

# HISTORY OF PARTITION OF INDIA

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Origin and Development of the Idea of Pakistan

Volume 1

**K.K. AZIZ**

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## PREFACE

This book has been in the making for over 20 years, and yet in its present form it represents only one-third of the original project in scope and size. A constellation of factors has conspired to cause the delay and the diminution. I don't feel free to spell out the nature and dimensions of all the obstructions put in my way, but a partial explanation can be attempted.

Soon after completing a study of the two-nation theory in 1963 (*The Making of Pakistan: A Study in Nationalism*, Chatto and Windus, London, 1967), I had started thinking, in a vague, irregular, orderless and desultory sort of way, about investigating the origins of the idea of a division of India on "communal" lines. In the November of the same year I moved from Karachi to Khartoum, and for some time all my attention and energies were absorbed by the process of adjusting to a totally different society, making a new home, and lecturing at what was then a university of a deservedly high reputation.

The Sudanese I found to be a mentally healthy people, relaxed in their ways of life and thought, and honest to themselves and to others. An inbred reserve and an instinctive dignity marked their conduct and behaviour. They were good nationalists, but did not talk so much about their country. They were good patriots, but did not parade their love of the land on every occasion. Nor did they show off their religion in florid and unnecessary gestures. They talked less of Islam and practised more of it. They lived Islam. There were no *mullas* to replace a vibrant and telling religion with sterile dogmatism. No sects divided them, no theologians split them, no schools broke the unity and simplicity of their faith.

This contrast between the even and placid (but by no means passive) tenor of the Sudanese society and the hysterical nationalism and snarling sectarianism of the society that I had just left set me thinking. I spent some time in acquainting myself with modern Sudanese history and discussing its various aspects with well-informed scholars and intellectuals. When they questioned me

in return, the burden of their inquiry was the background of the 1947 partition of India and the creation of Pakistan. The more perceptive among them were interested less in the general political and constitutional developments preceding the partition than in the whys and whereofs of the separation. The usual Pakistani argument that the Muslims could not live together with the Hindus in one country did not convince them, partly because of their own religious configuration (though the non-Muslim South was soon to erupt into a long-drawn out rebellion), partly because of their attachment to an Arab nationalism which did not distinguish between a Muslim and Christian Arab, and partly (perhaps principally) because they had no means of acquiring even a modicum of knowledge about Pakistan, thanks to our inactive scholars and indifferent diplomats.

The first stirrings to attempt a history of the idea of Pakistan appeared in my mind during these discussions with my Sudanese friends. I had already written something on the political situation obtaining in imperial India, and was planning several more books on the same theme. But a history of the idea caught my fancy in 1964, and I began to read around the subject. A concentrated spell of study on this topic was not possible, as I had to write other books, there was virtually nothing on India in the Khartoum libraries, and I was lecturing in an entirely different field (principles of political science, comparative government in Europe, political parties and pressure groups, and the like).

After more than three years of reading and making notes I felt that I could attempt a preliminary draft in the winter of 1967-68. This was done, but I was not satisfied with the result. There were far too many gaps in my knowledge. On my request the University of Khartoum granted me a sabbatical term consecutive to the summer vacation, so that in 1969 I was able to spend six months of undisturbed calm in Switzerland, re-writing the rough draft, putting in some of the missing pieces, and enlarging the treatment. I was pleased with the progress made, though the new manuscript was still far from being anything worth sending to a publisher. But it was not its imperfections which stopped further work on it. Rahmat Ali stood squarely in the way, and refused to move until I had dealt with him first.

The writing of the first complete draft had brought me up against the realization that Rahmat Ali occupied the central

position in the origin, development and consummation of the idea of Pakistan. So overpowering was the impact of his opinions and so seminal his role in modern history that I set the manuscript aside and began to study his life and ideas more closely. For the next two years I concentrated on Rahmat Ali, working in Khartoum and Cambridge, and from 1972 onwards the two books occupied my time and attention in almost equal proportions. The story of the writing of Rahmat Ali's life is related in the preface to my forthcoming *Rahmat Ali: A Biography* (Heidelberg and Lahore).

As far as the present work is concerned, the draft written in Switzerland received further additions and emendations in 1973. After that for several years I had no opportunity to re-consider it, not to speak of completing it. I returned to Pakistan in December 1973, on the request of the Government of Pakistan, to establish and run the National Commission on Historical and Cultural Research. The increasing volume and pressure of official work, the pains of adjustment to new surroundings after a decade of living abroad, and the absence of adequate libraries combined to deprive me of any time, energy or inclination for serious academic work. Besides other imperative calls on my attention, there was the agony of dealing with problems created by a bureaucracy whose ignorance, insensitiveness, *hubris* (which never led to Nemesis), insolence and inefficiency were as great as its assumed authority and airs of infallibility, and the exercise of that authority a cardinal article of its faith.

In 1977 a bitter personal crisis and the consequent breakdown of my health overwhelmed all faculties of consideration and reflection, and my pen and I were strangers for several years. I was forced to go back to Khartoum in 1978 to earn a living, but it was not till 1982 that I felt normal enough in nerve and flesh to resume my writing. The old manuscript, by now a faithful companion, was then taken in hand and entirely re-cast and re-written in February-July 1982 in Khartoum and Heidelberg. In the winter semester of 1983-84 I taught a course based on the book at the South Asia Institute of the University of Heidelberg. As every teacher-writer knows, this exposition of my findings and conclusions before an educated and well-informed audience and the ensuing discussion and exchange of ideas clarified several points and taught me, not for the first time, to realize the difference in perspective and

formulation between expressing an idea in writing in the study and expounding and defending it in speech in the lecture-hall. This necessitated a further revision of the manuscript, which was undertaken in the autumn of 1984.

Had conditions been normal this book should have been completed in 1972 and published soon after. But life is not always normal, and sometimes there intervenes a period when it is a sentence without pardon and amnesties. Such a spell overwhelmed me in 1977, and it took me a long time to gather all the parts of my mind together which the event had knocked apart. There were also other restraints on my publishing anything at all of which I am not free to speak at present. Indeed, the loom of time weaves fine and coarse.

In addition to other troubles, the person in whose care I had left my private collection of books, journals, papers and press-clippings when I was forced to leave Pakistan refused to send it to me either in Khartoum or in Heidelberg, in spite of innumerable requests, appeals and entreaties, and although I had arranged the required export permit and removed all other impediments in the way of its dispatch. This added immensely to my burden. I had to now, once again, seek, locate, read and take notes from books which I owned but could not reach. Some of the documentary material I had collected in the last 15 years, especially the files of cuttings from Indian newspapers and old journals, was not readily available in any European public or private library. I could have augmented the evidence presented in this work had I gained access to my own collection.

Another obstruction of the same kind was created by the National Commission on Historical and Cultural Research by its suppression or at least refusal to send me a copy of my own book which it had undertaken to publish. Long before I left Islamabad, the Commission had accepted for publication my 2-volume collection of documents on the condition of the Muslims in the Congress-ruled Hindu-majority provinces in 1937-39. My letters and reminders to the publication officer and the Chairman of the Commission (and, when its status was lowered and it was put under a mere Director, to this officer) regarding the book were not even acknowledged. After waiting for three years I wrote to the Minister of Education who was the controlling authority of the Institute, and the letter was sent through a close

friend who was then in the Cabinet. There was no response. A dozen reminders were sent to the Minister (the last one a month ago), but without effect. To this day I don't know if the book has been published. Every historian of modern Muslim India knows how effectively this taste of Congress rule goaded the Muslims on to the idea of Pakistan. I have not been able to deal with this important aspect of the subject or to support my assertions with contemporary documents relevant to the topic because the Institute lacked the ordinary courtesy (even a sense of its contractual obligation) to send me copies of my own publication, or even to inform me that the book was or was not brought out for "reasons of state". Common decency is indeed an uncommon virtue.

This list of sombre and disheartening factors is not yet complete. The art (or science) of history is not practised seriously in Pakistan. We do not have an authentic and reliable biography of any of the Indian Muslim makers of the idea of Pakistan studied in this book. Muslim leaders have shown no disposition to remember and record their own part in the public life of their own day or to chronicle the activities and achievements of others. Private papers are a rarity. With the single and happy exception of Khaliqzaman, no leader has left an autobiography, journal or diary. The dark corners of our history (and there are so many of these) remain hidden, and there appears to be little chance that our journey into them will be lightened up by any spark or flame, glow or gleam, ray or beam. Are we doomed to roam the hazy corridors of our past and grope for clues to our identity? In the absence of relevant source material I have not been able to answer substantial questions on several points. For example, why did Mawlana Muhammad Ali fail to opt for a separatist solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem in spite of his repeated statements in support of the separationist sentiment? Why did the Kheiri brothers propose a partition in 1917? And, above all, why did the Muslim League top leadership exhibit such stubborn reluctance to accept the idea of Pakistan and the name as its policy?

In the hope of receiving some new information from somebody who had it, in 1969 I drafted a letter to the editor containing ten specific questions. It was published in six national dailies (*Dawn*, *The Pakistan Times*, *The Pakistan Observer*, *Jang*, *Hurriyat* and *Tamir*) on 18 October. There was barely any response. Simultaneously I was exploring another avenue. I wrote personal letters to

237 persons in Pakistan between December 1969 and December 1973. The list of the addressees included all university professors of history who had earned doctorates in or were teaching modern Indian Muslim history, some of their junior colleagues, heads of all research organizations with an interest in national history, senior journalists who were writing copiously on Pakistan's history in English and Urdu newspapers and magazines, politicians who had witnessed the nationalist struggle, sons and descendants of some of the persons mentioned in the book, everyone who was expected to have some knowledge of the subject, and one gentleman who had actually prepared one of the major schemes discussed here (Dr. Afzaal Husan Qadri). A mere 28 wrote back to me, of whom only 12 sent me information which was both relevant and accurate. Dr. Qadri did not reply. During my Chairmanship of the National Commission on Historical and Cultural Research (1973-78) in Islamabad I tried to meet more scholars and to create in them an interest in what I was doing. But nothing could pierce their armour of indifference. Such unconcern smote me to silence, and the only feeling I had was one of chagrin at my apparent inability to move others with my own convictions or their real needs.

This long tale of woes should not be construed as a plea to look kindly at the shortcomings of my work, but as a warning to other scholars who might be toying with the idea of writing something serious on national history with the help of Pakistani scholars and resources.

The circumstances listed above also affected the original plans and dimensions of this book. Between 1966 and 1970 I had planned an extensive and comprehensive treatment of the subject running to four massive volumes. The first was to provide a substantial and detailed history of Muslim politics in India between 1858 and 1940, and was to be entitled "The Problem". The second, to be called "In Search of a Solution", was to furnish a full description and an analysis of all the suggestions, plans and schemes prescribed to solve the Muslim problem. The third, to be given the title of "The Solution", was to be a thorough study of the Lahore Resolution. The fourth was to put together all the major and significant documents and declarations used in the second volume. Measured by the notes I had taken from the literature I had read and the unpublished sources I had consulted,

and the documents I had collected, each volume was expected to be about 1,000-page long. The title of the entire work was to be *A History of the Idea of Pakistan*. But this ambitious programme had to be given up for the reasons outlined above. I must confess that it hurt me a great deal to abandon the original plan and to leave unutilized the bulk of the source material I had collected at so much cost to my time, health and pocket. But the chain of harsh necessity dragged me to this decision. How long could I go on ploughing a lonely furrow? The present book is only volume II of the projected series, but now it must perforce stand alone in its own right and self-sufficiency. I wish I could present the reader with the whole work, but, alas! life is like a man with a chalice of wine in his hands and a chain around his feet.

This book was in the press when I came across three recent publications. Mr. Sarfraz Husain Mirza sent me from Lahore his compilation of documents on the foundation, activities and achievements of the Majlis-i-Kabir-i-Pakistan (*Tasawwur-i-Pakistan say Qarardad-i-Pakistan tak*, Pakistan Study Centre, University of the Punjab, Lahore, 1983), containing a valuable 42-page introduction by himself. Professor Rothermund lent me his copy of Stanley Wolpert's *Jinnah of Pakistan*, and Mr. Najam Sethi presented me with a copy of Ayesha Jalal's *The Sole Spokesman*. How much I wish I had been able to use these books in the writing of my own! But it is gratifying to discover that all the three authors support fully and illustrate amply my findings about the very minor and subordinate role of the Muslim League in the growth of the idea of Pakistan. Both Miss Jalal and Professor Wolpert write with authority derived from the use of the All India Muslim League Papers, the Jinnah Papers, and the British Archives. Mr. Mirza reprints documents and correspondence which pinpoint the subsidiary role of the Muslim League and its policy-making organs. They confirm what I have discovered in and construed from an entirely different corpus of sources. As Mr. Fateh Muhammad Nasib wrote in his review of Mr. Mirza's book, it is now incumbent upon the historians of Pakistan to go further back than the Lahore Resolution in order to realize the historical untenability of their standard thesis that the Pakistan movement amounted to nothing except the constitutional struggle of the All India Muslim League under Jinnah's leadership and that Pakistan owes its creation to one political party alone (*South Asian Studies*, Lahore,

July 1984).

But such myths die hard. When professors write timidly and dobtiously or not at all and official textbooks contain more fancies and untruths than facts, history is bound to be borne on the wing of legend. Everybody writes on the Pakistan movement who has energy, a set of opinions to plead and an ambition to see his name in print. Everybody writes confidently, insistently, speedily, voluminously, passionately, shrilly, even fanatically, but not truthfully. Undaunted by the brutal reality of facts, he continues to use his rich arsenal of epigrams, slogans, invectives and stereotypes. One marvels at the fossil fridity of his prejudices and assertions. Dates are wrong. Facts are inaccurate. Documents are misquoted and garbled. Texts are tampered with. Secondary sources are preferred to the elementary. Conclusions are unsound and false. He trips and stumbles, he reasons in a circle, he offers controvertible arguments with sophistical efficiency, he takes the shadow for the substance — with only one aim in view: to prove his point. A complete collection of these errors of fact and logic will fill a volume of respectable size. I have illustrated all kinds of such aberrations with a few hundred quotations in my text and notes.

These flaws and fallacies, passing from book to book, circulating from newspaper to newspaper, repeated by writers who do not know better and by scholars who should have known better, are in the danger of becoming history. Both the general writer and the historian bow too much to the idols of the market place. But to hold strong views and feel deeply about what is outside the range of one's knowledge is not to qualify oneself to be a historian. The historical muse of Pakistan wears a gaudy apparel, gestures without elegance or effect, and is either mute or speaks in strident accents. Platitudes worn smooth by years are presented as scholarship. Emotion usurps reason, and a shadow falls between the reality and history. In this calmour of tongues inflamed rhetoric takes the field. What can one do? It is impossible to debate with an exclamation mark.

In this book I have tried to peel away those encrustations of legend and myth and assumption and fantasy and plain lie that cannot find confirmation in the evidence of the original word or of the trustworthy contemporaries.

I am aware of the slight anachronism in the title of the book: there was no idea of Pakistan before 1933, or, if the Muslim

League thinking is accepted, before 1940, or even some later date, as the Lahore Resolution avoided deliberately the use of the word "Pakistan". But a technically precise and fully self-explanatory title would have run to something like this: A History of the Idea of and the Plans for Partitioning, Dividing, Rearranging and Readjusting the Territories of the Sub-continent of India aimed at Safeguarding the Rights and the Communal and National Sentiments and Aspirations of the Muslim Population. Such a clumsy and impossible title would have been a joke. I hope the theologians of style will overlook the transgression of an ordinary mortal.

The first complete draft of this book was written in the gloriously-situated village of La Forclaz in the Canton of Vaud in Switzerland, where my wife and I lived in desirable comfort and rural quiet in the commodious chalet belonging to our good friends Mon. Leon Badoux and Madame Aimee Badoux. The other half was composed in the well-appointed and roseflower-covered apartment built on the edge of Lac Lemman in Clarens and rented out to us by Mon. W. Altorfer. I thank the Badoux family and Mon. Altorfer for providing ideal surroundings and creature comforts for writing a book. The final manuscript has been prepared at the South Asia Institute of the University of Heidelberg, where I am enjoying more than the usual German hospitality combined with excellent research facilities. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the favours bestowed upon me by the Director and staff of the Institute.

The late Professor Aziz Ahmad of the University of Toronto read parts of an early draft of the book in Islamabad, and my friend Professor Dr. Dietmar Rothermund of the South Asia Institute has been good enough to go through the entire final typescript with enviable patience. I remember Aziz Ahmad's kindness with pleasure and pray for his soul. I thank Dietmar for his interest in my work and for all the fine things he has been doing for me; his consideration and solicitude continue to make my academic and personal life rewarding.

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All my thanks and acknowledgements must be taken as a debt owed and (but partially) discharged, not as a shuffling off of responsibility upon other shoulders. For every fact chronicled here I have cited the original word or contemporary testimony, and every opinion and speculation, for which I take full responsibility, is based on historical evidence.

All translations from Urdu, Persian, Arabic, French and German are my own, unless the context indicates otherwise.

The greatest debt that I have owed, and not merely in the writing of this book alone, is to my wife. As is her wont and grace whenever I am writing, she has not only done all the tiring and arduous chores of copying notes from books and periodicals, comparing what I type with the original, filing all notes and papers, arranging all documents and sources, but, in this case, achieved the almost impossible feat of making me forget that a half-blind man can work as much as the one with both eyes unimpaired. During the two odd years in which this book and Rahmat Ali's biography were finally written only one of my eyes was functional and my general health was far from normal. In these circumstances, she directed and controlled my daily routine with such a firm though loving and tactful hand that I made the happy discovery that there were more working hours in a day than I had imagined possible in my state of health and ocular disability. The dedication of this book to her is only a puny effort on my part to clothe in borrowed numbers a conviction that lies beyond all phrasing. Words caress the contour of our thought, they don't mould it.

K.K. Aziz

South Asia Institute,  
University of Heidelberg,  
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University College Library, University of London

K K Aziz

## ABBREVIATIONS

AIKC	All India Khilafat Conference
AIMC	All India Muslim Conference
AIML	All India Muslim League
CMG	<i>The Civil and Military Gazette</i>
col(s)	column, columns
comp.	compiled, compiler
ed.	editor, edited, edition
eds.	editors
enl.	enlarged
FI	<i>The Friend of India</i>
fn.	footnote
IAR	<i>Indian Annual Register</i>
INC	Indian National Congress
IQR	<i>Indian Quarterly Register</i>
MG	<i>Manchester Guardian</i>
M.L.	Muslim League
n.d.	not dated
n.p.	no publisher mentioned
n.p.p.	no place of publication given
NW	<i>Nawa-i-Waqt</i>
NWFP	North-West Frontier Province
PNM	Pakistan National Movement (Cambridge)
pseud.	pseudonym
pub.	published
rep.	reprint, reprinted
rev.	revised
RTC	Round Table Conference(s)
TET	<i>The Eastern Times</i>
TMM	<i>The Madras Mail</i>
TPT	<i>The Pakistan Times</i>
TSI	<i>The Star of India</i>
TTI	<i>The Times of India</i>

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## PROLOGUE

In the evolution of every idea we find two tendencies running side by side: one negative, the other positive. Often it is difficult to determine which came first and which came later; sometimes, it is irrelevant. What is important is to remember that both contribute to the development, and to guard ourselves against the common inclination to dismiss the negative aspect as insignificant, shallow and ineffectual. Language is an instrument fashioned by man to aid his expression; but at times the creation dominates the creator, and we permit linguistic definitions and symbols, made strictly for our convenience, to interfere with our thought processes. But language was made for man, not man for the language. It is not difficult to lose sight of this truth; it is easy to run after the form and ignore the content.

In the case of the Indian Muslims, the two tendencies appeared during the same period. It was soon after the revolt of 1857 that the two sentiments began to agitate the Muslim mind. There was a fear of Hindu rule and a feeling of separateness from other Indians. The first grew out of the loss of Muslim sovereignty over India and the emergence of an alien power under whose aegis the principle of majority rule was to be gradually applied.<sup>1</sup> This was a negative factor, but one of incalculable force. Man is capable of doing anything out of fear, and ten thousand years of civilization will not stand in his way. Fear has immense power to move men; for men love security and want to keep what history, accident, the strength of their arms, the luck of their stars or the favour of God has given them. So the Muslim decided to stand against the coming of a Hindu rule with the tenacity of the primitive and the sophisticated argument of the modern. Every weapon in the arsenal of human ingenuity was to be put to use to oppose, blunt, avert and finally to destroy this threat.

The feeling of separateness was perhaps older,<sup>2</sup> but now it gained in significance in order to fortify the Muslim's resolve

to remain an entity to himself. The followers of Islam could not lose themselves in the wide waters of idolatry which splashed around them, sometimes too dangerously close, and which seemed bent upon carrying away a portion, however small, of this foreign rock which, only a little while ago, had stood so strong, so dominating and so impregnable. Now, perhaps with the help, or at least the encouragement, of the British rulers, the Hindu tradition of absorbing all kinds of alien forces and doctrines would at least succeed in breaching the weakening ramparts of Indian Islam. The threat was dire, and opened long vistas of unending gloom at the end of which it saw the annihilation of every shred of its spiritual heritage. The conquerors of India, the proud inheritors of the triumphs and glories of the Mughal court, could not merge themselves in the drab greyness of the vast Indian millions and still call their past their own. They had always been different from other Indians, but in the days gone by none had questioned this difference. The subjugated don't ask questions of the rulers on the throne, particularly if the ruler comes from far away and professes another faith. But now that the former rulers and the former ruled tasted the dust of a common humiliation, the danger was lest time and a shared destiny might obliterate this difference in the eyes of others and, what portended even greater danger, with the passing of the years, might make the Muslims themselves strangers to their own identity. This was a fear as hateful as that of a Hindu rule. Therefore, the differences must be emphasized. The separate feeling must be made conspicuous. The identity of a people must be shown to be a stark reality.

The play of these two factors upon each other was destined to create Pakistan. In separate analysis, the fear of Hindu rule inspired the demand for a partition of India, and the feeling of separateness led to the development of a separate nationalism. But this culmination was the work of many years. The fear of Hindu rule was slowly but regularly fed by a series of reforms which led India towards the final reckoning of majority rule in a single state. The feeling of separateness was deepened by the march of political events, the indifference, insularity and arrogance of the Indian National Congress, the opinions and ideas of political thinkers, and the policies and decisions of politicians. In the 1930s the two tendencies merged. The coming of the 1935 constitution, which ignored the plural nature of the Indian society in the

exuberance of its federal experiment, and then its operation in the Congress-ruled provinces from 1937 to 1939, convinced the Muslims that their dread of a Hindu rule was not an empty fear, and made them decide that the only practicable way out of this blind alley was complete separation.

Parallel to this, the national spirit, which had been abroad at least since the days of Sayyid Ahmad Khan, now blossomed forth as an unmistakable nationalism which brooked no talk of unity or compromise and demanded a territory to enshrine its personality. The combination of the two tendencies proved irresistible, and within a few months it had consummated into a formal demand for a partition.

But it was only a formal demand which was now being made. The substance of it had been enunciated and repeated by several tongues long before these bents and drifts became visible to more than a few discerning eyes. Starting from the year of the mutiny itself, we find statements and claims which at times came close to demanding or prescribing a division of India on Hindu-Muslim lines. Sometimes the language is vague and uncertain as if the author is not sure of himself and is groping for a solution which fitfully escapes him. Sometimes the words, and the purpose behind them, are ambiguous as if the suggestion is being made with only half a heart, and the author himself is not convinced of the rightness or the practicability of his recommendation. But as the nineteenth century moves to its close the voices multiply, the words wax stronger and the arguments expand, until in the twentieth the solution by partition is prescribed by many more in language which is clear and firm and with arguments which foresee lucidly those of Rahmat Ali and Jinnah. The mind is no longer split with doubt, the words no longer bear two meanings, the arguments no longer present a two-edged sword, the voices no longer falter. Everyone knows what he is suggesting and why.

The diversity of those who speak for partition is impressive. All kinds of men bring their contributions: the Muslims naturally, with their fears of the future, their pride in past glories, their hopes for the best, their flowing language dripping with rich analogies and symbols; the British diffidently, with their circum-spect phrases, their pragmatic arguments, their personal experience; even the Hindus, with all their orthodoxy, their dislike for Islam and its stronghold in the north, their anxiety to settle the communal

problem once and for all. These prophets of separation come from a variety of circles: there are, not unnaturally, politicians, like John Bright and Sardar Gul Khan; there are leaders of culture, like Sayyid Ahmad and the Kheiri brothers; there are writers and poets, like W.S. Blunt and Abdul Halim Sharar and Muhammad Ali and Hasrat Mohani; there are religious-cum-political leaders, like Jamaluddin Afghani and Bhai Parmanand and the Aga Khan; there are journalists, like Bambooke and Fazl Karim Khan Durrani; there are Hindu orthodox leaders, like Lajpat Rai; there are lawyers, like Nadir Ali; there are aristocrats, like Sayyid Sardar Ali Khan and Nawab Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan; there is even a pal-mist, Cheiro. Nor is this activity limited to the British and the Indians. Several foreigners are reported to have tried their hand and offered the fertility of their mind to the service of India: the Iranians in the person of Jamaluddin; the Turks, who sent two journalists to India, the Russians, whose supreme leader, Joseph Stalin, propounded his own vision.

Some of the ideas of this group are more valuable than others, but all are relevant to the search for a solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem on the basis of a physical division. Some proposals are clear and reach us through documentary evidence of undeniable authority. Some are found in second-hand reports, but the accuracy of the chronicler is beyond suspicion. Some come to our notice through channels which are of doubtful veracity. Some reach us *via* a passing reference or a tantalizing aside, and their origin or truth cannot be traced with any certainty. However, all these schemes and proposals and plans are treated in the following pages each according to its authenticity, influence and originality. Even the occasional report, however frustrating in its lack of documentation, is examined briefly, for it was a straw in the wind, and in this kind of study the straws cannot be ignored.

## NOTES

In part this fear was aggravated (perhaps, in the first place, even caused) by the emergence of a feeling of unity and nationalism among the Hindus. This can be traced back to the beginning of the nineteenth century, but I will, for the present purpose, cite some evidence from the 1840s onwards.

In 1845, the Hindus considered the Hindu law of inheritance to be "one of the strongest bulwarks of the national Hindu creed", *FI*, 17 April 1845. Next year a magazine wrote that "from a single family up to the whole nation the prevailing spirit among the Hindus at present is the enmity against Christianity. There is an enmity in each family, and there is a national enmity . . . ye, the whole nation is moved from its very bottom and filled with implacable hatred, and bent upon the utter destruction of Christianity", *MNH*, December 1846. Repeated references to nation and nationalism are worthy of notice.

During 1848-50, Gopal Hari Deshmukh, popularly known as Lokahitavadi, hoped that when Hindus were ready for self-rule, the British would leave India, and threatened that if the British did not, the Hindus would fight for independence as the Americans had done in America (A.K. Pirotkar (ed.), *Lokahitavadikrt Nibandha Sangraha*, Bombay, 2nd ed 1967, p. 138, quoted in Mahadev L. Apte, "Lokahitavadi and V.K. Chiplunkar: Spokesmen of Change in Nineteenth-Century Maharashtra", *Modern Asian Studies*, April 1973, p. 195). This he had written in his letters to the editor of the daily *Prabhakar* between 1848 and 1850, labelled *Satapatre* (hundred letters). In 1866 these letters were published as a book.

The general feeling was that the Hindus preferred British to Muslim rule. "More liberty and a larger share of the loaves and fishes, every man of course desires, but there is not one among them . . . we are speaking of the Hindus . . . who would vote for the displacement of Sir Henry Pottinger and the restoration of the Nawab of the Carnatic, if the question were made an open one tomorrow", *Spectator* (Madras), 6 June 1853.

2. "The Hindoos and the Mahomedans may be said to constitute two different nations in India, between whom there is no affinity of interests, and not the smallest sympathy of feeling . . . In all the movements which the Hindoos have made of late years in opposition to their present rulers, and in all those appeals which have been preferred by them against particular measures, though the grievances put forward were common to both classes, the Mahomedans have never united with them on any occasion, and as the Mahomedans are by far the most independent, and united, as well as redoubtable section of the community . . . however disproportionate in numbers . . . this circumstance has always served in no small degree to weaken the representations of the Hindoos", *FI*, 17 May 1855; this paper, issued from Serampore, was, in its general policy, by no means sympathetic to the Muslims. A modern Hindu historian has called it "a highly tendentious article" (S.R. Mehrotra, *The Emergence of the Indian National Congress*, Delhi, 1971, p 213)

# 1

## THE EARLY BEGINNINGS: 1858—1899

### John Bright (1858—1877)

Two speeches of John Bright may be cited to indicate that the concept of a divided India coincided, at least in some minds with the transfer of power from the East India Company to the British Crown.<sup>1</sup> Speaking during the debate on the bill providing for such a transfer in the House of Commons, on 24 June 1858 Bright suggested some remarkable changes in the structure of British India. He wanted the office of the governor general to be abolished. With a view to bringing the government closer to the governed, the unitary structure of the British Empire in India was to be replaced with five presidencies, each, equal in rank and status to the others, with its own council, financial and revenue system police force, judicial administration and military power. The five presidencies were to be constructed around five capital towns. Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Agra and Lahore.<sup>2</sup>

That this re-grouping was meant to be more than the genesis of a mere federal system is clear from what he said in elaboration of his recommendation. "If that were to go on for a century or more there would be five or six Presidencies of India built up into so many compact States; and if at any future period the sovereignty of England should be withdrawn, we should leave so many Presidencies built up and firmly compacted together, each able to support its own independence and its own Government; and we should be able to say we had not left the country a prey to that anarchy and discord which I believe to be inevitable if we insist on holding those vast territories with the idea of building them up into one great empire."<sup>3</sup> He was convinced beyond any doubt that the disunity of India ruled out the possibility, then or in any distant future, of founding or leaving behind a compact and

lasting empire or union. "But how long does England propose to govern India? Nobody answers that question, and nobody can answer it. Be it 50, or 100, or 500 years, does any man with the smallest glimmering of common sense believe that so great a country, with its twenty different nations and its twenty languages, can ever be bound up and consolidated into one compact and enduring empire? I believe such a thing to be utterly impossible. We must fail in the attempt if ever we make it, and we are bound to look into the future with reference to that point."<sup>4</sup>

It is true that speakers in parliamentary debates are liable to throw out startling ideas and then to forget them as if they had never given expression to them. *Hansard* is replete with such novel statements, either clothed in tantalizing brevity or dressed up in full array of logic and argument, wrung out of the members' lips by the atmosphere of the house, the exuberance generated by the attention being paid to their words or a momentary effort to show originality of mind. But with Bright this was not a passing thought spoken to suit time, place and opportunity.

Speaking on 11 December 1877 to the Indian Association in the Town Hall of Manchester, he repeated what he had said in 1858, making it clear that he foresaw several independent and sovereign States in India when British withdrawal had been effected. To appreciate his emphasis on such a culmination it is necessary to quote him *in extenso*: "And thus if the time should come—and it will come—I agree with Lord Lawrence that no man who examines the question can doubt that some time it must come—when the power of England, from some cause or other, is withdrawn from India, then each one of these States would be able to sustain itself as a compact, as a self-governing community. You would have five or six great States there, as you have five or six great States in Europe; but that would be a thousand times better than our being withdrawn from it now when there is no coherence amongst those twenty nations, and when we should find the whole country, in all probability, lapse into chaos and anarchy, and into sanguinary and interminable warfare. I believe that it is our duty not only to govern India well now for our own sake and to satisfy our own conscience, but so to arrange its government and so to administer it that we should look forward to the time—which may be distant, but may not be so remote—when India will have to take up her own government, and administer it in her own fashion.

I say he is no Statesman—he is no man actuated with a high moral sense with regard to our great and terrible moral responsibility, who is not willing thus to look ahead, and thus to prepare for circumstances which may come sooner than we think, and sooner than any of us hope for, but which must come at some not very distant date. By doing this, I think we should be endeavouring to make amends for the original crime upon which much of our power in India is founded, and for the many mistakes which have been made by men whose intentions have been good. I think it is our duty, if we can, to approach this great question in this spirit, and to try rightly to discharge the task committed to us, as the Government and rulers of the countless and helpless millions of that country.”<sup>5</sup>

It will be noticed that Bright starts with the fundamental fact of the disunity of India. Repeatedly he refers to the “twenty nations” and the “twenty languages” of the country. From this spectacle of diversity he concludes that a united India—compact, homogeneous and enduring—is an impossibility of which no man has the right to dream. Thus far he is saying nothing new. Countless British politicians, journalists, historians and administrators have pointed this out from the day of British arrival in India till the hour of their departure.<sup>6</sup> But they failed to pursue the logic of their observations. After pointing out that the wild disarray in which they found India, they sat back and either complimented themselves on giving some kind of unity to this land of discord or hoped that it would, at some future date, for some mysterious reason, transcend its differences and emerge a corporate and united entity. To deny such a possibility was to cast doubt upon British intentions and efficiency. Bright was free of such self-esteem and false optimism. He was also more relentless in the application of logic to what lay before his eyes. India had been a conglomeration of nations, peoples, religions and races since none knew when. The imperial sword of the Turkish Mughal had imposed an orderly arrangement on these disparate elements, but as soon as the Mughal will faltered, anarchy and disunity returned to plague this vast land. The British rescued it from complete disaster and chaos. Bright realized that such order and peace dealt out by an alien hand could not be a permanent remedy of the Indian ill. He saw the disunity as a permanent phenomenon born of history. In this he went far beyond any other Englishman of

his time. His contemporaries acknowledged the disunity but were reassured by the hope that it was the destiny of British rule to eradicate it. This was a comforting thought. It heightened their self-regard and brought the satisfaction that a good deed was in the process of being done.

Bright<sup>7</sup> asked the same question, but found a totally different answer. The question was how to deal with Indian disunity? The answer, by now common place, was: create unity on the basis of whatever is available. Such vague optimism did not attract Bright. He felt that the disunity was beyond repair. The British might be able to maintain the Queen's peace for as long as they chose to stay in India. But once they were gone, discord and anarchy would return. Prudence and statesmanship demanded that what could and would happen after the British withdrawal should be foreseen now. British responsibility did not end with the ceasure of their rule. To avoid post-withdrawal anarchy he prescribed certain steps which ought to be taken right away, at the commencement of Parliamentary responsibility for the affairs of India. Divide India into five or six viable, fairly-sized presidencies. Give each of them complete autonomy, abolish the centre, build up regional unities, and make a Europe out of India. Thus, by the time the British came to wind up their rule a half dozen states would be ready to take up the reins of sovereignty. Instead of an amorphous mass of many millions artificially divided into heterogeneous areas of purely administrative convenience, there would be a few well-knit entities which had learnt, under British guidance and supervision, the art of self-government and had built up traditions and loyalties peculiar to themselves. When independence came there would be no division, partition or disruption. Instead of an artificial monolith which would soon be brought down by its inherent weakness the British should create, develop and leave behind them a set of independent, separate and sovereign states which would last, bring peace to the area and some credit to those who had fashioned their creation.

Two further points in Bright's proposal deserve notice. He was not taken in by the idea, which began to win popularity during his own time, that the British should make a fetish of their having created a united India and further that this unity, whatever its worth and its endurance, should always be proffered as their lasting achievement. It may be that he was more far-sighted than

his contemporaries. It may be that he was less under the influence of the Anglo-Indians who had turned the unity of India (their own handiwork) into a vested interest and had persuaded the politicians that this achievement of the administrator was worthy of being raised to the dignity of a political principle. It may also be that in Bright's day the emphasis on unity was still in its infancy: this was the time when the sheer size, variety and novelty of the East excited the Western mind so much that no room was left for any feeling save that of wonder and awe. Whatever the reason may be, Bright stands alone, not in drawing attention to the Indian state of disunity, but in declaring it to be a permanent feature and in suggesting the creation of a number of potential states on the sub-continent.

In the second place, Bright did not pay the British Indian empire the tribute of eternity. In doing so he was not alone, but he was a little behind the time and also a little before it. In the first half of the nineteenth century several people in Britain and India voiced the opinion that the tenure of British rule could not be indefinite and that the day of its termination might be far away but was in no doubt. Then came the mutiny and the feelings hardened. For some time there was an uneasy silence on the issue, but as the sun of British imperialism mounted higher the hour of relinquishing authority receded farther. In the twentieth century, and astonishingly up to the 'thirties, it was not uncommon to hear the British say that India was certain to remain a part of the empire for as long as could be foreseen. Bright came in the middle of these two attitudes, in terms of time. But he had more in common with his predecessors than with his successors. To his mind, British withdrawal was distant but by no means remote. It is profitless to attempt to define the measure of such terms. What is relevant is that he did not stand with those who hoped to see the empire last for ever but with those who foresaw the end, and he went further in wanting to provide for that "distant" day.

It is true that Bright did not talk of the Hindus and Muslims; though their rivalry and differences were implicit in his belief in the country's disunity. Nor did he base his re-grouping of India on religious lines; though two of his presidencies, those with capitals at Calcutta and Lahore, could by reasonable extension lead to the creation of two Muslim states, very roughly coinciding with the later-day East and West Pakistan. But, as far as can be ascertained,

Bright was the first to suggest the immediate creation and later perpetuation of a number of states in India with a view to avoiding a future war of succession. Judged by what happened during the closing years of British rule and by the 1947 partition, his prescience is astonishing. We have no certain knowledge of what led him to this conclusion: whether it was a reading of history, or a flash of intuition, or mere foresight refined to the level of near-prophecy, or deep thinking on the future of British rule in India, or anxiety to save India from reverting to the anarchic days of the eighteenth century. It is difficult for the thinker himself to spell out every step which takes him to the concluding thought. For us who can look only at the finished idea the search for antecedents and motives is bound to be incomplete and but partly successful. But this difficulty should not be allowed to stand in the way of acknowledging the originality of his suggestion.<sup>8</sup>

### Sayyid Ahmad Khan (1867-1888)

With Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan begins the period of Muslim self-awakening.<sup>9</sup> The implications of his ideas may be a matter of controversy, but there is little doubt that he gave a new turn to Muslim thinking and that his influence was immense and lasted for a long time. In education, he emphasized the importance of combining Western knowledge with Islamic values, and, with a view to providing such instruction to his people, founded the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh. In religion, he argued that Islam was a creed of nature and embodied rational principles to which none could object. In social matters, he stood for simplicity of living, high ideals and regard for the rights and welfare of others. In politics, he advocated aloofness from political activity which was then predominantly Hindu-inspired and Hindu-led and co-operation with the British rulers.

Shrewd, industrious, enterprising, learned, and with a personal magnetism which few of his contemporaries could equal, he changed the course of Muslim thinking and laid the foundations of modern education for his community. Some of his teachings are now being questioned. His great emphasis on giving uncritical support to British policies and decisions seems today to be too one-sided. His radical interpretation of Islam is not acceptable to many today, just as it was sternly disapproved by some in his own time.<sup>10</sup>

Here, however, our concern is not with these controversies, but with his contribution to the evolution of the idea of separatism in Muslim political thinking. This can be traced to the early 1860s. At this time the Hindus of the United Provinces, and particularly those of Benares, were demanding that Hindi should replace Urdu and Devanagiri script the Persian script in all courts and government offices of the province. This shocked Sayyid Ahmad, who so far had been an enthusiastic advocate of Hindu-Muslim unity and had done much to promote it. Now Hindu disregard of Muslim sentiments surprised and pained him. According to Altaf Husain Hali, the Sayyid's most observant and meticulous biographer, this incident convinced him that it was no longer possible for the Hindus and Muslims of India to live together as one nation or to join hands in promoting the interests of their country. This was the beginning of his separatist thinking. Hali quotes a conversation between Sayyid Ahmad and his friend Shakespeare, the Commissioner of Benares, which took place in 1867. "During these days, when Hindi-Urdu controversy was going on in Benares, one day I met Mr. Shakespeare who was posted there as Divisional Commissioner. I was saying something about the education of Muslims, and Mr. Shakespeare was listening with an expression of amazement, when, at last, he said, 'This is the first occasion when I have heard you speak about the progress of the Muslims alone. Before this you were always keen on the welfare of your countrymen in general.' I said, 'Now I am convinced that both these nations will not join wholeheartedly in anything. At present there is no hostility between the two communities, but on account of the so-called educated people it will increase immediately in future. He who lives will see.' Mr. Shakespeare thereupon said, 'I am also extremely sorry, but I am confident about the accuracy of this prophecy'."<sup>11</sup>

Once convinced that the Hindus and Muslims had different interests and that more things separated them than joined them, Sayyid Ahmad never veered round from his course. He reiterated this opinion in several important pronouncements.

In 1883 he spelt out the reasons for his opposition to the introduction in India of the principle of election to representative institutions. He acknowledged that "the principle of self-government by means of local representative institutions" was "perhaps the greatest and noblest" lesson that England would teach India.

