundaries at the time of Partition or were later forced to do so.⁷⁹ Although this migration may seem voluntary, it was not. Huge numbers

⁷⁸ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No: 118/CF/47. Investigation by Intelligence Bureau into Reasons for Mass Exodus of Non-Muslims from Sind. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

⁷⁹ The term "forced migration" implies that ordinary migration does not involve force. Forced migration means that "it is not the 'push' of dire living conditions which forces people to migrate. it refers to the violence executed in the name, if not by the consent, of state authorities.

of people were forced to migrate from their native homes in the wake of communal violence, fear and insecurity and were thus completely wiped out in the places they left.⁸⁰

As a result of Partition, new international borders were created in Sindh and East Bengal. The areas which therefore became new borderlands had been the center/axis for the people who migrated in the aftermath of Partition. There was not a single ‘migration’ that took place following the Partition. Rather there were waves of eviction. These waves were different in different regions. For example, the experience in the border region of Tharparkar was different from that in the rest of Sindh. In East Bengal, the migration of Hindu people continued for decades after the Partition, while the movement of people across the Punjab boundary had long ceased.⁸¹ For Tharparkar, it was not until 1971, i.e. 24 years after Partition, that a huge number of Sodha Rajputs were forced to abandon the region.

On the eve of Partition, the largest Hindu population in Pakistan was concentrated in the provinces of East Bengal and Sindh. Over the years, the Hindu population in East Pakistan fell substantially. It fell from 29.7 percent in 1941 to 23.0 percent in 1947 and 14.0 percent in 1974.⁸² The Dacca District Gazetteer mentions that a large number of wealthy caste Hindus left the district for West Bengal after Partition.⁸³ The impact of Partition on Dacca district and city was as exceptional as it was in Karachi. As an

⁸⁰ Pandey, Gyanendra. 1999. “Can a Muslim be an Indian.” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*. 41: 4. Accessed: 2/10/2014. P. 612.

⁸¹ Bessel, Richard and Claudia B. Haake. editors. 2009. *Removing Peoples: Forced Removal in the Modern World*. London: Oxford University Press. P. 324.

⁸² Milam, William B. 2009. *Bangladesh and Pakistan: Flirting with Failure in South Asia*. London: Hurst and Company. P. 120.

⁸³ General Editor. Rizvi, S.N.H. 1969. *East Pakistan District Gazetteers. Dacca*. Dacca: East Pakistan Govt. Press. P. 87.

aftermath of the Partition, the population of Dacca city and the surrounding areas grew because of the migration of Muslims not only from India but also from other parts of Pakistan.⁸⁴

On the other hand, the Census of 1951 recorded a remarkable disparity in the percentage of Muslims and Hindus between two censuses of 1941 and 1951 in Sindh province due to the large-scale exodus of Hindus and the influx of Muslim refugees. As a result of Partition in 1947, the percentage of Muslims in Sindh increased from 73.2 to 90.1 percent and that of Hindus decreased from 20.9 to 2.9 percent. Among non-Muslims, the percentage of Scheduled Castes, which had been 5.2 in 1941, rose to 6.9. Due to the migration of Sikhs from Sindh, the percentage of members of “other religions” went down from 0.7 to 0.1 percent. Other than Tharparkar (61.8%) and Hyderabad (91%) districts, all other districts of Sindh were over 95% Muslim in 1951. The Muslim population had risen by 38.3% and the Hindu population had gone down by 84.3%. A 60% increase in the Muslim population was recorded in Hyderabad district, with a decrease of 95% in the Hindu population. Tharparkar district (that was much larger than the present day Tharparkar district in 1947) showed an increase of 54.5% in Muslims and a decrease of nearly 54.6 in Hindus. Among non-Muslims, Scheduled Castes had increased by about 49.0 percent overall in Sindh (66% in Hyderabad district and 63% in Tharparkar district).⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Ibid, 77-78.

⁸⁵ Sorley, Dr. H.T. 1968. *The Gazetteer of West Pakistan: The Former Province of Sindh (including Khairpur State)*. Published under the authority of Government of West Pakistan. Lahore: Gazetteer Cell Board of Revenue. P. 215.

This chapter discusses the loss of Hindu life, due to coerced and less coerced removal, from Pakistan by referring to the political context and the situation on the ground. I will first describe the situation in Sindh province and the policies of the Government of Pakistan regarding the Hindu population of the province. I approach Sindh province from the Tharparkar-Rajasthan border. Then I explain the treatment and official policies of the Government of Pakistan in the province of East Bengal, which later became East Pakistan. I will explain the reaction of the Pakistani and Indian governments to the huge evictions of Hindu people who wanted to stay back and did not intend to migrate from Sindh and East Bengal. I will attempt to provide an understanding of the reactions and responses of people who were alienated by the boundary from their homes and work, as the free movement which they had experienced prior to Partition was now restricted. In the following, I discuss the specific post-Partition situation of people in these three specific regions (Sindh and East Bengal) and the attitude of the Pakistani state towards the eviction of people.

The Loss of Hindu Life from West Pakistan - Sindh Province

Tharparkar

It is held that Sindh Province was not physically cleaved on the eve of Partition. This assertion ignores the fact that a *leeko* (*Dhatki: line*), an international boundary, *Inida-Pakistan jo border* or *India Pakistan jo had, dang*, (the limit), or simply border, was drawn in the desert district of the province, partitioning it from India.

The British conquest of Sindh was completed in 1843, but the first British invasion of Tharparkar took place in 1832. Hughes's Gazetteer mentions that the

boundaries of the British province of Sindh were adjacent on the east to the Rajput states of Jaisalmir, Jodhpur, or Marwar and to the South to the Rann of Kachh.⁸⁶ Within the British set-up, Thurr and Parkur (12,729 sq. miles) were a political superintendency, looked over by a political superintendent with extensive revenue and magisterial powers, a deputy collector and several Mukhtiarkars.⁸⁷ Smyth's *Gazetteer of the Province of Sind* describes the boundaries of district Tharparkar as follows: "it is bounded on the north by the territories of His Highness the Mir of Khairpur, on the east by the states of Jesalmir and Marwar, on the south by the Rann of Cutch and on the west by the Nawabshah and Hyderabad Districts of Sind. It is divided into two main portions which are absolutely distinct from one another, the irrigated area of the west, sometimes known as the pat, and the desert area to the east, the Thar, which constitutes a portion of the vast tract of country which embraces the Rajputana states and is often designated in maps as the Great Desert."⁸⁸

British reports show that a large percentage of Hindus, including Bhils and Kolis (spelled Kohlis elsewhere), lived in Tharparkar. As a matter of fact, this district was different in this respect from the other districts of Sindh province. "The large number of Hindus in this district differentiates it from any other district in Sind."⁸⁹ Among the many Hindu groups of Tharparkar, the British found the Soda/Sodha Rajpoots to be the dominant group of landlords and administrators of Tharparkar. British documents mention that

⁸⁶ Hughes, A.W. 1876. *Gazetteer of the Province of Sind*. 2nd Edition. London: George Bell and Sons. P. 1.

⁸⁷ Ibid, 68.

⁸⁸ Smyth, J.W. 1919. *Gazetteer of the Province of Sind: Thar and Parkar District*. Bombay, Reprinted by Sang-e-Meel Publications, Lahore (2005). P. 1.

⁸⁹ Ibid, 8.

“Rajpoots, originating from Malwa, conquered Umerkot fort in 1226 A.D. The Umerkot fort is the same fort where Humayun and his family were sheltered and Akbar was born in 1542. In 1750, Umerkot was conquered by the Kalhoras, a Sindhi Muslim dynasty. By that time, the Sodas/Sodhas had spread to the desert up to Parkar.⁹⁰

The British presence in adjoining Rajputana or Rajasthan “(the abode of princes)”⁹¹ goes back to 1818, when they arrived in Udaipur.⁹² Prior to that, the boundaries of this region and various Rajput principalities changed constantly. In 1560, Rajwarra (Rajputana) was included in the Mughal subah of Ajmer. The political system of Rajputana had been working on the basis of the interrelationship of clan affiliation and land control⁹³ along with alliances with regional forces. The geographical position of Rajasthan has rendered it the scene of invasions, as it is a gateway to the Northwest, to Iran. Jason Freitag writes that “From the armies of Alexander to the coming of the Mughals, Rajasthan had been the arena for many a battle, and the profusion of fortifications attested to the position of danger in which the Rājput̄s lived.”⁹⁴ According to a local Sodha Rajput leader, desert Thar had always been divided into two parts. One part of Thar was known as *Rajputna* and the other one as *Dhaat (i.e. Thar)*. Furthermore,

⁹⁰ Raikes, Stanley Napier. 1859. *Memoir on the Thurr and Parkur Districts of Sind, 1856*. Bombay: Education Society's Press. P. 4-5.

⁹¹ Tod, James. 1972. *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan or the Central and Western Rajput States of India*. With a preface by Douglas Sladen. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. P. 1.

⁹² Freitag, J. 2009. *Serving Empire, Serving Nation : James Tod and the Rajputs of Rajasthan*. European Expansion and Indigenous Response. Volume 5. Boston: Brill Academic Publishers. P. 51.

⁹³ Hallissey, Robert C. 1977. *The Rajput Rebellion against Aurangzeb: A Study of the Mughal Empire in Seventeenth-Century India*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press. P. 10.

⁹⁴ Freitag 2009, 31.

the gateway to Thar from the plains of Sindh is Amarkot⁹⁵ [Umerkot]. Desert Thar starts from Umerkot and the plains of the Indus begin from Amarkot, cross Sindh and go all the way to the Arabian Sea. Historically, trade routes passed along this stretch of land. When Sher Shah defeated Humayun, he took the same route through Amarkot to cross the River Indus to reach Iran. James Tod mentioned Tharparkar as the eighth state of “Rajwarra” and called it “the Indian Desert to the Valley of Indus.”⁹⁶

The British first arrived in Tharparkar in 1832 from Bhuj (Gujarat). British documents mention the long-term efforts to deal with banditry inflicted upon Kutch from the Parkur region. The bandits would conduct banditry in Kutch and then cross the boundary into Parkur after plundering. On 1 November 1832, the British force from Bhooj (Bhuj) marched into Parkur, leading the current Rana, Soda Jugoojee, to escape to Sindh. He was later handed over to the British Government by the Government of Sind. The British first imprisoned Jugoojee in Kutch and then later gave him a Jagir. A new Rana of Parkur, Kurunjee, who was at that time only three years old, was installed.⁹⁷

The British conquest of Sindh (Hyderabad Court) was completed in February 1843, following the Battle of Miani. Sindh was annexed to the rest of India, and so this region also became part of the British Indian Empire. This conquest transferred the allegiance of the inhabitants of the province from Talpur Mirs to the British Government.⁹⁸ “...[W]hen England’s banner floating from the citadel of Hyderabad, announced the pleasing intelligence that Sind and its dependencies had become a part of

⁹⁵ As pronounced by local Hindus.

⁹⁶ Tod 1972, 2.

⁹⁷ Raikes 1856, 25-27.

⁹⁸ Ibid, 28.

our India Empire... [, as] soon as the excitement of the first shock was over, the Thurr and Parkur people showed a great desire to be placed under the Political Agent in Kutch....”⁹⁹ This was not surprising for the British, as they were aware of the matrimonial alliances between Sodhas and the Rajputs of Kutch Bhujj.¹⁰⁰ A letter to the Rana of Nuggur Parkar (Nagar Parkar), dated 15 October 1844, informed him that the country of Sind and the district of Nuggur Parkur, a dependency of Sind, had fallen into the possession of the East India Company. The Governor of Sind, Charles Napier, further awarded him sanad of two villages and exempted him from taxes.¹⁰¹ Various principalities of Thurr and Parkar then progressively went into submission to British authority. Thurr and Parkur were initially given under the administration of the Political Agent of Kutch.¹⁰²

The Talpurs, the last Sindhi dynasty before the British, treated the Thurr and Parkur regions as khalsa or crown possessions. But the Rana of Jodhpur had claims on certain areas of Thurr and Parkur too.¹⁰³ In order to solve this dispute, a boundary commission was appointed in 1849 to demarcate the boundary between Thurr and Parkur, on the one side, and Marwar, on the other (the Sind-Marwar boundary); this demarcation was accomplished in 1850.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁹ Ibid, 29.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 29.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 92.

¹⁰² Ibid, 30.

¹⁰³ Ibid, 49.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 73.

In 1856, the British merged Thurr and Parkur districts into Sind province. They had been under the control of the assistant political agent in Kachh¹⁰⁵ and Bhooj¹⁰⁶ since 1844.¹⁰⁷ Under British control and different British administrators, Sindh evolved into five districts (Karachi, Hyderabad, Shikarpur, Upper Sind Frontier, Thar and Parkar) and three collectorates (Karachi, Hyderabad and Shikarpur).¹⁰⁸ Sind was headed by an officer called the “Commissioner in Sind,” who was subordinate to the Government of Bombay.¹⁰⁹

Other than administrative and revenue procedures, the British administration introduced a judicial department in Sind that was different from the traditional one. The British had also established a court of session in Mithi, Tharparkar. Sind Police Force, Public Works Department, Customs Department, Postal Department, Educational Department, and Civil Medical, Telegraph, Survey and Settlements, Marine, and Irrigation Departments were also introduced.¹¹⁰ Cattle lifting and thefts were the main offences in Tharparkar during the British period. Local people mention bands of thieves crossing to Rajputana or vice versa after committing their offense. The local tribal heads would then contact each other to claim the stolen items back. An old Sodha Rajput told me that although the Rajputs resisted the British and refused to pay taxes to *bhoora* (a color-faded person), as they wanted to continue their own tradition, the British brought

¹⁰⁵ Hughes 1876, 68.

¹⁰⁶ Raikes 1859, 1.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 44.

¹⁰⁸ Hughes 1876, 66.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 65.

¹¹⁰ Ibid, 65, 68.

the rule of law. “They ended the daily disputes here; [modern] education was brought here by them.”

After the 1857 “Mutiny,” the British had also introduced two types of telegraph service in Sindh, one international and the other regional. The Indo-European services connected Karachi (in 1860) to England via two electronic routes for the telegraph services: via Russia and via Turkey.¹¹¹ The government telegraph system connected Hyderabad to Chachra (contemporary Chachro) via Umerkot (90 miles). This line was under the charge of the superintendent of Rajputana Division, located at Disa.¹¹²

Tharparkar was slower to get international exposure than the port city of Karachi. Historically, people from Rajputana or other neighboring states had migrated to the Thar region in case of famine, and Thar was able to provide them with food and shelter. Hughes’ Gazetteer mentions that a famine struck the state of Marwar in 1869, following which “thousands of starving inhabitants immigrated into the Thar and Parkar...they were kindly treated.”¹¹³

The British had to counter what they term “rebellion” (referred to as a “War of Independence” by local people) in the state of Nagarparkar (Parkar) in 1858/9. The Thakur of Nagar Parkar, Rana (Rano Karanje), had refused to pay revenue to the British and formed an alliance with some local Thakurs against the British. The British sent forces from Hyderabad under the command of Colonel Evans. They were successful in

¹¹¹ Ibid, 75-76.

¹¹² Ibid, 77.

¹¹³ Ibid, 63.

Also see: 1879. *The Gazetteer of Rajputana*. Volume II. Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing. P. 7.

arresting the Rana and his minister, who were later tried and sentenced to 14 and 10 years respectively.¹¹⁴

At the time of Partition, the Sodhas remained the landed elites of Tharparkar. The British had to fight with local Rajput rulers in order to seize power in Tharparkar. Sodhas in the region trace their history of alliance and co-existence with Muslims back to the Mughals, when Humayun took refuge with the Rajputs of Umarkot after being defeated by Sher Khan Sur.¹¹⁵

Many villages in Tharparkar trace their history back several centuries. People I spoke with made references to cordial relationships between Rajputs and Moghuls. A Sodha man who was born in 1938 told me that his village had existed since the time of the Moghuls. He said that Rajputs in his village had moved from Umerkot (also a Rajput state, where Akbar was born) and had come all the way to Mithi (the contemporary District Headquarters). Mithi used to be a Nara Sodha state. The Nara clan was the most prominent of the Rajput clans that once existed in the region. Aljee, another prominent Thakur who belonged to the Akha Sodha branch of the Rajputs, was allied with the Rana of Nagar against the British. After occupying the desert, the British distributed jagir lands to people. The old Sodha person told me that Aljee refused to surrender. He kept defeating British armies in the mountains. But since the British had advanced military technology, Aljee had to go into hiding. The British arrested Rooplo Kohli, who was loyal to the Rajputs, and asked him the whereabouts of Aljee. But he refused to give them the information.

¹¹⁴ Hughes 1876, 57.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 30.

Making of Tharparkar - Rajasthan Border:

Today, Dhat or Thar is situated within the border of Pakistan. The local people, Hindu and Muslim both, have blood relationships on the Indian side of the border. Tharparkar does not appear in the narratives of Partition¹¹⁶ and is mentioned only in passing in Indo-Pak war histories of 1965 and 1971. Before Partition, Sindh and Rajasthan were connected via railways as well. *Raja ji Rail*, the train of the Raja, used to run on a 650 km track from Jodhpur to Hyderabad.¹¹⁷

After Partition, the Sind-Jodhpur border and the Gadro-Monabao border were officially used as posts of entry and exit by outflowing Hindu and incoming Muslim refugees. Muslim refugees at Barmer, Phulera, Ajmer, Agra, Delhi and some other camps used this border to enter West Pakistan. The first railway station on the Sindh border, after Partition, was located at Khokrapar. After reaching the Jodhpur railway station or

¹¹⁶ A Sodha Rajput told me that Tharparkar, despite being a Hindu-dominated region, decided to join Pakistan. He told me that at the time of Partition Hindus were in the majority in this district. In the 1946 elections, Indians had to decide whether India would be divided or not. In order to decide how the division would take place, the Raj held an election. The election was mainly contested between the All India Congress and the All India Muslim League. It was decided that areas in which the majority voted for the Muslim League would become Pakistan, and the others would become India. Rana Arjun Singh (the Rana of Rana Jagir-Umerkot) then supported the Muslim League in this region. When Rana Arjun Singh decided that he was going to contest from the Muslim League platform, the Congress leadership used his matrimonial relationships in Rajasthan to attempt to stop him from making that decision. But he refused for the sake of geography, i.e. Thar. Rana Arjun Singh agreed that Tharparkar had a majority Hindu population and that the question of the moment was to choose between Hindus and Muslims however, preferred geography over religious identity. Therefore he rejected Congress [and kept Tharparkar intact as a part of Sindh]. He decided that Dhat and Amarkot had always remained part of Sindh, associated with the Indus, and that they would remain that way.

¹¹⁷ A.B. Arisar. "A Railway Station Steeped in History." Dawn.com. <http://www.dawn.com/news/742220/a-railway-station-steeped-in-history>. Accessed: 12/26/2013.

Monabao railway station, refugees would usually disembark from passenger or goods trains and enter West Pakistan either on foot or using camel transport made available then on the border by the Pakistan Government. Upon their arrival, desert shuttles transported refugees either to Khokrapar or to Pithoro. There, in refugee registration camps, officials then sorted them out according to their professions and further distributed them within Sindh for rehabilitation.

By May 1950, the Government of Pakistan had decided to take no more refugees through this section and discussions to seal the Sind-Jodhpur border were underway. It was communicated to the Sindh Government that the Central Government wanted the border to be sealed. It was also decided to increase the number of border police and the frequency of their patrols, in order to stop the illegal infiltration of refugees into West Pakistan. The Government viewed this border as a 'safety-valve' for Indian Muslims, but, on the other hand, it also felt the danger of infiltration by Indian agents through this border. In order to discourage refugees from entering Pakistan, the authorities decided to recall the facilities provided to refugees upon arrival and to use persuasion to ask them to go back. The Indian Government was advised to set up a check post opposite to the Pakistani check post at the point of entry at Khokrapar. Only refugees possessing valid travel documents were to be allowed to enter via this border. It was also decided, first in May and then in June 1950, that railway service between Khokrapar and the Indian border be stopped, in order to discourage Indian Muslims from entering West Pakistan. The concerned authorities also decided to suspend the shuttle service between Khokrapar and Pithoro. The Sind Police was asked to set up at the border a temporary Police Camp, staffed by police as well as non-official Muslim Leaguers, to persuade refugees to return.

They also requested the Indian Government to use propaganda in Muslim refugee camps in India to send the people back to their homes. In case people refused to go back, they would have to produce documents proving that they had been driven out of their homes in India and that they were not Indian agents or criminals. Such people were directed to inform the police upon their arrival in Sind and were to be kept under surveillance.¹¹⁸

Due to the non-availability of the required police force and other resources to patrol the border, the date of implementation of sealing the Sind border was moved to 1 June 1950. It was also decided that the goods train would not run past Chhor. Due to the summer weather and the harsh conditions of this terrain, it was difficult to seal the border completely. It was described as an extremely hot 40 miles of barren, sandy desert without shade, shelter or drinking water. “The situation is not free from anxiety since if refugees in considerable number attempt to cross the desert and any of them die of thirst on the way there will be a public outcry....” In just two days, 29 and 30 May 1950, respectively, 750 and 400 refugees entered Pakistan.¹¹⁹

The Liaquat-Nehru pact, a pact between the government of India and Pakistan to settle the issues of minorities in the respective countries, had been signed on 8 April 1950 in Delhi. The Government of Pakistan wanted to discourage the movement of people in and out of its territories. On 3 July 1950, the Ministry of the Interior decided to stop all facilities for refugees provided at the border, except for drinking water. They further decided refugees who still wanted to enter Pakistan without proper documents would not

¹¹⁸ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No: 95/CF/50-1.i) Reimplementation of Permit on Sind Border, ii) Measures to ensure effective sealing of Sind Jodhpur borer, iii) Illegal influx of refugees through Khokropar. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

be prosecuted, and that at least some facilities, such as food and cholera vaccinations, would be maintained at Khokrapar. The goods wagon would be kept running, but not for refugee transportation. Karachi informed New Delhi via a telegram in May that no Muslim refugees should be allowed to proceed beyond the Indian customs outpost at Barmer. During the harvest season, it was decided to withdraw the camel transport from carrying refugees as well, since they were required for grain transportation. To further discourage the people who were waiting to cross the border, it was announced that it would be difficult to provide them water as well. “Water tanks can’t be moving.... Sind desert can’t be crossed on foot.... [T]here are no roads and no means of transportation, and even camels will not be available....”¹²⁰ On the other hand, in a secret letter to government officials, they were advised to treat refugees gently and to provide them with water and shelter at Khokrapar. It was not intended for people to die of exposure in the desert. “Government do not want that there should be any loss of life either because of force or exposure or thirst or starvation. This is a very delicate matter.... [T]hese are top secret instructions and must not be divulged to the public.” In the month of August 1950, 150-200 people arrived at Khokrapar.¹²¹

In 1950, the Government of Pakistan had initiated a program for the repatriation of refugees. The first batch of 5000 refugees was returned to Uttar Pradesh by the third week of July, 1950. The Government of Pakistan requested the Government of India to take back another 6000 people from UP in September and October. Another 75,000

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid.

refugees from UP and some other areas were also to be sent back. Among these refugees were a large number of people who had left their families in India.¹²²

In November 1950, 145 refugees were reported to have crossed the Jodhpur-Sind border to enter West Pakistan. In August 1951, it was decided to increase the number of police at the Sind border, and the Sind Government was instructed to make proper intelligence arrangements at Khokrapar and “other areas on our side of the border where Hindus are living in large numbers.” In 1951, the Pakistan Citizenship Act was introduced and implemented. The intelligence staff in the border region was given authority to take steps against people they thought were not bona fide citizens of Pakistan.¹²³

As both states were actively involved in propaganda against each other, this border also drew one such attempt. In 1949, the Ayodhya conflict took place in India. This issue was shown as one of the reasons for the exodus of Hindu refugees via the Khokrapar border. A handout issued by the Government of Pakistan’s Press Information Department on 24 September 1951, titled “Paper on Plight of Muslims in India and Causes of Exodus through Khokrapar”, covered issues regarding the future of mosques in holy cities and the economic degeneration of Muslims in India.¹²⁴

The demography of this region, historically part of Rajasthan for close relationships, changed only slightly in 1947. In the official records, I could find mention of only one border village, Gadro, whose Hindu inhabitants had shifted to India.¹²⁵ This

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

border remained porous, allowing the local people continue their relations on both sides of the border with minimal restrictions, till the 1965 Indo-Pak war. Local people mention that, in the case of a wedding procession (janj) to Rajasthan, prior to the 1965 war, they were required only to inform the in-charge at the check post about where they were heading and with how many people. No travel documents were required. The border was sealed gradually, with the final stroke coming in 1971.

Pakistan had an increased presence of military in this region after the April 1965 boundary conflict over the Rann of Kutch. During the 1965 war, the Pakistan rangers¹²⁶ advanced into Indian territories with the help of 50,000 local *Hur* volunteers (*razakars*), the *mureeds* of Pir Pagaro (the title of the spiritual leader of the Hurs - a Sindhi Sufi community. Pir Pagaro had declared his community free under British rule in Sindh and members of his community were tried and interned during the British period). Pakistani rangers were able to capture Indian posts¹²⁷ and therefore claimed victory.¹²⁸ The total area captured by the Pakistani army in Rajasthan at the time of the ceasefire was 1200 sq meters.¹²⁹ As far as 1971 is concerned, the Tharparkar-Rajasthan sector was not the main battlefield. The main battlefield was East Pakistan and the important cities of West Pakistan. In this sector, the Indians claimed victory in the Battle of Longewala as well as

¹²⁶ Previously Sindh Rifles (1943), Sindh Police Rangers (1948), West Pakistan Rangers (1958) and Pakistan Rangers (1971). Pakistan Rangers Sindh. History. <http://pakistanrangerssindh.org/ROKC1965.php>. Accessed: 12/14/2013.

¹²⁷ Pakistan Rangers Sindh. Indo-Pak war September 1965. [http://pakistanrangerssindh.org/1965\(2\).php](http://pakistanrangerssindh.org/1965(2).php). Accessed: 12/14/2013.

Also: "Enemy's Brigade Attack on Rajasthan Repulsed." *The Pakistan Observer*, Dacca. 10 October 1965.

¹²⁸ Youtube. 1965 Indian Attack Lahore Pakistan vs India 65 war <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5mp8YB7X-Q0>. Accessed: 12/13/2013.

¹²⁹ "Areas Held by Pakistan and India on Ceasefire Day." *The Pakistan Observer*, Dacca. 6 October 1965.

in the captured Pakistani area of Tharparkar. Local people do not mention violence or bloodshed during the war. People of one village, Janjhi, informed me about an encounter they had with Indian forces and bandits on one cold morning in December. These were challenging days, as people had to leave their houses and migrate. Prior to the actual attack by the Indian army on Tharparkar, in December of 1971, local Hindus serving in government offices had been transferred to Sindh. But those who were not government servants stayed in their homes. Many Hindu people I spoke to told me that the Indian army came in asking about the whereabouts of 'Muslims.' Many Hindus had also moved to refugee camps that had been established in India. With the advance of the Indian army in the region, the Pakistani forces withdrew further into Sindh and focused on defending other sectors. Many families were divided between refugee camps and Sindh. There were at least seven sectors in which Indian troops advanced in Tharparkar, approaching it from various directions. The attacks began on 4 December (Gadro sector) and concluded with attacks on the Bhalwa sector (17-22 December), when Indian platoons advanced towards Chahchro via Islamkot-Mithi.¹³⁰ The local Muslims refer to this conflict not as a war but as a rebellion in East Pakistan. Both wars generated tensions among the local Hindus and Muslims for a short period of time, mainly due to looted cattle and household materials. Local Hindus also told me that the Pakistan Army had not asked them to leave the area.

The ultimate result of sealing the border was an end to the passage and the historical trade route that had once connected Rajasthan, Gujarat, Sindh, and beyond. It created hardships in arranging Sodha Rajput women's marriages, on the other side in

¹³⁰ Pakistan Rangers Sindh: 1971 War <http://pakistanrangerssindh.org/1971.php>. Accessed: 12/14/2013.

Rajasthan. Sodha Rajput women are traditionally wed to Jadeja Rajput men. The restricted travel conditions and increasing cost of wedding expenditures prevents the families from getting to know each other before the wedding, often leading to fraudulent marriages and the abandonment of wedded women in India.

Following Partition, uncertainty prevailed among the people of Tharparkar. Many people didn't know what Partition meant. An old Sodha Rajput told me that when Pakistan was newly created, people didn't know what to do. Tharparkar district had 52% Hindu population and it also included Sanghar and Mirpurkhas districts at that time. (The British district of Tharparkar included more districts than of today's demarcation). He recalled that the Partition took place all of a sudden and people didn't know what would happen. They couldn't think properly and were worried about what would happen to them, so some Hindus started to leave. There was uncertainty.

According to the old Sodha:

With the advent of Pakistan and India, Karachi, Hyderabad and Mirpurkhas burned after 1947. Sikhs and Diwans [Sindhi Hindus] left for India. Whatever happened at that time continues to happen today. At that time it was popular knowledge that India was the country for Hindus and Pakistan was [the country] for Muslims. The educated people [among Hindus] had understood what the British had done so they calculated their options. They foresaw that since their religion was Hindu, they knew that they not be facilitated in Pakistan, so they left for India. But the poor people could not migrate, so they stayed here.

A man from the Maheshwari community told me that his parents had business in a village located on the border at the time of Partition. They left their possessions there and waited for things to get settled. Many people gave their jewelry to his parents to keep safe.

Local people also mention that until 1954 there was free movement between the two countries; then people slowly got settled down. "People finally became conceptually

ready that they had to live with Partition so they made up their minds.” This also perhaps refers to India and Pakistan sealing this border. There was however uncertainty among the Hindus who did not leave. “Those who left, left and those who stayed, stayed. They didn’t know what Muslims would do to them.”

I discuss in detail the fact that the Governments of Sindh and Pakistan were perplexed about Hindus leaving Sindh in “droves” in the absence of any communal violence. Some of the people I talked to told me that not everyone wanted to leave in 1947, and that those who left wanted to return. They refer to an environment of fear and harassment that surrounded them:

A lot of people [Hindu] thought that they would return so they gave their keys to their Muslim neighbors. They wanted to return but they didn’t return. People from Thar migrated on camels. People here were scared by Muslim politicians’ speeches made in Sindh before Partition. They scared Hindus about their honor by referring to their women. The Sindhi politicians, in their speeches, reminded Hindus that before Partition Muslim women went out to the fields with food; after Pakistan would have been achieved, we [Muslims] would make Hindu women do that. This is what created uncertainty and fear among people. They feared for their honor.

This indicated the bad treatment for the Hindus; it also made their position fragile with the mention of women in a degraded way as going to fields with food puts a woman in public space in a way that is considered degrading along with a fallen position for Hindu women in society.

Tharparkar was not a desired destination for incoming refugees as it was off the train route used to transport incoming refugees to Karachi. Their main destination was Karachi and not Tharparkar. “A lot of people [Muslims] came from the other side of the

border but they didn't stay here [in the desert], as this was not a developed region at that time. There was nothing to eat here, and so who would have wanted to stay here?"

A retired high school teacher from the Khatri community (b. 1932) narrated his memories of Partition days to me in the following words:

In 1947, I was in the 5th English grade of my school. In those days 7th grade was the grade of matriculation. We used to have the vernacular exam, which I had passed. Because of Partition high school was closed down and many of my classmates left for India and some stayed here. I didn't have money to continue my education so I quit my education in class five and I became a clerk in the treasury. Because of Partition there was a lack of staff in government offices so people without matriculation were also being accepted as government servants. Therefore, I applied and received the order of appointment in Mirpurkhas where I served at the start of my service. Not many people migrated from here [Tharparkar] after Partition. People didn't know what 'Partition' was even more than five years after Partition. The passage [border] was open and people moved freely. People knew only this much: that the other side was India and this was Pakistan but they could still travel frequently back and forth on camels. There was no prohibition or restriction on travelling. Later on there was some restriction on travel, after 1952, I guess.

The dominant Rajputs didn't see a reason to migrate from Tharparkar. According to one account, in 1947 only 5% (local estimate, no official figures are available) of Hindus migrated from Tharparkar. For the Hindu people of Tharparkar, it was the Hindus of upper Sindh, known as Diwan, who migrated in large numbers. Some Tharparkar Hindus I spoke with opined that Diwans and Lohanas were not in the majority in the areas from where they migrated; they were a minority in those areas, therefore they migrated. However, Thari Hindus who were living on and around the (present) border had no reason to leave. A Sodha Rajput told me, while explaining the history of his community in this region:

We live in an area which stretches over 450 miles along the Indo-Pak border, from the Runn of Kutch to Bahawalpur. We were the majority in our area. These

people [Rajputs] never out-migrated from Sindh, only minorities [Sindhi Hindus from Upper Sindh] migrated from Sindh in 1947. Hindus were powerful in Sindh during the British time. They were so because they were educated and literate. We misused the administration given to us by the British. We didn't know how to use it. The electorate system was new for us. Do you know who was allowed to vote [at that time]? A Khat-e-daar owning not less than 15 acres of land, only he was allowed to vote. People didn't know about the consequences. Migration never happened from our area, only the business class migrated from Upper Sindh.

However, after Partition things didn't remain the same for the politically dominant Rajputs of Tharparkar and the upper-caste Hindus of Sindh. The refugees aggressively sought Sindh as a home, and because of the government's efforts to settle them there, things started changing for the native Hindus. For only, 24 years after Partition, the major Rajput tribe, the Sodhas, decided to leave Pakistan. This happened approximately a year after Thakur Lachman Singh (the Thakur of Chachro) gave in to the mounting political tactics to contain him. Some people told me that tension among Hindus and Muslims grew in the region in the years following the Partition, as personal animosity would lead some people to complain to the police that someone else had visited India, and then the authorities would pursue that person. There were several incidents in which people were arrested on allegations of having visited India, especially Thakurs.

A Maheshwari person narrated the changed situation for the Hindu communities of Sindh in the following words:

We [Hindus] are more flexible than Muslims. Those of us who stayed back had decided that we would not demand our political rights. Our forefathers had decided that even during the rule of Talpur Mirs. During the Mir regime, we were not allowed to mount horses. But we did keep our businesses and we stayed here. There was no safety during the period of the Mirs. We [Hindus] had gained political rights for the first time in history during the British Raj. Kalhoras were liberals [as compared to Mirs, in their treatment of Hindus], they thought about the masses. Mirs were fond of hunting; they were not worried about the people. Before the British came here the land was the state's land. The economy was very

slow because of that system. The Angraiz came here for business, so they gave ownership of land to the people. Before that, people here didn't worry much about land or contest over it. When they gave lands, they also introduced cash for the first time in India. The first coin introduced was a silver coin and it was called Rani Chaap, then Edward seven came and his coin was known as the Bodhi Chaap. They were in use until WW II. Mirs were Baloch and they were looters. Baloch were also the soldiers of Kalhora. Kalhoros had Baloch installed in villages on the border with Jodhpur. There was no law and order here in those days. The Angraiz wanted a market, for which they wanted peace. Businessmen want peace. The British were not scared of Hindus but were of Muslims. Before the Angraiz, Hindus didn't have land. They distributed land for free and Hindus became landlords in Sindh.

In the midst this politically charged time, there were people who were struggling to finish their education and find jobs. One such person told me his personal struggle as well as that of a Hindu landlord who fought hard to protect his property but eventually failed in his effort:

My father ran his business in his village near the new international boundary. I did matriculation in 1960. I was the oldest son therefore the financial responsibility of the family fell on my head. We were a poor family and we literally had nothing at home. I had distinction in exams and despite that I had to give up my studies in order to look after my family. I started taking jobs at different places; I worked on the land of a landlord in a village. He then left for India. He has a story too. At the time of Partition he had 1 lakh acres of land, extending from Nawabshah to Umerkot. He was a member of the Sindh Assembly. He tried his best to protect his land. After 1970 he decided that he didn't want to live here. He started selling his land then. He was facing issues here. People were occupying his lands.

This indicates that there was a push and even once-powerful landlords and politically influential people could not protect themselves from it.

Some Hindu communities in Sindh trace their memories back to the arrival of Arab armies in the region. Many times, my questions regarding what happened after Partition were answered going back in time. For the Hindus of Sindh, the short British rule was a period of political liberation with an increase in economic prosperity. Yet, it

was not all about political and economic freedom, but about freedom of religion too. An 86-year-old Lohano barrister told me that Muslims successfully corrupted Hinduism in Sindh and extended their followership here:

They extended Islam in Sindh by occupying the Hindu temples and by telling people that Hindu dharma and Islam were in fact the same religion. Muslims also declared that the Shiva temples were in fact temples of Ali. Then they preached for centuries that Shiva and Ali were one and the same entities. In Sindh, *pirs* and *awliya* confused Islam and Hinduism to extend Islam. Sindhi Hindus needed protection under Muslim rulers and they found this protection from *pirs* because they were powerful, much more powerful than kings and *maulvis*. *Pirs* here even talked about the *bhakti* which attracted Hindus toward the shrines. Hindus used to go to Islamic darbars and darghas so as to get protection. Hindus were badly oppressed before the arrival of the British in India. It was after their arrival in the region that Hindus got freedom. This freedom was as if you take out the genie from the bottle. The same happened with the Hindus of Sindh. They fast forwarded in each direction and particularly excelled in education. No one in Sindh can forget the generous acts of Hindu philanthropy. But everything changed after [19]47. Muslims took Aligarh and Deoband to be everything, forgetting the softer side of Islam. Maulvis took over the interpretation of Islam while Sufis went in the background. Maulvis replaced Sufis.

So what happened after Partition? Why did Hindus keep leaving Sindh? Answering my question, the barrister told me:

The first riots in Sindh, after the Partition, took place in Karachi on the 6th of January 1948. These riots were initiated by Liaquat Ali Khan. The riots were Mohajir-oriented riots and Sindhi Muslims were not involved. This was the emergence of Mohajirs on the map of Sindh, which once again altered our social framework. They grabbed our lands, even mandirs - our places of worship. In Mirpurkhas, a Sikh Darbar was occupied by Jamat-e-Islami. They erected their office at the place where once *granthis* used to sit and recite.

How the Government of Pakistan, which was establishing the Pakistani polity, dealt with this situation, (what was its policy to deal with the aftermath of Partition), is discussed next.

To Let Go or Not? The Government of Pakistan's Treatment of Hindus in Post-Partition Sindh

The immediate post-Partition exodus of Hindus from Sindh is best understood when seen in the context of pre-Partition Sindhi politics and later with the arrival of Muslim refugees, and the violence incurred upon the local Hindus and Sikhs. Pre-Partition Sindhi politics exhibited a clear divide between the Hindu and Muslim legislators in the Sind Legislative Assembly, with attempts of Muslim members to get rid of Hindu dominance in the province. Prior to Partition, the Sindh Congress had sided with All India Congress and the idea of a united India, unlike the majority Muslim members. This, as well as the attitude of Muslim members in the Sind Legislative Assembly, had worried Hindus about their future status in Sindh. They feared a backlash from their ethnic Muslim neighbors. Sarah Ansari, a historian of modern South Asia, writes, "Politically, Hindus of Sindh had opted for an undivided India and were therefore apprehensive of becoming even more of a minority community than already."¹³¹ The fears of Sindhi Hindus only intensified in the weeks drawing closer to Partition. On 8 June 1947, the Sindh government took over Dayaram Jethmal Science College (Karachi) in order to prevent it from collapsing when many Hindus would depart from the province in the future. Prior to Partition, 75% of schools in the province were sponsored by Hindu capital, and Hindu students outnumbered their Muslim counterparts. Also in June 1947, the Sindh University Act, for which Muslim members had long campaigned, came into effect. According to the act, the new university administration would contain an

¹³¹ Ansari, Sarah. 2005. *Life After Partition: Migration, Community and Strife in Sindh 1947-1962*. Karachi: Oxford University Press. P. 48.

overwhelming Muslim majority and not the 50:50 representations that many Hindus had been asking for.¹³²

Despite the fear of insecurity, not all Hindus had decided to leave Sindh or migrate to India on the eve of Partition; rather, certain circumstances gradually pushed them out of Sindh. In addition to violence, there were many speculations, fears and rumors that led to the Hindu exodus from Sindh. Ansari writes, “Fears about the future position of local Hindus were being reinforced in the public perception by the transfer of non-Muslim funds out of Sindh to other parts of India since Partition.”¹³³ There were reports of attacks on Hindus and Sikhs in the districts of Dadu, Sukkur, Jacobabad, and Larkana, in addition to Karachi and Hyderabad.¹³⁴ The Sind Government therefore implemented throughout all of Sindh the “Bill to Make Provision for the Maintenance of Public Safety in the Province of Sind.” A Sindh Legislative Assembly member, Sirumal Vishindas, reported that the minority community had already suffered from the misuse of this bill. He mentioned that under its provisions Harijan workers had been arrested all over Sind. Seth Kushiram of Khanpur was also arrested and put in jail under the provisions of this bill. Some people doing service to Harijans were also arrested. He further stated that the arrest of Harijan workers produced panic in public. Dr. Watarmal of Mirpurkhas was arrested, handcuffed, tied with a rope, and marched off to the central jail at Hyderabad. Vishindas also mentioned that relatives of bank managers who had

¹³² Ibid, 49.

¹³³ Ibid, 48.

¹³⁴ Governor General Files. Government of Pakistan. File no. 187/4/GG/1947. GG 102-B Ordinary. Bill No. VIII of 1948. A Bill to Make Provision for the Maintenance of Public Safety in the Province of Sind. Passed on 7th Feb 1948. National Archives of Pakistan Holdings. Islamabad.

sanctioned loans for Hindu merchants were being arrested on the slightest suspicion of their leaving Pakistan. Certain newspapers which opted to promote communal harmony, such as the *Hindu*, *Sansar Samachar* and the *Sind Observer*, were banned by the Sind Government. Khuro responded to such protests by stating that people were being arrested who were trying to loot Hindus and forcibly trying to take possession of their lands and even crops.¹³⁵

In Jacobabad, violence was reported in May 1950. One Hindu person was reportedly killed and two others were injured by being stabbed by refugees. Shops were looted by the refugees and police arrested some 65 people to bring the law and order situation under control. This violence was also attributed to the arrival of refugees in the city. It was decided that by 26th May Muslim refugees from India would not be allowed to enter Sind without a permit. An official estimate of the number of refugees who had entered Sind by that time was 130,000, with another 20,000 waiting for transport to enter the province. Chaudhary Khaleeq-uz-Zaman, the president of the Muslim League, suggested in May 1950 that India should try to persuade Muslim emigrants on their way to West Pakistan to return to their homes in UP or elsewhere in India.¹³⁶ The situation in Sindh, which housed Pakistan's first capital, for its native Hindus could not become stable after Partition. This was not only the situation of Hindus. This was also true for those immigrant Indian Muslims who wanted to become Pakistanis but had to return as the new homeland could not accommodate them.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Foreign Office Files India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. 1947-1964. 1950: FO 371/84241. Communal Trouble in Sind – Embargo on Muslim Refugees entering Sind from India. National Archives (Great Britain). Accessed via Arizona State University Libraries.

Four out of six bills passed by the Sind Legislative Assembly in 1948, were related to financial interests, most importantly, the Bill to Amend the Motor Vehicle Act and the Bill to make Provision for the Maintenance of Public Safety in the Province of Sind. The Sind government wanted to cancel the transport route licenses of Hindu transport owners who were leaving Sind. The Sind Government therefore suggested a bill to nationalize motor transport. It expressed its purpose as follows: “In order to enable Government to cancel the permits granted to such non-Muslims as have left for India or as are neglecting the bus services entrusted to them because they do not want to continue to invest their capital in Pakistan.” The Motor Vehicle Act passed on 4 February 1948 amended the MVA of 1939. “Because of the exodus of good many Hindus from Sind who had this traffic in their possession, now it is going to be changed, we give authority to R.T.A and P.T.A that they can reallocate the permits for the various routes to the new people who are coming in.”¹³⁷ [Lt. Col. W.B. Hossack pointed out in the Sind Legislative Assembly that it was clear that Mr. Khuro [first Chief Minister of Sindh after Partition] was “catering” [aimed at] to the non-Muslims who would leave Pakistan and go to India. He pointed out that a certain section of the bill would be useless after the current state of things ceased to exist. He argued, “My point is that the non-Muslims will not continue to leave Pakistan and go to India indefinitely and therefore this provision will stand high and dry.” The Hindu members in the assembly protested that the people had not gone away, but Khuro denied this by stating that Hindus had sold their vehicles for high prices

¹³⁷ Government of Pakistan. File no. 187/4/GG/1947. GG 103. Subject: Sind Landholders Mortgages Bill, 1947. National Archives of Pakistan Holdings. Islamabad.

and that Hindus could sell their buses but not the routes.¹³⁸ The Sindh government wanted to keep all of migrating Hindus' possessions.

The Government of Sindh also wanted to restrict the 'exodus' of Hindus, both upper and lower castes. The government was interested in controlling the exit on the basis of either occupation or wealth. The ultimate aim was to restrict the movement of upper-caste Hindus and their capital out of the province and hence out of the country. Almost all early correspondence of the Government of Pakistan related to Hindus fell into the "secret" or "immediate secret" category. Some of this correspondence and decisions that have been declassified, or which I could find, show that the Government of Pakistan was interested in regulating the exit of certain classes of Hindu population from Sindh. The important thing is that all this correspondence was carried under the "secret" category, which shows the "carefulness" sought by the government from the very beginning in dealing with matters related to Hindu people in Pakistan. This also shows the confusion on the part of the masses, who were not certain about the country of their future residence after the Partition. The following incident also shows uncertainty on the part of the governments of India and Pakistan in determining their legitimate citizens. A note dated 7 November 1947, composed by Mr. Creagh Coen, a Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, reported that the High Commissioner for India in Karachi was distributing money to servants, *malis*, *dhobis* and sweepers to pay their fare by ship to Bombay. Mr. Coen was not sure if the act was undiplomatic, but he was sure that it

¹³⁸ Governor General Files. Government of Pakistan. File no. 187/4/GG/1947. NA Holding no: GG 103. Subject: Sind Landholders Mortgages Bill, 1947. National Archives of Pakistan Holdings. Islamabad.

was an unfriendly act which appeared to be part of a deliberate attempt to pull out members of certain useful and essential trades who were not easily replaceable. This issue was brought up with the High Commissioner for India; in his note to the government of Pakistan he denied the charges, stating that helping people to leave this way was not done regularly but only in a few cases. Moreover, the shipping companies were providing free tickets, which were being distributed by the Deputy High Commissioner's office.¹³⁹

The Indian High Commissioner further referred to a notification issued by the Government of Sindh under Sind Maintenance of Public Safety Ordinance 1947 forbidding essential services personnel from migrating from Pakistan. He complained that this order of the provincial government was causing hardship to a large number of persons who desire to migrate from Sind to India. He pointed out that it was not the policy of the government of India to encourage the migration of non-Muslims from Pakistan to India, but that persons who desired to go to India permanently and to seek a home there should be afforded any facility to do so.

The Indian High Commissioner also raised the point that neither the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan nor that of India had yet determined who was to be deemed a citizen of Pakistan and who a citizen of India. However, he said that he felt it was safe to presume that those who wished to leave Pakistan permanently and live in India had chosen to be citizens of India. On this ground he had intervened on behalf of such persons, and requested that the hardship caused to them by being prevented from going to

¹³⁹ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No: 217/CF/47. Migration of non-Muslims from Pakistan to India. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

the home of their choice be obviated. In particular he pleaded on behalf of the washermen and sweepers who belonged to the provinces and states of India and who were in the employment of private persons in Sind.¹⁴⁰

Thus, the Sindh Government kept expressing mixed responses to the exodus of Hindus from the province. The exodus of well-off, upper-caste Hindus worried the Sindh Government, as their capital guaranteed the sound running of the province (which had been predominantly run and looked after by Hindus). For the government of Sindh as well as for the central government of Pakistan, it was not clear why Hindus from Sindh would migrate. There were abundant theories in this regard which set the tone for the future relationship between the Pakistani state and its Hindu citizens. So what exactly was the Government of Pakistan's attitude towards this 'exodus' from Sindh, West Pakistan?

In a meeting held on 6 October 1947, Jinnah wanted intelligence agencies to inform him of the truth (reality) or otherwise about the information that there was a deep laid and well organized conspiracy among non-Muslims, particularly in the Province of Sindh, to leave Pakistan with the object of disrupting the normal economic, commercial and business life of the province, which was largely in their hands. A top-secret report was then organized by the Interior Ministry that stated that events in Kashmir seemed to have caused another wave of panic among the local Hindus, and that Hindus were rushing for the port. The evacuation of Hindus from Sind had continued daily, even

¹⁴⁰ Government of Pakistan. File No: 200/CF/47. To Regulate Exit from Sind or Pakistan: Proposed Restrictions on the Migration of Caste Hindus. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

before the developments in Kashmir. According to the intelligence bureau, it was difficult to understand the reason for this exodus when the province had been so peaceful.¹⁴¹

Besides portraying political developments in Kashmir as the main reason for Hindu people's fear and departure, the report also maligned Hindus for leaving Sindh. It stated: The reasons given are that, "apart from their own guilty conscience, the Hindus were moved to quit by reports from Hindustan sent by the evacuees who had gone ahead that big military preparations were going on there and that an attack was to take place as soon as Hindus had been evacuated from Pakistan. Scores of letters from early evacuees have come to notice containing this warning to their compatriots left behind in Sind. Another report current amongst the Hindus is that when Acharya J Kripalani (a Sindhi Congressite) was last in Sind, he advised them to pull out of the province as soon as possible."¹⁴² The report further stated that the Intelligence Bureau had intercepted communications between common Hindus. These letters were written by Hindu refugees from Sindh and were addressed to friends or relations in the province. It noted that "None of the senders is a person of any importance, but it is interesting to note that the general impression among the Hindu refugees in India is that India intends to drive Muslims out of the dominion of India and to take aggressive action against Pakistan."¹⁴³

The Government of Sindh's concern in relation to the flight of Hindu capital out of the province produced an ordinance on June 21st that made possible the official requisition of evacuee property (both moveable and immovable and effectively aimed at

¹⁴¹ Government of Pakistan. File No: 118/CF/47. Investigations by Intelligence Bureau into Reasons for Mass Exodus of non-Muslims from Sind. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Ibid.

prohibiting the transfer of funds out of Sindh by people in the province. On the other hand, the Hindus were worried about whether or not their property and rights would continue to be respected in a Muslim-dominated state. This fear had led Hindus transfer their assets out of Sindh. Ansari suggests that the transfer, attempted or successful, of Hindu-owned financial resources suggested that Sindhi Hindus would attempt to re-establish themselves elsewhere before the final deadline of 15 August.¹⁴⁴ On 25 November 1947 the Government of Sindh issued instructions to the district magistrates regarding the migration of the depressed classes.¹⁴⁵

The Government of Sindh wanted to implement laws restricting the migration of the caste Hindus out of Sindh and Pakistan. It maintained that caste Hindus were leaving Pakistan (i.e. Sindh) without paying their dues and taxes to the local bodies, the province or the Government of Pakistan. The official correspondence of the Government of Sindh stated the reason of making new laws as follows:

Hindus were leaving without paying income tax and land revenues and other provincial and municipal taxes. A good number of Hindus were holding ornaments in mortgage or other cash deposits and a number of them seem to have gone without returning them. The provincial government therefore thought that before they leave Sindh, a caste Hindu should get certificate from the government that he owes nothing to them. He should also give one month's notice to the collector to find out whether he owes any private dues.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴ Ansari 2005, 49.

¹⁴⁵ Records are not readable to know the reasons. Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No. 200/CF/47. To Regulate Exit from Sind or Pakistan: Proposed Restrictions on the Migration of Caste Hindus. (Immediate secret). National Archives of Pakistan Holdings. Islamabad.

¹⁴⁶ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No. 200/CF/47. To Regulate Exit from Sind or Pakistan: Proposed Restrictions on the Migration of Caste Hindus. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

However, before legislating this, the Sindh Government sought the advice of the central Government. They wanted to know if an impediment on free migration might have repercussions in India. Thereupon, the Ministry of the Interior forbade the Government of Sindh to take any such step. It was also suggested that any such legislation to restrict emigration by way of getting certificates from the Pakistan Government was likely to have strong repercussions in India. “Muslims from minority provinces, those who can, are migrating towards Pakistan for compelling reasons. A similar legislation in the Indian provinces will lock them up and will bring untold misery on them.”¹⁴⁷ The Ministry of the Interior also opposed this legislation on the grounds that it would provide opportunities for bribery and corruption.¹⁴⁸ Yet Liaquat Ali Khan had also held that Sindhi Hindus were taking “consumer goods” in large quantities with them to India, and that therefore their luggage must be searched for such goods.¹⁴⁹

During a meeting on 13 September 1947, Sindh’s Chief Minister, Khuro, despite his appeals to Hindus of the province to remain calm, delivered a speech on the subject of the atrocities committed by Sikhs and Hindus against Muslims in Punjab. He also denounced in this speech those who were leaving Sindh in “droves” and announced that a law was being drafted which would allow them to take with them only the clothes that they were wearing and very few personal items. The Chief Secretary to the Government of Sindh, A.P.Le Mesurier, pointed out to Khuro that such a law would repudiate his

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Foreign Office Files for India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Office of the High Commissioner for the United Kingdom. Political Boundary Commission Awards. Punjab & Bengal and Communal Disturbances resulting therefrom. DO/33/59. National Archives (Great Britain). Accessed via Arizona State University Libraries.

earlier assurances that the rights of minorities were to be respected. Later, Le Mesurier resigned in protest at the Sindh Government's attitude towards minorities in the province.¹⁵⁰

Uncertainty prevailed among Hindus, and various statements from Sindh Government officials kept adding to the confusion. It is unclear whether the Government of Sindh was trying to wipe out the panic and fear among its Hindu people or to increase it. On October 15, the Governor of Sindh, Mr. Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah, addressed a packed audience of Hindus at Ram Krishna Hall in Karachi. While referring to the exodus of Hindus, he made an appeal to them to shed their "fear complex." He stated that Sindh belonged to both Hindus and Muslims and that he would do all in his power as a governor to help them.¹⁵¹ The uncertainty, given the context of regional politics as well as Hindus' fear of Hindu women being insulted, was inevitable.

With the influx of refugees, the exodus of Hindus from Karachi, and the shortage of housing facilities in Karachi, tension grew in Sindh province. The occupation of Hindu properties by refugees, as well as an increase in the Sindh Government's tactics to either discourage the exodus or keep the Hindus' capital within the province, added to the worries of Hindus in Sindh. Searches of the belongings of migrating people was another issue, in addition to the occupation of their properties. On 18 October 1947, Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy, referring to the unauthorized occupation of houses in Sindh, asserted that complaints regarding unauthorized occupations were being dealt with expeditiously and that persons were being removed from premises to which they had gained illegal or

¹⁵⁰ Ansari 2005, 55.

¹⁵¹ "Hidayatullah Urges Upon Hindus to Shed Fear Complex." *The Pakistan Times*, Lahore. 18 October 1947.

unwarranted access. (I discuss the property question in detail in the next chapter). Referring to searches of people migrating from Sindh, Suhrawardy confirmed that searches had been stopped, exports were being made freely and attempts were being made to settle refugees in such a manner as not to inconvenience local residents. Many officers who did not carry out their duties were being very severely dealt with. Some were being dismissed and others demoted, according to Suhrawardy.

On their way out of Sindh, Sindhi Hindus were also being subjected to humiliation. Although the government of Sindh had been making cordial gestures toward the return of Sindhi Hindus, tensions continued over searches of people leaving Sindh as well as mistrust of Hindu Zamindars. These tensions are reflected in official allegations, such as the government's accusation that non-Muslim (i.e. Hindu) zamindars were not cultivating seasonal crops on time and were thus putting the province in danger of a food shortage. The *Pakistan Times* reported that the Sindh Government, in a press note, had said that non-Muslim zamindars were deliberately not cultivating food crops. The Sindh Government feared that this would result in a shortage of food grains in the coming year. The government had therefore ordered an inquiry into each case, announcing that if it was found that the percentage of cultivation done by the zamindars during the current rabi season (crops harvested in the spring) fell seriously short of what it had been the previous year, their lands would be taken over as abandoned under the Sind Economic Rehabilitation Ordinance. The government then urged all zamindars to put the maximum

area of their lands under rabi cultivation in order to avoid losses in revenue and in the production of food grains.¹⁵²

On the other hand, Muslims had begun arriving in Sindh from India by different routes. Most of the refugees who arrived in Sindh in the weeks following 14 August 1947 came via railway connections between Jodhpur and Sindh, on ships from the coast of western India,¹⁵³ or from Eastern Punjab by land using different means of transportation.¹⁵⁴ The focus of many was the port city of Karachi.¹⁵⁵ Karachi, the capital of Pakistan, did not remain calm after the arrival of the refugees. The city experienced violence early in the month of September 1947,¹⁵⁶ and by mid-September some 50,000 non-Muslims had registered at local Congress organizations for assistance in leaving. This eviction was seen by the Government of Pakistan as “a well-organized plan to cripple Pakistan.”¹⁵⁷

On 6 January 1948, a serious incident of violence took place in Karachi. It was instigated by Muslim refugees in Karachi who first targeted Sikhs on their way out of Pakistan and then turned to attack local Hindus. Some two hundred people were killed

¹⁵² “Non-Muslim Zamindars of Sind Warned.” *The Pakistan Times*, Lahore. 25 November 1947.

¹⁵³ Ansari 2005, 52.

¹⁵⁴ Cabinet Division. Ministry of Housing and Works. Government of Pakistan. File No: 55/CF/47. Influx of the Refugees from the Punjab into Sindh. Influx of refugees from the Punjab into Sindh: decision of Cabinet regarding useful employment of refugees. NDC Holdings. Islamabad, Pakistan.

¹⁵⁵ Ansari 2005, 52.

¹⁵⁶ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No. 69/CF/47. Refugee Relief and Law and Order in Karachi . NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

¹⁵⁷ Ansari 2005, 55.

and the homes and businesses of local Hindus were looted in central Karachi.¹⁵⁸ The Sindh government claimed to have arrested 1100 people in order to control the situation.¹⁵⁹

Immediately after this, the exodus of non-Muslims from Karachi sped up. According to Ansari, some 21,000 people departed for India within two weeks of the disturbances and another 40,000 left by the end of the month; this latter group included a large number of upcountry Hindus.¹⁶⁰ Once again the Sindh government attempted to slow down the Hindu exodus. The strategies included issuing confidential orders to the district authorities in upper Sindh that no Hindu should be permitted to leave the district without a special permit from the District Magistrate. However, the Sindh government's intervention failed to prevent the slow but steady movement of Hindus from Upper Sindh to Karachi and on to Bombay and Kathiawar. There were also reports of maltreatment of Hindu travelers on trains out of Sindh.¹⁶¹

With the influx of immigrants, one of the major problems that Karachi in particular, and Sindh in general, faced was accommodation. Karachi, being the primary façade of Pakistan, was the principal destination of the majority of people migrating from the central provinces of India. Karachi was thus facing a shortage of residential facilities. It could not house all the people who were aspiring to stay there. The refugees were already finding it justified to settle wherever they could find a room, in Karachi as well as in the other cities of Sindh.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid, 56.

¹⁵⁹ Governor General Files. Government of Pakistan. File no. 187/4/GG/1947. GG 102-B Ordinary. Bill No. VIII of 1948. A Bill to Make Provision for the Maintenance of Public Safety in the Province of Sind. Passed on 7th Feb 1948. National Archives of Pakistan Holdings. Islamabad.

¹⁶⁰ Ansari 2005, 57.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

The housing and settlement of the refugees was also the first substantial challenge faced by the Government of Pakistan. On 20 May 1948, Muhammed Hashim Gazder brought this issue before the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan by pointing out the problems with the accommodation and rehabilitation of refugees in Sindh and Karachi, including the insufficiency of the facilities available for them. He mentioned that the members of the assembly had approved the building of 5000 houses and 500 shops in Karachi alone, using the Quaid e Azam, Bihar and Pakistan Fund, for the accommodation of refugees. He also brought to the notice of the assembly the fact that refugees took money from the government to travel to interior Sindh, but that they would go there by one train and return by the next. This reflected, he said, the problem that urban migrants did not want to settle in rural Sindh. He also mentioned the riots of 6 January 1948, which had been the deadliest in Sindh since the Partition. The majority of the refugees, he said, wanted to settle down in Karachi, because, the majority of them were urban and, as Gazder put it, “every Mussalman who migrates to Karachi thinks Karachi is Pakistan.”¹⁶²

There is other evidence too that by May 1948 the settlement of refugees had become a headache for the Sindh Government. M.A. Khuhro, representing Sindh in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, took the floor and stated that there were reports of refugees damaging and looting abandoned properties of local Hindus. At this point there was an exchange of accusations among the members of the Constituent Assembly of

¹⁶² Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates. 20 May 1948. *Resolution RE: Accommodation And Rehabilitation Of Refugees*. Karachi. P. 704-721.

Pakistan.¹⁶³ By and large, during the first year of its establishment, the Government of Pakistan remained entangled in the issues of incoming and returning Muslim refugees.

Karachi, thus, immediately following the Partition, faced a serious problem of surplus refugees. The rate of arrival of refugees in Karachi was about 5000 per month. The Pakistani government wanted to stop the inflow of refugees from India, and they were insistent in asking the permit office in Bombay to discourage the flow of refugees towards Pakistan. Furthermore, the Government of Pakistan had decided to rehabilitate the incoming refugees in different provinces according to their professions. It was therefore decided to reserve space for the refugees in interior Sindh and elsewhere in Pakistan and then to move them there in batches. Refugees were mainly divided into the categories of agriculturists and non-agriculturists, and the former was largely distributed between Sindh and Punjab for agricultural purposes. Other than receiving its share of agriculturist refugees, Sindh also received the majority of the urban refugees, who only wanted to settle down in Karachi. One of the fortnightly report of the Ministry of Refugees and Rehabilitation (31 October 1952) mentioned that Sindh was facing quite a bit of difficulty in rehabilitating the agriculturist refugees. It stated that there were around 10,000 families without lands in Sindh.¹⁶⁴

The incoming refugees stayed in temples too. An emergency meeting of the Committee of Cabinet held on 22 September 1947 refers to Acharaya Kripalani (the Congress President, a Sindhi) meeting with Jinnah and mentioning to him that some religious places in Hyderabad (the second-largest urban center in Sindh), the Bhindu

¹⁶³ Ibid, 715-717.

¹⁶⁴ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No: 245/CF/52. Half Yearly Summaries of the Ministry of Refugees & Rehabilitation. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

Ashram, the Brahma Mandir and the Sanskrit Pathshala, had been occupied by refugees. The last mentioned was only a school, but Acharaya Kripalani had told Jinnah that a portion of it was set aside for worship. Jinnah then requested the Minister for the Interior to investigate this complaint himself, to take measures to see that places of worship were not occupied for other purposes and to inform Kripalani of the measures taken. On 28 September 1947, Jinnah was informed that the minister had been to Hyderabad himself a day earlier. The minister reported that he had no doubt that a portion of the Pathshala building was used for worship purposes. He then had asked the District Magistrate to get the school building vacated without delay. The final report was that the buildings that were being used by the local district magistrate to accommodate the overflow of refugees would be vacated.¹⁶⁵ Other than Sindh, the eastern wing of Pakistan, East Bengal/ East Pakistan was another province with a significant presence of Hindus. Sindh and Bengal are distant regions, but in order to understand the process of minoritization of Hindu people in Pakistan, it is relevant to discuss the history of Hindus in East Pakistan. Understanding the Partition of Bengal in 1947 is therefore relevant here. I will in the following discuss the Government of Pakistan's treatment of East Bengali Hindus in East Bengal after the Partition.

¹⁶⁵ Government of Pakistan. File No: 92/CF/47. Occupation of Places of Worship by Refugees. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

The Loss of Hindu Life from East Pakistan

Introduction

Unlike Sindh, Bengal was partitioned once again in 1947, to become the eastern wing of Pakistan. This partition, according to Joya Chatterji, was close to Bengal Congress's plan of Bengal's partition. Joya writes that on 20 June 1947, the Bengal Assembly grouped itself into Hindu and Muslim sections and voted on the Partition of Bengal. A majority of the Hindu members voted for Partition, while the Muslim members voted against it. Chatterji further explains that the Bengal Congress' scheme of Bengal's partition was designed in order to achieve a compact state with a strong Hindu majority in the West Bengal, leaving as much Muslim population as possible out of its boundaries.¹⁶⁶ Radcliffe's Award on the division of Bengal left 5 million Muslims in West Bengal and about 11 million Hindus in East Bengal (Pakistan), and it was very close to what Congress had Congress.¹⁶⁷ Since Hindus and Muslims were unevenly distributed in Bengal, the award included many Muslim-majority districts in West Bengal and vice versa.¹⁶⁸ The other problem with this new international boundary was that it did not run uninterruptedly. The award created enclaves in Pakistan and India both, which meant that there were parts in both India and Pakistan separated by land belonging to the other country. ¹⁹⁷ enclaves were created in Bengal after the Radcliff award: 74

¹⁶⁶ Chatterji 2007, 19-57.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, 59.

¹⁶⁸ An important consideration by the boundary commission was to assign the port cities to their hinterland especially their river systems. This allotted the city of Chittagong, and one of its non-Muslim majority district Chittagong hill tracts to Pakistan, Calcutta was awarded to India with Muslim majority areas such as Murshidabad, Nadia and Jessore. Khulna, a majority non-Muslim district, was given to Pakistan.

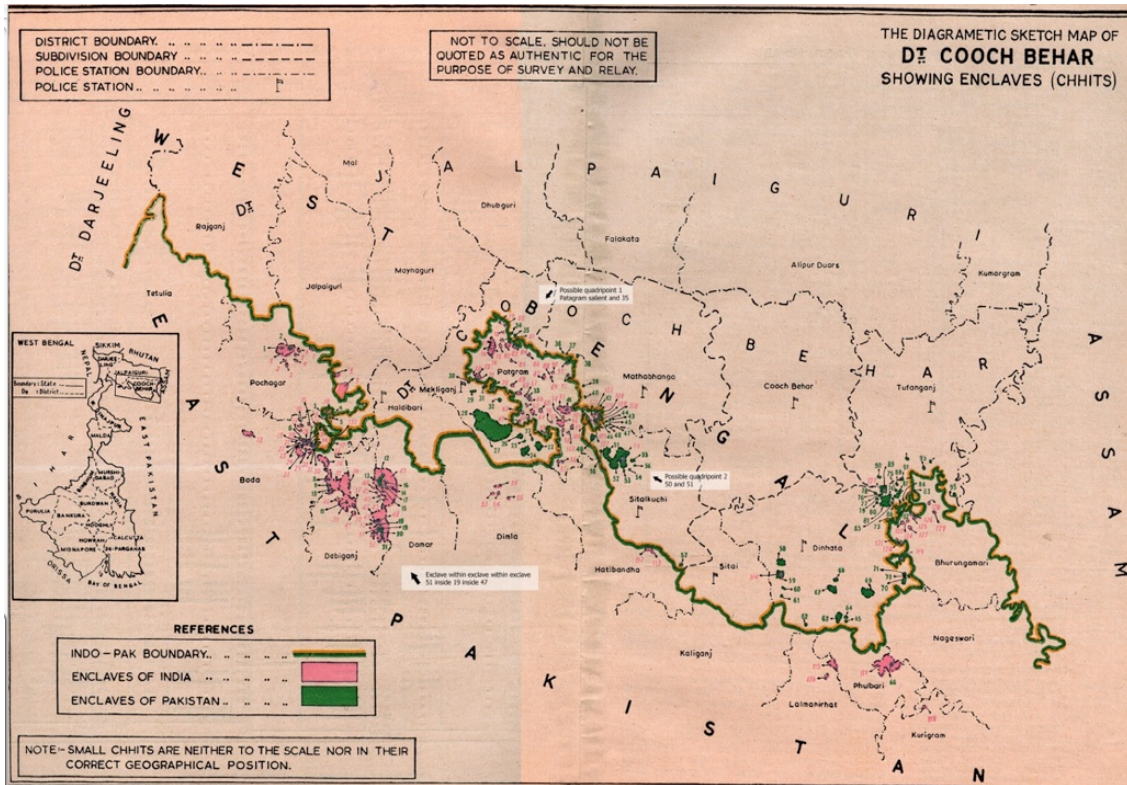
Pakistani enclaves were located within the territory of India and 123 Indian enclaves were situated in Pakistan.¹⁶⁹

The Radcliff award divided the former province of East Bengal into four parts. The largest of these, a group of sixteen districts at the center, formed East Bengal, which consequently became East Pakistan and later Bangladesh. This newly created East Bengal was surrounded by three territories that later joined India: Tripura (a princely state), Cooch Behar (another princely state), and a group of twelve districts. Bengal had no natural boundary separating its Muslim and other religious population. Almost half of the boundary cut through areas of the same religion's majority, not only Hindus and Muslims but also others.¹⁷⁰ After Partition, India and Pakistan had disputes on the interpretation of the Boundary Award in various regions, and as a result the matter was taken to the United Nations for settlement.¹⁷¹ This boundary was disputed not only on land but also in the water as rivers constituted the boundary as well.

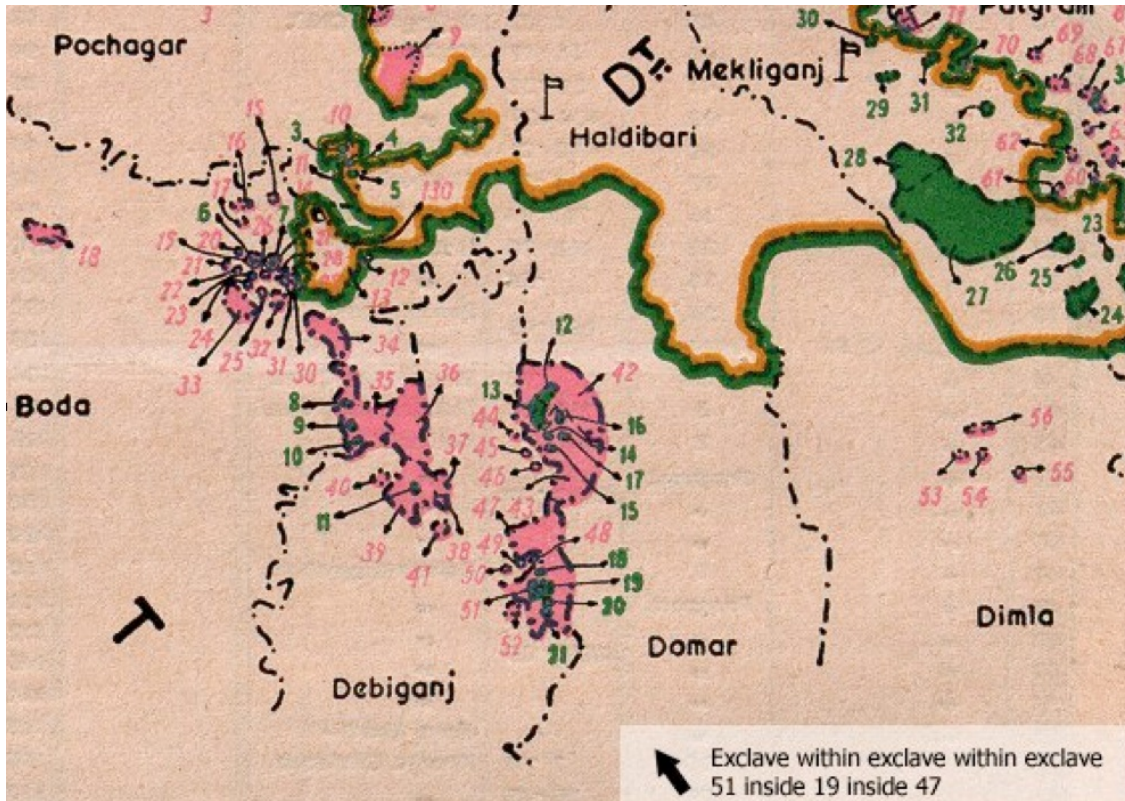
¹⁶⁹ Chatterji 2007, 60.

¹⁷⁰ Schendel, Willem van. 2005. *The Bengal Borderland: Beyond State and Nation in South Asia*. London: Anthem Press. P. 39-49.

¹⁷¹ Reports of International Arbitral Awards. 26 January 1950. Boundary Disputes between India and Pakistan relating to the Interpretation of the Report of the Bengal Boundary Commission. VOLUME XXI. P. 1-51.
http://legal.un.org/riaa/cases/vol_XXI/1-51.pdf. Accessed: 12/23/2013.



Map 5 East Pakistan and West Bengal International Boundary Showing Enclaves



Map 6 A Map showing Pakistani Enclaves within Indian Enclaves in East Pakistan (Maps taken from *The Economist*¹⁷³)

The East Bengali Hindu, the proto-Hindu of Pakistan

The 1961 census of Pakistan analyzes the country's religious minorities¹⁷² by community and region as follows:

Table 1: Communities in Pakistan as Recorded in the 1961 Census Report:

Communities	Pakistan	East Pakistan	West Pakistan
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¹⁷² A report prepared by the Ministry of Home Affairs stated that there were various religious communities in Pakistan. According to this report the Parsi community in Pakistan was well off ; the Christians were also reported to be doing well, except for some unfortunate exodus from East to Assam a year earlier. The report stated that Buddhists always received a special treatment from the government of Pakistan and were happy in Pakistan. But after recent floods, the Buddhists fell prey to the Indian propaganda which resulted in a Buddhist exodus from the East Pakistan in 1964.

Muslims	88.1%	80.4%	97.2%
Caste Hindus	4.9%	8.6%	0.5%
Scheduled Caste	5.8%	9.8%	1.0%
Christians	0.8%	0.3%	1.4%
Buddhists	0.4%	0.7%	.006%
Others	.05%	.1%	.1%

The majority of Hindus, at the time of commencement of Pakistan, were not only concentrated in East Bengal, but were also in a state of political destitution due to regional politics. A Government of Pakistan file states: “By far the biggest problem is presented by the Hindu community in East Pakistan. In West Pakistan they have been assimilated and are happy. But in East Pakistan they have remained in a state of flux. The communal disturbances which take place in India have inevitable repercussions upon them....”¹⁷³

The “Hindus” who originally intended to stay on their ancestral lands and decided not to migrate to India from East Pakistan, once counting 1, 50, 00,000,¹⁷⁴ are missing from the history of Pakistan. They are also absent from the Pakistani meta-narratives of the 1971 conflict, as well as from the customary articles published each year in Pakistan around the anniversary of the Fall of Dhaka. During this customary observance of the

¹⁷³ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No. 74/ CF/ 65. The Fair Treatment to Minorities in Pakistan. Sub Subject: Implementation of the Undertakings Given in the President’s Manifesto- Fair Treatment to Minorities in Pakistan. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

¹⁷⁴ Mascarenhas, Anthony. 1971. *The Rape of Bangladesh*. Delhi: Vikas Publications. P. 7.

secession of East Pakistan in Pakistan, it is often mourned and condemned that West Pakistan oppressed its Bengali Muslim brothers by likening them with Hindus. This is a train of thought that completely elides the history of East Pakistani Hindus and thus Pakistani Hindus as a whole. Assertions such as:

At best there was a condescending attitude toward them, with West Pakistanis considering themselves the elder siblings who would teach the East Pakistanis civilising habits (“We taught them how to make roti,” I [the author of the article] was once told by an aunt who had migrated from India to East Pakistan in 1947. One wonders why a rice eating culture would want to eat bread.). **At worst, Bengalis were considered closer in their cultural habits to Hindus....**¹⁷⁵] {emphasis mine}.

This alienating of the “Hindu” completely silences and hides the long history of the state’s treatment of Hindus who wanted to stay in their cities and villages as citizens of Pakistan after the Partition and did not want to migrate.

Some Bengali (Hindu) intellectuals I was able to speak with in Dhaka told me that they had always been hounded out of the country. One person told me:

It was always about “us”. From the disturbances of 1950s up till 1971, “they” [the state and Bengali neighbors] kept coming after us.’ We were always the target and we had to protect our girls. My family therefore sent my elder sister to Calcutta to protect her from Muslims. She never forgave us this, till her death. She passed away at the very young age of 33. We never knew what she had been through at our relatives’ place in India. She had to keep shifting from one relative’s place to another frequently. She lost her sanity in her mid-twenties and passed away in her early thirties.

This man’s sister was sent to Calcutta because, as a young girl, she was felt to be threatened by her Muslim neighbors. Her family had to take that decision because they

¹⁷⁵ Ali, Kamran Asdar. “Silent Past”. Dawn.com. <http://dawn.com/2012/12/16/column-the-silent-past-by-kamran-asdar-ali/>. Accessed: 12/16/2012.

had become a minority in East Bengal after the Partition in 1947, when a majority of Hindu families moved to West Bengal, mainly to Calcutta.

At the time of Partition, there was a lower level of violence in the Bengal region as compared to the Punjab. Migrants to West Bengal saw their migration as a temporary process. After Partition, there was a housing crisis in Dhaka like the one in Karachi. The migration from East Bengal occurred in a series of waves, rather than one tidal force. Upper-caste Hindus in East Bengal were sensitive to any threats to the honor of their female family members; this was one of the causes of unrest and migration.¹⁷⁶

“Humiliation, dishonor to the Hindus are the daily occurrence and it is so wide...that the incidents are only fragments,” pleaded Sri Ananta Lal Das in a petition sent to the Premier of East Bengal in 1949.¹⁷⁷

Although they lived in two distant and different regions and were subjected to different post-Partition situations, Sindhi and Bengali Hindus’ (Pakistani Hindus’) histories intersect. Because both regions were ruled by the same central government, what happened in the East and how it was handled by the Pakistani state (initially dominated by the founding Muslim League) shaped policies regarding Hindus in Sindh. It is also relevant that the development of the category “Hindu” as an “other” and as “fifth columnists” in West Pakistan (discussed in chapter 4) has to be seen in the light of its existence in East Pakistan. The Pakistani state’s initial worry about treating the displacement of Hindus was primarily projected in East Pakistan and in Sindh in West

¹⁷⁶ Eds. Bessel, Richard and Haake, Claudia B 2009, 333.

¹⁷⁷ Government of East Bengal. Home Department. Political Branch. File.No. CR 5P-15 of 1949. B, Nov 1950. 1-5. Alleged Forcible Occupation of House and Temple of Ananta Lal Das, Malda by Ansars at Rajshahi. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

Pakistan. Bengali Hindus formed the majority of the Hindu representatives in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. On several occasions, in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, Bengali and Sindhi Hindu politicians collectively protested against the politics of the Muslim League as well as against state policies that directly affected the status of Hindus in Pakistan. (This point will be discussed in detail in Chapter 4).

The main reason for discussing East Pakistani Hindus in the context of Sindh is that this discussion helps us to understand the gradual development of the image of the Hindu as the enemy in Pakistan, and explains the politics behind that development. Several authors point out that during the 1971 conflict Hindus faced special treatment by the Pakistan army in East Pakistan.¹⁷⁸ Sarmila Bose has dedicated an entire chapter of her book titled *Dead Reckoning: Memories of the 1971 Bangladesh War* (2011) to this special treatment during the military operations; the chapter is entitled: “Hounding of Hindus: The Politics of Minority Persecution.”¹⁷⁹ The Pakistani journalist Anthony Mascarenhas, who was an eye witness and reported the events from East Pakistan, termed it a cleansing process (genocide) to solve the political problem of East Pakistan. During the military operation of March 1971 Hindus were marked out among other targets, as the regime considered them “Indian agents” who had “subverted” the East Bengali Muslims. Hindu intellectuals were also included in the army’s list of targets in East Pakistan.¹⁸⁰ However, Hindu women and children were not targeted.¹⁸¹ In Pakistani history, the

¹⁷⁸ Blood, Archer K. 2006. *The Cruel Birth of Bangladesh: Memoirs of an American Diplomat*. Dhaka: The University Press Limited.

¹⁷⁹ Bose, Sarmila. 2011. *The Dead Reckoning: Memories of the 1971 Bangladesh War*. Karachi: Oxford University Press. P:115.

¹⁸⁰ Mascarenhas 1971, 117.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid*, 116.

dispute in East Pakistan has traditionally been seen as a conflict between Bengali Muslims and West Pakistanis/the Army/Punjabis and as an Indian- and Hindu-led conspiracy against Pakistan¹⁸² but its implication on East Pakistani Hindu population is seldom discussed.

In this conflict Bengali Muslims were also likened to Hindus. Understanding the treatment meted out to East Pakistani Hindus helps us understand why Bengali Muslims were likened to Hindus during this particular phase of Pakistan's history. One might debate whether Hindus were particularly targeted by the Pakistan Army as political opponents or if they were generally targeted, and thus whether or not it was a genocide.¹⁸³ Such facts as killings (one Dhaka based Bangladeshi Hindu scholar described the killings to me as "Gono-hatya"/massacre, indiscriminate killing); disappearances; the attack on Shankari Patti - a Hindu quarter in Dhaka; razakars taking Hindus to the army for executions (although not everyone arrested was executed); the knowledge among local people that Pakistani soldiers were told that all Bengalis were Hindus; and such questions as "How can a government kill its own people?" ("We were innocent, *razakars* burnt my home and now say that they were ordered to") make it important to probe the evolution of the idea of the Hindu as the enemy or the fifth columnist in Pakistan. Therefore, it is necessary to revisit the situation of East Bengali Hindus in post-Partition Pakistan.

¹⁸² Herald Exclusive. 2014. "What is the most blatant lie taught through Pakistan textbooks?". Dawn.com, 16 August 2014. <http://www.dawn.com/news/1125484/what-is-the-most-blatant-lie-taught-through-pakistan-textbooks>. Accessed: 8/16/2014.

¹⁸³ Bose, Sarmila. 2011. "The Question of Genocide and the Quest for Justice in the 1971 War." *Journal of Genocide Research*. 13:4, 393-419.

Post-1947 East Bengal

The communal tensions and violence in both Bengals continued uninterruptedly for years after the Partition. This was owing to many factors. Bengal had witnessed gory communal violence in 1946, a year before Partition, after the All India Muslim League withdrew its support from the Cabinet Mission's plan and called for a "Direct Action Day." As a result of this call, Hindu-Muslim riots broke out. The first wave of what is known as "Great Calcutta Killing" took place on 16-18 August. Around 4,000 people were reported killed in Calcutta, more were injured, and around 100,000 were left homeless. The violence then spread to the Noakhali district in East Bengal and to Bihar, where approximately 7,000 Muslims were killed. This wave of violence gave rise to disturbances in Bombay and the United Provinces.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸⁴ British Library. IOR/L/P&J/8665 f.f. 95. 96-107. Indian Independence: Partition Source 4: A Copy of a Secret Report written on 22 August 1946 to the Viceroy Lord Wavell from Sir Frederick John Burrows concerning the Calcutta Riots. <http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/findhelpregion/asia/india/indianindependence/indiapakistan/partition4/index.html>. Accessed: 12/24/2013.

The Governor of Bengal, Frederick John Burrows, narrated the events in Calcutta to the Viceroy Wavell, in the following manner: Friday, August 16th. Even before 10 o'clock Police Headquarters had reported that there was excitement throughout the city, that shops were being forced to close, and that there were many reports of stabbing and throwing of stones and brickbats. The trouble had already assumed the communal character which it was to retain throughout. At that time it was mainly in the northern half of the city. (Later reports indicate that the Muslims were in an aggressive mood from early in the day and that their processions were well armed with the lathis, iron rods and missiles. Their efforts to force Hindu shops to close as they passed through the streets were greeted with showers of brickbats from the roofs above – indicating that the Hindus were also not unprepared for trouble – and from this sort of exchange of missiles, matters soon degenerated into arson, looting and murder). The situation deteriorated during the forenoon and at 2.40 p.m. the Chief Secretary rang up my Secretary to say that the position had become so serious that he supported the request of the Commissioner of Police that the Army should be called in at once in aid of the civil power. Ten minutes later the Commissioner of Police reported that the Chief Minister had already

The signs of ethnic cleansing were first evident in the Dacca riots of March-May 1941, in 1942,¹⁸⁵ and then, as described above, in the Great Calcutta Killings of 16-20 August 1946, which left over 100,000 people homeless,¹⁸⁶ as mentioned above. A “Secret Report on the Situation in East Bengal for the Second Half of July 1948” prepared by the Chief Secretary of the Government of East Bengal (Dacca, 16 August 1948) held both Muslim and Hindu politics responsible for communal rioting. The report stated that Bengali Muslims were worried about happenings in Palestine (Middle East) and Hyderabad (India), and that this had created unrest among them. In discussing the Santipur riots in West Bengal, the report documented that Santipur was the center of militant Hindu communalism and that the Bombard Military Samity had been responsible for assaults on Muslims in early 1947. The report also mentions the role of the West Bengal media in spreading rumors and publishing news that made Muslims fearful. According to the report, West Bengali newspapers such as the *Hindusthan* regularly compared the numbers of refugees from East Bengal with that of those from West Bengal. “Whose refugees are greater in number? West Pakistan is without Hindus and migration is taking place from East Pakistan – but four crores of Muslims in India are

agreed to the calling in of troops. He added that the Police had used tear-smoke on crowds frequently and that the situation was bad in Harrison Road, Wellington Square and Corporation Street.

See Also: Markovits, Claude. Ed. “Case Study: The Calcutta Riots of 1946.” Online Encyclopedia of Mass Violence. <http://www.massviolence.org/The-Calcutta-Riots-of-1946>. Accessed: 3/19/14.

¹⁸⁵ See: Government of Bengal. Home Department. Political Branch. File No. Not Available. Report of the Dacca Riots Enquiry Committee. Bengal Government Press, Alipore, Bengal. 1942. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

¹⁸⁶ Eds. Bessel, Richard and Haake, Claudia B 2009, 330-331.

going about freely.”¹⁸⁷ There were rumours in West Bengal that Muslims there were in league with the Razakars of Hyderabad.¹⁸⁸ Publicity given by certain Hindu papers to the alleged recovery of arms from Muslim houses gave rise to apprehension among Muslims. Muslims were suspect in West Bengal, and the role of the Calcutta press in creating an environment of vilification of Pakistan in West Bengal was enormous.¹⁸⁹

The “minority problem” in East and West Bengal was far from settling down quickly, despite the apparent efforts of both Bengal Governments, as well as the Governments of India and Pakistan. The political and home department’s holdings at the Bangladesh National Archives detail the nature of these clashes and the actions taken during this period by both governments. The Governments of East and West Bengal had established Minority Boards at district levels to address the grievances of people.¹⁹⁰ The Chief Secretaries Conferences were a regular feature to discuss Partition-related issues between the two countries. By May 1951, the two countries had conducted 22 such

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Indian Army carried out an operation in Hyderabad after the standstill agreement was over between Hyderabad state and Indian Government to merge it with Indian Union in September 1948. See: Indian Army., The Hyderabad Police Action., <http://indianarmy.nic.in/Site/FormTemplate/frnTempSimple.aspx?MnId=KguAjb0WF91hodkYTFFVbg==&ParentID=+21VcnEXz3Qw11WFLkvCtQ==>. Accessed: 12/23/2013. Razakars were termed the ‘local rebels.’

¹⁸⁹ Government of East Bengal. Home Department. Political Branch. File No: CR 11-199 of 1948. B, Nov 1950/306-335. Migration of Muslims from Nadia on Account of Hindu Persecution, Killing of Muslim & Burning of Muslim Houses. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

¹⁹⁰ Government of East Bengal. Home Department. Political Branch. No: 5241-P. 30th November 1948. Cons. of District Minorities Boards. Dacca. Bangladesh Archives. Dhaka.

meetings.¹⁹¹ The post-Partition violence in East Bengal, according to official and media reports, involved the abduction of women, forced conversions and violent clashes.

Certain letters were sent to concerned governments by locals complaining about harassment of women and men and property grabbing. The complaints also included disrespect shown toward Hindu temples and deities. The majority of the complaints, however, were property-related. One such letter, written by Sri Krishna Sundar Bhattacharja, quoted his harassers:

All of you please agree to whatever I say, whether right or wrong... Hindus sell land and paddy belonging to Pakistan and send money to Hindusthan- we will not allow this. One of your brothers lives at home. Baring [sic] his share, two thirds of the paddy must be made over to us.¹⁹²

A detailed sketch of these tensions on the people's level in West Bengal can be drawn from the Government of Pakistan's Sub-Divisional Relief and Rehabilitation Officer's compilations of disputes and from the proceedings of the Chief Secretaries Conferences held alternately in Dhaka and Calcutta. The compilation shows the allegations of harassment of Muslims by "Hindus of the Indian dominion" in various districts. The

¹⁹¹ Government of East Bengal. File No: CR.3C1-2 of 1951. Conf: The 22nd Chief Secretaries' Conf was held at Shillong from the 23rd to the 26th May 1951. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

¹⁹² Government of East Bengal. Home Department. Political Branch. File No: IN-1 of 1949. B Jan 1951/249-250. Inter-Dom: On a Report Received from the Gov of West Bengal about the Harasment of one Sri Krishna Sundar Bhttacharja of Noakhali District, the West Bengal Gov was replied that the Persons concerned should bring their grievances to the notice of Minorities Board. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

Also: Government of East Bengal. Home Department. Political Branch. File No: II- 209 of 1949/ 447 – 448. (B-January 1951/447-448). Inter-Dominion: The Petition of Rajendra Nath Datta , Regarding Alleged Ill-treatment meted out to him.

Also: Government of East Bengal. File No: CR 3C-2/51. Agenda for Discussion at the 21st Chief Secretaries Conference held at Dacca on the 14th and 15th March 1951. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

department mentions the names of the people involved and the details of each dispute, such as beating, forced removal from homes, and snatching of paddy crops, and gives estimates of property losses. It also mentions Hindus pushing Muslims toward East Bengal, claiming that they had no right to live in Hindustan. One person was asked to leave while he was sowing seeds on his 18 bighas¹⁹³ of land. The Indians (i.e. Hindus) also took away his paddy, plough, four cows etc. The reports prepared by the officers of East Pakistan asked the Government of West Bengal to make compensation for the losses. Meanwhile the Pakistani side also reported complaints and disputes related to religious sensitivity, such as attacks on a *Muharram* procession in West Bengal. There were also disputes among Hindus and Muslims after colored water was splashed on Muslims during the Holi festival, and there were charges of extortion, of the inability of Muslim businessmen to return to their homes, of insults to Muslim women and so on.¹⁹⁴

¹⁹³ A unit of land in India the measure of which varies from region to region. In Colonial Bengal it was fixed at 1600 square yards per Bigha.

¹⁹⁴ See: Government of East Bengal. Home Department, Political Branch. File No: CR 5P-15 of 1949. B, Nov 1950, 1-5. Property: Alleged Forcible Occupation of House and Temple of Annata Lal Das, Malda by the Ansar Bahini at Rajshahi. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

See: Government of East Bengal. Home Department, Political Branch. File No: CR. 1-1-44. B Nov 1950/472-476. Inter-Dominion: Transfer of the Orphans of Jagatpur Ashram Orphanage Chittagong to West Bengal. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

See: . Government of East Bengal. Home Department, Political Branch. File No: CR. 3P-3 of 1949. B. March 1950/149-157. Inter-Dominion: Harassment of the members of the Minority Community in the District of Pabna National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

See: Government of East Bengal. Home Department, Political Branch. File No: CR. 1A6-3 -1949. B. Nov 1950/228-239. Arrest of Sri Sohanlal Panjabi, an Indian National at Kowkhali (Barisal). National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

See: Government of East Bengal. Home Department, Political Branch. File No: CR 1B2-23 of 1951. Border Incident: Kidnapping of Jamini Roy from Tempur Border Police

The first wave of loss of Hindu life in East Bengal also included members of the academic staff of educational institutions. By December 1948 a total of 229 such staff members were reported to have left for Calcutta.¹⁹⁵

Horowitz explains that the cyclical violence in East and West Bengal was reciprocal. The waves of this violence spread back and forth between Dhaka and Calcutta.¹⁹⁶ In Calcutta,

Station Karimpur i.e. the District of Nadia by East Bengal Police and Ansars. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

See: Government of East Bengal. Home Department, Political Branch. File No: CR5P-14 of 1950. B December 1952/912-990. Alleged Forcible Occupation of Houses and Properties Belonging to the Members of the Minority Community in Sylhet District. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

See: Government of East Bengal. Home Department, Political Branch. File No: CR 1-1 - 156 of 1948. B Nov. 1950. 100-104. Inter-Dominion: Report Reg: Oppressing, arresting, assaulting and killing of Musalmans at Kaitha and Kandi subdivisions of Murshidabad. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

See: Government of East Bengal. Home Department. File No: CR 8C-3 of 1949. B, Nov, 1950/270. Inter-Dominion: Confirmation of the Proceedings of 10th Chief Secretaries Conference held in Calcutta from 9th to 12th August 1948. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

See: Government of East Bengal. Home Department. Political Branch. File No: CR 3 C3-4 of 1951. B. June 1952/73-76. Conference: The Proceedings of the 21st Chief Secretaries Conference held at Dacca on 14th and 15th March 1951. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

See: Government of East Bengal. Home Department. Political Branch. CR. I E -2 of 1949. B. March 1950/200-206. Petition of Sheik Abdulla reg the Necessary Arrangements for his Safety in his House at Cal. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

See: Government of East Bengal. Home Department. Political Branch. File No: CR 1-1-25 of 1948. B, Nov '50/ 205-212. Inter-Dominion: Petition from the Muslims of Alipore Duars reg the Rehabilitation of Hindu Refugees. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

See: Home Department, Political Branch. CR. 5R – 2 of 1949. B, March 1950/161-165. Inter-Dominion: Riot: Communal Riots in Kankinara (Dh. 24 Parganas). National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

¹⁹⁵ Government of East Bengal. Home Department. Political Branch. DO.NO. 5274 P. 4th December 1948. Statement of Hindu Staff of Educational Institutions Left East Bengal. East Bengal Sec. Dacca. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

¹⁹⁶ Horowitz 2001, 403.

there were communal disturbances right after Partition.¹⁹⁷ In Dhaka, Hindus were 59% of the total population at the time of Partition and they possessed 85% of the property. 90% of this population left for India after the riots and violence in 1950, after which the property holdings of Hindus fell to 12.7%.¹⁹⁸ The 1950 violence was initiated in Calcutta and set off larger retaliations in Dhaka. These retaliations were answered back in India, stretching from Calcutta to UP.¹⁹⁹

The riots in East Pakistan generated a great number of migrants.²⁰⁰ People used railways as well as water transport to move between the two dominions.²⁰¹ According to one report, the number of Hindus in Dhaka had declined from 58% of the population to just 4.6%. A survey showed that Muslims now controlled 6,255 out of 7,175 properties owned by Hindus in 1947. The refugees from East Pakistan termed themselves the “New Jews” and saw themselves as the principal victims of the Partition. This discourse was created by the most privileged section of the refugee community; their lower-caste counterparts were reduced to a miserable existence of pavement dwelling.²⁰²

¹⁹⁷ Youtube. Pak Broad Cor. Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy (the fifth Prime Minister of Pakistan) address on Transfer of Power of India - Unrest in Calcutta Mr. Suharwardy, 16th August, 1947., <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=voTJiCfBr-A>. Accessed: 12/23/2013.

¹⁹⁸ Ray, Jayanta Kumar. 1968. *Democracy and Nationalism on Trial: A Study of East Pakistan*. Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study. P. 46.

¹⁹⁹ Horowitz 2001, 403.

²⁰⁰ Government of East Bengal. Home Department. Political Branch. File No: CR. 3-1-71 of 1951. Migration: During the Year 1951 more Hindus and more Muslims came to East Bengal then went out of it. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

²⁰¹ Government of East Bengal. Home Department. Political Branch. DO.NO. 5274 P. A Statement of Passenger Figures from and to Barisal- Railway Passenger Figure for 1948. 4 December 1948. Dacca. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

²⁰² Eds. Bessel, Richard and Haake, Claudia B 2009, 339-340, 347.

In addition to the daily clashes reported between Muslims and Hindus in some regions, the situation generated by this migration had escalated to such a high level between the two countries that fear loomed of war between India and Pakistan.²⁰³ The first recorded communal riot after Partition, in Dhaka, took place on 10th February 1950. The Dacca District Gazetteer mentions that this and the succeeding riots targeted Hindus in Dhaka. “A few Hindus were killed.... Four thousand Muslim bad characters were rounded up and at least ten were awarded life sentences.”²⁰⁴ The second communal riot in Dhaka broke out in 1964, apparently in reaction to the Hazratbal²⁰⁵ incident in Kashmir.

Politically, East Bengal was not static during the 1950s or after the defeat of the founding party of Pakistan, the Muslim League, in 1954. There may have been several state and trans-border factors and elements that resulted in the “Bengal Disturbances.” In any case, the communal violence of 1950 caused a large exodus of Hindu people to India from the East. Jayanta Kumar Ray quotes Bhupendra Kumar Datta as stating that “it was the policy of Government of Pakistan ... to deal with the overall political challenge of East Pakistan by squeezing out its Hindus.” During the communal violence of 1950 in East Bengal, a majority of the Hindu upper middle class was pushed out of East Bengal.²⁰⁶ The majority of the religious minority that stayed back were peasants.²⁰⁷

²⁰³ Khan, Yasmin. 2007. *The Great Partition: The Making of India and Pakistan*. New Haven: Yale University Press. P:191.

²⁰⁴ General Editor: Rizvi 1969, 80.

²⁰⁵ A shrine in Indian Kashmir from which sacred relics of Muslims went missing in December of 1963.

²⁰⁶ Ray 1968, 46.

In 1952, the Government of Pakistan promulgated the Security of Pakistan Act. The purpose of the Act was to keep anti-state agents and enemies in check. As a result, the Government cracked down on Communists in East Bengal. In July 1954 the Communist Party was banned and was declared an “unlawful association.” Following the promulgation of the Act, members of the Communist Party in East Bengal, as well as some other people, were arrested after most of them were declared to be enemy agents. A dominant majority of the detainees belonged to the Hindu community.²⁰⁸ The Congressmen in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan protested against the detention of political workers without trial.²⁰⁹ The Government of Pakistan insisted that their action was against the Communists and not against the Hindu community.²¹⁰ State policies, a sense of reciprocity between East and West Bengal, propaganda in the press as well as mutual violence against the communities in East and West Bengal: all contributed to huge migrations between the two countries. According to Horowitz, this ended only with the departure of millions of Hindus from East Pakistan to India in 1971, at the founding of Bangladesh.²¹¹ Hindus nevertheless still do routinely become targets of violence with the eruption of political violence in Bangladesh.

²⁰⁷ Indian Commission of Jurists. 1965. Recurrent Exodus of Minorities from East Pakistan and Disturbances in India: A Report to the Indian Commission of Jurists by Its Committee of Enquiry. Calcutta.

²⁰⁸ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No: 239/CF/56. Release of Safety Prisoners and Repeal of Safety Laws. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

²⁰⁹ Constituent Assembly (Legislature) Debates. 15 November 1952. The Restriction And Detention (Second Amendment) Bill. Karachi. P. 228 - 243.

²¹⁰ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No: 239/CF/56. Release of Safety Prisoners and Repeal of Safety Laws. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

²¹¹ Horowitz 2001, 403-404.

Before Partition, Upper-caste Hindus dominated the cultural and intellectual scene of Dhaka. But after the Partition, in the East Bengal Legislative Assembly, Hindus had no leading intellectual or political figure in the cabinet.²¹² Jogendranath Mandal (1904-1968), an East Bengali Scheduled-Caste leader, the first Law and Labour minister in the Pakistan Assembly, moved to India following the 1950 riots. In 1948, when communal riots broke out in Karachi, he had represented the Hindu community of West Pakistan as a minister. Upon remaining unheard by the government, Jogendranath Mandal left Pakistan unannounced and took political asylum in India.²¹³

Minorities and Indo – Pak Politics

Thus political conditions did not become stable for East Bengali Hindus after Partition for a long period of time. Waves of refugees continued to cross the border into West Bengal for three decades after the Partition. This situation brought about a discussion between the Government of Pakistan and the Government of India about minorities. The correspondence of the UK Foreign office with the High Commissions in Karachi, Dhaka and Calcutta shows how the departing colonial power viewed the two governments' handling of the issues of communal massacres, property looting, rehabilitation of refugees and finally the situation in Kashmir. Early in Feb 1950, the U.K High Commission in India had suggested that both Prime Ministers, i.e. Pundit Nehru and Liaquat Ali Khan, should tour the affected areas of East and West Bengal together. Jawaharlal Nehru had suggested that two fact-finding commissions composed of four

²¹² Khan 2007, 190.

²¹³ Banglapedia. National Encyclopedia of Bangladesh. Mandol, Jogendranath. http://www.banglapedia.org/HT/M_0151.html. Accessed: 12/19/2013.

people each, two from each country, preferably including a Minister, should inspect the affected areas, report what had happened, and work to restore confidence among the refugees. The Pakistani Prime Minister, Liaquat, responded that since this proposal had already been considered by the Chief Secretaries of East and West Bengal and consequently vetoed, he would like to refer the matter to the East Bengal Government again before answering. Liaquat had suggested that the two Governments should issue commands forbidding any further movement of refugees from one country to another. Nehru, on the other hand, thought that it was hasty to adopt such a proposal since it might have an effect contrary to the one that was intended. Nehru sent another telegram to Liaquat suggesting that he himself and Liaquat should, early in March, tour the affected areas together, with the objective of reinstating confidence among evacuees and refugees. Nehru pointed out that, unless the ill-feeling could be restricted among the population, the consequences in the two countries might be very serious. Liaquat had no time to reply to this Indian suggestion. The Indian Prime Minister Nehru's first telegram apparently had made some vague suggestion regarding rehabilitation of refugees. Liaquat pressed for the prohibition of further refugee movement across the new international borders since the Pakistani Government was facing a serious housing crisis to settle in refugees. This was coupled with a proposal for measures to promote the return of refugees from each Dominion to their homes.

In the end, Liaquat rejected the suggestion that the two Prime Ministers should tour the affected areas. He was apparently doubtful that the proposal would have any real beneficial effects, as the earlier joint Prime Ministers' tour during Punjab massacres (of

1947) had been unsuccessful. This reason was given to the press for his rejection of the proposal. The Pakistan Government thought that Nehru's proposals were in line with what they regarded as an Indian tendency to make gestures that would impress the world but that had no practical results. The Pakistani side considered that the first steps in restoring normal conditions and lowering the dangerously high level of tension should be the prohibition of further refugee movement and the resettlement of refugees. The U.K High Commission did not approve of Liaquat's rejection of Nehru's suggestion. The High Commission thought that the tour might have been no more than a gesture, but that its refusal was going to send a very bad message around the world. The Pakistanis estimated that 50,000 Muslim refugees from West Bengal had reached East Bengal since the current disturbances and another 30,000 had entered Sylhet as a result of the Karimgangi disturbances in Assam. As noted earlier, the Pakistani establishment was unable to cope with the housing facilities required by the refugees who were inundating Dhaka and Karachi. Pakistan was also worried by its own reports of events in Calcutta, according to the UK correspondence. While the Pakistanis agreed to some extent that casualties had been low, they had proof of 31 dead in one street battle. They believed that damage to Muslim property was enormous, and that the confirmed object of the violence was to produce a large-scale Muslim exodus.

Besides managing their own diplomacy, the two governments had to control and enforce a media policy as well, after the disturbances in the two Bengals. The Calcutta press had become an anti-Pakistan bastion, and the Pakistani media was responding in kind. A ban on communal reporting was imposed by the Chief Secretaries's

Conference.²¹⁴ According to the UK Foreign Office, the main events described in the aforementioned telegrams had been released to the Pakistani press by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and were “reproduced not too sensationally.” The press in East Bengal was also understood to be observing restraint on communal news. *The Dawn* (Karachi), however, printed a series of highly objectionable atrocity stories from its Dacca correspondent. This control on the press did not continue for long, and both sides soon started complaining about each other.

On 23 February 1950, Nehru made a strong statement in the Indian Parliament regarding the conditions of the Hindu minority in East Bengal. The British Foreign Office telegram mentioned that the feelings in Delhi were very high against Pakistan. Politicians in Delhi thought that the insecurity of the Hindu minority in East Bengal was no temporary phenomenon and that the “Pakistan Government was not, repeat not, taking any measures to protect Hindu life and property which by any standard can be regarded as reasonable.”²¹⁵ The arrival of refugees from East Bengal into Calcutta, according to the British Foreign Office telegram, was reported to have assumed large proportions (approximately 20,000 refugees). As the refugee movement into West Bengal continued, refugees kept bringing “highly coloured stories of conditions in East Bengal which inflame opinion in Calcutta. Indian authorities are very apprehensive that fresh outbreak

²¹⁴ A series of Chief Secretaries’ Conferences took place between the Governments of West and East Bengal to settle the issues which emerged after the Partition.

²¹⁵ Foreign Office Files India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. 1950. FL 10114/4. 1950. FO 371-84246. Feb-March 1950. Folder 1. Bengal Disturbances. Tension in India over the Disturbances in East Bengal. National Archives (Great Britain). Accessed via Arizona State University Libraries.

in Calcutta will occur as a consequence and fear that in that case disturbances might get out of control of military and police and result in large-scale massacres.”²¹⁶

The Indian Parliamentarians were of the opinion that a "stronger" attitude towards Pakistan should be adopted by the Indian government. The telegram further mentions that Nehru was having difficulty in keeping under control the politicians who were hasty on this issue. Nehru himself had felt strongly regarding the predicament of Hindus in East Bengal. This tension was indicated by fact that the Indian Minister of Defence and the Chief of Staff had held a meeting to consider the question of likely military dispositions in East Bengal. However, the matter was left undecided, according to the telegram. The unrest in Bengal was also seen linked politically with the situation in Kashmir. The British Foreign Office was of the opinion that Nehru's connecting of the Bengal and Kashmir issues was nothing but the old Hindu-Muslim animosity. The *Hindustan Times* had quoted the Indian Prime Minister as stating that, if India agreed to an exchange of population on a religious basis between East and West Bengal, India would lose its claim over Kashmir on the basis of the populace's religion. Earlier, during the final negotiations with the Boundary Commission over the Indian territories to be announced after Partition, Nehru himself had argued for attaching the Chittagong Hill Tracts to India on the basis of religion.

Nehru while commenting on the disturbances in East and West Bengal in his address to the Indian Parliament in February 1950, had stated: “all other issues were secondary in face of Bengal events. It was vital to know the facts in order that action

²¹⁶ Ibid.

could be taken but it was difficult to learn them.”²¹⁷ Nehru appreciated the control of the Indian press and condemned the lack of it in that of Pakistan. The UK High Commission was of the opinion that events in East Pakistan had been more serious than those in West Bengal. After months of anti-Indian and anti-Hindu propaganda in both East and West Pakistan, two incidents of violence by police in Khulna and Rajshahi districts of East Bengal had led to the flight into India of some 25,000 or 30,000 people. Outrage in West Bengal led to riots, the worst in Calcutta and after that there were widespread rioting in Dacca and mixed reports of trouble elsewhere in East Pakistan. Whereas Calcutta and Bengali politicians were influential in heating up the debate on East Bengal, its linkage with the Kashmir issue indicates the two countries’ politics to acquire territory.