But it was necessary to recall that Indian conditions were so different from the British that to borrow this principle and apply it in such a different context was to invite trouble. "India, a continent in itself, is inhabited by [a] vast population of different races and different creeds' the rigour of religious institutions has kept even neighbours apart: the system of caste is still dominant and powerful. In one and the same district the population may consist of various creeds and various nationalities, and whilst one section of the population commands wealth and commerce, the other may possess learning and influence. One section may be numerically larger than the other, and the standard of enlightenment which one section of the community has reached may be far higher than that attained by the rest of the population. One community may be fully alive to the importance of securing representation on the local boards and district councils, whilst the other may be wholly indifferent to such matters." In such circumstances and under these conditions "it is hardly possible to deny that the introduction of representative institutions in India will be attended with considerable difficulty and socio-political risks."<sup>1 2</sup>

He has still not used the word "nation" for the Muslims of India, though he is emphasizing racial and religious differences. Were the people of India one nation? At this stage his answer was a yes. Replying to the address of welcome from the Indian Association at Lahore in 1884, he declared: "By the word *qawm* I mean both Hindus and Muslims. That is the way in which I define the word nation (*qawm*). In my opinion it matters not what be their religious belief, because we cannot see anything of it; but what we see is that all of us, whether Hindus or Muslims, live on one soil, are governed by one and the same ruler, have the same sources of our benefits, and equally share the hardships of a famine. These are the various reasons why I designate both the nationalities (*qawamun*) that inhabit India by the term (*ayk lafz*) Hindu—that is the nation (*qawm*) which lives in India."<sup>1 3</sup>

But this did not make him oblivious to the awkward (because permanent) minority status of the Muslims. He is quoted as pointing out, at the end of 1886, that the Indian National Congress wanted representative legislative councils and it hinted at a future parliament of India, but in any such parliament the Muslims would be "in a permanent minority" and would always be outvoted as

the Irish members were at Westminster.<sup>14</sup>

This problem of being a minority worried him a great deal, and he referred to it in some detail in his address to the All India Muhammadan Educational Conference, which he himself had founded, at Lucknow on 28 December 1887. "Every one can understand that the first condition for the introduction of competitive examination into a country is that all people in that country, from the highest to the lowest, should belong to one nation. In such a country no particular difficulties are likely to arise. The second case is that of a country in which there are two nationalities which have become so united as to be practically one nation. England and Scotland are a case in point. . . . But this is not the case with our country, which is peopled with different nations. Consider the Hindus alone. The Hindus of our Province, the Bengalis of the East, and the Mahrattas of the Deccan, do not form one nation. If, in your opinion, the peoples of India do form one nation, then no doubt competitive examination may be introduced; but if this be not so, then competitive examination is not suited to the country. The third case is that of a country in which there are different nationalities which are on an equal footing as regards the competition whether they take advantage of it or not. Now, I ask you, have Mahomedans attained to such a position as regards higher English education, which is necessary for higher appointments, as to put them on a level with Hindus or not? Most certainly not. Now, I take Mahomedans and Hindus of our Province together, and ask whether they are able to compete with the Bengalis or not? Most certainly not. When this is the case, how can competitive examination be introduced into our country? Think for a moment what would be the result if all appointments were given by competitive examination. Over all races, not only over Mahomedans but over Rajas of high position and the brave Rajputs who have not forgotten the swords of their ancestors, would be placed as ruler a Bengali who at sight of a table knife would crawl under his chair. There would remain no part of the country in which we should see at the tables of justice and authority any face except those [*sic.*] of Bengalis. I am delighted to see the Bengalis making progress, but the question is—What would be the result on the administration of the country? Do you think that the Rajput and the fiery Pathan, who are not afraid of being hanged or of encountering the swords of the police or the bayonets

of the army, could remain in peace under the Bengalis? This would be the outcome of the proposal if accepted . . . Now, let us suppose the Viceroy's Council made in this manner [through an election by the people]. And let us suppose first of all that we have universal suffrage, as in America, and that everybody, *chamars* [a very low caste] and all, have votes. And first suppose that all the Mahomedan electors vote for a Mahomedan member and all Hindu electors for a Hindu member, and now count how many votes the Mahomedan member has and how many the Hindu. It is certain the Hindu members will have four times as many because their population is four times as numerous. Therefore we can prove by mathematics that there will be four votes for the Hindu to every one vote for the Mahomedan. And how can the Mahomedan guard his interests? It would be like a game of dice, in which one man had four dice and the other only one. In the second place, suppose that the electorate be limited. Some method of qualification must be made; for example, that people with a certain income shall be electors. Now, I ask you, O Mahomedans! Weep at your condition! Have you such wealth that you can compete with the Hindus? Most certainly not. Suppose, for example, that an income of Rs. 5,000 a year be fixed on, how many Mahomedans will there be? Which party will have the larger number of votes? I put aside the case that by a rare stroke of luck a blessing comes through the roof and some Mahomedan is elected. In the normal case no single Mahomedan will secure a seat in the Viceroy's Council . . . Now, we will suppose a third kind of election. Suppose a rule to be made that a suitable number of Mahomedans and a suitable number of Hindus are to be chosen. I am aghast when I think on what grounds this number is likely to be determined. Of necessity, proportion to total population will be taken. So there will be one member for us to every four for the Hindus. No other condition can be laid down. Then they will have four votes and we shall have one."<sup>15</sup>

Early in the following year, he went further and now did not hesitate to call the Indian Muslims a "nation", though some vague idea of the entity of one Indian people was still in his mind. "I have often said that India is like a bride whose two eyes are the Hindus and the Mahomedans. Her beauty consists in this—that her two eyes be of equal lustre. . . . I have often given my nation to understand that slaughtering cows for the purpose of

annoying Hindus is the height of cantankerous folly. . . . But when my Hindu brothers and Bengali friends devise such a course of action as will bring us loss and heap disgrace on our nation, then indeed we can no longer remain friends. Without doubt it is our duty to protect our nation from those attacks of the Hindus and Bengalis by which we believe that she will be injured. . . . Of a truth our nation has fallen into the pit of disgrace, but if my Bengali friends wish to trample this prostrate nation under their feet, then let them not cherish the hope that we can endure it. . . . The Congress is in reality a civil war without arms. The object of a civil war is to determine in whose hands the rule of the country shall rest. The object of the promoters of the National Congress is that the Government of India should be English in name only, and that the internal rule of the country should be entirely in their own hands. They do not publicly avow that they wish it for themselves: they speak in the name of the whole people of India; but they very well know that the Mahomedans will be unable to do anything, and so the rule of the country will be monopolized by them. We also like a civil war. But not a civil war without arms. If [the] Government want to give over the internal rule of the country from its own hands into those of the people of India, then we will present a petition that, before doing so, she pass a law of competitive examination, namely, that that nation which passes first in this competition be given the rule of the country; but that in this competition we will be allowed to use the pen of our ancestors, which is in truth the true pen for writing the decree of sovereignty. Then he who passes first in this shall rule the country. If my friends the Bengalis pass first, then indeed we will pick up their shoes and put them on our heads; but without such a civil war we do not want to subject our nation to be trodden under their feet. Let my Hindu fellow-countrymen and Bengali brothers understand well that my chief wish is that all the nations of India should live in peace and friendship with one another; but that friendship can last so long only as one does not try to put another in subjection."<sup>16</sup> The reader will notice the repeated use of the word "nation" for the Indian Muslims in this piece of writing. This was to continue to the end.

The Indian National Congress was established in 1885, and forthwith its founders began to make strenuous efforts to enlist Sayyid Ahmad's approval and, through it, the support of the

Muslims at large. When these bore no fruit, Badruddin Tyebji,<sup>17</sup> an influential Bombay Muslim who had joined the Congress and presided over its December 1887 session held at Madras, wrote to Sayyid Ahmad, pleading the Congress case, making it out to be a national organization and asking for his assistance. The Sayyid snubbed him. In public he expressed the views which have been reproduced above.

On 14 March 1888, Sayyid Ahmad delivered two long speeches at Meerut, one in the morning and the other in the evening. These addresses embody his public reply to Tyebji's defence of the Congress and a reiteration of his conviction that the Muslims formed a nation by themselves. To understand the development of the Sayyid's thinking we must study these speeches at some length; hence the long quotations that follow.

In the morning speech he declared: "It has never been my wish to oppose any people or any nation who wish to make progress, and who have raised themselves up to that rank to which they wish to attain and for which they are qualified. But my friends the Bengalis have made a most unfair and unwarrantable interference with my nation, and therefore it is my duty to show very clearly what this unwarrantable interference has been, and to protect my nation from the evils that may arise from it . . . . Our Mahomedan nation has hitherto sat silent. It was quite indifferent as to what the Babus of Bengal, the Hindus of these Provinces, and the English and Eurasian inhabitants of India might be doing. But they have now been vrongly tampering with our nation. In some districts they have brought pressure to bear on Mahomedans to make them join the Congress. I am sorry to say that they never said anything to those people who are powerful and are actually Raises [rich and influential persons] and are counted the leaders of the nation; but they brought unfair pressure to bear on such people as could be subjected to their influence . . . . We know very well the people of our own nation, and that they have been induced to go [to attend the Congress session] either by pressure, or by folly, or by love of notoreity, or by poverty . . . . When matters took such a turn, then it was necessary that I should warn my nation of their misrepresentations in order that others should not fall into the trap; and that I should point out to my nation that the few who went to Madras, went by pressure, or for some temptation, or in order to help their profession, or to gain

notoreity, or were bought . . . Gentlemen, what I am about to say is not only useful for my own nation, but also for my Hindu brothers of these Provinces, who from some wrong notions have taken part in this Congress . . . These proposals of the Congress are extremely inexpedient for a country which is inhabited by two different nations, who drink from the same well, breathe the air of the same city, and depend each on the other for its life. To create animosity between them is good neither for peace, nor for the country, nor for the town . . . Now, suppose all the English and the whole English army were to leave India, taking with them all the cannon and their splendid weapons and everything, then who would be rulers of India? Is it possible that under these circumstances two nations—the Mahomedans and the Hindus—could sit on the same throne and remain equal in power. Most certainly not. It is necessary that one of them should conquer the other and thrust it down. To hope that both could remain equal is to desire the impossible and the inconceivable . . . If we join the political movement of the Bengalis our nation will reap loss, for we do not want to become subjects of the Hindus instead of the subjects of the ‘people of the Book’.”<sup>18</sup>

In the evening speech he turned his attention to the amelioration of his “nation”. “My friends, what is now the state of our nation? All the Musalman families of Hindustan are falling and are being ruined . . . At the present time unless my nation unite and concentrate its forces, and collect all the requisites of education, and take the fact to heart that now without spending money it cannot acquire education, it will be impossible for it to become highly educated. Moreover, the old method was not adapted to the growth of those feelings of honour and national sympathy which are essential for our national progress . . . The second thing that I wish to see established in our people is national feeling and sympathy; and this cannot be created unless the boys of our nation read together. At this moment, when all of us Mahomedans have come together the assembly itself has an effect on our hearts, and an involuntary emotion gives birth to the thought—‘Our Nation’, ‘Our Nation’! — but when we separate the effect vanishes . . . Before all things, my nation should preserve its honour and its self-respect, and should give such a training to its children as will cultivate these feelings . . . I pray the Almighty that national sympathy may arise in my people, and that the nation may give

help, and may complete the glorious task we have undertaken for its improvement. I beg of you also to join in this prayer."<sup>19</sup>

Not content with writing privately to the Sayyid, Tayebji, in a letter published in the *Pioneer* on 2 April 1888, appealed to the Muslims to join the Congress and support its demands on the ground that it was a national organization and spoke for the whole of India. In reply to it, the Sayyid wrote a letter to the same newspaper, summarizing the reasons which kept the Muslims away from the Congress. "I ask my friends honestly to say whether out of two such nations whose aims and objects are different, but who happen to agree in some small points, a 'National' Congress can be created. No. In the name of God—No . . . . We are both desirous that peace should reign in the country, that we two nations should live in a brotherly manner . . . . We may be right or we may be wrong; but there is no Mahomedan, from the shoemaker to the Raise, who would like that the ring of slavery should be put on us by that other nation with whom we live . . . . The Bengalis and those obscure Mahomedans who joined it at Madras may possess such strength. For them it may be a blessing; but the participation in it by our nation would be for us a curse."<sup>20</sup>

A long commentary on these forthright words will not add much to the reader's understanding. All this leaves little doubt that Sayyid Ahmad Khan regarded the Muslims as a separate nation. All his original writings and speeches are in Urdu, in which the standard, in fact the only, term equivalent of "nation" is *qawm*. He used this word, though occasionally he employed the English "nation" while writing or speaking Urdu. It is true that at no place did he enunciate the two-nation theory in a formal statement. It was assumed that the Muslims were a nation. Assertion was taken to be enough: it was not necessary to build up a case to prove it. It followed that the Muslims could not participate in the Congress, because they were not a part of the nation which it claimed to represent.

If once it is granted that the Muslims were a separate nation, how could they support plans for reforms based on the assumption that India was one nation? Sayyid Ahmad was the first to warn his people that in political terms they were a minority and were destined to remain that for ever.<sup>21</sup> As a minority with nothing important in common with the majority, they should know that majority-rule meant a Hindu rule. Therefore, on their behalf,

he opposed the introduction of the principle of election in the creation of representative institutions. He also objected to the holding of open competitive examinations for recruitment to public services. These things were very well suited to countries which were nations, but not to places like India where national, religious and caste differences would debase the laudable principle of equality and merit into a perpetual domination of one nation over another. This may be undemocratic, but who would support a democratic system if it subjected him to a permanent state of what he called "misery" and "degradation"? Thus, the Sayyid was the first to underline the two factors, the negative and the positive, to which we referred in the prologue: the fear of a Hindu rule and the feeling of separatism.<sup>22</sup>

In passing, it may be remarked that he over-emphasized the negative factor and said but little in elaboration of the positive element. This was a failing common to a great majority of the Muslims who argued for separatism. Again and again, they conjured up the devilish prospect of a Hindu rule to frighten their co-religionists. Much less attention was paid to the more demanding and important task of marshalling the factors and ingredients which made the Muslims a nation instead of a mere community. The difficulties and problems which Pakistani nationalism has faced since 1947 may be traced back to this desideratum. But of this more in the epilogue.

Sayyid Ahmad's failure lay in refusing to see the consequences of his argument. His own logic should have told him that if the Muslims were a separate nation and if they were not prepared to countenance Hindu rule, then the only alternative was to work towards some kind of a system under which they could rule themselves. He could, or would, not show this way, thus stopping in the middle of his argument. He neither suggested nor hinted at a territorial separation. Nor did he begin even to think on these lines: had he done so, he could have referred at least to the prospects or the need for the rule of the Muslims in their own provinces. Perhaps it was too early in his time to grasp the political scheme of things, for politics in the modern sense of the term had just begun. Or, perhaps the fact that he did not belong to a Muslim province hid from his view the possibility that this could offer a solution of the Muslim problem. Or, perhaps he really believed that British rule over India was eternal; for, did he not say in his

first speech at Meerut on 14 March 1888 that "it is, therefore, necessary that for the peace of India and for the progress of everything in India the English Government should remain for many years—in fact for ever"<sup>23</sup>

Yet, this failing does not belittle his pioneering role or his vital contribution in revolutionizing Muslim political and cultural thinking. By telling the Muslims that their path ran separate from the highroad of Indian nationalism, by warning them of their minority status, by showing them the dangers of a majority-based democracy, and by holding them away from the Congress, he drove Muslim politics into a new channel. He did not say what lay in that direction, but he pushed "my nation" towards it, and left the rest to his successors.

We may bring our treatment of Sayyid Ahmad to a close with two quotations from a recent French historian of Indian Islam which sum up his impact on later thinking among his people. "Ce sont cette tendance de l'ame islamique et cette inconsciente 'dynamique' musulmane, nees des vertus ancestrales d'une race fiere, orgueilleuse, jalouse de son independance, qui ont determine en grande partie la naissance du Pakistan; et c'est dans ce sens qu'on peut considerer Sir Sayyid comme le precurseur du jeune Etat pakistanais."<sup>24</sup> Gumbretiere continues, "Si bien qu'a la fin de sa vie—sa mort survint en 1898—l'attitude rigide de Sir Sayyid face aux exigences hindoues etait devenue un modele de civisme musulman. Elle conduisit ses successeurs a demander un college electoral distinct et a revendiquer la formation d'un Etat specifiquement islamique."<sup>25</sup>

### The Myth of Jamaluddin "Afghani" (1880–1882)

A majority of Pakistani historians and writers who have put pen to paper on this subject asserts that the first Muslim to foresee, as also to suggest, a Muslim state in India was Jamaluddin, commonly but erroneously known as "al-Afghani" or, in Pakistan and India, where the Arabic definite article is not in use, simply as "Afghani".

Much mystery surrounds Jamaluddin's public career and his frequent comings and goings among the various Muslim countries. In some respects, portions of his ideas and opinions have been suppressed by Egyptian and Pakistani writers or edited in garbled

versions. Even the myth of his Afghan origin and birth has been accepted without inquiry or doubt. Wherever his opinions run counter to the rigidities of orthodoxy (not of Islam, but of received opinion), like his answer to Renan, or his ideas are inconsistent with the accepted national myths, like his stinging attack on Sayyid Ahmad Khan, there is a conspiracy of silence. In his case, history has more often than not been falsified in order to keep around him the untarnished halo of a great reformer and pan-Islamist.

Jamaluddin himself created the impression that he belonged to Afghanistan and was born there. He claimed this on several occasions, presumably because the fact of his Shia and Iranian antecedents would have proved a handicap to his activities and influence in Sunni lands like Afghanistan, India, Turkey and Egypt. Muhammad Iqbal, who was widely read in Islamic history and religious thought, believed that Jamaluddin was born in Afghanistan;<sup>26</sup> a pardonable mistake as all research about his origins took place after Iqbal's death in 1938. But no such explanation can be found for that large majority of Pakistani scholars and writers who insist even now that he was an Afghan by race and birth.<sup>27</sup> Recent research has shown that, on the contrary, he paid only one visit to Afghanistan in 1866-68.<sup>28</sup> There is abundant documentary evidence to prove that he was an Iranian by origin and birth, and not an Afghan.<sup>29</sup>

Our primary concern here is Jamaluddin's Indian connection. Available evidence dates his visit to India in 1854, and according to Qazi Abdul Ghaffar it lasted till 1857.<sup>30</sup> The theory that during this visit he came under the influence of the Mujahidin movement and imbibed an anti-British feeling from it<sup>31</sup> is discounted by Aziz Ahmad, who says that "whatever official 'Wahabi' records or private papers have been studied so far do not mention any one by the name of Jamal al-din or any of the names he assumed at various times". He adds that internal evidence leads to the same conclusion. "The conformist fundamentalism of the Mujahidin was exactly the antithesis of the margin of orthodoxy in Afghani's religious thought."<sup>32</sup> Nothing is known of his activities during this stay. His second visit is reported to have taken place in 1859. Again we have no information about his movements, and it is possible that this visit was an extension of the first.

He came to India for the third time in 1869<sup>33</sup> on his expulsion

from Afghanistan by Amir Sher Ali.<sup>34</sup> He could stay for only one month as the British sent him off to Egypt and did not allow the Indian *ulema* or leaders of Muslim opinion to approach or contact him.<sup>35</sup> Consequently this visit was of no significance.

His last visit was longer and produced some remarkable results. The official report of the Government of India says that he arrived at the "beginning of 1881",<sup>36</sup> but the Afshar documents prove that he was already in Hyderabad from April 1880 to October–November 1881.<sup>37</sup>

According to a Pakistani (Sharif al-Mujahid) who wrote his master's thesis on Jamaluddin, he found in India "a fertile soil to plant his ideas" and "made a deep impression on the people he came across, orienting some in his ideas, and making disciples of others".<sup>38</sup> The facile pen of Bipen Chandra Pal, a Hindu politician of Bengal of the early years of this century, also draws an exaggerated picture of Jamaluddin's activities and impact on India. He came from Kabul, he says, "inspired with the vision of an All World Confederacy of the Princes and Peoples of Islam", and "passed through India inoculating many a leader of Muhammadan thought in Calcutta and Bombay and other cities with this new virus" of pan-Islamism. The result was "a new self-consciousness of our Moslem neighbours, a new conceit of separate communal interests, and a new desire to revive, in the name of purity, the old iconoclastic spirit of the Islamic faith and thereby to work a new religious cleavage between the Mahomedans and their Hindu neighbours. The political conflicts between educated Hindus and Moslems were attributed to the natural jealousy of rival aspirants to office and rank, and the religious feuds to a desire to revive the original ideals of Islam and reorganize the old propagandist activities of that faith. But nobody ever suspected these as the slow and silent development of the seed that Jamal-ud-Din had sown in his confidential conferences with the Moslem intellectuals of Calcutta and other places."<sup>39</sup> In his memoirs, written many years after the above, Pal repeated the same thing. "Before Jamal-ud-Din's advent the educated Indian Muhammadans, particularly in Bengal, had been loyally co-operating with their Hindu fellow-subjects for the common advancement of national political interests. But with his visit they commenced to draw themselves away from the political activities of their Hindu fellow-subjects until gradually a wide gulf was created between the

Hindu and the Moslem intellectuals in the country in regard to our national endeavours.”<sup>40</sup>

While Sharif al-Mujahid is innocently optimistic, Pal is subtly insinuating. The best answer to such heightened and misleading accounts is to see what Jamaluddin said during his last Indian stay. While in India—he wrote several articles and delivered a number of lectures which were later published. All these were in Persian. Six of these articles were written for the first issues of a Hyderabad (Deccan) journal, *Mu'allim-i-Shafiq*. It was then edited by one Muhibb Husain, a conservative reformer and one of the earliest advocates of female education, but one opposed to Sayyid Ahmad Khan's religious speculation. Five others were published along with the original six in the first edition of the collected articles of Jamaluddin, the *Maqalat-i-Jamaliyyeh*, published in Calcutta in 1884.

This collection, the only original and definite record of Jamaluddin's Indian ideas, stands as a permanent reproach to the enthusiasm for re-writing history which is so much at work in many minds. In it there is no mention of pan-Islam or of any scheme to unite the Muslims behind one leader, or in one state or grouping or commonwealth or what you will. Even the defence of Islam usually comes in only as a part of an attack on Sayyid Ahmad Khan. In fact, the three main themes of these articles are: advocacy of nationalism of a linguistic or territorial variety, meaning a unity between the Muslims and Hindus of India (who in Jamaluddin's knowledge spoke one language; so much for his ignorance about India), and with nothing on the unity of the Indian Muslims with foreign Muslims; emphasis on the inestimable benefits of philosophy and modern science; and attacks, strong worded and virulent, on Sayyid Ahmad Khan as a hateful tool of the British.

Far from speaking of Indian Muslim unity or community of interest, in one of his lectures he says, “There is no doubt that the unity of language is more durable for survival and permanence in this world than unity of religion, since it does not change in a short time in contrast to the latter.” There is nothing here or elsewhere of Muslim separatism, communalism or identity of interest or outlook. Nowhere does he address himself specifically to Muslim affairs. In fact, he appears not to be able to distinguish between Muslims and other Indians. The following extract from his “Lecture on Teaching and Learning”, delivered at Albert Hall,

Calcutta, on 8 November 1882 (a Thursday), leaves no reasonable doubt about his thinking on Indian (as opposed to Muslim) unity and its glorious Hindu past: "Certainly I must be happy to see such offspring of India, since they are the offshoots of that India that was the cradle of humanity. Human values spread out from India to the whole world . . . . These youths are also the sons of a land that was the source of all the laws and rules of the world. If one observes closely, he will see that the 'Code Romain', the mother of all Western codes, was taken from the four *vedas* and the *Shastras* . . . . [The Indians] reached the highest level in philosophic thought. The soil of India is the same soil, the air of India is the same air, and these youths who are present here are fruits of the same earth and climate. So I am very happy that they, having awakened after a long sleep, are reclaiming their inheritance and gathering the fruits of their own tree."<sup>41</sup>

In his Paris journal he wrote: "A religious bond does not exclude national links with people of different faiths. In countries like Egypt and India, Muslims should co-operate with the Non-Muslims, and there ought to be good relations and harmony in affairs of national interest between the Muslims and their co-patriots and neighbours of different religions."<sup>42</sup> His belief in Hindu-Muslim unity, not in separate Muslim action in India, is clearly expressed in one of his articles in *L'Intransigeant* of Paris.<sup>43</sup> In the words of his earliest Indian biographer, Qazi Abdul Ghaffar, "though the Shaikh was mostly engaged in the service of Islam, as far as India was concerned he made no distinction between Hindus and Muslims. . . . He realised that the destiny of India was linked with the awakening and progress of both Hindus and Muslims".<sup>44</sup> His view that Hindus and Muslims must unitedly administer a death-blow to British imperialism in India was expressed clearly and emphatically.<sup>45</sup>

And yet, the majority of Pakistani intellectuals, trained in the out-of-date tradition of Jamaluddin's reputation as a pan-Islamist, continue to attribute to him pious and heart-warming opinions and ideals which he did not express or hold. According to Iqbal's son, a scholar in his own right, "there was one school of thought which believed in keeping the national organization of Muslims separate from that of the Hindus. Afghani belonged to this school".<sup>46</sup> Dr. A.S. Khurshid, after taking those historians to task who spin imaginary stories around Jamaluddin's personality (like

the scheme of creating a Muslim state in the north-west of India), delivers his own judgment: "The truth is that Afghani had no idea that there was a Muslim-majority area in the north-west of the sub-continent, nor did he wish to establish a united Muslim republic. If you analyse the articles written by Afghani, you will know that he wanted to free the whole Indian sub-continent from British imperialism and bring it under the standard of Islam (*Islam ke parcham tale lana chahte the*)".<sup>47</sup> Others repeat similar assertions, or make no mention of his attacks on Sayyid Ahmad Khan or of his views on Hindu-Muslim unity.<sup>48</sup>

Aziz Ahmad provides a balanced view of Jamaluddin's impact on Muslim India. "Pan-Islamic trends developed in India independently of Afghani's influence; it was much later that he came to be accepted as their symbol. The Urdu press of the 1870s already reveals pan-Islamic, especially pan-Ottoman, trends before Afghani's first works were published in India and long before the publication of *al-Urwa al-wuthqa*."<sup>49</sup> The correspondence between Jamaluddin and his Indian friends, editors, translators and publishers, like Abdul Ghafur Shahbaz and Azududdin, shows that in almost all important cases the initiative was Jamaluddin's. Unless some new documents come to light, it is safe to say that "by 1885 contact between Afghani and his Indian admirers had begun to fade".<sup>50</sup> His influence was limited. The *Haqiqat-i-Mazhab-i-Necheri* (which contained his detailed assault on Sayyid Ahmad) was published twice in Persian and once in Urdu translation in 1883-84, but this "shows more a trend of religious rejection of Sayyid Ahmad Khan's radical reformist views than acceptance of any positive message or credo of Afghani". The *Mu'allim-i-Shafiq* had a "limited circulation of only local significance".<sup>51</sup>

If any doubt still lingers about his attitude to Muslim India, his intemperate and mean attack on Sayyid Ahmad Khan should remove it. In his essay commonly referred to as "Refutation of the Materialists" (a polite, neutral title indicating a philosophic reply), but whose original Persian title is "The Truth about the Necheri Sect and an Explanation of the Necheris", he indulged in an offensive and irritating criticism of Sayyid's person and views. The point of attack was not the Sayyid's rationalism, nor his schemes of social and religious reform, nor his want of orthodoxy, for in all these things Jamaluddin was not only at one with the Indian's opinions but, in some respects and on certain issues, held

even more unorthodox views—views like those expressed in his debate with Renan, which a Mawdudi of that day would unhesitatingly have judged to be mischievous, even heretical, and on good authority. No, there was no religious or philosophical quarrel between the two men. What stung Jamaluddin was the Sayyid's policy of co-operation with the British. He saw it solely through the eyes of an incorrigible anti-imperialist, for whom any friendly or well-disposed feeling for the British, however political in nature and expedient in need, was an unmistakable proof of the worst kind of anti-nationalism bordering on treachery.<sup>52</sup> The element of hypocrisy in Jamaluddin's argument will emerge later when we come to analyse the nature of his much-vaunted anti-imperialism and his relations with the British.

His longest Persian article on Sayyid Ahmad is "A Description of the Aghuris" The choice of the title was deliberate and aimed at humiliating and insulting the followers of the Sayyid. The Aghuris were a small Indian sect, one of the most despised in society. He applied this term to the Muslim leader, and by natural extension to the Muslim community, to show his utter contempt for him and their policies. The Sayyid's followers were attacked for disrupting the unity of the community. It is not clear from his flowing but convoluted nineteenth-century Persian style whether their sin consisted in undermining the unity of the Indian community as a whole or that of the Muslim community. Corroborative evidence from his other lectures and articles of this period indicates quite clearly that his concern lay with the Indians as one community rather than with the Indian followers of Islam.<sup>53</sup>

One short paragraph on Sayyid Ahmad is enough to show Jamaluddin's abusive vindictiveness and gross discourtesy: "The dog indulges in flattery to get a bone; wags his tail; and places his head on his benefactor's feet, may he be from his own people or a foreigner. Man is worse than a dog. What a surprise! He should leave the dog miles behind in flattery and self-abasement. If he has no tail, well, he has got a beard [Sayyid Ahmad Khan had a long beard]. Nasatuda-i-Marg Khan [i.e., Sayyid Ahmad Khan] had understood the point: he was always ready, on the call of his master, to wag his beard in order to earn the crumbs of bread thrown to him. May God reward his expression of gratitude with more kindnesses from his masters!"<sup>54</sup>

Even the British were taken aback by Jamaluddin's ignoble

and malicious attacks on the Sayyid. A contemporary secret report said: "He was in Hyderabad for about 20 months; during his stay he associated chiefly with the rising generation of free thinkers, the followers of Sayed Ahmed of Aligarh. But in spite of all their kindness and hospitality towards him, he published a book in Persian against their doctrines."<sup>55</sup> Two generations later, a Frenchman commented that Jamaluddin "fut l'ennemi declare violent, parfois injuste, de Sir Sayyid".<sup>56</sup> Even after leaving India, Jamaluddin did not forgive or forget Sayyid Ahmad. In March 1889, he wrote a letter to his friend, the Master of the Mint, from St. Petersburg, saying in his usual arrogant vein that God had punished the Ottomans, the Khedive of Egypt, Sir Sayyid Ahmad and others who had opposed him.<sup>57</sup>

How can we explain the depth of Jamaluddin's animus against the Sayyid? Several reasons occur to mind, though none, or their combination, provides a complete answer. With his high (but dubious, as we will see shortly) claims of being an anti-imperialist, he had to castigate the Sayyid who was preaching loyalty and acquiescence to his followers. He looked at the Indian Muslim's view as nothing but a British-instigated plot to weaken Islam. He also saw it as "a new expression of a way of thought which had always endangered true religion".<sup>58</sup> This argument is weak, partly because Jamaluddin showed no understanding of the predicament of Indian Islam, but mainly because, as Keddie points out, the religious reform ideas of the two men "were almost identical, and where they differed, as on Afghani's stress on holy war, the difference was a political one".<sup>59</sup> This receives confirmation from an original source. Jamaluddin's chief point of attack was the Sayyid's identification of Islam with Nature (hence the "Necheri" in the title). But, towards the end of his life, in a letter to the *ulema* of Iran, Jamaluddin wrote, "Nature is your friend, and the Creator of Nature your ally".<sup>60</sup> This contradicts his earlier criticism of Sayyid Ahmad's "natural" approach to Islam.

It may well be that, far from influencing Muslim India, he was "in a real sense" reacting to the "compromising efforts of Sayyid Ahmad Khan in India".<sup>61</sup> That gives a new complexion altogether to his pan-Islamic ideas.

I think enough evidence has been given above to enable us now to sum up and pass some sort of judgment, however provisional, on Jamaluddin's role in the development of Indian Muslim political

thinking. The first thing to strike the reader of his Indian pronouncements and writings is his ignorance of Indian conditions in general and of the peculiar problems and circumstances of the Muslims in particular. Before he came to India, for twenty years or so the Muslims had been bearing the brunt of British vengeance for their alleged instigation of the mutiny. All well-informed persons of that day who were interested in imperialism, and especially in the British empire, knew this, as they also knew of the growing Hindu-Muslim tension in India and of the efforts of men like Sayyid Ahmad, Ameer Ali and Nawab Abdul Latif to keep their community united and aloof from the majority-led political movement. Jamaluddin should have known this, for he had made the cause of anti-imperialism the ruling passion of his life. But it seems from his own words that he either did not know this or deliberately ignored it. It is difficult to believe in his total ignorance. He was in Bengal for some time and there he met and talked to Abdul Latif and Ameer Ali and other Muslim leaders. He must have read Indian newspapers (some were published in Persian, so there could have been no language problem), and at least some of them must have been Muslim. He was on friendly terms with several Englishmen, who must have told him about what was happening in India. He certainly read Sayyid Ahmad's writings, for how else could he have answered them, if he answered them at all?

We don't know how Sayyid Ahmad Khan reacted to Jamaluddin's strictures. According to Aziz Ahmad "there is no evidence that Sayyid Ahmad Khan read any articles by Jamal al-din al-Afghani relating to himself, whether published in Hyderabad, Calcutta or Paris".<sup>62</sup> I cannot bring myself to believe that material of such explosive nature, which must have shocked the Sayyid's followers, written in Persian (a language in which all Muslim leaders and educated classes were perfectly at home) and printed and published in Calcutta and Hyderabad (which were among the major centres of Muslim education and culture), failed to come to the notice of the man who was the target of the caustic critique. The mystery deepens when Aziz Ahmad tells us at the same time that "in the 1880s, the writings of Jamal al-din al-Afghani were well known in Muslim India. *Al-Urwa al-wuthqa* reached the Nadwat al-'ulama and converted Shibli; it reached the stronger orthodox citadel of Deoband and converted Mawlana Mahmud

al-Hasan".<sup>63</sup> But for some reason Sayyid Ahmad never came to know of these writings, nor did *al-Urwa al-wuthqa* reach Aligarh which was not far from Deoband.

What Jamaluddin preached in India was in tune with the general trend of his thoughts on religion and nationalism. He was a great believer in the cementing power of language. Even the religious community, he said, would be stronger if it had a common language; had the Truks adopted Arabic, their empire would have been stronger and more united.<sup>64</sup> At times he made it clear that nationalism took priority over religion. National solidarity was a more effective instrument than faith in winning and maintaining political power. A national unity based on a common language was not only more powerful but also more lasting than one based on a common religion. The main argument was that men may easily change their religion, but not so easily their language.<sup>65</sup> It is reported that he had added a few lines in Arabic on the top of the article, which contained this sentence, "There is no happiness except through nationality (*al-jinsiyya*) and no nationality except through language".<sup>66</sup> A number of references to these ideas are to be found in the articles carried by *al-Urwa al-wuthqa*.<sup>67</sup>

Jamaluddin's views on imperialism are riddled with contradictions. In 1878 he penned a bitter attack on the British, which first appeared in the Arabic journal, the *Misr* of Alexandria. It was translated into English by the Rev. George Percy Badger and published in *The Homeward Mail* of London. Extracts of the English translation were reproduced in *al-Nahla* of 1 December 1878. Under the title of "L'opinion d'un Afghan sur les Anglais", Kudsi-Zadeh has translated it into French.<sup>68</sup> It is a stinging piece of writing, sparing nothing and none. Again, in an interview with Mon. A.E. Badaire, the editor of *La Correspondance Parisienne*, in 1885, he said that he had seen many administrations and governments, but never a government carried on with such "perfidy", "cruelty" and "barbarism" as British rule over its colonies. All groups and classes in British India, rajas, nawabs, the *ulema*, the rich and the poor, had of one accord decided to put an end to this infamous oppression. On the first signal, a general uprising would take place and, *alors*, there would be a massacre. He went on in this tone for a few paragraphs.<sup>69</sup> It may be pointed out that at this time even the non-Muslims in India were vying with each

other in professing loyalty to British rule.

In the same year, however, he suggested to Randolph Churchill, the Secretary of State for India, a bold scheme for an alliance between the British, the Afghans, the Persians, the Turks, the Egyptians and the Arabs, to drive the Russians out of Merv.<sup>70</sup> Pan-Islam was put at the service of British imperialism to ward off Britain's deadliest enemy in Asia. Ten years later he was writing to the British Government from Constantinople, seeking British protection against the hostile Ottoman Sultan. "I am an Afghan (Cabul) and I depend on England. I have passed a great part of my life in the Orient with the single aim of uprooting fanaticism, the most harmful malady of this land, of reforming society and establishing there the benefits of tolerance."<sup>71</sup> The Foreign Office called for files on the man from the India Office, and after studying them rejected his request.<sup>72</sup>

Another amusing aspect of his anti-imperialist campaign is the special place he allotted British imperialism in his list of *betes-noires*. There is little in *al-Urwa al-wuthqa* about French, Dutch or Russian imperialism, except a passing reference to the French occupation of Indo-China.<sup>73</sup> If he vent his spleen on Britain for having occupied Egypt and the Sudan and tried to subjugate Afghanistan (all Muslim lands), why did the well of his pan-Islamic sympathies dry up in the similar case of Russian domination of Central Asia? Further, he frequently asserted, assuring the Russians in the process, that Indian Muslims placed "their sole reliance on Russia to free them from the British yoke".<sup>74</sup> Indian Urdu newspapers of 1870s and 1880s contain no expression of such views or of any sympathy for or expectations from Russia.<sup>75</sup>

It was a strange pan-Islamism which made Jamaluddin seek friends and associates among all kinds of non-Muslims. On his Paris newspaper he collaborated with the Jewish Sanua. In Constantinople he associated himself with Babis, agnostics and atheists. In Russia he worked closely with the Procurator of the Holy Synod, Pobedonostsev.<sup>76</sup> In India he curried favour with the Hindus by asking Muslims to become a part of the Indian nation. He called Sayyid Ahmad a dog for his pro-British views, and yet he himself begged British protection against the *khalifa* of the age.

Jamaluddin's claims to have been an enemy of autocracy and an inspirer of revolutionary movements also arouse one's suspicion. There is no truth in the story that he was in opposition

to Sultan Abdul Hamid or that he inspired the Young Turk movement. If he had stood up against the Persian Qajars' policies of repression and granting monopolies to foreign investors, what stopped him from opposing the Hamidian autocracy and the Ottoman policy of granting monopolies and railway concessions to imperialist powers? Charles Adams' assertion that "the successful Young Turk movement of 1908 was prepared by [Afghani's] agitation during the years he spent in Constantinople"<sup>77</sup> is denied by modern Turkish historians. Niyazi Berkes points out that the first Young Turk organization was established in 1889, three years before Jamaluddin came to Turkey. Had he known such young Turks as Abdullah Cevdet and Ahmed Riza "he would certainly have denounced them as the most abominable *nacharis* and *dehris*".<sup>78</sup>

In the light of these facts, and of the new ones unearthed by recent scholars like Afshar and Mahdavi, Homa Pakdaman, Nikki Keddie, Aziz Ahmad and others, it is difficult to accept the hyperbolic estimates of his personality and influence made by a number of Muslims and non-Muslims in the twentieth century.<sup>79</sup> Two sober assessments may be nearer the truth. His influence did not emanate "from his deepest convictions but from his myth, as created by himself and his friends".<sup>80</sup> On his pan-Islamism, Majid Khadduri remarks that "his writings seem to stress reform rather than unity".<sup>81</sup> On his reform, Khadduri's comment leaves no doubt about the close affinity between Jamaluddin's and Sayyid Ahmad's views: "So Afghani urged Muslims to acquire European scientific and technological skills, the adoption of which, he argued, had never been opposed by Islam; but, in the meantime, he advocated the preservation of Islamic religious and moral values. His combination of European materialism with Islamic spiritualism was, perhaps, his most important contribution to Islamic thought. . .".<sup>82</sup>

Now we turn to the association of Jamaluddin's name with the origin of the idea of Pakistan. Here again we meet a well-constructed myth. The popular belief that he conceived the idea of the creation of a Muslim state in India has no truth. Such claims on his behalf have been made before and after the creation of Pakistan.

A book issued on behalf of the All India Muslim League in 1943 blandly stated, without offering any evidence, that "the

Pakistan idea was first conceived by Sayed Jamalud Din Afghani, an old Muslim patriot of world fame".<sup>83</sup> Another work published on the eve of independence made a slightly different claim when it said that "a greater and broader Pakistan was conceived . . . by the international Muslim figure of Jamal-ud-Din Afghani, who for the first time visualized the linking up of the north-western parts of India with the adjoining Muslim countries and forming a pan-Islamic federation".<sup>84</sup>

Among reputable historians, I.H. Qureshi was the first to enter such a claim on behalf of Jamaluddin in 1958.<sup>85</sup> When Aziz Ahmad asked him for his evidence, Qureshi mentioned a book by Tufail Ahmad Manglori (probably *Hindustan men Musalmanon ka Rawshan Mustaqbil*) which similarly quotes no source.<sup>86</sup> Qureshi's next assertion, though qualified, appeared in 1962. He wrote that Jamaluddin "is reported to have dreamt of a Muslim republic embracing the present Central Asian Socialist republics, Afghanistan and the Muslim majority areas in the north-west of the subcontinent".<sup>87</sup>

Aziz Ahmad's treatment of Jamaluddin on this point has traversed a full circle from confident assertion to complete repudiation. In 1960, talking about Iqbal's scheme for a partition of India, he said that this was "a solution which had been first proposed by Jamal al-din al-Afghani, who had envisaged a Muslim state incorporating the north-west Muslim majority provinces of India, Afghanistan and Muslim Central Asia."<sup>88</sup> In support he quoted Qureshi. In 1963, he reiterated that it was Jamaluddin who "concut le premier vers 1880 l'idée utopique d'un état musulman comprenant des régions d'Asie Centrale et le nord de l'Inde".<sup>89</sup> No authority was cited this time. In 1967, he made a more careful statement: Jamaluddin is "probably quite eponymously credited as having first conceived the idea of a Central-Asian-and-north-west-Indian state in the 1880s".<sup>90</sup> Again no evidence was given. In January 1971, in reply to my inquiry if he had any first-hand evidence to prove that Jamaluddin had suggested such a plan, he wrote: "The legend that Afghani ever wrote about the creation of a Muslim state in the north-west of the sub-continent including Afghanistan and Central Asia originated with Tufail Ahmad. I.H. Qureshi (*Muslim Community*) got it from him and I got it from Qureshi in my *Studies in Islamic Culture*. Since then I have had the occasion to study all the writings of

Afghani and I have come across no evidence of his ever having thought or said anything about the formation of such a state.”<sup>91</sup> Earlier, in answer to a similar inquiry, Nikki Keddie had told me that “there is *no* primary evidence that Afghani advocated an independent state of NW India, etc. The Pakistani authors all copy it from each other, with no reliable source.”<sup>92</sup>

Professor Keddie’s remark about authors copying each other is apt. Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada quoted Qureshi in 1963;<sup>93</sup> but in 1968, still quoting the same source, he amended “the Muslim majority areas in the north-west of the sub-continent” to “the Muslim majority areas of the sub-continent”<sup>94</sup>—which is saying quite a different thing. Two years later he repeated the amended statement, citing Qureshi’s *The Muslim Community* as his evidence.<sup>95</sup> Lesser writers have followed the standard historians,<sup>96</sup> thus perpetuating the myth.