Amidst these regional and national politics over the Bengal refugee crisis, from 13 to 20 February, roughly 20,000 East Bengali Hindus were evacuated to India while only a quarter of this number of Muslims was evacuated from India to Pakistan. The facilities in refugee camps in Dhaka were reported to be inadequate. The Indian Deputy High Commissioner had remained in his house on the advice of the Pakistani authorities. According to the Indian Prime Minister, India did not wish to interfere with the domestic affairs of Pakistan but was also “sympathetic and anxious when large numbers of people in Pakistan were suffering.”²¹⁸ The Indian Government held that it discouraged migration

²¹⁷ Foreign Office Files India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Feb-March 1950. FL 10114/5. Folder 1. FO 371-84246. Summary of Statement made by Pandit Nehru on 23rd Feb 1950 in Parliament regarding the serious view taken by Gov of India of Condition of Hindus xxx in East Bengal. National Archives (Great Britain). Accessed via Arizona State University Libraries.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

of populations, but could not refuse refuge to those in dismay.²¹⁹ The UK High

Commission remarked:

It seemed clear that a very large number, if not all, of the Hindus of Pakistan had lost all sense of security. It was the duty of Pakistan to enable its nationals to live their normal and peaceful lives. If they were unable to inspire the necessary confidence, and their citizens were compelled by circumstances to run away for safety, the Government had failed to discharge its duties. Moreover, communal tragedies in one country produced reaction in the other; India could not therefore remain indifferent to tragedies in Pakistan. The Government of Pakistan must

²¹⁹ He said that, “India and Pakistan may have become two different countries, politically and otherwise separate from each other. But large numbers of people live in each country, which have intimate associations and often relationship with people in the other country, and if they are in trouble, they look to this friendship and relationship. It seems clear to us that a very large number, if not all, of the members of the minority community of Pakistan have lost all sense of security and live in fear and apprehension. It is the bounden duty of Pakistan, as it is ours also, to inspire confidence so that each country's nationals can live their normal and peaceful lives and practice their vocations. If a country is unable to inspire that confidence and its own citizens are compelled by circumstances to run away to some other place for safety then the Government of that country has failed to discharge its duties. Communal tragedy in one country produces its reactions on the other. If tragedies occur in Pakistan, they powerfully affect the people of our country and we cannot remain indifferent to them. It is for the Government of Pakistan to consider seriously what the consequences are likely to be if they are unable to give peace and security to their own citizens. Those consequences happen to affect India also and we cannot remain indifferent to them. I should like to make an appeal to our own people in this grave moment of crisis. If they desire that Government should take effective action whenever necessary, they must realize that perfect order and security must prevail in India. There are anti-social elements and communal groups who, in spite of their declared opposition, really function in tune with the intense communalism of Pakistan.”

consider seriously what the consequences were likely to be if they were unable to afford security, India could not remain indifferent.²²⁰

The Pakistani Premier, on the other hand, as reported a UK High Commission telegram dated 24 February 1950, denied the massacre of Hindus in East Bengal and refused to admit it as a communal issue. The Pakistani PM was quoted as saying that it was impossible to estimate the number that had been killed but that he regarded it as unlikely that it ran into the thousands. Rather, there had undoubtedly been great damage to Muslim property and many thousands had been rendered homeless. He confirmed the earlier estimate of about 200 killed in the Dacca disturbances with heavy damage to property. He further admitted that in Khulna the police had taken stern action and that the people affected were mostly Hindus. “But the affair had not, repeat, not been communal.”²²¹ The Pakistani PM emphasized that the Pakistani state had been inflexible in dealing pitilessly with the Communists, “who did not understand any other kind of treatment”,²²² and he had resolved that any further Communist outbreaks would be equally severely dealt with whether the people involved were Hindus or Muslims. The Pakistani PM repeated the view that the Calcutta outbreak had not been a spontaneous reaction to the Khulna incident and cited the fact that there had been an interval of about

²²⁰ Foreign Office Files India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Feb-March 1950. FL 10114/5. Folder 1. FO 371-84246. Summary of Statement made by Pandit Nehru on 23rd Feb 1950 in Parliament regarding the serious view taken by Gov of India of Condition of Hindus xxx in East Bengal. National Archives (Great Britain). Accessed via Arizona State University Libraries.

²²¹ Foreign Office Files India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Feb-March 1950. FL 1014/6. Bengal Disturbances. Folder 1. FO 371-84246. Views of the Prime Minister of Pakistan on the Reports of Mass Killing in the Bengal Disturbances. Foreign Office Files India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Feb-March 1950. FL 10114/9.

²²² Ibid.

a month between the latter and the outbreak of the Calcutta rioting. The Pakistani Prime Minister considered the situation in East Bengal to be under control. The inflow of some 30,000 to 40,000 refugees into Sylhet from Karimgangi in Assam continued to trigger apprehension, and pressure remained high. The main problem was to stop any further minority exodus from East Bengal and West Bengal and to rehabilitate those rendered homeless. He also condemned Nehru's efforts to link Kashmir with Bengal.²²³

The Pakistani Premier held another press conference on 27 February 1950 to give his statement on the situation in Bengal. The Pakistani official stance regarding these disturbances held that Indian propaganda was deliberately confusing the issues. The fact was, according to the Pakistani side, that communal rioting first started in West Bengal as a result of (a) incitement by the Hindu Mahasabha, the R.S.S. and the Council for Protection of Rights of Minorities, which was training an irregular army without interference from the Government of India, and (b) a statement by Patel in Calcutta on 15th January inciting Bengali Hindus to violence.²²⁴ The Pakistani Prime Minister stated:

The echoes of this speech had hardly died in the streets of Calcutta when pamphlets and posters appeared in thousands, demanding action against imaginary atrocities against Hindus in East Bengal. The inevitable happened. On January 19th, Muslims were attacked in Bongaon and their mosques were desecrated. On January 20th, the Hindu Mahasabha sponsored a meeting at Berhampur in West Bengal. Immediately after this meeting Hindu mobs attacked the Muslim areas at Oorabazar and many other places in the district of Murshidabad. On January 21st, a Muslim quarter at Dum-Dum Cantonment was attacked and a mosque desecrated. Similar incidents took place in Ultadanga, Maniktolla and Beliaghata. On February 3rd, a meeting was organized by the Council for the protection of the Rights of Minorities at Batanagar. On February

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Foreign Office Files India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Bengal Disturbances. Folder 1. FO 371-84246. Statement by the Prime Minister of Pakistan to the Press on Bengal situation on 27th Feb 1950. Bengal Disturbances. Accessed via Arizona State University Libraries.

5th a communal riot broke out in Batanagar. By February 8th large scale rioting was taking place in Calcutta. It could hardly be a mere coincidence that these meetings were repeatedly followed by rioting, arson and loot. Over fifteen thousand refugees have already poured into East Bengal and at least twenty thousand more lie huddled in and around Calcutta in open spaces facing the winter weather in ankle-deep mud and filth.²²⁵

The Prime Minister further stated that the attacks on the minority community in East Bengal were “most deplorable.” He termed “amazing” Nehru's complaint that the East Bengal Government had prevented the Indian Deputy High Commissioner in Dacca from going to Barisal. The PM mentioned that an aircraft had been provided for the Indian High Commissioner in Dhaka to visit the affected areas.²²⁶

Referring to the Bengal troubles, the British High Commission telegram mentioned that the troubles had started towards the end of January with a minor incident in a village in the Khulna area. The police had gone to arrest some peasants and were assaulted. Such things happened pretty frequently all over India, states the telegram. The East Pakistan authorities discovered that the village was a Hindu village and decided to make this incident an example. The police and the local militia, therefore, beat up the villagers, burnt their houses, looted their property, raped the women and killed some men. This started a large-scale movement of Hindus out of the Khulna district, which in turn provoked anti-Muslim riots in Murshidabad (West Bengal). The report comments in this connection that the Radcliffe Award was mainly responsible for these developments, since it had been madness to put the predominantly Hindu Khulna district in Pakistan and

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Ibid.

the chiefly Muslim district of Murshidabad in India. The Murshidabad troubles had triggered demonstrations against Hindus in Dhaka; these in turn had led to anti-Muslim riots in Calcutta. According to the UK foreign office, the Home Ministry and the authorities in West Bengal had taken preventive measures in Calcutta before the situation became serious. It also opined that the Government of India had dependable evidence that local officials, including District Magistrates, in East Bengal were responsible for fueling public opinion. The Pakistani Government then turned to blame the unrest in East Bengal on the influx of refugees in East Bengal from Assam.

Another telegram, this one originating from the U.K. High Commission in India on 5 March 1950, mentions the mounting pressure on the Indian Government from its public to take action against the Pakistan Government to protect the Hindu “minority” in East Bengal. From February to March (1950) the politics and situation had escalated between the two countries, as each held to its own policy. The U.K High Commission had unconfirmed reports of precautionary military dispositions by the Indian Government, apparently on the East/West Bengal Frontier.²²⁷

Nehru was not in favor of exchanging populations, as this would have been unpractical. India’s long-term policy was that East Bengali Hindus were Pakistani nationals, but in the short term India intended to protect the incoming refugees.²²⁸ Whereas there was communal violence in Calcutta and the adjoining areas where Muslims were being attacked, burned out of their homes and killed, the British

²²⁷ Ibid.

²²⁸ FL 10114/21. In Bengal Disturbances Feb-March 1950 (Folder 1). FO 371/84246. Foreign Office Files for India, Pakistan and Afghanistan. Accessed via Arizona State University Libraries.

correspondence asserted that there was no comparison between the violence in East and West Bengal. They saw the problem in East Bengal as far more serious than the one in West Bengal.

The Liaquat-Nehru Pact

After the communal rioting of 10 February 1950 in Dacca, the prime ministers of India and Pakistan signed the Nehru-Liaquat or the Liaquat-Nehru Pact.²²⁹ In fact, it was only after Britain exerted pressure on the two governments that, in March 1950, they signed this pact, also called the Delhi Pact. The goal of the pact was to enforce minority rights. Both Pakistan and India agreed that each “will ensure to the minorities throughout its territory, complete equality of citizenship, irrespective of religion, a full sense of security in respect of life, culture, property and personal honor, freedom of movement within each country and freedom of occupation, speech and worship subject to law and morality. Members of the minorities shall have equal opportunity with members of the majority community to participate in the public life of their country’s civil and armed forces. Both Governments declare these rights to be fundamental and undertake to enforce them effectively.”²³⁰ The Prime Minister of India further drew the attention of his Pakistani counterpart to the fact that these rights were guaranteed to all minorities in India by its constitution, on which the Pakistani Premier pointed out that a similar

²²⁹ General Editor: Rizvi 1969, 78.

²³⁰ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File. No. 74/CF/65. Fair Treatment of Minorities in Pakistan. Sub Subject: Agreement Between the Government of India and the Government of Pakistan, Dated The 8th April, 1950. (Liaquat-Nehru Agreement). NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

provision existed in the Objective Resolution adopted by the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan.²³¹

The two governments also agreed that they would continue their efforts to restore normal conditions in East and West Bengal and would take suitable measures to prevent further disorder. They also guaranteed to punish all those who were found guilty of offences. It was also decided that both governments would recover the abducted women and the looted property of affectees. Priority in the matter of inquiry and action was to be given to the more serious incidents, such as offences against women (abduction of or insults to women). One of the suggestions in the Liaquat-Nehru Pact was that police officers of a stated rank should be given the power to search, without a warrant, houses and other places where, according to information received by them, an abducted woman might be found. The recovered women were then to be taken to custody houses. The management of these custody houses was to be inclusive of Hindu women. This suggests that a large number of affected women were Hindu. It was likewise agreed that all houses of minorities that had been requisitioned would be de-requisitioned by the Government of East Bengal. The two governments also agreed that they would not recognize forced conversions; any conversion effected during a period of communal disturbances would be deemed to be a forced conversion. Those found guilty of converting people forcibly would be penalized. Finally, the pact suggested measures to check the communal violence by taking “prompt and effective steps to prevent the dissemination of news and mischievous opinion calculated to rouse communal passion by press or radio or by any

²³¹ Ibid.

individual or organisation. Those guilty of such activity shall be rigorously dealt with.”²³²

Following the signing of the Liaquat-Nehru pact, 12 lakhs (1,200,000) refugees returned to East Bengal. But the figures kept fluctuating in both Bengals in the subsequent years.²³³ Within one day of signing the pact, there was a riot in Calcutta and the pact was dead.²³⁴ The Pakistani Home Ministry’s report stated:

...the Liaquat-Nehru pact was now virtually dead. A major riot took place in India one day after signing the pact but nothing was done to remedy the situation. Since then the reported number of incidents in India was 604 and some of them were on a very large scale with heavy loss of life and property and violation of honor but each incident appears to give the appetite of the militant Hindu organizations of more carnage.²³⁵

Another large spell of migration in the Bengal region occurred in 1950. According to Pakistani officials, they received 400,000 refugees from West Bengal and Assam. Within six weeks, by May 1950, the Hindu influx into West Bengal had reached 1.5 million people. This happened in the context of rising communal tensions in both Bengals. As tensions and worries grew among the relatives of East Pakistani Hindus in the West Bengal, the British foreign office thought that the governments of India and Pakistan were about to go to war. This spell of displacement of population continued even after the West Bengal government wound up the rehabilitation project in 1958. The

²³² Ibid.

²³³ Eds. Bessel, Richard and Haake, Claudia B 2009, 335.

²³⁴ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File. No. 74/CF/65. Fair Treatment of Minorities in Pakistan. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

²³⁵ Ibid.

1951 Census showed that Calcutta's population had gone up nearly 20% due to the influx of refugees.

Both East and West Bengal had a history of communal violence prior to the Partition. The signs of ethnic cleansing were first evident in the Dacca riots of March-May 1941, in 1942²³⁶ and then in the Great Calcutta Killings of 16-20 August 1946, which had left over 100,000 people homeless.²³⁷ This continued after Partition too. A report, Secret Report on the Situation in East Bengal for the Second Half of July 1948, prepared by the Chief Secretary of the Government of East Bengal (Dacca, 16 August 1948) published after the Partition held Muslim and Hindu politics both responsible for communal rioting. While discussing the Santipur riots in West Bengal, the report documented that Santipur was a center of militant Hindu communalism and that the Bombard Military Samity had been responsible for assaults on Muslims in early 1947. The report also mentions the role of the West Bengal media in spreading rumors and publishing news that made Muslims fearful. The Government of East Bengal held that Muslims were suspected in West Bengal and the role of the Calcutta press was enormous in creating an environment of vilification of Pakistan in West Bengal.²³⁸ Publicity given by certain Hindu papers to the alleged recovery of arms from Muslim houses gave rise to apprehension among Muslims. The U.K Foreign Office correspondence points to

²³⁶ See: Report of the Dacca Riots Enquiry Committee. Government of Bengal, Home Department-Political. Bengal Government Press, Alipore, Bengal. 1942. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

²³⁷ Eds. Bessel, Richard and Haake, Claudia B 2009, 330-331.

²³⁸ Government of East Bengal. Home Department. Political Branch. File No: CR 11-199 of 1948. B, Nov 1950/306-335. Migration of Muslims from Nadia on account of Hindu Persecution, Killing of Muslim & burning of Muslim Houses.. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings, Dhaka.

persistent anti-India and anti-Hindu propaganda in East Bengal carried on in the print press and at times on the radio in East Bengal. This anti-Hindu propaganda incited the masses against Hindus in East Bengal. Hindus were being called “kafirs,” fifth columnists, a danger to the Pakistani state and so on.²³⁹

The issue of East Pakistani Hindus had become politicized in India and was discussed in Parliament. The relatives of East Pakistani Hindus in West Bengal were also a source of pressure on the Indian Government to resolve this issue with Pakistan. On the other hand, the Pakistani state always categorized all Hindus of East Pakistan in one singular category, Hindus, in their official communication (despite the fact that they were counted separately as “Castes” and “Scheduled Castes” in the Census of 1961).²⁴⁰ The Pakistani state documents later claimed that the Hindus of West Pakistan were now settled and assimilated; this was quite contrary to the situation on the ground in Sindh. In the official Pakistani opinion, only the Hindu population of East Bengal had faced problems in settling down and there was no focus at all on the Hindu community of West Pakistan.

A general overview of the early correspondence which took place between the Governments of India and Pakistan shows how the newly established Pakistani and Indian governments were trying to deal with the communal disturbances in the two parts of Bengal, with each government rejecting the claims of the other. In the initial years, governments of India and Pakistan “naturally” assumed responsibility for protecting and safeguarding their “Hindu” and “Muslim” citizens in Pakistan and India respectively.

²³⁹ Bengal Disturbances March 1950 (Folder 2) FO 371/84247. Accessed via Arizona State University Libraries.

²⁴⁰ General Editor: Rizvi 1969, 87.

This also shows the high level politics of both countries in the initial years of independence.

The violence that began in Dacca in 1950 soon spread to other districts in East Bengal. The coastal district of Barisal witnessed the worst disturbances. Most of the Hindu victims in this district were reported to have died in the compound of a police station where they had taken shelter. This report was prepared by the Minister for Law and Labour in the Pakistan Government, Jogendar Nath Mandal, who represented the Scheduled-Caste Hindu population of Pakistan. He further reported to the central government that in Sylhet over 200 villages had been destroyed and 800 Hindu temples desecrated. Forced conversions, harassment of women and attacks on trains were also reported. Similar scenes of violence were repeated in West Bengal.²⁴¹

Joya Chatterji in *The Spoils of Partition: Bengal and India, 1947-1967* discusses the inability of the Indian Government to rehabilitate the refugees properly and the fact that they dealt much less well with the massive influx of refugees from Bengal than with those from Sindh.²⁴² The following table shows the property affected in three main administrative divisions of East Pakistan from 1947-1950. Most of the property belonged to the Hindu community:²⁴³

Table 2: The Property Affected in Three East Pakistan Districts from 1947 to 1950:

	Hindu	Muslim

²⁴¹ Eds. Bessel, Richard and Haake, Claudia B 2009, 334.

²⁴² See: Chatterji 2007.

²⁴³ The numbers indicate the properties which were requisitioned. (Adopted from Haimanti Roy [2012: 110]).

Chittagong	487	156
Rajshahi	105	23
Dacca	345	57

The Government of Pakistan's records show the concern over the exodus in the East. An Indo-Pak meeting was held on April 9, 1955 to discuss this matter. The memorandum records that certain measures to stop the exodus of minorities from East Pakistan were suggested by the PM of Pakistan to the Government of East Pakistan. The matter was also discussed in a meeting on 5 and 6 May 1956 at Dacca. The summary of the report mentions that there was a rise in the migration of members of the minority community from East Bengal which was viewed with increasing concern by both governments.

General Iskander Mirza, then President of Pakistan, affirmed that his government was anxious to stop the exodus and to find out the real causes and effective remedies. "For this purpose the minority minister of Pakistan should shortly be touring East Bengal. It was considered that a statement to re-assure the minority community in East Bengal that their rights and privileges would be fully safeguarded and further assuring those migrants who wished to return, a welcome back to their home, would have a beneficial effect."

Both sides also contemplated issuing a draft statement assuring the above. "This statement when issued would be given full publicity in Pakistan as well as in India. The Government of India would cooperate with the government of Pakistan in the efforts being made by the latter to re-assure the minorities." The draft statement, reproduced below, is attached to the above-mentioned file:

Draft Statement

The government of Pakistan have viewed with increasing concern the rise in the migration of members of the minority community from East Bengal. Members of the minority community are reminded that the government of Pakistan regards them as much [sic] citizens of the state as members of the majority community. They are consequently assured all the rights and privileges of citizenship.

Special machinery has been established for providing early redress of grievances of the members of the minority community.

Whatever might be the reason for the large scale movement of members of the minority community, the government of Pakistan would be prepared to take back in their original homes all migrants who wish to return. They may rest assured that all measures will be taken to safeguard their interests and security so that they should continue to live in Pakistan with honour and dignity.

With a view to assist in the creation of favourable conditions for the safety and comfort of the minority community the Hon'ble Mr. Pathan, Minority Minister, Pakistan accompanied by Mr. A.N. Chanda, Deputy Minister, External Affairs, India will shortly be making a joint tour of East Bengal.²⁴⁴

In 1964, communal violence broke out once again in both Bengals. A Committee of Enquiry into these disturbances that submitted its report to the Indian Commission of Jurists in 1965 termed these disturbances "genocide." This committee had visited the disturbed areas and recorded interviews with approximately 12,000 affected heads of families at different ports of entry from East Bengal into India. The committee suggested an enquiry into the reasons for communal disturbances in West Bengal too. The committee wrote a letter to Field Marshal Gen. Ayub Khan, informing him about the proceedings of the inquiry and asking his permission to visit East Pakistan for further enquiry, but they never received a response from the government of Pakistan. The commission wanted to investigate the reasons for the recurrent exodus of minorities from East Pakistan into India. The communal tensions resulted in a great exodus of people who were perplexed about their final destination in the region.

²⁴⁴ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No. 39/CF/57. Hindu Exodus from East Pakistan. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

At a Home Ministers' Conference in Delhi in 1964, the Indian delegation put forward many demands for the rehabilitation of the Hindu community in East Pakistan. A delegation of East Pakistani Hindus had also met President Ayub in Dacca. The Government of Pakistan restricted the number of passports granted for Indo-Pak travel early in 1964. This embargo was lifted in June 1964.²⁴⁵ Field Marshal Ayub Khan's election manifesto included an undertaking to fulfill the demands of the Hindu community of East Bengal. The manifesto was entitled, "fair treatment to minorities in Pakistan." The thirteen demands of minority communities included: separate representation in the national and provincial assemblies on the basis of population; reserved posts in the central and provincial services; liberalization of the procedure for issuing Pak-India passports and other travel documents; derequisitioning of houses and properties of members of the minority community; repeal of the Disturbed Persons (Rehabilitation) Ordinance, 1964; issue of licenses, permits etc. for businesses and industries; protection of places of worship and cultural centers; grant of foreign exchange to visit pilgrimage places outside Pakistan; liberal grant of firearms for the safety of life and property of the members of the minority communities; enhanced grants for educational institutions, hostels etc., for minority communities; nomination of members of minority communities for positions in all government sponsored bodies; award of all water and fishery rights to fishermen belonging to the minority communities; and constitution of minority boards. The demands were looked into by both central and

²⁴⁵ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File. No. 74/CF/65. Fair Treatment of Minorities in Pakistan. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

provincial governments.²⁴⁶ But in September 1965 the Indo-Pak war broke out. This resulted in a further eviction of Hindus from East Pakistan that the Pakistani government was unable to stop.

On 2 April 1965 it was decided that a joint meeting between the representatives of minorities and representatives of the central and provincial governments should be held at Dacca. The meeting, however, was postponed due to a state of emergency in the country. Normalcy had not been restored even by 1966, according to a Government of Pakistan letter dated 11 August 1966.²⁴⁷

The 1970's: Hounding Thakurs in Tharparkar

The Hindu communities of Sindh, including the Rajputs of Tharparkar, were gradually driven out of their lands to India. During my fieldwork, I spoke with people from various Hindu communities who had suffered politically or economically, or who were members of divided families. Many of these people did not name the quarters from where they had faced expulsion. They brought up their harassment only vaguely: “new people,” “people from another village,” “people who believed that they would be rulers in Pakistan,” “chairmen in Pakistan,” were the expressions used. *Roznama Jasarat*,²⁴⁸ a daily Urdu newspaper, gives an insight into the situation in Tharparkar and adjoining areas of Sindh regarding the witch-hunting faced by political and landed elite Hindus in Sindh. In the following I will relate the important events as they were reported by

²⁴⁶ Ibid.

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ The Daily Jasarat is an Urdu newspaper which has been published in Karachi since 1970. The newspaper reflects views of Jamat-e-Islami, a religious political party in Pakistan. <http://www.newspapers.com.pk/jasarat.htm>
<http://www.jasarat.com/>

Jasarat. The landed and political elites of the Hindu communities were driven out sometimes under the pretense that they were Indian citizens and sometimes under the pretense that they were enemies, opponents of the Pakistani state, or Indian agents. An ecology of fear was also produced and installed among Pakistani Muslims about the Pakistani Hindus.

One prominent person among many others to face this situation was Thakur Lachman Singh of Chahchro, a member of the West Pakistan National Assembly. After being booked in a cattle theft case and taken to a police station, he moved to Rajasthan along with his family. On 20 February *Jasarat* reported that Lachman Singh had been transported by an outlaw, Balvant Singh to India. On 22 Feb 1971, *Jasarat* reported the departure of Thakur Lachman Singh following his arrest and release by West Pakistani officials, as an escape which had been facilitated by ‘dishonest’ government officials and political leaders who took heavy bribes and thus were involved in the “escape” of Lachman Singh from Pakistan. Earlier the newspaper had been stressing that the Central Government should keep watch on the Hindus of Tharparkar. On 26 February the newspaper reported that Hindus of Tharparkar were fleeing. On March 1st 1971 *Jasarat* printed two headlines stating that Sindhi Hindus were involved in anti-Pakistan activities. *Jasarat* viewed all Hindus as essentially Indians and enemies of Pakistan.²⁴⁹

The majority of these anti-Hindu reports revolves around Hindu property. I will continue this discussion on the hounding of Thakurs in next chapter. Thus far I have tried

²⁴⁹ *Hurriyat* was another Urdu language paper to report anti-Hindu stories. See *Roznama Huriyat*, Karachi. (4 July 1970: A Patwari from Umerkot escapes to India, 7 June 1970: Separate Seats (in assemblies) for Hindus.)

to show in this chapter that, after Partition, the Hindu minority was in a state of flux and destitute on account of local and ground realities or because of politics between the two dominions. Communal feelings further fueled by the project of nation building in Pakistan, along with the arrival of refugees, made people evacuate their homes -- they had not seen this coming. In the next chapter I discuss the treatment of evacuee and enemy property by the Government of Pakistan which transferred ownership of Hindu land and property to Muslim ownership, contributing further to the minoritization of Pakistani Hindus.

TRANSFERRING OWNERSHIP OF HINDU PROPERTY IN PAKISTAN: PRODUCING THE HOMELESS, THE EVACUEE AND THE ENEMY

Introduction

After the Partition, India and Pakistan each established an office of Custodian General to take care of the property of people who had left their homes, lands, businesses and even personal items of daily use in either of the dominions. In Pakistan, an extended process of legislation and bureaucracy then followed for the settlement of this property. While the settlement of evacuee property was yet not fully accomplished, “The East Pakistan Disturbed Persons Rehabilitation Ordinance 1964” in 1964 was introduced in the province of East Bengal following the disturbances against Hindus after the Hazrat Bal Shrine incident in Kashmir. The properties of people dislocated due to communal disturbances was brought under the Evacuee Property Management Committee. This Ordinance deprived the Hindu community of their ownership of property from 1964 - 1968.²⁵⁰ After the war of 1965 between India and Pakistan, a new category of legislation, an Enemy Property Act, was introduced in each country. In Pakistan more specifically it was under the Defence of Pakistan Ordinance (Ord. XXIII of 1965), whose purpose was to ensure the security and defense of the country. This new ordinance was applicable to the entire country. These Acts directly expropriated people who lived in conflict zones and/or had been otherwise affected by the Partition or the Indo-Pakistan wars, barring them from the right of inheritance. Since India was declared an enemy country, Pakistan deemed those who had either moved to India or those citizens who were considered

²⁵⁰ Barkat, Abul, Shafiqe uz Zaman, Azizur Rahman and Avijit Poddar. Political Economy of the Vested Property Act in Rural Bangladesh. 1997. Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD) 1997. Dhaka. P. 30 -31.

“enemy subjects” within Pakistan, and hence their properties, enemy property. The Act was further extended after the Indo-Pak war of 1971.

In this chapter, I discuss how Hindu land was appropriated by the Pakistani state and was transmitted to Muslim ownership in Pakistan, after Partition, through the legal frameworks of the Evacuee and Enemy Property Acts of 1948,²⁵¹ 1965, and 1971. This aspect of minoritization of Pakistani Hindus is related not only to the loss of landed property and businesses (economic factors) but also to divided families and the emotional loss of native land. I show that the post-colonial state of Pakistan officially used the categories of “evacuees” and “refugees” for every person displaced in the Indian subcontinent in the context of Partition, and later the term “enemies” for the population disturbed after the Indo-Pak wars of 1965 and 1971. I elaborate on ways in which the terms “evacuee” and “enemy” are problematic: whereas many people actively chose to migrate after the Partition, many did not. Instead, they were coerced into leaving or selling their properties against their wishes. A considerable number of such people were evicted or expelled, they were politically victimized, and their belongings and properties were seized. This process made a large number of people homeless and homeland-less as they kept travelling back and forth between the two countries in the hope of retrieving their losses or settling in their homes, or were simply pushed to the other side of the border.

In her book *Partitioned Lives: Migrants, Refugees, Citizens in India and Pakistan, 1947-1965* (2012), Haimanti Roy deals extensively with the Evacuee Property Act and its outcomes in East Bengal. I discuss the emergence and evolution of Enemy Property Acts

²⁵¹ Amended in following years.

of 1965 and 1971 in Pakistan and the current status of the Acts in the eastern district of Sindh, Tharparkar. I argue that while, after the enactment of the Evacuee and Intending Evacuee Property Act, Hindus were pushed out of Pakistan in an indirect manner, the Enemy Property (Administration) Act (Act XLVI of 1974) simply declared Pakistani Hindus who either were in refugee camps in India because of military conflict or were indicted by other Pakistanis to be Indians or Indian Nationals. This law specifically targeted Hindus and their property, allowing the Pakistani state to appropriate Hindu-owned land. This law also contributed to a radical decline in the Hindu population, specifically that of Rajputs in Tharparkar. I show that the treatment of property was a long and complicated process which resulted in many acts of injustice in which the state and society, gradually at first and finally officially, seized the assets of Pakistani Hindus. Sindhi and Bengali Hindus find it emotionally difficult to talk about grabbed and confiscated properties. I will explain how the definition of “evacuee” gradually evolved and how it was used to evict Hindus from their homes, lands and properties. I conclude the chapter by discussing the emergence of the Enemy Property Act and its effects on an enemy city, Chachro.

The Home and the Homeless:

The eviction and displacement from properties following Partition in India was a long and violent process. This process was intensified with the arrival of new citizens and the process of nation-making. In Pakistan, as mentioned earlier, Punjab and NWFP were massively cleansed of their Sikh and Hindu population after Partition while Sindh and East Bengal kept facing the problem of refugees, evacuees and evacuee property for a long period of time. The Home Department, Political Branch records of the Government

of East Bengal after the Partition show that the both dominions were trying to solve the forceful eviction of people from properties and its restoration to lawful owners. I could not have access to such detailed official documents about Sindh but a glance at the news from Sindh as well as my fieldwork shows that it was a major problem in Sindh. The Pakistan Times, Lahore, for example reported on 18 October 1947, Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy referring to the unauthorized occupation of houses in Sind. Suhrawardy asserted that complaints regarding unauthorized occupations were being dealt with expeditiously and that persons were being removed from premises to which they had gained illegal or unwarranted access. In addition to this, The Liaquat-Nehru Pact was agreed upon by both Pakistan and India to deal with the “minority” problem after Partition. One of the major issues dealt within this Pact, along with many others, was the property of “refugees.” As the Pact addressed and guaranteed the rights of ownership or occupancy of the immovable property of migrants and guaranteed freedom of movement and protection for people in transit, it further pledged that if during an owner’s absence his property had been occupied by another person it would be returned to him provided that he returned by 31 December 1950. In case the migrant decided not to return, the ownership of all his immovable property would continue to vest in him. The owner would have unrestricted right to dispose of it by sale or by exchange with an evacuee in the other country or otherwise.²⁵²

²⁵² Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No. 74/CF/65. Fair Treatment to Minorities in Pakistan. Sub Subject: Agreement Between the Government of India and the Government of Pakistan, Dated The 8th April, 1950. (Liaquat-Nehru Agreement). NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

The violence which drove people out of their homes and led to the confiscation of properties usually does not find a place in studies on Partition or it has been studied as violence of the borderlands only, as Schendel argues (2005). Most literature on the violence that preceded and followed Partition focuses on grisly crimes. Gyanendra Pandey calls the less grisly violence “routine violence,” the kind “written into the making and continuation of contemporary political arrangements and into the production and reproduction of majorities and minorities.”²⁵³ This violence as a social fact, according to Pandey, has to be recognized not only in its spectacular or more visible forms but also in its hidden forms. Pandey points out that this routine violence is “involved in the construction of naturalized nations, of natural communities and histories, majorities and minorities.”²⁵⁴ According to Pandey, this kind of violence is “unceasing” and is “involved in the unrelenting construction of enemies of the nation, and the concomitant denial of equal rights or respect to the latter.”²⁵⁵

In South Asia, Partition-related violence was inflicted by a politically powerful community on the powerless – on the recently created minorities in both India and Pakistan. An examination of routine violence reveals issues related to power (such as land) and honor (women) and the attitude of the powerful towards the politically weak, unequal members of the society. It was not only people-to-people violence, but the state mechanism also helped or intended to further what the people affected by Partition called *zulm*, i.e. oppression.

²⁵³ Pandey, Gyanendra. 2006. *Routine Violence: Nations, Fragments, Histories*. Stanford; Stanford University Press. P. 1.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid*, 8.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid*, 14.

Modern boundaries and borders have re-shaped people's lives and political loyalties by converting people's hearts and homes into margins or borderlands of the new nation-states. After Partition, in India, a large number of people on both sides of the border had to leave their homes and native regions, their *watan*,²⁵⁶ unwillingly following the Partition. Whereas Bengal and Punjab were divided between India and Pakistan, Sindhi refugees lost their entire cultural space and became completely alien in a new country. Dipesh Chakrabarty has discussed the trauma of violence of forced evictions and of becoming *vastuhara* (homeless) in East Bengal after Partition.²⁵⁷ This can be further elaborated by borrowing the equivalent German idea of homeland, *Heimat*, and *Heimatlos*. A *Heimat* is a home, a native region and/or a local place. It is constituted by mental spatialization. The term refers to mentally created boundaries and exclusions, and hence constitutes a frame of reference for belonging and identity for a person. A *Heimat*, then, is a special space.²⁵⁸ Among its various definitions, *Heimat* denotes also the place where one is born, where one comes to consciousness of selfhood, and where one adjusts oneself to family and society or constructs a "social entity."²⁵⁹

The term *Heimatlos* refers to people without a home, country or community – and in the context of this study, to people in Pakistan who after Partition had to leave their *Heimat*, were denationalized, whose country of origin remained undetermined or who could not establish a right to the nationality or property that they claimed to be theirs.

²⁵⁶ Or *des/ desh* (homeland), *deh* (village), *janambhomi / jonombhomi* (place of birth).

²⁵⁷ Chakrabarty, Dipesh. 2002. *Habitations of Modernity: Essays in the wake of Subaltern Studies*. USA: University of Chicago. P. 116 & 119.

²⁵⁸ See: Blickle, Peter. 2002. *Heimat: A Critical Theory of the German Idea of Homeland*. Rochester, New York: Camden House.

²⁵⁹ Applegate, Celia. 1990. *A Nation of Provincials: The German Ideology of Heimat*. Berkeley: University of California Press. P. 5.

According to *The Pakistan Times*, by December 1947, 300,000 Hindus had departed Sindh, while between 1947 and 1967, 6 million Hindu refugees crossed into West Bengal from East Bengal.²⁶⁰ This detachment from the region of belonging, identity and home has resulted in academic and literary works that evoke memories of the homeland. These books include, for example, *Burden of Refuge: Partition Experiences of Sindhis of Gujrat*, by Rita Kothari (2009); *Sindh: Stories from a Vanished Homeland*, by Saaz Agarwal (2012); *Bhed bibhed*, by Manabendra Bandopadhyaya (Prejudice, 1992); and *Stories about Partition*, by Alok Bhalla (1994).²⁶¹ An East Bengali Hindu member of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, Shri Chandra Chattopadhyaya, once expressed his emotions in the Assembly in the following manner: “Practically, Western Pakistan is denuded of minorities by this time; only we, the Hindus of East Pakistan, numbering about a crore or 94 lakhs, are residing in East Bengal Province. East Bengal is our birthplace. We have not adopted Pakistan, we have been born in Pakistan. But, how are we treated? We are gradually being deprived of all status...”²⁶² Other modern examples of people’s removal from their native land and others acquiring the land through legal frameworks are the Indians’ removal in North America²⁶³ and the Palestinians’ removal from Palestine (Nakba) in 1948.

²⁶⁰ Chatterjee 2007, 2.

²⁶¹ Ibid, 114.

²⁶² Constituent Assembly (Legislature) of Pakistan Debates. 20 March 1954. The Central Budget –General Discussion–concl. Published by the Manager of Publications. Karachi. P. 269.

²⁶³ Eric Foner. *How the Indians Lost Their Land: Law and Power on the Frontier* By Stuart Banner (Harvard University Press, 2005).

<http://www.ericfoner.com/reviews/020906lrb.html>.

From 1947 to 1965, Pakistan had promised to protect evacuees' property and the vested interests of an evacuee in his property. In practical terms, however, the Government had failed to do this. Finally the wars of 1965 and 1971 led to the open confiscation and sale of Hindus' property declared as "properties of Indian Nationals" under the Enemy Property Act. According to one claim by the Hindu community, in Badin, Umerkot and Tharparkar alone a million acres of land was legally confiscated from Hindus.²⁶⁴ The Evacuee and Enemy Property Acts were used to evict people from their homes, their businesses, and their agricultural properties. Both acts are still intact today and continue to result in further land grabbing. A Hindu evacuee in Bangladesh told me in 2011 that he was still not allowed to visit his ancestral property in his village. He was threatened by the local politician, now the occupant of his property, not to travel to the ancestral village.

Evacuation as described by Evacuees themselves:

Minority community members' complaints related to property had started to pour in to both dominions soon after Partition. While both states were endeavoring to prepare a law to deal systematically with the property left behind by the affected people, the states also had to deal with the violence among majority and minority communities related to property grabbing. One glimpse of the tensions and oppressions wreaked upon minorities by opportunist members of majority groups can be found in the letters written

²⁶⁴ "The shoes I walk in: Minorities blame growing discrimination for the loss of a feeling of fellowship." *The Express Tribune*. <http://tribune.com.pk/story/663510/the-shoes-i-walk-in-minorities-blame-growing-discrimination-for-the-loss-of-a-feeling-of-fellowship/>. Accessed: 1/29/14.

by affected people. Unfortunately I couldn't locate any letters of this kind in the official records regarding Sindh, in either the Sindh Archives or the National Archives in Pakistan. But during my discussions with Pakistani Hindus, they did say a great deal about oppression. I found many such letters and cases in the Bangladesh Archives; therefore I use them to explain how people themselves explained the violence wreaked upon them.

The letters were petitions filed by East Bengali Hindus to the Government of West Bengal and by West Bengali or Urdu-speaking Muslims to the Government of East Bengal. An evacuee named Shaikh Abdullah, a 76-year-old businessman and Muslim League worker who had become an evacuee to Jessore (East Bengal) from Howrah (West Bengal), had filed a petition to the Governor of West Bengal requesting arrangements for his safe return to his home in Howrah. He claimed that he was a political victim for having been a Muslim League worker before Partition. His letter, written in English and addressed to the Governor of West Bengal, explains the nature of his victimization and his feelings after being removed from his home. The letter ends with him pledging loyalty to the new Indian dominion:

After "Swaraj" I became a victim of police "Zulum" [oppression] at Howrah, for the fault that I was a muslim leaguer during pre-partition days. Police extorted money from me ... They brought criminal case ... but I was acquitted They managed to cancel my license for "Manufacture" The result was that my life became intolerable at Howrah ... the police got an order passed by the Howrah District Magistrate restricting my movements to most humiliating extent, and also the police got my house sealed driving out all my family members from my house I had been to Allahbad ... and in coming back to Howrah I found my family stranded on the street. Further the Police have forbidden my tenants not to pay rents to me. As a result of Police "Zulum" I had no other alternative but to come to Jessore I and my family members have the strongest longing to go back Police have searched my house four times I am an old man and my whole

family are tied with an inseparable sentimental bond I therefore request you most fervently to very kindly see that I may come back to my house where in my father and other fore fathers lived. There is ... no attainment in the world for me, which can take me away from my most beloved house at Howrah. I shall always live as a very loyal citizen of Indian dominion. I hope this earnest appeal of a very old man weeping for a comeback to his home will not fail to evoke your sympathy. I want your justice at your hands and a protection from corrupt and wrongful police "Zulum."²⁶⁵

Another petition was filed by Sri Krishna Sundar Bhattacharja of Noakhali District to the Government of West Bengal in 1949 about the harassment and oppression he had suffered at the hands of members of the majority community in East Bengal (East Pakistan). Sri Krishna was an old and influential citizen of the locality, and his petition explains that it was due to his efforts that members of the minority community (i.e. Hindus) of the district had been able to continue living there until 1951. But now, the petition stated they feared getting pushed into the Indian Union. The authorities of East Bengal directed the persons concerned to take their grievances to the Minorities Board. This petition was filed against certain individuals for cutting paddy without permission and other harassment. A summary of the petition, translated into English, explains the situation below:

I am a childless widower, 74 years of age. We have agricultural land, a portion of which is cultivated by bargadars.²⁶⁶ After I came home from Calcutta on 23rd Agrahayana, I heard from my bargadar that Rafiqulla Meah had cut down the 135 bundles of paddy on 2 gandas²⁶⁷ of land out of 2.5 gandas purchased by me.... I did not get any paddy. On 1st Paush (1) Abdul Kadir Meah ... and others

²⁶⁵ Government of East Bengal. Home Department. Political Branch. File No: CR.IE-2 of 1949. B March.1950. Proceedings 200-206 Evacuee: In Reply to Our Communication Regarding the Case of Shaikh Abdullah, an Evacuee to Jessore from Howrah, the Government of West Bengal Informed that there is No Bar on Shaikh Abdullah's Returning to Howrah. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

²⁶⁶ Adhiar or the person who cultivates the land of another person on condition of delivering a share of produce of such land to that person

²⁶⁷ A local unit of land measurement.

belonging to the Akbar Fauj came to my house in the morning and demanded paddy from me. Abdul Kadir Meah said at the outset, “all of you please agree to whatever I say, whether right or wrong.” I objected to it. The said Abdul Kadir resumed, “Hindus sell land and paddy belonging to Pakistan and send money to Hindusthan. We will not allow this. One of your brothers lives at home. Barring his share, two-thirds of the paddy must be made over to us.” . . . In the meeting held at Hajibari during the night of 14th Paush Akbar Meah and Rafiq Meah incited soldiers known as “Akbar Fauj”²⁶⁸ against Hindus, saying, “In the absence of Akbar Meah the workers of the Akbar Fauj will carry on the work. If anyone gives evidence in favour of the Brahmin we will chop up his flesh into pieces and give them to dogs. . . .” On 17th Paush Sarat Chakrabarty was called in and eight or nine workers forcibly extorted a receipt from him for the money due to him. On that very day Nurul Huq finding me alone attempted to assault me. . . . At 12 P.M. in the same night Rafiq Meah, Akbar Meah, Jainal Meah, the said Nurul Huq and several other persons made an attempt to raid our house. . . . On 19th Paush²⁶⁹ they came to our house and threatened us in various ways. In the afternoon they abused me in the presence of Maulvi Sanaulla Saheb. During the month of Paush they were carrying on various oppressive activities such as (1) looting three boats laden with rice at Panchgaon (2) Beating a Muslim since he serves a Hindu and fining him for 200 rupees, (3) entering the house of Molvi Aminur Rasul Saheb, dragging him outside the house and beating him. Everybody is afraid of these persons. We, Hindus are almost dead. Our homes, lives and properties are not secure. Owing to fear for them no one seeks redress. Akbar Meah was arrested and he is now on bail. An enquiry is likely to take place soon. I have got only 50 maunds of dry paddy.²⁷⁰

A communal riot was reported in early 1949 in Kankinara (North 24 Parganas district), West Bengal. The riot started after Hindus sprinkled Holi water on a Muslim. The official communication records,

It is learnt that Hindus threw colour on Muslim[s] during Holi Festival and those who refused to submit to it were badly manhandled. Hindus openly told Muslims that they will have to take part in these festivals by free will or force otherwise

²⁶⁸ Akbar Army.

²⁶⁹ 9th month of Bengali Calendar.

²⁷⁰ Government of East Bengal. Home Department. Political Branch. File No. IN-1 of 1949. Proceedng 249 and 250. B January 1951. Inter-Dominion. On a Report Received from the Government of West Bengal about the Harassment of one Sri Krishna Sundar Bhattacharja of Noakhali District, the West Bengal. Government was replied that the Persons concerned should bring their grievances to the notice of the Minorities Board. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

they should leave for Pakistan... Hindus wanted to enter the houses of Muslims and threw color on Muslim ladies. In one case they did dishonor a Muslim lady [threw holi water on her].

An Urdu-speaking person, Noorul Haque, wrote to the East Bengal Government asking for a house to be requisitioned for him so that he could bring his family from West Bengal. He attached letters from Kankinara that showed the grim situation there. He wrote that since the riots his family had lived in “constant fear and depression there.” An attached letter (in Urdu) explains that people feared for their “*jaan, maal, izzat, aabroo*” (life, possession, respect, and honor) while living in Kankinara; therefore they wanted to migrate.²⁷¹

Evacuee Property

Definitions and Legislation:

After the Partition, India and Pakistan each established an office of Custodian General to take care of the property of people who had left their homes, lands, businesses and even personal items of daily use in either of the dominions. In Pakistan, an extended process of legislation and bureaucracy then followed for the settlement of this property. While the settlement of evacuee property had not yet been fully accomplished, after the war of 1965 between India and Pakistan, a new category of legislation, an Enemy

²⁷¹ Government of East Bengal. 1949. Home Department. Political Branch. Inter-Dominion. CR. 5R – 2 of 1949. B, March 1950/161-165. Riot. Communal Riots in Kankinara (Dh. 24 Parganas). The Complaints received from the Muslims of Kankinara regarding the losses suffered by them during the communal riot in Kankinara (District 24 – Parganas), were mentioned at the Hon’ble Prime Minister’s Conference and the Government of Pakistan has been informed of the fact of the riot. Dacca. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

Property Act, was introduced in each country. These Acts directly expropriated people who lived in the conflict zones or had been otherwise affected by the Partition or Indo-Pakistan wars. Since India was declared an enemy country, Pakistan deemed those who had moved to India due to the war enemy citizens and hence their properties, enemy property.

A total of six inter-dominion conferences were held between India and Pakistan to settle the issue of evacuee property. The first Indo-Pak evacuee property agreement was signed in Delhi in December 1948 and the second in Karachi in January, 1949. On 15 October 1949, these agreements were replaced by The Pakistan (Administration of Evacuee property) Ordinance, XV of 1949. According to the January, 1949 Karachi Agreement, an “Evacuee” was defined as “a person belonging to the minority community who has either left his house with the object of moving to the other province or intends to do so.” A “Refugee” was distinguished from an evacuee in the following manner: “an evacuee becomes a refugee when he crosses the border of the Province to which he intends to go.”²⁷²

The property in question was broadly divided into movable and immovable property. Some of the agreements undertaken by the two governments to deal with the movable property of the refugees included the Banking Agreement 1949 and the Movable Property Agreement of 1950. The Indo-Pak conferences on Evacuee Property recommended that both states would facilitate the evacuees’ getting fair compensation for their property. The officials also agreed that an evacuee owner should have the right to

²⁷² Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No. 150/CF/48 XIV. Half Yearly Summary of the M/o Refugees and Rehabilitation. NDC Holdings. Islamabad

transfer his property by sale, exchange or otherwise.²⁷³ The six-monthly reports, prepared by the Ministry of Refugees & Rehabilitation between 1948 and 1951, indicate that there was a deadlock between India and Pakistan over the evacuee property issue. These reports affirm that there had been a serious deterioration in the relations between the two dominions due to India's extension of evacuee property legislation to territories beyond the areas agreed upon in July 1949. The Pakistani side viewed that India had legislated with the object of taking over control of as much Muslim property as possible and pointed out the indiscriminate declaration of Muslims as evacuees for this purpose. The agreement over evacuee property was reached only for certain areas; these areas were categorized as Agreed as opposed to non-Agreed areas. This did not extend over or included all of India or Pakistan. In July 1948, according to Pakistani records, India suggested extending the areas to which agreements regarding all kinds of evacuee property could be applied.

Despite being against the Indian side extending the scope of legislation, by 1949 all of Pakistan was brought under implementation of The Pakistan (Dealings in Immoveable Evacuee Property) Ordinance. This ordinance was promulgated on 26 July 1949. It was applied to West Punjab, Sind, North West Frontier Province, Baluchistan, the Federal Capital and the acceded states. Pakistan had earlier imposed a ban on the sales and exchange of immovable property which was partially relaxed in January 1950; exchange of property in the agreed areas was allowed and sales were permitted in certain cases.

²⁷³ Ibid.

The deadlock between India and Pakistan over movable property broke in June 1950. A report compiled in December 1951 submitted that restrictions on sales of evacuee property would be further extended to April 1952 as the deadlock with Indians on the question of immovable evacuee property continued. The deadlock with India over agricultural immovable property also continued through March 1952.

The Pakistani side refrained from taking any action towards the verification of claims of urban immovable property as they thought that the time was not appropriate for that. The reason for inaction was that the market value of property was down. As of April 1952, there was again a complete deadlock between the two governments on the issue of the Movable Property Agreement of June 1950.²⁷⁴ Pakistan suggested that an “evacuee” should be defined as a person who had moved from one dominion to the other before 30th September 1948 and that property belonging to such a person would be defined as evacuee property. India was against this suggestion, as it thought that fixing a date would be unfair to persons who had left one or the other dominion after the fixed date.²⁷⁵

The definitions of an evacuee, evacuee property, property, an intending evacuee and a member of his family as per the Pakistan Rehabilitation Ordinance of 1948 were as follows:²⁷⁶

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

²⁷⁶ For Indian definitions please see: The Administration of Evacuee Property (Central) Rules, 1950. 2. Definitions.
http://admis.hp.nic.in/himpol/Citizen/LawLib/Amendments/Admn_evcue_prop_rule/c2.htm#s2. Accessed: 9/3/2014.

1. “An Evacuee” means any person who:
 - i. On account of the setting up of the Dominions of Pakistan and India, or on account of civil disturbances or the fear of such disturbances, on or after the first day of March 1947, leaves or has left any place in the territories now comprising Pakistan for any place outside those territories, or
 - ii. Acquires or has acquired, on or after the aforesaid date, in any manner whatsoever, any right to or interest in or benefit from any property which is treated as evacuee property under any law for the time being in force in India, or in any area occupied by India, or
 - iii. Is resident in any place in the territories now comprising India or in any area occupied by India and who for that reason is unable to occupy, supervise or manage in person his property in Pakistan, or whose property in Pakistan has whether wholly or partially, ceased to be occupied, supervised or managed by any person, or is being occupied, supervised or managed by an unauthorized person,
2. “Evacuee Property” means any property in which an evacuee has any right or interest, or which is held by or for him in trust, and includes –
 - a. Any right or interest in joint Hindu family property which would accrue to the evacuee upon the partition of the same, or
 - b. Property obtained from an evacuee after the twenty-eighth day of February 1947, until confirmed by the Custodian,
But does not include-
 - i. Any movable property in the immediate physical possession of an evacuee, or
 - ii. Any property belonging to a joint stock company the head office of which was situated before the fifteenth day of August, 1947, in any place in the territories now comprising India, and continues to be situated after the said date;
3. “Property” means property of any kind, and includes any right or interest in such property and any debt or actionable claim, but does not include a mere right to sue or a cash deposit in a bank....²⁷⁷

The new, amended Evacuee Property Bill retained the date which defined an evacuee as someone who had migrated before the first day of March 1947 and changed the date in the definition of Evacuee Property to the 18th day of October.

²⁷⁷ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. 44/CF/51. A Bill to Amend the Pakistan Rehabilitation Ordinance (XIX of 1948). (The Gazette of Pakistan Extraordinary. Published by Ministry of Refugees and Rehabilitation – Karachi – 15 October 1949). NDC Holdings. Islamabad. Pakistan.

4. “Intending Evacuee” means any person who on or after the first day of March 1947,
 - a) Has transferred from any place in the territories now comprising Pakistan to any place in the territories now comprising India, or in any area occupied by India, his assets or any part thereof;
 - b) Or has acquired, if the acquisition has been made in person, in any mode other than a mode specified in sub-clause (b) of clause (2) or, if the acquisition has been made by or through a member of his family, in any mode whatsoever, any right to, interest in, or benefit from any property which is treated as evacuee property under any law for the time being in force in India or in any area occupied by India, or
 - c) Has, by the execution of any document of transfer in writing, whether registered or not, or by means of any other document in writing, sought to effect an exchange of the whole or any part of his property in any place in the territories now comprising Pakistan with any property situated in any place in the territories now comprising India or any area occupied by India;And includes, any person against whom an intention to settle in the territories now comprising India or any area occupied by India is established from his conduct or from documentary evidence.