Do we have any *original* evidence to uphold this oft-repeated tale? There is none. The only item of information which may be called reliable, albeit second-hand, is al-Makhzumi’s report that Jamaluddin had suggested the division of the Ottoman empire into several “Khedival states”, with *khilafat* to be continued to be vested in the Ottoman rulers. He hoped that Iran, Afghanistan and Muslim India would join these semi-autonomous states in a pan-Islamic union.<sup>97</sup> It must be remembered that this is a reminiscence of a talk he had had with Jamaluddin over thirty years earlier. That hardly constitutes a first-hand source. Even as it is, it does not confirm the popular conviction about the creation of a state in north-west India.<sup>98</sup>

The very spectacle of so many variations on the theme, so much ambiguity and vagueness, so much lack of faithful detail and so much enthusiasm to quote one another, is a proof of the absence of any original and reliable testimony.

Even if it is assumed (the academics often assume things to exercise their minds) that Jamaluddin suggested such a Muslim state, several pertinent questions still face us. It is said that he made this proposal in 1879. He came to India after this, and, as we have seen, there is absolutely no indication in his Indian announcements and statements that he wanted the Muslims of that country to be separated and placed in a different territorial arrangement. Not only that, but such a proposal was meaningless without a prior conviction that the Indian Muslims formed a

distinct entity and wanted to separate from other Indians. Of this again there is no hint or indication in his works. On the contrary, he specifically asked them to unite with the Hindus and trampled upon the separatist followers of Sayyid Ahmad Khan for disrupting the unity of India. Muslim separateness, which he neither acknowledged nor supported, was based on religion. But, in one of his lectures and some of his articles, quoted above, he expressed his studied opinion that nationalism should be founded on language, which is not subject to quick changes, rather than on faith.

One thing is definite and clear. The state he allegedly envisaged was to consist of certain Central Asian areas, Afghanistan and certain areas of north-west India. By no means could the entire community of Indian Muslims be accommodated in this state. Further, his reported reference to the Muslim majority areas of the north-west shows that at the most he only took account of what later became West Pakistan. The Muslim majority area in the north-east of India was outside his calculations.

Is it unreasonable to deduce from this that he did not want to create a separate Muslim state for the Muslims of India, but merely to attach certain unspecified portions of north-west India, where the Muslims predominated, to a Central Asian state of his dreams? And, does this not mean that his interest lay, not in the Indian Muslims as such, but only in the Pathans or Afghans? His faith in language as the only viable basis of an enduring nationalism, combined with his belief that religion did not make an effective source of nationalism, supports the theory that he was working for an "Afghan" nationalism with a view to creating an Afghan or Central Asian republic. Muslims on the north-west of India were linked with the Afghans by religion, language, culture, background and history. To take them out of India into a Central Asian state was not the same thing as creating a separate state for the Muslims of India. On the other hand, it amounted to detaching from India the areas where Muslim majority was overwhelming, thus weakening Muslim strength over the whole of India, and, at the same time, leaving a very large number of Muslims in the Hindu-dominated India at the mercy of the majority. Some may feel justified in claiming him as the prophet of a "Pakhtunistan"; but Indian Muslim independence nowhere came into the picture. But all this is speculation.

Unless new documents come to our hand, Jamaluddin can be called the originator of the idea of Pakistan only by the wildest stretch of an imagination which is obsessed with seeking the origin of Pakistan in the most unlikely places. As a roving messenger of anti-imperialism and pan-Islam in the uneasy and venture-some years of the second half of the nineteenth century, he is a romantic figure of some attraction, much mystery and uncertain influence. As a prophet of a separate state for the Muslims of India, he is a myth.<sup>99</sup>

### Wilfred Scawen Blunt (1881, 1883)

Wilfred Scawen Blunt is another of those early Englishmen who looked into the future and did not see any prospect for a united India. Like Bright, he realized the immense diversity of India; but, unlike him, he saw the main line of division running between the Hindus and the Muslims. On two separate occasions he expressed the implications of this division for the future polity of India.

In one of his five articles in the *Fortnightly Review* of 1881-82,<sup>100</sup> which were later published as a book with the title of *Ideas about India*, he pointed out the hidden strength of the Indian Muslims and gave a hint about their future plans: "The stronghold of the Muhammadans in India is the North-West and there Islam is far from hopeless or disposed to perish. Intellectually th equals and morally the superiros of their Hindu neighbours. the Muhammadans of the Upper Ganges Valley have not forgotten that till very lately administration of India was almost entirely in their hands and they look upon their declining fortunes as neither deserved nor irremediable."<sup>101</sup>

In another article in the same series, he examined the question of political and constitutional reform for India. He knew that Indians desired an advance on the road to self-government, and as a man of liberal convictions he was not prepared to thwart such wishes. But the heterogeneity of India was a barrier against the development of self-governing institutions, the like of which was then in process in other parts of the British empire. In any case, he did not favour the creation of an imperial parliament, or one central legislature, for India. "India is far too vast a continent and inhabited by races for too heterogeneous to make amalgame-

tion in a single assembly possible for representatives elected on any conceivable system . . . any attempts of the sort at present would find for themselves the inevitable fate of the Tower of Babel. With the Provinces, and for all provincial affairs, self-government is a growing necessity, and the present age is quite capable of witnessing it in practice. I would like to see each province of India entirely self-managed as regards civil matters."<sup>102</sup>

Two points in this suggestion are very farsighted. In emphasizing the futility of one Indian assembly to represent the will of the people, or rather the wills of several communities, he anticipated the future Muslim demand for separate representation. In fact, he went much further than this. Such an assembly would not be serviceable, whatever system of election was devised, and therefore the whole idea of a single legislature, and with it of a single Indian government, should be given up. In its place the more practicable and rational system of provincial governments should be operated. Each province was to be "self-managed" in all civil matters.

This suggestion for development on provincial lines brought Blunt close to Bright. The only notable difference lay in their conception of what was a province. Bright had more radical plans. to divide India into a few large presidencies and then to train and prepare these areas, so that one day each would be an independent state. Blunt was more modest in his scheme. He took the provinces as they stood in his time as the unit of constitutional and political development, and vested them with the plenitude of civil power. As yet, however, there was no mention of Muslim or Hindu provinces.

In December 1883, while in Calcutta, Blunt developed his earlier provincial plan into a momentous suggestion. According to it, the country had to be partitioned on religious lines. All the northern provinces, which were Muslim, should be brought under one government, and all the southern provinces, which were Hindu, should be assembled under another government. Thus India should be split up into two parts, one part to be put under a Muslim government, the other under a Hindu government. But, presumably for some time to come, British overlordship over the whole of India was to continue. Each government was to be run by Indians themselves, with complete freedom of control over "civil administration, legislation and finance". But British soldiers would be stationed in each area, and through them the imperial

authority would maintain its military power and guarantee the defence of the sub-continent against external attack.<sup>103</sup>

With Blunt we leave the realm of vague speculation and oblique hints and enter the world of definite, matter of fact proposals. Conjecture, surmise and assumption about the meaning and significance of the motives of a John Bright, or the intentions of a Sayyid Ahmad, or the words of a Jamaluddin no longer strain the mind. Here is a clear, straight-forward scheme, though still in the embryo. The facts of Indian diversity, Muslim separateness and political feasibility have been dovetailed into each other to produce a plan which foresees much of what was destined to happen in India. Some minor points still need elaboration and clarification. What sort of relationship was envisaged among the several provinces, each of which was to form a separate government? Was this to be a federation on American lines: the only major and successful federal system known in Blunt's day? Or, was it to be a unitary system, in which provincial divisions were to be mere administrative areas, as it was in British India until 1935? More importantly, was any connection to subsist between the proposed Muslim and Hindu governments? Was Blunt suggesting a loose confederation with some kind of a shared agency at the top? Or, was the presence of a common imperial military power meant to be the only tenuous, temporary and purely expedient link between Muslim India and Hindu India?

We are unable to answer these questions, for Blunt did not draw up a constitution. He was not offering a ready-made constitutional scheme of reform or re-grouping. He was suggesting a solution to a problem which, in his opinion, was being underrated in his day, but which he had seen to be the fundamental problem of India, one to be ignored only at the peril of Britain and India. We should not cavil at the absence of details, but rejoice at his understanding and his ability to prescribe a remedy of such breathtaking novelty.

Though we may not be able to go so far as to say, with Ian Stephens, that Blunt outlined "pretty clearly" the "Pakistan demand of the future",<sup>104</sup> yet none can deny that he was the first to suggest a partition of India on Hindu-Muslim lines. Bright had foreseen several sovereign states in the India of the future, but not necessarily Muslim and Hindu states. Sayyid Ahmad, the first to perceive and announce Muslim separateness and the first

to warn the Muslims against the coming danger of a Hindu rule, did not go where his argument should have led him, and refused to see territorial division as a logical consequence of religious and national division. Jamaluddin, a fiery but ineffectual prophet of pan-Islam and a defender of the rights of the subject peoples against the rigour and immorality of the imperial system, was not moved by the plight of Indian Islam. Blunt followed the logic of his observation all the way, and ended up with a separate Muslim state in India. This was a partition on Hindu-Muslim lines. This was a suggestion set down without reservation, uncertainty or doubt.<sup>105</sup> Here was a problem which indifference could not minimize, which ignorance could not wish away, and which time would not solve by itself. And here was a solution which might be shockingly new but which tackled the problem once for all, without leaving loose ends all over the place and without trusting the shape of things to come to nothing more substantial than far-off hopes of good-will and a happy day.<sup>106</sup>

### Muharram Ali Chishti (1888)

Sayyid Ahmad Khan had used words and phrases which can reasonably be construed to indicate a belief in the two-nation theory. But, as always with him, he was reluctant to take the next necessary step. If the Muslims formed a separate nation, it followed logically that they should have organized themselves into a separate political party to safeguard their interests and formulate their demands. In the political world then opening its portals to an Indian stampede this was a necessity. In particular after the establishment of the Indian National Congress, and in the light of its claim to speak for the whole of India, the Muslim nation should have taken steps to assert its identity and demand its special rights. But Sayyid Ahmad turned his back resolutely upon all such activities and continued to preach total aloofness from political action.

Mawlavi Muharram Ali Chishti, the founder, owner and editor of the *Rafique-i-Hind*,<sup>107</sup> a weekly of Lahore, saw the unwisdom of this course. Believing strongly that the Muslims constituted a nation by themselves, he felt the need for establishing a Muslim party to give substance to their national status and claims. He went to Calcutta in February 1888 and, it has been reported, succeeded

in converting Sayyid Ameer Ali to his point of view. A large meeting was organized under Ameer Ali's chairmanship in which Chishti explained the two-nation theory and called for accepting its political implications. It has been claimed by some that this incident and the persistent advocacy of the *Rafique-i-Hind* were responsible for the establishment of a "Muhammadan National Conference" at Calcutta in January 1889.

Chishti's views are well reflected in the editorial of 19 May 1888. After reminding his readers that his journal had always opposed the Congress and tried to save the Muslims from its "vile influence", he made it clear that "nothing is further from our intention than to convert our countrymen to the habits of bureaucratic yes-men and to make them toadies". Turning to Muslim needs and fears, he said: "The very constitution of the British Commonwealth is such that unless we unite to claim our rights, there is no way out . . . . Is it not true that Muslim national rights are suffering due to the dominance of another nation? . . . We repeat that if the Musalmans are prepared to submit to a life of slavery in India, then they will prove a curse to India, a disaster for their nation and a nonentity in the eyes of the Government."<sup>108</sup>

The importance of the *Rafique-i-Hind* lies in that, as far as we know, it was the first journal to propound the two-nation theory in clear terms, to criticize Sayyid Ahmad Khan for his policy of opposing Muslim political activity, and to advocate the establishment of a Muslim political organization which should protect Muslim "national rights".

### Abdul Halim Sharar (1890)

It is curious to find that the first Indian Muslim proposal for solving the Hindu-Muslim problem by some kind of territorial re-arrangement and exchange of population (not by creating a Muslim state, be it noted) was inspired by recurring communal riots, not by the two-nation theory. This scheme was suggested by the well-known novelist and journalist, Abdul Halim Sharar.

As one of the founders of the novel in India, Sharar is an important figure in Urdu letters. He was a prolific spinner of historical-cum-romantic tales, and could easily turn out a piece of fiction at remarkably short notice. Such rapid industry put his name to nearly fifty books. Reading Sir Walter Scott's *Talisman*

during a train journey, he was struck by the bias of European fiction in its treatment of Islam. As a riposte he decided to write novels set in the times of the crusades to inform the reading public of Muslim India about their heroes and their religious history. The first issue of this resolve came off the press in 1886. Then began a veritable cascade of novels on the age of the crusades, the Islamic empire in Spain, the Arabia of the days of ignorance, Islam in Arabia, early days of Islamic rule in India, and Muslim India of the nineteenth century. This was historical fiction rather than fictional history. Events took place in history, but heroes and heroines were mostly created by the artist's imagination. The idea was to convey the spirit of Islamic history to the general reader, to tell him of the great past of Islam, to keep his pride alive, and to save him from the despondency and despair which encompassed him at the sight of contemporary events, foreign rule and Hindu hostility. He is not a major figure in the history of Urdu literature, but as one who kept the Muslim buoyant on the dark waters of those days he merits the attention of the historian.

But he was not a mere novelist. His versatility would have been astonishing had it not been in keeping with the literary tradition of Urdu literature of that time. He wrote some historical pieces; he published many essays; he was an accepted literary critic of his age; he wrote on education, politics, reforms, social problems and other issues which were then engaging popular attention. But, above all these miscellaneous activities, he was the founder and editor and sometimes sole writer of several magazines, and a journalist of considerable courage and much enterprise at a time when this art (or profession) was in its infancy and the fear of laws made by an alien government kept the journalist's natural *elan* in severe check.<sup>109</sup>

Born, brought up and mostly living in Lucknow, where the court of Oudh and later its admirers were striving to maintain some of the glories of Mughal cultural achievements, his memories of the days of Muslim rule made him feel the pain of present degradation the more. For such a man the frequency of Hindu-Muslim disturbances<sup>110</sup> and the minority status of the Muslims were presages that could not be ignored. A series of uncommonly sanguine communal riots in the late 1880s shook him and compelled him to seek a lasting remedy for this recurring calamity. At this time he was editing a weekly journal, *Muhazzib*,<sup>111</sup> from Luck-

now. In its leader of 23 August 1890 he set down his solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem: "Times are such that the religious rites of one nation cannot be performed without injuring the susceptibilities of the other. Nor is there the element of patience to ignore insults. If things have reached such a stage, it would be wise to partition India into Hindu and Muslim provinces and exchange the population. The Hindus seem to be of the view that they should not allow Muslims to be their neighbours. Neither do they like to convey the jingle of their temple bells to the Muslim infidels, nor they themselves like to hear the Azan [the Muslim call to prayer]. Surely this position would be acceptable to Muslims because they too seem to be tired of Hindus."<sup>112</sup>

Evidently, Sharar subscribed to the two-nation theory; though we don't know the exact word he used to describe the Hindus and the Muslims separately as a "nation". It is also obvious that he was not suggesting the creation of a Muslim state. Nor, strictly speaking, was he advocating a partition. The quotation given above is an English translation of the Urdu original, and clearly the translator has taken liberties with his task. The original text is given by him in three different places in three different versions,<sup>113</sup> but the variations are unimportant. The key-word used by Sharar in all versions is *azla* (singular: *zila*), districts. He wanted the Hindus and Muslims to distribute the districts between themselves: "*Hindu aur Musalman Hindustan ke azla ko apas men taqsim kar len*". In the English article, Dr. Khurshid had used the word "provinces" without saying that the original Urdu word was quite different; consequently all those who did not see his quotations of the original Urdu believed that Sharar had taken the province as the unit of partition.<sup>114</sup> In his articles in the *Mashriq* and *Imroz*, however, he added, in passing and with challenging curtness, that "it must be remembered that at that time the word 'zila' was used in the sense of 'province'". This explanation was not only belated and casual, but also had no warrant in history or language. In Urdu a district is a *zila* and a province a *subah*. Both are old words and were in common use in the nineteenth century. There is no justification for translating *azla* as provinces. Not only that, but Dr. Khurshid seems to have taken further liberties with the sense of the original editorial when, in a book published in 1964, he stated that Sharar had suggested a partition of India between the Hindus and the Muslims.<sup>115</sup> By failing to mention the unit of

re-distribution he was misleadingly broadening the scope of Sharar's proposal.

But, apart from this mistranslation of an operative word on which the substance of the suggestion hinges, is it reasonable to deduce from these few sentences of the editorial that Sharar was really advocating a partition? Dr. Khurshid, who was the first to bring this editorial to public notice, thought so, for he prefaced the quotation by a single magisterial sentence: "strangely enough the earliest to make the proposal for the partition of the sub-continent was Abdul Halim Sharar, a novelist and a journalist".<sup>116</sup> As he seems to be the only person in possession of the original editorial, and perhaps also of the issues of the *Muhazzib* of that period, students of history would have been grateful for some further details. But they have not been given anything beyond the English translation of one extract from the leader. Perhaps there is nothing else to give

The exact meaning of Sharar's suggestion has to be construed from attendant circumstances and corroborative evidence. What was the general tone of the editorials of the *Muhazzib* before and after the date on which this proposal was made? Did Sharar later refer to what he had suggested, in elaboration, clarification, amendment or even repetition of it? Did his suggestion produce any reaction in the columns of this journal or elsewhere? These are questions which must be answered before determining the significance and value of his plan. In the absence of any information of this character, we have to take the available extract, as it stands, for what it is worth.

A partition means a clear division of a country or province or area into two or more parts with the parts being allotted to or given under the control of different parties, nations or governments. In this sense Sharar definitely made no suggestion for a partition. His language is vague, but there is no confusion about what he was aiming at. Tired of every-day Hindu-Muslim riots and mutual intolerance and dislike, he said that the problem could be solved by separating the two communities, so as to avoid common living which caused these disturbances. Therefore, he suggested movement on a large scale so that all Muslims migrated to certain districts and all Hindus to certain others—he took the district as his basis because of the obvious reason that, under British rule, it was the most important unit of administration.

After thus sorting out the two communities into separate districts, there would come into being districts which were completely or at least overwhelmingly Muslim and those which were completely or overwhelmingly Hindu. As most people spent their entire life within the district, their property lay within it, their profession or vocation was practised within its boundaries, and local elections took place on the district level, a Muslim district would bring much security, physical and moral, to its population. Moreover, the administrator would welcome such a change, for it would free him from the inconvenience of keeping peace between communities, of controlling local bodies which were split on communal lines and turned local councils into arenas of competing interests, and of receiving delegations and deputations from rival communities and trying to pacify angry protests flowing from contradictory claims. This was the sweet dream of every district officer, and its advantages were incontrovertible.

But then so was its impracticability. To ask millions to move to another place in peacetime without any dire pressure to goad them is to ask for the impossible. Men moved in millions in 1947, but then stark, naked fear of death hounded them and they were fleeing from what they believed to be a calamity without parallel. In the East where regional loyalties are intense, where local roots go deep and where land is the centre of life, people don't leave their homesteads and settle down a few hundred miles away because the government asks them to do so. Only two things will make them surrender their hearth: fear of death and love of money. Even the first is not all powerful; for some will die rather than go, as many did in the cataclysm of 1947. The second will send a man far away to amass wealth, but in most cases he will return to the ancestral scene, even if only to breathe his last in the family circle. No, the suggestion of a transfer of population on such a scale was a fantastic proposition and ran counter to the human grain.

It may be that Sharar had only his province in view. It was a Muslim minority province, but its Muslims had strong traditions of culture and powerful memories of their rule. They dominated the cities and played a part far beyond their numbers in the political and social life of the area. It was relatively easy to group them together into Muslim districts, but only relatively. It still would have been a task of immeasurable difficulty. In any case, this

would not have offered a solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem over the whole of India

Granting for a moment that Sharar wanted the whole of India to be re arranged into Muslim and Hindu districts, it would still not amount to a partition. Unless all Muslim districts were made contiguous to one another, it would not even make a partition of the future a feasible proposition. Anyway, going by the actual words used by Sharar, it is plain that he was advocating separation, not partition. Till we have more information about his proposal this conclusion should be able to stand scrutiny.

### Theodore Beck (1887, 1894)

Theodore Beck was a principal of the MAO College, Aligarh, during Sayyid Ahmad's life, and several pro Congress Muslim politicians and writers have attributed much in the Sayyid's pro British attitude to his influence. But it is beyond the scope of the present study to examine this controversy. Here we are concerned with Beck's views on Indian Muslims.

He was confident that a parliamentary system of government made no sense in "a country containing two or more nations tending to oppress the numerically weaker"<sup>117</sup>. On the lack of affinity between Hindus and Muslims he wrote that "not less than the physical difference between the burning plains of Mecca and the snowy heights of the Himalaya is the difference in thought and feeling between the Mahomedan and Hindu worlds"<sup>118</sup>. The impact of this difference on the governance of India was clear. "The divergence between Hindus and Mahomedans is the crucial difficulty in the formation of this [an Indian] nationality, and though the Hindus outnumber the Mahomedans the latter showed themselves for six centuries not inferior in physical force"<sup>119</sup>. The day "of fusion into a common nationality, seems far distant enough to allow at any rate the present generation of Anglo Indian statesmen to leave it out of account in their policy"<sup>120</sup>. The Muslims "if not a nation in the strictest sense of the term, are united by a feeling very like national feeling and derived from the religious and social bond"<sup>121</sup>.

He then worked out the implications of the presence of two nations for the future polity of India. If majority rule was instituted, "the Hindu party, being in a majority that would fear no

change of religion in the voters, would be absolute masters, as no Mahomedan Emperor ever was".<sup>122</sup> "The action of a free parliament in the North-West Provinces [the later United Provinces] would tend, I imagine, to exclude from appointments and extinguish the political influence of the race that were masters here for six centuries, the superb monuments of whose taste now remain as the finest spectacle offered the visitor to India—a race that still remembers the past, and that counts among its allies not only men in every province in India, but the hardy Afghan beyond the frontier, the Turkoman, and the Arab."<sup>123</sup> The growing hostility to the Muslims among the newly-educated Hindus was not "an amiable feature of the times". The Muslims had refused to join the Congress, not because they were backward in education, as alleged by some in Britain, but because they had no "wish to put a rope round their own necks and place themselves at the mercy of those who have hold of the other end".<sup>124</sup>

In these words in 1887 (when these essays were written for several newspapers in India). Beck confirmed the two-nation theory, explained the Muslim absence from the Congress, rejected the principle of majority rule in India presumably for all time to come, and reiterated the Muslim resolve never to live under the Hindu majority.

Later, in 1894, commenting on the British plan for a system of recruitment by open competition to the public services in India, Beck calculated that such a system would give the majority of the posts to the Hindu Bengalis and the remainder chiefly to Brahmans of Bombay and Madras. He pointed out the dilemma in which the reforms of 1892 had put the Muslims. If they did not make a turmoil the House of Commons would not believe that they disliked the proposed scheme of competitive tests, and would thus see their interests suffer grievously. If they agitated "they may hurry the people towards the British bayonets".<sup>125</sup>

### Theodore Morison (1899)

Next we come to another Englishman in the line of Bright, Blunt and Beck, but one of different antecedents. Sir Theodore Morison was a close friend and a great admirer of Sayyid Ahmad Khan, a principal of the MAO College of Aligarh, and later a member of the Council of the Secretary of State for India. He

spent many years in India in the service of Muslim education. He knew the Muslim mind well, and his intimate association with nearly every Muslim leader of that period, particularly in northern India, gave him an insight into the contemporary trend of Muslim thinking. He was familiar with Muslim character, Muslim consciousness of separateness and Muslim fear of Hindu rule.

Unlike Bright, he emphasized the fact of Hindu-Muslim division more than the general diversity of India. Unlike Blunt, he was sympathetic to the Aligarh movement and the Muslim aspirations. In England he was for a long time one of the few influential voices in support of conceding separate electorates to Muslims, of granting special protection to the Indian minorities and of elevating the Aligarh College to the status of a Muslim university.<sup>126</sup> To acknowledge his services to Indian Islam is to pay an outstanding debt.

His *Imperial Rule in India* was written in the year before he took over as principal of the Aligarh College, and was published in 1899. This is significant; the ideas he expressed were formed before he came to Aligarh. One passage of this book puts him among those who contemplated the future of Indian Muslims on separatist lines. Echoing Beck, he wrote: "The Muhammadans are in some ways the most definite and homogeneous political unit in India; they are heirs of a common civilization and common traditions of glory, and they are conscious to an extent unsurpassed in India of their corporate existence. If the 57 million Muhammadans of India were all collected in one province or tract of country, if for instance, the North of India from Peshawar to Agra were inhabited exclusively by the Muhammadans, a national spirit associated with those territorial limits would already be in process of formation, which would suggest a practical solution of the present problem. But the Muhammadans are, as a matter of fact, scattered in isolated groups all over the peninsula, and in consequence such sentiment of nationality as they do possess links them not with Sikhs and Bengalis, with whom they share the soil, but with their co-religionists wherever they are found, be it in Arabia or Persia or within the frontiers of India. So little do the Muhammadans regard India as their own country that their great poet, Hali, has compared his people to guests who have overstayed their welcome, and lamented that they ever left their native homes for India." Here Morison quotes three verses from Hali's *Musaddas*,

and then continues, "The views held by the Muhammadans (certainly the most aggressive and turbulent of the peoples of India) are alone sufficient to prevent the establishment of an independent Indian Government. Were the Afghan to descend from the north upon an autonomous India, the Muhammadans, instead of uniting with the Sikhs and Hindus to repel him would be drawn by all the ties of kinship and religion to join his flag."<sup>127</sup>

Here we find all the ingredients of a separate Muslim nationalism in India. The Muslims regard themselves separate from the Hindus and Sikhs in spite of sharing the same soil with them. They don't look at India as their country. They have more in common with the Muslims of foreign lands than with the non-Muslims of India, so far so that if an Afghan invasion of an independent India would take place they would side gladly with the Muslim invader against the Indians. The establishment of an independent government in India, run by Indians, is therefore impossible as long as the Muslims think on these lines. Further, the collective attitude of the Muslims clearly marks them out as a distinct nationality. They possess a feeling of "corporate existence" to such an extent that they would be a nation but for the absence of a territory of their own. Had they all been living in one area, the "corporate existence" would have combined with territory to produce a "national spirit". In other words, they had all the makings of a nation except a territory which they could call their own. This was an invitation, if it could be called that, to the Muslims to start thinking about a territory for themselves. It was a clear indication that the Hindu-Muslim problem could be solved by physically separating the Muslims from other Indians.

## Conclusion

Thus, by the close of the nineteenth century certain ideas about the future of India were in the air.<sup>128</sup> Indian diversity was now taken for granted by every one, except the Hindus, whose claims on behalf of India as a nation could not permit such acquiescence. The future shape of India could not emerge from the mould of a rigid, unitary and united society. Therefore, a united, independent India was improbable, if not impossible.

Above all, there were the Muslims, in swift motion towards a nationalism of their own, and fearfully afraid of the coming

majority rule which, imposed in the name of the blind majesty of democracy, would place them firmly and for all time under the Hindus. Some sort of re-arrangement, re-grouping or separation was beginning to appear in the thoughts of several men. No transparent idea was yet in sight. No clear-cut schemes were yet drawn up. No definite proposals were yet offered to the public for comment, consideration, acceptance or rejection. The language was ambiguous and uncertain. Arguments were involved and confused. Intentions were not expressed conspicuously. Motives were difficult to disentangle. It was as if people were groping in the dark for a solution, but it eluded them. They knew that something was seriously wrong somewhere, but the remedy seemed not to lay in their hands. The wish to change the scheme of things was asserting itself, but the direction of change, even its nature, was beyond their vision.

But people had at last begun to talk of separation, and that was a momentous development. It is strange that ideas about separation, however vague and spasmodic, should have preceded the establishment of the first proper, all-India Muslim political party. It shows that radical political thinking is possible without the formal apparatus of an organization. It also shows the depth of Muslim concern for their future: thinking about their destiny came first and founding parties and winning elections came afterwards.

The most important development of the nineteenth century was that separation, definitely political, perhaps territorial, was being talked about without creating consternation or evoking mockery. The very familiarity of the idea, without its acceptance, was big with consequences. In the century which was now dawning, it was destined by swift stages to open a new era in the history of this ancient and restless mass of land.

## NOTES

1. Technically, India was not ruled by the British Government before 1858, though the Parliament had made certain charter acts for the good administration of the country.
2. Apart from representing important regions, these cities were also geographically the five nodal centres of the sub-continent: Calcutta in the east, Madras in the south, Bombay in the west, Lahore in the north, and Agra (approximately) in the centre.
3. *Select Speeches of Rt. Hon. John Bright on Public Questions*, London, 1907, p. 14. This was a selection from two earlier volumes. *Speeches on Questions of Public Policy* (2 vols, 1868) and *Public Addresses* (1879), both ed by J.E. Thorold Rogers. The 1858 speech was issued as a 36-page pamphlet by Edward Stanford of London in the same year under the title of *Speech on Legislation and Policy in India, Delivered in the House of Commons on the Second Reading of the Indian Bill, 24 June 1858*.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 13. A committee of the British Indian Association of Calcutta reported on this speech as follows: "The tendency of centralization. . . is uniformity, but the distinguishing feature of the Indian communities is variety. A single nation may thrive under centralization, for there the principle of the unity of action has a wide field for play. But centralization for a number of nations, each at a different stage of progress and with various degrees of intelligence, can have no principle for its basis, for it is the practical confusion of all principles imaginable. Hence in India centralization is an anomaly", quoted in *The Englishman*, 29 January 1859.
5. *Select Speeches of Rt. Hon. John Bright on Public Questions*, London, 1907, p. 51.
6. For details see K.K. Aziz, *Britain and Muslim India*, London, 1963.
7. There is very little material on Bright, except a few old and old-style biographies. See B.G. Gokhale, "John Bright and India (1848-1861)", *Journal of Indian History*, April 1963, pp. 57-67; and J.L. Sturgis, *The Ideas and Activities of John Bright in Relation to the Empire, 1843-1889*,

unpublished M.A. thesis, University of London, 1963.

8. Between Bright's and Sayyid Ahmad Khan's times, Muslim fear of Hindu rule received substance from various Hindu threats and claims. In 1864, for instance, Rajendralal Mitra, in a paper on "The Origin of the Hindvi Language and its Relation to the Urdu Dialect" read before the Asiatic Society of Bengal, asserted that Urdu was nothing but an Aryan dialect overlaid with Persian influence, and that Indians could not even imagine giving up the Devanagiri script in view of their "patriotic feeling for the alphabet in which the Vedas are preserved"; quoted in Stuart McGregor, "Bengal and the Development of Hindi, 1850-1880", *South Asian Review*, January 1972, p. 140. In the same vein, Indian nationalism and Hinduism were identified as one in Dyananda's efforts to remodel Indian society on the basis of the Vedas, in Raja Ram Mohan Roy's founding of Brahma Samaj, and in Devendranath Tagore's successful attempts to establish a number of Indian-Hindu associations; see R.P. Dua, *The Impact of the Russo-Japanese (1905) War on Indian Politics*, Delhi, 1966, pp. 7-8.

His important political writings are: *An Account of the Loyal Mohammedans of India*, Meerut, 1860; *Review on Dr. Hunter's Indian Mussalmans*, Benares, 1872; *The Causes of the Indian Revolt*, Benares, 1873; *Sir Sayyid Ahmad on the Present State of Indian Politics*, Allahabad, 1888; and *Akhiri Mazamin*, Lahore, 1898. On him there is much more than can be cited here. A varied selection: Rajendra Prasad, *India Divided*, Bombay, 1946, pp. 90-104; I.H. Qureshi, *The Muslim Community of the Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent*, The Hague, 1962, pp. 236-252; A.H. Albiruni (S.M. Ikram), *Makers of Pakistan and Modern Muslim India*, Lahore, 1950; J.M.S. Baljon, Jr., *The Reforms and Religious Ideas of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan*, Leiden, 1949, rev ed, Lahore, 1958; *Eminent Musalmans*, Madras, n.d.; G.F.I. Graham, *The Life and Work of Sayyid Ahmad Khan*, London, 1885, and *Reviews on Sayyid Ahmad Khan's Life and Works*, Aligarh, 1886; *Indian Nation Builders*, Madras, n.d., Vol. III; G.D. Khanna, *Great Men of India*, Calcutta, 1940, pp. 52-63; *Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan: A Sketch of His Life and Work*, Madras, n.d.; L.F. Rushbrook Williams (ed),

*Great Men of India*, Bombay, n.d., pp. 606–615; Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan, 1857–1964*, London, 1967; Abdul Hamid, *Muslim Separatism in India*, London, 1967; M.S. Jain, *The Aligarh Movement*, Agra, 1965; Hafeez Malik, *Moslem Nationalism in India and Pakistan*, Washington, D.C., 1963; M. Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims*, London, 1967; Yusuf Husain (ed), *Selected Documents from the Aligarh Archives*, Bombay, 1967; C.W. Troll, *Sayyid Ahmad Khan: A Reinterpretation of Muslim Theology*, New Delhi, 1978; S.M. Ikram, *Mawji-Kausar*, Lahore, 1970 rep., pp. 73–110, 155–166; Hafeez Malik, *Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and Muslim Modernization in India and Pakistan*, New York, 1980; Shan Muhammad (ed.), *The Aligarh Movement: Basic Documents, 1864–1898*, New Delhi, 1978; Abdul Hamid, *Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and the Genesis of the Muslim Separatist Movement in Politics: An Interpretation*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of the Punjab, 1953; Rahmani Begum Muhammad Ruknuddin Hasan, *The Educational Movement of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan, 1857–1898*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1959; and Margaret H. Case, *The Aligarh Era: Muslim Politics in North India, 1860–1910*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Chicago, 1970. For further references and periodical literature on him see K.K. Aziz, *The Historical Background of Pakistan, 1857–1947: An Annotated Digest of Source Material*, Karachi, 1970.

10. *Indian Musalmans: Are they bound in conscience to Rebel against the Queen?*, Benares, 1872, Appendices I and II.
11. Altaf Husain Hali, *Hayat-i-Javed*, Lahore, n.d. p. 263. A recent historian has claimed that in 1869, during his stay in London, Sayyid Ahmad “came to believe that the separation of Muslims from Hindus might be beneficial for the Muslims”; Hafeez Malik, “Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan’s Contribution to the Development of Muslim Nationalism in India”, *Modern Asian Studies*, April 1970, p. 139. But he offers no evidence for the statement. On 19 April 1870, Sayyid Ahmad wrote to Nawab Mohsinul Mulk: “Hindu language demands have made Hindu-Muslim unity an impossibility. The Muslim will never agree to own Hindi, and if this Hindu demand continues to be made, one

- day the Hindu will irrevocably reject Urdu, and the result will be that one day the Hindus and the Muslims will separate from each other completely"; quoted in Salahuddin Nasik, *Tahrik-i-Azadi*, Lahore, n.d., p. 159.
12. Quoted in Choudhry Khaliqzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan*, Lahore, 1961, pp. 269–270.
  13. Sayyid Iqbal Ali, *Sayyid Ahmad Khan ka Safar-i-Punjab*, Aligarh, n.d., pp. 140–167, quoted and translated by Hafeez Malik, "Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's Contribution to the Development of Muslim Nationalism in India", *Modern Asian Studies*, April 1970, p. 138.
  14. Quoted in an article by Jamiluddin Ahmad in *MN*, 23 March 1960.
  15. *Sir Sayyid Ahmad on the Present State of Indian Politics, consisting of Speeches and Letters reprinted from the 'Pioneer'*, Allahabad, 1888, pp. 2–24.
  16. *Ibid.*, pp. 25–28.
  17. For sympathetic reviews of Tayebji's life see *Indian Nation Builders*, Madras, n.d., Vol II; H.B. Tyabji, *Badrudin Tyabji: A Biography*, Bombay, 1952; and "The Late Mr. Badruddin Tyabji", *Indian Review*, November 1906, pp. 814–818 (a fulsome tribute).
  18. *Sir Sayyid Ahmad on the Present State . . .*, pp. 30–53.
  19. *Ibid.*, pp. 63–71.
  20. Quoted in Ram Gopal, *Indian Muslims*, Bombay, 1959, p. 67.
  21. However, similar views were expressed by Sayyid Ameer Ali; see K.K. Aziz, *Ameer Ali. His Life and Work*, Lahore, 1968.
  22. It is a habit of all Hindu and Indian Muslim historians to attribute Sayyid Ahmad's separatist ideas to the "imperialist" influence of his British friends and colleagues, particularly to that of Theodore Beck. Sayyid Abid Husain repeated this in his *The Destiny of Indian Muslims*, Bombay, 1965, p. 39. Two years later he confessed to Hafeez Malik "that no authentic evidence was available supporting the contention that Sir Sayyid was thoroughly dominated by Beck, and that he formulated his policies on Beck's suggestion. Dr. Husain also regretted the fact that instead of doing his independent research on this issue, he relied excessively

- upon [Sayyid Tufail Ahmad] Manglori's assertions", Hafeez Malik, *op. cit.*, p. 142, fn. 36.
23. *Sir Sayyid Ahmad on the Present State*. . . , p. 40. My emphasis.
  24. Andre Guimbretiere, "Le reformisme musulman en Inde", *Orient*, no 16 (1960), p. 27.
  25. *Ibid.*, p. 30.
  26. Shamloo (comp.), *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, Lahore, 1948 ed, pp. 130, 132.
  27. There is no room to list all of them. As types, see S. Hyder, *Progress of Pakistan*, Lahore, June 1947, p. 23; Sharif al-Mujahid, "Pan-Islamism", in *A History of the Freedom Movement*, Karachi, Vol. III, Part I, 1961, p. 96; Ghulam Husain Zulfikar, *Zafar Ali Khan: Adib awar Shair*, Lahore, 1967, p. 35; Parveen Feroze Hasan, *The Political Philosophy of Iqbal*, Lahore, n.d., p. 214; Mirza Abid, *Jamaluddin Afghani*, Lahore, 4th ed 1966, pp. 12, 14, 16, 19.
  28. This is supported by the Afghan documents themselves. For details see Nikki R. Keddie, *An Islamic Response to Imperialism*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1968, pp. 6-7.
  29. For this evidence see Iraj Afshar and Asghar Mahdavi, *Documents inedit concernant Seyyed Jamal-al-Din Afghani*, Tehran, 1963; Nikki R. Keddie, "Afghani in Afghanistan", *Middle Eastern Studies*, July 1965, pp. 322-349; H. Pakdaman, *Djamal-Ed-Din Assad Abadi dit Afghani*, Paris, 1969; Mirza Lutfullah Asadabadi, *Sharh-i-hal wa Asar-i-Sayyid Jamal el-Din Asadabadi maruf be "Afghani"*, Tabriz, 1947, Arabic tr. by S. Nash'at and A. Hasanayn, *Jamal al-Din al-Asadabadi*, Cairo, 1957; and Volume on Afghani (F.O. 60/594) in the India Office Library, London. "A despatch from the United States Minister to Egypt dated March 17, 1936 (no. 883.91/I) records the researches of the Secretary of Legation, J.R. Childs, while on a visit to Persia, into the mystery of al-Afghani's origin. Childs satisfied himself, on the evidence of published investigations of Persian scholars and the presence of al-Afghani's relatives in Iran, that al-Afghani was a native of Iran. . . ." (Sylvia G. Haim (ed), *Arab Nationalism: An Anthology*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1962, rep 1976, Introduction, p. 7 fn.). The authenticity of the Afshar-Mahdavi documents is beyond doubt.

- During his second journey in Iran (1889) Afghani was the guest of a big Iranian merchant, Haji Muhammad Hasan Amin Zarb. Before his expulsion from Iran, Afghani left with Zarb his library and some personal documents. Zarb's grandson, Asghar Mahdavi, a professor at the Tehran University, in collaboration with Iraj Afshar, published some of these personal documents. The complete collection is now in the Majlis Library, Tehran. How amusing to find that in Afghanistan, Afghani was known as al-Rumi and was thought to be from the Ottoman Empire (Vartan Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan*, Stanford, 1969, p. 86 fn., quoting Mahmud Tarzi's article in the *Siraj al-Akhbar*, 6th year, no. 5).
30. E.G. Browne, *The Persian Revolution*, London, 1966 ed, p. 5; Ghulam Jilani Azami, "Jamal al-Din Afghani", *Kabul*, 7 July 1931; Qazi Abdul Ghaffar, *Asar-i-Jamaluddin Afghani*, Delhi, 1940, pp. 32-37; Nikki R. Keddie, "Sayyid Jamal al-din al-Afghani's First Twenty-Seven Years: The Darkest Period", *Middle East Journal*, Winter 1966, pp. 526-527; Aziz Ahmad, "Afghani's Indian Contacts", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, July-September 1969, p. 476.
  31. Nikki R. Keddie, *op. cit.*, *Middle East Journal*, Winter 1966, p. 527.
  32. Aziz Ahmad, *op. cit.*, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, July-September 1969, pp. 477-478.
  33. Afshar and Mahdavi, *op. cit.*, pp. 5, 156.
  34. *Proceedings of the Government of India in the Foreign Department*, Political (Calcutta), 1869, "Cabul Diaries"; Nikki R. Keddie, *op. cit.*, *Middle Eastern Studies*, July 1965, p. 336.
  35. C.C. Adams, *Islam and Modernism in Egypt*, London, 1933, p. 5.
  36. A.S. Lethbridge, General Superintendent, Thagi and Dakaiti Department, Government of India, *Memorandum*, copy printed by the F.O., London, no. 55, dated 1896, Public Records Office, London, F.O. 60/594.
  37. Afshar and Mahdavi, *op. cit.*, pp. 12, 157.
  38. Sharif al-Mujahid, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-105. It must be noted that in partial support of this he depends on W.S. Blunt's account. But Blunt is a biased witness, for he intensely

disliked Sayyid Ahmad Khan and was therefore glad to praise Jamaluddin who had been abusive in his attacks on the Sayyid.

39. Bipen Chandra Pal, *Nationality and Empire*, Calcutta, 1916, pp. 370–371.
40. Bipen Chandra Pal, *Memories of My Life and Time*, Calcutta, 1932, p. 417.
41. Jamaluddin Afghani, *Maqalat-i-Jamaliyyah*, Calcutta, 1884. The whole collection is relevant and provides a fine window into his mind. The extracts quoted here are from the translation given in Nikki R. Keddie, *An Islamic Response to Imperialism*, pp. 101–108.
42. *Al-Urwa al-wuthqa*, Vol. I, pp. 151 ff.
43. See his “Lettre sur l’Hindoustan”, *L’Intransigeant*, 24 April 1883.
44. See Qazi Abdul Ghaffar, *op. cit.*, pp. 120–155.
45. G. Allana, *Our Freedom Fighters, 1562–1947*, Karachi, 1969, p. 144.
46. Javed Iqbal, *Maey Lalafam*, Lahore, 2nd ed 1973, Foreword, p. xxviii.
47. Abdus Salam Khurshid, “Sayyid Jamaluddin Afghani”, *NW*, 16 March 1978.
48. See, for instance, S.A. Vahid, “Introduction”, to Parveen Feroze Hasan, *op. cit.*, p. xiii. Mirza Adib’s *Jamaluddin Afghani* (in Urdu, first pub in 1946, 4th ed 1966, Lahore) omits all reference to his activities in India; this slim volume is addressed to high school students, hence its frequent reprinting.
49. Aziz Ahmad, *op. cit.*, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, July–September 1969, p. 476.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 489.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 490.
52. Taken from the English tr. of the full text in Nikki R. Keddie, *An Islamic Response to Imperialism*, pp. 130–174. The original Persian title of the essay was “Haqiqat-i-Mazhab-i-Neicheri wa Bayan-i-Hal-i-Neicherian”. It was first pub in Hyderabad in 1880, and a second ed, with an introduction by the editor of the *Farhang*, at Bombay in the same year. An Urdu tr, under the same title, by Sayyid Abdul Ghafur Shahbaz, was pub at Calcutta in 1883 (Aziz Ahmad, *op.cit.*,

- Journal of the American Oriental Society*, July–September 1969, p. 480 fn. 43). The first ed is included in the Afshar-Mahdavi documents. The popular title under which it is known, “Refutation of the Materialists”, is taken from the Arabic tr, *ar-Radd ‘ala al-dahiriyyin*, by Muhammad Abduh and Abu Turab, Beirut, 1885, Cairo, 1894, rep 1935. Pakdaman says that Jamaluddin himself had translated it for the first time into Arabic in 1880 (Homa Pakdaman, *op. cit.*, p. 68); she gives a list of differences between the Persian original and the Arabic tr by Abduh and Abu Turab (pp. 68–70). It was tr into French by Mlle. A.M. Goichon, *Refutation des materialistes*, Paris, 1942. There is a Turkish tr in manuscript form by Yakub Efendi-zade Muhammad Munir, deposited at the Istanbul University Library, Yildiz Collection.
53. The original title was “Sharh-i-Hal-i-Aghurian”. It appeared in the *Muallam-i-Shafiq* of September and October 1881 in two instalments. The target of the assault is a person referred to by Afghani as “Nasatuda-i-Marg Khan”, i.e., one rejected or unglorified even by death; easily identifiable with Sayyid Ahmad Khan.
  54. For the Persian original and its Urdu tr see S.M. Ikram, *Yadgar-i-Shibli*, Lahore, 1971, pp. 384–385.
  55. India Office printed confidential report on Afghani, 6 March 1896, quoted in Nikki R. Keddie, “Religion and Irreligion in Early Iranian Nationalism”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, April 1962, p. 282.
  56. Andre Guimbretiere, *op. cit.*, p. 34.
  57. Homa Pakdaman, *op. cit.*, pp. 233–234.
  58. Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798–1939*, London, 1962, p. 125.
  59. Nikki R. Keddie, *op. cit.*, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, April 1962, pp. 279–280.
  60. Letter tr and rep in E.G. Browne, *The Persian Revolution of 1905–1909*, London, 1910, pp. 28–29.
  61. Wadi Z. Haddad, reviewing Keddie’s *Sayyid Jamal ad-Din ‘Al-Afghani’: A Political Biography* in *The Muslim World*, LXVI (1976), p. 229.
  62. Aziz Ahmad, “Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Jamal al-din al-Afghani and Muslim India”, *Studia Islamica*, (1960), p. 63.

63. *Ibid.*, p. 69.
64. See Muhammad al-Makhzumi, *Khatirat Jamal al-Din*, Beirut, 1931, p. 232. This book is a record of the conversations which Afghani had with al-Makhzumi during his last years in Istanbul.
65. The original article arguing this position was in Persian and is not available to me at the time of writing. I am using a partial French tr: Mehdi Hendessi, "Pages peu connues de Djamal al-Din al-Afghani", *Orient*, no. 6 (1958), pp. 123–128.
66. Sati al-Husri, *Ma hiya al-qawmiyya?*, Beirut, 1959, p. 225.
67. Afghani and Abduh had organized a secret society of Muslims in Paris, and published *al-Urwa al-wuthqa* to spread and popularize their ideas on the unity and reform of Islam. Abduh wrote the text, Afghani supplied the ideas (Rashid Rida, *Tarikh al-ustad al-imam al-shaikh Muhammad Abduh*, Cairo, Vol I, 1931, p. 289). The first issue appeared on 13 March 1884 and the last on 16 October 1884. All the 18 issues are preserved in the Bibliotheque Nationale of Paris. For the photostate of the first page of the first issue see *Orient*, no. 21 (1962), page facing p. 89. It has been asserted that the journal "was published at the expense of a number of Indian Muhammadans" (*Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, eds Gibb and Kramer, Leiden, 1953, pp. 85–86), but I have found no other evidence in support or against this statement.
68. See A. Albert Kudsi-Zadeh, "Les idees d'Afghani sur la politique coloniale des Anglais, des Francais et des Russes", *Orient*, nos. 47–48 (1968), pp. 200–206. The *Misr* was pub by two of Afghani's Egyptian disciples, Adib Ishaq and Salim al-Naqqash, *Al-Nahla* was a bilingual journal pub in London by the Rev. John Louis Sabounji, a Roman Catholic priest, which preached Islamic reform "with an Arab nationalist colouring" and denounced Sultan Abdul Hamid as "an usurper of the title. . . Caliph" (Albert Hourani, *op. cit.*, p. 268). Blunt says that there was a mystery about its financing and suspects that the funds to support it came, in part at least, from the ex-Khedive Ismail (W.S. Blunt, *The Secret History of the British Occupation of Egypt*, London, 1923, p. 66).
69. "Une conversation du directeur de la *Correspondance Parisi-*

enne avec le scheik Djamal-Eddin", *La Correspondance Parisienne*, 20 May 1885. For photographs of the original see Afshar and Mahdavi, *op. cit.*, facsimiles 158–163.

70. Jacob M. Landau, "Al-Afghani's Pan-Islamic Project", *Islamic Culture*, July 1952, p. 51, citing W.S. Blunt, *Gordon at Khartoum*, pp. 466–468, who relates this Churchill-Afghani interview.
71. Letter dated 12 December 1895, Public Records Office, F.O. 60/594, quoted in Nikki R. Keddie, *op. cit.*, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, April 1962, p. 282.
72. *Ibid.*
73. For this passing reference see *al-Urwa al-wuthqa*, Vol. I, p. 52.
74. Despatch from Morier, St. Petersburg to London, 20 July 1887, no. 253, Secret, in F.O. 60/594, quoted by Aziz Ahmad, *op. cit.*, *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, July-September 1969, p. 490.
75. *Ibid.*
76. Nikki R. Keddie, *op. cit.*, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, April 1962, p. 283, who relies on British Foreign Office sources.
77. C.C. Adams, *Islam and Modernism in Egypt*, London, 1933, p. 12.
78. Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey*, Montreal, 1964, p. 266 fn.
79. Some examples of the hagiographic approach: "No other man in our time has stirred the soul of Islam more deeply than he" (Iqbal, in Shamloo (comp), *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, Lahore, 1945, p. 132), and "if somebody deserves to be called renewer after Abdul Wahab. . . it is Jamaluddin Afghani" (Iqbal, in Shaikh Muhammad Ata, *Iqbalnamah*, quoted in Annemarie Schimmel, *Gabriel's Wing*, Leiden, 1963, p. 21); "a celebrated religious teacher and prophet" (N.D. Harris, *Europe and the East*, Boston, 1926, p. 176); his "life touched and deeply affected the whole of Islamic world in the last quarter of the nineteenth century" (Albert Hourani, *op. cit.*, p. 108); "by the time he died most of the Islamic world had felt, directly or indirectly, some of the impact of his powerful personality and had been exposed to his ideas" (A. Albert Kudsi-Zadeh,

“Islamic Reform in Egypt: Some Observations on the Role of Afghani”, *The Muslim World* January 1971, p. 1); “what al-Afghani did was to make Islam into the mainspring of solidarity, and thus he placed it on the same footing as other solidarity-producing beliefs” (Sylvia G. Haim, *Arab Nationalism*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1962, 1974 reprint p. 15). A Pakistani biographer, who writes anonymously even invents a meeting between Jamaluddin and Iqbal in India, in which Iqbal “was much impressed by his political views” (Naz, *Iqbal*, Lahore, 1970, p. 48). At the time of Jamaluddin’s last visit to India Iqbal was a 4-year old child. The curious reader will find similar fabrications and imaginary virtues in all articles published in the Urdu press of Pakistan since 1947; their number exceeds a hundred.

80. A.C. Niemeijer, *The Khilafat Movement in India, 1919–1924*, The Hague, 1972, p. 36.
81. Majid Khadduri, *Political Trends in the Arab World: The Role of the Ideas and Ideals in Politics*, Baltimore, 1970, p. 57 fn.
82. *Ibid.*, p. 58.
83. M.R.T. (ed), *Pakistan and Muslim India*, Bombay, 1943, 2nd ed 1946, p. 14.
84. S. Hyder, *Progress of Pakistan*, Lahore, June 1947, pp. 22–23.
85. See his contribution in W.T. de Bary (ed), *Sources of Indian Tradition*, New York, 1958, p. 827.
86. Nikki R. Keddie, *Sayyid Jamal al-Din ‘Al-Afghani’: A Political Biography*, Berkeley, 1972, p. 155 fn. 27.
87. I.H. Qureshi, *The Muslim Community of the Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent (610-1947): A Brief Historical Analysis*, The Hague, 1962, p. 295, citing as his authority *A History of the Freedom Movement*, Karachi, Vol. I, 1960, pp. 48, 49.
88. Aziz Ahmad, “Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Jamal al-din al-Afghani and Muslim India”, *Studia Islamica*, (1960), p. 67, quoting as his source I.H. Qureshi in de Bary’s *Sources of Indian Tradition*.
89. Aziz Ahmad, “Remarques sur les origines du Pakistan”, *Orient*, no. 26 (1963), p. 21.
90. Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan, 1857–1964*, London, 1967, p. 168.

91. Letter to me from Toronto, dated 15 January 1971. His italics.
92. Letter to me from Los Angeles, dated 3 September 1970. Her italics
93. Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, *Evolution of Pakistan*, Lahore, 1963. p 42.
94. Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, *The Pakistan Resolution and the Historic Lahore Session*, Karachi, 1968, p. 3.
95. Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada (ed), *The Foundations of Pakistan*, Karachi, 1970, Vol II, p. xii.
96. Two instances from among dozens. "On one occasion Jamaluddin Afghani had made a clear reference to the possibility of making the entire area from Russian Turkestan to West Pakistan into a strong and united Muslim state" (Professor Muhammad Khalilullah, "Do Qawmi Nazria awr Iqbal", *Jang*, 31 September 1977; repeated in exact words in his "Iqbal awr Do Qawmi Nazria", *ibid.*, 23 March 1978), and Jamiluddin Ahmad, *The Final Phase of Struggle for Pakistan*, Lahore, 2nd ed 1968, p. 152.
97. Muhammad al-Makhzumi, *op. cit.*, pp. 237-241; Hisham Sharabi, *Arab Intellectuals and the West*, Baltimore, 1970, pp. 109-110.
98. Iqbal, though mistaken about Jamaluddin's origins, was sure that, in spite of the close association of his name with "what is called Pan-Islamic movement", he "never dreamed of a unification of Muslims into a political State" (statement issued on 19 September 1933, Shamloo, *op. cit.*, p. 204.
99. Besides the works cited above, the following throw additional light on Jamaluddin: Ruchi Ram Sahni, *The Awakening of Asia*, Lahore, n.d., pp. 39-41, 75-81; H.A.R. Gibb, *Modern Trends in Islam*, Chicago, 1947, pp. 27-32; Muhammad Iqbal, *Islam and Ahmadiism*, Lahore, 1936, pp.30-31; W.C. Smith, *Islam in Modern History*, Princeton, 1957, pp. 47-51; Sharif al-Mujalid, Sayyid Jamaluddin Afghani: His Role in the Nineteenth Century Muslim Awakening, unpublished M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1954; Elie Kedourie, *Afghani and Abduh*, London, 1966; T. Cuyler Young, "Pan-Islamism in the Modern World", in J.H. Proctor (ed), *Islam and International Relations*, London, 1965, pp. 194-219; I. Goldziher, "Djamal al-Din al-Afghani",

*Encyclopaedia of Islam*, first ed; Abd al-Qadir al-Maghribi, *Jamal al-Din al-Afghani*, Cairo, 1968; Nikki R. Keddie, *Religion and Rebellion in Iran*, London, 1966; A.J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, London, 1954, Vol VIII, pp. 692–695. For the Afghani-Renan debate see Renan, “L’Islamisme et la science”, *Journal des Debats*, 30 March 1883; Afghani, “Reponse a Renan”, *ibid.*, 18 May 1883; “Reponse de Renan a Jamal-ed-Din”, *ibid.*, 19 May 1883. The most important articles pub in *al-Urwa al-wuthqa* have been tr and pub by Marcel Colombe in *Orient* (Paris), no. 21 (1962), pp. 87–115, no. 22 (1962), pp. 125–159, no. 23 (1962), pp. 169–198, and no. 24 (1962), pp. 121–151. For a comprehensive bibliography on Afghani see A. Albert Kudsi-Zadeh, *Sayyid Jamal al-Din al-Afghani: An Annotated Bibliography*, Leiden, 1969.

100. W.S. Blunt, “The Future of Islam”, *Fortnightly Review*, August 1881, pp. 204–223, September, pp. 315–322, October, pp. 441–458, November, pp. 585–602, and January 1882, pp. 32–48.
101. W.S. Blunt, *Ideas about India*, London, 1885, p. 89.
102. *Ibid.*, p. 163.
103. W.S. Blunt, *India Under Ripon: A Private Diary*, London, 1909, pp. 107–108.
104. Ian Stephens, *Pakistan*, London, 1963, p. 70. He does not cite any source.
105. Blunt was not given to entertain doubt. He was accustomed to make forthright statements. For example, “The British Empire is a structure that might crumble at any moment, the sooner the better, say I”. W.S. Blunt, *My Diaries: Being A Personal Narrative of Events, 1884–1914*, London, 1932, entry of 26 November 1897, p. 285.
106. See also his “Ideas about India: The Mahomedan Question”, *Fortnightly Review*, November 1884, pp. 624–637, and “The Future of Self-Government” *ibid.*, March 1885, pp. 386–398. On Blunt see Edith Finch, *Wilfred Scawen Blunt, 1840–1922*, London, 1938, esp pp. 112–114 and 180–191 on his Indian visits of 1879 and 1883; Earl of Lytton, *Wilfred Scawen Blunt: A Memoir by His Grandson*, London, 1961; Lepel Griffin, “An Indian Thersites”, *Fortnightly Review*, March 1885, pp. 371–385, for a strong

- criticism of Blunt's ideas on India; and G. Scott, Wilfred Scawen Blunt—Anti-Imperialist, unpublished B. Litt thesis, University of Oxford, 1961.
107. The *Rafique-i-Hind*, founded, owned and ed by Mawlavi Muharram Ali Chishti, began publication as a weekly from Lahore on 5 January 1884. A paper of high quality, it supported Sayyid Ahmad Khan's ideas and movement till 1888. When it differed from the Sayyid's religious views, it became the major focus of attacks on him in the Punjab, and pub some vulgar pieces on him and on Mawlavi Nazir Ahmad. This led to litigation between Nazir Ahmad and Chishti, as a result of which Chishti had to render an apology on 19 June 1893. It ceased publication in 1904. Information from Imdad Sabiri, *Tarikh-i-Sahafat-i-Urdu*, Vol. III, Delhi, n.d., A.S. Khurshid, *Sahafat Pakistan wa Hind men*, Lahore, 1963, pp. 280–281, and his letter to me from Lahore, dated 21 October 1969.
108. Rep in Pakistan Caliphate, "The Genesis of Pakistan", *CMG*, 6 August 1942.
109. For Sharar's literary activities see Ram Babu Saksena, *A History of Urdu Literature*, Allahabad, 1927, 2nd ed 1940, pp. 334–341, and Muhammad Sadiq, *A History of Urdu Literature*, London, 1964, pp. 339–344.
110. He wrote in *Dilgudaz* (one of his journals): "Whether we support Congress or not, one very sad thing which we notice about its activities is that it seems to be creating more differences between Hindus and Muslims than existed previously", Abdul Halim Sharar, *Lucknow: The Last Phase of an Oriental Culture*, tr and ed by E.S. Harcourt and Fakhir Hussain, London, 1975, "A Note on Abdul Halim Sharar", p. 23. No date is given, and it may have been written at any time between January 1887, when *Dilgudaz* began to appear, and the 1910s when it ceased publication.
111. The first issue of *Muhazzib* came out on 1 August 1890. Made up of 16 pages, it mainly comprised of editorial comments and articles, with brief notices of national and foreign news. See A.S. Khurshid, *Sahafat Pakistan wa Hind men*, pp. 270–271.
112. Quoted in A.S. Khurshid, "Origin of Pakistan: Trends that Led to Partition", *TPT*, 23 March 1962. Another scholar

- calls this journal *Tahzib*, Waheed Qureshi, *Pakistan ki Nazriyati Bunyaden* Lahore, 1973, pp. 102, 116.
113. In *Sahafat Pakistan wa Hind men*, p. 272; "Pakistan ka Bani Kaun?", *Mashriq*, 1 April 1964; "Pakistan ke Qyam awr Baqa Men Sahafion ka Kirdar", *Imroz*, 14 August 1970.
  114. For example, Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, *Evolution of Pakistan*, p. 58, and *The Pakistan Resolution and the Historic Lahore Session*, p. 4.
  115. A.S. Khurshid, *Karwan-i-Sahafat*, Karachi, 1964, p. 67, quoted in M. Rafique Afzal, "Origin of the Idea of a Separate Muslim State", *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, January-April 1966, p. 177 fn 2.
  116. A.S. Khurshid, in *TPT*, 23 March 1962.
  117. Theodore Beck, article in *The Pioneer*, 2 and 3 November 1887.
  118. Theodore Beck, *Essays on Indian Topics: Reprinted from The Pioneer and Other Papers*, Allahabad, 1888, p. 45.
  119. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
  120. *Ibid.*, p. 47.
  121. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
  122. *Ibid.*, pp. 82-83.
  123. *Ibid.*, pp. 83-84.
  124. *Ibid.*, p. 84.
  125. Theodore Beck, "The House of Commons and the Indian Civil Service", *National Review*, May 1894, pp. 372-389. See also his "Native India and England", *ibid.*, November 1894, pp. 375-391, which is the text of his address to the Anjuman-i-Islam of London delivered on 8 September 1894. I have found nothing on him except "The Late Mr. Theodore Beck", *Calcutta Monthly*, September 1899, pp. 239-240, and Alfreda Elizabeth Meyers, *Theodore Beck and Sayyid Ahmad Khan: The Myth of Provocateur and Puppet in Muslim Separatism, 1875-1909*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, American University, Washington, D.C., 1973.
  126. See his *The History of the MAO College, Aligarh, from its Foundation to the Year 1903*, Allahabad, 1903; "A Descendant of the Prophet", *National Review*, June 1898, pp. 578-586 (on Sayyid Ahmad Khan); "A Muhammadan University", *ibid.*, October 1898, pp. 243-249 (on Aligarh).

“An Indian Renaissance”, *Quarterly Review*, April 1906, pp. 553-570 (the Aligarh movement); “The Association of Indians with the Government of India”, *The Englishman*, 27 November 1906; “Can Islam be Reformed?”, *Nineteenth Century*, October 1908, pp. 543-551 (a reply to Cromer); “England and Islam”, *ibid.*, July 1919, pp. 116-122; “The Outlook for India”, *Contemporary Review*, April 1931, pp. 409-415; “The Hindu-Muslim Problem in India”, *ibid.*, June 1931, pp. 710-717; and “The Government of India and Civil Disobedience”, *ibid.*, February 1932, pp. 137-143. I am not aware of any material on him except some passing references and the entries in the *Who Was Who* and the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

127. Theodore Morison, *Imperial Rule in India. Being an Examination of the Principles Proper to the Government of Dependencies*, London, 1899, pp. 4-5.
128. For some contemporary reports on the Hindu-Muslim issue and on the thinking of the two communities see W.W. Hunter, *The Indian Musalmans: Are They Bound in Conscience to Rebel against the Queen?*, London, 1871, 2nd ed 1872; E.C. Moulton, *Lord Northbrook's Indian Administration*, Bombay, 1968; Muhammadan Literary Society of Calcutta on Muslim Education, quoted in *The Englishman*, 22 October 1873; Peter Townsend, *The Last Emperor: Decline and Fall of the British Empire*, London, 1975; *Sadharani* (a leading Bengali weekly), editorial, 5 January 1878; John Gallagher, Gordon Johnson and Anil Seal (eds), *Locality, Province and Nation: Essays on Indian Politics, 1870 to 1940*, London, 1973; Francis Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims*, London, 1974; Peter Hardy, *The Muslims of British India*, Cambridge, 1972; *Mahomedan Observer*, 1 January 1887; *The Times*, 16 January 1888; Leonard A. Gordon, “Party-Building under the Raj: Bengal, 1875-1918”, *South Asian Review*, January 1971; F.W. Thomas, *The Mutual Influence of Muhammadans and Hindus*, Cambridge, 1892; Swami Sharddhanand, *Inside Congress*, Bombay, 1946; Indian National Congress, *Annual Reports*, for 1894, 1895 and 1896, Allahabad; *Moslem Chronicle*, 9 January 1897; A.C. Lyall, “India under Queen Victoria”, *Nineteenth Century*, June 1897; and contem-

porary issues of *Bharat Fiwan* and *Kavi Vachar Sudha* of Benares, *Hindustan*, *Prayag Samachar* and *Hindi Pradip* of Allahabad, *Arya Darpan* of Shahjahanabad, and *Hindustani* of Lucknow.

# 2

## THE INNER MOMENTUM : 1900-1924

### The State of Hindu-Muslim Relations (1900-1910)

The first decade of the twentieth century is something of a puzzle. It witnessed a number of significant developments, like the partition of Bengal, the Hindu agitation against this, the Muslim deputation on separate electorates, the founding of the All India Muslim League, the Minto-Morley reforms which gave the Muslims what their deputation had demanded, and increasing Hindu-Muslim friction. But these ten years are devoid of any contribution to the growth of the idea of Pakistan. This odd circumstance will be examined later. Let us begin the study of the new century with a quick look at the state of Hindu-Muslim relations as reflected in contemporary reports and other evidence.

In April 1901, the well-known Hindu leader Bal Gangadhar Tilak wrote in his *Marahatti* paper that it was "wrong to conclude . . . that the Marathas, Punjabis, Bengalis, etc., all these different people have one nationality".<sup>1</sup> As if to confirm the belief of their leader, the Hindus of Moradabad, after having won a majority in the city council in 1903, 'treated the Muslims as their subjects'.<sup>2</sup> In early 1906, Sister Nivedita underlined the Hindu character of Indian nationalism when she wrote that "service for the nation was a duty—a duty as taught in Gita".<sup>3</sup> When the Muslim deputation saw the Viceroy at Simla and requested separate and weighted representation in all elected bodies, and received a sympathetic reply, the entire Hindu and Congress press criticized the Muslims for making such a suggestion and the Viceroy for supporting it.<sup>4</sup>

Indian diversity and Muslim separateness were acknowledged in the House of Commons in June 1907 by Lord Percy: "India is not a homogeneous nationality but a congeries of races animated by antagonistic ideals. Muslims are physically superior but numeri-

cally inferior and the Hindus physically inferior but numerically far superior. Therefore government by majorities in India must mean the government of the strong by the weak.”<sup>5</sup> The increasing Hinduizing of nationalism was noticed by the sharp eye of C.F. Andrews, who wrote to the Viceroy’s private secretary in 1908: “There is a rapid Hinduizing of ‘national’ ideas going on among the younger men . . . and a Hindu religious colouring is given to National ideas.”<sup>6</sup>

Hindu-Muslim differences were implicit in this religion-dominated nationalism. During the anti-partition agitation in Bengal, Rabindranath Tagore wrote in the same year: “When our speakers failed in Mymensingh and other areas to win the heart of the Mussalman peasantry, they felt very indignant. They never thought for a moment that we have never given proof of our real interest in the welfare of the Mussalmans or of the common people of our country. We cannot, therefore, blame them if they are rather suspicious of our professions of goodwill. A brother does, of course, suffer for the sake of another brother, but if somebody just turns up from nowhere and introduces himself as a brother, he is not very likely to be straight away shown into his share of the inheritance. Our people do not yet know what they are their brothers, and our conduct has not so far been such that we can claim to have fraternal feelings in relation to them surging in our mind.”<sup>7</sup>

Another top-ranking Hindu leader was of the same opinion. Gokhale told Blunt in 1908 that Muslims were all against the Congress and would constitute a danger in any reconstruction of India on a national basis, because, though much less numerous and less rich, they were united. Blunt asked him if his (Blunt’s) appealing to the Muslims to join the Congress would do any good, but was told that it would be useless.<sup>8</sup> Contemporary Hindu opinion, specially in the Bengali circles, was that Muslims were “treacherous enemies who could not be trusted with the work of securing political freedom”.<sup>9</sup>

In an article written at the end of 1909, C.F. Andrews brought out the close connection between Hinduism and Indian nationalism of his day. “Today it [religion] is probably, in many Hindu minds, one of the strongest emotional forces evoking love of country. . . . Today many of the noblest among the younger Hindus are finding in a revival of their sentiment a partial satisfaction of their rising national instincts. They don’t strictly distinguish in their thoughts

—perhaps they hardly wish to distinguish—between mother India as the object of their devotion and that Motherland within the Divine Nature itself of which Hindu saints and philosophers have spoken, and which had become embodied in popular legend as a religion of the common people. . . No Mussalman could join with a Hindu on this religious basis, however patriotic he might be, however he might love India as his own native country. This fact should be clearly recognized by those who wish Indian patriotism to be all-embracing and inclusive, and not merely confined to Hinduism.”<sup>10</sup>

This was confirmed by official communications reaching the government from the administrators. The Commissioner of Lucknow told the government on 18 May 1909 that throughout the province the Hindus were attacking their rivals where they could, and Hindu *taluqdars* were dismissing Muslims from their service. The Hindus of Agra even went so far in 1910 as to renounce the charms of their Muslim courtesans. Harcourt Butler wrote to the Viceroy’s private secretary on 25 November 1910 that “never in my experience has Hindu-Mahommedan antagonism been so intense as it now is in Northern India. People there are beginning to ask for separate courts of justice, separate schools, etc . . . for the two communities. Most municipal elections turn on this question. The Mahommedans have got too much, say the Hindus; we must get back a bit”. The Commissioner of Agra reported to the government on 21 February 1911 that Hindu merchants were considering stopping credit to Muslims, and Muslim pleaders and physicians were being boycotted by their Hindu clientele <sup>11</sup>

### Three Vague Proposals (1904, 1905, 1907)

In an atmosphere of so much friction and enmity one would have expected several Muslim attempts to solve the communal issue by separation. In fact, we find practically none. I think this can be explained by three factors. Bengal was partitioned in 1905, and a separate province of Eastern Bengal and Assam was brought into being which contained a very large majority of Muslims. On 1 October 1906, the Muslims demanded separate and extra representation in all elected bodies and got it under the new reforms of 1909. In December 1906, the All India Muslim League was

established in Dacca. These momentous developments gave Muslims a confidence which they had lacked earlier. The government had created a new Muslim province. Their own representatives would now sit in the councils, free of any obligation to Hindu voters, and their number would be larger than their strength in the population allowed. They had their own national organization which would act as a counterpoise to Congress claims. Things were going smoothly. They had achieved much in ten years. More benefits would flow in coming years from a beneficent government and their own unity and determination. This is the way their mind was working, and for the time being (the qualification is important) their thoughts did not contemplate the marking out of a separate path for themselves.

On 15 and 16 February 1907, Mawlana Muhammad Ali gave two lectures at Allahabad on "The Present Political Situation" and "The Muhammadan Programme". I read their substance after I had written the above; they seem to endorse the optimism which I have indicated in my analysis. He said: "The Muslim League was not an effort at disintegration but at integration. He compared the Congress of the Hindus and the League of the Mussalmans to two trees growing on either side of the road. Their trunks stood apart, but their roots were fixed in the same soil, drawing nourishment from the same source. The branches were bound to meet when the stems had reached their full stature, and shade the passerby. The soil was British, the nutriment was common patriotism, the trunks were the two political bodies and the road was the highway of peaceful progress."<sup>12</sup> This picturesque and clever analogy hovers between unity and separation. Separation is implied by the two trees: they are planted on opposite sides of the road, and will never become one. Unity is underlined by the common soil and by the happy prospect when the branches of the two trees would embrace one another and provide welcome shade to the whole nation. Muhammad Ali is sitting on the fence; he would practise this art in all the years to come.

In these ten years, three suggestions are *reported* to have been made for a partition of India on a religious basis, but the reports are so vaguely worded and so casually mentioned without citing any original source that nothing definite can be said about them until further information comes to hand. They are briefly noted

here to keep the record complete.

One recent study mentions in passing that in 1904 Bhai Parmanand, an orthodox Hindu leader of the Punjab (whom we will meet again), advocated a division of India on Hindu-Muslim lines. No details are given, no evidence is produced, and a mere secondary source is mentioned.<sup>13</sup>

The second amounts to two sentences in an autobiography, stating that in 1905 Akbar Allahabadi, the well-known poet of humour and biting satire, used to tell the author that, as Muslims found it difficult to live with the Hindus, the two nations would be able to exist in peace if India north of the Jumna river was given to the Muslims. The exact words used in the report are: "*Jumna darya tak agar uper ka hissa Musalmanon ko de diya jaye to donon qawmen itminan ki zindagi basar kar sakti hayn.*"<sup>14</sup> It may be noted in passing that Akbar was a harsh critic of the Aligarh movement and mocked at modern education and living.

On the third report we have more definite information but no verifiable authority. "About 1907", we are told by a modern scholar of Iqbal (S.A. Vahid), "two Turkish statesmen visited the sub-continent, and they were so depressed to read about Hindu-Muslim riots all over the sub-continent that, in a book they wrote, they suggested that the sub-continent should be sub-divided into Hindu India and Muslim India."<sup>15</sup> The names of the visiting statesmen are not given, nor is the exact date of their visit provided, nor is the title of their book mentioned, nor is any supporting evidence quoted. It would have been interesting to know what impelled them to advocate a partition, and under the influence of which Muslim leaders, if any, they formulated this radical solution. We are not even told whether the book in question was written in English or Turkish, and where it was published. Further confusion is created by the use of the word "sub-divided" by the author of this report. What does it mean? Is he quoting the Turkish statesmen's word or translating what they had said, presumably, in Turkish? It is not impossible that these Turks showed concern for the Muslim problem in India because they themselves were Muslims and had a peculiar and troublesome minority problem in the Ottoman empire. But there is so little mention of any Turkish interest in India in contemporary literature that it comes as a surprise to find such a novel idea being propounded by the Turks. In the absence of any further information it is not possible to

pursue this interesting line of inquiry.

In response to my inquiry on this point, Mr. Vahid wrote: "I read the book to which I have made a reference sometime in 1925. I forget much about it. But so far as I can remember the name of the book was 'Cross versus Crescent', and one of the authors was Khalil Khalid Bey, who was for some time Turkish Consul General in Bombay."<sup>16</sup> This book is not available to me at the time of writing this study.

### Muhammad Ali (1911, 1912)

In 1911 Muhammad Ali,<sup>17</sup> while giving vent to his dissatisfaction with the condition of the Muslims, expressed certain opinions which could be interpreted as a confession of faith in Muslim separatism and an agreement with the two-nation theory. On 14 January he wrote in his *Comrade*: "We have no faith in the cry that India is united. The problems of India are almost international. But when the statesmen and philanthropists of Europe, with all its wars of interests and national jealousies, do not despair of abolishing war and placing Pax on the throne of Bellona, shall we despair of Indian nationality? We may not create today the patriotic fervour and fine national frenzy of Japan with its forty millions of homogeneous people. But a concordat like that of Canada is not beyond the bounds of practicability. It may not be a love-marriage born of romance and poetry. But a *mariage de convenance*, honourably contracted and honourably maintained, is not to be despised."<sup>18</sup>

A fortnight later he returned to the subject: "... the problems of India are not so national as international. And in international law, the strength of a country or Power does not count, for the basic principle of that law is the equality of all nations. The Musalmans stand on a par with the smaller Powers of Europe, and can even claim like those Powers an absolute equality in all inter-communal controversies. But they do not do so, and limit their demand to such a representation as is adequate and effective for the preservation of their existence and their honour."<sup>19</sup>

And again, a year later, he still believed in the absence of a united India. "... a united India does not exist today. We have to create it and the first necessary condition before it can be created is to recognize that it does not exist."<sup>20</sup>

Muhammad Ali knew his mind, and these words have the qualities of clarity and strength. But they need to be placed in their context. The *Comrade* used, by habit, strong words and delighted in being provocative. Nevertheless, it was the first English journal of quality in Muslim India, and succeeded in moulding the public opinion of the elite as nothing had done before. Its immense influence on Muslim thinking is undeniable. It formulated new ideas as well as it reflected Muslim fears and hopes. The dates of the appearance of these editorials must be kept in mind. Between 1905 and 1911 Muslim politics was in a ferment. In the course of these seminal years several notable developments came tumbling down one after another, as we have mentioned in the opening section of this chapter. The Hindus had taken umbrage at the division of Bengal, and had answered it with a virulent agitation which was as much anti-British as it was anti-Muslim. Hindu-Muslim relations had deteriorated swiftly. The Hindus and the Congress had also looked with utter distaste at the Muslim demand for separate representation and additional seats in councils. They had reacted similarly to the establishment of the Muslim League. The Congress had never been able to win the support of any large section of the Muslims, but the founding of a separate Muslim party was a public demonstration of the Congress's failure to speak for India. In the meantime, the first major instalment of reforms was on the anvil in London, and when it came in its final shape in 1909 it contained a provision for separate Muslim representation, a concession which every Hindu politician, group, party and newspaper opposed vociferously.<sup>21</sup>

The feeling of separateness was fast growing among the Muslims and coming to the surface. A few years of hectic politics had set a seal on Hindu-Muslim alienation, and India never recovered from the effects of these developments. All the basic issues were formulated during this period, opposing stances were taken, and attitudes were struck. There were some changes of detail in later years, some appearance at bargaining, some softening or hardening of attitudes; but fundamentally the mould created in this half decade continued to shape Hindu-Muslim relations until the late 'thirties, when the final demand for a clear partition was decided upon.

Thus Muhammad Ali wrote at a time when the Bengali Hindu agitation was in full spate. He wrote in support of the Muslim

demand for separate representation, which was still being criticized by the Hindus though the India Act of 1909 had conceded it, and this should have silenced the controversy. He also wrote in defence of Muslim League policies, for he was not only a member of the League but one of its founding-fathers. As a politician Muhammad Ali is not an easy man to understand or portray. He changed his parties and views several times; others did so too, but his *penchant* for candid talk and sturdy language did not leave him convenient loopholes to evade the charge of inconsistency. Postponing our judgment on him, for we will meet him again a few years later, let us look more closely at his words quoted above.

It is a merit of Muhammad Ali that he went straight to the heart of the problem. Of course, he wrote when Hindu-Muslim relations were at an uncommonly low ebb; but then so did other Muslim leaders and journalists. He was alone among them to state in clear words that the Hindu-Muslim problem was an international one; that the two communities, in spite of the difference in their size, were like nations which are recognized by status, not by numbers; and that the two communities were absolutely equal in political terms. Twenty-two years later Rahmat Ali was to employ these very words in justification of his Pakistan plan; and twenty-nine years later Jinnah was to use them in support of his demand for a partition.

But Muhammad Ali did not go that far. Like his other contemporaries and like some of his predecessors mentioned in the last chapter, he walked almost to the edge of his argument and then retraced his steps. In India there was an international problem waiting to be solved. The Muslims were a nation. They were right in claiming absolute equality with the Hindus. They had no faith in the existence of a united India. *But* they were prepared to give it a try. They would not assert their equality to its logical end and demand parity (that was to come later with Jinnah); they would content themselves with adequate representation. They might fail to create a spirit of nationality in India, as the homogeneous Japanese had done; but they would strive to create a sort of a Canada in India. This would not be a marriage born of passion and romance, that was impossible; but they would accept an arranged marriage as all Indians did in their personal life.

That was the limit to which Muhammad Ali could go—an arranged marriage, brought about by mutual convenience, and

the nuptials to be managed by the British. He was still hopeful of better days. Probably the couple would settle down in conjugal peace and quiet, and years of companionship and also of occasional tiffs would bring that mature attachment, if not flaming love, which frees from impediments the path of married life. Such are the hopes of all Indian parents who arrange their children's marriages, and of the children who have to hope because there is nothing else to do. But suppose conjugal love failed to blossom? Suppose the arranged match did not work out? What then? Here Muhammad Ali fell silent. Like the Indian father answering his doubting son (the daughter does not have even that privilege), he talked of hope and assurance. What was the point in contemplating dark days? Why think of despair? Things were bound to turn out well!

Perhaps Muhammad Ali was an optimist at this stage. He genuinely believed that the future would vindicate his hopes. Or, perhaps, he had his doubts but preferred not to give them tongue. If he was a sceptic, had he given thought to alternatives? What would happen if the arranged marriage collapsed? Would he have suggested a fresh attempt and renewed his assurance? Or, did that make separation unavoidable? If so, what kind of separation? We don't know. He did not return to this subject *again with such clarity. He did not mention division or partition*, but he came near doing it. He saw the possibility without facing it.

### Joseph Stalin (1912)

The Communist theory of nationalities, particularly in its application to India, has been cited by some writers as evidence of an early belief in the formation of several national groups in the sub-continent. In a book on India, published in 1947, R. Palme Dutt, the half-Indian leader and publicist of the British Communist Party, referred rather vaguely to a statement made by Stalin in 1912. He introduced Stalin's quotation with the imprecise remark that "Communist writers say that in 1912 Stalin was foreseeing the break-up of India into several nationalities". Then the words of Stalin are given as: "In the case of India, too, it will probably be found that innumerable nationalities, till then lying dormant, would come into life with the further course of bourgeois development."<sup>22</sup>

It will be noticed that Dutt does not give the source of this quotation either in this book or in its second edition, but relies for this information on some unnamed "Communist writers". This, however, is usual practice with him, and in all his works are to be found statements, assertions, reports and quotations unsupported by references to their origin.