5. “member of his family” in relation to an intending evacuee means any person who is wholly dependent upon such evacuee for the provision of the ordinary necessities of life or who shares with such evacuee in the ordinary expenses of the household to which they jointly belong or who owns property or carries on business jointly with such evacuee.²⁷⁸

The Pakistan [Protection of Evacuee Property] Ordinance 1948 was repealed by Governor General Khawaja Nazimuddin on 15 October 1949. Evacuee property was divided into two basic categories, agricultural and urban. Under urban were included immovable and movable property. Houses and shops in rural areas were considered urban immovable property. The general plan for the management of evacuee property was that the ownership of immovable property left by an evacuee would remain vested in the Custodian. Later it was decided that the rehabilitation authorities of the dominion concerned were permitted to take over such property for temporary use, for a fixed period

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

of years, for the purposes of rehabilitation of refugees from the other dominion, but not for other purposes. The rehabilitation authorities could take over immovable evacuee property only for the years prescribed (residential property for 3 years, commercial and industrial property for 4 years and agricultural property for 3 years). It was decided that if the owner made his own arrangements for the proper looking after of his property, such property would be restored to him for management and or disposal as per the owner's wish. If the property was taken over by the rehabilitation authorities, the owner would continue to have full rights and facilities to transfer his property, by sale, exchange or otherwise. These facilities included the employment of private dealers and brokers to arrange exchanges or sales of property. There were then procedures for the owner to follow if he was unable to transfer his property, in case of different types of properties.

The evacuee property agreement guaranteed an evacuee's rights vested in the Custodian. The Custodian, on the other hand, was made responsible in the absence of evacuee for the proper safekeeping of the evacuee's property. It was the Custodian's job to ensure that full compensation was recovered for movables and immovable requisitioned by the provincial government or its officers for a public purpose, which could include the rehabilitation of refugees or the economic life of the province.²⁷⁹

An amendment in the Pakistan Rehabilitation Ordinance of 1949 was later suggested. This Bill adopted new definitions of the terms "evacuee," "evacuee property," "property," "intending evacuee" and "members of his family" as proposed to amend Bill of Pakistan (Administration of Evacuee Property) Ordinance of 1949. The new Bill proposed to bring all definitions in line with Indian law and definitions. One such move

²⁷⁹ Ibid.

was to include cash deposits in banks in the definition of property. The Pakistani side noted that the Indian law exempted cash deposits in banks from inclusion in the definition of evacuee property, but the cash deposits of Muslim companies were treated as evacuee property. In Pakistan, prior to this definition, the bank deposits of all evacuees without distinction had been exempted.²⁸⁰ The law targeted those who, according to Pakistani officials, wanted to sell their assets in West Pakistan before migrating to India. One of the reports of the Ministry of Refugees and Rehabilitation stated, “The new law is being applied strictly judicially against those who are staying in West Pakistan merely to wind up their assets or have clandestinely been transferring them with the ultimate object of migrating to India.”²⁸¹

The following table shows the Agreed Areas mentioned in the original plan and the additional areas as proposed by India.²⁸²

Table 3: Agreed Areas

a) Original Proposal	b) Additional areas as proposed by India in July 1948
1. East Punjab & Delhi Province.	1. Ajmer-Merwara.
2. All States formerly known as Punjab States (except Malerkota, Bahawalpur & Khairpur).	2. Malerkotla State.

²⁸⁰ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No: 44/CF/51. A Bill to Amend the Pakistan Rehabilitation Ordinance (XIX of 1948). NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

²⁸¹ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No. 150/CF/48. Half Yearly Summary of the M/o Refugees and Rehabilitation. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

²⁸² Ibid.

3. Bharatpur State.	3. Matsya & Rajasthan Unions.
4. Alwar State.	4. Saurashtra.
5. Bikaner State.	5. Jaipur State.
	6. Jodhpur State.
	7. Western Districts of United Provinces which shall in any case include in Districts of Dehradun. Saharanpur, Meerut and Muzzaffarnagar.

The new regulation also legislated that the gold and silver items on deities taken to West Bengal by refugees also fell under the jurisdiction of this agreement and it was decided that they too would be removed by the East Bengali authorities at the exit ports.²⁸³

Apart from the Pakistani Central Government's Evacuee Property Act, the Sindh Government wanted to introduce a provincial evacuee property law named the "Promulgation of Sind Protection of Evacuee Property Ordinance." The Sindh Government also wanted to appoint an additional Custodian of Evacuee Property in Sindh. Among other suggestions, the Ordinance that sought the approval of the Governor General of Pakistan defined an evacuee as a person who "owing to any conditions or consequences arising out of (sic) the Partition of the country known before the 15th of August as India - has been or is absenting himself from Sind and does not personally

²⁸³ Government of East Bengal. Home Department, Political Branch. File No: 3C3-4 of 1951. Proceedings 73 to 76 B June 1952. Conference: The Proceedings of the 21st of Chief Secretaries Conference held at Dacca on 15th March 1951 (Dacca). National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

occupy, supervise or take possession of his property in Sind.” The Sindh ordinance also proposed that all leases of agricultural land which was now evacuee property effected after 15 August 1947 would be terminated with effect from the end of the Kharif²⁸⁴ season of 1948. This property would then rest in the prescribed Custodian. The ordinance also stipulated that the provincial custodian would have the power – out of any money belonging to an evacuee in his possession or out of the income or proceeds of sale, if necessary, of evacuee property to pay... any taxes, duties, xxx²⁸⁵ rates, which may be leviable by the Pakistan dominion or the provincial or any local authority in relation to any property undertaking or business or such evacuee in his possession or control and to defray the cost of necessary repairs to such property.

The expression “necessary repairs” meant the completion of any uncompleted building; this was to be paid with money held by the Custodian on behalf of evacuees, to make payments to refugees from prescribed areas in accordance with rules. In this suggested Ordinance by the Sind Government, the description of evacuee property also included livestock, food grains and crops. The Central Government rejected the proposed Ordinance as the Pakistan (Protection of Evacuee Property) Ordinance of 1948 was already there and no further action was deemed necessary for the promulgation of this provincial ordinance in Sindh.²⁸⁶

The Government of India’s stance towards evacuee property favored “government to government” settlement, whereas Pakistan stood for settlement between individual

²⁸⁴ Monsoon crop harvested in autumn (India and Pakistan).

²⁸⁵ Not readable.

²⁸⁶ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No. 252/CF/48. Promulgation of Sind Protection of Evacuee Property Ordinance. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

owners by sale, exchange or otherwise. According to Indian claims, Hindus owned one-third of the land in Sindh and, comprising more than half the population of the city of Karachi, about 3/4 of the urban property there.²⁸⁷ India claimed that the property left by Hindus in Pakistan was far greater in quantity and value than the property left by Muslims in India. Therefore the Government of India was in favor of a block transfer of evacuee property between the Governments of Pakistan and India, through payment being made by one Government to the other for the estimated differences in the value of the property so transferred. Assessing this value was, however, a task of huge magnitude, and this settlement could not be achieved between the two countries. According to the Government of Pakistan papers, within a few days of the promulgation of The Pakistan Ordinance of 1949, the Government of India, on 18 April 1950, introduced new legislation to replace its own ordinance because of what it called “certain loopholes” in it. The two countries had also agreed that they would not create the fresh evacuees, and they had both failed to follow the agreement.

A report compiled in December 1951 submitted that restrictions on sales of evacuee property would be further extended to April 1952 as the deadlock with Indians on the question of immovable evacuee property continued. The deadlock with India over agricultural immovable property also continued through March 1952. As of April 1952,

²⁸⁷ Issued on behalf of the Ministry of Rehabilitation by the Publications Division. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Government of India. 1950. “Concerning Evacuee Property: Problem and Solution”. The United Press, Old Sec, Delhi.

there was again a complete deadlock between both governments on the issue of the Movable Property Agreement of June 1950.²⁸⁸

Expanding the Legislation: The Intending Evacuee

According to Pakistani official documents, India introduced a new act in 1950 named the Administration of Evacuee Property Act, 1950. The Government of Pakistan alleged that “the changes made in the Indian law were notorious for the invention of the ‘intending evacuee’, granting powers to Custodians to attach the property of persons suspected of being ‘intending evacuees’, and the limiting of appeals.”²⁸⁹ Following this Indian move, Pakistan introduced its own “Intending Evacuee” law in 1951. In New Delhi in April 1949, the Indian PM had assured the Pakistani Minister for Refugees and Rehabilitation that the “intending evacuee” clause in the Indian law would not be used to create fresh evacuees. Relying on that assurance, the Pakistani Minister had issued instructions to the Custodians in West Pakistan not to create fresh evacuees. It then appeared to the Pakistani side that “the Government of India have never implemented Mr. Nehru’s assurance, and that Indian law continued to operate with harshness. Therefore there seemed no point in further deferring the bringing of Pakistan’s legislation in line with that in force in India.”²⁹⁰

²⁸⁸ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No. 150/CF/48 XIV. Half Yearly Summary of the M/o Refugees and Rehabilitation. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

²⁸⁹ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No: 44/CF/51. A Bill to amend the Pakistan Rehabilitation Ordinance (XIX of 1948). NDC. Islamabad.

²⁹⁰ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No: 44/CF/51. A Bill to Amend the Pakistan Rehabilitation Ordinance (XIX of 1948). NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

The introduction of the Intending Evacuee clause in the case of Sindh meant that an “intending evacuee” was required to give the concerned magistrate 14 days’ notice of his intention to leave Pakistan. This clause created havoc for people who had no intention of leaving Pakistan but were declared “Intending Evacuees” while their properties were declared “evacuee property” by the Custodian Office. The six-monthly reports mention that a large number of appeals were received from Hindus for a declaration that they were not evacuees. As a result of decisions in favor of some of them, orders were issued for the restoration of their property, subject to the protection of the interests of refugees settled on their property.

However, it was not only the intending evacuee clause that was introduced in the Act; joint share-holding companies were also brought under the jurisdiction of the Act, thus extending the sphere of the Act and including as much property of Hindus as it could. Also, people who had transferred some money to India around the time of Partition were declared intending evacuees. Whereas the Indian state revoked the India act, which its own courts had dismissed as unjust, the Pakistani version continued to be implemented in Pakistan. According to the Evacuee Property Act, Hindus who were declared non-evacuees were not allowed to sell their properties in Pakistan, or if they sought permission to sell such properties, permission to do so was not easily granted.²⁹¹

In the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, many Hindu legislators registered their protest against the way that the evacuee property issue was being dealt with. D.N Dutta, a legislator from East Bengal, protested against the Government of Pakistan for

²⁹¹ Constituent Assembly (Legislature) of Pakistan Debates. 29 March 1951. *Starred Questions and Answers*. Karachi. P. 557-558.

confiscating the properties of Hindu property owners. He said that this had been happening since the passing of the Act in 1951. He recorded his protest in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan in the following words:

Mr. Chairman, when this Ordinance was passed in the year 1948, it had one definite object. The object really was proper administration of the evacuee property. Unfortunately, evacuees had to leave Pakistan from their Fatherland under certain circumstances...therefore the Government thought it necessary that the properties that they had left should be administered But Sir, things have changed since after that. You find, Sir, this Ordinance had been amended time after time and that when this Ordinance was amended in the year 1951, it is clear that the object in view was to expropriate the Hindu property-owners of this country. I told them then and I repeat it now that really if it is the object of the Government to confiscate the property left by the unfortunate evacuees, let them do it by one clear legislation. My friend ...the mover [of the Bill] says: This is a simple legislation...it is not a simple legislation. It is highly mischievous legislation- done with the definite object of expropriating the property of not only private individuals but the shareholders of companies. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I bring this charge against the Government: the object now is to expropriate the properties of the Hindu property-owners. You are aware that after passing of the Act many persons who had been declared non-evacuees in 1950...after protracted hearing by the then Custodian-General, their properties are now being attached and seized on the ground that they are intending evacuee. Are you aware of the fact, Sir, that many persons who are living in Pakistan, who are bona fide Pakistanis, their properties are being seized. Notices have been served on them to show cause why they should not be declared intending evacuees.²⁹²

D.N. Dutta mentioned the names of Rai Sahib Jhamandas and Seth Rupchand as being among the people who were prominent victims of the new Act. Rai Sahib Jhamandas and Seth Rupchand, according to D.N. Dutta, were members of a joint Hindu family, ran a well-known firm, Pahlumal Motiram, and were carrying on their businesses in the province of Sindh. Dutta further added that owners of ginning factories and urban properties and business concerns in Karachi, Mirpurkhas and other places had been

²⁹² The Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates. *The Pakistan (Administration of Evacuee Property) (Second Amendment) Bill*. 19 November 1951. Karachi. P. 149-150.

served with notices identifying them as “intending evacuees”. Properties of Hindu-owned firms were being confiscated and other properties were being locked up in Sindh. (One source informed me that while the relatives poured in from interior Sindh to take refuge with them in Karachi, the notices of intending evacuee were pasted outside their residential places in Karachi). Moreover, notices had also been issued to [the public] not to make payments to certain business owners. Dutta told the other members of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan that there had been many instances in which people were declared intending evacuees and notices were served on them while a new Custodian awaited appointment:

The old Custodian has retired some six months back and till recently no Custodian has been appointed and during this period attempts have been made in the name of the administration of evacuee law, for persons who are carrying on business here and actually are bona fide residents of Pakistan, to be declared as evacuees I oppose the consideration of the Bill.²⁹³

The Hindu legislators of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan kept floating the issue of evacuee property from time to time and were never heard. They protested against the role of the Evacuee, Rehabilitation and Custodian Departments following the Partition. Questions about the functioning of the Rehabilitation Department and the Custodian Department were raised by East Bengali Hindu members along with the lone Sindhi Hindu parliamentarian.

One particular complaint was against Irshaduddin, an assistant Custodian Department officer at Mirpurkhas, who had been transferred to Larkana due to the unsatisfactory report he had received elsewhere. When, after his appointment,

²⁹³ Ibid, 150.

Irshaduddin reached Larkana, he served notices of “intending evacuee” on each and every wealthy Hindu, according to the Hindu legislators. He was promoted by the Custodian Department despite the remarks of a high judicial authority against him. After receiving the notices of Intending Evacuee, “every Hindu concerned went from pillar to post to save himself [from the excesses of this officer and from being declared an intending evacuee] but to no avail.” Irshaduddin was said to have occupied a temple in Dadu district. Hindu legislators discussed a case in Dadu district in which a Hindu man was awarded the Sind Governor’s medal for rendering help in the rehabilitation of refugees on his own lands. He had allotted his personal land to refugees. Even this man was declared an intending evacuee.

B.C. Nandy, another member of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, revealed additional facts about the ways in which Hindus were being pushed out of Sindh. He mentioned Abdul Quddus Bihari, who was trying to harass Hindus and push them out of Sindh. Nandy further informed the Muslims legislators that Hindu legislators have been protesting against Maulana Bihari since three years. He informed them that a criminal case was registered against Maulana Bihari in a Karachi court. Bihari was said to be touring all the districts of Sind - followed by his own gang of friends - and creating trouble for the poor local Hindus. He was managing to get the Custodian Department to get notice of intending evacuee served on every respectable Hindu resident and grab his property. Nandy protested at great length that all his efforts to work with the Custodian Department to keep a check on property grabbing had failed.

The Congressmen in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan also vehemently protested against the gradual development of the law and the expansion of the definition

of evacuee property. Shri Kamini Kumar Dutta, while speaking on the Amendment, pointed out:

At first when this ordinance XV was passed it was confined to the properties of particular individuals. Then, when it was amended in 1951...the scope of the definition was further extended and in the definition of “evacuee” even a limited concern was included...the present Bill aims at further extending the scope of the evacuee...it includes now a joint stock company, more than 50 percent of the shares of which are held by persons who are evacuees.²⁹⁴

D.N. Dutta explained that the acceptance of such clauses in the evacuee bill would only increase the number of sufferers and the complexity of the situation. He said that the evacuee ordinance itself guaranteed that a person could apply for the restoration of his property during the given time period. He pointed out that the law was inherently unjust, as people who were not evacuees would also suffer and lose their assets. He also pointed out that, while the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan was sitting to enact a law regarding the administration of evacuee property, apparently meaning the property of evacuees, in an indirect manner it was extending the definition of evacuee to include persons who were not evacuees. At this point the Chairman of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan asked Kumar Dutta to discontinue discussing the evacuee property bill. The Chairman asked him to limit his discussion only to general principles and not to go into details. Kumar Dutta said that he was speaking on the principles. Dr. Ishtiaq Qureshi (Minister for Refugees, Rehabilitation, Information and Broadcasting) said that the particular clause K.K. Dutta wanted to discuss was harmless. But K.K. Dutta proceeded:

As I will demonstrate your action is never harmless...now the scope of an evacuee person is extended...the danger of the amendment is that it should have a retrospective effect. It will affect the interests of many transactions which might

²⁹⁴ Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates . 19 November 1951. *The Pakistan (Administration of Evacuee Property) (Second Amendment) Bill*. Karachi. P. 146.

have been completed meanwhile in which not only an evacuee but everyone will be affected. All the transfers which might have taken place during this period will become invalid.

Seth Sukhdev, following K.K. Dutta, also made a legal point regarding the evacuee property clause which included joint shareholding companies in it. He maintained that the definition of evacuee had been widened under the new amendment. This was unfair, he said, because if shareholders of a company lived in India, the company itself had to be declared an evacuee in Pakistan. He suggested that the new law should be applied only to those joint stock companies the majority of the shareholders of which had migrated from Pakistan and had thus become evacuees. He added that previously these companies had been non-evacuee and could therefore transact their business in the normal way in Pakistan. An evacuee, on the other hand, was subject to several restrictions, as he could not transfer any property nor could he recover any loans.

Although the legislation of evacuee property ideally was supposed to protect the rights of evacuees, it also granted the Rehabilitation Department the right to acquire any evacuee property for the sake of the rehabilitation of refugees or for economic construction. Wholesale acquisition of evacuee plots was not advised, as it would result in the expropriation of the evacuee rights. But before a final decision could be taken by the two states in this regard, the rehabilitation authorities in Pakistan had allotted evacuee plots to refugees for construction of buildings. In case the allottee of a plot chose to construct a building in spite of the allotment being temporary, the evacuee owner could claim only the value of the plot, not that of the building constructed on it. In order to deal with this fiasco, the Cabinet suggested financial measures to lessen the loss to the evacuee; it also suggested that no allotments of unallotted plots should be made.

However, it was clear that the government intended to use the plots for public service buildings such as hospitals, maternity homes, educational institutions and women's industrial homes, and that such land should be acquired under the Rehabilitation Ordinance and that the remaining plots should be allotted to building societies or corporations that offered to construct large blocks of flats for residential or commercial purposes.

The Pakistan [Administration of Evacuee Property] Ordinance 1949, (XV of 1949), gave the Custodian authority to permit the allottee of an evacuee plot to build a pukka structure with a right to compensation for such structure in the event of being asked to surrender the plot. The Custodian of Evacuee Property was reported to have adopted these measures. It was also advised that the Government of Pakistan should be reluctant to adopt the pre-partition values for property, as the bulk of the evacuee property was situated in the Punjab, which had experienced a considerable fall in the value of property since Partition. It was therefore advised for the sake of West Pakistan to insist on the present values of the property. Thus, the value of evacuee plots in Karachi was to be fixed on the basis of prices obtaining for similar property in the locality concerned during the year 1951.²⁹⁵

The Pakistani Government had to deal with unauthorized occupation of valuable commercial plots left behind by the Hindu owners. Also it prioritized the refugees for allotment of evacuee property. In 1952 there were reports of unauthorized occupation of evacuee plots. Many unauthorized persons had without a valid allotment put up pucca

²⁹⁵ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No. 227/CF/51. Fixation of Value of Evacuee Building Sites in Karachi. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

structures on such plots. It was also reported that quite a large number of evacuee plots were in the unauthorized occupation of refugees and others who had put up only temporary huts for residential or commercial purposes. Some of these plots were occupied by individuals or families. Most such plots were very valuable. The Pakistani government intended to free such plots from occupation in order to allow for future building projects. Ultimate importance, in this regard, was given to official buildings or public purposes.

In the late months of 1951 and in January 1952, the Government also acquired property in various quarters in Karachi via transfers and auctions. The top priority of the Refugee and Rehabilitation Ministry, as mentioned above, was to use the evacuee property to compensate Muslim refugees from India. However, the matter of fixation of property values remained pending during the 1950's because the Rehabilitation authorities were unable to adopt any uniform method of fixing those values. The Minister of Finance held the opinion that there were no prospects of the evacuees returning and claiming their lands. In due process, with arising complications in the process of allotment and determining who the right allottee was, the Rehabilitation Department cancelled and re-cancelled some of the allotments. The records of the Rehabilitation Department show a yearly rise in the value of Karachi evacuee property from 1949 to 1951.²⁹⁶

²⁹⁶ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File. No. 227/CF/51. Fixation of Value of Evacuee Building Sites in Karachi. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

Table 4 Rise in the value of evacuee property in Karachi from 1949-1951

Quarter	Rate in year 1949 per Sq. yd.	Rate in end of 1950 per Sq. yard.	Rate in beginning of year 1951 per Sq. yd.	Reasons
Rambaugh Quarter	Rs.68/-	Rs.70/-	Rs.75/-	Near to Bunder Road
Tahilram Quarter	Rs.60/-	65/-	70/-	Old locality
Rancher Quarters	50/-	65/-	90/-	Commercial

By the year 1954, the category of movable property included lockers, properties of joint stock companies, bank accounts, shares etc. Despite the deadlock, however, both governments allowed evacuees to remove or recover their personal movable property from their houses in the old country of residence or to collect their belongings from friends they had left them with by 31 December 1954.²⁹⁷

In 1955, the Government of Pakistan approved certain types of persons for quasi-permanent allotments of evacuee property. The categories of such persons were as follows: 1. persons who had to leave India under violence or threat of violence, 2. government servants who had opted for service in Pakistan at the instance of the Muslim

²⁹⁷ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File. No. 245/CF/52. *Half Yearly Summaries of the Ministry of Refugees & Rehabilitation*. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

League Wing of the Undivided Government of India, including non-officials who were invited by the Government of Pakistan to serve the State, and 3. persons who had been deprived of their rights on their properties, as a result of the application of evacuee property law in India.

A memorandum dated 3 January 1956 shows growing disagreement on the procedures with respect to evacuee property between the two countries. This memorandum shows that procedural transparency had not been achieved in the process of transfer of evacuee property, and that it was not achievable.

Thus, the Custodian Boards, which had initially been designed to function only on the request of individual property owners and to take care of the property of people who were expected to return soon, started requisitioning the property for the state and allotting it further. The Rehabilitation Department had the power to access and acquire any property it thought was needed to rehabilitate refugees. This is how evacuee property became the favorite target of people wanting to acquire property.

In East Bengal, the scale of refugees and evacuees was massive. On 26 March 1951, Professor Raj Kumar Chakraverty inquired of the government benches whether all the Hindu migrants returning to East Bengal had been rehabilitated. He further asked if their land and homes had been returned to them. Dutta added to the above mentioned queries by saying that movable property of Hindus had been sold in their absence in East Bengal.²⁹⁸

²⁹⁸ Constituent Assembly (Legislature) of Pakistan Debates. 26 March 1951. *Rehabilitation of Refugees in East Bengal*. Karachi. P. 331-333.

The evacuee property policies kept changing with the passage of time. On 20 November 1951, two members from the Hindu community, one from East Bengal and the other from Sindh, protested the expansion of the application of the bill. They protested that the definition of the word “evacuee” had expanded. They called the expansion mischievous; in turn, the ruling party termed their objection “irrelevant.” Finally D.N. Dutta (East Bengal) and Seth Sukhdev (Sindh) were harshly silenced by the government benches. At the end of the session, a vote was conducted to take the opinion of the members. The CAP debate registered the members who voted aye and no; it shows that all the Hindu members voted no. However, the motion was still adopted, as their number was small. As a result, an issue that was directly related to Hindu communities, affecting them badly, causing them to lose their land, was decided against them. D.N. Dutta termed this behavior and treatment legal discrimination. In his words:

The foreign companies are allowed to function and to carry on their business [in Pakistan] but the bona fide residents [Hindu citizens] living here and managing the property will not be allowed to manage the properties. These persons should not be placed in more disadvantageous position. Even as far as the question of those evacuees, who have left this country on account of certain circumstances over which they had no control, is concerned the position in this.²⁹⁹

D.N. Dutta continued, protesting against the inclusion of joint stock companies in this

Act:

They [Hindus] may be foreigners today, but formerly they were the residents of our State... there is no reason why those 51 per cent of evacuees who were formerly the residents of this State should not be allowed to manage the properties and business.... I would not have said even these very few words if there was a bona fide intention as was the case when the Ordinance was passed in 1948 to

²⁹⁹ Constituent Assembly (Legislature) of Pakistan Debates. 20 November 1951. *The Pakistan (Administration of Evacuee Property) (Second Amendment) Bill*. Karachi. P. 208.

administer the properties. The object today is entirely different. It is not to administer the property but to confiscate the property and thereof [sic] the evacuees should not be placed in a worse position than the foreigners and this clause should not be placed in the Bill.³⁰⁰

Dr. Ishtiaq Qureshi presented the logic for adding the new clause in the bill, stating that Pakistan was adding the new clause because Indians had done so. Kamini Kumar Dutta then responded to Dr. Ishtiaq Qureshi's statement:

But we are not concerned with what they are doing. Supposing they have made any legislation out of malice for those persons who have left India, we should not be victimized for that reason...Pakistan should decide on the situation existing here and not on the situation existing in India as Pakistan deals with the interests of its own people, and should not be influenced by any action of the Republic of India which, to us, appears to be absolutely improper.³⁰¹

At this point the speaker asked Seth Sukhdev to move his amendments to this bill. He refused to do this. However, D.N. Dutta moved his proposed amendments; thereupon Dr. Ishtiaq Qureshi accused D.N. Dutta of being a greater advocate of the evacuees than the Government of India. On 20 November 1952, the Pakistan Administration of Property Bill was presented in the Constituent Assembly once again for an amendment. Bhapes Chandra Nandy, objecting to the bill, argued that the bill was flawed and would cause hardships to the parties due to the procedural defects. He further added:

In this Bill there is no mention of safeguarding the interests of the parties. Sir, solving "administrative difficulties" is one thing but meeting the ends of justice is quite another thing. The very purpose of law is to ensure justice and its right administration in the interests of the parties."³⁰²

³⁰⁰ Ibid.

³⁰¹ Ibid, 210.

³⁰² Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates. 20 Novemeber 1951. *The Pakistan (Administration of Property) (Amendment) Bill*. Karachi. P. 452.

Seth Sukhdev also opposed the amendment and mentioned the harassment of Hindu property and land owners by the Custodian Department.³⁰³ He said that Hindu property owners could not sell, mortgage or lease their property; in a way, they had been deprived of their property rights. D. N. Dutta raised the case of Bhishan Das and the role of the Custodian Department as an example, quoting the remarks of a High Court Judge regarding the behavior of Custodian Department officers that these two gentlemen were active in grabbing and usurping the properties of some of the members of the minority community.

D.N. Dutta further added that the duty of the custodian was to manage, administer, and preserve the evacuees' property. He said that if these purposes were done away with, the Custodian would get power to grab the property of the minority communities.³⁰⁴ Dutta quoted an incident in which Hindus had been beaten at Mirpurkhas. He remarked: "Injustices have been done and the properties of minority communities have been grabbed. We are not safe in the hands of Custodian and I may add that appellants belonged to minority community; members should understand the real plight of the evacuees and the so-called evacuees." He described the case of a Hindu family from Mirpurkhas: a total of 17,000 acres of rich cotton fields, two cotton ginning factories, houses, gardens, shops and other properties of this family had been confiscated. The mover of the amendment, Dr. Ishtiaq Husain Qureshi, accused D.N. Dutta of carrying out propaganda against the Government. He further accused D.N. Dutta of 'prostituting' his knowledge of law in front of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. At

³⁰³ Ibid. P. 455.

³⁰⁴ Ibid. P. 459.

the end of the discussion, the mover of the amendment, Qureshi, dismissed the allegations and concerns of Hindu property and land owners in Sindh.

After the Partition, many new mosques and religious institutions were also built on evacuee property, unlawfully. The religious circles, in order to get the ownership of this property, requested the government to transfer the ownership to the occupants to clarify the the Islamic legal status of such mosques. This request was granted.³⁰⁵

³⁰⁵ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No. 4/CF/73. *Resolution Moved by Maulana Abdul Hakim in the National Assembly*. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

Propaganda

Like other grievances mentioned by the Hindu members in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan about the predicament of their community, the complaints regarding the occupation of Hindu property and misuse of evacuee property laws and procedures were also refuted as a propaganda campaign by the government. One early example is from 1948. On 21 December 1948, the occupation of the Ramakrishna Mission building and its premises in Karachi was heatedly debated in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. The question raised by a Hindu member as a representative of the community was termed propaganda against the Government of Pakistan by a Muslim member of the Assembly. Professor Raj Kumar Chakravarty inquired of the Minister of the Interior whether he was aware that, after the communal troubles in Karachi in January 1948, the temple, other buildings, and premises of the Ramakrishna Mission had been occupied by unauthorized persons and that they had not vacated the place despite a court order to do so. Chakravarty asked “whether Government propose to protect this religious and humanitarian trust-property? If so, how?” Khawaja Shahabuddin then denied Chakravarty’s claim that the mission building was a temple, saying that it was only a *math*, that it had been used for religious teaching and that after the disturbances the building had been vacated by the mission people. After being vacant for a short period of time, it was allotted to Khan Bahadur Akhtar Adil by the Rent Controller. Shahabuddin stated that after “opposition leaders” had approached him about the said building he had been able to get the mission building restored to the Mission administration, but that the

Swami had sold the building within two days to another person. The following dialogue then took place in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan:

The Honourable Mr. Muhammad Habibullah Bahar: Will the Honourable Minister be pleased to tell us whether propaganda is being carried on against the Pakistan Government on the lines of the question put by Prof. Raj Kumar Chakraverty?

The Honourable Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan: If so, it has been effectively answered.

The Honourable Khwaja Shahabuddin: Sir, unfortunately that is so. A great deal of propaganda is being carried on but I feel this answer will prove a satisfactory answer to such propaganda.

Mr. Dharendra Nath Datta: Will the Honorable Minister be pleased to tell us if he knows the difference between what is a temple and what is not a temple?

Mr. President: That does not arise.

Mr. Dharendra Nath Datta: Will the Honorable Minister be pleased...

Mr. President: Have you any other question?

Mr. Dharendra Nath Datta: Yes. Will the Honorable Minister be pleased to tell us whether he is aware that in Ram Krishna Homes, deities are worshipped every day and there was washing every day.

The Honourable Khwaja Shahabuddin: Sir, it might have been so but unfortunately the Swami has sold that place; it is not our fault...

Dr. Muhammad Husain: Since a lot of mischief is being done by this kind of propaganda that house of worship was taken possession, what is the Government doing to contradict this propaganda?

Sardar Shaukat Hyat Khan: Would it not be proper that in order to appease the other community this temple sale is cancelled and Government hand it back to the community concerned...?

The Honourable Khwaja Shahabuddin: Sir, as the matter entirely concerns the law courts and the Government has no authority to cancel any legal sale, it depends on the Honourable Member himself to go before the court of law and question its legality and try to do quite a good turn to the minority community of which he appears to be such a great champion.

Sardar Shaukat Hyat Khan: Is it not the concern of the Government to see that the rights of the minority community are safeguarded and since my Honourable friend on the right is saying that its sale should have not taken place, would not the Government invoke the Evacuees Property Ordinance? ...

Mr. Serajul Islam: Is it not a fact that hundreds and thousands of mosques in India are still in the possession of the majority community?

President: That doesn't not arise (*sic*).³⁰⁶

³⁰⁶ Constituent Assembly (Legislature) of Pakistan Debates. 21 December 1948. Unauthorised Occupants of Ram Krishna Mission Building and Premises in Karachi. Karachi. P. 205- 208.

On the state level, in their dealing with the evacuee property issue, India and Pakistan exhibited a lack of trust in each other. In January 1950, India produced and widely distributed a 63-page brochure entitled “Concerning Evacuee Property”³⁰⁷ whose object was to denounce Pakistan for alleged violation of various agreements relating to evacuee property. To expose the falsity of the charges made by India, the Pakistani side also printed a brochure in January 1950, entitled “Evacuee Property Problem--Pakistan’s case.”³⁰⁸

Apart from the two states each struggling to get a solution of its own choice on the evacuee property issue, the press on both sides was pushing the states to conclude the matter on a communal basis.³⁰⁹ For example, the half-yearly summary of the Ministry of Refugees and Rehabilitation mentions the pressure of the press on the Indian government to sell off Muslim evacuee property and distribute it among Hindu and Sikh refugees as compensation. The report states that the Pakistan government was also under similar pressure from the press, but that it refused to listen.³¹⁰ The proceedings of the 16th Chief Secretaries Conference (May 1950) brought under discussion the behavior of the press in West and East Bengal. The East Bengal Government complained regarding the behavior of the Calcutta Press, which continued to be hostile after the Delhi Editors Conference.

The Chief Secretary, West Bengal pointed out that not all West Bengal newspapers were

³⁰⁷ Government of India. 1950. Issued on Behalf of the Ministry of Rehabilitation by the Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. “Concerning Evacuee Property”. Delhi.

³⁰⁸ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No. 150/CF/48 XIV. Half Yearly Summaries of the M/o Refugees and Rehabilitation. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

³⁰⁹ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No. 245/CF/52. Half Yearly summaries of the M/o Refugees and Rehabilitation. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

³¹⁰ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No.245/CF/52 Half Yearly Summaries of the M/o Refugees and Rehabilitation. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

violating the agreement of restraint on this issue, also not all East Bengali newspapers were honoring it. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, *Hindustan Standard*, *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, *Jugantar*, *Nation*, *Advance* and *Basumati* were pointed out as having breached the agreement on the Indian side.³¹¹

The Evacuee, The Intending Evacuee and The East Pakistan Disturbed Persons (Rehabilitation) Ordinance, 1964 (mentioned briefly in the introduction of this chapter) finally paved the way for the promulgation of the Enemy Property Act after Pakistan and India fought a brief war in September 1965. The target of this Act, like previous ones, was the minority, i.e. the Hindu community in the both wings of Pakistan. In the following I will discuss the Enemy Property Act while specifically giving details of enemy property in Tharparkar.

Producing enemy property

Chachro, The Enemy City:

Chachro³¹² is a small desert town which has hardly ever registered its presence on the national level. It went under Indian occupation in December 1971³¹³ and remained so until the Indian forces departed after the Simla Pact in 1972. The Indian advance into this sector, occupying Nagar and Chachro, two main sub-divisions in the region, was sudden.

³¹¹ Government of East Bengal. Home Department. Political Branch. File No: 3C3-4 of 1950. Proceedings 56. B January 1951 Conference: Confirmed Copy of the Proceeding of the 16th Chief Secretaries Conference held at Shillong from 23rd May -26th May 1950. National Archives of Bangladesh Holdings. Dhaka.

³¹² The city of Chachro is located at a distance of 60 km to the northeast of Mithi, approximately 50 to 60 kilometers from the international, locally known as Rajasthan border. The important Indian towns are Jesalmir to the north and Barmer to the east of Chachro.

³¹³ A quiet and not well maintained memorial for the Pakistani martyrs of the 1971 war stands near the village of Barach, about 25 kilometer southeast of Mithi, the district headquarters of Tharparkar.

Tharparkar of the 1970's can be best described as living in the age of camels and *kekras* (six-wheeled army trucks). Traveling between cities took days, and at times weeks, if camels were not available. The Partition of 1947 left many families in Sindh divided between two countries. The war of 1971 had the same result in Tharparkar. Many families decided not to return, fearing future wars and dislocation, since the region had been active militarily. After the war, some men went to India to get married to their dislocated fiancées in the refugee camps, bringing their wives to Pakistan with them. For those wives, whose families had not returned to Pakistan, visiting their families in India turned out to be a difficult task.

Chachro has spread out in recent years and many newly constructed cement structures can be spotted from afar. Despite the fact that there was no fight for control of the city in 1971, Chachro is a living war museum. Among the newly constructed houses stand some unlooked-after mud walls and in some places only wooden doors. My visit to Chachro was the first time during my fieldwork that I came across the word “enemy property.” Prior to this, people had discussed only the excesses over “evacuee property.”

Before the war and the occupation, Chachro was the hometown of Thakur Lachman Singh, as mentioned earlier, a prominent Sodha Rajput leader in the region. His “Kotri”, a pink *haveli*, stands out in Chachro. No one lives in the Kotri nowadays, but there are caretakers and it has recently been renovated. The caretakers of the pink Kotri didn't respond to any of my queries, but they extended hospitality and they showed me around. Rana Lachman Singh's family in India, whom I contacted through facebook and via email, also refused to narrate the events to me that led Lachman Singh out of

Chachro. They did, however, view the exodus of Rajputs from Tharparkar as a result of the kind of treatment met by Rana Lachman Singh in Pakistan. Rajputs in Tharparkar view themselves as having been converted into a minority after 1971, as their numbers and their hold upon land and regional politics declined after the war. Once in the majority and in power, the Sodha Rajputs in Tharparkar today feel that they have become minor citizens in a political sense. Local people have transformed Thakur Lachman Singh into a mythical character. The narrative of his arrest, release and departure from Chachro is enhanced by the rumors of his return with the Indian army in December 1971.³¹⁴

It was after the 1971 war that the Enemy Property Act of 1965 was extended to Chachro. All property left behind by people who decided not to return to Tharparkar was declared Enemy Property. But this was only one side of the problem. Enemy Property was and is scattered throughout the country (in East and West Pakistan). Although the Act provided for the official confiscation of the property of Hindus affected by the war, it was also misused to usurp other Hindu property and businesses as well.

People in Chachro remember pre-1971 Chachro fondly. According to them, the place was originally named *Hanji Tal* (a small village now located near Chachro), and some 250 years ago it was ransacked by Madad Khan Pathan (Shah Nasirdin, an Afghan raider on Sindh³¹⁵). Before 1971, the city was thriving. A committee headed by Saajan Essardas ran the affairs of the city. An elderly man of Chachro, from Khatri community, told me:

³¹⁴ His own immediate family members in India now organize the exodus of Hindus from Pakistan to Rajasthan in India and portray it as a matter of persecution and refugee crisis.

³¹⁵ Imperial Gazetteer of India. V.6. P.178.

http://dsal.uchicago.edu/reference/gazetteer/text.html?objectid=DS405.1.I34_V06_184.gif. Accessed: 3/29/14.

Our panchayat was responsible for the city's affairs, and there were five *mukhis* who were in charge of everything. We had love and understanding between all qoms (groups of people). Then hate grew, and Partition took place. Before the war of 71 (*ekhater wari jang*), Lachman left one night for India, and after the war, the entire city was abandoned.

After the city (along with other cities) was handed back to Pakistan in 1972, most of its Hindu inhabitants either had shifted to refugee camps in India or were living in other towns of Sindh. The city was almost empty except for four Hindu men who refused to go with the Indian Army at the time of handing over to Pakistan. Since then, the city has been going through a process of rehabilitation.

The Enemy Property Act and Enemy Property in Pakistan

It was not only the Partition that led to the exodus of people from their respective countries on the basis of religion in the subcontinent. The Indo-Pak wars of 1965 and 1971 also played a role in pushing more people out of their homes. After the second India-Pakistan war broke out on 6 September 1965, the Defense of Pakistan Ordinance (Ord. XXIII of 1965) was introduced to ensure security and public safety and the defense of the state. On 9 September 1965, the Government of Pakistan issued an executive order known as the Enemy Property (Custody and Registration) Order II of 1965. This Order decreed:

India is declared as an enemy country. All interests of enemy, i.e. the nationals, citizens of India, those residing in the territory occupied/captured/controlled by India – in the firms, companies as well as in the lands and buildings situated in Pakistan – are to be taken over by the Custodian of Enemy Property for control or management. The benefits arising out of trade or business or lands and buildings should not go to the enemy, so that it may not affect the security of the state of Pakistan or impair its defence in any manner.

A similar act was first promulgated in India. Pakistan then promulgated its act, which remains in effect in Bangladesh [the seceding state] as well as in Pakistan to this day.

Rule 161 of the Defence of Pakistan Rules, 1965, defined “an enemy” as:

- a. Any state or Sovereign of a state at war with Pakistan, or
- b. Any individual resident in enemy territory, or
- c. Any body of persons constituted or incorporated in enemy territory in or under the laws of state of war with Pakistan, or
- d. Any other person or body of persons declared by the central Government to be an enemy, or
- e. Any body of persons whether incorporated or not carrying on business in any place, if and so long as the body is controlled by a persons [sic] who under this rule is an enemy, or
- f. As respect any business carried on in enemy territory, an individual or body of persons whether incorporated or not carrying on that business.³¹⁶

Rule 169 of the Defence of Pakistan Rules defined “an enemy subject” as follows:

- a. Any individual who possesses the nationality of a state at war with Pakistan, or having possessed such nationality at anytime has lost it without acquiring another nationality, or
- b. Any body of persons constituted or incorporated in order the laws of such state.³¹⁷

³¹⁶ Barakat, Abul, Shafique uz Zaman, Azizur Rahman and Avijit Poddar. 1997. *Political Economy of the Vested Property Act in Rural Bangladesh*. Dhaka: Association for Land Reform and Development (ALRD). P. 141.

³¹⁷ Ibid, 141.

“Enemy property” was defined as “any property for the time being belonging to or held or managed on behalf of an enemy as defined in rule 161, an enemy subject or any enemy firm, but does not include property which is “evacuee property”, under the “Pakistan Administration of Evacuee Property Act, 1957 (XII of 1957).” The rule further stated: “Provided that where an individual enemy subject dies in Pakistan any property which immediately before his death, belonged to or was held by him, or was managed on his behalf, may notwithstanding his death continue to be regarded as enemy property for the purposes of rule 182.”³¹⁸

Rule 178 prohibited the transfer of property to or by an enemy. It stated that “a transfer of property movable or immovable made, whether before or after the commencement of the Ordinance, to or by a person or body of persons defined in rule 161 or an firm, is injurious to the public interest or was made with a view to evade the provisions of this part, the Central Government may by order, declare such transfer, and any subsequent transfer or subtransfer of the same property or part thereof to be void , either in whole or in part or may impose such conditions on the transfer as it thinks fit.”³¹⁹

In accordance with the terms of the Indian Act, all properties throughout India that were owned by or managed on behalf of, “Pakistani Nationals” between 10 September 1965 and 26 September 1977 were taken over by the Custodian.³²⁰

³¹⁸ Ibid, 142.

³¹⁹ Ibid.

³²⁰ [Anonymous]. 2008. “Custodian of Enemy Property.” *The Economic Times*. http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2008-05-26/news/27699543_1_enemy-property-custodian-pakistan-or-bangladesh. Accessed: 3/23/2014.

In Pakistan, an Office of the Custodian of Enemy Property for Pakistan/Enemy Property Management Board was then established to take care of matters related to such property. Enemy Property Management Boards were established in both East and West Pakistan (Dhaka and Lahore, respectively). The Office of Custodian of Enemy Property, Ministry of Communications, Islamabad, identifies Enemy Property as:

Following the 1965 and 1971 wars with India properties of Indian nationals who had left Pakistan were declared Enemy Property under the Defence of Pakistan Rules.³²¹

Comparatively recent Pakistani official correspondence states that, on account of the migration of Hindu *Khatedars* [land owners] during the Indo-Pak wars of 1971, their property was declared to be enemy property.³²² The Enemy Property Management Board then planned a procedure for the sale of enemy property. The first priority of the state was to dispose of enemy property by selling it to the highest bidder through auctions or sealed tenders. The “enemy property” disposed of by the Government of Pakistan included not only agricultural land and residential properties but also factories and tea gardens.³²³ Like evacuee property, enemy property too was categorized into urban and agricultural property. The other property confiscated under this rule included enemy banks as well as enemy commercial firms. Under Rule 169 (2) (c) of the Defence of

³²¹ Office of the Custodian of Enemy Property for Pakistan. Ministry of Communications. Government of Pakistan. Letter No. DA &S-233/05-Identification of Enemy Property. Dated 11 April 2005.

³²² District Office (Revenue) Tharparkar. Letter No. DO (Rev) RB/-47 of 2008. Subject: Recovery of Rent from the Occupants of Houses, Shops & Plots etc. Declared as Enemy Property and Its Remittance to the Custodians Account at Islamabad. District Office (Revenue) Tharparkar. Letter No. DO (Rev) RB/-47 of 2008. Dated: 22 January 2008.

³²³ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File. No. 35/CF/66-II. Disposal of Enemy Property viz. Tea Gardens, Factories. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

Pakistan Rules, any company “whether incorporated in Pakistan or not, of which any member, shareholder or officer is an enemy subject [lives in India] and which is carrying on business in Pakistan” was declared an enemy firm. It was also decided that vesting should be on a selective basis and that the property of such companies, in which the majority in the equity was held by one or more of the following, should not be treated as an enemy property: 1. Pakistanis, 2. Neutrals [British] and 3. Indian Muslims. It was ordered that in such cases only enemy-held minority shares were to be vested in the Custodian. The Pakistani state clearly favored Muslims (Indian and Pakistani) in the treatment of such properties. It was reported that shareholders of one enemy tea company which was registered in India but had assets in Pakistan were Pakistani Muslims. Their shares had been purchased before the 1965 war.³²⁴

In East Pakistan a census was organized to collect the details of the enemy property.³²⁵ In 1970, the Government of Pakistan decided to hand over five enemy-property hotels on lease to the Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation.³²⁶ In that same year, the Government of Pakistan had decided to dispose of all enemy property and to wind up Enemy Property Boards. It was also decided to hand over all urban enemy

³²⁴ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No: F164/CF/69 1969. Policy Regarding Neutrals Holding in Enemy Property. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

³²⁵ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No. 35/CF/66-IV. Assessment and Management of Enemy Property. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

³²⁶ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No.118/CF/70 1970. Disposal of Enemy Property: Disposal of Five Enemy Hotels and their Transfer to PIA. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

property to the provincial governments, which could then use it for housing schemes.³²⁷

However, the 1971 war resulted in the creation of more enemy property.

It was also initially decided that the enemy properties would not be handed over to industrialists whose holdings were already large, nor would the properties be nationalized. It was also decided that “enemy enterprises” valued at Rs. 50 Lakh and above would be disposed of via tenders. Tenders for the sale of some enemy industrial units of market value of Rupees 50 lakh and above were advertised and then opened on 15th July, 1969. Some of the good offers that were received for some important enemy properties are mentioned below (I was unable to get the records for the ones without offers):

1. Lyallpur Cotton Mills, assessed market value Rs. 3,60,00,000, offered 3,87,00,000
2. Sutlej Cotton Mills, assessed market value Rs. 3, 19, 00,000, offered 3, 17, 00,000.
3. West Punjab Factories Ltd. Okara.
4. Okara Flour & General Mills Ltd, Okara.
5. Luxmi Salt Works Ltd., Karachi
6. Amritsar Sugar Mills Company Ltd., Rattoki.
7. The Ganesh Flour Mills Ltd., Lyallpur.
8. The Kaycee Industries Ltd.

³²⁷ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No. 156/CF/70 1970. Progress report on implementation of the cabinet decision in Case No. 8/2/68 dated 26th of January 1968 regarding disposal of enemy properties. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

9. Mohini Mills Ltd, Kushtia, assessed market value Rs. 82, 42, 146 offered 41, 50,000.
10. North Bengal Sugar Mills (private) Rajshahi assessed market value, 2, 28, 99,776.00, offered, 1, 43, 10,500.00.
11. Adarsha cotton Spinning and Weaving mills including Basu's Glass works, Dacca, 79, 08,668.00, no tender was received.
12. The Faletti's Hotel, Lahore.
13. Flashman Hotel, Rawalpindi.
14. Dean's Hotel, Peshawar.
15. Cecil Hotel, Muree.
16. The Palace Hotel, Karachi.

The Pakistani state was legally challenged for this action. The Palace Hotel Karachi, an enemy hotel, was encumbered with two civil suits – a writ petition against its takeover by the government under the Defence of Pakistan Rules, and a suit for specific performance and contract – both filed by its former Pakistani Hindu directors, who also attained an *ad interim* injunction against the disposal of the property.³²⁸

³²⁸Mohini Mills was advertised again and again to get a higher bid, which was not received even after a third attempt. The following is the official description of one of the industrial enterprises taken over by the state in West Pakistan:

“The Lyallpur Cotton Mills Ltd. is a unique institution. It was established in 1934, long before the concept of industrial welfare emerged in our country. The founders of the mill established an undertaking in which the cardinal note was joint consultation and welfare of labour side by side with profitability of the industry. There was not only a full-fledged high school but Workers Clubs had been established with very substantial amenities not even available in foreign-owned undertakings. Besides three dispensaries --one Allopathic, one Homeopathic, and one Ayurved -- there were two Swimming pools and a

By 28 October 1970, The Enemy Property Management Board had sold off 24 units in East Pakistan and 27 in West Pakistan, each valued below Rs.20 lakhs, and had received payment for them. 23,666 enemy shares in East Pakistan and 533,766 in West Pakistan had also been disposed of. The total amount received from enemy property on account of sale proceeds, dividends, and profit in East and West Pakistan was 1,99,29,148.49 rupees, as of 30th September 1970. The gross value of enemy property in East and West Pakistan is listed below:

Table 5 Approximate value of Enemy property in East and West Pakistan:

Approximate value of all types of enemy property	East Pakistan 316,915,963.00 [excluding land and buildings in East Pakistan]	West Pakistan 265,670,343.00
Approximate value of enemy property disposed of during the quarter July-December 1970	287, 722,6.00	789,190.00

club for the workers. The Library is a very distinguished structure. The canteen can accommodate about 600 workers at a time. The mill also provided funds [for] such [expenses] as daughter's marriage. Because of such an enlightened attitude the workers had acquired a feeling of belonging to the undertaking. That is why when the Mill was declared enemy property and WPIDC took over the charge of the management, a revolutionary change took place.”

Approximate value of enemy property disposed of in all previous quarters	339,347,01.00	298,297,15.00
Progressive total of enemy property sold up-to-date	368,119,27.00	306,189,06.00
Approximate value of all types of enemy property still to be disposed of	280,104,036.00 [excluding lands and buildings in East Pakistan]	23,50,51,438.00

Details of Enemy Property in Sindh

In this section I will present the details of some enemy property in Sindh, according to the records of the Office of the Custodian of Enemy Property, which still functions under the Ministry of Communications, Pakistan. However, there are many other towns and cities in Sindh where enemy property is located but for which I was not able to collect the details.

The Enemy Property office records indicate that such property is scattered all over Umerkot, Mirpurkhas and other cities in Sindh.³²⁹

Table 6: Enemy Property in Sindh (Non-Agricultural)

	Houses	Shops	Plots	Factories
1. Tharparkar				

³²⁹ Office of the Custodian of Enemy Property for Pakistan. Ministry of Communications. Government of Pakistan. Letter No. DA & S-233/05-340. Identification of Enemy Property. Islamabad. Dated 10 June, 2005.

i. Samaro	-	-1-	-	-
ii. Mithi	-8-	-	2	-
iii. Chachro	-139-	163	-	-
iv. Nagarparkr	-100-	-123-	-8-	-
Total ³³⁰	-247-	-286-	-10-	
1. Rest of Sindh	-	-	-	-
i. Sukkur	-8-	-	-	-
ii. Rohri	-195-	-47-	-39-	-2-
iii. Panno Akil	-235-	-23-	-32-	-
Total	438	70	71	2

Table 7: Enemy Property in Sindh (Agricultural)

Tharparkar	194,026 - 00 acres
Umerkot	5,510 - 29 acres
Mirpurkhas	7-32 acres

Table one shows that more housing units of enemy property were listed in those parts of Sindh that had not been directly affected by the war. Table two indicated that more agricultural land was listed as enemy property in Tharparkar and adjoining Umerkot and Mirpurkhas than in the rest of Sindh.

³³⁰ Office of the District Officer (Rev) T'parkar, Mithi. Letter No. Do (REV)/-977 of 2005. Identification of Enemy Property. Dated: 17.06.2005. Another letter mentions the number of houses in Tharparkar as 246 and Shops 288.

The following table shows the details of enemy property vis a vis agricultural land in the entire district of Tharparkar. This land was disposed of in open *cachehries* (courts) after the legal formalities had been carried out.³³¹ It also shows the taluka-wise area and details of disposed of and remaining enemy property in district Tharparkar.

Table 8: Enemy Property in Tharparkar

	Taluka	Total Area in Acres	Disposed Area	Area Remaining to be disposed of	Rate of Rent/Lease	Remarks
1	Mithi	13864 - 15	2201 - 18	1162 - 37	Rs. 6 per acre per year for 30 years	Disposed of in open <i>cachehries</i>
2	Diplo	764 - 38	-----	746 - 38		
3	Chachro	111407 - 27	944 - 30	110462 - 37		
4	Nagarparkar	66852 - 33	531 - 23	66321 - 10		
	Total	192871	3677 -	189194 -		

³³¹ Government of Pakistan. Ministry of Communications. Letter No. DA&S-233. Identification of Enemy Property. Dated: 22 June 2005.

		- 33	31	02		
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Some of the property listed in Chachro is now occupied by people (Hindus and Muslims) who shifted to Chahchro after the city was restored to Pakistan. In 2008, the Custodian office decided to collect the rent on houses, shops and plots from their occupants since the date of their occupation and to remit the recovered amount to the Custodian account in the National Bank of Pakistan in Islamabad. Human rights organizations were invited to witness the process.³³²

Prior to the formulation of the land grant policy (22-8-2000), agricultural lands were leased out to the sitting tenants on an annual basis. After the application of the land grant policy, some of the above-mentioned land was disposed of on lease for thirty years to the occupants/sitting tenants at the rate of Rs. 6/- per year for the agricultural land.³³³ According to official records, a sum of Rs. 50,016.00 has so far been recovered from the occupants of enemy property in Tharparkar district. However, no policy has been devised by the Custodian for the disposal of non-agricultural property.³³⁴

The act was openly used by the state to seize Hindu businesses and properties. However, it was not only the state that dispossessed Hindus of their properties and fortunes, but also members of the majority community who obtained the possession of Hindu property by unfair means. I did not have access to the details of dispossession in

³³² District Office (Revenue) Tharparkar. Letter No. DO (Rev) RB/-47 of 2008. Subject: Recovery of Rent from the Occupants of Houses, Shops & Plots etc. Declared as Enemy Property and Its Remittance to the Custodians Account at Islamabad. Dated: 22 January 2008.

³³³ Ibid.

³³⁴ Ibid.

the case of towns and villages in Pakistan other than those in Tharparkar. In the case of East Bengal, Abul Barkat et al in their work titled *Political Economy of the Vested Property Act in Rural Bangladesh* (1997) give a few examples of how this Act was used to grab Hindu-owned property in East Bengal, and they give a detailed account of the mechanisms of dispossession. From West Pakistan, one example is that of 22 Aikman Road, Lahore, whose owner, Gopal Das, was deported to India by a Pakistani court on allegations of his being an Indian citizen who had overstayed his visa in Pakistan, filed by his business partners in Lahore.³³⁵ I will describe this case next.

The Case of 22 Aikman Road, Lahore

According to a petition filed by Gopal Das's children, he ran an automobile business in Lahore along with his business partners. In 1963 he developed differences with his partners, who filed an FIR against him. In the same year he was ordered to be deported to India. Gopal Das, who was then left in no-man's land on the Indian-Pakistani border, was arrested by the Indian Border Forces on charges of spying. He remained imprisoned until his relatives in India arranged for him to be released. His family was also forced to leave Pakistan. Gopal Das challenged the order of the Pakistani court and was acquitted in 1964. After that, he applied for a Pakistani passport in Delhi, but was never issued one. Under Rule 182 of Defence Rules of Pakistan, his property in Lahore was declared enemy property and he was notified of the requisition. Gopal Das filed one writ petition against the requisition notification in 1969, another in 1970 and a third one in 1971,

³³⁵ See: "Enemies Over Night." *The News*, Pakistan, 21 January 2007. <http://jang.com.pk/thenews/jan2007-weekly/nos-21-01-2007/dia.htm#1>. Accessed: 1/23/14.

without any success. The heirs alleged in their petition in 2007 that their father's Pakistani gardener, Abdul Ghafoor, had occupied the house by pretending to be their relative. Gopal Das's house had been constructed in 1943 at an estimated cost of Rs. 91,000. It had a total area of 18 kanals (1 Kanal = 0.125 acres), 6 Marlas (20 Marlas= 1 Kanal) and 142 sq. ft. The market value was assessed in July 1968 at Rs. 2.03 lac. The building apparently attracted many prospective buyers. The East Pakistan Association, Lahore, wanted to acquire this building and later the Civil Defence Organization desired to purchase it, but neither organization could arrange to meet the price. The property was then advertised for sale in December 1970. A certain Mrs. Begum Zerina Khan offered the highest tender, but the Enemy Property Management Board, Lahore, came to the conclusion that the building was worth at least Rs. 4.88 lakhs, more than Begum Khan had offered. The tenders were therefore rejected. In October 1972, the Government of the Punjab showed an interest in taking over the building after a payment of Rs.3.80 lac. A discount of up to 40% over the reserve price was allowed in order to deliver the possession of the vacant property. At a cabinet meeting held on 21 December 1974 in Prime Minister House, Rawalpindi, it was decided that the land in question should be transferred to the Government of Punjab at the price they had offered for it. The rules of procedure were allowed to be amended for this purpose. The sale deed was finally finalized in October 1976.¹ The Government of the Punjab then approached the Ministry of Communications with the request that the building at 22 Aikman Road, Lahore, an Enemy Property, be transferred to them at the price of Rs.3.80 lac for providing accommodation to government officers. Currently 22 Aikman Road, Lahore, serves as the Civil Defence Academy under the Ministry of the Interior. In 2007, the children of

Gopal Das contested the status of 22 Aikman Road. The Daily Times, Pakistan, on February 08, 2007, headlined: **Who owns 22-Aikman Road: Hindu siblings, govt or ‘the gardener’: Siblings’, govt’s petitions be heard by same bench: LHC.**

Hounding Thakurs and the “Hidden Evacuee Property”

Connecting back to the hounding of Sindh’s Hindu landlords, especially Rajputs in Tharparkar, let us have a look at how *Jasarat* reported this activity. *Jasarat* highlighted Maulana Abdul Quddus Bihari’s efforts in locating what it called “the hidden evacuee property” all around Sindh. Maulana Bihari demanded that the Government of Pakistan find out about and locate all the hidden evacuee property in Sindh. As the president of the Mohajir Relief Committee (the interview was published in 1971), he expressed a wish that several years earlier, upon his appeal, the government of Pakistan had nationalized all evacuee property. If this had taken place, he opined, the country could have averted the current economic crisis it was facing. He further stated that if all “hidden” and “stolen” evacuee property was recovered and converted into an estate, the country would have a financial revival. The newspaper reported the maulana saying, further, that an organized gang of Hindu landlords of Indian citizenship had spread in Sindh, from Tharparkar to Sanghar, to Ghotki, to Kandhkot, to Umerkot, to Shikarpur and Jacobabad. He alleged that these people were obtaining papers for the properties of Hindus who had already migrated to India and were residing in India. This gang offered heavy bribes to government officials in order to get such papers. The maulana expressed his anger over the administration, which, with the help of officials, had displaced thousands of Sindhis

and Mohajirs (read occupant Muslims) from the lands of “Indian” (Hindu) people, in order to please Hindus.³³⁶

On 22 February 1971, *Jasarat* printed a two-page interview with Maulana Abdul Quddus Bihari. In the interview, the Maulana explained that it was the aim of his life to dig out the *matrooka* (Urdu: literally, abandoned, read evacuee) property in the country. He mentioned that he had been protesting against the “Indian Hindus” (read: the Hindus who had left Sindh) since 1954. According to him a “horrible” gang (of Hindus) was operating in Baluchistan and Sindh, and this “gang” was continually sending the country’s (read: Pakistan’s) wealth and secrets to India. The Maulana alleged that this gang was spending a great deal of money in Pakistan to spread hatred between communities.

He further revealed that soon after Pakistan had been established, a bomb had gone off in a house on Jamshed road in Karachi. The maulana claimed that a Jana Sangh party leader, Chand Gopal, had been apprehended for that crime. Later, Liaquat Ali Khan (the first Premier of Pakistan) had swapped Gopal Das with the Indian Government for a certain Dr. Qureshi. After this swap, the nephew of Gopal Das, Lila Ram, with the help of Dengo Mal Advocate, had managed to transfer Gopal’s property to his own name and had continued to send the income to his uncle in India for years.

Bihari further alleged that during Suhrawardi’s leadership (as Prime Minister), the Awami League had brought some changes in the evacuee property law which were in favor of Mohajirs and Sindhis (Muslims), but that Mr. Bhutto had deleted clause no. 21,

³³⁶ “Lachman Singh ke farar main Rashi Afsaron aur Siyasi Leedron ka haath hai – Chupi Hoi Matrooka Amlak ka Pata Chalaya Jaye.” *Jasarat*, Karachi. 22 February 1971.

with the result that Indian Hindus (Hindus of Sindh) were allowed to sell their property and take money to India. He further stated that he suspected Hindus of Tharparkar of being (Indian) spies. He said that in order to confirm this he had taken the help of a Hindu insider, (a certain) Buland Rai, who himself went several times to India to confirm these things for him.

The Maulana repeated that Pakistani money was being transferred to India. He kept on accusing Hindus of having “occupied” cotton mills in Tando Jam and Mirpurkhas. He said that Hindus were transferring money from Pakistan to India in the form of gold, silver and grains. This “gang,” the Maulana continued, was functioning with the help of local officials and “jahil” tribals (ignorant, backward, referring to local scheduled castes and tribes). The Maulana grieved that Mr. Bhutto had given a free hand to Hindus to sell their properties and take the money to India. It was because of this favor that the Hindus gave huge donations to the Pakistan People’s Party in the elections. The Maulana commented that the root of the Hindu conspiracy was very deep (in Pakistan). Indian Hindus (Hindus of Sindh) could easily become Pakistani citizens and acquire Pakistani passports by giving mock addresses in Pakistan and successfully hiding their Indian citizenship. Here Abdul Quddus Bihari mentioned a certain person who had been caught presenting fake Pakistani papers and had proven to be an Indian. Later the same person had been successful in acquiring fake papers from Karachi and had managed to get an international passport. He had been helped by influential Hindus in the entire process. This person then sold “evacuee property” for lakhs of rupees. The Maulana then added sensation to his allegations by saying that the person now lived in a jungle near

Sanghar and owned a wireless set. How was this wireless used and for what purposes, officials may know better, he remarked.³³⁷

He gave another example of “Indian Hindus” discreetly coming to Pakistan and trying to sell properties. He told the reporter that Gyan Chand of District Dadu was occupying a *matrooka* (abandoned) property worth 20 lakh rupees. Maulana Bihari “informed” the newspaper that Indian Hindus were involved in spying as well as murders in Pakistan. He cited the example of the Government of Pakistan’s case against Thakur Lachman Singh in a case of spying, mentioning that it was now useless to feel shocked over the “escape” of Thakur Lachman Singh because the administration had helped him in escaping, and the entire village number 123 (*Deh 123*) had been put in jail. He further complained that Rana Chander Singh (the Rana of Umerkot/Rana Jagir), despite the protests of newspapers, was still the king of Mirpurkhas district. He said that Chander Singh had established a parallel government in Sindh.³³⁸

On 26 February 1971, *Jasarat* published a statement issued by the Amir of Jamat-e-Islami, Karachi, Sadiq Hussain, expressing his shock over the police escort that had been provided to Lachman Singh’s friends. He asked the Pakistani Government to explain why facilities that were not easily available to loyal citizens of Pakistan had been provided to Rana Lachman Singh’s friends, who could not prove their Pakistani citizenship. He pointed out that there were some dishonest officers in the administration who were helping foreigners. He said that in Tharparkar, Indian citizens (Hindus) had displaced Mohajir allottees and haris (farmers). He expressed his awe over “foreigners”

³³⁷ “Maulana Abdul Quddus Bihari Ka Interview – wo Jasoosi kis tarah karte hain.” *Jasarat*, Karachi. 22 February 1971.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*

getting hold of ammunition and attacking Pakistani citizens in Pakistan. He said that the Jamat-e-Islami had brought this to the attention of the Governor General of West Pakistan two years earlier and that they had again brought it to the attention of the Governor of Sindh. He insisted that the issue was not settled with the escape of Thakur Lachman Singh. He further reiterated that one needed to sort out and punish the Pakistani officers who support the Indian Hindus so that “we” could eradicate Lachman Singhs and their oppression of *haaris* and mohajirs.³³⁹

The same page of the 24 February edition of the newspaper has another report headlining that Hindu landlords of Tharparkar were preparing to “escape” to India after selling their properties. A plea on behalf of the people of Sindh to investigate the activities of enemies of the country was made. The paper reported that Hindu landlords of Tharparkar were collecting money on a large scale so that they could escape with Pakistan’s money to India. The Hindu jagirdars were displacing the Sindhi and mohajir *haris* from their lands and had created troubles for them. The people of Tharparkar, said the newspaper, had demanded that the landlords should be prevented from selling their lands. The paper reminded its readers that a Hindu landlord and a former parliamentary secretary of the Pakistan Assembly, Thakur Lachman Singh, had already escaped with his family, including two officers. Lachman Singh had accumulated wealth before he “escaped” to India. These landlords of Tharparkar, wrote the newspaper, were never loyal to Pakistan. During the 1965 war, many had been arrested for spying for India. They had

³³⁹ “Lachman Singh ko Mussalah Police Guard ki Ijazat milne per Izhar-e-Hairat.” *Jasarat*, Karachi. 26 Febraury 1971.

international passports and some of them were Indian citizens. The newspaper demanded investigations of the “Hindus” who were selling their properties.³⁴⁰

On 20 February 1971, *Roznama Jasarat* printed an interview with Qazi Muhammad Faiz (of the Awami League). The newspaper asked him to describe his services for the country and he said that after Pakistan had been created, Sindhi landlords had attempted to occupy the lands left behind by Hindu landlords. He had agitated against these efforts, as he was of the opinion that the lands left behind by the Hindus should be equally distributed among Mohajirs and haris. Although the Muslim League government accepted his opinion in principal, they could not do anything practically. Eventually, Sindh’s landlords and wadero (Sindhi, lit: elders, landlords), especially Ayub Khoro, had turned against him. Khoro had had him jailed in a forged case of robbery and caused his home to be attacked.³⁴¹

On 1st March 1971 *Jasarat* headlined that Indian Hindus had prepared pickets in rural Mirpurkhas. The subheading reported that Sindhi and Mohajir *haris* were being displaced and Hindus were selling properties. The president of the mohajir relief committee, Maulana Abdul Quddos Behari, told the newspaper that Hindus had sold the Chowk market for 3 lakh rupees. The paper reported that the central government had ordered these Hindus to leave Pakistan, but that they were morcha band (armed and positioned). They had also gathered all Thakurs in village # 123 to evict the “locals” and had sold their properties. A magistrate in Mirpurkhas had summoned some Hindu

³⁴⁰ “Tharparkar ke Hindu Jagirdar Amlak Farokht ker ke Bharat Farar Honeki Tayari ker Rahe hain.” *Jasarat*, Karachi. 26 February 1971.

³⁴¹ “Awami League ke Qazi Faiz Ahmad.” *Jasarat*, Karachi. 20 February 1971.

Thakurs to the court and asked them to prove that they were Pakistani citizens; they were unable to prove this.³⁴²

While all this was being reported in Sindh, the opposition's politics in East Pakistan were also an issue in West Pakistan. *Jasarat* started accusing Hindus of East Pakistan of having caused trouble there. While explaining the demands of the Awami League to its readers, the paper suggested that the Awami League wanted to have an independent Bangladesh and that the biggest support of the Awami League were the Hindus of East Pakistan.³⁴³ The newspaper also highlighted that there were new conspiracies underway to get the Muslims of East Pakistan under the control of Indian Hindus.³⁴⁴

Post-1971 Tharparkar:

After the Indian occupation of parts of Tharparkar, thousands of local upper-caste and Scheduled-Caste Hindus, along with Muslims, were displaced. Local Hindu people

³⁴² "Bharti Hindoon ne Mirpurkhas ke Dehi Ilaqon main Morche Qaim ker Liye." *Jasarat*, Karachi. 1 March 1971.

Also: "Umerkot ka aik Hindu Patwari aik lakh ropya ki sarkari raqam lekar Bharat bhag gaya." *Jasarat*, Karachi. 3 July 1971.

"Hindu Patwari ke Bharat fara ho jane ke waqi` ki Ala satah per Tehqeeqat." *Jasarat*, Karachi. 18 July 1970.

"13 Hindu jaidad farokht ker ke karoron Rope Bharat muntaqil kiye ja rahe hain. *Jasarat*, Karachi. 22 July 1970.

"Mazeed Teen Hindu no-Jawan Bharat Farar ho gai," "Pakistan se farar honewala Hindu patwari aur deegar 60 afrad Bharat main siyasi panah Hasil karneki koshish kar rahe hain." *Jasarat*, Karachi. 25 July 1970.

"Sindh ke Hindu Lakhon rope ki raqm main Na-jaiz tor per Bharat Muntaqil kar rahe hain." *Jasarat*, Karachi. 25 August 1970.

"Aik aur Bharti Jasoos Kotri main pakra gaya , Mulzim Mussalaman hai aur Larkana main rehta hai." *Jasarat*, Karachi. 4 September 1970.

³⁴³ "Siyasat-namah Mashriq-o-Maghrib – Mashriqi Pakistan main Awami League ki Asal taqat wahan ke Hindu hain." *Jasarat*, Karachi. 7 June 1970.

³⁴⁴ "Mashriqi Pakistan ke Mussalamnon ko Bharti Hinduoon ke chungal main phansane ki nai sazish." *Jasarat*, Karachi. 13 June 1970.

informed me that the Indian army's occupation was sudden and the Indian army came in inquiring about Muslims. Some of the people caught in the conflict in Tharparkar either moved to the plains of Sindh or stayed in the Indian camps for refugees located in Rajasthan. After the governments of India and Pakistan entered into the Simla Agreement in 1972, India returned the occupied territory to West Pakistan.³⁴⁵ After signing the agreement, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, then President of Pakistan, sent a delegation of three members to bring back to Tharparkar the *Thari* refugees who were living in refugee camps in India. As many people told me, the then leader of the dominant Rajput group in Pakistan advised his community not to return, given the unfavorable political conditions as well as the witch hunting of the Rajput community. "Diwali doesn't occur every day, return soon," was his message (according to those who narrated this to me, it was a hidden message for the Hindus to not to return). Many others decided to return, but most of the Sodha Rajput community decided not to return.

According to the National Assembly of Pakistan debates, an estimated 55,000 people returned to their homes. However, although the war was over, the environment of suspicion and mistrust was not over in certain sectors. In September 1972, some members drew the attention of the speaker of the Pakistani Parliament to the allegations and the speculations that 55,000 Indian agents had settled in Sind as Pakistani Hindus. It was brought to the attention of the House that the daily *Nawaiwaqt* dated 13 September 1972 had alleged that some 55,000 Hindus were being settled in Sindh as Pakistani Hindus

³⁴⁵ Bhutto.org. Indian and Pakistani forces shall be withdrawn to their side of the international border. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto: Simla Agreement. <http://www.bhutto.org/simla-agreement.php>. Accessed: 3/4/14.

who were otherwise Indian agents. Some MNAs argued that the Indian “agents” were being settled in Sindh so that an East Pakistan-like situation (insurgency) could be created in West Pakistan as well. The *amir* of Jamat-e-Islami had also raised this concern in a speech somewhere, according to one member of the Assembly. However, the speaker of the National Assembly did not want to entertain debate on this issue. He stated that it was people who were originally from Sindh that were being re-settled there, and there was no harm in it. Maulana Shah Ahmed Noorani Siddiqui, of Jamiat Ulema Pakistan, showed his concern that it should be verified whether they were Pakistani citizens or not and it should be checked whether “gorillas” were entering Pakistan.³⁴⁶

The Government benches maintained that this news was based only on ill intentions, while some assured the others that only Pakistani nationals were being allowed to come back. They asserted that the Government and security agencies were vigilant. They also stated that the allegation was just a hypothetical proposition. One MNA stated that this was exactly what had happened in East Pakistan where Indian (read Hindu) Agents had been settled, which had finally resulted in the loss of the country. A member then described the ground situation in these words to the opposing members: during the war there had been no defense system for these areas, and (because of war) Muslims were in trouble; however, the majority of the population there (in Tharparkar) was Scheduled Caste and Untouchable. The Pakistan army was simply not present to defend the border. The local people took refuge wherever they could. After the Simla

³⁴⁶ The National Assembly of Pakistan Debates. 13 September 1972. *Adjournment Motion re: Settlement of 55,000 Indian Agents in Sind As Pakistani Hindus*. P. 1342

Agreement, the government had appointed a three-member delegation to bring them back to their '*watan*.'

According to the ruling party member, this news had been fabricated out of a habit of creating a mentality that Hindus were agents in the region and in order to find an excuse for an armed operation. The speaker again tried to convey that only the people who had fled to India during the Indian occupation were being brought back. The Speaker of the National Assembly finally closed the debate by saying that the government was simply resettling the people who had been residents of the areas under Indian occupation, and that was all.³⁴⁷

In order to understand the production of enemy property and the emotional loss attached to it, I now return to Chachro. Thakurs in Tharparkar have been in a state of destitution since Partition. A Maheshwari man told me that Thakurs had left in 1971 and also before 1971. Chahchro taluka had sixteen tapey (a local category of land revenue), fourteen of which belonged to Thakurs. The Thakurs had *jagirs* and villages within the 14 tapey. The other two tapey belonged to Baloch people. A year before 1971, Lachman Singh, a Member of the Provincial Assembly and a Parliamentary secretary of the Pakistan People's Party, had not been getting along with another local person. Thakurs were in the police. But people complained against Thakur Lachman Singh, and he did not like that. He left at night with his family. His departure took place a year before the war. He was the elder, figurehead of his people. After 1971, all Thakurs left voluntarily. "The people in the other two tapey took away the powers of Thakurs", he told me. Thakurs had remained here as rulers, and the changing situation was not acceptable to them.

³⁴⁷ Ibid, 1341-1347.

The area around Chachro was part of the territory that the Indian army handed back to Pakistan after the Simla Agreement in 1972. During the occupation, the international border had shifted to the other side of Chachro, and it had become part of India. The Muslims had left this area on camels and on foot while Hindus in the nearby cities such as Mithi was generally scared.

A Maheshwari man who recounted his experience of the 1971 war to me articulated that his family had been in Chelhar (another town in Tharparkar) when war broke out in this sector. He said:

We were uncertain about the future. I was in Khipro at the time of war and also at the time of the ceasefire, which took place on the 17th or 18th [of the month of December]. We didn't know where our village was situated, in India or in Pakistan. There were only rumors, there was no confirmed news. I came all the way to Naukot [another city in Tharparkar] but didn't get to know if Chelhar itself was in Pakistan or India. Some people told me that it had been looted; some said that Muslims had ransacked it and some said that Thakurs had looted it. I think that in that war both Hindus and Muslims got looted, they both lost their fortunes. We didn't and don't have any communal feelings here, and the reason for that is that even during British rule here, this part was ruled by Thakurs. Everyone respected the British and their law. If a dakoo [dacoit] came here to loot from Jodhpur, what could police do here? Thakurs would work together with Thakurs in Jodhpur and get the culprit. Muslims and Baniyas all saluted Thakurs because they maintained law and order.

While narrating his struggle to get united with his family, the Maheshwari man told me about his journey to Chelhar:

When I reached near Naukot, I had to walk on foot, which makes it a distance of more than 70 km from my village. I was told to avoid the fort route, as I could get looted. I was advised to take a longer route. With my friend I stayed a night in a village, and walked again the entire morning and reached a village of Muslims. At that time we didn't eat food at anyone's home, we were strict about food laws, but nowadays we eat. A Muslim teacher at that village made bread for both of us and brought milk for us. We stayed at another village the next night and the Muslim teacher [there??] transported us on his camel. All along our way, we were hiding from looters. In this situation we passed by a village where the residents joked at us, "Are you going to loot somewhere?" And then they told us it was night, and

therefore it was not wise to go forward because the military was everywhere. They offered to let us stay there for a night, but I kept moving because I wanted to see my family. When I approached Chelhar, the military stopped me and asked, “Who are you? Where have you come from?” and at that time I didn’t know how to answer that question. It was the Pakistan army; I told them who I was. They asked me whose house it was that I was standing outside. I told them that it was my house, they body searched me and then asked me to shout to my family to come out, so I called aloud to them. [The Maheshwari man started crying at this point.] I was hurt, too much hurt. I felt insulted. It was my home, my village and I was stopped in front of it.

Before the 1971 war, Chahchro had around eight hundred houses of Hindus (of various castes). They had to live in refugee camps in India during the war. The women stayed in camps while the men went out to earn their livelihood. There is a comparison made between migrants of 1947 and 1971 from Tharparkar to India too. People talk about those who went in 1947 as being not as prosperous as those who left in 1971, because the latter were facilitated by the Government of India. A Khatri man, surrounded by 6 others in his home, narrated his experience in these words:

On 6 October 1971, all Hindu government servants were transferred from near the border areas to interior Sindh. The war was already going on in Bengal, and India was siding with Bangladesh, not with Pakistan. “Proper war” was declared on 6 December in Sindh. At that time my mother was in Chahchro, and she left for India as people migrated from here. She told us that there was a water shortage in the city and that people were tense. My mother returned after the ceasefire. We and Mussalmans used to live together. Before [the] 1971 [war] we never ever knock at a door while entering any house: we would just enter the home and sit and no one would ever ask why and what we were doing there. After ‘71 things changed. Things changed because people were displaced as a result of the war, and now we knock on doors. I returned to Chachro on 14 January 1973 and worked in relief and rehabilitation activities. People had started returning to their homes; the government was giving away wheat, clothes and ghee. Those who didn’t leave got relief cards. We were given 800 rupees per head and it was my duty to distribute the cards. Some Hindus thought that India was now their country, so they didn’t return; some had looted here on their way out to refugee camps in India, so they didn’t return, fearing hostility. There is a rumor among people that Lachman Singh returned during the war, leading the Indian army all the way up to Chachro. After the war, the government declared this entire city to be ‘enemy property’. Those who left in 1947, their property was called evacuee,

and those who left in 1971, their property was called enemy. I ask why you called it enemy property. These are homes of our relatives.

At this point many other people who were present in the room asked me to tell them why this abandoned property which belonged to their relatives was called “enemy property” by the Government of Pakistan. There were many voices in the room. At this point *Baba*, my friend’s father, also the head of the host family (Maharaj community) who was facilitating my day in the field, decided to interrupt, and he ended the discussion with a conclusive remark: “[T]his is what the government has decided to do. If they want to call it enemy property they can call it [that].” Another voice interrupted, “We are Hindu, we don’t say anything, what can we say?”

While *Baba*’s son-in-law waited outside the home, in conformity with *Thari* tradition of the son-in-law not facing his father-in-law, the Maheshwari man, now a retired school teacher, continued the tale of Chachro:

When we returned, we didn’t find doors intact with our homes. When the Indian army departed, the Pakistan army entered [the city]. There were only three people who had decided to stay in Chachro and did not leave even when the Indian army offered to leave with them. The Pakistan army investigated these three men and let them stay there. Slowly people started returning. Upon my return I found Chachro to be “Mohen ja dara” [referring to the ancient Sindhi mound, Mohenjodaro]. When I was serving in interior Sindh, I had always wished to visit Mohenjodaro. After returning to Chachro my wish was fulfilled. I didn’t need to visit Mohenjodaro any more; it was here in front of my eyes. Now Chachro has changed. The life is returning to it and it is turning into a city now. The people who lived on the border, the local people, they have also occupied our homes and plots here; they have their properties there on the border and have also established themselves here. They have the privilege of keeping and visiting both properties.

While we drove out of Chachro, back to Mithi, *Baba* and his son-in-law both got emotional while we passed through a particular alley. Finally breaking their customary

veil of silence, they pointed to some “enemy property” and recalled emotionally to whom in their family the house had belonged. It was a family reunion for them.

At Umerkot, Rana Hameer Singh recalled the removal of his people from this region. He told me:

After the war of 71 my tribe alone suffered the loss of one lakh of people from Tharparkar. Bhutto sahib sent Rana sahib [Rana Hameer Singh’s father, Rana Chander Singh] to bring them back, but my father prevented them from returning to Pakistan. He was afraid that he could not be their guarantee any more in the changing political situation. In our tribe we do not conduct matrimonial alliances within the Sodha tribe. Now, with whom and how do we wed our girls? Until 1965 there was no border, there were only police stations and it was an easy procedure. Since the war of 1965, security forces are firmly positioned on the border. And on the other hand here in every village our sisters are sitting [waiting to get married] and there is no one to marry them. The outcome of 1971 fell mostly on Sodha Rajputs. 250,000 acres of land was abandoned and this is what you call “enemy” property today! 250,000 acre is not a small area.

Back in Chachro, I asked a Khatri person why he thought India had gone to war with Pakistan in this region. He told me, “Pakistan and India have not always been friendly. East and West Pakistan were so much apart. The Indian army wanted to engage Pakistan more; they opened this front so that no more soldiers and supplies could go to East Pakistan from the West. Bengali officers were serving in this region.” At this point, Baba told everyone present, “I was here and have seen Bengali officers. They were distressed and they used to cry in uncertainty about what would happen with them here as they had heard the news of rebellion in East Pakistan.”

Another Maheshwari man (now more than eighty years old), one of four people who remained in Chachro after the Indian army and locals had evacuated it, told me:

When the war broke out and Indians occupied Chachro out of the blue, it was a catastrophe here. I took my family to the refugee camp in Barmer. But since my Jagah (place), makan (home) and zameen (land, property), everything was here, I came back to take care of my property. After the occupation, for 10 months, the

city kept functioning. As Indira agreed to return this region to Pakistan, the Indian army asked people to leave with them. They offered to facilitate the shift with transportation, and when Chachro was vacated, they informed Pakistan that they had left. A similar routine happened in Nagar [Nagarparkar]. When the Indian army returned this area to *Bhutta* sahib [Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto] and Indians started to evacuate, I was standing on the roof of my house. The Indian army waved to me, asking me to come with them to India, but I refused. The Indian army didn't bother us during their stay here. We were only four people left in Chachro, all Hindus. The Muslims had already fled following the occupation. The Pakistani army entered twenty-four hours after the departure of the Indian army. We said *salam* to the Pakistani forces, even made tea for them. After taking control of the city, they asked us "Who are you?" We said, "We are Hindus." They didn't say anything but gestured as you would to say, "*Kamal ki baat hai*" [That's a strangely wonderful thing]. We told them that this is our "watan" [homeland]. I had returned to look after my business. The Pakistani army asked us if we needed anything. We were fine and we didn't take anything from them [the army]. My family returned after the Simla Pact. When Chachro was occupied, the city people [Hindus] remained here for ten months. When Bhutto and Indira had a pact, [Chachro] got vacated within two months. The Indian army asked people to come to India with them; these people refused to go with them; [the people] wanted to stay here and did not expect another war soon.

He paused here to point to his sons, and joked, "But they followed me back, even though

I tried my best to get rid of them and had left them in India." When I asked this

Maheshwari man about Lachman Singh, he straight away refused to answer.

I won't talk about Lachman Singh. People gossip that he returned to Tharparkar after the war. He might have, just to see his *watan* [homeland]. But I didn't see him. When he was a Pakistani, he was jailed for no reason, therefore he left. We didn't see him returning to Chachro; only people in *barani* (the countryside) talk about him. After the city was returned to the Pakistani army, Bhutto sahib sent three people from here to bring back the people in refugee camps, including Pir Gillani and Rana Chander Singh. Bhutto sahib sent them to bring Hindu people back, and when Rana sahib went there he told people: "diwali roz naheen aati hai, ye do main saath laya hoon, jaldi aana". [Diwali doesn't come every day, I have brought two (men) with me, come soon]. It was a clear message for the people and they refused to return. They still get aid from the Indian Government and are wealthier than the people here in Chachro. We are poor people, getting ground in between. Before the war there were 1500-2000 Hindu houses in Chachro and now only 10- 15 houses of original *reh wasi* (inhabitants) are left in Chachro. The total number of Hindu houses is now only 150, comprising different communities. By comparison, there are 700 to 800 Muslim houses.

Charan is a Rajput sub caste. Charans, other than having various occupations, are also bards. It is believed that they are born with the quality of being a poet, *Kavi*. Charan Rajputs trace their origins to Lord Shiva. They are considered to be divine or sacred by their fellow Rajputs, and to be divinely blessed with the gift of poetry. Charans are supposed to be the genealogy keepers of deities and of the Rajput rulers. These ‘Rajkavi,’ or kings among poets, are supposed to memorize and transmit the history of Rajput clans, states and Ranas (rulers). Charans were among those severely affected in Pakistan in the wake of the 1971 Indo-Pak war in the Rajasthan-Tharparkar sector, as the war resulted in a mass migration of Rajput castes, including Charans, from Pakistan to India. Charans claim to have possessed, prior to the war, twenty-four villages in Nagarparkar taluka alone and twenty-four in Chachro taluka. Now, in Chachro Taluka there are only four or five Charan houses left. A Charan kavi told me:

From Shiv ji, Ganesh ji was born. Raja Pritho, many yugs (ages) ago, served Shiv ji for years. Shiv ji asked him what he wanted in return and Pirtho asked for Shiv ji’s vachan (agreement), which was granted. Then he asked for a *devta* to protect his Rajputi [rule]. The Charans were then assigned by Shiv Ji to protect Rajputs, and Rajputs in return have been taking care of Charans. Rajputs were believed to be Rajas of the entire universe; they were caretakers of anyone living under their dominion. The Charan caste, according to them, is assigned the jobs of *kavita karan* [poetry], *dua* [blessing] and *bad duai* [affliction/curse]. According to their belief, one cannot afford to make a Charan angry. A Kavi Raaj, the poet, is believed to be a *devi puttari* [son of devi]. They believe in Hinglaj Mata as their mother, and that both Hindus and Muslims must respect a Charan.

The Charan poet continued, telling me, “We are the history keepers of all communities [genealogists], especially of Rajputs - you will find the history of Hindus and Muslims all from us.” He then told me a story about a Charan’s association with his land. The story is about a Charan who was taken to Kabul. In Kabul, the Charan prayed to the goddess to

make it possible for him to return home. He returned from Kabul and established himself in Chachro. In 1971, the progeny of that Charan left Chachro. Then, to tell me about those who left Chachro after the 1971 war, he rhythmically recited the names of people and their houses from his community in Chachro:– “Makan Jugto Charan, makan ... Charan, Makan...Charan” – he went on and on. Then he paused to tell me:

Our zamindari, our homes, everything is here [in Tharparkar]. We are now only around a hundred families left in Pakistan. After 1971 everyone left; our land and our jagirs, everything is gone. Before the war, we had twenty-four villages in Nagarparkar and twenty-four in Chachro. They were ours [inhabited by Rajput/Charan people]. In Chachro now only four or five houses are left. Mithria Charan Rawat was our own village, Charran Hor was another village - now “others” live there and only a few houses have remained which belong to us. Chachro remained under Indian occupation for 14 months or at most two years; then Bhutte [Bhutto] sahib sent emissaries from here to bring people back who had left after the Indian occupation. The upper-caste Hindus didn’t return, including Charans; mostly the Scheduled Classes returned. People didn’t return because they had problems living here, they were harassed by the rangers. Hindus had difficulty, then the war started and our *mait* [relatives] left. Now in Umerkot, Kaharoro Charan and new Chor we have some Charan families left. Mithria Charan is our village too. My *banni* [field] is here so I am maintaining it for my livelihood, but the majority has migrated from here. We still have some presence in Nagarparkar district. In Raathi Charan we have 30 to 40 families, in Gadro we have some presence too. There are quite a few families in Nagar taluka now. Mithi and Diplo have 15-20 houses left. Pir Ghulam Rasool Shah Jilani went to bring the Hindu people back on the orders of Bhutto, but Charans, Brahmans and Baniyas didn’t return. We were already in trouble here [in Tharparkar] because of the border drawn in the middle of our region. Then the war broke out. Tehseel Chachro and Tehseel Nagarparkar went under Indian control.

Remembering old Chachro, the narrator said that it had been a beautiful city and that the citizens of Chachro had been hospitable people. But after the Thakurs left, the city ceased to exist. Now Chachro has started to return to life as a city. Then the man recited a poem in Sindhi in which he praises Chachro as a woman with a silky body. The poet asks Chachro what happened to the old beautiful days. Chachro tells the poet that the people “she” was proud of had left and “she” was now a *shamshan* (cemetery). I asked again if

he has composed a piece on war or migration. Kavi Raaj Charan changed the topic again. He then told me in low voice, “I didn’t say anything in Chachro’s desertion. Had I uttered something, Chachro wouldn’t have flourished again.”

After the war, the tapedar (revenue officer) of Chachro, Muhammad Hassan Lala, was appointed once again to his position. When he returned to Chahchro, he offered homage to it in Sindhi poetry, inquiring,

O Chachra, why are you so deserted?
Where have the beautiful people that once resided here gone?
Where have the nightingales of your garden departed?
Chachra, thieves have left you without light, without an heir. Who exactly has brought this distress upon you?

...

Why are you dressed in mourning?
Why is your beautiful land so devastated?
Then Chachro responds to the poet, telling him its biography and how it mourns its present situation:
The wealthy people of Chachra have departed, leaving their riches behind,
Lalji left, so did our very dear Lachhman....
During the war, the wholehearted people left, giving me a taint in my heart...

Thus far, in this chapter I have discussed how the Evacuee Property and Enemy Property Acts were used to seize Hindu property after Partition in Pakistan. While large Hindu property holders all over the country were affected, I have focused my research of the wartime and post-war situation in Tharparkar. Here Rajput Hindus largely bore the brunt of the war, resulting in the loss of their land and ultimately their political demise.

As the hold of Hindus declined on their properties and many were forced to migrate to India it eventually led to the demise of their political stature in the new polity. This takes us to the next chapter of this dissertation, which aims at tracking down the political minoritization of Hindus in post-Partition Pakistan and attempts to trace the

trajectory whereby Hindus became entirely alienated from the political space in Pakistan.

I discuss the political process of minoritization of Hindus in post-Partition Pakistan in

chapter 4.

POLITICAL MINORITIZATION OF PAKISTANI HINDUS

Introduction

Towards the end of the nineteenth century and during the early decades of the twentieth, colonial rule introduced a parliamentary form of government in India. In the twentieth century, the colonial rule then focused on constitutional reforms. This emerging form of politics, which intended to include Indians of varied backgrounds in it, was based on modern ideas of western polity that inducted new political discourses in India. Ideas as to what constitutes a majority or a minority and ideas about belonging to a majority or a minority were an important aspect of the new polity formed in the style of the British parliamentary system. As a result, the notion of community in India underwent a transition. Indian social groups shifted from a vague [or caste-based] conception of community to an enumerated and fixed one,³⁴⁸ adjusting to electoral categories. Other than parliamentary politics, the Census, which was first carried through in 1872, generated numbers and statistics about India. This new social world also demanded from its inhabitants that they redefine their religious and linguistic identities, to become either a majority or a minority. The institutions and discourses generated in colonial India continue to define the daughter nation states of India, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

In this chapter I will examine the process of political minoritization of Hindu people in Pakistan, showing how they were converted from merely a numerical minority into fifth columnists. During its first seven years, the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan downgraded its Hindu members from the “political and communal other” to “enemies

³⁴⁸ Kaviraj, Sudipta. 2010. *The Imaginary Institution of India*. New York: Columbia University Press. P. 94-97.

and fifth columns” of the state; finally, it constitutionally excluded them from the affairs of the state. I will describe the continuation of British colonial institutions and discourses in Post-Colonial Pakistan, as these defined the Pakistani polity from 1947-1974 and continue to do so. I show that the extension of the colonial-period crisis of Muslim Identity and Muslim communalism, the discourse on majority and minority, the question of joint and separate electorates and most importantly the opposition between the Muslim League and Congress, became decisive in the political alienation and exclusion of Pakistani Hindus from the process of nation-building in Pakistan.

At present, the majority of Pakistani Hindus practice the politics of no-politics. A group of Khatri men told me, “We do not take part in politics in Pakistan. . . . We have also persuaded our younger generation to keep away from it.” An old Maheshwari person told me, “We have security and business here in Pakistan, so we don’t need politics. Life, honor and livelihood are the most important things in one’s life. If we step into politics, we will lose the rest of it”. Then he proceeded to share an old paper with me showing his family mission statement, some of which reads as below:

XXX Family Mission Statement

1. We don’t believe in any religion, caste, creed except humanity. Humanity is super most to all.
4. We believe that Defeat is better than Victory.
7. We will never like leading role in political, economic, social or any other field. We will prefer BACK BENCHES.³⁴⁹

³⁴⁹ **XXX Family Mission Statement (originally in English)**

1. We don’t believe in any religion, caste, creed except humanity. Humanity is super most to all.
2. We believe that every Right has Responsibility also.
3. We strongly believe that every Action has Reaction. As you sow, shall you reap.
4. We believe that Defeat is better than Victory.

How, when and why did Hindus in Pakistan decide to be an apolitical community? The present chapter attempts to answer this question.

In this chapter, I discuss the continuation of the colonial period crisis/confusion of Muslim identity which led to an extensive construction of an Islamic identity for the Pakistani state. I also discuss the continuation of the colonial legacy of majority-minority discourse and Muslim communalism in the formative years of Pakistan. I do so by focusing on the processes of Constitution-making in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. Some of these debates span many years; therefore I try only to present the main areas of contention here. This chapter also examines the Pakistani state's choice of Urdu as the state language in Pakistan, the clash of this choice with Bengali and the exclusion of the Hindu minority's language and literature from the project of nation-making. This chapter also discusses the discourse on the Hindu as a fifth columnist as it evolved in the post-colonial state. I describe the post-colonial state's suspicion of its Hindu citizens' loyalty, and thus, the construction of the Hindu as an enemy or fifth columnist.

Not only did the post-colonial daughter nation-state of Pakistan continue with the colonial era politics; it also muted discourses pertaining to some sections of the society, such as Hindu Scheduled Castes and Hindu Scheduled Tribes and Hindu women of all

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5. We believe in **HARDWORK**. Any income without physical activity is **IMMORAL**.
 6. We believe that **FORGIVE** is best **REVENGE**.
 7. We will never like leading role in political, economic, social or any other field. We will prefer [to be] **BACK BENCHES**.
 8. We believe that Time is best Judge.
 9. We believe that Tolerance and Patience is best way of living.
 10. We believe that all persons are equal. **RESPECT** and be **RESPECTED**.

castes. Part IV, the conclusion, focuses on the absence of discourse on Scheduled Castes and Tribes, and on their disappearance from any political discourse in Pakistan.

Pakistan's Colonial Legacy

Redefining South Asian Muslim Identity in Pakistan

By default, Pakistani nationalism inherited the crisis of South Asian Muslim identity, communal politics, fear of survival and an ex- minority on the eve of the Partition. Besides the search for a distinct Islamic identity, a key component of this political crisis was the All India Muslim League's leadership's fear of becoming a minority in united India and remaining under Hindu dominance. This merged with the idea of a pan-Islamic identity. Kavita Datla points out that, after World War I, with the exception of only a few individuals, the majority of Indian Muslims bought into the idea of a pan-Islamic community.³⁵⁰ Aamir Mufti argues that the crisis over Muslim identity in India, which first emerged in the decades following the rebellion of 1857, continues to be one of the central dramas of political and cultural life in the three successor states to British India.³⁵¹ He places the crisis of Muslim identity in the larger context of the problematic of secularization in post-Enlightenment liberal culture as a whole, and therefore sees the crisis as linked with the Jewish question in modern Europe.³⁵²

The predicament of Muslim identity and politics in India grew thicker after the colonial administration decided to introduce the parliamentary form of government and a

³⁵⁰ Datla, Kavita Saraswathi. 2013. *The Language of Secular Islam: Urdu Nationalism and Colonial India*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. P. 14.

³⁵¹ Mufti, A.R. 2007. *Enlightenment in the Colony: The Jewish Question and the Crisis of Post-Colonial Culture*. Princeton University Press. P. 1-2.

³⁵² Ibid, 132.

constitution. The fear of remaining a minority in a future Hindu-dominated India solidified this crisis. As the crisis of the Jews, who by 1933 had come to represent minority status on an international level, gained momentum in Europe with the demand for a sovereign country, the Muslim leadership in India became involved in the Palestine issue. The Jewish leadership in Europe was also aware of the minority issue developing in India and had sent literature to Jinnah on a Jewish scheme to solve the Palestine issue.

Dr. Siegmund Kaznelson, in a letter dated 24 May 1946, wrote to Jinnah:

I think the book might interest you not only as regards the Arab-Jewish problem and that of Palestine, but also as regards the very similar problems of India. "Partition" and the question of minorities, particularly in the case of partition, as well as the problems of nationalism, of national or religious separation etc. are extensively dealt with.... If one considers that the same issues, especially the question of dualism and of the many nationalities and religions in the old Austro-Hungarian monarchy were discussed...one wonders how all teachings of history are not taken into consideration when the same basic questions are arising once again.³⁵³

From 1930 onwards, the All India Muslim League gradually developed its two-nation theory. The partition of British India into India and Pakistan was announced on 3rd June 1947 by Louis Mountbatten. The Indian Independence Act announced India and Pakistan as independent dominions. On 14th August 1947, Pakistan was declared a separate country. The crisis of Muslim identity and the fear of Hindus did not cease with the establishment of Pakistan. Pakistani nationalism, as it developed in the years preceding the Partition, could not rid itself of communalism but also added an element of right wing Islamic politics to it. This is reflected in the treatment of Hindu politicians and citizens of

³⁵³ Quaid-e-Azam Papers Archives. File No. 1059. (A letter from Dr. Siegmund Kaznelson to Jinnah, sending him his book on Jewish minority to help understand the issue in India. Dated: May 24 1946). National Archives of Pakistan Holdings. Islamabad.

Pakistan. Although there had at one time been discussions and disagreements on whether to include Hindus in the mainstream politics or not, by the 1970's, politics in Pakistan became strongly established on theocracy. One of the distinct features of this polity, which combined Islamic theology with a parliamentary form of government, was that it denied a share in power or dominant political office to those who did not profess Islam as their religion. This was a new development in the history of India.

Colonial Parliamentary Politics

Another colonial legacy that the new South Asian state of Pakistan continued was to define “minority” on the basis of religion. This resulted in the minoritization of several groups. In colonial India, on the eve of independence, Datla points out,

unlike Britain or the settler colonies of the British Empire, where minorities (working class, non-white[s], women) were in some sense defined by their lack of access to democratic institutions, in colonial India on the eve of independence, the definition of minorities took more dramatic turns.... [T]he arrival of Indian independence was accompanied by a relatively rapid minoritization of certain linguistic, ethnic, caste and religious groups.³⁵⁴

The questions of community and minority were two important questions at the junction of Indian political history where the British were attempting to introduce parliamentary politics to Indians. Thus, prior to Partition, certain political moments defined the future of Indian politics. Three of these were the Census, the Simla deputation,³⁵⁵ and the proceedings of the Round Table Conferences in London (1930-1932), which finally led

³⁵⁴ Datla 2013, 168.

³⁵⁵ A Muslim deputation met Viceroy Minto in Simla in 1906, asking for more power and representation for Muslims; the demand of separate electorate was also first presented through this delegation.

to the British Prime Minister's announcement of the Communal Award of 1932. Three questions related to these moments, i.e. the number, the communal identity and the electorate, have contributed and continue to contribute to South Asian politics. In particular, they have played an important role in the minoritization of Pakistani Hindus.³⁵⁶

The image of a society comprised of castes and communities, of majority and minority, well in place by the late 19th century, underpinned all the debates around constitutional reform that would take place in the 20th century.³⁵⁷ An important moment in the evolution of Indian Muslims as a separate group of Indians was the Act of 1909, which involved Indians in the Viceroy's ruling council and instituted separate Muslim electorates³⁵⁸ in India. The Act led to the communal electorates in 1919 and finally resulted in the Communal Award of 1932, with allocations for Muslims, Hindus, and caste-based electorates, institutionalizing the politics of minority in India.³⁵⁹ The expansion of this democratic and parliamentary form of politics in India came with European and British baggage emanating from the humanistic revolution, ideas of

³⁵⁶ "Minorities Treated Unfairly in Polls." *Dawn.com*
<http://www.dawn.com/news/1048655/minorities-treated-unfairly-in-polls>. Accessed: 10/10/13.

³⁵⁷ Tejani, Shabnum. 2007. "Reflections on the Category of Secularism in India: Gandhi, Ambedkar and the Ethics of Communal Representation, c.1931." In *The Crisis of Secularism in India*, edited by Anuradha Dingwaney Needham and Rajeswari Sunder Rajan. Durham: Duke University Press. P. 47-48.

³⁵⁸ Accepting that Muslims could have their own body of voters which would elect its own representatives. Separate Electorate was given to communities on religious or community basis. It meant that under a separate electorate system, a Muslim would only vote for a Muslim representative. A Joint electorate on the contrary did not divide voters and both Hindu and Muslims could vote for either Hindu or a Muslim representative.

³⁵⁹ D'Souza, Radha. 2014. "Revolt and Reform in South Asia: Ghadar Movement to 9/11 and After." *Economic and Political Weekly*. Vol - XLIX No. 8, February 22, 2014. P. 68.

citizenship, the rise of secularism (and the expansion of the electorate in Britain). As in Britain, the idea of a voter and who could vote also gradually extended in India. The British voting system was founded on the “First Past the Post” (FPTP) system, which meant that victory went to the candidate scoring the most votes. This system was introduced in India and was institutionalized via a Constitution.

The role of statistics in shaping colonial India is now widely known. The British Empire was seeking to transfer democratic rights to the natives of India, and in the transition from colonial governance to democracy the politics of numbers was overwhelming. Institutions such as the census sought to classify and document the various communities, and placed the innumerable castes under the category of “Hindu.” This, as well the upper-caste-Hindu social reform movements of the 19th century, had recast India as the land of the Aryans, with Muslims and Christians as foreign intruders. This classification was essential to the identification of Hindus as a majority community.³⁶⁰

The politics of number and the Communal Award³⁶¹ played a decisive role in subsequent years in the politics of the provinces where the Census showed Muslims to be in the majority: Punjab, Bengal, and later Sindh. In the case of Bengal, Chakrabarty writes, the Communal Award shook the foundations of Hindu domination in the province. The Communal or Macdonald Award of 1932 was the initiation of institutionalized Indian politics on the grounds of religion. The British Prime Minister, Ramsay Macdonald, commented on the Award that the British government would have to

³⁶⁰ Tejani 2007, 47.

³⁶¹ The 1932 award by the British Prime Minister. It accepted separate electorate for Muslims in India.

settle the question of representation for the Indians, as they themselves could not reach a conclusion. He likewise said that there was a need to have checks and balances “to protect the minorities from an unrestricted and tyrannical use of the democratic principle expressing itself through majority power.” Separate representation, wrote Macdonald, on the official notification of the Award, “is primarily designed to secure adequate protection for the minorities; it is bound to continue in some form or other until minorities are disposed to trust to majority rule, and until a political accommodation between Moslems and Hindus is reached.”³⁶²

The 1941 Census particularly became a battleground for securing numbers. The All India Muslim League actively mobilized Muslims to get each and every household member, importantly women, registered with the census enumerators. Secondly, it wanted to lessen the disparity in their numbers with Hindus by arguing with the Census Commissioner to count as Hindu only the four castes mentioned in the Manu Smriti and by requesting that all others be enumerated separately.³⁶³

However, by 1909, the understanding of “community” in Indian politics had shifted from a qualitative one to a quantitative one, and majority was defined strictly in terms of numbers.³⁶⁴ After 1909, the minority question became practically synonymous with the Muslim question. The other recognized minorities of India -- the Jains, the Sikhs, and the Christians -- were, from the vantage point of the colonial government and

³⁶² Chakrabarty, Bidyut. 1989. “The Communal Award of 1932 and Its Implications in Bengal.” *Modern Asian Studies*. Vol. 23: 3. Accessed: 10/10/2013. pp. 493-495.

³⁶³ See: Census of India Correspondence. Muslim League Circulars. PT-III 1940-1941. Volume 458. Sindh Archives. Karachi.

³⁶⁴ Tejani 2007 , 50.

the newly emerging culture of representative politics, numerically and politically insignificant.

The early 20th century saw the formulation of a “corporate” Muslim identity in India. However, it is important to note that during this time the term “communal” did not solely mean a religious community, but also included “non-religious, corporate interests such as landlords, tea planters, jute farmers as well as commercial and educational bodies. All communities irrespective of their size were considered equally essentials of Indian society.”³⁶⁵ Tejani writes that “by 1909 ‘communal’ was taken to mean the political organizing of a ‘religious’ community to the furtherance of its own ends, and often in the most hostile and violent ways.”³⁶⁶ The separate electorate allowed a double vote to be given to the members of a communal body. For example, the zamindars of Sindh could vote both in the general electorate and for a representative only from their body. The purpose of the separate electorate was to even out the balance of power for the “backward” communities.³⁶⁷

The Electorate

A delegation of influential Muslims had met with the Viceroy, Minto, in 1906 to plead their case that in “further electoral reform Muslims should, on account of their status as a minority in India and their historical significance to Indian society, be considered an electoral category in their own right.”³⁶⁸ This, along with other factors,

³⁶⁵ Ibid, 49.

³⁶⁶ Ibid, 49.

³⁶⁷ Ibid, 50.

³⁶⁸ Ibid, 48.

paved the way for the Morley-Minto reforms of 1909. The Morley-Minto reforms institutionalized separate electorates for Muslims.

The politics of statistics became pivotal in the politics of the provinces where the Census showed Muslims to be in the majority: Punjab, Bengal, and later Sindh. Chakrabarty writes that “the Communal Award shook the foundations of Hindu domination in Bengal.” Separate representation, wrote Macdonald on the official notification of the Award, “is primarily designed to secure adequate protection for the minorities; it is bound to continue in some form or other until minorities are disposed to trust to majority rule, and until a political accommodation between Moslems and Hindus is reached.”³⁶⁹

In Sindh, the census report of 1872 showed the Muslim population as 78% with Hindus at 18%.³⁷⁰ Despite many political factions among Sindhi Muslim politicians, Sarah Ansari mentions that the Communal Award of 1932 resulted in only a slight majority of Muslims in the Sind Legislative Assembly (34 out of 60 seats). For Sindhi Muslims this meant that in the future many of them could agree on the need to protect Muslim interests in the face of the “solid bloc of Hindu members” that this award had produced.³⁷¹

Constitution-Making in Pakistan

Early Pakistani Politics in the Public Domain

With the establishment of a new Muslim majority country in Pakistan, many religious, semi-religious and political parties struggled to provide the newly founded

³⁶⁹ Chakrabarty 1989, 493 – 495.

³⁷⁰ Ansari 2005, 41.

³⁷¹ Ibid, 39-40.

polity with an ideology. The constitution was one significant ground for such tension, as many parties struggled to get their political thought implemented in the Constitution. The making of *dastoor-e-Pakistan*, the constitution of Pakistan, became a major political and ideological battleground.³⁷² The struggle was finally won by the supporters of an Islamic Aai'n (an Islamic Constitution)³⁷³ reinforced by an ideology³⁷⁴ for an 'Islamic State.' This Islamic state was to convert itself into an Islamic system (*Nizam-e-Islam*), governed by only Islamic institutions, in order to bring an Islamic moral order into existence in Pakistan. Islam was given as the sole solution for all the troubles faced by the nation.³⁷⁵ The Ulema from both wings of the country crafted a list of 22 points essential for the formation of an Islamic country and subsequently played an active role in amending the reports, resolutions and drafts of Pakistani constitutions.³⁷⁶

The foundation of an Islamic political theory was designed to have the state enforce Islam in every facet of life. The constitutional basis for this was provided in the Objective Resolution (1949) as a preamble to the constitution. In the 1962 constitution, a council of Islamic ideology was proposed to define 'Islam's ideology' for Pakistan.