But, apart from that, there is nothing startlingly new in Stalin's reported declaration. The principle of nationalities, as propounded by Communist theoreticians, is by now quite a familiar feature of Communist political thinking. Inspired by the incredible heterogeneity of Russia and impelled by the need for some kind of a principle to deal with a country containing a score of national groups, the makers of the Soviet revolution were quick to see the value of a theoretically liberal doctrine of nationalities, not only for Russia where they were attempting their first experiment, but also for all other countries with large and amorphous populations. The break-up of such countries into nationalities was prophesied with a view to showing the disruptive character of the development of capitalism, winning the support of such national groups which wanted to be independent, and presenting Communism as an attractive and effective solution of the nationality problem.

Apart from being the pronouncement of a front-rank Communist thinker and statesman, no deep and hidden meaning should be sought in Stalin's words. Prospects for a break-up of India in the future had been mentioned by many persons before him. The possible emergence of a number of nationalities out of the numerous Indian mass of humanity had been foreseen much earlier by men like Bright, Blunt, Strachey, Morison and several other British observers of the Indian scene, not to speak of some Indians themselves, particularly the Muslims, whose patriotism for India or dislike of the British did not blind them to the disunity, diversity and heterogeneity of their country. From the point of view of the present study, Stalin's belief in the disunity of India and his prophecy of the eventual birth of more than one nationality have no significance. He made no reference to the Hindu-Muslim problem; probably he did not know much about it. There is no mention of it even in one of his later statements made in 1924 before the students of the University of the Peoples of the East: "Now-a-days India is spoken of as a single whole, yet there can be hardly any doubt that in case of a revolutionary

upheaval in India, many hitherto unknown nationalities will energe on the scene.”<sup>23</sup>

To refer to Stalin in connection with the history of early thinking about a partition of India and to pass on can be misleading. The attitude of the Communists, inside and outside India, to the creation of a separate Muslim state, is an interesting study in confusion and contradiction. In spite of Stalin's reported statements and the general theory of nationalities enshrined in the Communist doctrines of Soviet Russia, Soviet attitude to the Pakistan demand before 1947 and to the state of Pakistan after independence has been one of unreserved hostility, not so much on political and diplomatic levels as in historical understanding. Soviet writers on South Asia have believed consistently that the demand for Pakistan was instigated by the British and had its roots in the imperialist policy of divide-and-rule, and that its creation owes much to British interests. Histories of India and Pakistan which have appeared in Moscow during the last thirty years, bearing the imprint of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, contain as much misinformation, sweeping generalities unsupported by evidence, distortion of facts and deliberate misrepresentation of history as one can find in the accounts of the most biased among Hindu historians.<sup>24</sup>

Similarly, the Communist Party of Great Britain did not conceal its hostility to the Indian Muslims, and opposed the Pakistan demand with arguments borrowed from its Hindu critics. All of this cannot be explained by the half-Indian origin of its foremost leader and propagandist, R. Palme Dutt. It is obvious that the British Communists chose to follow the Moscow line. What is, to a great extent, inexplicable is the different course adopted by the Communist Party of India. The Indian Communists were almost neutral in the Hindu-Muslim struggle, choosing to attach more importance to the exploitation of the poor by the capitalists and landlords of both religions than to the substance of their political differences. With the opening of German-Soviet hostilities, however, their attitude took a swift turn in favour of the British war effort, for now the war was declared to be a “people's war”. Following this, they became harsh and relentless critics of the Congress which was obstructing the war effort and thereby endangering Soviet ability to repel the Nazi invasion. By the logic of the Indian politics of that period, hostility to the Congress

was taken to be automatic support for the Muslim League; this was helped by the League's neutral, in practice favourable, attitude towards war effort. But the Indian Communists went further, and came out in support of the Pakistan demand, justifying it by the Communist doctrine of nationalities with their right to independent existence.<sup>25</sup> By doing so they made the Congress their enemy. But more important was the fact that here the Indian Communists were using a principle enunciated by the Soviet leaders in justification of a policy which was totally opposed to the Soviet attitude to the Pakistan demand. This rebellion remains one of the minor mysteries of Indian politics as well as of the world Communist movement.

### Bhai Parmanand (1912)

We have already seen that in 1904 Bhai Parmanand is reported to have suggested a division of India on Hindu-Muslim lines. According to another account (by Abdul Hamid), he made this (or another such) suggestion in 1912. In his *Apbitti*, said to have been published in Urdu in Lahore in 1923, he wrote that "the police searched his house in 1912 and seized some of his private papers which included the rough draft of a letter addressed to Lajpat Rai containing a blue-print of a constitution for free India together with a proposal to push the Muslims across the river Indus".<sup>26</sup> In the same year was published his *Arya Samaj awr Hindu Sangathan* from Lahore, in which he "reiterated the proposal in a somewhat different fashion".<sup>27</sup> Hamid neither quotes from the two books he has apparently consulted nor gives direct references to their pages. He also fails to elaborate the "somewhat different fashion" in which in 1923 Parmanand repeated his 1912 proposal.

On this amended proposal, however, we have some further information at another place. In his second book, Parmanand stated that Hindu-Muslim unity was unthinkable. "According to him", Pirzada tells us, "the solution lay in either the Hindus assimilating the entire Muslim population of the sub-continent or being eventually assimilated by the alien intruders. Rejecting both as impracticable, he proceeds to outline a solution of his own: 'It struck me a long time ago that the only satisfactory avenue to unity is to effect complete severance between the two

peoples India could be partitioned in such a manner as to secure the supremacy of Islam in one zone and that of Hinduism in the other'.<sup>28</sup>

It appears that Parmanand's plan of 1912 hardly left anything to the Muslims. According to Hamid, his earlier proposal was to push the Muslims "across the river Indus". This reminds us of Jamaluddin's alleged scheme of detaching a part of north-west India and amalgamating it with Afghanistan and some areas of Central Asia to create a Muslim republic. The details of the Parmanand plan are not known. It is reasonable to assume that he expected the Indian region lying beyond the Indus to merge with Afghanistan. Otherwise, how could the tiny, resourceless, land-locked north-west frontier province and the tribal areas be converted into an independent state? And, how could it accommodate more than a fraction of the total Indian Muslim population? The 1912 proposal was clearly not for a partition of India (the term is not used in Hamid's account), but for extending Hindu control over the whole of India, including the Punjab, minus the north-west frontier.

The 1923 scheme is certainly one of partition. He wants the creation of two zones, one Muslim, the other Hindu, to be effected by a division. We are unable to say what kind of a partition he was suggesting, for no details are available. What is beyond any doubt is that this is the first clear proposal for a partition of India on religious lines made by a Hindu. It is significant to note that he belonged to the orthodox school and the right wing of Hindu politics, being one of the founders of the All India Hindu Mahasabha.<sup>29</sup>

Here dates are important. Parmanand's solution by partition did not come till 1923; the 1912 plan was not one of division. Between 1912 and 1923 partition was suggested by several Muslims, though no serious notice was taken of them.

### Characteristics of the Post - 1912 Period

From 1912 onwards our search for the origins of the idea of a separate Muslim state is conducted in a relatively unclouded atmosphere. The groping is over and done with. Now there is more light, and the goal is better marked. Doubts and uncertainties begin to dissolve as the concept of a partition rises into view.

The search for a permanent solution grows intense. Thoughts turn more frequently to separation. The assumption of a united India and the hopes of arranging things within its compass recede. There are some who still fear to cross the Rubicon, and continue to pin their hopes on a less radical solution. But the mounting wave of new thinking sweeps along with gathering volume and speed, and leaves the remiss conservatives with nothing but a feeling of their inadequacy.

The idea of partition seems to have been the third and final stage of a process of thought which, in perspective, looks simple and undeviating. First came the realization of the gravity of the communal problem. It was a very serious affair, but no effort was made to find a permanent solution. Such was the thinking of Sayyid Ahmad's period. His contribution to this thought process was his emphasis on the existence of the problem. For the first time, Muslims, and others, began to take a serious view of the future of Islam in India. As the problem grew in gravity and communal riots multiplied, the idea of segregation struck some minds. Blunt was the first to suggest it among the British, Sharar among the Muslims. Physical separation was the only way to avoid constant friction and bring moral and material prosperity to the Muslim minority. From physical separation to political division was a revolutionary step which most feared to take. But the march of events made such reluctance out of date. When an idea begins to develop and grow it generates an inner momentum of its own, and those who try to halt its march with words of caution labour in vain. A time had to come when the concept of separation would ripen into the idea of a partition. The consummation may have the appearance of being the work of one mind, but in reality it was not so. (That is what makes nonsense of the general Pakistani assertion that Iqbal conceived the idea of Pakistan and Jinnah achieved it). Many small hints contributed to the ultimate commitment. Several minds were working to the same end and harbouring similar thoughts. When the feeling of a nascent nationalism coincided with the disappointment at all ready-made ameliorative expedients, partition was found to be the only solution possessing the merits of permanence, security and national advancement.

With these contours of the thought process fixed on our mind, we may proceed with the story of the idea. But, first a brief look

at the state of Hindu-Muslim relations and the sentiment of separatism on both sides in the years 1911-20 is in order.

### The State of Hindu-Muslim Relations (1911-1920)

In his presidential address to the Indian National Congress in 1911, Bishan Naryan Dhar pointed in clear words to the threat posed to Indian nationalism by the current separatist tendencies. "The idea of a united Indian nation", he said, "may not be alluring to some people, and a section of the Muhammedans may, for the present, fail to realize its true significance; but the instructed classes do care for that ideal and they see that it is menaced by separatism".<sup>30</sup>

Some Muslim voices were now raised in favour of Hindu-Muslim parity, a sure guidepost to partition. Muslims were afraid that if, with the advance of democracy on the local level, the official element was squeezed out of district boards and town municipalities, the Hindu majority was bound to crush the Muslim minority. This posed a special danger for the Muslims of the Hindu-majority provinces. A note written on 2 September 1911 by Shaikh Zahur Ahmad of the United Provinces points to this problem. "In these circumstances to give preponderant influence to one community would mean grave injustice to the other; and it would be an evil day for India if the mass of any community comes to think that its interests have been left at the mercy of the other and the British Government has in any way deviated from its well established principle of holding the balance even in India. In these circumstances, since it is the majority of votes that decides all questions in municipal and district boards, a community whose members are less than 5% will naturally be at the mercy of the predominating community and this in the absence of the personal *dabao* [pressure] and influence of the official president means the sacrificing of the interests of the minority to those of the majority. The only solution of such a difficult problem lies in giving equal representation to both the communities or distributing the number of representatives in such a way that if the non-partisan members voted with the Muhammedan members the issue may be decided accordingly."<sup>31</sup> It took the Muslim League 34 years to make such a demand, and that on the executive side, not the legislative; it was in 1945 at Simla that Jinnah demanded equal Muslim and

non-Muslim representation on the Viceroy's Executive Council.

It will be recalled that in 1908 Gokhale had told Blunt that the Muslims were keeping themselves away from the Congress. Four years later, when Sarojini Naidu told Gokhale that Hindu-Muslim unity would be achieved in five years, he replied, "Child, you are a poet, but you hope too much. It will not come in your life-time or mine. But keep your faith and work for it if you can."<sup>32</sup>

Some prominent Hindu leaders were so terrified of a Muslim revival in India and its possible linkage with foreign Muslim countries that they were prepared, their hatred for the British empire notwithstanding, to forge an alliance with the British rulers in self-defence against such an Islamic gathering in. B.C. Pal of Bengal illustrates this trend, and his words are worth reflecting upon. "Pan-Islamism and Pan-Mongolianism offer, therefore, the greatest menace to India's future and to the realization of the dream of the Indian Nationalist. . . . And the real strength of this Pan-Islamic outburst will come from Egypt and India. . . . Indian Nationalism, in any case, has, I think, no fear of being permanently opposed or crippled by Great Britain. On the contrary, the British connection can alone offer it effective protection against both the Pan-Islamic and the Pan-Mongolian menace . . . The sixty millions of Mahomedans in India, if inspired by Pan-Islamic aspirations, joined to the Islamic principalities and powers that stand both to our west and our north-west, may easily put an end to all our nationalist aspirations, almost at any moment, if the present British connection be severed. . . . One is forced to recognize the absolute need of keeping up the British connection in the interest of Indian Nationalism itself, for the very simple and sufficient reason that there is absolutely much greater chance of this Nationalism fully realizing itself with rather than without this connection . . . Indeed, the backbone of Pan-Islamism is not in Persia or Afghanistan, much less in Algeria or Abyssinia [?], but in India and Egypt. This sentiment is the strongest among Egyptian and Indian Muslims. . . In her own interest, therefore, Great Britain will have, before long, to come to terms with Egyptian Nationalism, on the one side, and cure the conceit of separate political interests and superior political claims of the Indian Mahomedans, on the other, and lead the Indian Muslims to recognize that their future is absolutely bound up with that of the larger and composite Indian Nation. This is the only remedy against the Pan-Islamic menace so far as it affects

Great Britain."<sup>33</sup> This was written in May 1913.

In August-September of the same year, he wrote with equal clarity. "It was never more true than it is today, that India and Great Britain must stand or fall together. . . . A reasonable compromise between Indian Nationalism and British Imperialism is, therefore, as much of an imperious necessity for Great Britain as it is for us."<sup>34</sup> Such clear words need no commentary. The important thing to bear in mind is that Pal was not one of the pro-British, self-seeking, second-class politicians, but a mass leader of more than considerable influence and prestige.

On the other side, the British administrators and public men of Indian interest and experience were stressing Muslim fears of a Hindu rule. Sir James Meston, the Lieutenant Governor of the United Provinces, wrote to the Viceroy on 25 March 1915 that the Muslims "know that, if they lost us, the Hindus would eat them up".<sup>35</sup>

In Britain, Curzon warned the Cabinet of the implications of granting "self-government" to India. In his memorandum of 2 June 1917 he wrote: "What do we mean by self-government for Indians? We do not mean that India, either now or in any future that can be reasonably predicted, will become a single autonomous unit. . . . Such an aspiration, in the present phase of Indian evolution, is the wildest of dreams; and the belief that it can be attained is doomed to irretrievable disappointment. Neither do we mean that India can be resolved into an organized federation of Autonomous states under the control of a Federal Government of Delhi or elsewhere. That also is an impracticable ideal . . . . It may be that in the march towards the self-governing ideal the political unity of India may be disintegrated and assume different shapes."<sup>36</sup> At the same time, Montagu thought that "ultimate self-government in India" would be "a Commonwealth of self-governing provinces or countries united to the Home Government and to one another and to the Native States".<sup>37</sup>

The Muslim feeling in this decade is summed up by a modern scholar in these words: "The most striking fact in this account is the Muslims' assertion, at every point, of their community's right to a separate political existence. The strategies of politics, as we have seen, were not constant; the type of Muslim politician with influence varied; and the political system underwent radical change. But this determination to maintain a distinct political

identity was throughout the basic factor in Muslim thinking. The suggestion that the community should take its place simply as one religious and cultural group in a diverse Indian nation was never entertained.”<sup>38</sup>

### Wilayet Ali “Bambooque” (1913)

Muhammad Ali, as we have seen, had come near to entertaining thoughts of a partition but had preferred not to voice them, and, instead, had held out a hope of moulding a new nationality on the Canadian model of an English-French-cum-Protestant-Catholic concordat. But some of his colleagues dared to go where he himself had feared to tread.

One of his close associates on the staff of the *Comrade* was Wilayet Ali, an old boy of the Aligarh College and at this time a practising lawyer at Barabanki.<sup>39</sup> Every issue of the journal carried a very readable column entitled “Gup” (gossip: the predecessor of “Over a Cup of Tea” and “From Here and There” of later newspapers); and this was written by Wilayet Ali under the pseudonym of “Bambooque”. For the issue of 10 May 1913, he wrote up “The Interview”, an imaginary conversation with “a gentleman who owns dubious brains but refreshingly original views”. One question and the answer to it ran as follows:

“Q. How would you solve the Hindu-Muhammadan problem?

A. The Hindus and the Muhammadans should be segregated—northern India to be assigned to the Moslems and the rest to the Hindus. (When it was pointed out to the gentleman that unenlightened opinion, deriving support from the vulgarity of Census records, did not consider his classification of the Indian population to be exhaustive, he added readily but without apparent compunction, ‘The Sikhs and Jains and other castes and creeds will go with the Hindus’).”<sup>40</sup>

The talk is still about segregation without leading to partition, and the proposal, perhaps made in jest as it appeared in a column given to humour, recalls Blunt’s suggestion of a Muslim north and a Hindu south. But it shows that at least the idea of physical separation was catching on. It is an improvement on Muhammad Ali’s own picture of the future and on several other suggestions which found even segregation too venturesome to contemplate.

## Lovat Fraser (1914)

Following our chronological order and to make the story as complete as available information renders it possible, a reference may be made to another allusion, though its strict relevance is doubtful. I.H. Qureshi tells us that "one Lovat Fraser, who had been editor of *The Times of India* published in the early days of the First World War, in *The Daily Express* of London, a map in which an arrow was drawn from Constantinople to Saharanpur (now in the Indian State of Uttar Pradesh) showing 'a Muslim Corridor', because the population of this area was overwhelmingly Muslim. Muhammad Ali, in supporting a resolution for the introduction of reforms in the North-Western [*sic.*] Frontier Province, mentioned the existence of such a corridor".<sup>41</sup> No source is cited. The body in which Muhammad Ali introduced his resolution is not named. Anyway, it is difficult to see any connection between this and the idea of a separate Muslim state in India.

## Choudhary Rahmat Ali (1915)

Rahmat Ali occupies a very important place in the history of the origin of the idea under study, and has one later chapter to himself. His first public statement on the need for a separate Muslim state was made in January 1933, but in his book he has made a claim that such an idea first occurred to him in 1915.

The trials through which the Muslims had been passing since 1909 convinced Rahmat Ali that their salvation lay in the creation of a Muslim state in north India. In 1915, when he was an undergraduate at the Islamia College, Lahore, he founded in the College a society called the Bazm-i-Shibli. In his inaugural address to it he said: "North of India is Muslim and we will keep it Muslim. Not only that. We will make it a Muslim State. But this we can do only if and when we and our North cease to be Indian. For that is a pre-requisite to it. So the sooner we shed 'Indianism', the better for us and for Islam." He tells us that "the immediate occasion for this statement was the negotiations which were then afoot between Hindoo and Muslim leaders for an understanding on the basis of the national unity of India, and which culminated in the perilous Lucknow Pact of 1916".<sup>42</sup>

No corroborative evidence has so far turned up in support of

this claim. Rahmat Ali does not say why he established the Bazm-i-Shibli. Nor does he mention any names associated with the Bazm. Nothing has yet been discovered in contemporary newspapers about this society. The College does not answer inquiries. Nor do we know much about Rahmat Ali himself between 1915 and 1933. But by all reports Rahmat Ali was a man of integrity, and there is no room to believe that he invented this claim of 1915. In any case, considering what had gone before that date in Indian thinking, his idea of a Muslim state in north India was not such an improbable suggestion. Yet, some more evidence and details should have been welcome.

There is no direct external evidence to bear out Rahmat Ali. But circumstantial evidence, admittedly of an indirect nature, may be found in the fact that the idea, or ideal, or dream, of a Muslim state was in the air in these years. F.K. Khan Durrani, whom we will again meet in the following pages, reminds us that, around 1916, "when we were boys at college, we used to debate about the desirability of division of the country and exchange of populations". He confesses that "these were idealistic dreams of isolated individuals and not practical politics". He adds, "I mention it only to show that the consciousness that grows in time into the feeling of nationhood was already dawning upon the minds of individual Muslims".<sup>43</sup>

It is possible that Durrani was a student when Rahmat Ali inaugurated his Bazm-i-Shibli and floated the idea of a Muslim state in north India; or, perhaps he was a reader of the *Comrade* (a very likely distraction for the Muslim students of that period) and knew what "Bambooque" had written. He might even have heard about Blunt's suggestion. Whatever we may think of Rahmat Ali's claim, it offers some confirmation of the fact that the idea was now being discussed in young circles, even if it wore the appearance of a vision seen by some individuals.

### The Kheiri Brothers (1917)

This group of stray, individual minds was soon joined by two men who led a strange life of travel and adventure, suffering and persecution, and ultimate vindication. The two Kheiri brothers, Abdul Jabbar and Abdus Sattar, played a prominent role in advancing the idea of a Muslim state in India.

The family was Arabian by origin, and the first Kheiris arrived in India in the time of Shahjahan to teach Arabic to Mughal princes. The earliest arrival was one Khairullah, but we don't have complete information on all the generations. We know, however, that the ancestry of the Kheiri brothers can be traced in an unbroken line to one Abdul Khabiq, who had a son called Abdul Qadir. This Abdul Qadir had two sons: the elder was Abdul Wajid (whose son was the Urdu writer, Rashad-ul-Kheiri), the younger was Abdul Hamid. Abdul Hamid had three sons in this order. Abdul Jabbar, Abdul Ghaffar and Abdus Sattar. To take the middle brother first, for he had no public life, Abdul Ghaffar got himself employed in the irrigation department. At some point in this humdrum career he beat up his English superior and lost his job. Since then he remained unemployed, and after 1947 migrated from India to Pakistan. In appearance he was slim and tall with a long beard.

Sometime in 1908-11 the three brothers left India—one of them because of an unhappy marriage—and went to Beirut. During their stay there, which lasted for a few years, they inaugurated a Muslim boy scout movement which they called the *kashshaf* (explorers). They also established a Madrasa-i-Hindia. At this stage Abdul Ghaffar returned home and the other two went on to Istanbul, where they were actively involved in the Turkish war against the Allied powers and later in the Khilafat movement. As supporters of the *khalifa* and defenders of his office and power they were naturally not in the good books of Mustafa Kamal, who referred to them in one of his speeches as "the two mad Indians". Finding the new Turkey of Ataturk uncongenial, they moved on to Germany sometime in the mid-'twenties where they lived for about ten years. In Germany they established an Islamic society, joined the National Socialist Party, and were much influenced by Fascist ideas. They left Germany a little before Hitler came to power.

Abdul Jabbar, the eldest brother, wished to return home but was disallowed by the Government of India. Questions were asked in the House of Commons on this interdiction, but permission was not granted. He settled in London and cultivated the Labour Party. After some time, when he was permitted to enter India, he came to Delhi and lived the rest of his life as a gentleman of private means. A bitter opponent of the Congress, he welcomed

the Pakistan demand when it was made. Some of his ideas betrayed the influence of his stay in Germany: once he tried to organize a para-military movement, which for a time impressed the Aligarh students. He sported a long beard and used to insist that every Muslim ought to do the same. A great lover of books and the proud possessor of a vast library, he refused to come to Pakistan in 1947 because he had no means of bringing this treasure safely with him. He died a bachelor in Delhi in the early 'fifties.

Abdus Sattar, the youngest brother, returned to India from Germany in the early 'thirties and began to teach German and French at the Aligarh University, where he died in 1945. Like his brothers he, too, was bearded. In Germany he had married a German lady, who went to live in London after his death. He left two daughters and one son, who live in Pakistan.

The dates of birth of the three brothers cannot be ascertained; probably they were born between 1870 and 1880.<sup>44</sup>

We have some more details about Abdus Sattar's later life. On his return to India he was shadowed by the police, partly because of his stay in Germany and partly because of his political views expressed while he was in Turkey and Germany. In spite of this, he gathered a few of the staff and students of Aligarh and established the Muslim League branch of the Muslim University.<sup>45</sup> When the second world war broke out he was interned in the Dehra Dun jail for about two years.<sup>46</sup> He kept in touch with the Muslim League during the incarceration and used to write to Jinnah. In September 1940, the Council of the Muslim League, at a meeting in Delhi, passed a resolution regretting that he was being detained as a B class prisoner without trial, and urging the government to free him. It also authorized the president of the party in the central legislature to take up the matter of his release with the government.<sup>47</sup>

In 1917 a conference of the Socialist International was held at Stockholm, and the Indian delegation to this gathering consisted of four students: Virendranath Chatopadhyaya, M. Acharya, Abdul Jabbar Kheiri and Abdus Sattar Kheiri.<sup>48</sup> The two Kheiri brothers submitted a written statement to the Conference in which they urged a partition of India into a Hindu India and a Muslim India. A summary of this statement was published in the official proceedings of the Conference which were edited by Camille Huysmans of Belgium and issued in French from Uppsala in the beginning of 1918.

In 1941, when nobody remembered this and when Hindu propaganda about the British instigation of the Pakistan demand was rampant, Abdus Sattar wrote from the Dehra Dun jail to Camille Huysmans, asking him to confirm that a proposal for partition had been made at the Conference in 1917. In his letter of 22 August 1941, Kheiri wrote, "One could hardly expect you to remember an event which took place about twenty-four years back. But the peculiar circumstances of the time, place and occasion will probably help you to remember it easily. Those were the times of the Great War I. A meeting of the Socialist International was to take place in Stockholm to consider the possibility of peace. You were the General Secretary at that time. It was the year 1917, the month of September or October. Two Indians belonging to an Indian Patriotic League met you and discussed with you the Indian Problems. You took very keen and sympathetic interest. Then you asked them to write on paper their idea for the best solution of the Indian Problems. A few days later they submitted to you a written statement. It was the partition of India into a Muslim India and Hindu India. I am sure you will have remembered it for at that time you were much surprised with the idea."<sup>49</sup>

Thus letter was sent by Abdus Sattar to Clement Attlee, Lord Privy Seal in Churchill's war cabinet, for transmission to Huysmans whose address was unknown to him. On 30 December 1941 Huysmans, in a letter to Attlee which was forwarded to Abdul Jabbar and Abdus Sattar, confirmed what had happened at Stockholm. "I remember very well their visit", he wrote, "and in my book on the Stockholm Conference, published in the beginning of 1918, at Uppsala in French language, with the title Stockholm, you will find, pages 407-408, a summary of the report of the Central Committee of Mahomedan Industries. It is only a summary, but you will see by the text, and I remember by my good memory that the delegates write truth in the letter, forwarded by you: they suggested in 1917, in their full text, Partition of India into a Muslim India and a Hindu India. As they write also, I seemed surprised with their idea, at the moment, but not so surprised as the two delegates think; as this idea was so strongly connected with some of our own political solutions in Europe. The very aggressive tone of statement proves further that it is childish to suppose any British influence in the matter."<sup>50</sup>

Here, for the first time, we reach firm ground. There is incontrovertible evidence that a partition of India into Hindu and Muslim states was suggested in 1917 by the Kheiri brothers. They were not suggesting a mere re-arrangement of authority by which the imperial power would make north India a Muslim area and south India a Hindu area (a construction which could reasonably be put on Blunt's scheme and on some other later plans). Their violent anti-imperialist attitude rules out that possibility. They wanted a partition as a means to independence.<sup>51</sup>

Unfortunately we don't know what inspired the Kheiri brothers to make this suggestion. Was it their stay in Turkey, or their anxiety to save Islam in India? Their prolonged absence from home may not have kept them in touch with the growing Hindu-Muslim rivalry. In fact, however, this was the time of a general co-operation between the two communities, of their coming together in support of the Khilafat movement, of their collaboration in the formulation of the Congress-League scheme of reforms and of the Lucknow Pact of 1916. It would be of much value to know the source and nature of the influences which worked on them in these years. It appears that at least one of the brothers, Abdul Jabbar, was in London in the early 'thirties. It should be interesting to know if he ever met Rahmat Ali, for if he did it is possible that Rahmat Ali drew a hint from the Kheiri plan for his own suggestion of 1933.

Above all, one should like to know why the brothers did not renew their 1917 proposal until as late as 1938. What explains this silence? Between 1917 and 1938 much was said and written about this idea and during the 'thirties it was mentioned and debated in several newspapers for prolonged periods of controversy. But not a word from the Kheiris is on public record. This is one of the important unanswered questions relevant to our inquiry.

Their name appears once again in 1938 in the story of the idea of partition. In May, Abdus Sattar Kheiri wrote a letter to Jinnah which makes interesting reading, for Jinnah's conversion to the two-nation theory was yet to come, and he was not used to receiving such forthright communications. "We, here in Aligarh", wrote Abdus Sattar, "have the fullest faith in you. We feel that the interests of not only 90,000,000 Indian Muslims are secure in your hands but also those of the generations to come. BUT it is rather disquieting to hear that pressure is being brought on you to

bring about an understanding at any cost, provided some selfish members may be able to get a few big jobs. . . . The most fundamental fact and right that the 90,000,000 of Indian Muslims are in THEMSELVES A GREAT NATION and A SEPARATE POLITICAL ENTITY must not be sacrificed.”<sup>52</sup>

This was quite a strong statement coming from the president of a constituent branch of AIML, for the League had not yet committed itself to the two-nation theory or to a formal demand for a separate state. But Kheiri's pioneering spirit and unusual courage took no notice of the League's tardy thinking or cautious attitude. Two months after writing the above-quoted letter, he circulated an open letter among the members of the Muslim League Council, which, coming officially from the president of the Muslim University Muslim League, “clearly expounded” the “two-nation concept and the demand for a separate homeland for the Muslims”.<sup>53</sup> Six months later, at the Patna session of the League in December, he distributed leaflets “propounding the two-nation concept”.<sup>54</sup> Apparently, he was running ahead of the official League policy.

### The Aga Khan (1918)

At about the same time as the Stockholm Conference, the Aga Khan<sup>55</sup> was dreaming quite a different dream. In his *India in Transition*, published simultaneously in England and India in 1918, he made suggestions which were both startling and far reaching. What he seemed to be trying to plan was a huge federation of South Asia with India as its nucleus and centre.

He started with the assumption that India, “with her vast population, her varied provinces and races, her many sectarian differences (brought to the surface by the present search for the lines of constitutional advance)”, would never be fit for “a unilateral form of free government”.<sup>56</sup> Constitutional reform should be so worked out that provinces were groomed ultimately to make up a genuine Indian federation. “. . . for some years to come each Indian province in the critical stages of federalism, must have a constitution that provides, on the one hand, for an independent and strong executive, responsible to the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for tenure of office and appointment; and, on the other, for elective assemblies to control finance and

legislation. Thus will be built up the future United States of India within the British Empire".<sup>57</sup>

Coming to the shape and size of the provinces he proposed some very significant changes. He was strongly opposed to, what he called, "the suggested sub-division of the existing provinces into a considerable number of self-governing states".<sup>58</sup> His main argument against this was that "such small administrations would unduly narrow down national effort". The general criterion he had in mind was the unit of provincial self-government being equal "at least to a medium European state". Bengal, as then constituted, was a good example of a "suitable and reasonably homogeneous" area for federal autonomy. Two or three districts on the west of the United Provinces were to be handed over to the Punjab to which they "belong by affinity". Sind would be detached from the Bombay Presidency and, with the North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan, would form the Indus Province, with Quetta as its capital.<sup>59</sup>

He believed that "by such a scheme of redistribution there would be much greater approximation than at present to provinces which could honestly be called nationalities, each having an importance and coherence ranking with those of at least some European States".<sup>60</sup>

From this point onwards his dream begins to expand to fantastic proportions. The creation of an Indian federation was not the final goal: it was only the first step. Once this "internal federation" was complete, and it began to develop its economic influence northwards and westwards, Afghanistan would "seek association" with it. She would not be sacrificing her independence by entering the federation. And he saw no reason for stopping there. The group of small principalities from Arabia and the southern littoral of the Persian Gulf would reasonably be expected to become members of the projected union, for would this not ensure them "peace and liberty, freedom and order"? With these areas coming in, Persia would naturally be attracted.<sup>61</sup> The northward thrust of the federation would in time take it to the boundaries of China when Nepal, Bhutan and Tibet attached themselves to it. In the south, Ceylon was "naturally and historically" a part of India.<sup>62</sup>

In this manner a great South Asian Federation was to be erected on the foundations of justice, liberty and a "recognition for every

race, every religion and every historical entity".<sup>63</sup> The India of this future "a progressive, satisfied and happy India"—would be "the strongest pillar, next to the United Kingdom, of the British Empire".<sup>64</sup>

What can one say of this scheme except that the grandeur of its design stretched far beyond the possibility of its realization? The Aga Khan seems to have set no limit to his imagination. It has been his misfortune that he exerted immense influence on the shaping of Indian reforms and on several day-to-day problems, while each one of his long-term plans was completely ignored by those for whom it was fashioned. He played an important part in the elevation of the Aligarh College to the status of a Muslim university; his role in the Muslim struggle for winning separate representation was vital and extended from the 1906 Simla deputation to the working of the 1935 reforms; his exertions in the direction of uplifting the community were generous, commendable and sincere, his sustained and anxious efforts to extract safeguards for the Muslims from the British government were often successful and brought much security to the community. These are valuable services which every unprejudiced historian will acknowledge gladly and readily.

But his foresight did not match his practical common sense. To lift the gaze beyond the horizon and see what possibilities the years would bring, to co-ordinate reason and imagination, to dip into the future and distinguish between the practicable and the fanciful—this was beyond his strength. He was intelligent, shrewd, indecently rich, immensely powerful, dangerously well connected, a citizen of the world whose cosmopolitanism was a thing of marvel, a well-informed internationalist who found himself at home in the East and the West, and also a minor prophet whose word was law unto his followers. But he was not a statesman. He lacked that quality of political divination which lifts the statesman and the seer above the mere politician. In him were also absent that tenacity of purpose, that single-minded devotion, that concentrated effort, which enable one to see the future and to fight for it as if there was no alternative.

And that explains the nature of his 1918 proposals. He wanted India to be a federation, not a unitary (or in his quaint language "unilateral") state. This was dictated, on the one hand, by the diversity and size of the country, and, on the other, by the need

of fitting the princely states into an Indian pattern.<sup>65</sup> But he seems to have entertained some curious ideas about what a federal system could do. For one thing, he could not foresee the difficulties of harnessing native states and provinces under one federal yoke: he was to know later what complications such an experiment could create and what hopes it could frustrate. For another, he had no clear conception of the federal system itself. Talking about the entry of Afghanistan into the projected Indian federation, he said, "The fact that Bengal and Bombay, Hyderabad and Kashmir were enjoying full autonomy, would be a guarantee to the Afghans of no risk of loss of independence in entering the federation."<sup>66</sup> Did he really believe that independent countries could come into a federation without loss of independence? Was he confusing federation with a confederation? It is true that Afghanistan was not, in 1918, a sovereign country in the strict meaning of that term: though matters were set right by Amir Amanullah in another two years. But then neither was she a province of the British Indian Empire. Even if we disregard this constitutional confusion, only ignorance (unpardonable in such a well-informed man) or misdirected enthusiasm (unexpected in such a shrewd person) could have made him believe that the Afghans, who loved freedom as one loves a woman and who had fought a war of independence against the greatest empire of the time because of the stationing of a British mission in Kabul, would agree to lose their identity in the welter of "these Hindustanis". The Aga Khan's expectation of Persian membership of the federation of his dreams is even more astonishing. He himself was of Persian origin and, notwithstanding contemporary instability and weakness, was it not absurd to hope that such an ancient and proud civilization would not think it degrading to enter a union where India was the dominating figure and Great Britain the helmsman?

Presumably the Aga Khan was greatly impressed by the successful working of the American federal system, and saw no reason for the failure of a similar model to bring South Asia into unity. He ignored what every student of political science learns in his first lessons, that a federation will not work until there is a minimum level of homogeneity among its people and a voluntary desire for a union. Both those characteristics were absent from the South Asian scene. To see anything even vaguely common between a Kuwaiti and a Tibetan or an Iranian and a Madrasi might have

been an act of humanity and nobility, but political schemes based on nobility alone have a nasty habit of exploding in disaster. The brotherhood of man is a virtuous ideal, but nationalism and political ambitions prefer to work without it.

But it would be wrong to think that the Aga Khan was moved by these high ideals. There was a clear and obvious reason behind his plan of uniting such a variegated mass of humanity it lay within, or within the sphere of influence, of the British empire. He made no secret of what had inspired his plan. It was to make India—so far the brightest jewel in the imperial crown—"the strongest pillar" of the British empire. The hold of British imperialism in Asia was to be energized by widening the physical area of its scope and strengthening the political unity of its possessions. This was an act of piety: of imperial piety.

No attempt has been made here to make a detailed examination of his proposals. Much can be said, but that will take us far afield. We have seen enough to understand the motive and the range of the scheme. Now we return to our subject.

What is important from our present point of view is the slight attention paid to the Muslim problem of India in the making of this scheme. He shows no concern for the Hindu-Muslim problem, and no anxiety for the future of Islam in India. It is possible that time and circumstance shaped this attitude. When he was thinking out his ideas and putting them on paper, the Hindus and Muslims of India seemed to be sinking their political differences and closing their ranks against British rule. The Lucknow Pact had been signed in 1916, and currently the Congress and the League were co-operating in drafting a constitutional scheme in opposition to the coming official instalment of reforms. Communal peace had nearly arrived. On the other side, the violent Khilafat movement was in the offing, and it posed a dangerous problem to the British. The great war was still raging, though the end was in sight. In these conditions he might have forgotten that a Muslim problem did exist in India. If so, he sinned in good company. There were many then, in England and in India, who saw in the abatement of communal fever the lineaments of a bright and eternal peace. But there were, even then, some voices who protested against the acceptance of a temporary phase as the end of all trouble, and warned the complacent of future perils. The Aga Khan, with his long Indian experience and intimate acquaintance with the pre-

dicament of the Muslims, should not have let immediate events cloud his judgment.

Of course, there is nothing in his ideas about the two-nation theory or the awakening national spirit of the Muslims. He is still thinking on the lines of territorial nationalism and regional loyalties. He believes that the Indian provinces would, under his scheme, mature into "nationalities". He deems Bengal to be a "good example" of a homogeneous area to be developed into a nationality. He shows no special interest in the Muslim Provinces or in the matter of ensuring Muslim majority rule in them. On the contrary, his suggestion for a larger Punjab, augmented by some areas of the United Provinces, would have reduced its slight Muslim majority to a minority. The only useful point in his plan is the creation of a large Muslim province, to be called the Indus Province, by amalgamating Sind, Baluchistan and the NWFP—an idea which later Iqbal was to develop into a suggestion for a yet larger Muslim province including the Punjab, and which still later Rahmat Ali was to make into an independent state with the new name of Pakistan. But there is no indication in the Aga Khan's statement that he suggested the Indus Province with a view to consolidating Muslim power or saving Sind from Bombay-cum-Hindu rule. In fact, there is no direct reference to Muslim interests in the entire plan. The only concession he makes to them is the declaration that "everywhere beyond the areas where it is the principal vernacular Urdu would be the recognized tongue of the Mahomedans".<sup>67</sup>

The Aga Khan's scheme appears to have evoked no reaction among the Muslims of India. I have not come across any mention, favourable or otherwise, of it in the contemporary literature I have consulted. Among the Hindus, much later, some saw in it a device to enslave the Hindus, or to enthrone the Muslims with the help of the British. One Hindu writer, in the course of the historical introduction prefacing each issue of the *Indian Annual Register* (which, incidentally, was intended as an objective and neutral collection of current statistics, figures and documents), recognized in it "the organization of an Anglo-Muslim alliance". He interpreted the proposed South Asian Federation as an arrangement "wherein Muslims will be junior partners in the firm at present, hoping to rise in time to the senior partnership".<sup>68</sup> A similar fear was expressed in later years by Dr. Ambedkhar, the untouchable leader, who wrote, "what a terrible thing it would have been

if this South Asiatic Federation had come into being? Hindus would have been reduced to the position of a distressed minority".<sup>69</sup>

It is not easy to see any ground for these apprehensions. The Muslims were one quarter of the Indian population. The population of the Gulf principalities was negligible and that of Afghanistan very small. Even with the inclusion of Iran, Muslims could not have matched the numerical superiority of the Hindus of India. Moreover, the Hindu percentage, too, was to be increased with the entry of Ceylon, Nepal and Bhutan. If Tibet was neither Hindu nor Muslim, still the Hindus could be far from being a minority. On the contrary, they would remain a majority, though less overwhelming than in India proper. There is no evidence, external or internal, that the Aga Khan was advancing the interests of the Indian Muslims by urging this scheme.

### Two Vague Reports (1919)

As the Aga Khan was looked upon as a major representative and spokesman of Indian Muslim interests, and in fact acted as one for many years, some of his readers might have felt that his 1918 plan reflected Muslim opinion or at least implied Muslim approval. As if in refutation of this, a number of definite suggestions emanated from India in the five years following the publication of his book, and they pointed to quite a different direction.

Sir Arthur Keith records that about 1919 he noticed a tendency among the Indian Muslims which reckoned upon a partition. "Among the Muslims also", he wrote, "there was propagated a wild but not negligible scheme for the creation of a Muslim state based on Afghanistan and embracing all those north-western areas where the faith is strong." Then he added his own unfavourable comment to the report, "Such a state would inevitably form a permanent source of danger in India."<sup>70</sup>

Many years later, Dr. Beni Prasad, who had been watching the communal problem for some time, declared that "the idea of an Islamic state in the North-West had floated in an amorphous form in a few minds in the general ferment of 1919 . . .".<sup>71</sup> He quotes no authority for this, and might have derived his information either from contemporary observers or from Keith who was the only writer before him to mention the precise year of 1919

Beni Prasad's use of the words "Islamic state" is probably an unconscious failure to distinguish between an Islamic and a Muslim state; the point is unimportant. But both he and Keith mention the north-west, and the latter is sure that the state was to be based on Afghanistan. This may have been an echo of the influence of Jamaluddin. It is more probable, however, that Afghanistan was brought into the scheme by the circumstances prevailing towards the end of the war. There was serious unrest in India in this period, and in 1918 a "Provisional Government of India" was formed in exile in Kabul by a few Indians, including Barkatullah, who had disappeared from India after expressing culpable anti-government views. The British were terrified of Afghanistan since their disastrous experience of the Afghan wars, and were easily persuaded to believe in a Muslim plan of separation embracing Afghanistan. The Hindus, too, often talked of the danger of an Afghan invasion of India with the connivance of Indian Muslims, and made it a ground for charging the latter with anti-Indian and extra-territorial loyalty.