Announcing the Constitution to the nation, President Ayub Khan stated:

³⁷² Youtube. Radio Pakistan. Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani's Addresses about 1970s Election on National Issues. Part 1.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PSjA5nsSyoE>. Accessed: 10/10/2013.

³⁷³ Maududi, Sayyid Abul A'la., *The Islamic Law and Constitution*. Translated and edited by Khurshid Ahmad. Islamic Publications Ltd. Lahore. Pakistan. 1950, 1980. P. 26.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 15-17.

³⁷⁵ Youtube. "Maulana Mufti Mehmood Historic Speech to the Nation lignum Radio"., <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHjgqtjdV3A>.

³⁷⁶ Maududi 1980. Appendix II. `Ulama's Amendments to the Basic Principles Committee's Report. P. 337.

We are an ideological state. And the basis of our nationality is the ideology of Islam. Whilst making material progress we naturally wish to do it under the umbrella of Islamic moral and spiritual values. To achieve this is the continuous progress and affects every aspect of life. We have therefore provided an organization called the advisory council of Islamic Ideology. This body will consist of experts from many fields and will be backed by eminent research scholars. Whilst making laws, the president and the legislatures have been enjoined to seek their advice for giving them Islamic bent.”

The 1962 constitution also made religious education compulsory in state educational institutions in Pakistan.³⁷⁷ The insistence on an Islamic constitution and society caused the mainstream political parties to Islamize the language of politics in Pakistan; some simply became Muslim communal parties. The religious right abhorred the ‘western political system’ while at the same time adapting to parliamentary politics. The first two constitutions of Pakistan³⁷⁸ (1956, 1962) did not provide political stability to the country. The third constitution was unanimously approved in 1973,³⁷⁹ after the secession of the eastern wing, now Bangladesh, in 1971.

³⁷⁷ Pak Brod Cor. Radio Pakistan. Ayub Khan announces the 1962 Constitution of Pakistan(1-3-1962).Part 2. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPXaWnLWkh4>

³⁷⁸ The interim constitution was Pakistan Provisional Constitution Order 1947.

³⁷⁹ One of the salient revisions to the 1973 constitution was the second amendment, which declared the Jamat-e-Ahmadiyya, a non-Muslim group. This Second Amendment was adopted on 7 September 1974. The Ahmadiyya had its roots in pre-Partition days; after the establishment of Pakistan, there were incidents of violence and rioting against Ahmadis, in 1953 and in 1974. Although in 1954 the Government of Pakistan dealt harshly with those who rioted against Ahmadis, it did not do so in 1974. Following the riots of 1974, the Prime Minister, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, took the issue of the Ahmadis to the National Assembly of Pakistan. The anti-Ahmadiyya proceedings of the National Assembly were kept confidential so that members of the National Assembly could opine freely regarding Ahmadis. The amendment to the constitution was reached with 130 Ayes and 0 Nays. Members of the Jamat-e-Ahmadiyya were declared non-Muslims and were forbidden to call themselves Muslims or to adopt Islamic religious symbols. Thus the Pakistani state, which excluded ‘non-Muslims’ with the approval of its first constitution (1956) and had embarked upon designing an Islamic ideology for its citizens with the

From early on, Pakistani politics and its representative body, the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan (*Majlis-e-Dastoor Saaz*), were consumed by ideas about an Islamic constitution, along with various interpretations of Islam and its superiority to other world religions. The Assembly's goal was to give Pakistan a distinct identity. In this process, the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan acted as a theological body, constantly interpreting religion and suggesting the Islamization of legislation.³⁸⁰ The Pakistani state also categorized all its citizens in a simple, dichotomous way, as either Muslims or non-Muslims.³⁸¹ This simply meant weighing the total of all different Islamic factions and groups against the remainder of the population. By doing this, the Pakistani state destroyed the possibility of carrying on the existence of a traditional, plural South Asian society.

This intense Islamic constitution-making process not only excluded Pakistani Hindus, but also forced them to exit the political process. Their opposition to an Islamic

second constitution (1962), finally began officially rejecting self-declared Muslim groups such as Jamat Ahmadiyya.)

³⁸⁰ There were out House politics of constitution as well.

³⁸¹ I have not come across any official definition of a Muslim and a non-Muslim by Pakistani state. Munir Report's deliberations show that there was no consensus among ulema on the definition of a Muslim and that of an Islamic State. Maududi's definition of Muslims and Non-Muslims is worth noting. He writes: An Islamic state is essentially an ideological state and is different from a nation state. This Islamic state classifies the people living within its jurisdiction in the light of their belief or disbelief in the ideology which constitutes the basis of the state. In other words, the people are divided into Muslims (who believe in the ideology of the state and non-Muslims (who do not believe in that ideology. An Islamic state should only be run by Muslims and non-Muslims shall never be entrusted with the responsibility of policy making and an Islamic state should distinguish between its Muslims and non-Muslims. See: Maududi 1980, 273-275.

constitution was determined to be caused by their being Indian agents and thus their political voice was constantly neglected.³⁸²

During the 1950's, new political parties were founded to counter the power that the Muslim League had so far enjoyed. There was a suggestion of splitting the Muslim League into two wings.³⁸³ It was argued that there was no need of the Muslim League in Pakistan, because the goal of Pakistan had been achieved.³⁸⁴ The question of whether to include "non-Muslims" (read Hindus) in mainstream Pakistani politics proved to be a major cause of division among Muslim political leaders from 1947 until 1970.³⁸⁵ In East Pakistan, Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy founded the Muslim Awami League. After the Muslim Awami League's victory in the 1954 elections, the East Pakistani Council of the party (AL) took the initiative, under the leadership of Maulana Bhashani, to drop the word 'Muslim' from the name of the party and to advocate a system of a joint electorate rather than separate electorates. Bhashani was committed to transforming the Awami League into a non-communal Institution.³⁸⁶ This decision made some Muslim members decide to quit the party. They thought that it was a divergence from the party manifesto of 1952. Fourteen prominent members of the party in West Pakistan announced the organization of the New Awami Muslim League to uphold the original creed of the party. They were particularly critical of the decision of the East Pakistan Council to admit "non-

³⁸² Ibid, 41.

³⁸³ "Suhrawardy Supports League Split." *The Pakistan Times*. 16 December 1947.

³⁸⁴ Youtube: Prime Minister Liaqat Ali Khan's Speech on 14th August 1948.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P1gLV06KX0>

³⁸⁵ "If acted upon 6 point formula, Pakistan will divide into 5 parts. Why are the parties allying with Hindus after promising an Islamic Constitution?" *Jassarat*, 10 July 1970.

³⁸⁶ Custers, Peter. 2010. "Maulana Bhashani and the Transition to Secular Politics in East Bengal." *Indian Economic Social History Review*. 47: 2. P. 243-244.

Muslim” members. They were of the view that the admission of non-Muslims in the party is tantamount to permitting “Bharati” and other anti-Pakistan influences to permeate the party. Besides the Congress Party of Pakistan, two other parties that adopted a secular approach to politics and were willing to admit non-Muslim members on equal terms were the Ganatantri Dal (in the East) and the Azad Pakistan Party in West Pakistan.³⁸⁷

The other major party to emerge after Partition was the Krishak Shramik party. It first entered into an alliance with the Nizam-i-Islam Party. By the end of 1953, the Awami League and the Krishak Shramik Party had formed an alliance, the United Front, to contest the elections. The preamble of the joint manifesto issued by the alliance demanded that no laws should be passed that were repugnant to the Quran and the Sunnah. It also demanded the annulment of the Safety Act (which allowed the Government of Pakistan to detain people and the release of “security prisoners” (i.e. political prisoners who were members of the Communist Party in East Bengal, an overwhelming majority of whom were Hindu).³⁸⁸ The alliance argued that the Safety Act was being used to harass and victimize Hindu citizens in Pakistan. On another note, the Communist Party was banned from East Pakistan in 1954.³⁸⁹

On 23 March 1956, Pakistan ceased to be a Dominion and was proclaimed the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The process leading to this event was a long one and the decision to adopt the idea of an Islamic state and its nomenclature had given rise to many heated debates in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. Outside the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, claims of making Pakistan one of the greatest Islamic nations in

³⁸⁷ Ibid, 73.

³⁸⁸ Callard 1957, 71-73.

³⁸⁹ Ibid, 73.

the world were being made, and the ruling Muslim League party was preparing to get an official narrative of the history of Pakistan written.³⁹⁰

By the 1970's there would emerge a few more political parties. Outstanding among them was Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party. Against the backdrop of these nationwide political parties, there had already emerged some strong regionalist movements, in East Pakistan as well as in West Pakistan. The Pakistani nationalism of the 1970's had to counter the emerging regional (ethnic) nationalisms and therefore had to find a strong binding factor that appealed to the masses. The binding factor that was selected was religion: Islam.

The Constituent Assembly of Pakistan

After the Indian Independence Bill had become an Act on July 18, 1947, the setting up of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan was announced. A committee to set up the Assembly met in the Sind Assembly on August 10 and elected Jogendra Nath Mandal as its chairman. The Constituent Assembly of Pakistan³⁹¹ held its first session on 11 August 1947. Members from East Bengal constituted the majority in the house.³⁹² The second Constituent Assembly of Pakistan was in business from 1955-1958. It had 40

³⁹⁰ "Rewriting History of Pakistan." *The Dawn*, Karachi, 14 Feb 1952.

³⁹¹ The purpose of the Constituent Assemblies of Pakistan was to design a constitution for the country. The first Constituent Assembly of Pakistan functioned from 1947 until 1954. Muslim League was a dominating party till 1954. The first Constituent Assembly contained 15 "non-Muslims" members, 13 from East Bengal and one each from Sind and the Punjab. Punjab's seat was occupied successively by a Christian and a Parsi. Not all non-Muslim members were part of the opposition party. J.N Mandal [A Scheduled Caste representative] was a cabinet minister. (See: Callard 1957, 79-82).

³⁹² First Constituent Assembly from 1947-1954 : <http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/former-members/1st%20Constituent%20Assembly.pdf>

members from East Bengal, forming the majority.³⁹³ Also, the first two constituent assemblies had a visible Hindu presence from East Pakistan. The third National Assembly of Pakistan (1962-1965)³⁹⁴ was an all-Muslim body. As well, for the first time, the provinces of West Pakistan were united into one unit, i.e. West Pakistan (as opposed to East Bengal), and the number of representatives was equalized at 78 each.³⁹⁵ It was the fifth National Assembly of Pakistan (1972-1977) that introduced members from minority constituencies.³⁹⁶

On 21 May 1947, Jinnah, responding to a Reuter's journalist regarding the nature of the central government of Pakistan, had stated:

The basis of the central administration of Pakistan and that of the units to be set up will be decided no doubt, by the Pakistan Constituent Assembly. But the Government of Pakistan can only be a popular representative and democratic form of Government. Its Parliament and Cabinet responsible to the Parliament will both be finally responsible to the electorate and the people in general without any distinction of caste, creed or sect, which will be the final deciding factor with regard to the policy and programme of the Government that may be adopted from time to time.³⁹⁷

While addressing the inaugural session of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, referring to the Hindu-Muslim issue and the issue of majority and minority, he had also stated:

³⁹³ Second Constituent Assembly from 1955-1958. <http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/former-members/2nd%20Constituent%20Assembly.pdf>

³⁹⁴ The first session of the National Assembly took place on 8th June 1962 at Ayub Hall in Rawalpindi. National Assembly of Pakistan. 3rd National Assembly. <http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/former-members/3rd%20National%20Assembly.pdf>

³⁹⁵ Ibid.

³⁹⁶ 5th National Assembly of Pakistan. <http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/former-members/5th%20National%20Assembly.pdf>

³⁹⁷ Jinnah Archive. Interview with Mr. Doon Campbell, Reuters' Correspondent, New Delhi, 21st May 1947. www.jinnaharchive.com/docs/doc/1947/01472105.html. Accessed: 3/4/14

[W]e 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.... You may belong to any religion or caste or creed – that has nothing to do with the business of the State.... [I]n England conditions some time ago were much worse than those prevailing in India to-day. The Roman Catholics and the Protestants persecuted each other. Even now there are some States in existence where there are discriminations made and bars imposed against a particular class. Thank God we are not starting in those days.... We are starting with this fundamental principle that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one State.... [Y]ou will find in course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense...but in the political sense as citizens of the State.... My guiding principle will be justice and complete impartiality....³⁹⁸

The first in-House opposition to the ruling Muslim League was given by the Pakistan National Congress. The choice, however, was not theirs. The Pakistan National Congress had severed its ties with the Indian body and was forced into the position of being the spokesman for a minority. Many of its leaders, including the first Pakistani leader of the opposition, Krishan Shankar Roy, migrated to India.³⁹⁹

During its first seven years, the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan downgraded its Hindu members from the “political and communal other” to “enemies” of the state, and finally it constitutionally excluded them from the affairs of the state. This was contrary to Jinnah’s assurances about the equal citizenship and rights of minorities if they remained loyal to the state.⁴⁰⁰

Yet there were politicians who had concerns about the direction the politics in Pakistan would lead to. Prior to the Partition, the All India Muslim League had remained an all-

³⁹⁸ The Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates . Official Report. *President’s Address*. 11 August 1947. Manager of Publications, Government of Pakistan. Karachi. P.20.

³⁹⁹ See: Callard, Keith B. *Pakistan: A Political Study.*, P. 54.

⁴⁰⁰ “There is only one answer: The minorities must be protected and safeguarded. The minorities in Pakistan will be the citizens of Pakistan and enjoy all the rights, privileges and obligations of citizenship without any distinction of caste creed or sect.”
www.jinnaharchive.com/docs/doc/1947/01472105.html.

Muslim body. Whereas the aforementioned statements of Jinnah indicate that he might have an all-inclusive concept of a modern polity in his mind, some doubted the intentions of the Muslim League. In December 1947, Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy (East Bengal) showed hope that the Muslim League would open its doors for “non-Muslims” and that it would not form a government by shutting out a section of the masses by its very makeup. He said, “If they do that it would be fascism and not democracy.” But he also speculated that the ruling Muslim League, in order to maintain its power, would mislead the masses by appealing to Muslim solidarity.⁴⁰¹ In the following years, the League did exactly that.

More than seven years later, the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan had not produced a constitution. During all of these years, Pakistan existed without a constitution and functioned on the remnants of the Government of India Act. Until 1955, all cabinets in Pakistan were drawn from members of the Muslim League, the founding party of Pakistan. The provincial and central government politics of the early years cannot be distinguished from each other, as many leading political figures participated in and influenced government on both the provincial and the central level. Keith Callard writes that in fact a small, well-defined group of men monopolized political offices throughout the country. Sindh had separated from Bombay only ten years before Partition and was still struggling with political instability, as were the other provinces of Pakistan. The Constituent Assembly of Pakistan was dismissed twice before the first constitution was approved in February 1956 and brought into operation in March 1956. On 23 March

⁴⁰¹ “Suhrawardy Supports League Split”. *The Pakistan Times*, Lahore. 16 December 1947.

1956, Pakistan ceased to be a dominion and was declared the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.⁴⁰²

In the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, the voice of the opposition members who belonged to various Hindu communities was totally ignored from the outset. In the following paragraphs I will briefly cite the proceedings of some debates which took place during 1947-1957 to show how Hindu members were treated during the legislative procedure, particularly in the fashioning of the constitution. This treatment generally falls into four categories: discussions in which *a.* Hindu members were denigrated, *b.* Hindu members' opinions/voices were ignored, *c.* Hindu members were hushed, and *d.* Hindu members decided to go along with the majority. In the following, I will focus on just a few of the most important debates or controversies: the adoption of the national flag, the Objective Resolution, the Constitution and nomenclature, and the Electorate debate.

Choosing the Nation's Emblem

For the inaugural ceremony on 14 August 1947, Pakistan adopted its national flag with the emblem of a crescent and a star on 11th of August of the same year. Officially, a Pakistani flag is "A dark green rectangular flag in the proportion of length to width 3:2 with a white vertical bar at the mast, the green portion bearing a white crescent in the centre and a five pointed white heraldic star." According to the official description, the

⁴⁰² Callard 1957, 25.

dark green and white represent peace and prosperity, the crescent, progress and the five-rayed star, light and knowledge.⁴⁰³

The use of celestial icons, crescent and star, as an empire's emblem is associated with the Sasanian Emperor Khosrow Parvīz, Khosrow II (d.628). This particular Sasanian style was later adopted by Yazid I, Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiyah (d.683), the second Umayyad caliph (680–683).⁴⁰⁴ The crescent was later adopted by the founder of Ottoman Empire, Osman I or Osman Gazi (d. 1324) for use on his flag. The Safavid Empire used green for its flags, as did the Mughals in India. However, green was not invariably associated with Muslims in all eras, elsewhere or in India.

(Hindu) Indian nationalists consistently used the color green and the crescent on their flags to represent Muslims in India from 1906 onwards. These flags were designed to defy the Star of India, which was included in the Union Jack to show India as a colony of the British Royal Crown. Indian nationalists used religious iconography, often Hindu, to represent the Indian nation. Initially, Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1856-1920) used Ganesh as a figurehead, but Muslims were unhappy with this. Some nationalists also used Kali as well as Gau Mata to represent India.⁴⁰⁵ Later the nationalists began representing what they called two numerically prominent nations of India, i.e. Muslims and Hindus, on their flags. The Calcutta flag of 1906 had a lotus (representing Hindus) and a crescent

⁴⁰³ Government of Pakistan. President Secretariat. Flying of Pakistan Flag & Honour and Respect to be shown to it. File No: 138/CF/64. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

⁴⁰⁴ See: Mochiri, Malek Iradj. 1982. "A Sasanian-Style Coin of Yazīd B. Mu'āwiyah." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*. No. 1. P. 137-148. Also see: _____. "A Pahlavi Forerunner of the Umayyad Reformed Coinage." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*. No. 2. P. 168-172.

⁴⁰⁵ Virmani, Arundhati. 1999. "National Symbols under Colonial Domination: The Nationalization of the Indian Flags." *Past & Present*. No: 64. P. 174 & 178.

(representing Muslims) on it, and the Sanskrit words *Vande Mātaram*⁴⁰⁶ were inscribed on it.⁴⁰⁷ The flag of 1907 also represented Muslims with a crescent on it.⁴⁰⁸

Gandhi presented his idea for a flag in 1921, adding a spinning wheel (Charkha) on the tricolor flag. In his version of the flag, white stood for other religious minorities in India, green for Muslims and red for Hindus. One can easily see the adjustment of religious communities according to their number and the merger of numerically smaller communities in the white. Gandhi explained his scheme in the following way:

On maturer [sic] consideration, I saw that the background should represent the other religions also. Hindu-Muslim unity is not an exclusive term; it is an inclusive term symbolic of the unity of all faiths domiciled in India. If Hindus and Muslims can tolerate each other, they are together bound to tolerate all other faiths. The unity is not a menace to the other faiths represented in India or to the world. So I suggest that the background should be white and green and red. The white portion is intended to represent all other faiths. The weakest numerically should occupy the first place, the Islamic colour comes next, the Hindu colour red comes last, the idea being that the strongest should act as a shield to the weakest. The white colour moreover represents purity and peace. Our national flag must mean that or nothing. And to represent the equality of the least of us with the best, an equal part is assigned to all the three colours in the design.⁴⁰⁹

While persuading Sikhs not to press too hard for the inclusion of their colour (i.e. black) in the flag, Gandhi wrote the following:

The Sikh friends are needlessly agitated over the colours in the proposed national flag. ... I have not the shadow of a doubt that they should withdraw the objection. The white includes all other colours. To ask for special prominence is tantamount to a refusal to merge in the two numerically great communities. I would have had only one colour if there had been no quarrel between Hindus and Mussulmans. The Sikhs never had any difference with the Hindus. And their quarrel with the

⁴⁰⁶ "I bow to thee, Mother"

⁴⁰⁷ Roy, Srirupa. 2006. "'A Symbol of Freedom': The Indian Flag and the Transformations of Nationalism, 1906-2002." *The Journal of Asian Studies*. 65: 3. P 500.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid, 503.

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid, 503.

Mussulmans was of the same type as the Hindus. It is a dangerous thing to emphasize our differences or distinctions.⁴¹⁰

One of the consistent characteristics of such flags was that Hindus and Muslims of India were represented prominently with their emblems. The Indian National Congress adopted its tricolor flag in 1931. It was acknowledged by prominent Muslim leaders such as Abul Kalam Azad, and Muhammad Ali, who was active in the Khilafat movement (1919-1924) and wore a cap with a crescent and star on it. The Muslim League rejected Congress's flag in its 1937 Lucknow Session and announced its "*sabz hilali parcham*" (Green Crescentic Flag) which it had adopted in 1906 at the time of establishment in Dacca,⁴¹¹ under which Muslims of India would be united.⁴¹²

The Pakistani leadership, after 40 years of heralding the green flag for representing Indian Muslims, decided to adopt it as the national flag of Pakistan. This decision was announced on 11 August 1947. In the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, after Jinnah's presidential address on 11 August 1947, the members of the Congress party pledged their allegiance and loyalty to Pakistan. Previously a majority, they had now assumed the position of a minority in the new state.⁴¹³ What followed this was the first

⁴¹⁰ Ibid, 504.

⁴¹¹ Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No. 138/CF/64. President's Secretariat. Flying of Pakistan Flag & Honour and Respect to be Shown to it. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

⁴¹² Virmani 1999, 174 & 178 & 189.

⁴¹³ The Sind Minorities Association had already been founded and its vice president, Seth T.Motandas, had written a letter to Jinnah on 16 August 1947 inviting him to a dinner with the Minorities Association. He wrote and invited on behalf of all minority communities of Sind: Hindus, Christians, Parsis Jews and Sikhs etc. The letter said that the motto of association was Conciliation, Cordiality and Co-operation. See: Governor General Files. Government of Pakistan. File No. F.22-G.G/47. Invitation from the Sind

communal spat on the floor. Liaquat Ali Khan moved a resolution for the acceptance of the national flag of the Federation of Pakistan in the assembly. He unfolded a flag in front of the house and declared it as the future national flag of the federation of Pakistan.

Liaquat Ali Khan specifically mentioned that this flag did not represent any community or political party.⁴¹⁴ The resolution moved by Liaquat Ali Khan, as well as the flag he waved in front of the house, created a huge stir and angered many. These included not merely members of the Congress party, but also other members who were equally struck by surprise at this unexpected exhibition of the national flag. The Muslim League and Congress benches took part in a heated debate on the design and meaning of the flag.⁴¹⁵

The minorities' representatives asked for an equal opportunity to design Pakistan's national flag. The Congress members agitated for a secular flag and argued that the flag "proposed" by Liaquat Ali Khan was a spiritual and communal flag – in other words, it was the Muslim League's flag. Bhem Sen Sachar (West Punjab) argued in the house that the decision about the national flag was an important matter. He suggested the formation of a committee of the minorities who might be given an opportunity to design the flag. His proposed amendment was: That this Assembly resolves that a committee consisting of seven members, namely; Sjt. Kiran Sankar Roy, Sjt. Dharendra Nath Datta...for the purpose of determining the design of the National Flag of the Federation of Pakistan."⁴¹⁶ He further argued that Pakistan was not the result of a

Minorities Association Karachi to Quaid-i-Azam to a dinner party. National Archives of Pakistan Holdings. Islamabad.

⁴¹⁴ Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates. 11 August 1947. *Official Report. Resolution re: National Flag of the Federation of Pakistan*. Karachi. P. 22.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid, 21.

⁴¹⁶ Ibid, 25.

conquest. It was a result of mutual understanding, and minorities were not asking any favor by requesting the opportunity to design the flag.⁴¹⁷ Dhirendra Nath Datta pointed out that the flag presented by Liaquat Ali Khan was nearly identical with the Party flag of the Muslim League. “It is to a great extent identical, if not the most part of it to the Muslim League.” At this point someone asked “what about the Congress flag?” upon which Khan said that the Congress flag did not represent a community but “it represented the virtues of the nation.” He requested an opportunity to design the flag. “I have come from the district of Tipperah in Eastern Bengal. My Hindu constituents have told us that we should make certain suggestions with regard to the design of the flag. They are ready to accept the flag... they will salute it.”⁴¹⁸ Liaquat Ali Khan insisted that this was not the Muslim League’s flag, neither was it a religious flag, as no such flag was used in the early days of Islam. The following conversation then took place in the Assembly:

The Honourable Liaquat Ali Khan: Then, he said that it is the religious flag. If he would look up the history, he would find that during the time of our Holy Prophet there was no such flag. Therefore, I do not know how he says that it is a religious flag. As a matter of fact, moon and stars are as common to my Honourable friend and they are as much his property as mine.

Mr. Kiran Sankar Roy: Would you have the sun also, which is also a common property?

The Honourable Liaquat Ali Khan:... we have tried to give quite a prominent place to white in this flag which I have presented... white is made up of seven colors and thank God we have not got even seven different minorities in Pakistan. Therefore, there is room for not only all the minorities that are today, but for any other minorities that might spring up hereafter.

Bhim Sen Sachar: I hope you will not create them!

The Honourable Liaquat Ali Khan: ... he hopes I will not create minorities. It is only a minority that can create a minority. I happen to be a majority in Pakistan and therefore it will not be my desire to create any more minorities.⁴¹⁹

⁴¹⁷ Ibid.

⁴¹⁸ Ibid, 27.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid, 28.

Eventually the minorities lost the debate, because Pakistan needed a flag to wave on the 14th of August celebrations; therefore the minorities were turned down in their request of designing a flag.

Defining Pakistani Polity – The Objective Resolution

The next big blow to the Hindu representatives in the House came on 7 March 1949, when a resolution to make the Objective Resolution⁴²⁰ an introduction to the Constitution of Pakistan was introduced in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. The Objective Resolution was drafted by Shabbir Ahmed Usmani, a cleric and founder of

⁴²⁰ The Objective Resolution read as follows: "In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful; Whereas sovereignty over the entire universe belongs to God Almighty alone and the authority which He has delegated to the State of Pakistan through its people for being exercised within the limit prescribed by Him is a sacred trust; This Constituent Assembly representing the people of Pakistan resolves to frame a constitution for the sovereign independent State of Pakistan: Wherein the State shall exercise its powers and authority through the chosen representatives of the people; Wherein the principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and social justice, as enunciated by Islam, shall be fully observed; Wherein the Muslims shall be enabled to order their lives in the individual and collective spheres in accord with the teachings and requirements of Islam as set out in the Holy Quran and the Sunna; Wherein adequate provision shall be made for the minorities freely to profess and practice their religions and develop their cultures; Whereby the territories now included in or in accession with Pakistan and such other territories as may hereafter be included in or accede to Pakistan shall form a Federation wherein the units will be autonomous with such boundaries and limitations on their powers and authority as may be prescribed; Wherein shall be guaranteed fundamental rights including equality of status, of opportunity and before law, social, economic and political justice, and freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship and association, subject to law and public morality; Wherein adequate provision shall be made to safeguard the legitimate interests of minorities and backward and depressed classes; Wherein the independence of the judiciary shall be fully secured; Wherein the integrity of the territories of the Federation, its independence and all its rights including its sovereign rights on land, sea and air shall be safeguarded; So that the people of Pakistan may prosper and attain their rightful and honoured place amongst the nations of the World and make their full contribution towards international peace and progress and happiness of humanity." See: Anonymous]. 2009. "The Objective Resolution." *Islamic Studies*. 48:1.

Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam. Liaquat Ali Khan moved this resolution, which contained special principles upon which the constitution of Pakistan would be founded. Liaquat Ali Khan, making a speech after presenting the Objective Resolution, reasoned that this proposed preamble to the Constitution was a frank and unequivocal recognition of the fact that all authority must be subservient to God. It was to negate and contradict the Machiavellian ideas of a polity where spiritual and ethical values had no role to play in the governance of the people.⁴²¹ While referring to Europe's persecution of minorities and the tolerance of Islamic empires, he argued that no non-Muslim should object to the Objective Resolution. He also claimed that this Resolution did not aim at establishing theocracy in Pakistan. The Objective Resolution aimed at re-shaping the lives of the Muslims of Pakistan according to Islamic rules. A part of Liaquat Ali Khan's speech was about minorities' rights.⁴²² Like the national flag, this Resolution was also presented by the Muslim League's leader and was adopted in a hurry despite an outcry from minority members.

Bhupendra Kumar Datta protested that politics and religion should be kept separate. He said:

Politics, as I have said, Sir, belongs to the domain of reason. But as you intermingle it with religion, as this Preamble to this nobly conceived Resolution does, you pass into the other sphere of faith. The same is done in the paragraph on "Sovereignty" on page 13 of the 1st volume of *Select Constitutions of the World*, circulated by the Constituent Assembly Office. Thereby, on the one hand, you run the risk of subjecting religion to criticism which will rightly be resented as

⁴²¹ [Anonymous]. 2009. "The Objective Resolution." *Islamic Studies*. 48:1. P. 91.

⁴²² "The State will seek to create an Islamic society free from dissensions, but this does not mean that it would curb the freedom of any section of the Muslims in the matter of their beliefs." [Anonymous]. 2009. "The Objective Resolution." *Islamic Studies*. 48:1. P. 95.

sacrilegious; on the other hand, so far as the State and State policies are concerned, you cripple reason, curb criticism.⁴²³

He further pointed out the fact of diversity of Islamic jurisprudence and disagreement among Muslims on who was a true Muslim. While resisting the need to have any ‘Objective Resolution’ at all, Barma Prem Hari also opposed approving the Objective Resolution in haste. He suggested that the resolution be debated for a long time because the constitution would be an important document in the future. Further, not only should members of the legislature have a voice, but also the people of Pakistan should be able to give their opinion regarding this document. He argued that various religions and customs lived in Pakistan, and that therefore the legislators should not act in a hurry. He insisted that the constitution committee should keep in mind the sect they belonged to, as leaving out some Islamic schools of thought would render them a minority too.

Another member, Sri Chandra Chatopadhyaya, also emphasized the need of debating the Objective Resolution. He objected that the Objective Resolution had been presented 18 months after the establishment of Pakistan, and this, according to him and his party, was too late. Chatopadhyaya said that the minorities had thought that no such thing would be presented because what was needed at that time was only the Constitution of Pakistan and not an Objective Resolution. He stated that it had been 18 months since Partition and they assumed that no such resolution was needed. He also said that they were expecting the Constitution of Pakistan to be based on equality, democracy and social justice as announced by Quaid-e-Azam. He said that they thought that politics and

⁴²³ Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates. 7 March 1949. Re: Objective Resolution. Karachi. P. 100.

religion would not be mixed up. He insisted that this was what Jinnah had announced in assembly but the Objective Resolution was totally different than his announcement. He further pleaded the need to delay the approval of the Objective Resolution and more discussion of it. He said, We haven't yet understood the meaning and the complexities of this resolution and we need to study this in detail and discuss this with Muslim, non-Muslim and other people. What do the opening sentences of the Objective Resolution mean?.⁴²⁴

While referring to the Objective Resolution, he stated that “we, non-Muslims” had not really understood it and that they needed to understand it after a careful study and consult other members in East Pakistan regarding this. He further commented that at this time the members of the Constituent Assembly from East Pakistan had departed, and that they had no idea that such a resolution would be presented. He suggested that any decision on the Objective Resolution should be delayed until the next meeting and that there should be an observation that a focus on only the spiritual development of Pakistan was not enough.⁴²⁵

At this point, Liaquat Ali Khan termed Chatopadhyaya the “president of [the] opposition party.” Chatopadhyaya answered the premier by saying that his party was not the worry here; rather, he was concerned about everyone. Liaquat Ali Khan clarified that by “party” he had meant the “non-Muslim” members of the assembly because if anyone could oppose this resolution, it would be simply the non-Muslim members, and all the non-Muslim members were present in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. Liaquat Ali

⁴²⁴ Mabahis Majlis-e-Dastoor Saaz Pakistan. 7 March 1949. Official Report (In Urdu). *Tehreek Qarardad-e-Maqasid Dastoor Pakistan*. Karachi. P. 14- 17.

⁴²⁵ Ibid. P. 16.

Khan stated that the resolution had been circulated in advance and that the non-Muslim members had had six days to think about it. He continued, “You are not [so] dumb that you have not understood the meaning of this, if you still want to think more, we can postpone the session till tomorrow morning.” Liaquat Ali Khan did not agree with the view that no such resolution was needed in Pakistan. He argued that it was required so that members could know what type of constitution they wanted to work on. The Resolution was adopted in a hurry by the majority Muslim members of the Assembly.⁴²⁶

After the passage of the Objective Resolution on 7 March 1949, on the same day a committee was formed to articulate the Basic Principles for the future constitution of Pakistan in accordance with the Resolution. The Basic Principles Committee’s (BPC’s) report⁴²⁷ was adopted by the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan in 1953⁴²⁸ and thereafter it was contested on various grounds by East Bengali and specifically by Hindu members of the Constitutional Assembly. In 1950 the Ulema had presented their 22 points⁴²⁹ to establish Shariah in Pakistan. These 22 points were fairly adjusted to the BPC report as easily as in the Constitution of Pakistan. One of the major points of the BPC report was

⁴²⁶ Mabahis Majlis-e-Dastoor Saaz Pakistan. 8 March 1949. Official Report (In Urdu). *Tehreek Qarardad-e-Maqasid Dastoor Pakistan*. Karachi. P. 14-18.

⁴²⁷ This report laid the foundations of a state which was obligated to construct an Islamic society.

⁴²⁸ _____. 1953. *Report of the Basic Principles Committee (As adopted by the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan From Paragraphs 1 To 130.)* Karachi.

⁴²⁹ 1. Ultimate Sovereignty over all nature and all law vests in Allah... 2. The Law of the land shall be based on the Quran and the Sunnah ... and no law shall be enacted...in contravention of the Quran and Sunnah. 3. The state shall be based not on geographical, racial, linguistic or any other materialistic concepts, but on the principles and ideas of Islamic Ideology.... 12. The head of the state shall always be a male Muslim. Maudoodi. 1980. P. 332-335.

that only a male Muslim could be the head of Pakistan.⁴³⁰ This was a clear reduction in the political condition not only of women but also of male members of non-Islamic communities in Pakistan. This was the moment in the history of Pakistan when a clear move was made towards declaring the country an Islamic Republic. The protests of the Hindu members were turned down by asserting that the Muslim League had asked people to join them in their struggle against the British and the Hindus so they could have their own state in order to live in accordance with the Quran and the Sunnah. And if they did not hold their promise now, it would be a betrayal to the country and to the people.⁴³¹

Naming Pakistan

As stated earlier, six years after Partition, Pakistan did not have a constitution. Therefore the nature of the polity it aspired to remained unclear for at least 6 years. It was the task of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan to design a polity for the country. Throughout the period of drafting the first Constitution, which was finally approved in February 1956, the ruling Muslim League resisted firmly the demands of Hindu members for a secular, all-inclusive Constitution for the country. When the Muslim members decided to denominate the country the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, it was another step towards excluding the religious other from the polity. The following example shows the desperation about the nomenclature decision on the part of Hindu members who had believed in an equal status for minorities and a secular state of Pakistan. On 2 November 1953, the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan witnessed an unusual day. The “leader of

⁴³⁰ Maudoodi. 1980. *Amendments to Basic Principles Committee Report*. P. 332.

⁴³¹ Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates. 4 November 1953. *Report of the Basic Principles Committee*. P. 671-678. Also see: on 12 November 1953. P. 732-734 and on 2 November 1953. P. 659-667.

Congress Party”, Sri Chattopadhyaya, asked permission to present a special statement. He was asked to delay it until the next day, but he refused. He stated:

I have no tomorrow. I shall have to make the statement today because it is an urgent matter.⁴³² ... Sir, it is with a heavy sense of responsibility, but at the same time with a deep regret, that I want to make a statement explaining the steps we propose to make.... We, the Hindus, form about 14 per cent of the population. We are the citizens of the State of Pakistan and always anxious to make Pakistan a prosperous, democratic modern State. We, in our humble way have been working in the Assembly and its Committees to make a suitable constitution, but the recent trend and proceedings in this House, have been a disappointment to all of us.⁴³³

In giving the reasons why he and other minority members felt left out of the process of Constitution making, Sri Chattopadhyaya made the following points:

1. During the Constitution making discussions, repeated references were made to the two-nation theory.
2. The name of the state was proposed to be Islamic Republic of Pakistan, instead of Pakistan.
3. It was decided that the head of the state would be a Muslim, which trampled the principle of equal rights of all citizens.
4. Minorities had thus far taken a stand for a joint electorate, but all the Muslim members had fought it.
5. The method of arriving at decisions in the House was undemocratic and prejudicial to the interests of the minority.

⁴³² The Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates. 2 November 1953. *Statement by the Leader of the Congress Party*. P. 657. Karachi.

⁴³³ *Ibid.* P. 658.

6. The frequent references to and emphasis on an Islamic Constitution had left the presence of Hindu members in the Assembly useless.

After making these points he declared as the representative of Hindu community in Pakistan, "...we feel that any further participation by us, the representatives of the Hindu minority, in the constitution-making, will be of no efficacy. So the members of my party have resolved not to take part in the discussion of the Report of the Basic Principles Committee in the present context of things.... we are leaving this house. With your permission we walk out."⁴³⁴ Following this short speech, the Hindu members present in the House walked out of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan and boycotted its proceedings.

On the floor of the house, Nur Ahmed (East Bengal), M.H Gazder (Sind) and A.K. Brohi (Sind) made speeches to defend the support of Muslims in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan for an Islamic Pakistan and an Islamic Constitution. They referred to the rhetoric of Partition, saying that Pakistan was achieved in order to be an Islamic country. They quoted Jinnah's speeches and maintained that it had always been made clear that Pakistan was going to be an Islamic state. They termed the protest and objections of the opposition as "too much asking by our friends" [the Hindu members]. Once again, they accused the Congress members of being influenced by foreign quarters, i.e. India.⁴³⁵

⁴³⁴ Ibid. P. 658-659.

⁴³⁵ Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates. 2 November 1953. *Report of the Basic Principles Committee*. Karachi. P. 660-664.

Professor Rajkumar Chakraverty pointed out that the “Constitution based upon the BPC Report was against the Cabinet Mission Plan” of 3 June 1947. According to this plan, he stated:

India was divided into two countries and under which the leading political parties of that time, the Congress and the Muslim League, contemplated and gave their solemn word that the minorities and all other people in each country would enjoy the full and equal rights of the citizenship.⁴³⁶

He further told the Assembly that the Constitution Pakistan was going to adopt was a breach of the Delhi Agreement (1950) between Nehru and Liaquat Ali Khan.

Chakraverty stated that the Constitution went against Jinnah’s speech on 11 August 1947 and was also in violation of the United Nations’ charter of human rights. He said that any Constitution based on two-nation theory would always render Hindus and Muslims two different nations. He protested that by declaring itself an Islamic Republic of Pakistan, it had forgotten that there were one crore of non-Muslims residing in it. It had forgotten that this land equally belonged to the Muslims and the non-Muslims. Also by accepting that no law repugnant to the Quran and Sunnah in the Constitution, it ignored the holy books of other religions and so on.⁴³⁷

Shri Chandra Chattopadhyaya pointed out that in an Islamic state, according to Islamic principles,

We cannot be citizens. We cannot be even zimmi.... It means we are stateless; we are pariahs; we are outlaws. Therefore I cannot accept this Constitution which is framed upon these principles, which means committing hara-kiri so far as the Hindus are concerned....⁴³⁸

⁴³⁶ Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates. 21 September 1954. *Report of the Basic Principles Committee*. Karachi. P. 505.

⁴³⁷ Ibid, 505-506.

⁴³⁸ Ibid, 528-529.

He further pointed out, referring to Maududi, that an Islamic State by default meant that a neighboring non-Muslim country becomes Dar-al-Harb.⁴³⁹ He also pointed out the differences of opinion among Muslim scholars about the nature of the Islamic state. However, he said, his and other members' concern was the status of non-Muslims and especially Hindus in the proposed constitution of Pakistan. Then he referred to the problem of the definition of a Muslim, since by then Maudoodi (the founder of Jamat-e-Islami) was in jail for agitating against the Ahmadis (the followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani). Chattopadhyaya pointed out that as soon as it had been announced that Pakistan would be an Islamic country, a requirement had been made to declare Ahmadis non-Muslims and there had been attacks against them.⁴⁴⁰

On 21 February 1956, Bhupendra Kumar Dutta made another effort to put forward the Congress's point of view. He commented on the process and procedure of Pakistan's constitution-making in the following words:

We are making the constitution for the country, from the very beginning we decided not to be in a bargaining mood, we decided to reduce our demands to the irreducible minimum, the no [sic] fulfillment of which will make our very existence impossible. If you call it Islamic you assign the near about a crore of non-Muslims in the State a subordinate position – either they remain here as *zimmi*s or clear out.

The above discussion shows that Hindu representatives in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan kept protesting as much as they could to survive constitutionally. Despite their

⁴³⁹ A concept in Islamic political and legal thought. Lit. Arabic: House/abode of War. According to Islamic Jurisprudence, a country or countries where Islamic Law is not the law of the land. See: Dar al-Islam in Encyclopedia Britannica (online). <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/1545037/Dar-al-Islam>. Accessed: 10/18/2014.

⁴⁴⁰ Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates. 21 September 1954. *Report of the Basic Principles Committee*. Karachi. P. 529-535.

reservations about the Objective Resolution, the Basic Principles Committee Report, the nomenclature of the country as well as the procedure of Constitution-making, the Muslim members of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan went ahead with their decisions about the future Constitution of the country and determined the future of Hindus in Pakistan. The final example from the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan that I will discuss here is the electorate debate and exclusion of religious minorities from the mainstream politics of Pakistan.

Separate Electorate vs. Joint Electorate

At the eve of Partition, Pakistani parliamentary politics inherited a system which had by then enshrined statistics and which allowed the fate of communities to be determined based on their numbers. Other than the concepts of minority and majority, the Pakistani parliamentary system was born with the ideas of Joint and Separate Electorates. The combination of Joint and Separate Electorates⁴⁴¹ was aimed at allowing minority communities to protect their communal interests.

In the shift from colonial governance to democracy in India, the politics of number was overwhelming. According to Shabnum Tejani, the greatest irony of this episode was that, in the 1930's, while Untouchables sought to be recognized as a minority, they were appropriated into a majority; and Muslims, who had struggled for recognition as a majority, were forced to be a minority. However, the category of minority and what it might mean politically were uncertain.⁴⁴²

⁴⁴¹ In a separate electorate, a community, usually a minority, selects its separate representatives via separate elections.

⁴⁴² Datla 2013, 169.

Earlier, in 1931-1932, prominent Indian political leaders had been invited to London for a series of Round Table conferences to draw up the constitution of India. It was during these conferences that Gandhi went on his well-known fast unto death, protesting against Ambedkar's attempt to have Untouchables recognized as a minority community in the same way that Muslims and Sikhs strove to be.⁴⁴³ Muslims were awarded a separate electorate in 1909. This system of electorate had continued since that time in India. This system, however, also increased polarization and alienation among Hindu and Muslim communities, as legislators from one community did not require votes from the other community. This disconnected communities with smaller numbers from mainstream politics but also kept the majority communities from interacting with minority communities. Therefore, besides the concepts of minority and majority, the Pakistani parliamentary system was born with the ideas of joint and separate Electorate.

From their first days, members of the Pakistani polity did not want to give what they termed "non-Muslims" an equal standing in politics. This excluded all non-Islamic religious communities from national politics and reduced the traditionally religious and communally plural South Asian society into only two categories, Muslims and non-Muslims, in post-colonial Pakistan.

In the context of the debate on the Constitution of Pakistan, the debate over separate and joint electorates achieved particular momentum in Pakistani politics. In both East and West Pakistan, the Hindu community was in favor of a joint electorate so that they would remain integrated in society and could claim their rights as equal citizens of Pakistan. The majority, however, wanted to continue with the separate electorate for the

⁴⁴³ Tejani 2007, 46.

minorities. The majority further aimed at securing Pakistan for Muslims, as they viewed it as a fraternity of Islam and looked forward to establishing strong relationships with Arab and other Islamic countries.

The exclusion of Hindus from electoral representation began in 1952 on a city level, with the City of Karachi Municipal Bill. Karachi was then the capital of Pakistan. Partition had changed the statistics of the city since the anti-Hindu riots of 1948. The bill was presented in the aftermath of the mass expulsion of Hindus from Karachi. The City of Karachi Municipal Bill was presented for discussion in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on 25 April 1952. The goal of the bill was to recalibrate the share of each community residing in Karachi for representation in the Karachi Municipal Committee. The proceedings of the bill reveal how, through separate electorates, a minority community totally lost any representation in one of the major cities of Hindu presence in Sindh.

The bill, as presented, did not allocate any seats for Hindus of Karachi. Seth Sukhdev, representing Sindh's minorities, rose to give a long background of Karachi's history. He lamented in his speech that Seth Naumal's⁴⁴⁴ Karachi had now vanished after Partition. He stated that after partition Sindhis invited the outsiders, the refugees, who found the city clean and healthy, which was due to the work of the Sindhis. He then presented a long history of the establishment of Karachi and the efforts of Hindu communities to maintain it. He wanted the government to adjust the representation via a joint electorate. His stance was that at least for the city municipal committee there should be no Christians, Jews, Parsis, Hindus or Mussalmans.... "Why are we dividing the city

⁴⁴⁴ Seth Naomal Hotchand Bhojwani, the developer of Karachi .

in religious compartments?” he asked. He observed that the bill proposed 91 Muslim seats, two Christian seats, and one for Parsis, but there was no mention of the Hindu community, as if the Hindu community did not exist in Karachi. He protested against the bill’s failure to allocate any seats at all to Hindus in the Karachi Municipal Committee. He kept asking why Hindus were not even mentioned in the bill, saying that even though there were as many Hindus in Karachi as Christians, the bill mentioned all the other communities and not Hindus. “Have you got such hatred for Hindus which you have been showing for last four days that you do not want to mention their name even? It is pitiable, Mr. President, it is a sad commentary on the Muslim League Politics,” he said. He called the Muslim League a fanatic group and proposed:

Mr. President Sir, I would therefore, submit the Honourable Minister – I Know, the Honourable Minister is above communal; above religious feelings, but he has to work with such fanatical group that he cannot help it – that he should amend: “Hindus and communities other than Muslims, Christians and Parsis.”⁴⁴⁵

It was not only local upper-caste Hindus who lost representation in the Karachi Municipal Committee, but also the Scheduled-Caste Hindus. Birat Chandra Mandal of East Bengal brought this to the Assembly’s attention on the same day by raising questions on behalf of the Scheduled Castes and laborers regarding the municipal bill. He pointed out that in the bill there was no mention of the interests of Scheduled Castes or laborers. Besides expressing surprise that no seats for laborers had been included in the bill, he pointed out that there were more than 15,000 members of Scheduled Castes residing in Karachi. “My friend [the mover of the bill],” he sighed, “has forgotten to put

⁴⁴⁵ Constituent Assembly (Legislature) of Pakistan Debates. 25 April 1952. *The City of Karachi Municipal (Amendment) Bill*. Karachi. P. 1712.

their names, they have not been given any representation, and I request my friend that you give two seats to Labor and two seats to scheduled castes, I request my friend to do the needful for the poor laborers and poor scheduled castes who reside in Karachi.”⁴⁴⁶

At this point, D. A. Malik, the mover of the Bill, defended his scheme of representation of communities of Karachi in the municipal committee by referring to the pre-Partition scheme according to which seats in the Karachi municipal government were distributed by community, i.e. among Hindus, Sikhs, Mohammedans and Jews. He kept supporting his bill, stating that it would not induce the government to move away from the community-wide franchise. Addressing the concerns of the Hindu community, he said that the only complaint regarding the bill was that in the old schedule, there was mention of Hindus but not in the new one. While citing the findings of the latest census he argued that Hindus as well as Caste Hindus formed a really small proportion; their adult population, which was allowed to vote, was 4013. For Scheduled Castes the number was 10,960 (in Karachi). The proportion for one seat to any group of the population was 1 : 35,000, and Hindus fell short of this number in Karachi. The total of Caste Hindus and Scheduled Castes was only 14,000-odd, or at most 15,000.⁴⁴⁷

This motion too was adopted by the House, eliminating any representation of Hindu communities in the capital of Pakistan and Sindh. This was not merely a demographic shift in the Hindu population in Karachi, but a psychological one too.

By the early 1950's the representatives of various religious minorities in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan had developed a greater understanding that their

⁴⁴⁶ Ibid, 1715.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid, 1717.

communities were not being given any political space or accommodated by the majority (i.e., Muslims) in the process of Constitution-making and that they were thus not being treated as equal citizens. The sentiments of Hindu politicians grew so strong that on 20 April 1954, Bhupendra Kumar Datta expressed as follows the sense of discrimination in his community in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan after an advertisement was published regarding East Pakistani Hindus⁴⁴⁸:

One word about us the minorities. The same spirit of 'we shall rule you as we will' has been more palpable in that region [East Pakistan]. We have been persistently demanding joint electorates. But no, that gives you equal citizenship, you Jimmies [*zimmis*] and slaves, you cannot have it. In our Pakistan you shall remain as drawers of water and hewers of wood.... [P]lainly we are extra-territorials, we are not Pakistani citizens, and we are a stateless people. And over whose signature does this advertisement appear? It is Honourable Mr. Muhammad Ali, Mr. Nurul Amin.... If that continues to be order of the day, we as Congressmen do not wish it but someday in our exasperation, we may begin to wish that a similar advertisement would appear about Indian Muslims not over the signature of so many V.I.P.s. but only of one person and that is Sri Jawahar Lal Nehru.⁴⁴⁹

The issue of the electorate also caused division between members of the Hindu and Christian communities in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. Whereas the Hindu community struggled for a joint electorate, the Christian community struggled for a separate electorate. The Christian community asked for a separate electorate on the grounds of being a minority in Pakistan, making a similar demand to the one that the minority communities had made in India before Partition. On 22 April 1957, Hussain S. Suhrawardy, the premier of Pakistan at the time, who was in favor of a joint electorate,

⁴⁴⁸ It was referred to as the futile advertisement of the hurricane lantern. I could not trace this advertisement.

⁴⁴⁹ Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates. 20 March 1954. *The Central Budget – General Discussion-concl'd.* Karachi. P. 261.

maintained, while discussing the Electorate Bill, that the Separate Electorate for minority communities in West Pakistan would bring no benefits; therefore, he held, they should attempt to attain the joint electorate. Suhrawardy was in favor of a Joint Electorate for minorities. He said that separate electorates were promoted by the Muslim League in Dacca and criticized the mentality of people who acted as if any of these political concepts would make the country un-Islamic. At this point, he ventured to explain Islam to the audience, argued in favor of Joint Electorates while mentioning the plight of the Ahmadi community and Justice Munir's report.⁴⁵⁰ He also maintained that adopting a joint electorate would save Pakistan from the problem of defining Qadianis⁴⁵¹ and prevent putting them under any category.⁴⁵² On 22 April 1957, C.E. Gibbon defended his stance in favor of Separate Electorates on behalf of the Christian community. He accused that the Pakistani PM of eliminating the minorities in West Pakistan.⁴⁵³

Jamat-e-Islami was in favor of Separate Electorates.⁴⁵⁴ In January 1958, the leader of Jamat-e-Islami, Abul 'Ala Maududi, published a white paper on the issue of electorates. The paper accused Hindus and Communists of deploying Hindu ideas (secularism and territorial nationalism) against the Muslims of Pakistan under the pretext of a demand for a Joint Electorate. The white paper made the accusation that even after Partition, Hindus had refused to submit themselves to the basic approach of Pakistan's

⁴⁵⁰ The 1954 Justice Munir Commission Report On The Anti Ahmadi Riots Of Punjab In 1953.

⁴⁵¹ Ahmadis

⁴⁵² Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates. 22 April 1957. *The Electorate (Amendment) Bill*. P.841-847.

⁴⁵³ Ibid, 847- 875.

⁴⁵⁴ Jamiat Ulema al-Islam opposed Separate electorate for Hindus as the thought it would create strong Hindu blocks in provincial and national assemblies.

Muslims. It termed the battle for a Joint Electorate a Hindu scheme. The white paper viewed Bengali Muslims as being used by Hindus for power. It alleged that the Muslim parties of East Pakistan had bartered away the ideology of Pakistan for the votes of the Hindus. It declared that ‘the imposition of the joint electorate is the most dangerous conspiracy that has been perpetrated upon the masses of Pakistan.... [T]he joint electorate is not only a negation of the two-nation theory, it will also weaken the Islamic consciousness of the Millat.’⁴⁵⁵ The Jamat viewed the introduction of the Joint Electorate as fanning the flames of Bengali nationalism, which would finally lead to the secession and secularization of East Bengal.⁴⁵⁶

In conclusion, the debates on the above mentioned themes reflect the fact that the newly founded state started functioning with a residual sense of Islamic communalism. It continued the communal politics of the British era while simultaneously searching for an Islamic identity. This resulted in the decline of public space for other religious communities in Pakistan. The fact that the post-colonial state could not rid itself of communal politics and the politics of number was reflected again and again in the speeches of members of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. They asserted repeatedly that Pakistan had been created by Muslims as an Islamic state. The Constituent Assembly of Pakistan approved vital resolutions in the absence of Hindu members or while they were staging a boycott. By the time the new polity, Pakistan, adopted its first Constitution, it was set to alienate the religious minorities – Hindus, Christians, Sikhs and others – indiscriminately. The vision of an Islamic state that Pakistani politicians adopted

⁴⁵⁵ Maududi 1980, 396.

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid, 394-397.

was theorized by the politically influential clergy, which included 31 Shia and Sunni clerics representing the various Islamic schools of thought in Pakistan. These ‘Ulema convened in Karachi from 21st to 24th January and finalized the fundamental principles of the Islamic state, which were then conveyed to the government.

Thus far I have tried to show that the electoral and parliamentary form of politics introduced by the colonial government were transferred to post-colonial Pakistan along with its problems and rigidities. When the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan inaugurated on 11 August 1947, it had inherited the colonial definition of what constituted a “minority”. “Minority”, from the outset, meant a person belonging to a faith other than Islam. Thus, religious belief was already an agreed-upon marker of distinction between majority and minority. One of the institutions that generated this discourse in the new state (as well as the constitutions) and furthered it was the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. Besides these issues relating explicitly to the Muslim and Hindu community’s religious identity, another momentous controversy in the political history of Pakistan was the national language. Religious identity was intimately involved in this controversy as well. This controversy revealed the fracture lines of Muslim nationalism in India soon after Pakistan was founded. The next part of this chapter will study how the discussion of two languages, Bangla and Urdu, which started in colonial India came to collide soon after the creation of Pakistan, and how once again Hindus were blamed for splitting up the political feeling in the country.

Adopting Language: Urdu OR Bangla, but which Bangla?

During the colonial period, Urdu and Hindi became strong carriers of politics and identity for Muslims and Hindus in North India. According to political scientist Paul Brass, language movements and politics advanced alongside politicized religious movements in colonial India.⁴⁵⁷ Pierre Bourdieu (a French sociologist, anthropologist, and philosopher) stressed the class formation of official language(s) which, used as cultural capital on the part of the elites, work in reinforcing class hierarchies and distinctions in a society.⁴⁵⁸ After Partition, the Pakistani state decided to announce Urdu as its state language. Announcing Urdu as the state language alienated Bengalis, who were the majority of Pakistan's population. By pronouncing Urdu the state language the complexity of Muslim identity in South Asia also unfolded. It also initiated the waning of Muslim League in the East Bengal. For some East Bengali politicians this was a failure on the part of the new state to recognize their identity and it finally parted the ways of supporters of Urdu from supporters of Bengali politicians in East Bengal who wanted the new state to recognize Bangla. Modern nations use the "performativity of language" to construct their narratives.⁴⁵⁹ The origin of the theory of performativity is credited to J. L. Austin, who put forward his theory in his *How to Do Things with Words* (1975). In this book he introduced the "performative" as a new category of utterance that has no truth value since it does not describe the world, but acts upon it -- it is a way of doing things with words. Some statements or declarations are merely performative in nature and the

⁴⁵⁷ Sarangi, Asha, editor. 2010. *Language and Politics in India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. P. 184-185.

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid, 4.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid, 4-5.

success of such pronounced acts is based on those utterances, because it is by the utterance of the words that the act itself is performed.⁴⁶⁰ The rejection of Bangla as the national language was not acceptable to Bengali Muslims who were a nation within a new nation.

Jinnah, during his visit of East Pakistan in March 1948, while addressing the Convocation of Dhaka University, announced:

Let me restate my views on the question of a state language for Pakistan. For official use in this province, the people of the province can choose any language they wish.... There can, however, be one lingua franca, that is, the language for inter-communication between the various provinces of the state, and that language should be Urdu and cannot be any other.... [The] state language, therefore, must obviously be Urdu, a language that has been nurtured by a hundred million Mussalmans of this subcontinent, a language understood throughout the length and breadth of Pakistan and... more than any other provincial language, *embodies the best that is in Islamic culture and Muslim tradition and is nearest to the languages used in other Islamic countries.*⁴⁶¹

After the mid-1940s, Urdu became the marker of being Muslim in India. This happened under the leadership of the Muslim League, who had actively advocated for Urdu as the mother tongue of Muslims. After Partition it was promoted as the national language of Pakistan.⁴⁶² Urdu was therefore a choice as state language as the representative language of the Islamic tradition that connected it with the rest of Muslim world (script too). What was ignored by this edict was the evolved Islamic identity of the Bengali language and Bengali Muslims, which had developed in Bengal since the late 19th century. The edict

⁴⁶⁰ Hall, Kira. 2000. Performativity. *Journal of Linguistic Anthropology* 9(1-2). *American Anthropological Association*. P.186.

⁴⁶¹ Youtube: Quaid-e-Azam's Speech at the Dhaka University Convocation.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G20Wzck-SLw>.

⁴⁶² Datla 2013, 18.

also ignored the fact that Urdu was never an exclusively Muslim language⁴⁶³ or the language of the regions that formed Pakistan.

The bulk of Muslims in Bengal were peasants, and literacy was confined to upper-caste Hindus. In Bengal, from the period of Rammohan Roy (1774-1833) to the period of Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), high literary culture had become a firmly Hindu domain. Trends in modern Bengali literature were triggered by western rationalist epistemology, political liberalism and new notions of culture.⁴⁶⁴ This high culture, which occupied itself with creating a modern Bengali Hindu identity, gradually alienated Bengali Muslims.⁴⁶⁵ This was the time when Hinduism was reinventing itself and moving towards adopting a new definition of itself against the backdrop of missionary and Orientalist presence in India.⁴⁶⁶ Modern Bangla literature made a conscious attempt to exclude Islamic and Persian elements, trying to come up with a modern Hindu Bangla identity, in the context of the Western colonial presence and knowledge. Writing the history of Bangla literature was part of the project of literary modernity. This project was dominated by a Hindu elite class, as the initial historical accounts tended to leave out Islamic elements. One can say that this period was marred by the inclusion and exclusion of different social groups in a given literary culture, and further by the break-up of relations between the Islamic (Perso-Arabic) and the Sanskritic in Indian literary traditions in general.⁴⁶⁷

⁴⁶³ Datla 2013, 7-8.

⁴⁶⁴ Kaviraj 2003, 531.

⁴⁶⁵ Ibid, 541.

⁴⁶⁶ Thapar, Romila. 1989. "Imagined Religious Communities? Ancient History and the Modern Search for a Hindu Identity." *Modern Asian Studies*. 23: 2. P. 209-231.

⁴⁶⁷ See: Kaviraj 2003, 504.

In late-nineteenth-century Bengal, efforts to construct a Mussalmani Bangla in order to create an independent Muslim identity were already underway.⁴⁶⁸ Such efforts were marked by the segregation between Bengali Hindu literature and Bengali Muslim literature. Modern Islamic reform movements such as the Fara'izi and the Tariqah-i Muhammadiyah preached the exclusion of Bengali deities from Bengali Islam.⁴⁶⁹ The attempts to construct a distinct language for the Muslims of Bengal began in the late nineteenth century. A Bengali preacher seeking Islamic revival and reform, Maniruzzaman Islamabadi, formed the Islam Mission Samiti in 1904. The Samiti initially planned, along with other goals, to translate Islamic literature into easy Bangla for Muslims. In 1911 the Bangiya Mussalman Sahitya Samiti was formed in Calcutta. The aim of this organization was to bring about a reawakening among Muslims of Bengal by producing Muslim or national literature to develop the Muslim community and bring them on a par with the Hindu community. The Bangiya Mussalman Sahitya Samiti aimed at consolidating Muslims' Islamic identity by translating Arabic, Urdu and Persian literature into Bangla, by publishing biographies of *pirs* and *awliya*, by composing a national history of Bengali Muslims, and by encouraging Bengali Muslims to write on Islamic history. Eventually Akram Khan, a strong supporter of Mussalmani Bangla, joined the Samiti. Addressing the Samiti's third annual conference, Akram Khan endorsed Urdu for Muslim nationalism:

Bengali has to be enriched with Arabic and Persian words. . . . In the current style of written Bengali, the idolatry of the Hindus is so apparent. . . . we need

⁴⁶⁸ Chakrabarty, Bidyut. 2004. *The Partition of Bengal and Assam, 1932-1947. Contour of Freedom*. New York: Routledge Curzon. P. 43.

⁴⁶⁹ Eaton, Richard M. 1993. *The Rise of Islam and the Bengal Frontier, 1204-1760*. 1993. Berkeley: University of California Press. P. 228.

publication of our religious texts and our national history in Bengali. Muslim nationalism is completely religious [and] to its great peril the Muslims can forget that their national language is Arabic. . . . Urdu is neither our mother tongue nor our national tongue. However, for the protection and nourishment of Muslim nationalism we need Urdu.⁴⁷⁰

Despite his assertion that Urdu was not a mother tongue or national language, Akram Khan endorsed Urdu as a binding factor for the political cause of Muslims. In 1924, S. Wajed Ali, a Bengali Muslim writer and a nationalist (1890-1950), came up with a new form of Bangla alphabet influenced by the Urdu alphabet.⁴⁷¹ Islamization of Bangla was deemed necessary because “Bengali of the Muslims was weak than that of the Hindus” and because “the Bengali language had not been adequately Islamized and the Bengali Muslims were yet to become *pucca* Muslims.”⁴⁷² Bengali Muslims who thought they lacked a pure Islamic language and therefore attempted to purify Bangla of its Hindu elements, made an agreement with Urdu as a representative language of Muslims. This cooperation however, didn’t continue after the common goal, Pakistan had been achieved. Bengali Muslims wanted the recognition of their nation as a Muslim nation within a new Islamic nation - state and this was not accepted by the supporters of the Urdu camp of politicians.

The responsibility of the demand for Bengali as a state language was credited to East Bengali Hindus. In March 1954, Bhapesch Chandra Nandy, replying to the Muslim League’s accusation that there was a Hindu brain behind its defeat in elections in East Bengal, stated:

⁴⁷⁰ Chakrabarty 2004, 44-45.

⁴⁷¹ Ibid, 45.

⁴⁷² Ibid, 46.

Similar arguments we heard when in East Bengal strong agitation arose for making Bengali as one of the state languages. Government's policy was at that time to put the whole blame on the Hindus. It was from the Chief Minister of east Bengal down to ordinary Police officer, who tried to prove that it was the Hindu who was putting this demand for Bengali Muslims. It was in last November, papers like *Dawn* wrote editorials to show that it was the Bengal Congressites and some interested people who were pressing for making Bengali as one of the State languages; it was not the demand of the Muslim mass. But it has been now proved beyond doubt, when the leaders of the United Front party, like Mr. Fazlul Haq, have made it the first point of their demand that Bengali must be made one of the state languages ...it has been proved that demand for making Bengali one of the state languages is not from the Bengali Congressites and a few interested Muslims, but is practically the demand of the entire people of East Bengal.⁴⁷³

In Sindh, the British recognized Sindhi as an official vernacular in 1851, and its use as an official language led to the gradual standardization of Sindhi.⁴⁷⁴ In the 19th century, Muslim and Hindu communities used multiple scripts for Sindhi. Muslims used Arabic characters while the Hindus used "Baniyan." Not only this, but also the various religious and caste groups preferred distinctive styles of scripts. The names Baniyan, Waniko and Wanki are derived from nouns referring to Sindhi trading castes. The script used by the Lohana caste was known as Lohanki.⁴⁷⁵ During my fieldwork, a Maheshwari

⁴⁷³ Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates. 18 March 1954. *The Central Budget – General Discussion*. Karachi. P. 162.

⁴⁷⁴ Asani, Ali. 2003. "At the Crossroads of Indic and Iranian Civilizations: Sindhi Literary Culture." In *Literary Cultures in History: Reconstruction from South Asia*, edited by Sheldon Pollock. Berkeley: University of California Press. P. 614.

⁴⁷⁵ *Ibid*, 622 & 623.

trader told me that the Wanki script was a distorted form of Devanagari. According to Ali Asani, a professor of Indo-Muslim and Islamic Religion and Cultures, this pluralism with respect to the scripts in Sindh, which had allowed different caste and religious groups to write Sindhi in their own particular style, came to an end after the British decided to conduct their administration in Sindh in the Sindhi language. This required them to select a standard way of writing Sindhi. They had to choose between the Perso-Arabic and Devanagari scripts. In 1842, the Arabic script was selected, after some Muslim groups as well as Hindu scholars immersed in Persian literary tradition campaigned for it.⁴⁷⁶

The demand of recognition of Bengali was seen to be put forward by the enemies and the fifth columnists of the state. Before Partition, the Muslim League tried to unite the Muslim vote in India by giving Muslims a sense of being one nation and by asserting that there was one language that was the language of Indian Muslims. Therefore, after Partition, this remained a strong part of their political imagining of the new nation of Pakistan. This strategy can be seen in the Muslim League's correspondence with the Census Commissioner of India for the 1941 census. Apart from emphasizing the need of recognizing Urdu as a different language than Hindustani, and of counting only caste Hindus (and not Untouchables) as Hindus in the return, it strongly advocated among Muslims through pamphlets that they turn in their information as follows:⁴⁷⁷

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid, 625.

⁴⁷⁷ See: Census of India Correspondence: Muslim League Circulars, Part III. 1940-1941. P. 458. Sindh Archives. Karachi.

Qom, Tribe, Caste	Religion	Mother Tongue
Mussulman	Islam	Urdu

Aamir Mufti, in his book *Enlightenment in the Colony: The Jewish Question and the Crisis of Post-Colonial Culture*, opines that the notion of two languages, one Hindu and the other Muslim, owes its origin to British attempts to comprehend the structure of the populations coming under their jurisdiction in India. The British conceived Muslims as a whole in India as an alien presence, a perception reinforced by the self-perceptions of the Ashraf, who traced their genealogies to the central Islamic lands.⁴⁷⁸ After the creation of Pakistan, the Ashraf who had migrated to Pakistan thinking that Pakistan was made for Urdu and for the Ashraf classes formed in Urdu, found themselves defending its status as the only national language against Bengali. Mufti points out that Bengali was the first language of the majority of Pakistanis, a language written in a single script of Sanskrit origin. Mufti states that, after Maulvi Abdul Haq, a champion for Urdu as a national language of Pakistan (known as the “Father of Urdu”, from Uttarpradesh), moved to Pakistan, he produced polemics against champions of Bangla and against the Bangla language. In 1951, Abul Hasan Nadvi (a religious scholar and a pan-Islamist, from Raibreli) made a remark in support of Urdu that reveals the bitterness of the discourse produced by the growing realization of the risk of a new homelessness of Urdu in its new country. He said that “the majority of Bengalis cannot be delivered from enslavement to Hindu culture, Hindu mythology, and Hindu literature, until such time as they free their

⁴⁷⁸ Mufti 2007, 144.

language from Sanskritic Bangla and Sanskritic script.”⁴⁷⁹ This focused the attention of the Pakistani state on Bengali Hindus as having stirred up the language controversy as a way of posing a threat to the country.

The Government of Pakistan held an education conference in December 1948 to draw up measures to increase the literacy rate among Pakistanis. As a result, an Education Bill was presented in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. In order to increase the literacy rate among the Muslims of East Bengal, it was suggested that the Nastaleeq script be introduced for Bangla. The Bengali Hindu members of the Constituent Assembly saw this plan as one that which would endanger their language.

On 27th March 1951, while discussing the Education Bill, a Bengali Hindu member of the Assembly, a lawyer and an educationist, Shri Dharendra Nath Datta, raised an objection to the suggestion of introducing the Nastaleeq/ Arabic script for Bangla in East Pakistan in order to fight the illiteracy of Bengali Muslims. He said that East Bengali Hindu parliamentarians saw this proposal as an attack on the Bengali language. Maulvi Ibraheem Khan, a Bengali Muslim member from East Bengal, while replying to D.N. Dutta’s objection to adopting the Nastaleeq script for Bangla, said that D.N. Dutta had accused his colleagues of Islamizing the Bengali language. This might give the impression to the outside world, he said, especially to India, that in East Bengal a veritable crusade was being waged against the precious language of the people. At this point a lengthy debate regarding the development of Bangla language erupted between D.N. Dutta and Maulvi Ibraheem Khan which was later joined by other Bengali Hindu members. Both sides had claims over Bangla. Maulvi Ibraheem Khan claimed that

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid 152.

Muslims had developed Bengali language and literature. He accused Bengali Hindus of sanskritizing the Bangla language. He said: “Under British (rule) you guys imported heavy Sanskrit into it [Bangla] and made it a difficult language. We are going to make it the language of the people; it is good for both Hindus and Muslims.” But the protest of the Hindu members against adopting the Nastaleeq script for Bangla continued. Bhapesch Chandra Nandy argued against the new suggestion, arguing that Bengal had one language – i.e. Bangla — and altering it by introducing words from a foreign language might ruin it.⁴⁸⁰

The West Pakistanis interpreted this language quarrel between the East Bengali Hindu and Muslim representatives as a provincial matter. However, another parliamentarian, Muhammad Habibullah Bahar, added that if the Center wanted to adopt Arabic script for Bengali, that would be a welcome development, because Arabic was the language of the Quran. He informed the house that the scheme of reducing four hundred Bangla letters to only forty was acceptable to the East Bengal government. The Arabic script was being employed to eradicate the illiteracy of the Bengali population, two-thirds of which was Muslim. Since there was an educational emergency in the country, it was thought that two-thirds of the population need not waste their time learning a new script, as it was assumed that they were already familiar with the Arabic script. The discussion here was interrupted by Professor Raj Kumar Chakravarty, an intellectual and Bengali Hindu member of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. After listening to protest from the East Bengali Hindu members against the change in Bangla script, Fazlur Rahman, the

⁴⁸⁰ Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates. 27 March 1951. *The Central Budget-List of Demands*. Karachi. P. 460-480.

Minister for Education and Commerce, commented that the “cat is out of the bag.... In the case of Arabic [script is adopted], Hindus would have been handicapped but the Muslims, because they know one script already, would not have had difficulty in adapting themselves to it.”⁴⁸¹

In May 1954, the Government of Pakistan recognized Bangla also as a state language. The first Constitution of Pakistan, approved by the Constituent Assembly in February 1956, gave official recognition to Bangla. This did not stop the language-based communal politics. After the defeat of the Muslim League in the provincial elections of 1954, Bengali Hindus were more suspect than ever before.

An October 1956 document which I found in a personal collection at the National Archives, Islamabad, entitled “The Bengal Triangle: Eight-point Electoral Formula for East Pakistan – ‘Nationalities’ in Modern Composite States”⁴⁸² was addressed to the then premier of Pakistan, Hussain Shaheed Suhrawardy. The document, a Muhajir formula, was intended to resolve the political standstill between East Pakistan and West Pakistan. It suggested that East Pakistan had a triangle of political sites, namely the Bangla Muslims, the Urdu Muslims and the Bangla Hindus. The first side of the triangle was Bangla Muslims, who, having Bangla culture as their base, were the product of the Anglo-Hindu educational policy of Calcutta University, the biggest center of Brahmanism in Bengal, and represented the secularist and leftist side of the intelligentsia.

⁴⁸¹ Ibid, 479.

⁴⁸² Maulana Zafar Ahmed Ansari Collection. PC/ZAA 21, 22. The Bengal Triangle: Eight-point Electoral Formula for East Pakistan – ‘Nationalities’ in Modern Composite States by Raghbir Hussain. President Anjuman Muhajreen Mashriqi Pakistan, Vice President East Pakistan Jamiat I Ulema I Islam. 45, Main Shahed Maidan Dacca. National Archives of Pakistan Holdings. Islamabad.

The second side of the triangle was Urdu-speaking immigrants, the Urdu Muslims. This faction, having Arabic Persian-Urdu culture as its base, was the product of the Islamic educational policy of the makhtabs and madrassas of Bengal, which had fervently fortified the freedom and integrity of Islam during and after the Anglo-Hindu raj of Calcutta University. According to the writer of the document, this class of Muslims included Jamiat-e Ulema-i- Islam, the Nizam-i-Islam Party, Jamiat Hizbullah, Jamiat Ahl-e-Hadith, the khankahs and the madrasahs. The third side of the triangle was the Bangla Hindus, who, having Sanskrit and Sanskritized Bangla as their base and Brahmanism as their source of inspiration, were also the soul and brain of Calcutta University, which had its implications in thousands of schools and cultural institutions in West Bengal, East Bengal and Assam.

The document goes on to say:

...from the battle of Plassey to the Mutiny to 1947, the Bengali Hindus and the British combined against Muslim rule and established the Anglo-Hindu Raj in Bengal. From 1937 to 1947, the two sides of the Bengal triangle, i.e., the Bangla Muslims of Bengal and the Urdu Muslims of Bengal and India established Pakistan on the ground of the Two-Nation Theory, the oneness of the Millethood [religious nation], and they both defeated the third side: the Bangla Hindus and their allies. The Urdu and Bangla sides got Bengal and India partitioned and established Pakistan on the ground of the two-nation theory, the oneness of the Millethood and brotherhood of Iman and Islam. The defeat of the Congress Proja Party showed that two sides of the Bengali Triangle, the Bangla Muslims and the Urdu Muslims unitedly could be greater than and dominant over the third side of the Bangla Hindus.

The document then analyzes the 1950's political situation in East Pakistan. It states that in 1954, the general elections in East Bengal reversed the situation. Bangla Muslims united with Bangla Hindus, formed the Jugto Front, wiped out the Muslim League and, with the slogans of "*Rashtra Bhasha Bengla Chai*" and *Bangla Rashtra*, won the

elections on the basis of Banglaim. The massacres of Urdu-speaking Muslims at Karnafully and Adamjee, the open preaching of the Reunion and the independence of East and West Bengal by the Jugto Leader Mr. Fazlul Huq at Calcutta and Karachi and the ousting of the Urdu-speaking Mr. Suhrawardy of Calcutta from the Jugto leadership were the direct, natural results of the combination of Bangla Muslims and Bangla Hindus.

The two main languages of South Asia which claimed to represent Muslim identity, belonging to two different ethnic worldviews, were each not accepted by the other community. Bengali Muslims pressed for the acceptance of their Bangla as a state language of Pakistan. Although this request was granted, it did not resolve the differences between the groups of people who had wanted their language to be the state language. Sindh, on the other hand, has struggled since 1947 to protect Sindhi identity and language within Sindh. Muhajirs (the Urdu speaking migrants) constitute over fifty percent of the population of Karachi and Hyderabad, two major cities of Sindh. In these cities, Muhajirs have displaced Sindhis economically. In 1957-1958, students at the University of Karachi were prevented from writing exams in Sindhi. The growing sense of deprivation resulted in a Sindhi language movement. This movement serves as a vehicle for Sindhis to express grievances against their displacement in Sindh and against the Pakistani state, especially the Punjabi establishment. The language riots of 1971-1972 between Muhajirs and Sindhis were supported by the Jeay Sindh movement led by G. M. Sayed. This movement also called for the reinstatement of Sindhu Desh (an Independent country of Sindh), a goal for Sindhi nationalists.⁴⁸³

⁴⁸³ Asani 2003, 640- 642.

This scuffle of languages, however, hides the insecurity of Bengali Hindus about their culture and hardly finds its place in history other than when they are blamed for instigating the language movement as enemy agents. The Bengali Hindu intelligentsia watched their literature being assaulted through the banning of pre-Partition textbooks in East Pakistani schools. Their struggle for the recognition of Bangla, which was opposed even by some Bengali Muslim politicians, was regarded as an internal and provincial matter by the West Pakistani members of the Assembly. The literary and linguistic exclusion of heritage Bangla literature from the Pakistani curriculum posed serious identity threats to Bengali Hindus. Since they were involved in the language movement, the State targeted them for having demanded their rights. Bengali Muslims, on the other hand, who had developed a distinct Bangla identity and concept of nation that excluded Hindus, had argued for the status of Bangla as an official language of Pakistan on the basis of the majority of their number over the people of West Pakistan, who comprised several different ethnic and linguistic groups.⁴⁸⁴ As Sufia M. Uddin describes it, “Bengali Muslims coalesced as a group, primarily identifying with their ethno-linguistic identity, which had been thoroughly affirmed in the nineteenth century through prolific literary productivity that took place in their regional language.”⁴⁸⁵ She continues commenting that Bengali Muslims’ national vision parted way with that of Muslims who “identified themselves with broader sub continental Muslim culture symbolized in the knowledge and use of Urdu.”⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸⁴ Uddin, Sufia M. 2006. *Constructing Bangladesh: Religion, Ethnicity and Language in an Islamic Nation*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. P. 2 - 3.

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid, 15.

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid, 118.

The conflict of regional nationalisms based on language and religion in Pakistan can be found reflected in the War of Liberation literature produced in Bangladesh. Some of this literature has one feature in common: emphasis on the similarity of religion of the victims and the inflictors, i.e. Islam. This literature shows how sensitive East Bengalis were towards their Muslimness. It also shows Pakistani soldiers wondering that they had come to fight against “Hindus” but instead “learning too late that the people whom they were killing were Muslims.”⁴⁸⁷

The stories present characters reciting Quranic verses at the time of the attack. They reflect the awe of Pakistani soldiers learning that the people they were fighting with had the same religion as they did. The characters in these stories knew it was fatal to be resembling “Hindus.” At times, the stories use symbolic language to convey the consequences of looking like a Hindu. For example, one story narrates the following:

The [Bengali] Principal prayed night and day for the safety of Pakistan. At all odd hours of the day, he prayed to Allah and never missed an opportunity to chide his colleagues. In a written petition, the Principal had begged the military authority to remove all shahid minars [Martyr Monuments], mausoleums commemorating the martyrs of the Language Movement, from school and college premises. These unauthorized constructions looked like the Shiva Linga of the Hindus. In fact, these were slings, penetrating the body and flesh of Pakistan. These slings have to be removed to cure the body of its ailments. The military listened to Dr. Afzal Ahmed’s plea. Wherever they went in the villages, they first targeted the minars. Not a single shahid minar was spared.⁴⁸⁸

Another story tells about a girl whose village was attacked by the Pakistani army:

Hafiza had chanted the Quran louder and faster. Something was very, very wrong. And in time of trouble who else to turn to but Allah the Merciful, Allah the All knowing?. . . Hafiza nearly fainted with fear as she heard, rather than saw, two

⁴⁸⁷ Zaman, Niaz, ed. 2001, 2007. *1971 and After: Selected Stories*. Bangladesh: The University Press Limited. P. ix.

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid. “The Raincoat”. au: Akhtaruzzaman Elias. P. 10-11. Also: Nameless and Casteless. P.76.

soldiers pass single file down the aisle between the plots. . . . [S]he heard one of the soldiers say as he lit a cigarette, “In Karachi we were told that the Bengalis in East Pakistan are all *kafirs* and infidels and must therefore be wiped out. But when we attacked that village, I saw prayer mats on the floor, Holy Qurans on tables, and also heard the *muezzin* delivering the *azzan*. What kind of infidels are they then, if they follow the same religion as ours?”⁴⁸⁹

The conversation then continued between the two soldiers, who were trying to make sense of the battle in which both sides belonged to the same religion. But politically one of them either was a Communist or was assisted by India, and that made him an infidel and thus eligible to be killed.

Religion could not hold East and West Pakistan together. In Sindh, the demands for the recognition of Sindhi not being met became equivalent to the minoritization of Sindhis as well as of Sindh as a region.

Choosing the Enemy: Hindu, the Fifth-Column

The communal politics of the former British India did not stop with the birth of India and Pakistan. In Pakistan, the communal politics of British India days were conjoined with the politics of establishing an Islamic state. The Objective Resolution and then the Constitution which included the Islamic ideology, established further institutions in the country that guaranteed the Islamization of every aspect of life in Pakistan. As stated earlier, this not only eliminated Pakistani Hindu politicians from national politics, but also barred them from holding any significant and important ministerial positions in Pakistan. Because of their religion, they could not be trusted citizens of the Pakistan. The Hindu members were belittled for their religion, and because the Hindus were the

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid, 33-34.

religious majority in India, Pakistani Hindus became an easy target to blame as Indian agents. Time and again, they were accused of being in touch with Indian consulates and that they got their advising on Pakistani politics from India. Some were even accused of being members of Jewish organizations. They were likewise accused of being disloyal and unpatriotic. Such accusations took on more momentum with the language controversy in Pakistan. The following section shows how Pakistan Hindus were constantly transformed into a fifth column, from 1947 to 1971.

The Colonial Bania

Before Partition, the Muslim League exploited sentiments among Muslim peasants against Hindu landlords and moneylenders in order to advance its goal of achieving Pakistan. The vilification of the Hindu-Bania as an oppressor not only resonated in Pakistani politics after the Partition but also became the permanent facade of the Hindu in the Pakistani imagination. This vilification, however, concealed the role of the Muslim landlord in the exploitation of peasants or the prevalent agrarian system in colonial India which exploited peasantry. In Sindh a Bania-Wadero (Sindhi: elder, landlord) relationship existed in the rural areas, without which the Bania system could have not worked in isolation.⁴⁹⁰

The vilification of Hindus as Banias can be traced back to the arrival of the British in Sindh. The British found two major communities in Sindh, Hindu and Muslim. According to David Cheesman, a scholar of Sindh, the British classified the Muslims as

⁴⁹⁰ Markovits, Claude. 2000. *The Global world of Indian Merchants: 1750-1947. Traders of Sind from Bukhara to Samarqand*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press. P. 2-3.

“Sindhis” and the Hindus as “Hindus.” The Hindus that the British came into contact with in Sindh were principally Banias. The Bania was the creditor and the Sindhi (Muslim Hari) was the debtor. The British found this very unpleasing. Sir Richard Burton, (1821-1890, an English Orientalist and diplomat) described the situation Sindh in 1876 in the following manner: “The Hindu’s reed-pen is a rod of iron and abjectly the unhappy Sindi trembles before it.”⁴⁹¹ Evan James (Commissioner of Sind) supported this view of Burton’s, stating that debt was an excruciating burden on Sindhi Muslims and Waderos.⁴⁹² Sindhi Muslim Zamindars were dependent upon Sindhi Hindu businessmen for financial services. The system of rural debt was not something unique or limited to Sindh but rather was widespread in 19th-century India. The case of Sindh was different, though, because nearly all creditors were Hindus and nearly all debtors were Muslims. This system was running as usual in Sindh until the British awarded full property rights to landholders. This changed the old relationship between the two parties. The new system allowed a creditor to seize the land of a debtor to recover money that was owed.⁴⁹³

The British view of the Bania was not positive. This British view of moneylenders had a background in biases imported from Europe. Cheesman finds the roots of British views about Banias and their business of moneylending in attitudes toward the Jews of Europe:

The arguments frequently revolved around stereotypes borrowed from anti-Semitic folklore, officials viewing the relationship between debtor and creditor in

⁴⁹¹ David Cheesman. 1997. *Landlord Power and Rural Indebtedness in Colonial Sind 1865-1901*. London: Curzon. P. 161.

⁴⁹² Ibid.

⁴⁹³ Ibid.

simplistic terms, through a haze of racial and cultural preconceptions. The archetypal caricature of the grasping Jewish usurer was transferred to the Hindu Bania. He became “the eastern Shylock.” The honest – but somewhat obtuse – agriculturist was helpless in the moneylender’s hands, enabling “the cunning practitioner of the market-place to swindle the dull peasant out of his land.”⁴⁹⁴

Malcolm Haig’s (a settlement officer in Sindh) observation that, ‘Nothing was bad enough to be said of the Bania, the sole representative of thrift and prudence in the community. He is called *‘the Sind extortioner’ – ‘the source of all evils’ – ‘the curse of the cultivators,’* but it is conceded that he is ‘perhaps in a measure a necessary evil.’”⁴⁹⁵

With the passage of time, debt and the Hindu Bania became sensitive political issues; they became volatile issues in the 20th century, “when Muslim indebtedness fuelled resentment against Hindu banias.”⁴⁹⁶ The slogan of liberation from the Bania became part of the Pakistan movement in both Sindh and Bengal. As in Sindh, moneylenders (mostly from the Teli and Banik castes) and Zamindars were mostly Hindus in Bengal as well. In 1947, out of 2237 large landholders in Bengal, only 358 were Muslims.⁴⁹⁷ In fact, Muslim peasants conceptualized Pakistan as a new moral community, where an ethics of justice would dominate life. Thus, the idea of Pakistan carried a sense of liberation for the peasant from the landlord. Kamal Ahmed, a Bangladeshi nationalist historian, states that the attitude of Hindu Zamindars towards Muslim peasants involved both communal and economic exploitation. Therefore the Muslim League’s slogans, such as ‘Land to the tiller’ and ‘End of money lending,’

⁴⁹⁴ Ibid, 163.

⁴⁹⁵ Ibid, 163.

⁴⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁷ Kamal, Ahmed. 2009. *State Against the Nation: The Decline of the Muslim League in Pre-independence Bangladesh, 1947-54*. Dhaka: The University Press Limited. P. 29.

became routine at the League's processions and meetings in Bengal.⁴⁹⁸ In East Bengal, Pakistan was presented as a peasant utopia to the peasant class.⁴⁹⁹

The echo of this image of the Hindu as a Bania who oppressed the agriculturist Muslim resonated in populist statements made in the Sind Legislative Assembly. For instance, G.M. Sayed, an MLA from the Muslim League, stated while addressing a Sindh Assembly session in June 1941:

During the last 40 years, the Hindu has snatched away 40% of land from the Mussalman and this, taken together with the enormous interest and interest over interest that the Bania charges has reduced his life to a condition of utter helplessness. He earns not for himself but for the Bania. Due to the control that he wields over commerce, a Bania has been able to exploit for his personal gain all the wealth which in equity and justice ought to be the possession of the poor villager...the Mussalman has remained hopelessly poor. Due to his undisputed control over services, the Bania has been able to collect an enormous sum of money through bribes...which he spends and displays by way of erecting bungalows and palaces and purchasing gorgeous dresses. On the other hand, the poor agriculturist who toils days and night has neither a decent home to live in nor a decent cloth to cover himself, much less sufficient to eat.⁵⁰⁰

Although Hindu businessmen had enjoyed economic freedom and exercised influence in the court of the Sindhi Amirs (Muslim rulers),⁵⁰¹ the general situation of

⁴⁹⁸ Ibid, 27-32.

⁴⁹⁹ Hashmi, Taj-ul-Islam. 1992. *Pakistan as a Peasant Utopia : The Communalization of Class Politics in East Bengal, 1920-1947*. Boulder: Westview Press.

⁵⁰⁰ Markovits, Claude. 2000. *The Global world of Indian Merchants 1750-1947: Traders of Sind from Bukhara to Panama*. P. 2.

⁵⁰¹ Cheesman 1997, 182.

lawlessness did not spare them from getting robbed or even murdered. An old Maheshwari person in Tharparkar whose grandfather narrated to him the events of the Mir period (The Baloch, Talpur dynasty in Sindh, from 1783 to 1843), told me that Hindus were not allowed to mount horses during that period. Therefore Hindu merchants used to travel on donkeys, selling their commercial goods from village to village. Upon seeing a Baloch approaching, a trader would spill his *desi ghee* onto the sand, in order to protect himself from getting robbed. The Baloch would find nothing to loot, and so he would spare the trader and leave. The Hindu trader would then gather the sand in his shawl, bring it back home and sort out the *ghee* from the sand by heating it. Despite their second - class status during the period of Mirs, the Hindu was respected and had access in the court. However, the Sindhi merchant was not limited to Sindh, he was an international trader. Claude Markovits in his book *The Global World of Indian Merchants, 1750-1947: Traders of Sind from Bukhara to Panama* (2000), argues that the riches of Sindhi Hindu businessmen were not earned by moneylending and collecting interest in Sindh alone. As a Maheshwari person told me, Sindhis were international traders and they travelled to far off places to do business. It was their foreign-earned money that they brought back and invested in Sindh. Markovits writes, “Sayed does not appear to have been aware that sections of the banias of Sind derived their wealth not from the exploitation of the peasantry in Sind but from international trading and finance. This is the case in particular for the banias of Hyderabad and Shikarpur,⁵⁰² who traveled to far-off places for trade and commerce.

⁵⁰² Ibid, 3.

In the 1930's, G. M. Syed founded the Sindh Hari [Landless Peasant] Committee to protect the interests of *haris* and to abolish the Zamindari system in Sindh.⁵⁰³ Towards the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, Indian agriculture was already witnessing huge transformations due to industrialization, the attempts to raise the production of profitmaking crops and the introduction of a canal system for irrigation. In some permanently settled Indian regions, the land's affairs were semi-feudal. In some regions where land transfers had been permitted by law, large tracts of land had passed to absentee Sahukars and other money lenders, due to large-scale peasant indebtedness.⁵⁰⁴ While the hari movement in Sindh sought to abolish the Zamindari system, Sindhi Muslim and Hindu Zamindars constituted the majority of the members of the Sind Legislative Assembly before Partition. The pre-Partition debates of the Sind Legislative Assembly, after it had become an independent province from Bombay, show clear signs of division across communal lines. When it came to the abolition of the Zamindari system, the brunt of this abolition was taken by Sindhi Hindu landlords. G.M Syed, in his *The Case of Sindh* explains his disappointment on this issue in the following manner:

So in order to save the kisans (*Haaris*) from the clutches of the landlords, the bureaucrats, the money-lenders and dacoits and to obtain for them medical, educational and other civic amenities, and to enable them to live in peace and security, I with the help of my friends, laid the foundations of the Sindh Hari Committee under the Presidentship of Jamshed Mehta, in Mirpurkhas in 1930. This committee waged a protracted struggle for the emancipation of kisans, for securing tenancy rights for them, and for educating them. Selfless kisan workers suffered incarceration. The feudal lords and a brutal bureaucracy tortured many of them to death. They continued their hard struggle in spite of all this. They

⁵⁰³ He organized Sindh Haari (landless peasant) Conference and became its secretary in 1930.

⁵⁰⁴ Bhalla, G S. 1983. Peasant Movement and Agrarian Change in India. *Social Scientist*. 11: 8. P. 39.

achieved several successes, the most important being crop-sharing on an equal basis with the landlord and the passing of the Tenancy Rights Act. I admit that we could not achieve all of our basic objectives. An important reason for this was the British policy to sustain the feudal lords in order to retain their loyalties. This policy was retained after partition by the civil and military bureaucracy; I could not give enough time to the Hari Committee because of my increasing involvement with all-India politics. Anyhow, I continued to cooperate with the Committee at every level in spite of the fact that most of my time was taken up with the constitutional and political problems of the sub-continent.⁵⁰⁵

The political and economic interests of representatives of the two communities had long been walking different paths in Sindh. A Lohano (Sindhi Hindu) man told me that in 1946 he went to see a Muslim Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) who was a member of the Sind Hari Committee. When he arrived there, a delegation of Hindu Zamindars was already there to meet the MLA and complain about the Haris. Hindu Zamindars were of the opinion that the Hari committee was run by Muslim Zamindars who were encouraging and provoking the Haris to rise up and agitate against the Hindu landlords. The landlords had voted for Congress but were still being removed from their lands. They lamented that Muslims wanted to remove the landlord system from Sindh and that they had begun the process by getting rid of Hindu landlords. The Lohano (Lohana) man then explained the situation to them in these words:

Look, when you cook something hard, the first thing that dissolves in the cooking pot is the weakest, and we were the weaker part of society in Sindh. This was the beginning of institutionalized bias and discrimination against us! Inqilab first hits the weak and then the stronger. I told Hindu landlords that their objection to the Haari committee was redundant, but if you put it in a way that Hindus were being discriminated, yes it was true.

A few months before Partition, on April 16, 1947, the Sind Legislative Assembly had

⁵⁰⁵ G.M Syed. 1974. *The Case of Sindh: G.M Syed's Deposition for the Court*. P. 9-10.

passed a bill known as the Sind Landholders' Mortgages Act 1947. This Bill was intended to "restore to their former owners, land that has been sold at any time after the year 1901 by means of a declaration that the transfers were not sales but merely mortgages...." The bill mentioned that its purpose was to restore to its former owners only land that had been mortgaged and not land that had been transferred by sale. The bill aimed at protecting landowners (i.e. Muslims) from falling into the hands of moneylenders (whatever caste or community, Hindu or Muslim, noted the Ministry of the Interior) and to recover from Hindu banias mortgaged lands which in the past had been in their possession, on the ground that a mortgage was an outright sale. Following the passage of the Bill, members of the province's minorities agitated against it, saying that that the law would prejudice the interests of the minority communities, depriving them of their lawfully acquired land. After the establishment of Pakistan, the Bill was forwarded to Jinnah for his assent as Governor General. However, since most of the Hindu landlords were gone, their properties were now to be treated as evacuee property. As Zamindars were leaving Sindh, Jinnah kept the file pending, thinking it was not necessary to enact the bill. With the introduction of the evacuee property law, the working committee of the Sind Muslim League unearthed the bill for approval, for it could have a bearing on the compensation that was to be paid to India for evacuee property left in Pakistan. In 1953, the Pakistani Governor General did not approve the bill; the Interior Ministry advised that there was a fundamental repugnancy between the bill and the evacuee property ordinance which would make the bill impotent.⁵⁰⁶ On 4 June 1953, the Sindhi newspaper *Alwahid*

⁵⁰⁶ Governor General Files. Government of Pakistan. GG No. 103. File No. 187/4/GG/1947. Sind Landholders Mortgages Bill, 1947. National Archives holdings.

wrote that the Muslims of Sind were struggling to safeguard their interests and save themselves from the clutches of Hindu banias, but that, unless the Sindhi Muslims got back their land from the Hindu Bania, who had used treacherous means in getting the land, their lot would not improve. The newspaper alleged that the government was deliberately preventing this bill from getting sanctioned and was depriving the people of Sind from enjoying the advantage of the bill.⁵⁰⁷

After Partition, the Sind Muslim League tried its best to acquire the lands and businesses of Hindus and Sikhs of Sindh.⁵⁰⁸ But the central government was occupied with refugee rehabilitation, and most of the land of Hindu landlords befitted to be adjusted in evacuee property settlement.

The abolition of Zamindari was also an issue for Muslim society in Bengal. In Bengal too, the essential appeal of Pakistan was the anticipation it held of release from Hindu supremacy.⁵⁰⁹ A political party called Praja Samiti (Bengal Tenant Party) founded in West Bengal in 1929 aimed to safeguard the interests of Muslim jotedars (landowners), sampanna praja (cultivators) and professional groups. This party later transformed itself into the Krishak Praja Party (KPP), which promised to abolish Zamindari without compensation. After the provincial elections of 1936, the KPP entered into a political coalition with the Muslim League after negotiations with Congress over a Congress-supported KPP ministry ended in disappointment on both the economic and the political front. The coalition with the KPP gave the Muslim League an opportunity to share

Islamabad, Pakistan.

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁰⁸ Government of Pakistan. File No. 102/A. Ordinary. National Archives of Pakistan Holdings. Islamabad.

⁵⁰⁹ Chakrabarty 2004, 18.

political power with the KPP in Bengal province. An internal schism in the KPP ministry developed when members of the party perceived that A. K. Fazlul Haq was not implementing its agenda. Upon being squeezed by the Congress party as well as by opposition from his own party, Fazlul had joined the Muslim League in 1937 in Lucknow. This made the Muslim League's path in Bengal easier, as they had found a Bengali leader to mobilize the Bengali Muslims for the cause of a separate Muslim homeland. In 1939 A. K. Fazlul Haq announced that he was "a Muslim first and Bengali afterwards." Chakravarty terms this the period of the emergence of Muslims as a community and a political force in India.⁵¹⁰

One incident in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan sheds light on the construction of the image of the Bania and shows how the Hindu Bania was replaced by the Muslim Bania. On 26 October 1953, The Karachi Essential Articles Bill was presented in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan to deal with the post-Partition shortage of goods in Karachi. Seth Sukhdev entered his debate, referring to the communal politics during 1942-1945. He said:

It was dinned out in our ears by Congress as well as Muslim League that it was Hindu banyas that create black market, I was also one of those people who used to say that banyas are the curse of Sind, we used to believe that too because if you do false propaganda, you start believing in that; now after Pakistan has come into existence, most of its residents are Muslim leaguers who wanted to have the Islamic way of life. . . . I am discussing why black marketing has come into being. . . . I am serious, I am not laughing at Muslim League or any religion, so I request you to hear my speech, so I began to think all these people who have come from India will make heaven of Pakistan, they will have plenty to eat, plenty of milk to drink, plenty of clothes to wear, why all these big merchants all Muslim Leaguers need to indulge in such things? They are very loyal. . . . why the goods disappear. . . . they are good people, they pray five times a day, they are not

⁵¹⁰ Ibid, 48-49. Also see: Banglapedia entry Praja Party.
http://www.banglapedia.org/HT/P_0268.htm. Accessed 11/6/13.

bad people, then why they have taken to black marketing? Hindu banya may do anything but these Mussalmans and especially the Muslim Leaguers, they should resort to this kind of dirty work is incomprehensible. I ask why in one night commodities have disappeared [from bazars in Karachi]. Rich people are exploiting Pakistan and are grabbing Hindu's property.

The next day, 27 October 1953, Seth Sukhdev continued his speech. Jaffer (Sind-Muslim) maintained that Sukhdev's speech was anti-Muslim and anti-Muslim League.⁵¹¹ He declared Sukhdev's opposition to the bill a Hindu conspiracy to cripple Pakistan. He alleged that Hindus were taking money out of Pakistan while Muslims from Bombay brought money to save Pakistan. He accused Hindus of continuing to harm Pakistan. He declared that Hindus were part of an international racket connected to Jews. These Hindus were in Pakistan, black marketeering in Karachi.

Today, many Hindus in Sindh try to understand what has happened to them and why. has the community been uprooted and had to leave Sindh? Some ride a guilt trip trying to understand the past with the help of a belief in Karma. Many believe that maybe they were atrocious enough to deserve this fate. An old Maheshwari person told me, "I often think maybe we did not share our money with people, which is why people rejected us." Often comparisons are drawn with the business communities of other ethnicities and religions. "But we are better than a Pathan moneylender, who first throws a debtor in the grave and then demands money back. We never killed a person." In Dhaka, Professor Chakrabarty inquired: "Was it only about that we were landlords and the rich of the society, did that earn us to be expelled from our homes?" Despite people being expelled

⁵¹¹ Constituent Assembly (Legislature) of Pakistan Debates. 27 October 1953. The Karachi Essential Articles (Price Control And Anti-Hoarding) Bill. Karachi. P. 1150.

from their houses and hearths after Partition, the dream of equality and class equality for peasantry never came true.⁵¹²

From Bania to Enemy – Suspicion and Demands of Loyalty

The Congress Party in Pakistan could never get rid of its Indian past, and thus, as Keith Callard points out in his book, could never play the part of a parliamentary opposition. The members had to be constantly on the alert to defend the party against allegations of disloyalty to the state and of sympathy with India. They also had to face suspicion and hatred toward the religion they professed.⁵¹³ For these reasons, the Congressmen formed a very fragile opposition in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. The first session of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan opened with speeches of Hindu members who assured their colleagues of their loyalty to the State and requested Jinnah to assume from then on the role of the leader of a new nation instead of being a leader of only Muslims. They also had a vision about the state of which they were now the citizens and it was put forward from the outset. Kiran Shankar Roy, while congratulating Jinnah on the inaugural day, stated:

As far as we are concerned, Sir, if the Pakistan which you have in your mind means a secular democratic State, a State which will make no difference between a citizen and a citizen, which will deal fairly with all irrespective of caste, creed or community, I assure you that you shall have our utmost co-operation. [He went on saying

⁵¹² Youtube: Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani addresses about 1970s Elections on National Issues. Part I. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PSjA5nsSyoE>. Accessed: 3/14/14.

⁵¹³ Callard 1957, 85.

that Congressmen were not happy with the division of of India, Bengal and Punjab but] as this arrangement has been agreed upon by the two great parties, we accept it loyally, and shall work for it loyally. (cheers.) We shall accept the citizenship of Pakistan with all its implication. (cheers.)⁵¹⁴

The Hindu masses on the ground were also put to the test to prove their sincerity and loyalty to the state, Pakistan. The leadership of both the All India National Congress and The Muslim League⁵¹⁵ understood that after Partition both countries would have a significant number of “minorities” living within their boundaries. Jinnah’s talks to the media before Partition guaranteed constitutional protection to the minorities in Pakistan, as mentioned earlier. However the question of the loyalty of people belonging to faiths other than Islam (now officially categorized as “non-Muslims”) kept surfacing from different quarters again and again. To bring the communal tensions back to zero, in India and Pakistan, both countries established regional peace committees after the Partition. Since Pakistan did not have a constitution at the time of its founding, many people were left unsure about the future. Whether Pakistan was going to be a theocratic or a secular state was not clear. The discussion continued in Pakistan for years after Partition. Religious minorities were repeatedly assured that Pakistan was going to be a secular and democratic state. At times these assurances were followed by an insistence on allegiance

⁵¹⁴ Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates. 11 August 1947. *Congratulations to the President*. Karachi. P. 13.

⁵¹⁵ Muslim League: in the post Khilafat Movement period, /Muslim politicians aimed at political organization of Muslims and this was the aim of Muslim League at the outset. It presented the attainment of Pakistan as a “panacea” that would open the way to the transformation of the lives of the Muslims of India. The League asserted that the Muslims of India were a nation and that they must have their own state. Because they were in a minority they must be united to achieve their purpose. (See: Keith Callard. P. 36-37).

to the State on the part of religious minorities. The newspaper *Pakistan Times, Lahore*, covered such events in detail.

An example of the pattern can be seen in the address of Ghulam Mohammad, Minister of Finance, to a deputation of businessmen from Karachi (consisting of Nusserwan Ji Metha, Seth Jermdas Savaldas and Seth Isserdas Varindmal). Addressing the businessmen, he said,

I most categorically assure you that Pakistan is a secular democratic and not a theocratic state, and each one of you as a citizen has the same rights and privileges as the head of the state Jinnah himself. But I must also express that no state could tolerate divided loyalties on the part of her citizens. Equal privileges of citizenship necessarily imply equal obligations. Those who want the protection must also be loyal to the state and offer straightforward co-operation to the government.⁵¹⁶

He also assured the businessmen that the venues of government service would be open to all minorities irrespective of caste and creed. Ghulam Mohammad assured the delegation that the corner-stone policy of the government of Pakistan was to protect its minorities. He added that there was one condition only: that the minorities must owe allegiance to the state. He stated:

There could be no divided allegiance or mental reservation about it. People cannot profess allegiance to another state, preach to citizens of Pakistan to leave the state and paralyze the economic life of the state and at the same time demand equal civic rights. A state cannot possibly protect those who are disloyal to it. The Pakistan government are honest and sincere in their profession apropos the protection of its minorities. The proof of this lies in the fact that the Muslims of India have been advised by the Quaid-e-Azam to be loyal to India.⁵¹⁷

⁵¹⁶ “Pakistan will give Full Rights to its Minorities. Ghulam Mohammad Urges People to Fight Communal Madness.” *The Pakistan Times*, Lahore. 10 October 1947.

⁵¹⁷ Ibid.

The duty of the minorities, asserted the Finance Minister, was to owe allegiance to the state wherein they lived – be it India or Pakistan.⁵¹⁸

However, another fraction of politicians opposed the ongoing “sadistic” demands of loyalty from minorities. One of the primary voices on this side of the question was that of H.S. Suhrawardy. The *Pakistan Times* reported him demanding that the *majorities* of Pakistan and India should be loyal first. Suhrawardy, while showing his disliking towards such demands, articulated:

It is not the minorities but the majorities of India and Pakistan who have been disloyal to their statesare the crimes committed by the majority communities to be considered as evidence of their loyalty and high patriotism and are the sufferings of minorities to be deemed evidence of their disloyalty?⁵¹⁹

⁵¹⁸ Ibid.