But contemporary evidence does not support this theory. In all plans suggested before this date, or after it, north or north-west India is mentioned as the Muslim area to constitute the future separate state, without any mention of the inclusion of Afghanistan. Of course, Afghanistan was the only nearly-independent country next door to India; historically it had been the highway of all Muslim invasions; culturally and linguistically it was allied to a large portion of north India; and it was also more accessible. Persia, too, was contiguous, but it lay along a province, Baluchistan, which was politically dormant, and an uncrossable desert lay between the Indian frontier and the inhabited parts of Persia. Nor had the Persia of that day a strong enough record of anti-British feeling to attract the Muslims of India. For these reasons it is quite possible that some Muslims in India looked at Afghanistan with affection and, if no alternative was forthcoming, were prepared to combine with her rather than live in a Hindu India. But as far as is known such views were not publicly aired by any responsible person.

**Abdul Qadir Bilgrami (1920)**

In the March and April 1920 issues of the *Zulqarnain*, an

Urdu journal of Badayun in the United Provinces, was published an open letter to Gandhi from a Muslim who called himself Muhammad Abdul Qadir Bilgrami. His real name was Muhammad Azizuddin Ahmad Bilgrami, and he belonged to district Hardoi, near Lucknow. Educated at the Aligarh College, he served in the United Provinces Civil Service, and later as a minister in the Baharatpur State. He had to use an assumed name because government servants were debarred from publishing any political or controversial matter.

The article was reprinted in the form of a pamphlet in December 1925.<sup>72</sup> Pirzada says that a second edition of the original letter was published from Badayun in 1922;<sup>73</sup> I have not seen it, but in that case the 1925 pamphlet should be the third edition or reprint. The point is of no real importance as there is no indication in the last reprint that it is a third, or whatever, edition. I think the article was reprinted, we don't know how many times, without any emendation or revision. I use the 1925 reprint, the only one available to me.<sup>74</sup>

The 62-page letter opens with the sentence. "Mahatmaji, no problem in Indian politics is as important as that of Hindu-Muslim unity, because it is one of the accepted facts that the success of all schemes for the future welfare and progress of this country depends on this, that the two nations (*qawmen*) treat each other with tolerance."<sup>75</sup> Gandhi should not, he emphasizes, gather the impression from this writing that "I am opposed to Hindu-Muslim political unity (*ittehad*)", because "in my opinion, the welfare of this country depends on the two nations working together (*mil jul kar*) in politics".<sup>76</sup>

Then, for the next 53 pages (5--58), he argues in justification of the ritual slaughter of cows by Muslims on the Eid-uz-Zuha—this being the major source of communal friction and rioting in India. Some of the points he makes must have been music to the ears of the fundamentalists and the *mullas*, but they were certainly not intended to achieve communal unity or peace. "It is our belief", he says, "that the Hindus are heretics (*kafirs*) and polytheists (*mushrik*), and we are forbidden by our religion to entertain any feeling of friendship or affection for them. . . . In the light of these Divine injunctions, the Hindus should not expect the Muslims ever to behave towards them with genuine love. But we can, without hesitation, make agreements with them for

national and political reasons or for the sake of common interests".<sup>77</sup>

Ritual sacrifice is one of the duties imposed upon the Muslims, and they are not free to abandon it. To the Hindu argument that Islam nowhere orders the Muslims to slaughter cows and that they can equally well slaughter a goat or a sheep or a camel, thus fulfilling their duty without hurting the sentiment of the Hindus, his reply is uncompromising and provocative: "Every person has the right to choose the animal he wants to slaughter; but if any Muslim, at the time of choosing the animal, takes into consideration the possibility of pleasing the Hindus, and decides to sacrifice a goat with the intention that his act will be looked upon by the Hindus with appreciation and will become a means of effecting closer relationship and mutual unity, then his sacrificial offering will no longer be purely in the way of God, and will not be acceptable in the eyes of the *sharia* (Islamic law)."<sup>78</sup>

He criticizes those Muslim leaders who had appealed to the Muslims to voluntarily give up cow slaughter in the interest of national unity and communal peace. He singles out Mushir Hussain Qidwai, Mazharul Huq, Hasrat Mohani, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Muhammad Ali, Shawkat Ali and Mawlana Abdul Bari Farangimahalli, for special mention in this connection. He tells Gandhi that, except the last-named, all of them are unacquainted with *fiqh* and therefore "ignorant" (*juhala*) by the standard of the *sharia*.<sup>79</sup> He devotes the next 8 pages to proving the desirability of sacrificing cows, quoting several sayings of the Prophet,<sup>80</sup> and ends by laying down that "if a person sacrifices a cow with the avowed purpose of hurting the feelings of the Hindus, there is nothing objectionable in it".<sup>81</sup>

After quoting classical Hindu sources, including the *Vedas*, supporting cow killing and beef eating,<sup>82</sup> he returns to Islamic legal teaching on the issue. The *fiqh* lays down that if any permitted act or the Prophet's *sunnat* is obstructed or a forcible attempt is made to stop its practice, this may result in allowing the disallowed. "Therefore, when the Hindus insist on putting a stop to (cow) sacrifice, and we are compelled, for your sake, not to slaughter a particular animal whom you worship, it becomes religiously binding upon us to sacrifice the cow, in place of a goat, lest our right might be lost through want of practice."<sup>83</sup>

On the strength of an alleged Prophetic tradition (*hadith*),

he sums up Islam's attitude to the Hindus in these words: "It is clear that in the present age it is impossible for us to stop with force the falsehood-worship of another nation. That leaves us only two ways: to express in words the evil of the practices of the *kafirs*, and to have a hatred for them in our hearts."<sup>84</sup>

Finally he comes to his own scheme of re-grouping which ought to be quoted in full in his own words:

"After accepting the principle that religion should be separated from politics and the faiths of the two sides should not be interfered with, it is necessary that a high-powered Commission consisting of representatives of Hindus and Muslims in equal number be appointed to consider the scheme that follows so as to produce a practicable and acceptable decision on the following lines:

(1) 'India should be partitioned anew on the basis of nationalism (*qawmiyyat*) in such a manner that areas be set apart for the majority of each nation and these be regarded as the spheres of influence of each nation. For example, the following three provinces can be created for the Muslims:

(a) The NWFP and ten districts of West Punjab, namely, Rawalpindi, Attock, Jehlum, Gujerat, Shahpur, Mianwali, Jhang, Muzaffargarh, Dera Ghazi Khan and Multan.

(b) In Bengal the districts of Bogra, Rangpur, Najpur, Jessore, Nadia, Faridpur, Dacca, Rajshahi, Pabna, Mymensingh, Baqargunj, Noakhali, Patra and Chittagong be constituted into a separate province.

(c) Sind should be separated from the Bombay Presidency and constituted into a third Muslim majority province.

(2) The principle should be accepted that after this division (*taqsim*) the administration would be carried on in accordance with the interests of the majority of the population in these provinces.

(3) Regulations should be framed for the protection of minorities in all such areas which are the spheres of influence of the other nation. These should extend to the freedom for practice of religious rites, and should guarantee the right of employment to the minorities. . .

(4) Facilities should be provided for the exchange of minority populations which may wish to move from their homeland (*watan*) in one area of influence to the other, so that such people may migrate with the minimum of loss.

- (5) The decision of the Commission should be given the form of a National Agreement, and should be placed before the Government as a united, agreed demand for implementation.
- (6) Till such time as this agreement is drawn up
  - (a) Hindus should not oppose the right of separate Muslim electorate.
  - (b) In the Punjab and Bengal, Muslim representation should be on the basis of their population.
  - (c) National *panchayats*, with equal numbers of Hindus and Muslims, should be set up to resolve disputes; only such persons as enjoy the confidence of their nation should be put on these bodies.<sup>85</sup>

This scheme and the reasons given for putting it forth make an interesting reading. Bilgrami talks of cow slaughter for 58 pages, and then abruptly adds 3 pages spelling out the solution of the problem. There is no profit in commenting upon his distasteful language, his aggressive attitude towards the Hindu religion, and his dubious use of alleged prophetic traditions. Few Muslims would share his interpretation of Islam.

As a separationist (and possibly partitionist) he stands alone among the Muslims in insisting upon a division simply in order to safeguard their right to sacrifice cows on one particular day in the year. He calls the Muslims a nation, and probably believed in the two-nation theory, but nowhere does he say that they want a state (if it is a state that they want) because they are a separate nation. Not to speak of arguing for Muslim nationalism, he does not even mention it as a basis for his demand. The right to continue to practise a religious rite (as he interprets it) determines his entire approach. What counts with him is not even the negative factor of a fear of Hindu rule, but merely a burning hatred for the other community.<sup>86</sup> His aim is not communal peace, as it was with Sharar.

Bilgrami goes further than any of his predecessors in not only naming the provinces he wants separated from the rest of India (if that is what he wanted; his description is so vague), but also in demarcating the districts which would make up these provinces. But in the Punjab, he deprives the Muslims of such Muslim majority districts as Montgomery, Lahore and Sialkot; one wonders if he was quite familiar with the Punjab. He is also the first to suggest and accept a division of the two major Muslim provinces,

Bengal and the Punjab; a problem which was to lead to much confusion, controversy and misunderstanding in the last years of British rule. Another fresh departure from the standard view is his suggestion of merging the Punjab and the NWFP. But he does not refer at all to Baluchistan; and to let Sind stand as a separate province made little economic sense.

We fail to grasp the exact nature and extent of his plan because he uses an unclear and ambiguous terminology. "Areas", "provinces" and "spheres of influence" are used without defining them. He wants three provinces for the Muslims; and he uses the word *taqsim*, which can equally mean division or partition. Does he envisage these three provinces to form one state or two states (as Bengal was not congruous to the other two)? Or, is he aiming at perpetuating the rule of a Muslim majority in these provinces? The term "sphere of influence" (*halqa-i-asar*) is meaningless in the national context. Does he want an independent Muslim India, free of British rule; or three Muslim provinces guaranteed to be governed by the majority community, as a part of British India? Nowhere do we find him employing the word "states" or even "countries". Is he arguing for segregation?

Segregation is suggested by his reference to the possible movement of the members of one community to its own "sphere of influence". But this transfer is not made obligatory. Even if it were, the three provinces could not accommodate all the Muslims of India. And that nullifies the entire *raison d'etre* of his scheme: if Muslims would still continue to live in Hindu areas and at least some Hindus in Muslim areas (a great many in Bengal, in fact), the problem of cow sacrifice, which had started the whole train of argument, stands unresolved. It is difficult to understand him, but I doubt if he planned or suggested a division of India and the creation of a separate Muslim state in the subcontinent, as I.H. Qureshi<sup>87</sup> appears to believe. It is another variation on the theme of separatism.

### The Widening of the Communal Gulf (1921-1924)

Before proceeding with our story of the development of the idea it is imperative to notice the worsening communal situation in India in the twenties. In spite of the unifying influence of the Khilafat movement, fissures in Hindu-Muslim unity began to

appear. As the momentum of the movement slowed down, the fissures widened. Some Muslims had already been suspicious of Gandhi's and Congress's all-out support to a purely Muslim agitation; the fading away of the Khilafat zeal redoubled their lack of confidence in the majority community. Some Hindus had criticized the Congress for allying itself with the Khilafat Conference; now they came out with the *Shuddhi* and *Sangathan* movements, which aimed at converting Muslims who had once been Hindus to their old faith and at strengthening Hindu social and political structure. The Muslims answered this trend with their *tabligh* and *tanzim* movements: the first to preach Islam and convert more Hindus, the second to consolidate Muslim unity.

In this *milieu* communal relations deteriorated rapidly. This deterioration is chronicled briefly in the following statements from both sides taken at random from contemporary literature. Their importance lies in the fact that they reproduce the atmosphere in which current and later separatist plans were thought of and publicized.

A Hindu wrote in 1921: "In spite of all the demonstrations of affection that have taken place in many parts of India between Hindus and my Mahomedan brethren, I am afraid, when the evil day dawns the sword of Islam will not lie idle in its scabbard. I deeply grieve to say this: but rather say it than not say it. Educated Muslim India may not, and I feel it will not, draw the sword for Delhi and the glory of Islam, but the lower orders will unquestionably be the tool of men athirst for ambition or led astray by false ideals."<sup>88</sup>

Even Gandhi said at the height of the Khilafat movement that "I know there is much distrust of one another as yet. Many Hindus distrust Muslim honesty. They believe that *swaraj* means Muslim raj, for they argue that without the British, Muslims of India will aid Muslim powers to build up a Muslim empire in India. Muslims, on the other hand, fear that the Hindus being in an overwhelming majority will smother them."<sup>89</sup> Such an enlightened Congress leader as Jawaharlal Nehru took decisions which were bound to alienate even Congress-minded Muslims. On his becoming the chairman of the Allahabad Municipal Board in 1923, he persuaded the members to pass an order to the effect that in future Tilak Day (1 August), the anniversary of his death, and Gandhi Day (18 March), the anniversary of the day on which he was sent

to jail, were to be public holidays in the city.<sup>90</sup>

A Bengali Muslim leader, Abdul Karim, expressed the community's views towards the end of 1923 or early 1924 in these words: "The Musalmans of India owe allegiance to Islam in respect of religious principles, to their countrymen in respect of social obligations and to the particular party of which they are members in respect of political ideals. A Musalman in this country cannot, therefore, say that he is an Indian first and Musalman next. All that he can say is that he is an Indian Musalman first and a member of the wider Islamic brotherhood afterwards."<sup>91</sup>

Such moderation of sentiment or expression was absent from the statements of the founders and upholders of the *Shuddhi* and *Sangathan* movements. Their announcements were extremely provocative. A few examples of their thought and style will prove this.

Swami Birajik wrote on 1 May 1924: "The struggle for swaraj is mainly a struggle of Hindus, because this country belongs to Hindus. Its name is Hindustan. All its mountains, rivers, and holy places have got Hindi names. The outside world also calls the Christians and Muhammadans of India, Hindus. . . . Hindu community is the chief community with which all other communities will be amalgamated by means of Shuddhi. . . . I assure you that today the greatest religion of India is nationalism. The people who go against the spirit of nationalism shall be expelled for good from India."<sup>92</sup>

Lala Har Dayal had already, in 1915-18, condemned pan-Islamism as "a fraud and a hoax" and as "one of the most curious farces of the last decade". Fully aware of Muslim India's devotion to Turkey, he yet declared that "the Turks, as a nation, are utterly unfit to assume the leadership of the Muslim world"; they had no brains. It was an "evil day" when the Caliphate was entrusted to the Ottomans. "If this be Islam, I should blush for the faith of 70,000,000 of my fellow Indian citizens." "If the Muslims of India wish to appear in company with their Hindu brethren on the public platform of the civilized world, they must first wash their hands clean of Ottomanism in all its shapes and disguiss" "There is nothing but dirt, and dead dogs, and scheming rascals in Stamboul." Now, in May 1924, he turned his attention to the Muslims of India. "Hindu Sangathan should make it their principle to give their National jewels [Hindu literature, civilization, gods,

etc.] to every Indian child, whether Muhammadan or Christian. If the followers of other religions refuse to follow them and spread disaffection in the country, they should be opposed by law, or sent back to the Arabian desert to eat dates. What right have they to eat mangoes or oranges of our India?"<sup>93</sup> Next year he repeated the message in yet stronger terms. "So long as the Punjab and Hindustan do not get rid of foreign religions we will not be able to sleep peacefully. . . .The Hindu who does not admit this is degenerate, lifeless, dead-hearted and unwise. Every true-hearted Hindu should have an ambition to free this country of Christianity and Islam. . . . In the Punjab and Hindustan two communities cannot live together. Either all the Hindus should accept Islam, or all the Muhammaedans should be made Hindus by conversion . . . . Islam is such a curious religion that Muhammedans cannot live conjointly with other nations in any part of the world. For unity and peace it is essential that either there should be only Islam, or no Islam at all in the world. Even 20% of Islam creates agitation and disturbances. . . . Islam can never mix with other nations and religions. This is a historical truth."<sup>94</sup>

This was extremist enough, but Swami Birajik went even further. In June 1924 he pontificated: "Personally I do not believe that any book is inspired; but if, there be a question of the comparison of Veda and Quran, I shall declare it in plain words that, so far as religion and civilization are concerned, it is necessary that the teachings of Quran should be abolished from the nations of the world, and in its place Muhammedans should be given the teachings of the pure Rashtrya religion."<sup>95</sup>

In the meantime, Muslims were laying down the minimum terms on which they would be prepared to co-operate with the Hindus in working for self-government. Four such conditions were mentioned in October 1924: (1) The number of seats for Muslims in legislatures and all other elected bodies be fixed in excess of the present number, preserving the existing system of separate electorates; (2) The number of Muslims in all public services should be fixed, and the proportion be not less than one-third, with posts open to competition to be similarly apportioned; (3) Some special facilities be provided for Muslim education; and (4) Muslims should enjoy absolute liberty with regard to their religious duties and their performance.<sup>96</sup> Another Muslim leader repeated these, adding th important proviso that the powers of the Governors of

provinces for protecting minorities should be strengthened.<sup>97</sup>

Simultaneously, Bhai Parmanand was warning the British against the dangers of a Muslim north-west and pointing out their need for Hindu help in such a contingency. "Even now if the British Government see any danger from the north-west, they will have to look forward to the help of the Hindus. To extend the supreme power of Muhammedans from the extreme frontier to the NWFP, and therefrom to the Punjab, cannot be the policy of a sane government."<sup>98</sup>

The *hubris* of the Congress may be judged from a minor constitutional incident that occurred in the Indian Legislative Assembly in March 1925. After the debate on the Muddiman Report, Pandit Motilal Nehru and his party withdrew from the house. On this, the president of the assembly, a Congressman, declared that by this walk-out the house had ceased to retain that representative character which the constitution required it to have, and that it was now for the Government to consider whether the assembly should be allowed to continue to function. He added that if the Government introduced any controversial legislation now "he might be forced to use the extraordinary powers given to him under the Act of adjourning the House *sine die*".<sup>99</sup> At this time the Congress membership in the country was less than twenty thousand.

In the face of such actions, one Muslim was forced to conclude that "these things will never cease until they [Muslims] give up their religion and become the pariahs of Hindu society".<sup>100</sup>

Undisturbed by the consternation their announcements were creating among the minority community, the Hindu right wing went merrily along enunciating their doctrine of a pure Hindu rule. "No other raj than Hindu Raj can last for ever in India", proclaimed one. "The day must come when all the Muslims of India will become Aryas by Shuddhi, Adi Andolan, etc. [does "etc." mean force!] . . . This is our ambition; this is our desire."<sup>101</sup>

Lala Har Dayal echoed this sentiment in June 1925. ". . . if India ever gets liberty, we will have Hindu raj here. . . . If the Hindu nation reawakens in future, the result would be that not only will we establish Hindu raj in India, but our ambition of converting the Muhammedans, and conquering Afghanistan, and other such ambitions, etc., will also be realized." Next month he came out with this solemn proclamation: "I declare that the future

of the Hindu race, of Hindustan and of the Punjab, rest on the four pillars: (1) Hindu Sangathan, (2) Hindu Raj, (3) Shuddhi of Muslims, and (4) Conquest and Shuddhi of Afghanistan and the frontiers. So long as the Hindu nation does not accomplish the four things, the safety of our children and great-grandchildren will be ever in danger, and the safety of the Hindu race will be impossible. The Hindu race has but one history, and its institutions are homogeneous. But the Mussalmans and Christians are far removed from the confines of Hinduism, for their religions are alien and they love Persian, Arab and European institutions. Thus, just as one removes foreign matter from the eye, Shuddhi must be made of these two religions. . . . Just as there is Hindu religion in Nepal, so there must be Hindu institutions in Afghanistan and the frontier territory; otherwise it is useless to win Swaraj. . . . Some Hindus say that when the English leave India, the Indian Mussalmans and the Afghan Pathans will read the fine speeches of the Congress-wallahs and sing 'Bande Mataram' and embrace the Hindus like affectionate brothers! . . . As long as Islam survives in India and Afghanistan, so long will the mouth of these brothers be open to see the wealth and belongings of the Hindus, and so long will their leaders wish to establish Muslim Raj in India and live in luxury. As long as the Afghans and the Pathans remain Muslims, so long will the passion to loot India be strong in their veins. . . . Those who preach Hindu Sangathan on the one hand and on the other sing the tune of Hindu-Muslim unity are making a great blunder. In this way neither will be achieved, nor will Hindu-Muslim unity be attained—even if such unity were possible. It is important to remember that this apostle of revolutionary Indian nationalism had already, in March 1919, renounced his anti-British creed, and declared that the British Empire was "fundamentally beneficent and necessary institution" and "the Britishers—Englishmen, Scotchmen, Irishmen, Indians, Egyptian, Burmese, Zulus, Baluchis; and others—should work and fight together".<sup>102</sup> He could offer his admiration and loyalty to the Christians of England, but for the Christians of India he had only Shuddhi. For the Indian Muslims he had nothing but an implacable hatred.

In mid-1925 an Englishman with long Indian experience described the Muslim predicament in these words: "As for early Indian Home-Rule (Swaraj), within or without the British Empire

various possibilities present themselves to the reflective Muslim. With relations, religious, social, political and economic, such as subsist at present between his own and the Hindu community, and as they are likely to remain for a long time to come, he sees only two alternatives under a regime of complete Swaraj with British authority removed or reduced to a shadow; on the one hand, the submergence of his community in Hinduism, on the other Muslim political domination, at all events in certain regions of India; and domination to be secured by a struggle which will probably not be confined to discussion and negotiation, but will involve the use of physical force, and in which assistance may or may not be received from sources situated beyond the North-West frontier of India, though in that direction he must, in view of past history, look with the utmost misgiving."<sup>103</sup>

The Muslims were now beginning to convey their dread of Hindu rule to the British. No political advance in India was to be decided upon without proper safeguards for Muslims, "otherwise the Government of India will only be a Hindu Government".<sup>104</sup>

What was the nature of Hindu rule that the people cited above were forecasting? Swami Birajik summarized its features in a public speech. When the Hindus would be sufficiently strong they would put up the following conditions to the Muslims:

1. Do not regard the Quran as an inspired book.
2. Do not call Muhammad the Prophet of God.
3. Forget your Arabic, etc.
4. Instead of the works of S'adi and Rumi (famous Persian poets) study the works of Kabir and Tulsi Das.
5. Instead of observing Islamic festivals and holidays, observe Hindu festivals and holidays.
6. Observe the festivals of Rama and Krishna and other Hindu gods.
7. Give up Islamic names and christen your children as Ram Din and Krishna Khan, etc.
8. Offer your prayers in Hindi, instead of Arabic.<sup>105</sup>

The Muslims went on protesting, but evidently to no avail. In his presidential address to the Muslim League Aligarh session on 29 December 1925 Sir Abdur Rahim bitterly complained against the public Hindu threats to drive the Muslims out of India. In return, he warned that "Musalmans would be too big a mouthful for their Hindu friends to swallow. Thanks to the artificial con-

ditions under which they lived they had to admit that the Hindus were in a position of great advantage and even the English had learnt to dread their venomous propaganda. Hindus were equally adept in the art of belittling in every way possible the best Musalmans in public positions, excepting only those who had subscribed to the Hindu political creed. They had in fact by their provocative and aggressive conduct made it clearer than ever to Muslims that the latter could not trust their fate to Hindus and must adopt every possible measure of self-defence.”<sup>106</sup>

In short, the Muslims, “with their cultural coherence and an essential community of thought”, were opposed to any further modification or extension of reforms “unless the interests and position of the Muslim community are carefully safeguarded.”<sup>107</sup>

As year succeeded year more and more Muslims turned their vagrant thoughts to separation, division, partition, or any other avenue that held some promise of security from the burgeoning growth of a nationalism which fed on the Hindu faith. This section has been written to prepare the reader to expect an increased Muslim interest in the exploration of such avenues.

### Nadir Ali (1921)

In 1921 a reference to a possible partition of India is reported to have been made by one Nadir Ali of Agra. According to Khaliqzaman, Nadir Ali published a pamphlet in which “as one of the methods of settlement of the Hindu-Muslim problem he discussed partition of India”.<sup>108</sup> This is irritatingly vague and brief. Did he mention or discuss a plan of partition? Did he suggest a partition of his own fashion, or review the current plans without expressing his own opinion or preference, or just examine the question of partition in abstract terms?

The fact that Khaliqzaman has mentioned him probably means that he suggested a partition and therefore merited a notice. But the title of the pamphlet is not given, nor anything said about its contents or circulation or popular reaction. About the person himself no real information is given. We are told that he was “a great admirer of the British” and was “violently opposed to the Khilafat movement”; both might be subjective judgments. Nadir Ali is said to have been “a local practitioner of Agra”, which again does not help us. In India the word “practitioner” was in use for

both a practising physician and a practising lawyer; though here it is a reasonable assumption that he was practising law.

### Hasrat Mohani (1921, 1924)

With Hasrat Mohani we take a step backwards and scrutinize the possibilities of a federation for satisfying Muslim aspirations. Mohani is a tragic figure in Indian politics and Urdu literature. He suffered much without achieving anything. He was a man of many parts: a poet of considerable merit, a powerful prose writer, a pioneering journalist, a prominent politician who joined and often led all major parties (Congress, Khilafat Conference, Muslim League, Communist Party of India), and an unremitting critic of British rule for which sin he spent several years in various prisons.<sup>109</sup> He was the first Indian to move a resolution demanding "complete independence" for India from the Congress platform during its 1920 annual session.<sup>110</sup>

In his presidential address delivered before the Muslim League annual session at Ahmedabad in December 1921, he spoke of an independent India and of the place of the Muslims in it. Referring to the professed aim of the major Indian political parties, which was generally termed *swaraj* or self-rule or self-government or independence, he said that from the Muslim point of view "it is not enough that we should stand for complete independence alone". It was "necessary to decide upon the form that it should take, and, in my opinion, it can only be an Indian Republic on the lines of the United States of America". He realized that the Hindu-Muslim unity of his day, born of the euphoria of the Khilafat agitation rather than of any identity of interests, had not removed Muslim fears. The Muslims still "suspect that on the achievement of self-government the Hindus will acquire greater political powers and will use their numerical superiority to crush the Musalmans". This feeling was widespread. "The generality of Musalmans, with a few exceptions, are afraid of the numerical superiority of the Hindus and are absolutely opposed to an ordinary reform scheme as a substitute for complete independence." The "primary reason" for this was the presence of an alien ruler. In the absence of complete independence and under a merely reformed constitution, Muslims would be under a "double subjection". They would be subject to a Government of India controlled by the

British a common slavery shared by Hindus and Muslims. But they would also experience a second subjection "to the Hindu majority which they will have to face in every department of the Government". With the removal of British control, however, they would be left with only one fear: the fear of the Hindu majority. This fear could be removed by the establishment of an Indian Republic. This was possible because "while the Mussalmans, as a whole, are in a minority in India; yet nature has provided a compensation; the Mussalmans are not in a minority in all the provinces. In some provinces such as Kashmir, the Punjab, Sind, Bengal and Assam [*sic.*], the Mussalmans are more numerous than the Hindus. In the 'United States of India' the Hindu majority in Madras, Bombay and the United Provinces will not be allowed to overstep the limits of moderation against the Mussalmans".<sup>111</sup>

This was the concept of a set of Muslim provinces balancing another set of Hindu provinces, thus vouchsafing some security to the Muslims. It implied that the Muslim provinces would be firmly and unreservedly ruled by definite Muslim majorities: an implication which, as we have seen, was far from being unquestionable. What is even more important, Mohani paid no attention to the crucial problem of the powers of the federal government. The removal of Muslim fears of domination by a Hindu majority could be reduced to a meaningless farce if the Muslim provinces were open to interference by a central administration in which the Hindus had an upper hand. This question, too, was later to prove so intractable as to leave no alternative to partition. Federalism in general and without qualifications was no remedy of the Indian problem. Mohani said that the American system was his model, and his reference to Muslim provinces presupposed as complete a provincial autonomy as was possible or practicable, but, we presume, that he also knew how the federal government of the United States had grown in power at the expense of State rights, and how all the difficulties in the formation of Hindu-Muslim administrations in the provinces were bound to be reproduced in the federal centre of his scheme. How was he going to guarantee that the Hindu provinces and the Hindu majority would not, as he put it, "overstep the limits of moderation against the Mussalmans"? If constitutional devices could be of any avail the Muslim problem would have solved itself long ago.

Three years later Mohani is said to have presented a slightly

amended form of the same proposal. Rejecting dominion status as a profitless objective and offering complete independence as a goal worth fighting for, he announced that the Muslims would fully co-operate with the Hindus in the task of winning this independence provided that they were assured that free India would be a "bi-communal" federal state with "Muslim States united with Hindoo States under a National Federal Government of India". The Hindus were called upon to recognize the bi-communal basis of the future system. The federal government was to be a "Supreme National Government composed of Hindoos and Muslims".<sup>112</sup>

There is hardly any substantial difference between this and the 1921 proposal. Raising Muslim provinces to the level of Muslim states had no meaning: they were to remain units of a federation. And all the objections against his first scheme can be raised against this one, too. On one point, however, Mohani opened a new door. In insisting on Hindu recognition of the "bi-communal" nature of the new state he was anticipating the parity issue, which appeared officially for the first time at the 1945 Simla Conference and which Jinnah had begun to raise in 1939. In this could be seen the first seeds of the two-nation theory, but the theory had been enunciated in unmistakable terms a long time before; and one would have expected Mohani to take for granted at least the awareness of it. His interest in Muslim provinces was a valuable straw in the wind; this had never been said before so clearly from the Muslim league platform; though, as we have seen, it was not altogether a new idea. He did not make any attempt to re-group or re-arrange the provinces with a view to giving them greater homogeneity or firm Muslim majorities.

The importance of Hasrat Mohani lies in his enunciation of the goal of complete independence. No significant figure before him, Hindu or Muslim, had rejected a self-governing status within the British empire and argued for a total severance of the colonial connection. He did this on two grounds: no country could be really free under dominion status, something which the very words should have conveyed to other politicians; and Muslims would receive a better deal under an independent federal structure. But there is no sanction at all for the claim, made by some writers,<sup>113</sup> that he foresaw partition or urged a division of India on religious grounds.

## Wahabuddin Kamboh (1923)

Second-hand and tantalizingly brief reports abound in this chronicle, and now we come across another such account. One Chaudhri Wahabuddin Kamboh suggested his "Nuristan" scheme in 1923 under which the Muslim provinces in the north-west were to separate from India and form a Muslim state.

Wahabuddin had a respectable lineage. One of his ancestors, Shaikh Enayatullah, was a *mir munshi* in Shahjahan's court and wrote the famous *Bahar-i-Danish*. Another, Muhammad Saleh, was the *diwan* of the Lahore province. With the coming of anarchy to the Punjab in the later Sikh period, the family lost its estate and official position, and shifted to a small place called Hir Kamboh near Amritsar where it began to earn a living through farming.

Sometime towards the end of the nineteenth century Wahabuddin's father joined the provincial police department, but died in 1900 while still in service. The son, who was then eighteen and a vernacular middle school student, abandoned his studies and took up his late father's post to keep the family away from a light purse. In the service he picked up some English and taught himself Arabic. He retired in 1934 as a sub-inspector, and returned to live in his village. In mid-1938 he joined the small group of young Muslim activists in Lahore who had recently taken it upon themselves to propagate and popularize the concept of Pakistan. In 1947 he fled from Amritsar and found refuge in a village in district Lyallpur, where he died on 11 October 1964. He was the author of the *Tarikh-i-Kambohan*, which ran to three editions.

After witnessing communal rivalry and bloodshed at close quarters as a policeman, he felt strongly that it was impossible for the Muslims to live together with the Hindus. In 1923 he thought of a plan to solve the problem: the areas which later formed West Pakistan should cut themselves off from India and establish an independent state to be called "Nuristan" (land of light).<sup>114</sup>

This is all we know about the scheme and its author. Wahabuddin had promised the writer of the article which gives us this information to put full details on paper for publication, but within a year he died, and we have to content ourselves with whatever has been given above. Apparently, going by the words of the report, he gave no thought to Bengal and was in favour of dividing the Punjab. Further comment is impossible till we know more of the plan.

## Sardar Gul Khan (1923)

In the same year, a Pathan from the NWFP opted for a straight separation. The occasion was an official inquiry into the question of extension of reforms to that province ordered by the Government of India. The committee, headed by Sir Denis Brey, heard many witnesses. Among them was one Sardar Gul Khan, the president of the Islamic Anjuman of Dera Ismail Khan. The exact words of his evidence have been preserved in the minority report of the committee by N M Samarth

“Q The idea at the back of your Anjuman is the Pan-Islamic idea which is that Islam is a League of Nations and as such amalgamating this (Frontier Province) with the Punjab will be detrimental, will be prejudicial, to that idea. That is the dominant idea at the back of those who think with you? Is it so?

A It is so, but I have to add something. Their idea is that the Hindu-Muslim unity will never become a fact, it will never become a *fait accompli* and they think that this province should remain separate and [a] link between Islam and [the] Britannic Commonwealth. In fact, when I am asked what my opinion is—I, as a member of the Anjuman, am expressing this opinion—we would much rather see the separation of the Hindus and the Muhammadans, 23 crores of Hindus to the South and 8 crores of Muslims to the North. Give the whole portion from Raskumari to Agra to Hindus and from Agra to Peshawar to Muhammadans, I mean transmigration from one place to the other. This is an idea of exchange. It is not an idea of annihilation.”<sup>15</sup>

To this interrogation Samarth added his own comment on the witness. “There was not before the Committee another witness who could claim to speak with the authority of personal knowledge and experience of not only the North-West Frontier Province and Independent territory but Baluchistan, Persia and Afghanistan, which this witness could justly lay claim to.”<sup>16</sup>

Like most of his predecessors, Gul Khan is not above using loose and ambiguous language. But one thing is beyond doubt. He stood for physical separation, for segregating the two communities throughout the sub-continent, so that North India was turned

into a Muslim area and South India into a Hindu area. Probably he meant to say that the alternative to this exchange was nothing but annihilation. This was his solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem. But the rest of his statement is open to several interpretations. Was he arguing for a division (constitutional, *not* sovereign) of India into a Muslim government in the north and a Hindu government in the south, as Blunt had done in 1883? Or, was he merely urging a transfer of population on religious basis with a view to avoiding communal friction, as Sharar had suggested in 1890 and Bilgrami in 1920? There is no mention in his evidence of independence or even self-government. The idea of an independent future might have been in his mind, but he did not put it in words. If he was merely suggesting a Muslim and a Hindu government whose writ ran in separately demarcated territories but under an over-all British control, then he was repeating nineteenth century ideas. But much had happened since then, and, even if he was unaware of the various proposals adumbrated in past years, the contemporary political scene might have suggested to him that the physical and territorial separation he was demanding would well perpetuate itself and, at some future date when foreign rule was withdrawn, lead to the creation of two states in India.

This, of course, is speculation. What is certain is that he did not suggest in clear words a division of India or the creation of a Muslim state, though his thoughts appear to run in that direction; and to that extent, but only to that extent, he may be said to have indicated something that could be seen to lead to a future partition.<sup>117</sup>

### Ubaidullah Sindhi (1924)

Ubaidullah Sindhi was another of those Indian Muslim political adventurers who spent several years in Afghanistan and Turkey (in his case also Russia), hiding, travelling, intriguing, scheming and meeting all sorts of anti-British personalities.

According to his manifesto, issued from Istanbul in 1924, each region of India was to be called "Swarajiya Republic", and these regions' collection (India) was to be known as "Indian Federal Swarajiya Republican State". Each "Republic" was to be a free member (*azad rukan*) of this federation in preservation of its economic, cultural and political freedom. The federal capital

to be at Delhi. Two secondary "centres" (*markaz*) of the federal government would be situated at Agra and Lahore; similar secondary centres would be established in north-eastern India and the Deccan. In this federation religion and state would be separated. The government would have nothing to do with any particular religion.<sup>118</sup>

He believed that in politics no distinction should be made between Hindus and Muslims, but he was not in favour of "eradicating completely" (*sire se mitane*) their religious differences. He wanted to bring the two communities into one unity (*wahdat*), like the branches of one tree. This idea stemmed from his belief in the doctrine of *wahdat-ul-wajud*.<sup>119</sup>

This statement begs so many questions that no intelligent or useful commentary is possible. There is not enough to interpret. Republics and regions and areas are heaped together in the same sentence. Secondary centres are scattered round the sub-continent. A federation is established without detailing its jurisdiction. The religious approach, the fundamental factor in the whole situation, is muddled by refusing to see any political differences between Hindus and Muslims or to remove their differences in religious beliefs. In any case, he did not talk of a partition or a separation; on the contrary, he was after a *wahdat* of the two communities.

A brief look at his later ideas and plans shows that he allowed political and doctrinal confusion to govern his suggestions till the end. On 24 December 1939 he formed the Jumna-Narbada Sind Sagar Party at his home village, Goth Pir Jhanda in Sind. One clause in the basic programme of the party proclaimed that just as the area watered by the Ganges and the Jumna is the source of Hindu civilization, the valley of the Indus is the "mine (*ma'dan*) of Muslim civilization". Once these two glorious tracts are brought into agreement with "our ideology" (*nazria*), we would have the key to the solution of this difficult problem.<sup>120</sup>

In a statement entitled "National Unity of India: Is it National or International?", issued on 3 September 1940, after the Lahore resolution had been adopted by the Muslim League, he asserted that India was a country of several nationalities. His party wanted to create, in the Muslim majority provinces, an "atmosphere of true Islam and humanitarianism".<sup>121</sup> But he did not support the Pakistan demand. In fact, he toured India in 1941, speaking

against partition and against making religion a basis of nationalism.

Addressing the Anti-Separation Conference at Cumbakunam in Madras in June 1941, he declared that people should dismiss from their minds all thoughts of an international unity or alliance of Islam. There was no possibility that the Muslim League would realize the wishes for which it was demanding a partition of India. Nationalities were born of language and territory, not of religion.<sup>122</sup> He asked the Muslim League to negotiate with the Congress and submit its Pakistan plan to it. The Congress might amend, change or alter the plan, and the Muslims had to accept these changes. Then the plan should be placed before the British parliament on behalf of the Congress, and all amendments considered necessary by the Government should also be accepted.<sup>123</sup>

On 17 April 1944 he told the Sind Students Federation at Hyderabad that "in Sind we want a permanent Sindhi government, and in this connection we will not allow any religious issue to be raised. We deem Sind a 'permanent' country (*mustaqil mulk*), and we will join the other countries of the sub-continent in a federation".<sup>124</sup>

His other opinions germane to the Muslim problem can be listed briefly. The Sindhi language should be written in the Roman script, not the Arabic. He believed in "nationalism, democracy and secularism". Iqbal was a "communalist", and in practice his Islam was one of an "Indian communalist, rather of a Punjabi Muslim". He was severely critical of Iqbal's imaginary "*hayula*" (fabrications) of Islamic culture and Islamic civilization. It was a misfortune that, under Sayyid Ahmad Khan's propaganda and pressure, the Muslims of India had kept away from the Congress.<sup>125</sup>

### Muhammad Ali (1924, 1925)

As we have seen, Muhammad Ali had, twelve years ago, come very near to suggesting a partition but had somehow never brought himself to utter the necessary words. He seems to have gone through a similar experience during 1923-25. His conviction about the essential disunity of India persisted. In 1923 he announced, "Unless some new force other than the misleading unity of opposition united this vast continent of India, it will remain a geographical misnomer."<sup>126</sup> It is of some significance that these words

were spoken in his presidential address before the Indian National Congress, a party with which the unity of India was an article of faith.

During the next two years he made a number of statements which are often quoted by Pakistanis in support of his ability to have foreseen a division of India. The occasion for these announcements was often the problem of the NWFP, and especially the conclusions of the inquiry committee appointed to study it.

In the sixteenth annual session of AIML, held in Bombay in December 1924, a resolution was passed urging upon the government to introduce such reforms in the NWFP as would bring it into "a position of equality with the other major provinces of India".<sup>127</sup> It was moved by Sahibzada Aftab Ahmad Khan, seconded by Abdul Aziz of Peshawar and supported by Muhammad Ali. In his speech Muhammad Ali said: "If a line be drawn from Constantinople to Delhi on the map of the world it would be found that at least right up to Saharanpur there was a corridor of purely Muslim people or Muslims were in clear majority. This gave them the clue for understanding the backward condition in which the Frontier and the Punjab were purposely kept by those in power."<sup>128</sup> It will be recalled that this corridor had been brought to public attention by Lovat Fraser in a map which he had published in the *Daily Express* of London in 1914 or 1915. A mere reference to the Muslim majority of this area did not mean anything, nor is there any clear connection between the two sentences of this passage.

Sardar Gul Khan's proposal, for whatever it was worth, drew some very significant comments from Muhammad Ali. On 22 May 1925, he wrote in his journal. "If this partition was practicable, instead of this suggestion being an indication of the treachery harboured by Muslims against their Hindu neighbours, and of the probability of their letting in and assisting a foreign Power beyond our frontiers to conquer India, it would rather be an indication that Musalmans had no desire to rule over Hindus, to whom they were willing to consign the whole of India from Agra to Cape Comorin. Is that not exactly what the Turkish exchange of population indicates? The Turks were sick of foreign intervention in their affairs on the pretext of securing justice for Christian minorities in Turkey, and in their exasperation they said to Europe: 'We don't want to rule over your Christian minorities.'