⁵¹⁹ “Let Majorities of Pakistan and India be Loyal First: Suhrawardy on Sadistic Demands of Loyalty from Minorities.” *The Pakistan Times*, Lahore, 15 October 1947. (He further said that: The constant demands of the leaders of the majority communities for reiterated and fulsome expressions of loyalty to the state by minorities are first assuming proportions of sadism. Some leaders touch the subject lightly and in passing. This is as it should be. Others insist on repeated asseverations as the alleged price for the protection and impose fantastic tests. The poor minorities do not know which way to turn for nothing would appear to satisfy these leaders unless the minorities surrender their self-respect and grovel before the mad consent to annihilate themselves physically, morally and culturally...The minorities have certainly every right to resent their tales being continuously twisted in this manner. What have they done to justify such treatment? Were the minorities of the Punjab or Delhi or western UP in any way disloyal to the state when they were butchered by the majorities under a national government and after independence had been achieved, when they had every right to expect co-operation from their co-nationalists and to be treated as brothers rather than as hostile aliens. Did the state deny to the minorities protection for any such cause? What then is the justification for the government to state in season and out of season that loyalty of the minorities is the price for the protection when even aliens and foreigners are entitled to protection from lawless elements by a government. It is clear that this insistence by

A Lohano advocate was stopped on the steps of Sindh High Court by a colleague who told him that since the Partition the courts were now only for Muslim advocates, since Pakistan was for Muslims. The advocate narrated to me his experience of the change in his political status after the Partition:

One unit ka bill chal raha tha pachpan main. (One Unit Bill was being discussed [in the Assembly] in 1955). In 1950 or 51 Liaquat Ali Khan was murdered [and then] K. Nazimuddin became Prime Minister [of Pakistan and] Gulam Muhammad became Governor General. He dismissed the Pakistani parliament in [19]54. Molvi Tameezuddin, the Speaker, decided to challenge this decision and

governments on expressions of loyalty by the minorities is but an attempt to make Constituent Assembly of Pakistan goats out of them for their utter failure to protect them , it would be far better and far more honest if the governments were to set their own houses in order, if they were to deal with those officers of their own, drawn from the majority community , who were disloyal to the policy of their own employers and have neglected to protect the minorities from savagery , brutality, massacre, arson and pillage. I can assure the governments that if they did their duty all minorities would deem it a privilege to pledge their loyalty whole heartedly to their state as often demanded, and fight shoulder to shoulder with the majority community for the honour and glory of the state of which they are inhabitants. Teach the majorities as you should their duties towards the state and towards the minorities and their co-citizens and for heaven's sake do not humiliate the minorities further. The later know their duties and what is demanded of them. They have never wished ill to the state in which they live. All they want is to live in peace and lead an existence compatible with self-respect and human dignity and co-operation with their brethren of the majority community." The "minorities" representative in Pakistan also responded to the situation by asking their co-religionists to the demands of loyalty towards the new state. C.E Gibbons, then president Anglo –Indian Association of Pakistan while addressing a meeting of Anglo-Indians held in Rawalpindi (Punjab) pressed on his own community: If you discharge your duties honestly and loyally, you will force the hands of the state to discharge its duties towards you. If you have decided to choose Pakistan as your homeland, you should remember that you become the most loyal minority in the state. He said that it was incumbent upon the state that the rights and privileges of loyal communities adequately safeguarded. He added that the state could not encourage the growth of an antagonistic group of persons or communities whose only objective was to destroy the fabric of state. It was for you to decide whether to stand with the forces of good or evil or like opportunists to stand aside. You are the members of a big family of various communities in Pakistanwe all owe an obligation towards our state. The assurance of safeguard your rights and privileges are written in large letters –these are the assurances of your Governor General, the Quaide-e-Azam, who in unequivocal terms, has declared that minorities in Pakistan would be treated on an equal basis."

went to court. In 1955, the discussion on Establishment of West Pakistan Act of 1955 [One Unit Bill] was taking place in the Assembly. The Assembly used to meet in the building of the Sindh Assembly and I wanted to go and see the debate. Pir Ali Rashdi was minister then, so I went to him asking for a sticker (permit) to enter the building. You could only get the pass on the *sifarish* (recommendation) of a Minister. Pir Ali Rashdi told me that I would get it. I then went to the Assembly to pick it up and told my name to the security personnel who had to issue the pass. He paused filling it, raised his head and looked at me. Then he called the CID official for further scrutiny. This was my first encounter as a Hindu with someone in Pakistan. I can never forget this. True, he was doing his duty. I went to take my pass, and when he heard the Hindu name he raised his head. It has happened so many times with us. But I say, this is evil in our society, we don't blame our country, and we face it hoping that things will advance one day.

Political space has shrunk for Pakistan Hindus since the Partition, for all people belonging to different Hindu communities in Pakistan, individually and collectively. As mentioned earlier, the descendants the Congress party in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan always had to defend themselves against allegations of being enemies and Indian agents. Time and again, the Congress members had to remind other members of the Constitution Assembly of Pakistan that they were not Congressmen of India now but of Pakistan. Around this time, the image of the Hindu as enemy was being institutionalized in Pakistan.

An earlier example would be of from 13 March 1950. In this session of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, Hindu members protested against the allegations of *Dawn*, an influential daily English paper, about them. Sri Chandra Chattopadhyaya showed his concern over *Dawn's* report about an alleged 'Master Plan' according to which two or three members of the Pakistan parliament had been briefed to open a front in Pakistan by supporting "Bharati" (Indian) allegations and narrating the "tales of woe" of East Pakistani Hindus. According to *Dawn*, those members were specifically

instructed to ask that East Pakistan Hindus be armed 'to defend themselves.'

Chattopadhyaya appealed that, since *Dawn* was very influential in the country, such baseless allegations might create prejudice against the Hindu members of the parliament, and therefore action must be taken against the newspaper. He said, "if no action is taken, it will be impossible for the members of opposition benches to say anything good, bad or remain indifferent." He further pleaded to be given protection from the writings of *Dawn*. Addressing the chairman, Chattopadhyaya added, "If you think the newspaper is right, we will sit down in the future and say nothing." Liaquat Ali Khan responded by saying that *Dawn* did not represent the government, nor was it controlled by the government. He added, "My honorable friends need have no fear; they will receive the same protection, the same privilege, and the same rights as any other Pakistani." Sri Chattopadhyaya requested that action against the newspaper be taken by the government so that Hindus' rights and privileges as members of the opposition would be protected. However, the government took no further action.⁵²⁰

Political developments in East Bengal exacerbated the situation on the ground there. As historian Haimanti Roy mentions, in early 1951 posters depicting Hindus as "enemies" were pasted in public places such as at various railway stations in East Bengal. These posters were in English, Bengali and Urdu. In one set of these posters, a Hindu was shown to be trying to overhear what a Muslim was saying. The poster's title advised, "Speak Carefully: The Enemy is Listening."⁵²¹

⁵²⁰ Constituent Assembly (Legislature) Debates. Volume 1- 1950. *Question Re Protection of Opposition's Privilege to Criticize Government*. 13 March 1950. P. 1-2.

⁵²¹ Roy, Haimanti. 2013. *Partitioned Lives: Migrants, Refugees, Citizens in India and Pakistan, 1947-1965*. USA; Oxford. P.150-151.

The Pakistani Congressmen constantly demanded that they be treated as equal Pakistanis. On 15 Nov 1952, the Congress members, once again, in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan tried to assert their presence in the country. They said that 1 ½ crore Hindus and 6 ½ crore Muslims made 7 ½ crore Pakistanis. The story of the Pandavas from the Mahabharata was quoted and Nur-ul- Amin, the PM, was criticized for bringing in the law of detaining people without trial in the name of the country's security. By this time, the Government of Pakistan, had promulgated the Security of Pakistan Act and was arresting members of the Communist Party in East Bengal (the Communist Party was banned in July 1954 and was declared an 'unlawful association') as well as some other people by declaring most of them as the agents of enemies. A dominant majority of the detainees belonged to the Hindu community of East Bengal.⁵²²

Syed Shamsur Rehman (East Bengal - Muslim) termed the complaints from the Hindu members as personal attacks on ministers and on the Muslim League. In his opinion some Hindus pretending to be Muslims were teaching hatred against Pakistan. He gave a couple of examples to prove his point. He accused Pakistani Congressmen, "You act differently here in front of press and public eye and differently when away." He further accused the Hindu community of Dhaka of selling their properties to two or three different Muslim buyers so that they would keep fighting over the ownership of the property, while in West Bengal no one was willing to buy property from Pakistani Muslims (those intending to migrate to East Bengal from West Bengal). He further commented, referring to the sudden departure of J. N. Mandal, the Speaker of the House

⁵²² Cabinet Division. Government of Pakistan. File No. 239/CF/56. Release of Safety Prisoners and Repeal of Safety Laws. NDC Holdings. Islamabad.

and the first law minister, from Pakistan to India in the wake of the government's inability to curtail the violence against Hindus in East Bengal in 1950: Today a gentleman is sitting in a responsible chair and tomorrow he disappears. Where he went, how his gods were transported, how he went, we don't know. I would request my friends in the opposition to have [a] little love for poor Pakistan; we want Pakistan to live forever.⁵²³

At this point Mushtaq Ahmed Gurmani (West Punjab) commented that the opposition members' remarks were off the mark and irrelevant. He further said that the phrase "security of Pakistan" could be "vague" for the Hindu members, but for Muslims it was like an article of faith. He further expressed hope that with the passage of time his Hindu colleagues in the Constituent Assembly would learn to appreciate the genuine meaning of the phrase "security of Pakistan." With this, Gurmani accused Iftikharuddin (who also opposed the so-called security act) of taking money from Russians, and said that other Congressmen had done so earlier.⁵²⁴ Gurmani continued criticizing Congressmen by referring to their religion and their alleged "Indian connections." He stated: "I didn't go to a pandit to consult for a mahurat... [T]here is aggression against Pakistan being preached in our neighboring country, preached openly against Pakistan." He cited the legacy of the Muslim League and his continuing loyalty to and support for the Muslim League.⁵²⁵

⁵²³ Constituent Assembly (Legislature) Debates. 15 November 1952. *The Restriction And Detention (Second Amendment) Bill*. P. 228- 243 & 237.

⁵²⁴ Ibid.

⁵²⁵ Ibid, 240.

In the 1954 elections in East Pakistan, the first election after the creation of Pakistan, the Muslim League was totally defeated. The Government of Pakistan was trying to mobilize the Muslim masses in East Pakistan by appealing to their Islamic religious sentiments. The Bengali Hindu members on the floor of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan brought this to the record. On 18 March, 1954, Bhapesch Chandra Nandy discussed the Muslim League's defeat during the Central Budget discussion in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan. He commented that the Muslim League had been defeated in East Pakistan because it had introduced communal features in East Bengal during the elections. The results of the elections showed that the Muslim League had been rejected by 56% of Pakistan. Prior to the elections, the Muslim league had moved its machinery from all provinces of West Pakistan and had engaged in fierce propaganda against minorities in East Pakistan. The Hindu members of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan registered their complaints by stating that they were scared that there would be a communal problem any time in East Pakistan. The Muslim league had adopted this communal attitude during the previous year's sessions of constitution making; during the elections, it had pursued the same policy of preaching anti-Hindu feelings in East Bengal. Referring to the anti-Hindu, communal policies of the Muslim League, Nandy stated:

Muslim league leaders thought that it was the Hindu brain that was working behind [the anti-Muslim League sentiments in East Pakistan]. They openly propagated that Hindus are financing the East Bengal United Front of Mr. Suhrawardy, Mr. Fazlul Haq and Maulana Bhashani; they alleged it was East Bengal Hindus who were collecting money, mobilizing the resources and giving them advice. Similar arguments we heard when in East Bengal strong agitation arose for making Bengali as one of the State languages. Government's policy was at that time to put the whole blame on Hindus. It was from the Chief Minister of East Bengal down to ordinary Police officer, who tried to prove that it was Hindu who was putting this demand for Bengali as a state language in the mouths of the Bengali Muslims and that it was never the demand of Bengali Muslims. It was in

last November, papers like Dawn wrote editorials to show that it was the Bengal Congressites and some interested people, who were pressing for making Bengali as one of the state languages; it was not the demand of the Muslim mass. But now it has been proved beyond doubt, when the leaders of the United Front party, like Mr. Fazlul Haq, have made it the first point of their demand that Bengali must be made one of the State languages if the Central Government wants to pull on with East election days, the Muslim League Leaders from West tried to put the whole blame on the Hindus and the Hindu Congress and said that they were financing the agitation and were behind the demand. But now they are realizing how deep was the sore in the minds of the Bengali Muslims who voted overwhelmingly against Muslim League. . . . But the Muslim League leaders from the West as also Muslim League leaders of East Bengal deliberately distorted facts and tried to put the whole blame on Hindus as if Mr. Fazlul Haq and all the Bengali Mussalmans were all fools. . . . If really the Hindus of East Bengal could really wield so much political influence, we would have been very glad.⁵²⁶

At the conclusion of his speech, Bhapes Chandra Nandy called for a stop to propaganda against Hindus. While calling for a liberal solution and vision to look at the problems in East Bengal, he said:

I must point out to our government that they must have a new approach to the problem with more liberal outlook, otherwise the disintegration that has begun today will continue to disastrous ends. In East Bengal we are faced with communal attitude of the Government. The Hindu industrialists who have invested crores of rupees in new industries and have started several textile and other mills after partition are often threatened with communal discrimination. It is mischievously propagated that Hindus are not investing money in Pakistan but shifting everything to the other side of the border. But as a matter of fact Bengali Hindus have invested their hard earned money to enrich Pakistan, their homeland. But still false allegations and communal discriminations are poured on their head. Such propaganda must stop otherwise disaster will follow.⁵²⁷

The Bengali Hindu members told the assembly that Muslim League stalwarts from West Pakistan had been to interior villages of East Pakistan and had tried to mobilize the opinion of the Muslim masses in favor of the Muslim League. These members said that

⁵²⁶ Constituent Assembly (Legislature) Debates. 18 March 1954. *The Central Budget – General Discussion*. Karachi. P. 161-162.

⁵²⁷ *Ibid*, 166.

before they would proceed to discuss the economic policy of the government, they wanted to discuss party politics, because in their opinion the political and economic policies of the government were not separate things. In their opinion, these were interlinked and the present budget, according to them, reflected the policy followed by the party in power.

The Bengali Hindu members continued protesting against the state's attitude toward them in East Bengal. They continued reminding the state that they had invested in the new country although it was being propagated that they were not. Hindu industrialists had invested crores of rupees in industries, but were faced with communal discrimination. It was being propagated that Hindus were not investing money in Pakistan, but transferring money out of Pakistan. Hindus struck back by arguing that they had invested their hard-earned money to enrich their homeland, but still they were falsely accused for financially crippling Pakistan.

On 27 March 1954, Bhupesh Chandra Nandy pointed out that people living in the border region in East Bengal were suffering because their livelihood was based on border trade. He pointed out that border trade had been made impossible because of restrictions of movement and a lot of people who were unaware of the visa and immigration system continued to suffer. Nandy said that these people did not have the courage to come forward and protest and that, if they did, the Pakistani Government would call them fifth columnists:

The very outlook of politics, Sir, has become mediaeval, retrogressive and disruptive. It is medieval because, after seven years, our politics are still viewed from a communal angle. They still cannot think [of a] Pakistani [as] a Pakistani; they still think he is a Hindu, he is a Christian, he is a Muslim – again, he is a Shia Muslim, a Sunni Muslim, or a Qadiani Muslim. This outlook is working as a

corroding virus in our body and politics. . . . Can there be any justification for a new small state, like ours, to divide ourselves in this way? Can we not think that we are one nation, one people, one State, with one flag, with one ideology? But with this outlook of [the] majority section of the people it is hopelessly impossible. . . . Then there is the treatment of the non-Muslims. It has not improved yet, because the leaders – the political leaders – of the country, to make themselves popular – to acquire for themselves cheap popularity – still harp on communal slogans; they still harbor [a] communal outlook and as a result it has come to stay. Only the other day in East Bengal, on the second day of the election of the Muslim candidates, in the city of Dacca, I was surprised when the refugees supporting the Muslim League having a free fight with the United Front people rushed into some sweetmeat shops all belonging to Hindus, broke the glass panes and looted the shops and carried away the cash boxes. The Hindus had nothing to do with the election affairs of the Muslim candidates, but still this happened in the heart of Dacca city. All this was due to [the] communal virus which had been created by these leaders and which re-acts anytime that it gets any chance...⁵²⁸

Referring to the elections, B. K. Datta, on 20 April 1954, made a reference to the advertisement used by the Muslim League government in the East during the elections (see above, earlier in this section) and pointed out the names behind that advertisement. According to him, holders of top government positions, including Nur-ul-Amin, campaigned against Hindus in East Pakistan. He said, “If that continues to be the order of the day, we as Congressmen do not wish it but someday in our exasperation, we may begin to wish [this] appear about the Indian Muslims not over the signature of so many V.I.P.s but only of one person and that is Sri Jawahar Lal Nehru.”

By the 1970’s, Sheikh Mujeeb-ur-Rehman of the Awami League and Maududi of Jamat-e-Islami had initiated extending verbal challenges to each other. Before the elections in 1970 in East Pakistan, the Jamat had called for elections in the province to be carried out under army supervision. *Jasarat*, the official newspaper of Jamat-e-Islami,

⁵²⁸ Constituent Assembly (Legislature) Debates. 27 March 1954. *The Finance Bill*. Karachi. P. 708.

was articulating a fear that Hindus from Calcutta would come to Dhaka to create disturbances during the elections.⁵²⁹ *Jasarat* never admitted the exodus of Hindus from East Pakistan and alleged that India was propagating the exodus of Hindus from East Pakistan to cover up the struggle with Naxal Baris in India.⁵³⁰

Jasarat had also started spreading the idea that anything or anyone propagating political rights of East Bengali Hindus was opposed to Pakistan. For example, on 18 July 1970 *Jasarat* printed a political caricature in which it showed Mujeeb-ur-Rehman performing wedding rituals of Hindu and Muslim culture. By this time the hegemony of Islamic politics was established to the point that every idea had to be qualified as Islamic. Even Mujeeb-ur-Rehman, the leader of the Awami League, had to announce that his six points, which were facing fierce opposition from West Pakistan, were not un-Islamic.⁵³¹ The eastern wing of Jamat, headed by Professor Ghulam Azam, declared from East Pakistan that Sindhi and Bangla nationalisms were both un-Islamic. He declared that the slogan “son of the soil,” which was being presented by Bengalis and Sindhi nationalists, was also un-Islamic. In the same manner, he asserted, the slogans of *Jiye Sindh* and *Joye Bangla* were un-Islamic.⁵³²

Jamat argued that since Pakistan had been created to implement Islam, in an Islamic state there should be no discrimination between a muhajir and a local person.⁵³³

⁵²⁹ *Jasarat*, 14 July 1970.

⁵³⁰ *Jasarat*, 15 July 1970.

Also: “Mashriqi Pakistan main Mukammal Aman hai, Hindu’on ke Naql-e-Watan ki Khabar Ghalat hai.” *Jasarat*, Karachi. 12 July 1970.

⁵³¹ *Jasarat*, 20 July 1970.

⁵³² “The propaganda of Hindu exodus from East Pakistan is to extract communists of West Bengal”. *Hurriyat*, 13 July 1970.

⁵³³ *Jasarat*, 21 October 1970 & 28 October 1970.

Jassarat alleged that the people who were propagating Bangla nationalism were actually in love with All India Radio. They created the sentiment that if the concept of Muslim nationality were done away with, Pakistan would come to an end. Meanwhile Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam took credit for the Pakistan movement, the objective resolution and the constitution of 1956. JUI also dismissed the ideology of Jamat-e-Islami. Meanwhile, the Pakistan People's Party's Z. A. Bhutto was advocating his political creed of Islamic socialism.⁵³⁴

By now *Jasarat* had started to propagate that Hindus were playing a major role in each disturbance in East Pakistan. On 6 August 1970, the Muslim Leagues declared that the Awami League was an agent of the Indian government. It was argued that if the Joye Bangla movement were successful, Muslims would once again be under the dominance of Hindus.⁵³⁵ By this time, Pakistan once again was in need of a new constitution as well and, for the first time in the history of the country, the speeches of political leaders were televised. Maulana Maududi asserted that the constitution of Pakistan must be prepared according to the *Sunni* interpretation of Islam, although he left room for a *Shia* to become a president or the premier of Pakistan.⁵³⁶

Back to Tharparkar:

After the Indian occupation of parts of Tharparkar in December 1971, thousands of upper-caste and scheduled-caste Hindus were staying either in Sindh or in refugee camps in India. After the governments of India and Pakistan reached an agreement for the

⁵³⁴ *Jasarat*, 4 Aug 1970.

⁵³⁵ *Jasarat*, 9 Aug 1970.

⁵³⁶ *Jasarat*, 17 Aug 1970.

release of POWs and the return of occupied territory in West Pakistan, the Pakistani premier, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, sent a delegation of three members to bring the Thari refugees back to Tharparkar. As many people told me, the leader of the Rajput tribe in Pakistan at the time signaled to his community not to return, given the unfavorable political conditions and the witch hunting directed against members of the Rajput community that was going on at the time. As I have mentioned earlier, “Every day is not Diwali, return soon,” were his words. Many, however, decided to return. According to the National Assembly records, an estimated 55,000 people returned to their homes. Nonetheless, although the war was over, the environment of suspicion and mistrust had not disappeared from certain sectors.

In September 1972, some members of the Assembly drew the attention of the Speaker to the fact that the daily *Nawaiwaqt*, dated 13 September 1972, had alleged that some 55,000 Hindus were being settled in Sindh as Pakistani Hindus who were otherwise Indian agents. Some Members of the National Assembly argued that the Indian “agents” were being settled in Sindh so that an East Pakistan-like situation could be created in West Pakistan as well. The *amir* of Jamat-e-Islami had also raised this concern in a speech, according to one member of the assembly. However, the Speaker of the National Assembly did not want to entertain a debate on this. He stated that it was people who were originally from Sindh who were being re-settled there, and that there was no harm in it. Maulana Shah Ahmed Noorani Siddiqui, of Jamiat Ulema Pakistan, expressed concern that it should be verified if the people being resettled were Pakistani citizens or not, and it should be checked if “guerillas” were not entering Pakistan.

The ruling party members argued that this news was only based on ill intention, while some assured the Assembly that only Pakistani nationals were being allowed to come back. They asserted that the government and its agencies were being vigilant and stated that the allegation was just a hypothetical proposition. One Member of the National Assembly stated that this was exactly what had happened in East Pakistan, where Indian (read Hindu) Agents were settled, and that this had finally resulted in the loss of that part of the country. A member of the ruling party then described the situation on the ground as follows: during the war [Bangladesh War, 1971] there was no defense system for these areas, and (because of war) Muslims were in trouble; however, the majority of the population there (in Tharparkar) was Scheduled Caste and Untouchable. The Pakistan army was simply not present to defend the border. The local people took refuge wherever they could. After the Simla pact [July 2, 1972], the government had appointed a three-member delegation to bring them back to their native land, 'watan'. This news had been fabricated, according to the ruling party member, out of a habit to form a case and create a mentality that Hindus were agents in a region so as to find an excuse for an armed operation. The speaker of the Assembly again tried to convey that only the people who had fled to India during the Indian occupation were being brought back. The Speaker finally closed the debate by reiterating that the government was only resettling the people who had been residents of the areas under the Indian occupation.⁵³⁷

It was only not the Hindu politicians who were excluded from the realm of national politics in Pakistan, there were other sections of people belonging to the category

⁵³⁷ The National Assembly of Pakistan Debates. 13 September 1972. *Adjournment Motion re: Settlement of 55,000 Indian Agents in Sind As Pakistani Hindus*. P. 1341-1347.

“Hindu” the discourse/s on whom were muted in the new state. Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Hindu women are only three broad categories to refer to in this respect. In the next section, I will briefly discuss the erasure of Scheduled Castes, Tribes and Hindu women from socio- political discourse in Pakistan.

Pakistani State and the Muted Discourses: Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Hindu Women

Although the founder of Pakistan promised the return of a normal situation for Hindus in Pakistan after Partition, he didn't give any roadmap to achieve this task. In the coming years, this situation not only suffocated the political but also the existential space for the state's religious minorities. The Pakistani state, which consciously adopted an Islamic identity and aspires to remain an authentic and legitimate Islamic state,⁵³⁸ has not only alienated certain sections of its society as its citizen but has also muted discourses about certain sections of population, including especially Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Hindu women. These muted discourses are not about numbers or identity, rather it is terminating the discourses on for example Untouchability. In this section, I will briefly discuss the post-Partition break in the discourse on Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Pakistan. I take the help of interviews, to elaborate on the position of Pakistani Scheduled Castes and Tribals, conducted during my fieldwork in Sindh. As mentioned in the introduction, the work on Hindu women in Pakistan is the subject of an entire independent research project.

⁵³⁸ Express Tribune: Religious Decree: Constitution Completely in Line with Sharia. <http://tribune.com.pk/story/672064/religious-decree-constitution-completely-in-line-with-sharia/> . February 15, 2004.

Before Partition, a discourse on caste (*Varna*) and Untouchability in India had developed which debated caste and the future of the caste within Hinduism and Indian politics. The Jat-Pat-Todak Mandal (the Caste Destruction Society, founded in Lahore in 1922) is one such example.⁵³⁹ Initially the British census categorized groups in India that sat outside the caste system as ‘Depressed Classes’; from 1909 they designated members of these groups ‘Untouchables.’ As a consequence of this grouping, ‘Dalits’ (the oppressed) and ‘Adivasis’ (aboriginals), were new identities and collectivities that emerged in British colonial India. Several groups belonging to various *antyaja* communities (lower castes) from different localities came to identify themselves under these categories. They were considered to be at the bottom of social hierarchies at the same time as they had their own internal hierarchies.⁵⁴⁰ The Untouchables, in the emerging democratic parliamentary system, could not get recognized as an independent community, as their leadership would have preferred. The Untouchables wanted to be counted independently, as a minority, and not with or as part of the Hindu majority.⁵⁴¹ As Datla has further discussed, during the round table conferences, held in London, from 1931-1932, the Dalit leader Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar (1891-1956) fought to get Untouchables acknowledged as a minority community along the same lines as Muslims and Sikhs. Among the other backward communities, the British had shown special interest in uplifting of Untouchables. The colonial state had recognized the degraded

⁵³⁹ Ambedkar, B.R., K.L. Chanchreek, Saroj Prasad, and Rakesh Kumar. 1991. *Social Justice and Political Safeguards for Depressed Classes*. New Delhi: Shree Publishing House. P. 75-92.

⁵⁴⁰ Hardiman, David., *Gandhi in His Time and Ours-The Global Legacy of his Ideas*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), pp: 123-124.

⁵⁴¹ Datla 2013, 169.

conditions under which Untouchables lived and saw their treatment as an integral part of Hinduism. Different presidencies thus introduced small pieces of legislation in the second half of the 19th century that sought to upgrade the condition of the “backward” castes. These legislative moves were limited to the removal of legal barriers to education and employment. They did not actively promote an anti-untouchability program. After the 1858 declaration by Queen Victoria that the new regime would continue a policy of noninterference in native customs and religion, officials in India were reluctant to take any steps to undermine untouchability for fear of provoking accusations from the upper castes of interfering with the principles of Hinduism. Gandhi vehemently opposed the idea of a separate electorate for Untouchables, on the grounds that they were part of the organic unity of Hinduism. Untouchability was heinous but they should not be counted separately, Gandhi asserted. On the other hand, other Indian political leaders – namely, Jinnah, the Aga Khan and the representatives of Christians, Sikhs, and Anglo Indians – supported separate electorates for the Depressed Classes.

In the Roundtable Conference held in London in 1930 to discuss and resolve the place of minority communities in a future constitution for what was still being called dominion India, Ambedkar argued that the Indian intelligentsia was populated by members of upper castes. He argued that the problem of the Depressed Classes would “never be solved unless they get political power in their own hands.” He advocated that they be recognized as a minority community much in the same way that Muslims were.¹ Gandhi, on the other hand, opposed Ambedkar’s demand, making several arguments against it. In 1931, Gandhi pointed out that Muslims and Sikhs were organized but the Untouchables were not organized, and they also lacked political consciousness. He said

that if Untouchables got a separate electorate their lives would become miserable. He was of the opinion that separate electorates for Untouchables would keep them in bondage forever. Retaining their classification under the category of Hindu would require “orthodox Hindu” candidates to approach them for votes. The Minorities Committee came to a standstill in August 1932 and the British PM, Ramsay Macdonald, gave his solution to the problem in the form of the Communal Award. Muslims, Sikhs, Europeans and Christians were to receive separate electorates. The Depressed Classes would receive separate electorates in the provinces in which they were the most populous but would also be allowed to vote in general constituencies. Thus, they were given a double vote. In dismay at the communal award, Gandhi began his famous fast unto death on September 20, 1932. Intense pressure was put on Ambedkar from around the country to withdraw his claims, and he ultimately did so. This resulted in the Poona Pact, which ensured that Untouchables were retained within the general electorate of Hindus. Under the Poona Pact, Untouchables were granted 148 seats in various provincial legislatures, with 18 percent reserved for Untouchable candidates in the central legislature. But the Untouchables were not awarded a separate electorate.⁵⁴²

Pakistan, at the time of its establishment, had a significant number of Scheduled-Caste communities in both wings of the country. At the opening session of the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, on 11 August 1947, Jogendra Nath Mandal (General, East Bengal) was the only representative of Backward Communities in the Assembly. He congratulated Jinnah on his own behalf and on behalf of the eight million members of the

⁵⁴² Ibid.

Scheduled Castes of Pakistan, whom he was representing in the house. While congratulating Jinnah, he said:

I have to represent the great section of the minority communities inhabiting Pakistan, the section of people who are backward in all respects, who are backward politically, economically and socially. I feel I am not strong enough to carry out my mission, and it may be that you will always find myself alone to raise a single voice on behalf of the eight million of scheduled castes of Pakistan. . . . I shall try to raise the voice of other small minorities too ... who have got no representative here. . . . On behalf of the eight million of the Scheduled Castes and other small minorities ... I assure you our whole-hearted support ... and sincere loyalty. . . . I shall always be found asking more and more for the backward minorities. But ... unless the backward section of the people of your beloved Pakistan are raised to the level of the other people, the State of Pakistan cannot be prosperous, happy and peaceful. . . . [A]lthough my people are backward in education, although my people are backward socially and economically, they are not backward in faithfulness and service. I assure you, Sir, that the service of the millions of the Scheduled Caste people of Pakistan will be always at your disposal. . . .”⁵⁴³

Demands of loyalty were also made of the Scheduled-Caste Hindus. While discussing the nature of the polity and its nomenclature and dealing with opposition from democrats, Scheduled-Caste Hindus also faced allegations of being disloyal to the state. Rasa Raj Mandal was pointed out during the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan debate for his stance in favor of a democratic state in Pakistan. He then arose to answer the objections leveled against him, stating that he did not require a certificate of loyalty from anyone in Pakistan as he was among those who had struggled in the Pakistan movement. He stated:

I worked with the Muslim League workers during the last Sylhet Referendum and in the referendum at many times my own life was in danger but still I never flinched in doing my best for achieving Pakistan. You know, Sir, that Khulna is a Hindu majority district in East Bengal and that means Scheduled Caste majority

⁵⁴³ Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates. 11 August 1947. *Congratulations to the President*. Karachi. P. 15.

district and on behalf of the Scheduled Castes Federation I submitted a memorandum before the Bengal Boundary Commission for inclusion of Khulna in Pakistan...it was the representatives of the Bengal Scheduled Castes Federation who were the balancing factor in the pre-Partition days in maintaining the Muslim League Ministry in power at that time. So, Sir, it is obvious that if in the fight for Pakistan the Scheduled Castes had not been with Mr. Suhrawardy his Ministry would not have been there...That is why I say that I stand in no need of a certificate of loyalty to the State from anybody here outside this House within the territory of Pakistan. I will not go to anybody and beg for a certificate of loyalty. But I must say that I find here on the Government Benches certain members who fought against Pakistan but they have made their way into the Ministry and on the other hand there are several non-Muslims who fought for Pakistan and now they are maltreated....⁵⁴⁴

While referring to the environment surrounding the debate for an Islamic Constitution and the use of “Islamic” in Pakistan’s nomenclature, Mandal pointed out:

I must say that the introduction of the word “Islamic” before the “Republic of Pakistan” has filled the minds of minorities with grave misgivings[.] I must make it quite clear that I have great regard for all religions. I respect all other religions as much as I do my own. Sir, I know that Islam is a religion of most of my country men. It is not the religion of Islam, but the introduction of the word “Islamic” that has created enormous doubts and disappointment amongst the non-Muslims of Pakistan. By declaring it an Islamic State, the common people will think that since it is an Islamic Republic of Pakistan, this is a State for the Muslims there, thereby the lands and properties of non-Muslims have become the property of Muslims. This will make the existence of non-Muslims difficult, if not impossible, in Pakistan.... Although this name Islamic does not give the Muslims anything, it causes incalculable harm to the minorities and it injures their sentiments....⁵⁴⁵

The Pakistani Scheduled Castes’ narrative, as I was able to gather it during my fieldwork, shows that the Partition had changed the community only by making it politically more voiceless. As far as *adivasis* are concerned, they never got any representation on the national level. Besides a few mentions of reservations for Scheduled-Caste students in

⁵⁴⁴ Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates. 21 February 1956. *The Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan*. Karachi. P. 3381.

⁵⁴⁵ Ibid.

Pakistan and reservations in East Bengal in the 1950's in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan,⁵⁴⁶ there is nothing much one can find on this group of citizens in the government documents or national newspapers. The 1961 census indicates that there were 5,411,057 members of Scheduled Castes in Pakistan (4,993,046 in East Pakistan and 418,011 in West Pakistan.)⁵⁴⁷ Today, the majority of Pakistani Scheduled-Caste people live in two provinces, Sindh and Punjab (southern). Three major groups among the Scheduled Castes and Tribes in Tharparkar are Meghwar, Kohli and Bheel. The census of Thar and Parkar conducted in 1911, however, does not show a hierarchical order of the castes, tribes or races that inhabited Thar and Parkar at that time.⁵⁴⁸ The people enumerated as Scheduled Caste in the Pakistani census belong both to *antyaja* and to *adivasi* groupings.

The political representatives of Scheduled Castes dispute the official count of their numbers. They are of the opinion that their numbers are deliberately minimized, and that their reduced official strength in numbers is also a reason for their backwardness. Different groups and organizations calculate the numbers of Pakistani members of Scheduled Castes differently. A recent study gives the total number of Scheduled-Caste people in Pakistan as approximately 330,000, according to official statistics. But, according to the same report, the representatives and activists of the community dispute

⁵⁴⁶ Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates. 27 March, 1951. *The Central Budget-List of Demands (Inadequacy of the fund for scholarship to scheduled caste education and about the working of the fund)*. Karachi. P. 459/461.

⁵⁴⁷ Central Statistical Office. Economic Affairs Division. Ministry of Finance, Planning and Development. Government of Pakistan. 1972. *25 Years of Pakistan in Statistics: 1947-1972*. Karachi. P. 6.

⁵⁴⁸ Table VI of this census recorded Bhil, Dhed, Koli, Rajput, Vani, Lohanu and others, respectively under Hindu caste, tribe or race. See: Smyth, J.W., *Gazetteer of the Province of Sind: Thar and Parkar District.*, 1919, (2005, Sang-e Meel Publications, Lahore). P. 55.

this number and put it at around five million people. This recent study mentions that, as per the official census of 1998, the Scheduled-Caste Hindus in Pakistan are concentrated in Sindh and Punjab [on the boundary between Punjab and Sindh] provinces. In Sindh, they are concentrated in nine northern districts: Tharparkar, Umerkot, Mirpur Khas, Badin, Tando Allah Yar, Tando Muhammad Khan, Sanghar, Matiyari, Hyderabad, Ghotki, Sukkur, and Khairpur. In Punjab, the majority of Scheduled-Caste Hindus live in the districts of Rahimyarkhan and Bahawalpur. It is estimated that 89% of the Scheduled-Caste population of Pakistan lives in these 11 districts.⁵⁴⁹ The Scheduled-Caste population in Pakistan is overwhelmingly rural, as 90 percent live in villages and rural areas and only 10% in urban areas.⁵⁵⁰ According to some sources, Pakistani law lists 40 castes and tribes, including Bheel, Bagri, Balmeke, Meghwar, Kholhi, Oad and Bhangi, as Scheduled Castes. In Sindh, the Scheduled Castes make up an estimated 1.7 million bonded labourers. A presidential ordinance – Scheduled Caste (declaration) Ordinance 1957 – provided for a 6 percent quota for Scheduled Castes in government jobs, but the law was never implemented. Eventually, in the late 1990s, it was scrapped.⁵⁵¹

In Tharparkar, Kohlis are one large tribe. The Kohlis of Tharparkar are famous as hunters and as those who have a thorough knowledge of what is where in the forest. They

⁵⁴⁹ Alternative report to the UN Committee on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). 2013. “Scheduled Caste Women in Pakistan-Denied a life in Dignity and respect.” Prepared by the Pakistan Dalit Solidarity Network (PDSN) in association with the International Dalit Solidarity Network.

http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cedaw/docs/ngos/JointNGOsSubmissionPakistan_ForTheSession54.pdf. Accessed: 11/25/2013. P. 2.

⁵⁵⁰ Shah, Zulfiqar. 2007. Information on Caste Based Discrimination in South Asia. “Long Behind Schedule: A Study on the Plight of Scheduled Caste Hindus in Pakistan.”

Karachi: Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research (PILER). P. 16.

⁵⁵¹ Ibid, P. 6-7.

claim to be the best farmers in Sindh and often compare themselves favorably to Punjabi farmers. A significant number of Kohlis also reside in Punjab. Kohlis take pride in their past, when they served as the soldiers of Rajputs. After Partition, the new country did not offer them much. One Kohli person told me:

After 1947 we became more slaves, slaves of everyone. We were told to abandon Nagar— we were weak, (the security) agencies didn't even leave *atta* (flour) in our houses. Go to our huts and see how Kohli lives. You would be amazed to see what my community eats, they have nothing in their homes. As citizens of Pakistan, we are 100 years behind the rest of Pakistan. Our community is not educated enough. Out of 20 lakh only 3% are educated. No political party has ever strived for us. Both Sindh and Pakistan is responsible. We are the best agriculturists in the entire country. Kohlis and Punjabis, they both know the art of cultivation best in Pakistan. 20,000 acres of land which belongs to the President of Pakistan [now the former president] is cultivated by Kohlis. Go and ask him who has made him rich and a big man? Us!

The Bheels are another large tribe; they are mainly pastoral nomads. In the non-rainy season in Tharparkar, they migrate to the barrage areas in Sindh with their livestock and return when it begins to rain. Bheel men walk the entire day with their cattle and sleep in ditches during the night. This migration happens each year. Another significant Scheduled-Caste community is the Meghwars. Meghwars venerate *Pir Pithoro* (situated at Pithoro, Sindh) and *Rama Pir* (situated at Tando Allahyar, Sindh). They are also known for singing songs of Kabir.

The scheduled castes in Sindh hold multiple identities. While in Sindh, and especially the Barrage area, members of these groups introduce themselves as Marwari or Rajasthani, while up in the desert they are known by their castes. When being referred to outside of Sindh, they merge into the larger category of “Hindu.”

In the Pakistani Scheduled Castes’ narrative about themselves, two things are especially significant: 1) they are the original inhabitants of the land called Sindh, and 2)

they see themselves as the original races that inhabited the subcontinent before the arrival of “Aryan” people. Some of the activists who agreed to speak with me spoke about Ambedkar, Buddhism and Dalit identity, while others referred to themselves as ‘Derawari’ (Dravidians), the original and direct descendants of the Indus Valley Civilization. Sindh has an important place in this narrative as the hub of one of the world’s ancient civilizations. A majority of people I spoke to, after asserting their Dravidian identity, also strongly allied themselves with Sindhi identity and politics. “We are Sindhis,” or “We prefer to be Sindhi,” they would say. Their quest is to find political space and validity under any of these labels. This is a difficult task for the Scheduled Castes of Sindh, as they have to overcome many obstacles to achieve this goal.

The effort to be appropriated into a “Dravidian” identity takes their narrative and search for identity beyond Thar, Sindh and Pakistan, and knits them together with a pan-subcontinental identity. The starting point of this identity is the Indus Valley Civilization and the ancient ruins of Harrapa and Mohenjo Daro, understood to be the original homes of Dravidians. Like other claims of origins, this one involves the assertion that ancient gods established Dravidian civilization on earth. A Kohli man told me,

The Sindhu valley was called “Indu” – [The river] Indus was initially Indu darya [river] and then gradually it became “sindhu” darya. The banks of this river have traces of famous Harappa and Mohenjo Daro civilizations. The people who inhabited those civilizations, they were agriculturists. This civilization was initiated by Shiva and Parvati and was the best civilization in the world. [Then pointing to himself, he said] We are those people [the descendants of the Indus Valley civilization] and we don’t need a certificate for that from anyone.

The Scheduled Castes are not well known in Pakistan outside Sindh or southern Punjab.

The same Kohli person told me that the Pakistani government was ignorant of their

history when it called them Hindu. He told me:

A long time ago, when the Aryans attacked India and occupied cities, the native people receded to the jungles. Then the Persians came here and they saw that those living in the forest were black people, black beauties, so they called them Indu, from Indu it became Industan and finally Hindustan. Foreign conquerors kept coming to India. If you have a look at a map, from Gawadar⁵⁵² to Karakorum, you will find a chain of mountains. From Karakorum to Assam there are mountains. The subcontinent is like a valley with no passage to enter, but yet it attracted Ghori, who invaded India, looted all the gold, picked up thousands of girls and sold them in bazars for takas. Partap Singh toppled the history of India. So were there no people in India? There were, but they were enemies [Aryans, so they did not fight back].

A Meghwar person told me that people in other provinces of Pakistan don't have any knowledge about Bheels, Meghwars and Kohlis.

They [Pakistani Muslims] don't know if we are Muslims or Hindus. They only know about it when we tell them. In Pakistan, all Hindu panchayats are dominated by upper-caste Hindus. The government also gives jobs to upper-caste people. Our community is 90%. Educated people do not mind us but sometimes people tell us: *aap hindu hain, to phir you aur phir woon, aap aisa kartey hain aur app waisa kartey hain.* (You are Hindu, so this and that; you do this and you do that).

One person who introduced himself to me as a Marwari said:

The Marwari community is oppressed. People [society] usually do not know about our condition. Only those among Muslims who are closer to us know about our problems. The entire fabric and machinery of our society is Muslim. If the Chief Justice is not getting justice, then why care about us? When Quaid-e-Azam said after the Partition [the speaker's brother, who was sitting next to him, almost started reciting Jinnah's inaugural speech in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan on 11th of August 1947]: "You are free, you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your churches." Complete freedom was announced, and white in the flag represents minorities. Then why do we get this treatment? We have never been to India, and we have never owned it. After Partition we didn't move to

⁵⁵² Gwadar – Balochistan (southwestern province of Pakistan).

India. We own this land, we are the native people of this land. Then how come we are treated like aliens?

Jinnah was quoted again and again by all communities I approached as legitimating their presence in Pakistan, but comparisons with India were drawn as well when it came to the state of Untouchable people in Pakistan. One person told me:

We salute Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, for Dalits of India got their rights because of him. Today, in India, a 70% quota is allocated for Dalits. The posts of Deputy Commissioner or S.P's positions are reserved for Dalits. Quaid-e-Azam's philosophy and words were buried with him. We are happy that Pakistan came into being. Whether we got something or not, the Indian government was forced to give rights to Dalits. UP's Chief Minister is Mayawati, an *achoot* woman. Do you see how much of Hindu mythology is related to that region, and an *acchoot* woman becomes Chief Minister? It's a big thing. Salaam to Mayawati. Dalits have reservations in India but we don't have them here in Sindh and in Pakistan because our elected representatives forget us when they go forward. We eat chilies at home and some people, when they move up, get access to sharab, kebab and chicken. They forget us and our condition.

Referring to shifts in Pakistani politics since the 1950's, this man told me, "We had reservations and reserved seats in the 1956 constitution, but then those seats were given to Hindus, who became a minority from the general category of the electorate. What do they [Pakistani state] mean by minority? Reservation is always for backward castes and not for a minority. They want to keep us weak and backward."

Some Scheduled-Caste activists have tried to push their struggle for human rights by adopting the nomenclature "Dalit," taking the lead from the Dalit literature produced in India. The person who introduced Dalit literature/thought to Sindhi Scheduled Castes was Khurshid Qaimkhani (died. Jan 2013), whose family migrated from Rajasthan, India, in 1947 and who was a veteran of the 1971 war. He is credited with introducing Dalit literature to the Scheduled-Caste activists who worked with him. He was also a pioneer

of the Pakistan Dalit Forum and produced the leading work on Pakistani Scheduled Castes (basically the nomadic castes) in Sindhi, entitled *Bhatkandar Nasala* (2008), later translated into Urdu as *Bhatakti Naslain* (The Wandering Generations/Races). This work enjoys an exalted position among Pakistani Scheduled Castes. Qaimkhani's work tries to cover all oppressed and marginalized sections of Sindhi society, including the descendants of African slaves in Sindh. He used the word '*Khanabadosh*' (the wandering/gypsy) for the vagabond groups of people who are not assimilated in the city settlements, and the word "gypsies" for the gypsy groups of Europe, presenting the idea that the European gypsies were once inhabitants of North India, and they migrated to flee the persecution of upper-caste people. The Roma of Europe, the people and their language, are named after the River Roma, which was a river in Western India that flowed where the Luni now flows. These gypsy tribes are not integrated into societies anywhere in the world.

In the propagation of a Dalit identity, images of Ambedkar, the King Priest from Mohenjo Daro, and the dancing girl become important visual markers of this identity: the King Priest, wearing a shawl with Sindhi Ajrak print, and the dancing girl, wearing an arm full of bangles as Thari women do, play an important role in contemporary Sindhi Scheduled-Caste identity, which merges this identity into Sindhi nationalist identity.

The 1956 constitution of Pakistan abrogated Untouchability but it is still practiced in parts of Sindh. This practice cuts across communities in Tharparkar, being found among Muslims and Hindus both. For Scheduled-Caste activists, getting Untouchability eliminated is a way of reclaiming their humanness. Regarding Untouchability, a Kohli person told me:

We, the native people, only got Untouchability and discrimination. We are not even considered human beings. I ask, why? What have we done? Are we not humans? *Kia hamarey haath aankh paon naheen?* (Do we not have limbs and eyes?). Beti (daughter), we have fought to start eating at hotels or to even get *chai*. We started our own hotels, and as a result these people lost business. It was under coercion and fear of losing business that these people have started selling us food. After many protests, they don't reject us anymore for a roti (a meal).

The Meghwar community is struggling hard to equip itself with education. A person from the Meghwar community who holds an MBA told me:

Wherever we get a chance we advance and move forward. We are a *sadhu* [good, avoids conflicts] community - we don't have many conflicts. In the past, my community has faced Untouchability and therefore we have accepted the challenge to change. Once I was traveling and I saw my teacher traveling by the same bus. I wanted to shake hands with him, but he didn't take my hand – he said, “You are coming from the village, so I can't shake hands now.” Our utensils used to be separate in hostels. Now everything is changed. 10 or 12 years ago people would not eat together here, even in Mithi, on official meetings. Then we introduced disposable cups. From time to time, some other issue pops up, but we pursue our cause.

This person told me how difficult it was for the Meghwar community to achieve the goal of education:

Our chairman union council was a Muslim by the name of Shah. He wouldn't let anyone [from the Meghwar community] attend the school. My cousin had to run away and studied in other villages. After graduation, he did a teacher's course and then returned to the village. Only then did Shah come to know that he had become an educated person.

Untouchability and segregation lead to the lowest levels of respect. An Advocate from the Bheel community who also worked for the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan in Sindh told me how important it was for Dalits to equip themselves with law degrees and to become professionals [professional persona]. He explained the conditions they face as follows:

If we go to the police station and do not add 'advocate' with our names, we are not treated with respect. The usual response of police officers is: "accha, you are a Bheel, or a Kohli, or a Meghwar...." So when we add 'advocate' with our names, at least the tone changes. I remember when I was a child, I won a position in the school. When I was called for the prize-giving ceremony, the headmaster refused to shake hands with me. He said, "I have to go for prayers in 10 minutes and if I shake hands with you, I wouldn't be able to pray, so please don't shake hands." So if an educated headmaster can show this attitude, how would the illiterate masses behave? In hotels, Dravid people don't share utensils with other communities. We also can't sit on chairs in front of influential people.

Some people told me that the changing and faster means of transportation and communication are bringing about changes in the entire social fabric of Tharparkar. Before metaled roads were built, Tharparkar was a closed and difficult region, and it was segregated from the Barrage area. Now one can go to Hyderabad (in the Barrage area) and return the same day on a bus. A Meghwar man working for a local NGO told me about his school days in the following words:

During our childhood days, whenever we traveled from Islamkot to Naukot, we always brought our water with us. Because if it got used up, that was all there was. It was hard to get water from other villages [because there they would be recognized as untouchables]. Now some change has occurred. This is what people knew about their varan [varna], but now technology is bringing change. Now everyone owns cell phones. Before, the one who owned a phone was powerful. We used to travel on kekras, and there used to be only 6 or 7 seats on a kekra. Upper-caste people, traditionally, would occupy those seats. Nowadays we travel on buses, and everyone is equal since you cannot reserve seats on the buses. And no one can say, "You can't sit here." For the Scheduled-Caste people, status is now changing because technology and the infrastructure are changing there in Tharparkar. The young generation of upper-caste people is also changing their mindsets. Older people would still say, "han Bheel, han Meghwar, han Kohli," but who cares now? It's a process of transformation even for Meghwar. Some Meghwar don't go to schools but some attended and then from *Thar* they moved to Karachi and from Karachi, abroad.

For the optimists, change is inevitable:
No one can stop this change. First people used to travel on camels, and it would take them a week to reach Sindh, or people would migrate during a drought in search of food and water. The Barrage area people's treatment of these refugees

was not decent. But now, things are changing and *Thari* people in villages have TVs and they have educated themselves in Urdu while watching the programs.

For some, by contrast, change is still out of reach. A Kohli person expressed his feeling of helplessness to me in the following words:

We complain only to God about our situation. When we look at the bungalows of Islamabad and Karachi, we say, “(Bhagwan) you gave *sukh* (happiness) to some and *dukh* (suffering) to others.” We only complain to Him. I feel angry. At times, I want to eat myself when I get angry. Why are we being discriminated against, what have we done? We believe in him in heavens, one day we will finally become *Insan*, human beings. A *haari* is not considered an *Insan*, we are slaves.

Concluding: What does it mean to be a “Minority”?

In the preceding chapters, I have tried to show the processes of minoritization by which the post-colonial state, Pakistan, spun and keeps spinning the religious minorities out of its socio-political milieu. The title, or the political status ascribed to religious minorities, i.e. “minority”, in itself is problematic. Local Hindu communities in Tharparkar showed resentment and dislike towards the use of the word “minority” for them. For them, they are the local people, natives, sons of the soil, and attaching the word “minority” to their identity is a form of degradation. For example, a Rajput leader described the situation of his community in the following words: “Now, people come here and see how the Hindu is living in Tharparkar and how the majority Muslim is treating the Hindu. I oppose and disagree with these terminologies. In this area, we were never in a minority; rather, Muslims were a minority.” He then asked me why Pakistan had been created, and then answered the question himself:

Pakistan was created because Jinnah Sahib, when he was in the Congress, needed to have a guarantee from Hindus who were in the majority that how they would give them [Muslims] protection. Caste or creed did not matter to Jinnah.

Jinnah was concerned about the [Muslim] minority. He asked the Congress leadership, "How are you going to give us protection?" This was his question. They did not answer him, and he opted for a state for minority where a minority could live. Pakistan was thus created for a minority; it is a country for minorities. [Then he continued telling me] There is no doubt that today 97% of Pakistan is Muslim - today they have become majority but yesterday they were not a majority. We [Rajput Hindus] opted for Pakistan, we stood for Pakistan, and we have not migrated here. We are sons of the soil; the Hindu is the son of the soil and has stayed here after the Partition.

A Bhatti Rajput man told me:

After the Partition, when Sindh became part of Pakistan, Pakistan became an Islamic nation and Muslims starting telling Hindus, "We are starting to be the political leaders here from now on." They told us that they would be members and chairmen of council unions. It became very difficult for Rajputs even to continue living in Tharparkar.

Since the ruling elite and notables of community had departed in 1971, the community experienced a drastic decline in societal value. The Bhatti Rajput man continued telling me:

Today we have no value, we are being demoted to second-class citizens in our own Des, Janam Bhoomi. A policy was made somewhere, by people who wanted to become MPA (Members of Provincial Assembly) here, to limit the role of Rajputs in Tharparkar, and Rajputs migrated. Those who migrated, migrated for the sake of safety. Today our community is spread across Rajasthan and Gujarat. Rana Chander Singh (father of Rana Hameer Singh, the founder of the Pakistan Hindu Party) had good relations with the government of Pakistan. There was no case against him [alluding to the case against Lachman Singh that made him leave his hometown]. Chander Singh stayed here, with his land, with his dharti and with his people.

He told me that alienating Rajputs from regional and national politics has made them a minority and thus a weaker group in the region. He said, "We are not being given a share in politics; we have become a minority here."

Things changed drastically again for the Pakistani Hindu community after the

introduction of the separate electorate in the 1973 constitution.⁵⁵³ This made the community completely aloof, alienated from mainstream national politics. Hindu politicians were cut away from the Muslim voters in their constituencies, and Muslim politicians did not have to keep in touch for the purpose of elections since they didn't require the Hindus' vote.

Now we do not have any part in politics - we only cast a vote. We are Rajputs. This *dharti* [land] is our *mata* [mother] and no child wishes bad for its mother. We have shed blood for this land. We have relatives here, Muslims and Hindus both. Muslims in India even plan atomic things, but Rajputs here do not go beyond matric. We are simple farmers and are scared of sending our sons away to urban centers for education. The constitution of Pakistan bars a "non-Muslim" from becoming head of state.

On my question to him regarding the right of a Hindu to become PM and President, he just laughed and kept thinking for a while, then said: "Imagine, what if two men were sitting in a room and you brought roti (food-bread) and said, One can eat it but the other cannot? [The other one] would naturally like to taste it."

At the provincial and national level, the Rajput community is without any legislator because the number of [members in the] Rajput community is not large enough to win them a seat. "So whom do you prefer to vote for?" I asked him. "We prefer to vote for Arbabs (a local Rajput Muslim caste) because they are Rajputs and our relatives."

A significant fallout of the minoritization of Pakistani Hindus is the effect on Hindu women. Before Partition, the Sind Legislative Assembly had one Hindu woman representative who pressed on Hindu women's issues. Pakistani Hindu women suffered as much as men from alienation from home and homeland, not only in the wake of

⁵⁵³ Youtube: Rana Chander Singh on Separate Electorate on PTV.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLar_cXEpOs. Accessed: 10/24/13.

Partition but also during the Indo-Pak wars of 1965 and 1971. Some women were separated from their families after being married off. This is true of Sodha Rajput women, for example, who are married off to men of the Jadeja tribe in India and thus are separated from their natal homes by a border as well. At times Sodha women are abandoned by their in-laws. There is a slight shift in this trend now, as increased expenditures make it difficult to find a groom in India and therefore some Sodha parents arrange their daughters' marriages in Pakistan. Still, the fate of girls in India, as well as those who cannot find appropriate matches in Pakistan, worries many. A study on Pakistani Hindu women, including Dalit women, is another area of exploration which demands an independent study.

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