Take them and be done with it. Let us have in exchange the Muslim minorities in Greece, and after that let us develop such area as is left to us, and let Christian Greece and other Christian States in the Balkans develop such areas as they have.' Turkey had despaired of Christian and Muslim unity as some Hindus and Musalmans despair of Hindu and Muslim unity. But despair was anything but indicative of a desire to conquer territories inhabited exclusively by Christians."<sup>129</sup>

A careful study of this passage reveals several interesting things. First of all, Muhammad Ali apparently looked at Gul Khan's proposal as one suggesting a partition of India which, on the construction of the Pathan's own words, is, as already said, rather a far-fetched interpretation. It appears that some Hindus had read in Gul Khan's evidence a proof of Muslim intention to conquer India with foreign, presumably Afghan, help. Muhammad Ali denies this and thinks that, on the contrary, Gul Khan's plan was an indication of Muslim willingness to be fair to the Hindus in inheriting the imperial bequest in such a way that the two communities took control of their respective areas. His analogy from Turkish experience of her Christian-cum-European minorities is a good answer to the Hindu and British attitudes to the Muslim minority in India. The Hindus claimed that the Hindu-Muslim problem was due to the presence of a third party, the British; that as soon as foreign rule departed all would be well; and that therefore instead of harping on the need for safeguards Muslims should unconditionally and unreservedly join with the Hindus in expelling the imperial power. Such logic found no favour with Muhammad Ali, and in this he followed the general Muslim opinion. The British turned the Indian communal problem to their own advantage when they contended that their presence was essential in view of the Hindu-Muslim lack of unity, and that their neutral overlordship was required to keep the balance even between the two communities. Here again the recent Turkish example was relevant. If the third party claimed a perpetual lease on its occupation on ground of protecting the minority, and if the minority and the majority were not able to resolve their differences, then let the minority and the majority be separated. Thus at one stroke the Muslims would shed their fear of the majority and get rid of British rule.

I am here paraphrasing what Muhammad Ali said in answer

to Hindu criticism and in elaboration of his arguments. But this does not mean that he subscribed to Gul Khan's theory, for his words indicate that he was not one of those who had despaired of finding a solution to the Hindu-Muslim problem. "Some" Muslims had despaired of this, he says, not all. There is no clear expression of his own opinion in this passage. He is merely commenting on public issues, though we must confess that his reference to Turkey is significant. All the same, he is not arguing in favour of a partition, or even supporting it by a hint. However, he makes a most valuable point in saying that the partition proposal of Gul Khan shows that the Muslims have no ambition to rule over the Hindus.

We have not yet finished with Muhammad Ali, nor has he with Gul Khan. A fortnight later he returned to the subject. In the issue of 5 June he discussed the right of the various provinces of India to separate when freedom came. "Because at one time in the very remote past the empire of the Hindu Mauryans included these territories, or because in more recent times the Sikhs held possession of them, their inhabitants should now be deprived of their right to determine whom they could have as their rulers? The British have taken possession of Burma; and, though many Indians have settled there, and while benefitting themselves, have helped in the development of Burma, there is no organic unity between India and Burma, and the only bond between them is that of our common slavery. Would any one on that account deny to the Burmans the right to determine whether they would keep Burma a Province of India, when the British yoke has been lifted from the neck of both the countries, or separate from India altogether? There are a good many Ceylonese who would like to have a federation of Ceylon with the provinces of India when both countries are free. Others, perhaps, although anxious to free themselves from the British yoke, would not like such a federation, but would prefer entire separation, and nobody can question their right of self-determination. Is this right only to be denied to the people living on our borders? If so, why? For our part we think it essential that all the border people should exercise this right when India herself is free, and that no compulsion should be used on our side to keep the inhabitants of any portion of our frontier tied to us by force. Even if the Mauryans, the Mughals and the Sikhs had kept them so tied to India, or if the Muslim Generals of the Abbasid Khulafa and several Ghazanevid Kings

had kept them so tied to some other Empire or Kingdom.”

He continued: “It may be that, following the will-o-the-wisp of ‘a scientific frontier’, Indians may like a particular river-bank or a mountain-top to remain within the confines of India. But the only way in which we can secure such river-bank or mountain-top is to offer to the inhabitants of the coveted area such inducements as would incline them to affiliation with India. It may be that some of us would like Burma to remain part of free India; and others may like to have Ceylon federated with India’s provinces. Others yet may like a similar federation of Nepal and Bhutan with ourselves. These wishes may be dictated by economic reasons or strategic ones, by religious reasons or cultural ones. But in any case it would not be right to use force. We can only try persuasion and inducement, and, instead of compulsion, we could only aim at carrying conviction to the people whom we desire to attach to ourselves. The problem is a very different one in the case of the areas situated in the heart of India, for separation is not physically possible. But we are even doubtful of the morality of the North keeping the South tied to itself as the result of the Civil War in America; and similarly the ethics of compelling every portion of Ulster to be tied to the rest of Ireland is very doubtful. But it is quite a different case where areas on the periphery of India are concerned. If the inhabitants of those areas have need of us, they will no doubt come to us unasked. If, on the contrary, it is we who have need of them, we must offer them sufficient inducement to remain in or become affiliated to India.”<sup>130</sup>

This was to be Muhammad Ali’s last word on the subject, though he lived another six years. He did not refer to the issue of separation again, though in 1931, just before his death in London, he warned that if a solution to the Hindu-Muslim problem was not found there would be a civil war in India.

The above-quoted passage shows that he had finally lost faith in Indian unity. There is no longer a hope that a common nationality may emerge, or a concordat may solve the problem. The right of self-determination is now demanded, not for India as a unit as in the past, but for its various provinces and areas. No portion of India should be forced to affiliate itself with the future Indian state or its acquiescence taken for granted. The emphasis is on the future of the north-west frontier; in fact, that was the occasion for writing these editorials.

Separation is now the obvious trend and there is hardly any doubt that it has won Muhammad Ali's approval<sup>131</sup> But the question is what kind of separation was he advocating or foreseeing, and on what grounds? It is noticeable that he does not mention religion as the only or even the principal basis of separation. Anticipating the wishes of the people, he thinks they may be dictated "by economic reasons or strategic ones, by religious reasons or cultural ones." This is a general, comprehensive political statement of the grounds on which a demand for separation might possibly be made when the time comes. The two nation theory or the special Muslim position or the prospects for a separate Muslim state have nothing to do with the argument.

The creation of a Muslim state is not even indirectly mentioned not to speak of being defended<sup>132</sup> On the contrary, he speaks in the name of India, from which others may secede. "We must offer inducements to inhabitants of areas which India covets. "Some of us" would like Burma to remain in India. "We" must use persuasion instead of force to keep people within India. The frontier people will come to "us" if they have need of "us", but if "we" need them "we" must offer them good reasons to remain with India. This is not the language of a Muslim who argues for his own separation from India, but of a Hindu who is trying to stop others from leaving India. The "we" stands for India, not for the areas wanting separation. With such irrefutable evidence from his own lips it is not easy to see how some historians make him out to be one of the originators of the idea of Pakistan and, to add surprise to surprise, quote this passage in support of their case.

Muhammad Ali's repeated emphasis on the necessity of conceding the right of self-determination to the "border people" is not easy to understand. In the case of other areas of India he was merely examining the future possibility of a demand for their separation, but in that of the north west frontier (presumably his "border people") he actually argues for the exercise of self-determination, and seems to be of the opinion that the result of this exercise would be separation. He must have known that the frontier province, even with the addition of Baluchistan (another frontier area), could not possibly stand as an independent state. Was he then taking it for granted that this area, along with the tribal belt, would join Afghanistan? This is what Jamaluddin had suggested nearly half a century ago, but Muslim politics in India

had in these intervening years advanced to a point where such a proposal would surely have repelled a majority of the thinking people; for it amounted to weakening the total Muslim strength of India. If it was, as has been suggested, a reply to Sardar Gul Khan's scheme, it was a case of shooting at the wrong target, because Gul Khan's vision was not confined to his own province or race.

## NOTES

1. B.G. Tilak, in *Kesari*, 25 April 1901, pp. 2-3.
2. Francis Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims*, London, 1974, p. 82, citing *Rohilkhand Gazette*, 24 February 1903, and *Sahifa*, 12 June 1904 and 5 August 1903.
3. Sister Nivedita, in *The Indian Review*, March 1906, p. 165.
4. See *Hindu Patriot*, 5 October; *Sanjvan*, 11 October; *Hitavadi*, 12 and 14 October; *The Amrit Bazar Patrika*, 2 and 3 October. *Bengalee*, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 9 October, all of 1906.
5. *HC 175 4S* 6 June 1907, cols. 890-891.
6. Quoted in Penderel Moon, *Gandhi and Modern India*, London, 1968, p. 276
7. Quoted in Hirankumar Sanyal (ed), *Young Tagore for Today*, Bombay, 1945, p. 25.
8. W.S. Blunt, *My Diaries*, London, 1932, p. 635.
9. Gordon Johnson, "Partition Agitation and Congress Bengal 1904 to 1908", in John Gallagher, Gordon Johnson and Anil Seal (eds), *Locality, Province and Nation*, London, 1973, p. 255.
10. C.F. Andrews, "Nationalism and Religion", *The Indian Review*, January 1910, pp. 10-11.
11. All quoted from official unpublished papers by Francis Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims*, p. 194. For specialized inquiries into the Hindu-Muslim problem in this period see Shan Muhammad (ed), *The Indian Muslims: A Documentary Record, 1900-1947*, New Delhi, n.d., Vol. I, pp. 175-280; Pardaman Singh, *Lord Minto and Indian Nationalism, 1905-1910*, Allahabad, 1976; and the following doctoral theses: Barbara S. Chaudhry, *Neo-Hinduism and Militant Politics in Bengal, 1875-1910*, Hawaii, 1971; G. Johnson, *Indian Politics, 1888-1908*, Cambridge, 1967; Janet Mary Rizvi, *Muslim Politics and Government Policy, 1885-1917*, Cambridge, 1969; and W.M. Myrum, *Hindu-Muslim Relations in India, 1900-1924*, Wisconsin, 1954.
12. History Sheet of Muhammad Ali, comp by F.H. Vincent, Deputy Director, Criminal Intelligence, Government of India, quoted in Afzal Iqbal, *op cit.*, p. 43.
13. Waheeduzzaman, *Towards Pakistan*, Lahore, 1964, p. 199,

- who refers the reader to Humayun Kabir's article on "Muslim Swing to Nationalism", which appeared in the *Hindustan Standard* of Calcutta on 17 October 1945.
14. Naqi Muhammad Khan, *Umar-i-Rafta*, Karachi, 1958, p. 198. On Akbar Allahabadi see Muhammad Sadiq, *A History of Urdu Literature*, London, 1964, pp. 304-315; Abdul Qadir, *Famous Urdu Poets and Writers*, Lahore, n.d.; Qamaruddin Ahmad Badayuni, *Bazm-i-Akbar*, Delhi, 1944; S.M. Ikram, *Mawj-i-Kausar*, Lahore, 1970 rep., pp. 212-220. Ebadat Brelvi, "The Poetry of Freedom", *Pakistan Quarterly*, Spring 1962, pp. 54-61; and Margaret H. Case, "The Social and Political Satire of Akbar Allahabadi", *Mahfil*, no. 4 (1964), pp. 11-20.
  15. S.A. Vahid, *Studies in Iqbal*, Lahore, 1967, pp. 300-301.
  16. S.A. Vahid's letter to me from Karachi, dated 3 December, 1969.
  17. Muhammad Ali wrote *Thoughts on the Present Discontent*, Bombay, 1907; *My Life: A Fragment*, Lahore, 1942. See also Afzal Iqbal (ed), *Selected Writings and Speeches of Mawlana Muhammad Ali*, Lahore, 1944, and Ali Brothers, *For India and Islam*, Calcutta, 1922. On Muhammad Ali see S. Moinul Huq, "Maulana Muhammad Ali", in *A History of the Freedom Movement, 1707-1947, Vol III, 1906-1936, Part I, 1906-1928*, Karachi, 1961; A. H. Albiruni (S.M. Ikram), *Makers of Pakistan and Modern Muslim India*, Lahore, 1950; *The Ali Brothers: A Sketch of Their Lives and Careers*, Madras, n.d.; *Muhammad Ali: His Life, Services and Trial*, Madras, n.d.; W.J. Watson, *Muhammad Ali and the Khilafat Movement*, unpublished M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1955; Rais Ahmad Jafri (comp), *Selections from Maulana Muhammad Ali's Comrade*, Lahore, 1965; K.K. Aziz, *The Indian Khilafat Movement: A Documentary Record*, Karachi, 1970; Afzal Iqbal, *Life and Times of Mohamed Ali*, Lahore, 1974 (the best treatment so far); and Abdul Majid Daryabadi, "Mawlana Muhammad Ali", *Kya Khub Adami Tha*, Delhi, 1966, pp. 87-96.
  18. *Comrade*, 14 January 1911. He was the founder and editor of this quality journal, the first and last of its kind in Muslim India.
  19. *Ibid.*, leader entitled "Separate Electorates", 28 January 1911.

20. *Ibid.*, leader, 6 January 1912.
21. For details of the agitation against the partition of Bengal and its effect on Hindu-Muslim relations see K.K. Aziz, *Britain and Muslim India*, London, 1963; Shan Muhammad (ed), *The Indian Muslims: A Documentary Record, 1900-1947*, New Delhi, n.d., Vol. I, pp. 77-174; and M.K.U. Molla, *The New Province of Eastern Bengal and Assam, 1905-1911*, an unpublished Ph.D. thesis, London University, 1965. On the founding of the Muslim League and the controversy about separate electorates some new material is available in S.R. Wasti, *Lord Minto and the Indian Nationalist Movement, 1905-1910*, Oxford, 1964; and Shan Muhammad, *op. cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 1-280.
22. R. Palme Dutt, *India Today*, London, 1947, p. 385. This is repeated in the 2nd ed of this work, *India Today and Tomorrow*, London, 1955, p. 239.
23. Extracts from this address were pub by the All India Muslim League (AIML) newspaper, *Dawn* of Delhi. on 31 December 1945; quoted in Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, *Evolution of Pakistan*, Lahore, 1963, p. 84.
24. See, for example, V.V. Balabushevich and A.M. Dyakov (eds), *A Contemporary History of India*, New Delhi, 1964.
25. See G.M. Adhikari, *Indian National and Hindu-Muslim Unity*, Sydney, n.d. (which contains the party's resolution of 19 September 1942 on "Pakistan and National Unity"); John H. Kautsky, *Moscow and the Communist Party of India*, New York, 1956, pp. 16-45; M.R. Masani, *The Communist Party of India: A Short History*, London, 1954, pp. 7-98; and S. Roy (ed.), *Communism in India: Unpublished Documents, 1935-1945*, Calcutta, 1976; S. Pradhan (ed.), *Marxist Cultural Movement in India: Chronicles and Documents, 1936-1947*, Calcutta, 1979; and P.C. Joshi, "The Economic Background of Communalism", in B.R. Nanda (ed.), *Essays in Modern Indian History*, New Delhi, 1980, pp. 167-181.
26. As quoted in Abdul Hamid, *Muslim Separatism in India*, London, 1967, p. 206.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 206.
28. Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, *The Pakistan Resolution*, Karachi, 1968, p. 5, quoting Bhai Parmanand, *Arya Samaj awr Hindu*

- Sangathan*, Lahore, 1923, page number not cited.
29. See Bhai Parmanand, *Hindu National Movement*, Lahore, 1929, and *Story of My Life*, Lahore, 2nd ed 1937, tr from the Hindi by N. Sundar Iyer. On him there is M.L. Bhardwaj, "Bhai Parmanand", *CMG*, 23 March 1941. According to still another report, Dr. Muhammad Alam said, in his speech at the AIML Lahore session of March 1940, that Bhai Parmanand had made a proposal for a partition of India in 1914-15 on behalf of the Ghadar Party; Dr. Alam repeated this on the floor of the Punjab Legislative Assembly on 4 March 1941; see Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, *The Foundations of Pakistan*, Karachi, 1970, Vol. II, p. 345.
  30. Quoted in M.A. Karandikar, *Islam in India's Transition to Modernity*, Bombay, 1968, p. 163. In 1918, Gandhi wanted cow slaughter to be stopped by force. "So far as I know Hindu religion", he said, "I am sure that Hindus would not hesitate to compel their religious enemies, the English and Muhammadans, to give up cow-killing even by the force of sword", quoted in *Al-Fazl* (Qadian), 9 March 1918.
  31. Note in the National Archives of India, quoted in Francis Robinson, "Municipal Government and Muslim Separatism in the United Provinces, from 1883 to 1916", *Modern Asian Studies*, July 1973, p. 428.
  32. B.R. Nanda, *Gokhale, Gandhi and Nehru: Studies in Indian Nationalism*, London, 1974, p. 17.
  33. B.C. Pal, *Nationality and Empire*, Calcutta, 1916, pp. 91-96.
  34. *Ibid.*, pp. 224-226.
  35. *Hardinge Papers*, quoted in J.M. Brown, *Gandhi's Rise to Power*, Cambridge, 1972, p. 139.
  36. Curzon Memorandum to Cabinet on Indian Self-Government, 2 June 1917, *Chamberlain Papers*, AC 21/4/23, quoted in Richard Danzig, "The Many-Layered Cake: A Case Study in the Reform of the Indian Empire", *Modern Asian Studies*, January 1969, p. 69.
  37. Memorandum to Cabinet, in *Chamberlain Papers*, AC 15/5/5, quoted in *ibid.*, p. 70.
  38. J.H. Broomfield, "The Forgotten Majority: The Bengal Muslims and September 1918", in D.A. Low (ed), *Soundings in Modern South Asian History*, London, 1968, p. 218. Details of Hindu-Muslim conflict in 1911-20 are available in

Janet Mary Rizvi, *op. cit.*, W. M. Myrum, *op. cit.*; Ivy Cheatham, The Government of India and the Montagu Report, unpublished Ph D. thesis, Columbia University, 1919; Robert Shane Ryland, The Making of the Government of India Act, 1919, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Duke University, 1970, P G Robb, *The Government of India and Reform: Policies towards Politics and the Constitution, 1916-1921*, London, 1976; and Algernon Rumbold, *Watershed in India, 1914-1922*, London, 1979.

39. These biographical details are taken from Syed Sharifuddin Pirzada, *Evolution of Pakistan*, p. 85. It is a pity that we don't know any more about him. He died in 1918.
40. Bambooque, "The Interview", *Comrade*, 10 May 1913.
41. I.H. Qureshi, *The Muslim Community*, The Hague, 1962, p. 296
42. Choudhary Rahmat Ali, *Pakistan: The Fatherland of the Pak Nation*, Cambridge, 3rd ed 1947, pp. 213-214.
43. F.K. Khan Durrani, *The Meaning of Pakistan*, Lahore, March 1944, rep March 1946, p. 108.
44. For all this information I am indebted to Mr. A.S. Kheiri, a former Pakistan ambassador in the Sudan and a grandson of Rashad-ul-Kheiri. When the ML started a serious propaganda campaign in favour of the Pakistan demand, Abdus Sattar Kheiri wrote the first pamphlet in the "Pakistan Literature Series" entitled *National States and National Minorities*, Lahore, 1945.
45. Syed Abid Ahmad Ali, "Quaid-i-Azam and Aligarh", in Jamiluddin Ahmad (comp), *Quaid-i-Azam as Seen by His Contemporaries*, Lahore, 1966, p. 194.
46. G. Allana, *Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah*, Karachi, 1967, p. 298.
47. AIML Council Resolution no. 6 of 29 September 1940, *Resolutions of the All India Muslim League from April 1940 to April 1941*, Delhi, n d., p. 24.
48. G. Allana, *op. cit.*, p. 297.
49. Kheiri-Attlee-Huysmans correspondence is rep in Pirzada, *Evolution of Pakistan*, pp. 86-89. It was made available to him by Mrs. Zainab Makhdum, daughter of Abdus Sattar Kheiri.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 89. For an English tr of the relevant extracts from the report of the proceedings of the Stockholm Conference

- see G. Allana (ed), *Pakistan Movement, Historic Documents*, Karachi, 2nd ed May 1968, pp. 48-50. But he does not cite the source from which he had taken the extract.
51. According to one account, "it was during their stay in Germany that they propounded the theory of a separate homeland in India", Syed Abid Ahmad Ali. *op cit.*, p 194. But if Mr. A.S. Kheiri's chronology is correct they were in Turkey, not Germany, in 1917.
  52. Full text of the letter in G. Allana (ed), *Pakistan Movement: Historic Documents*, pp. 177- 178. The capitals are in the text. Allana does not date this letter. Pirzada also reproduces it and gives it the date of 23 May (S.S. Pirzada (ed), *Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah's Correspondence*, Karachi, 2nd ed 1966, pp. 175-177). Pirzada's compilation also carries two other letters from Abdus Sattar to Jinnah, one written from the Dehra Dun jail on 12 August 1941 and the other from Aligarh, on 29 October 1944, along with Jinnah's replies to these.
  53. Syed Abid Ahmad Ali, *op. cit* , p. 194
  54. *Ibid.*, p. 194. There is some confusion of time sequence here. The author mentions the distribution of leaflets "at the Patna Session" first and then says that "afterwards" an open letter was circulated to the Councillors "in July 1938". The occasions are dated incorrectly: there was a Council meeting at Delhi on 30 and 31 July 1938, and the annual session met at Patna on 26-29 December 1938. The Council meeting did not come after the Patna session. Perhaps he has confused the sessions, of which there were two that year: a special session at Calcutta in April and the 26th annual session at Patna in December.
  55. The Aga Khan, in spite of a full life and a high stature, still awaits a biographer. In the meantime, one may consult N.M. Dumasia, *A Brief History of the Aga Khan*, Bombay, 1903, and *The Aga Khan and His Ancestors: A Biographical and Historical Sketch; Eminent Musalmans*, Madras, n.d.; H.J. Greenwall, *His Highness the Aga Khan: Imam of the Ismailis*, London, 1952; *Indian Leaders of Today*, Karachi, 1942, Part II; Stanley Jackson, *The Aga Khan: Prince, Prophet and Statesman*, London, 1952; Sardar Iqbal Ali Shah, *The Prince Aga Khan: An Authentic Life Story*,

London, 1933; Hamshad Rahim, *The Aga Khan and the Khojas of India*, unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Chicago, 1958; and, of course, his own *The Memoirs of the Aga Khan: World Enough and Time*, London, 1954.

56. Aga Khan, *India in Transition: A Study in Political Evolution*, London, 1918, p. 37.
57. *Ibid.*, pp. 41—42.
58. I have not been able to find such a “suggested subdivision” to which he refers. Who suggested it and when?
59. *Ibid.*, p. 45.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
61. *Ibid.*, p. 170.
62. *Ibid.*, p. 171.
63. *Ibid.*, p. 172.
64. *Ibid.*, p. 301.
65. “By what other system can the Native States be brought into active union with the rest of India?” he asked himself rehetorically, *ibid.*, p. 167.
66. *Ibid.*, p. 170.
67. *Ibid.*, p. 46.
68. Suresh Chandra Dev, “India in Home Polity”, *IAR 1938*; Calcutta, n.d., Vol. II, p. 48.
69. B.R. Ambedkar, *Pakistan or Partition of India*, Bombay, 2nd ed 1945, p. 292 fn; see also D.R. Jatava, *Dr. Ambedkar's Role in National Movement, 1917-1947*, New Delhi, 1979.
70. A.B. Keith, *A Constitutional History of India, 1600-1935*, London, 2nd ed 1936, p. 287.
71. Beni Prasad, *India's Hindu-Muslim Questions*, London, 1946, p. 77.
72. Muhammad Abdul Qadir Bilgrami, *Hindu-Muslim Ittihad par Khula Khat Mahatma Gandhi ke Nam*. The publisher's name is omitted. It was printed by Muhammad Muqtadi Khan Sherwani at the Muslim University Press, Aligarh.
73. S.S. Pirzada, *The Pakistan Resolution*, p. 4.
74. The Urdu text was pub by the Pakistan Historical Society, Karachi, in 1970, with an introduction in English by Muhammad Ziaul Islam, and with the English title of *An Open Letter to Mqhatma Gandhi*, with the following words added in parentheses under the title: “containing a scheme

for the partition of the sub-continent written and published in 1920". All references in my account are to the pages of this reprint. I am grateful to the late Dr. I.H. Qureshi and the late Mr. Ziaul Islam for sending me an advance copy of it.

75. *An Open Letter to Mahatma Gandhi*, p. 3.
76. *Ibid.*, p.4.
77. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.
78. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
79. *Ibid.*, pp. 16-20.
80. *Ibid.*, pp. 21-29.
81. *Ibid.*, p. 26.
82. *Ibid.*, pp. 38-44.
83. *Ibid.*, pp. 48-49.
84. *Ibid.*, p. 54.
85. *Ibid.*, pp. 59-61 Ziaul Islam's English tr of these pages in his introduction is at places grossly misleading.
86. With such an opinion about the Hindus, one wonders why he chose to serve the Hindu ruler of Bharatpur State at the end of his career.
87. I.H. Qureshi, *The Muslim Community*, p. 295; see also Akhtar Waqar Azim, "Tasawwar-i-Pakistan. Manzil be Manzil", *Imroz*, 14 August 1968.
88. An Indian, *India's Destiny*, Allahabad, 1921, pp 57-58.
89. Quoted in Ram Gopal, *Indian Muslims*, Bombay, 1959, p. 152.
90. Sarvepalli Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru. A Biography*, Vol I, London, 1975, p. 92.
91. Abdul Karim, *Letters on Hindu-Muslim Pact*, Calcutta, n.d., p. 13.
92. Swami Sat Deo Pari Birajik, in *Tej of Delhi*, 1 May 1924, quoted in M. Fazl-i-Husain, *Plans of Hindu Raj*, Calcutta, 1932, pp. 229-230.
93. The quoteations for the earlier period are from Har Dayal, *Forty-four Months in Germany and Turkey*, London, 1920, pp. 29-54. The latter opinion is from *Paigham-i-Sulha* (Message of Peace) of Lahore, 13 May 1924, quoted in M. Fazl-i-Husain, *op. cit.*, p. 234. On Har Dayal see L.P. Mathur, *Indian Revolutionary Movement in the United States of America*, Delhi; 1970; Dharmavira. *Lala Har Dayal and*

*Revolutionary Movements of His Times*, New Delhi, 1970, Emily C Brown, *Har Dayal Hindu Revolutionary and Rationalist*, Tuscon, 1975, Anup Singh, "Har Dayal", *New History*, 1 April 1939, pp 1-6, and C F Andrews, "Lala Har Dayal A Noble Patriot and Truth Lover", *Modern Review*, April 1940, pp 469-470

- 94 Lala Har Dayal, in *Tej*, 26 March 1925, quoted in M Fazl i Husain, *op cit*, pp 234-235
- 95 Swami Sat Deo Parı Birajik, in *Tej*, 20 June 1924, quoted in *ibid* p 236
- 96 Sayyid Sardar Ali Khan, letter, *The Times*, 25 October 1924
- 97 Dr Ziauddin Ahmad, address to the Royal Colonial Institute, London, 26 November 1924, *ibid*, 27 November 1924
- 98 Bhai Parmanand, *Regeneration of Indian Nation*, Lahore, n d, p 9
- 99 C H Setalvad, *Recollections and Reflections An Auto-biography*, Bombay, n d, pp 263-264 According to Gandhi, total membership of the Congress in the country in November 1924 was a mere 15,000 (V N Naik, *Indian Liberalism—A Study*, Bombay, 1945, p 8)
- 100 A Correspondent, in *Muslim Herald* of Madras, April 1925, quoted in An Indian Mahomedan (Sayyid Sardar Ali Khan), *The Indian Moslems*, London, 1928, p 195
- 101 Lala Dhanpat Rai, in *Parkash* of Lahore, 26 April 1925, quoted in M Fazl i-Husain, *op cit*, pp 128-129
- 102 Lala Har Dayal, in *Milap* of Lahore, 23 June 1925, quoted in *ibid*, p 110 The proclamation of July 1925 in *TTI*, 25 July 1925 His changed views on the British Empire are in "Mr Har Dayal's Confession of Faith", *India*, 28 March 1919, pp 107-108
- 103 Sir Patrick Fagan, "Some Thoughts on the Future of Islam", *Asiatic Review*, July 1925, pp 369-376
- 104 Sayyid Sardar Ali Khan, letter, *The Times*, 31 August 1925
- 105 Swami Sat Deo Parı Birajik, speech at Sagar (Central Provinces), quoted in *Wakil* of Amritsar, 9 December 1925
- 106 Reported in *The Times*, 30 December 1925, and *IQR* 1925, Vol II, p 356
- 107 M R Titus, "The Reaction of Muslim India to Western Islam", in John R Mott (ed), *The Muslim World Today*.

- London, 1925, pp. 93-108. For the widening Hindu-Muslim gulf during 1921-25 see W M Myrum, *op cit.*, Shan Muhammad, *op. cit.*, Vol III, pp. 1-343, David Page, *Prelude to Partition: All India Muslim Politics, 1920-1932*, unpublished D.Phil thesis, Oxford, 1974; Gail Minault Graham, *The Khulafat Movement: A Study in Indian Muslim Leadership, 1919-1924*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Pennsylvania, 1972; and G. Robert Thursby, *Hindu-Muslim Relations in British India A Study of Controversy, Conflict and Communal Movements in Northern India, 1923-1928*, Leiden, 1975.
108. Khaliqzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan*, Lahore, 1961, p. 238.
109. On Hasrat Mohani see Muhammad Noman (ed), *Our Struggle, 1857-1947*, Karachi, n.d.; Jamil Ahmad, "Hasrat Mohani", *Dawn*, 9 March 1952; Abida R Rizwi, "Hasrat Mohani", *ibid.*, 18 May 1958; Ebadat Brelvi, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-61; Zeno (Safdar Mir), "Hasrat Mohani", *TPT*, 18 May 1963; Tahir Majid, "Hasrat Mohani: A Dauntless Freedom Fighter", *Dawn*, 13 May 1967; and Nurulain Ahmar Lari, *Hasrat Mohani*, Gorakhpur, 1973 (in Urdu). The only full treatment in English is K.H. Kadri's doctoral thesis submitted at the SOAS, University of London.
110. In 1920 M.N. Roy and U.N. Mukherji issued from Moscow a signed appeal in the name of the Communist Party of India and esp addressed to the Congress. Copies of this manifesto were sent to India through Nalini Gupta. It was said that this appeal induced Hasrat Mohani to move the "complete independence" resolution (see David N. Druhe, *Soviet Russia and Indian Communism*, New York, 1959, p. 51).
111. *IAR 1922*, pp. 403-404.
112. Choudhary Rahmat Ali, *op. cit.*, p. 216. He cites no source, saying that this proposal was put forward by him in his conversations with Hindu leaders in 1924.
113. For example, Pyam Shahjahanpuri, "Nazria-i-Pakistan ke Awwalin Dai Mawlana Hasrat Mohani The", *Kohistan*, 14 August 1968, who claims that in 1924 Mohani demanded (*matalaba kyâ tha*) that India be divided into two parts, a Hindu India and a Muslim India. He goes on to suggest that this demand inspired Iqbal to put forward his 1930 "demand for a division of the country" Of course, he gives

no authority for these statements.

114. "Nuristan", *Sayyara Digest*, January 1966, pp. 65-68. The article carries Kamboh's photograph. No author is mentioned, but Mr. Khurshid Alam, who sent me the article, told me that he had written it from personal knowledge.
115. The North-West Frontier Enquiry Committee, *Report*, Government of India, Delhi, 1924, pp. 122-123. Sardar Gul Khan's words are reproduced in a slightly different version in *The North-West Frontier Enquiry Committee, Memoranda and Evidence*, Government of India, Delhi, 1923, Vol. I, pp. 729-730.
116. The North-West Frontier Enquiry Committee, *Report*, p. 122.
117. There is no justification for the assertion that he had demanded "a partition of India" and "the creation of a separate Muslim state" made by Akhtar Waqar Azim, *op. cit.*
118. Muhammad Sarwar, *Afadat wa Malfuzat-i-Hazrat Mawlana Obaidullah Sindhi*, Lahore, 1972, p. 144.
119. *Ibid.*, p. 146.
120. *Ibid.*, p. 108.
121. *Ibid.*, pp. 108-109.
122. *Ibid.*, pp. 149-150, 159.
123. *Ibid.*, p. 160.
124. *Ibid.*, p. 147.
125. *Ibid.*, pp. 239, 305, 429-435, 503. Obaidullah wrote *Shah Waliullah awr unka Falsafa*, Lahore, 1944; *Shah Waliullah awr unki Siyasi Tahrik*, Lahore, 1944; *Ilham al-Rahman* (commentary on the Quran in Arabic), Karachi, n.d.; and *Khutbat-o-Maqalat-i-Mawlana Obaidullah Sindhi*, Lahore, 1970 rep. On him see Muhammad Sarwar, *Mawlana Obaidullah Sindhi Halat-i-Zindagi, Talimat awr Siyasi Afkar*, Lahore, 1943, 3rd. ed. 1967; Zafar Hasan Aybek, *Ap Biti*, Lahore, n.d. (? 1966), 2 Vols.; J.M.S. Baljon, "A Comparison between the Koranic Views of Ubayd Allah Sindhi and Shah Wali Allah", in Hamida Khuro (ed.), *Sind through the Centuries*, Karachi, 1981, pp. 183-190; and Khalid Duran, "Ubayd-Allah Sindhi in Turkey: First Contacts between Pakistani and Turkish Nationalisms", *Journal of the Regional Cultural Institute* (Tehran), Vol. VI, nos. 1-2 (undated), pp. 29-42.

126. Muhammad Ali, Presidential Address to the INC session, 1923, full text in *IAR 1923*, Vol II, Supplement, pp 19-97.
127. *Resolutions of the All India Muslim League from May 1924 to December 1936*, Delhi, n.d., Resolution no. 3, pp. 9-10.
128. *IAR 1923*, Vol. II, p. 478.
129. *Comrade*, 22 May 1925.
130. *Ibid.*, 5 June 1925.
131. There is no mention, direct or indirect, of Muhammad Ali's suggestions for separation in S Moinul Huq's chapter on "Maulana Muhammad Ali" in *A History of Freedom Movement*, Karachi, 1961, Vol. III, Part I, pp 140-174. A surprising omission in a book which is generally regarded in Pakistan and outside as the "official" history of the nationalist movement and was planned and executed by a panel containing all prominent or influential historians of the country. Similarly, there is hardly any reference to the subject in S. Moinul Huq (comp), *Mohamed Ali (Life and Works)*, Pakistan Historical Society, Karachi, 1978, a collection of 8 essays by various scholars written for the centenary celebrations of Muhammad Ali's birthday.
132. Khaliqzaman claims that in 1924 Muhammad Ali "in one of his speeches at Aligarh said, 'If the Hindu-Muslim problem is not settled, India will be divided into Hindu India and Muslim India.'" (Khaliqzaman, *op. cit*, p 238) I have not been able to locate this speech in any published record, and no one else has quoted it or referred to it. Khaliqzaman does not cite his source.

# 3

## IN SEARCH FOR A HOMELAND: 1925-1929

### Development of Communal Separatism (1925-1929)

The last years of the second decade witnessed sharper communal rivalries than before. The right wing Hindus continued their campaigns of *shuddhi* and *sangathan*, Muslim leaders went on reiterating that life with the Hindus would be impossible without special safeguards and guarantees. There were more and more separatist plans as the decade drew to its close—a reflection of Muslim feeling of insecurity. A summary of contemporary thinking on the communal problem follows, based on documented sources and information.

Raj Kumar Ametti declared in March 1926 that “without *shuddhi* Hindu-Muslim unity is impossible”. When “all the Indian Muslims are converted to Hinduism, we would see only Hindus around us. Nobody can, then, prevent us from getting freedom”.<sup>1</sup> Suspicion grew to such proportions that the Hindu movement for the abolition of untouchability was characterized as a campaign to organize the untouchables and set them up against the Muslims by no less than the official organ of the pro-Congress Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind, *Al-Jamiat*.<sup>2</sup> In Bengal, Hindu politicians started belittling the Muslim majority in the province and asserting that the Hindus really formed the bulk of the voting strength.<sup>3</sup> In a speech at Cawnpore in September 1926, Pandit Motilal Nehru, stung by the taunts of the right wing publicists like Pandit Malaviya, announced that he was a good Hindu and “I can go one step further and say that even the Congress is a Hindu body. Some Muhammedans had certainly joined it in 1920-21, otherwise it has been all along a purely Hindu body from its very start”.<sup>4</sup>

Sir Abdul Qadir, in his presidential address to AIML Delhi session of December 1926, told the Muslims “to ask for a restora-

tion of our majority strength in Provinces where our numbers are larger than others".<sup>5</sup> While the Muslim League was talking about legislative majorities, some Hindu parties were planning to reduce the Muslim population to a status lower than that of the lowest cast. An editorial in a Maharashtran paper spelled this out: "If the foundation of *swaraj* is laid upon the unity of these two communities in India, the building thus raised cannot last long. Its foundation will be shaky. This opinion is based on facts. The social boycott of Muslims for the sake of *sangathan* will not be harmful to Hindus. For the upkeep of a tree, it is necessary to lop off its branches and boughs and cut its superfluous portions. For a good work we have to make sacrifices, and so we should not mind a little loss." Then followed these instructions to the Hindus:

1. We should not take any part in the religious or other ceremonies of the Muslims.
2. We should not enter into transactions with Muslims in our trade and commerce, and we should especially avoid purchasing goods from them.
3. For cultivation purposes, lands should be given to Hindus alone.
4. Muslims should not be engaged for private service.
5. We should not enter into lending or borrowing transactions with Muslim moneylenders.
6. No Hindu lawyer should appear on behalf of any Muslim in any case.
7. No cattle should be sold to Muslims.
8. We should not buy meat from Muslims.
9. Hindus should not buy medicines from Muslim physicians, nor should the Hindu physicians and doctors sell medicines to Muslims."<sup>6</sup>

The year 1927 brought no relief. In January, Dr. B.S. Moonje told a Hindu Conference in Dacca that *swaraj* meant nothing less than Hindu raj.<sup>7</sup> One of his colleagues said in a public meeting in Sind in April that "there should not be any feeling of pity in your hearts against those who pull their knives upon the throats of our cow-mother".<sup>8</sup> Hindu-Muslim unity was no doubt necessary, said another, but "this unity can be had only by means of *shuddhi*, because unity means intermingling . . . so long as the Muslims and the Christians of Hindustan are not converted, you cannot get *swaraj*".<sup>9</sup> Moonje again advised his people: "From today it should be the duty of every Hindu to leave the Muslims

in their condition, at the mercy of Englishmen, so that they might realize their folly, and in dejection should throw themselves at our feet, and should then help us in our struggle for *swaraj* without putting up any selfish demands. Such a unity would be more solid and durable."<sup>10</sup> In June, Professor Ram Deo announced that the Hindu flag "shall be hoisted on each and every mosque in India".<sup>11</sup>

An editorial comment in the *Arya Vir* of 25 June sums up the Hindu extremist opinion so well that it deserves a long quotation: "The time is not far when this Islam shall be abolished for ever from India and anybody, even Mahatma Gandhi, who will help directly or indirectly in the propagation or defence of Islam, shall be regarded as the enemy of this country and *swaraj*, and no true-hearted Hindu shall keep any relations with such persons. . . . Now we will practically show to Muhammedans and some of their *swarajist* friends that if they are desirous of seeing an atmosphere of peace and unity in India, it must be their first duty to drown this Islam in the Ganges for ever; Hindus cannot tolerate Islam for long, because it has not only caused a great harm to the Hindu nation, but has also prevented India from getting *swaraj*. So long as the present Islam is not reformed and it is an obstacle in the path of the welfare and freedom of this country, Hindu-Muslim unity is utterly impossible. . . . Time will come when this country will have Aryan rule once more. Then Islam will be properly reformed or people will be heard calling Abdul Rashid and Muhammad Amin by the name of Ram Sarup, and Ram Das . . .".<sup>112</sup>

In July, the *Milap* of Lahore wrote that "for the safety of India it is essential to conquer Afghanistan (which is a part of India) and unite it with India. If the government thought it necessary and advanced towards Afghanistan, all the Hindus will help them".<sup>13</sup> Lala Har Dayal summed up the future of "Hindu Nation, Hindustan and the Punjab" in four imperatives: Hindu *sangathan*, Hindu raj, conversion of Muslims and Christians, and conquest of Afghanistan and the frontier provinces and the conversion of its inhabitants.<sup>14</sup> The *Milap* warned King Amanullah that "Hindustan does not want any religious government in Afghanistan, nor can it allow a religious or Islamic kingdom. Why should it put itself in danger by having a fanatic government in its neighbourhood?"<sup>15</sup>

- Muslim leaders continued to call for protection and a genuine

federal system. Sir Muhammad Shafi told the Muslim League session at Lahore in December 1927 that "the federal India of the future should be built up on the lines of the United States of America, the Central Government possessing such powers as are expressly vested in it by the constitution and all residuary powers being left to the individual states".<sup>16</sup> Simultaneously, Abul Kalam Azad, the Congress leader, told the Muslim League Calcutta session (there were two sessions of the party that year due to a split) that "if the Muslims did not recognize this great step they were not fit to live. There would now be nine Hindu provinces against five Muslim provinces, and whatever treatment Hindus accorded in the nine provinces, Muslims would accord the same treatment to Hindus in the five provinces. Was not this a great gain? Was not a new weapon gained for the assertion of Muslim rights?"<sup>17</sup> Another Muslim reiterated that his community was "united by the common tie of religion, the social tie of equality, the cultural ties of language, and the historical tie of a glorious past, and is homogeneous and compact".<sup>18</sup>

In April 1928, Moonje again declared that "as England belongs to Englishmen, France to the French, and Germany to Germans, in the same way Hindustan belongs to the Hindus. Hindus want swaraj, but not at the cost of their religion. If the Musalmans want to co-operate with us, without making any demands for rights, the Hindus will also advance shoulder to shoulder with them; if not, the Hindus should be prepared to fight their way to freedom without the help of other communities, for the simple reason that Hindustan belongs to Hindus alone".<sup>19</sup>

In spite of such provocation, and also because of lack of any organized thinking about alternatives, Muslim parties went on repeating that a federal system in India would suit their needs.<sup>20</sup>

Motilal Nehru, in the course of his Congress presidential address at Calcutta in December 1928, claimed for the party the status of an all-parties conference. It was its duty "to deal with every question coming before it from the point of view of the greatest good of all the parties and the people of India".<sup>21</sup>

The Muslims were obviously anxious but did not know what they could do beyond asking for a federation and provincial autonomy. No party was yet prepared to mention separation. The Aga Khan, speaking to the first AIMC session at Delhi on 31 December 1928, called the Muslims a nation, but haltingly and

circumspectly "In regard to the implications of the term 'communal' I may remark in passing that the Muslims of India are not a community, but *in a restricted special sense* a nation composed of many communities" <sup>22</sup>

In December 1928, the All India Khilafat Conference demanded a "federation of Free and United States of India", consisting of "fully autonomous" provinces and large Indian (native) states or groups of smaller native states, each unit having its own elected governor and assembly. The federal parliament would consist of representatives elected by the units, and would have jurisdiction only over such subjects as concern the whole of India and are entrusted to it by the constituent units. "The Musalmans of India will not accept any constitution which would not be framed on the principles stated above" <sup>23</sup>

Khwaja Hasan Nizami, unlike the Aga Khan, did not hesitate to give his community the appellation of nation. "Muslims are separate from Hindus, they cannot unite with the Hindus. The Muslims are one united nation and they alone will be masters of India. They will never give up their individuality" <sup>24</sup> Dr Shafa't Ahmad Khan, though not going that far, echoed the feeling that the Muslim community was united, compact and homogeneous <sup>25</sup> The first AIMC dutifully passed a resolution on 1 January 1929, demanding a federal system with residuary powers vested in the provinces <sup>26</sup>

Candid statements of their views continued to pour forth from Hindu lips in 1929. In a speech in Karachi, Malaviya advised all Hindus to strive for *swaraj* and achieve it as quickly as possible so that they might be able to stop cow killing <sup>27</sup> The *Hindu* of Lahore carried a passionate and ringing editorial on 21 October. "Oh, young Hindu brethren of India, alas, where is the brave Pratap who was a terror to emperor Akbar, where is that hon-hearted Shivaji who paralyzed Aurungzeb, where is that Banda Bairagi whose sword cut the Muhammedans to pieces? Alas! alas! where have they all gone, where are they hidden?" <sup>28</sup> On 27 October, *Milap* joined the chorus. "The young Arya wants neither the rule of the English, nor of the Muslim, but only Ram Raj" <sup>29</sup>

General Muslim feeling, still far from making a formal demand for separation, may be gathered from a few statements made towards the end of 1929. Mushur Husan Kidwai denied the charge that Muslims were too communalistic in their outlook and an

obstacle to the progress of the country on democratic lines. They would "go a step forward than their Hindu brethren" provided that they "are assured that the rule by the non-Muslim majority will not result ultimately in the expulsion of Muslims from India as it did from Spain". They had been forced to be on the defensive "to safeguard themselves from the prospective rigid, centralized, bureaucratic aggressive Hindu Raj which the Hindu all-Parties' Report has delineated". They had been given every reason to fear "that the majority, if let unchecked, would not hesitate to take wrong advantage of its ballot-box majority and power, and would trample down under its feet the traditions, the language, the culture of the minority".<sup>30</sup>

Muhammad Ali told the Round Table Conference on 19 November: "Let me assure every British man and woman who thinks of shaping our destinies that the only quarrel between the Hindu and the Muslim today is a quarrel that the Muslim is afraid of Hindu domination. I want to get rid of that fear."<sup>31</sup>

Dr. Abdullah Al-Mamun Suhrawardy made it clear on 29 December that Muslims shall, on no account, tolerate the substitution of British rule by Brahmin rule or by the tyranny of the majority.<sup>32</sup> In the words of a non-Muslim, "*Swaraj* is a Hindu demand aimed at saving Hinduism from Western influence".<sup>33</sup>

No constitution, warned Sir Azizuddin Ahmad, shall work even for six months unless the Muslims were given that "honour and power in it which is their due". They had ruled India for centuries, and they would never consent to pass under the domination of the Hindu majority. "There can be no compromise on the point." Any solution "must be an equal partnership at the least", and any other arrangement "will end in total failure". To "the Hindus there can be no submission; and this fact must be realized by British constitution-makers, or there can be no peace in India". "In short, the Muslims refuse to accept a Hindu raj: that is the long and short of it." He minced no words on this point; "the least attempt on the part of the Hindus to use their majority tyrannically would lead to civil war. The Muslims are of fighting stock, and they will stand no nonsense."<sup>34</sup>

### Lala Lajpat Rai (1924)

As mentioned in the last chapter, Bhai Parmanand had stated

in 1923 in his autobiography that in 1912 or before he had written a letter to Lala Lajpat Rai enclosing a scheme for a division of India under which the Muslims were to be driven across the Indus. This letter was seized by the police when it took possession of Parmanand's papers. We don't know if this letter was delivered to Lajpat Rai or not; probably it was, because there was nothing to stop Parmanand from writing it again and posting it to the Lala.

In any case, the two Hindu leaders whose opinions and views were so similar were often meeting each other and exchanging notes on the Muslim problem. Either as a result of Parmanand's letter of 1912, or of his book of 1923 in which a certain proposal had been mentioned, or under the influence of contemporary developments, Lala Lajpat Rai gave serious attention to the Muslim issue in the autumn of 1924. The fact that he mentioned Hasrat Mohani's proposal in elaborating his own suggestions shows that he was trying to solve the Hindu-Muslim problem in the context of the political developments of his day.

Though not in the first line of Indian leaders, Lajpat Rai<sup>35</sup> was a very well-known figure in north India and wielded vast influence over the Hindus of the Punjab. Firmly anchored to the Arya Samaj doctrine, he was a Hindu of the orthodox school and later joined the Hindu Mahasabha. But he was equally active in the Congress, and for some years the party hierarchy accepted him as its principal source of information on the affairs of north India. The views of such a man therefore carry considerable weight.

In November and December 1924 he wrote several articles on the Hindu-Muslim problem and on Pan-Islamism which appeared in a number of Hindu newspapers—*The Hindustan Times*, *The Tribune*, the *Bombay Chronicle* and the *Swarajya*. The core of his proposal was expressed in an article in *The Tribune* of 14 December, which also contained the principal argument which led him to his conclusions.

He was convinced that the demand for, or a continuation of, separate representation for Muslims based on separate electorates was completely inconsistent with Indian nationalism and a united India. He failed to see how those who spoke in favour of it, and he specially mentioned Jinnah among them, could claim to be nationalists. Nationalism and communal representation were irreconcilable. Not only that, but those who said that separate representa-

tion was a temporary political expedient of which time would gradually see the end were indulging in cruel self-deception. It could never be abolished, except through a civil war. And a civil war would again result in the supremacy of one community over the other. That is why some Hindus feared that at least some Muslim leaders were planning to establish Muslim rule throughout India with the help of "foreign Muslim states". This made the Hindus even greater opponents of the system of separate electorates. But this opposition, however determined, was useless in the face of the government's resolve to maintain separate representation. Thus it came about that the system had become "the most effective reply to the demand for *Swraj*, and the surest way of India never getting it". As long as the Muslims insisted on it, the British would never leave India. As the Muslims seemed to have no intention of foregoing it the prospects for independence looked remote. This was the heart of the Hindu-Muslim problem and the stalemate to which it had brought India.

How to deal with the problem? Now Lajpat Rai came to his concrete proposal. "My suggestion is that the Punjab should be partitioned into two provinces, the Western Punjab with a large Muslim majority to be [a] Muslim-governed province; and the Eastern Punjab with a large Hindu-Sikh majority to be [a] non-Muslim-governed province." On Bengal he held his judgement. To him it was "unimaginable" that the "rich and highly progressive and alive Hindus of Bengal" would ever agree to work with the Bengali Muslims under the Das Pact. If they chose to do so, he had nothing to say about them. If his hope was proved right, he would divide Bengal into a Muslim province and a Hindu province. The future of other provinces was in no doubt for they were clearly either Muslim-majority provinces or Hindu-majority provinces. "Under my scheme", he said in final conclusion, "the Muslims will have four Muslim States: (1) The Pathan Province or the North-West Frontier; (2) Western Punjab; (3) Sind; and (4) Eastern Bengal. If there are compact Muslim communities in any other part of India, sufficiently large to form a province, they should be similarly constituted. But it should be distinctly understood that this is not a united India. It means a clear partition of India into a Muslim India and a non-Muslim India."<sup>36</sup>

In clarity, detail and firmness this proposal is a landmark in the evolution of the idea of Pakistan. There is no vagueness or con-

fusion about the suggestion. This is the first clear scheme of partition to appear of which we have full details, and in some respects it goes beyond what anybody had suggested before or was to suggest in future until we come to Rahmat Ali. It is strange that it should have come from a Hindu, and one of orthodox and extremist views. One would have thought that as a consequence of protracted Muslim thinking on separation a Muslim would be the first to make such a definite proposal. Bilgrami and Nadir Ali are reported to have suggested a partition but we have no detailed accounts of them. Other Muslims were mostly talking about a federal solution or a general separation which never seemed to result in partition. It might also have been expected that a radical solution of this kind would emanate from the Congress which prided itself on its political ingenuity and might have tried to incorporate the trend of current Muslim opinion in a new plan of its own, at least to attract more Muslims if for no other reason. But it had attached itself so indissolubly with the concepts of a united India—a single nationalism and majority rule, that far from conceding any degree of separation it was not prepared to consider even a looser form of federation. Pluralism of any variety was anathema to it. This harsh rigidity and high ambition were to cost it what it held closest to the heart—the unity of India.

Lajpat Rai, too, believed in a united India, but he was enough of a realist to see that this ideal was not shared by the Muslims. He realized that a compromise which brought much, though not all, was to be preferred to a dream which never coincided with reality. He was a *pukka* Hindu, and therefore unable to compromise with communal electorates. But, instead of continuing to repeat his condemnation of the system, he decided to try to get rid of it by a revolutionary process. He wanted independence for India, and wanted it so badly that he was willing to set up a Muslim state in India if this was the only way to win freedom. It is important to grasp this point. He did not advocate the setting up of a Muslim state because he was in love with the Muslims, in that case he would have agreed to separate electorates, an infinitely lesser evil. He disliked separate Muslim representation so much that he preferred a broken up India to its retention. His anxiety to see India as a free land is not in doubt, his sincerity as an Indian nationalist is not in question, his ability to compromise is not at issue. Equally his hatred for the Muslims is beyond doubt.<sup>37</sup> He disliked them so

much that he was prepared to see them secede and set up a new state rather than have them in India with their own independent spokesmen in legislatures and local councils. And he made no secret of this hatred. He hoped that the Hindus of Bengal would not agree to live in peace with Muslims and make a success of the Das agreement which gave the Muslims some adequate safeguards in popular representation and public services. Thus does good sometimes come out of evil.

Other features of Lajpat Rai's plan can be mentioned more briefly. Almost every Muslim and Hindu had so far kept his eye on north India, and every mention of separation had drawn a line between the north and the south. Lajpat Rai, on account of his deep interest in the future of the Bengali Hindus, was the first to include the Bengali Muslims in his calculations. (Bilgrami had done so, too, but it is uncertain if he wanted a partition). Lajpat Rai put Eastern Bengal into the Muslim state and saved his Hindu brethren from what he considered a perilous destiny. That in doing so he was making nonsense of the agitation against the 1905 partition of Bengal, of which he himself had been a violent apostle in the Punjab, did not enter his head. In including Bengal in his re-arrangement of India he also went beyond the Allahabad proposal of Iqbal, to be made six years later, which not only restricted its scope to the north-west of India but also did not advocate a partition. He also forestalled Rahmat Ali by eleven years, for it was not till 1935 that the Pakistan National Movement of Cambridge turned its attention to the Muslims living in the east of India.

Another aspect of his scheme connects him with Rahmat Ali. His suggestion for the creation of Muslim states in other parts of India, besides the Muslim areas named in the scheme, was later to be taken up by Rahmat Ali in excess of zeal, and developed into a demand for several large and small sovereign enclaves inside India. But Lajpat Rai's proposal carried a rider which negated the suggestion. He posed the condition that such a Muslim state would come into existence only where there was found a "compact" Muslim community, "sufficiently large to form a province". By this standard there was nothing left for the Muslims to claim in addition to what Lajpat Rai had already given them. His line of demarcation followed closely the boundaries drawn in 1947. He omits the name of Baluchistan from his list of Muslim States, but this is probably an oversight and has no importance.<sup>38</sup>

## Cheiro (1925)

Within a year of the publication of Lala Lajpat Rai's scheme a palmist and astronomer confirmed the future emergence of a Muslim state in India.

Count Louis Hamon, who wrote under the name of Cheiro, practised the sciences (if that is the proper description) of palmistry and astronomy for long years and became a figure well known throughout the world. Combining chiromancy (from *kheir* in Greek meaning hand, *mancie* in Old French meaning divination = divination by hand, hand-reading, palmistry), numerology or the science of numbers, and astrology, he made several predictions which startled the world by their accurate fulfilment. Among other things, he correctly forecast the exact date of the death of King Edward VII of England when he was still the Prince of Wales, the outbreak of the Boer War, the assassination of King Humbert of Italy, the fall of Oscar Wilde, the beginning and end of the first world war, the warning of coming death to W.T. Stead of *The Review of Reviews*, and the death by drowning of Kitchener.<sup>39</sup>

In 1925 Cheiro compiled his *World Predictions* and the manuscript was handed over to the publisher in October, though the book did not come out till 1927. On India his forecasts make an interesting reading today. "There is no likelihood of peace in India. On the contrary, sedition and upheavals of all kinds will be more prevalent than ever. Any attempt at [a] settlement of the Indian question by the British Government will be frustrated and come to nothing." This may be taken to refer (in the future, of course) to the work of the Simon Commission and to the unsuccessful attempts made by Lord Irwin to reach a settlement with the Indian parties on constitutional advance. "Thousands upon thousands will suffer prison gladly in their effort for Indian independence. They will prevent and block, in every imaginable way, plans made by the British administration; bringing disorder and chaos in all departments of Government." In this one may choose to read the coming of the 1930 campaign of civil disobedience called by Gandhi, and again the Congress agitation of 1932-33. ". . . one thing that becomes more and more evident is that England will not be able to hold that country in subjection as she has done in the past."

Then he came to the future of India in respect of the Muslim problem. "That Buddhists and Mahomedans will join together to make India a united nation, is out of question. The utmost one can hope for is that, in a native government, they would form opposition parties and so rule the country together [*sic.*]. The danger is, however, a form of religious-civil war that will keep the country in a state of continual upheaval." And then, finally comes this: "In this coming War which is by no means far off, England will be attacked in all her Mohammedan possessions. She will give India her freedom, but religious warfare will rend that country from end to end until it becomes equally divided between the Mohammedans and the followers of the Buddha."<sup>40</sup>

It is a little strange that Cheiro should refer repeatedly to the "followers of Buddha" in India; perhaps, he meant Hindus by this phrase, or perhaps he shared the general Western ignorance about oriental religious systems. His statement also implies that Muslims made up half the population of India. Was it lack of information or just carelessness? If it was ignorance, it is astonishing in a man who knew the future; though the ability not to know the present should prove no bar to predicting the future.

However, the reader may choose to read in these words whatever he wants. Whatever scientific principles the astronomer or the palmist may claim for his practice, prediction is not history and forecasts are not arguments. Nor should the inclusion of Cheiro in this chapter be taken to mean that I subscribe to the truth of the arts or sciences Cheiro practised. The search for the origins and development of an idea leads one to innumerable directions, to highroads and by-ways made by many hands, and it is one's duty to describe each one of them. If a purely rational standard were to be applied to the selection of testimony, several so-called historical suggestions would turn out to be nothing more than plain hunches and intuitions, basically not far removed from predictions and forecasts. For, what is a wish but a prediction dressed up in a bit of logic!

### The First Aligarh Scheme (1925)

To return to the solid ground of contemporary politics, let us look at the next suggestion made by the Indian Muslims in the direction of separation or partition. According to one report, some

teachers and students of the Aligarh Muslim University prepared a scheme of partition in 1925. It is said to have been aimed at the creation of a separate state. Among those who were responsible for drafting it were Dr Syed Zafar Hasan, pro Vice Chancellor and head of the department of philosophy (who led the team), Raghob Ahsan, Dr Burhan Ahmad Faruqi, Dr Afzaal Qadri, Dr M M Ahmad and Syed Amiruddin Kidwai (who worked as secretary to the group). A pamphlet embodying the proposal was prepared and distributed on the occasion of the celebrations of the jubilee of the university and also at that year's annual session of the Muslim League.

It began by drawing attention to the real nature of the Hindu-Muslim problem which, it was stated, was not merely a question of cow killing but covered such issues as Hindi Urdu controversy, share in public services, separate representation through separate electorates, observance of religious rites, and the system of government suitable to India. These were proving to be obstacles in the way of unity, and the proposal being presented was intended to solve the problem. It was suggested that a commission composed of Hindus and Muslims should consider the scheme and try to reach an agreement which could then be placed before the government as a national demand.

The suggestions made were: India should be re-arranged on the basis of a new theory of nationality. For example, Muslims should be given the NWFP, the Punjab, Sind and Bengal. Rules should be framed in order to protect the minorities' freedom of religious observances and their right to a share in public employment. Further, in view of their political and national importance they should be given certain special centres: Amritsar and Ludhiana for the Sikhs and Sialkot for the Christians. In the United Provinces, which is the centre of Muslim culture, necessary arrangements should be made to safeguard Muslim interests. Transfer of population should be facilitated so that people finding themselves in minority areas may migrate to places where their community is in a majority.<sup>41</sup>

The reader will notice how closely the proposal follows the details, even the phraseology, of Bilgrami's scheme. It will be recalled that Bilgrami's article of 1920 was reprinted as a pamphlet in 1925 from Aligarh.

The author of this report calls the plan the "Aligarh Scheme"

and dates it in 1925. We know that a scheme bearing this title was prepared by two Aligarh teachers, Dr. Syed Zafar Hasan and Dr. Afzaal Qadri, and published in 1939 (it is studied in chapter 12). But the details of this 1939 scheme differed in several important respects from what has been described above. It is not possible to discover if our source is talking about the later scheme under the wrong impression that it was issued in 1925: it looks as if he is, because he says that this scheme was referred to by Rajendra Prasad in his *India Divided*, Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan in his *Martial Law se Martial Law tak* and Khaliqzaman in his *Pathway to Pakistan*. But all these writers have talked about the 1939 scheme. The confusion might have been removed if we knew for certain that he had merely mistaken the date and that 1925 should read as 1939. But the account of this scheme appears between those of other pre-1925 schemes and just before that of Lala Lajpat Rai's. Moreover, the 1925 scheme, as described here, does not advocate complete separation or the creation of a Muslim state. Though the author began with the statement that a scheme for a separate state was presented at Aligarh in 1925, he ended the account with the bland statement that nowhere in it is to be found the theory of a division of India and that actually it aimed at a united central government. Thus the confusion is about schemes, not about dates.

It is possible that the Aligarh dons prepared such a scheme in 1925 as the first stage of their thinking on the future of Muslim India, and that it was only later that they were convinced that partition offered the only solution, and said so in their new scheme of 1939. But there is no reference to their 1925 plan in the later scheme, nor has anybody else mentioned it.

### Sayyid Sardar Ali Khan (1928)

Barring the years 1938 and 1939, if any one year is to be singled out as showing the greatest public interest in the idea of Muslim separation it must be 1928. At least seven references reflecting Muslim feeling of insecurity and search for a solution can be discovered in these twelve months. Some of them contain suggestions which, after what we have recorded of previous years, seem out of date; others keep pace with the tenor of events and point more confidently to what was to come. All deserve a brief glance.

Sometime in 1928 was published in London a book called *The Indian Moslems* by someone who wrote under the pseudonym of "An Indian Mahomedan". The identity of the author, who had already written a volume on *British India from Queen Elizabeth to Lord Reading*, was disguised by the publisher in a note saying that "the writer of this work is an Indian Nawab holding a responsible official position". For some years the anonymity was maintained successfully, but now we know that he was in fact Nawab Sayyid Sardar Ali Khan of Hyderabad Deccan.

In *The Indian Moslems* he concerned himself with the problem of Muslim fears and insecurity but did not suggest a partition or division. He did not even refer to a physical separation, which was by now a familiar idea.

However, he did speculate on a possible "subdivision" in one passage: ". . . and no doubt if India ever comes again to be subdivided, as was her usual lot before the Mogul arrived, they [Muslims] will be entitled to obtain their share in a general partition. But it would not be in any India that preserved its unity. In default of British control, resigned in weariness or disgust, that unity could only be revived and sustained by the Muslims recruited as they would be by their kinsmen and co-religionists from the regions beyond the north-west frontier. It is the appreciation of these facts, which do not seem to be understood by English politicians, and the consciousness of their own worth and dignity that makes the Muslims of India so tenacious of their rights, so resentful of their attempted infraction by races for whom, in the historical sense, they can only feel contempt and derision. To tell them that the Hindus are to be the future masters of India inspires them with wonder as to the mental calibre of the persons who can credit such fairy-tales. Not only are the Muslims fully conscious of their innate power, but the Hindus have not been so completely imbued with the indulgence of their newly developed megalomania as to be unaware of it, or to persuade themselves that a purely numerical total has ever sufficed to support a sway. If so, lions would have no chance among sheep. It is the sense of this inferiority—for it is nothing else—that makes the Hindus so clamorous and energetic in urging the British public, and the leaders of that public, to suppress and humiliate the Muslims and to regard themselves as the sole spokesmen of India.

He also believed firmly in the two-nation theory: "Within the

frontiers of India live two nations, the Muslims and the Hindus, which entertain for each other the same feelings as do, for instance, French and Germans, and who differ from one another more profoundly than any two nations in Europe."<sup>43</sup>

He made two or three points which were new or were given a new emphasis. "Concessions to Hindus, direct or indirect, must be accompanied and balanced by corresponding concessions in just proportion to Muslims, so that their relative position shall remain undisturbed and the same. This will be the foundation on which Muslim opinion in India will stand."<sup>44</sup> This was, in other words, a demand for treating the Hindus and Muslims as equals and bringing the majority and the minority on a par. He made it clearer a few pages later. ". . . the classification of the Muslims as a minority is based on many fallacies. In common fairness and just proportion, the Muslims should be placed on an absolute equality with the Hindus. That is, perhaps, the only sure way of obtaining full justice for the followers of Islam."<sup>45</sup>

One minor point that he made betrayed the utter impossibility of the Muslims ever reposing any trust in the Hindus. The demand for a proportionate quota in public services was already a commonplace. He now demanded that all British officers working in India should debar their Hindu subordinates from submitting personal reports on Muslim candidates for employment. This should only be done by their Muslim subordinates.<sup>46</sup> If mutual confidence was at such a low ebb the chances of political co-operation and common, undisturbed living were indeed remote. From such premisses, rooted in everyday experience, it was not difficult to build a case for a complete separation.

### Srinivasa Sastri's Report (1928)

The fact that by 1928 Muslim thinking on partition had come to be acknowledged by Indian opinion in general is borne out by a statement made by Srinivasa Sastri in that year, in which he is reported to have said that "the Muslim demand for the creation of autonomous Muslim States along the north-west border is actuated by a desire to acquire means of exerting pressure in emergencies on the Government of India".<sup>47</sup> By "autonomous Muslim States" here Sastri could not have meant independent states, for why should there have been in existence a Government of India

after the sub-continent had been divided and freed? Nor could he have been referring to pressure on an independent and sovereign India's government, for how could such a government be open to the pressure of neighbouring countries? His use of the word "autonomous", instead of sovereign or independent, also points the same way. He was obviously referring to Muslim wishes to enjoy complete autonomy in their own provinces.

### *The Times Report (1928)*

However, Sastri's statement faithfully reflects contemporary Muslim opinion. Another source, which cannot be dismissed as uninformed or biased, not only confirms it but actually goes beyond it in explanation of Muslim ambitions.

In March 1928 "a correspondent in India" sent a dispatch to *The Times* containing his view of the situation. "Throughout not only the Punjab, but also the valley of the Indus and its tributaries", he wrote, "there is a practical vision of a constructive future, based on history. This is the vision of effective Muslim rule. From Sind to Lahore and Peshawar this vision is near and clear; in the South it is an abstraction. . . . The Muslims—urban and rural—are practically solid in the intention to co-operate with the Royal Commission<sup>48</sup> for the presentation of their claims for a dominant position in the Punjab proper, the extension of representative institutions to the NWFP and Baluchistan, and the separation of Sind from Bombay. These claims are obviously controversial even in matters of comparative detail, but the motive behind them is of world significance. . . . Once the claims put forward are implemented there would come a move for augmentation of the present Delhi enclave into a major administration, by transferring to it the predominantly Hindu districts of the Eastern Punjab which adjoin it. From the point of view of a common culture and administrative convenience such a step would find many supporters, and it is thoroughly practicable. We should then have a solid Muslim *bloc* from the Peshawar valley to the mouths of the Indus. Its supporters hold that this policy is practicable, and that it not only secures the interests of the Muslim majority in the area immediately affected but is the best—in fact, the only—constructive plan for guaranteeing safe development to an independent Hindustan. . . . Established as they wish to be, the Muslims

of the North would view with comparative unconcern the efforts of Hindustan to develop self-government on lines compatible with Brahmanism. Their position of strategical predominance would enable them to assure fair treatment to the minorities of their own religion in the other provinces. . . . It is not to be supposed that things will work out immediately just as the Muslim leaders would wish. It does not seem logical, however, or compatible with our avowed intentions towards India to discountenance out of hand a plan which is constructive and contains many elements of a practicable structure."<sup>49</sup>

The whole, they say, is more than the sum of several parts. In the foregoing pages we have been looking at individual minds cogitating on the Muslim problem and at individual schemes and plans presented to solve it. But here, in this dispatch, we have the first general picture of Muslim aspirations. Partly it was the passage of time which had brought together the various threads of the argument, partly it was the cumulative effect of many political moves on the Indian chess-board which had brought separation into focus, and partly it was the appointment of the Simon Commission which had forced the Muslims to co-ordinate and clarify their aspirations. Undoubtedly, there were still many schools of thought among them. The long march to Pakistan had not yet begun. The Muslim League had yet to give its official blessings to the two-nation theory and to the demand for partition. But the process, it seems, had begun. The stirring of the mind always precedes the formulation of demands. Public opinion is first moved and moulded and then comes the final act of embodying the wishes in specific terms.

The great merit of this dispatch is the generality of its observation. By moving among people, attending political meetings, talking to leaders and reading newspapers, the correspondent was able to draw the broad lines of Muslim policy. And the canvass presented an entirely new scene.

What did Muslim India want? And why did it want it? It was seeing the vision of an effective Muslim rule in its own areas. It saw in it not only a secure and constructive future, but also a fulfilment of the historical process. The Punjab could be split because a province with so narrow a majority would be but a liability. Let there be one solid Muslim country from beyond Peshawar up to Karachi. It would be a fortress as well as a haven of peace. Not

only would the Muslims thus find themselves again and live a life of their own, but this would also leave the Hindus free to pursue their own ideals in their own way without the political necessity of dragging the unwilling Muslims in their wake. The strength and internal coherence of the Muslim *bloc* would be a guarantee that the Muslims left behind in Hindudom were not ill treated. The prospects for achieving this end were not brilliant; but neither were they dark and remote. Things were moving fast—how fast is only now clear in perspective—faster than men had hoped, even faster than their thoughts. They were to gather even greater speed as some politicians made mistakes and others gained by them, as the contradictions of British policy became apparent, as the comforting prospect for a united India receded into oblivion as it had always receded during its long history, as the stirrings of the Muslim soul reached that highest note where music ends with a crashing throb and leaves the heart ready to achieve the impossible, and as a leader of iron resolution emerged to lead his flock to the summit of freedom.

### Ashraf Ali Thanawi (1928)

But, let us leave aside the contemplation of historical future and once again step into the confusion of historical evidence. A claim has recently been made that in June 1928 Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanawi suggested the establishment of a separate Muslim state in India.<sup>50</sup> Here is another example of an important statement being made without any supporting proof or quotations from the original source. It is not impossible that the Mawlana, a very well-known theologian and a widely revered figure, made such a suggestion in the course of a public utterance or a private conversation or a letter to a friend or a follower which has not been published. Considering the contemporary trend of thought in Muslim politics, it is quite probable that he might have done so. But we must have definite information and at least some details before accepting the claim as a fact and examining the nature and scope of the proposal.

### The Aga Khan (1928)

In 1918 the Aga Khan had sketched a plan for a huge South

Asian Federation with India at its heart. The future of Islam in India had no central place in his scheme of things, and he had mainly adopted the principle of territory in the shaping of its structure and the principle of loyalty to the British empire in the formulation of its politics. It speaks well of the transformation in Muslim opinion in India that ten years later he was recommending a substantially different plan in which religion and history took the place of territory as guiding principles, and the setting up of a Muslim state was indicated (though not demanded). The imperial connection with Britain was still retained and the ruling power again received a warm tribute of devotion.

Apart from the sweeping force of events which had the strength of thawing the chill off the most devoted conservatives, the immediate cause of this change in the Aga Khan's views was the publication in India of the Nehru Report. This handiwork of the Congress and its supporters had steadfastly and totally refused to see any change in Muslim politics which merited notice. The framers of the Nehru Constitution had, with studied arrogance and incredible shortsightedness, dismissed from their consideration all Muslim safeguards which were by then a part of the established arrangements and hardly open to renewed controversy. They had also rejected the Muslim demand for a genuine federal structure, not realizing in the zeal of their "nationalist" faith that Muslims were already on the point of forsaking federalism and embracing partition.

The Aga Khan took the pre-1914 Bavaria as his model for framing the future arrangements in India. "Each Indian province", he said, "must enjoy to the full the freedom and independence" of old Bavaria. The provinces would thus be converted into "Free States", resembling the self-governing British dominions, and "ultimately held together by the bond of Monarchy, represented by the present British Sovereign and his heirs". The existing provinces were not to be accepted as entities for this treatment. Extensive re-casting and regrouping were called for, and this was to be done on new principles. "Each free state would be based, not on considerations of size, but on those of religion, nationality, race, and language—plus history." Then he specially referred to the Muslim areas and looked forward to a state of their own. ". . . the Muslim provinces of the North and the West would probably coalesce and make one important free state". He made it clear that these free

states were not going to make up an Indian federation that would not have been a very novel idea, and events and convictions had already rendered it obsolete. "The free states would not be mere provinces with Legislatures and Executives liable to be overruled by a Central Government in which the Hindus would have a permanent majority. They would be secure from all kinds of interference, except in matters in which they would be freely associated with the other states."<sup>51</sup>

Evidently the Aga Khan had made a long journey since 1918. This is the most radical plan we have so far got from any influential Muslim figure. Its radicalism is also its realism. It ought to be remembered that in 1928 India was not a federation. Federalism had first been suggested as a possible solution of Indian diversity by Edwin Montagu in the report he had prepared with Lord Chelmsford in 1918. Several Muslims were currently demanding a federation—a true federation which would safeguard provincial autonomy. Another seven years were to pass by—a long time in this period of swift change—before a federation would be ready, and another two before it would be partially implemented.

The great merit of the Aga Khan's proposal is that it looked beyond the coming federation and fixed its gaze on a loose alliance which could be so loose as to be non-existent. In practical terms India was to be divided into a number of near-independent states. Some of them would combine together to make a large state. All of them would be associated in an alliance, but this association was to be free and only in those matters which were willingly and voluntarily put into the pool by each free state. It is implied that once British rule had withdrawn, this alliance would cease to function.

From the narrower point of view of discovering the origins of the Pakistan idea the Aga Khan proposal came very near to it. Once the principle of the creation of free states had been established and put to work, he thought it probable that the Muslim provinces in the north-west would merge to make a large free state. This is more than Iqbal was able to foresee in 1930. But both he and the Aga Khan did not mention the east. In the case of the Aga Khan, perhaps there was no point in making a specific reference to eastern India because under his principle Bengal would be a free state, and obviously with a Muslim majority.

## A New Delhi Province (1928)

*The Times* dispatch of March had referred to certain plans for converting Delhi into a larger administrative area. Its author must have been privy to some inside information, for it was reported in early September from Delhi that a resolution sent to the Delhi Municipal Committee for consideration suggested a garden party hosted by the Committee to entertain the Viceroy and to present addresses to him and the Chief Commissioner of Delhi. Both addresses would urge the creation of a proper and larger Delhi Province, having the same form of government as that enjoyed by other provinces.<sup>52</sup>

Ten days later it was reported from Delhi that for some time past a committee consisting of representative citizens of the city had been engaged in drawing up a scheme for the extension of Delhi province. This scheme was accepted at a meeting held on 17 December, and would be presented at a public meeting to be held in the town hall on the 18th. It recommended the formation of a province consisting of the existing enclave together with the Agra, Rohilkhand and Meerut divisions of the United Provinces and the Ambala division of the Punjab. The projected province would have a population of about 18 million, the majority of which would be Hindu; Muslims would number about 22%.

It was argued that such a province would create a homogeneous and united area with common linguistic, cultural and historical ties. Figures had been worked out to show that it would be financially self-supporting. In terms of communal proportion, the creation of this province would reduce the Hindu population of the Punjab by 10%, thus making the latter a fully Muslim majority province. The Muslim population of the United Provinces would be reduced by about 2%, which would not have mattered much as the existing ratio of Muslims was very low. The framers of the scheme claimed that "it will constitute a strong buffer province between the predominantly Mahomedan NWFP and the Punjab, as it will then be, on the one side and the predominantly Hindu United Provinces".<sup>53</sup>

Nothing came out of the suggestion. The last sentence of the report is interesting for its implications. Provinces are not international entities which can serve as buffers between two hostile states. Creating a buffer province between the Muslim north-west

and the rest of Hindu India could only mean one thing: contemplating a future division of the sub-continent on religious lines. Still several questions occur to mind. Would a buffer province with a 22% Muslim population not create complications for the new Hindu India? Should a buffer province contain nearly a quarter population of an "alien" people? How could the new province ease the relationship between the two future Hindu and Muslim independent states? Whatever the answers to these questions, the suggestion was a clear pointer to the direction of a partition of the Punjab. Even without counting future gains, the exclusion of the Ambala division from the Punjab would have given the Muslims of the province a comfortable and assured majority which would have brought them considerable security and peace of mind.

### F.K. Khan Durrani (1928)

In going beyond federalism and in indicating a more far-reaching and realistic approach, the Aga Khan was reflecting Muslim opinion more accurately than were the Muslim party leaders of the time. This is further demonstrated by two firm proposals which were made soon afterwards.

Fazal Karim Khan Durrani, an Ahmadi missionary by vocation and a journalist by profession, used to edit a journal called *Muslim India* from Lahore in the 'twenties (in the 'thirties he issued another weekly, *The Truth*, from 66 Railway Road, Lahore). From the two books he published<sup>54</sup> we can see his fanatic devotion to Islam and his gnawing anxiety to be able to do or suggest something to revive its ancient glories. It is a pity that copies of his journal are no longer available, for in its columns we should be able to trace the development of his mind and the full stretch of his argument. It seems that he was an under-graduate in about 1914 for, as we have seen above, he recalled in one of his books that while in college he had heard his fellow-students talk about a Muslim state in India, and that he shared their hopes and dreams with the unbounded zeal of the young.

However, the first time that he put his plans on paper was towards the end of 1928. From *The Future of Islam in India*, which appeared in February 1929<sup>55</sup> but must have been written at least a few months before that, we find that his solution of the Muslim problem was unique in its scope and novelty. Till now

people had been trying to find a solution within the flexibility of a federal system; a few, blessed with longer foresight or convinced of the inadequacy of any political device, had pointed towards separation and urged a partition. But it was evident that division, granting that it did materialize, would fail to protect Islam in India as a whole, for it would still leave millions of Muslims in Hindu hands. A total transfer of population, embracing the entire sub-continent and touching every single Muslim, did not make practical sense. A Muslim state would have two weaknesses if one judged it by the higher standard of saving Islam in India. It could not be in itself an Islamic state since it could count a large number of non-Muslims in its citizenry. It would be a Muslim state, but that was a different matter. Secondly, it would be able to save only a portion, admittedly a large portion, of the followers of Islam in the sub-continent.

It would be quite wrong to think that these aspects of the problem did not occur to Muslim leaders: it would be a poor tribute to their common sense. They were men of ability and experience, and most of them were trained lawyers who well understood limitations inherent in constitutional contrivances. They also loved Islam and would certainly have preferred to bring into their ring of protection every Indian Muslim if it were but possible. But they were politicians who dealt with majorities and minorities, concessions and safeguards, democratic principles and electoral arrangements, administrative measures and political devices. They were not missionaries of Islam; they were Muslim politicians. They could only speak of political solutions, perhaps revolutionary in nature, but still political. To rise above the circumscribed plane of politics, to see the problem not in terms of Indian Muslims but in those of Indian Islam, to aim not at protecting a minority but at redeeming a people, to fix the gaze not at reviving a part of lost sovereignty but at recreating the past in all its puissant completeness—this was not in the power of politicians. Only a missionary, who had no end in view but the service of Islam and no purpose in life but the advancement of his faith, could view the problem in its devout reality: that Islam was in dire peril in India, that it must be saved, and that the creation of a Muslim state in one corner of India would not help.

These must have been Durrani's thoughts for many months or may be years. Tortured by anxiety and yet buoyed by hope, he

finally came to the conclusion that Islam must once again conquer India and re-establish the suzerainty which had fallen from its grasp with the decline of the Mughals. To the advocacy of this he turned in his aptly titled *The Future of Islam in India*

For a man of such views the hopes of Hindu-Muslim unity must have sounded no more than the fancies of a silly old woman. Right in the beginning he put it down as th first premiss of his argument that "Hindu-Muslim unity is impossible".<sup>56</sup> The reasons for this, so different from those pleaded by polite and dissimulating politicians, were plain. "So long as the Hindus and the Muslims keep their separate identities, they cannot unite. The only solution of India's problem is that one of them must go. Either Islam must re-conquer Hindustan and with greater thoroughness than it did before, or Hinduism must wipe Islam off India's surface. There is no other solution possible."<sup>57</sup> Showing more realism than constitutional experts and inventors had exhibited, he commented sharply and shortly on the prospects for a state based upon a Hindu-Muslim agreement. "No state has ever in the history of the world come into being through pacts. States are based upon power, not upon pacts. The creation of a state by Hindu-Muslim unity would be a wholly new experiment in the history of the world, which will call for its success the highest morals on both sides. These do not exist and failure of the experiment is a foregone conclusion."<sup>58</sup>

Assimilation would not do. Elimination was the answer. "The true solution of the communal problem lies in the elimination of one of the two contending elements. Before independence can be achieved, one community must wipe out the other or reduce it to such helplessness that it ceases forever to count as a factor."<sup>59</sup> It needed no saying that Muslims were not prepared to be eliminated or reduced to an impotent and suppressed factor in a Hindu India. Neither their religion nor the natural instinct of self-preservation allowed such acquiescence. If the choice lay between elimination and domination, who did not know what to choose? So he finally arrived at the conclusion which was implicit in his first premiss. "For years and years I have been cherishing a dream and the time has come that I should put it before my brethren. It is the dream of a MUSLIM INDIA. I have never been a believer in Hindu-Muslim unity. . . .the events that have happened in India during the last ten years have made it plain for all who have eyes to

see that the dream of a MUSLIM INDIA is the only alternative that has been left to the Muslims of this country.”<sup>60</sup> And again, as if to emphasize the point: “The true solution of India’s problem is elimination of one of the two elements. Either the Muslims should commit suicide and remove themselves from the stage (or grow tufts of hair on their heads and become Hindus, which means the same thing) or assert themselves like Muslims and make a bid for the empire of India. There is no other alternative.”<sup>61</sup>

Of course, Durrani represents an extreme view, but one which a great many Muslims must have applauded had it been widely publicized, its impracticability notwithstanding. Even if the Hindus had not been arrogant and anxious to impose majority rule on the non-Hindus, and even if the British had not appeared to lend support to the introduction of “democracy”, Muslims would still have found themselves honour bound to favour such a point of view. It did not lie in the mouth of a believer to oppose a scheme which aimed at the glory of Islam, nor today does it create anything but admiration in the hearts of Pakistanis who had set up an independent state professedly to save as much of Indian Islam as was possible.

If Durrani’s was an extreme view, it must also be remembered that a similar outlook had found favour with the Hindus earlier. We have seen above that *shuddhi* and *sangathan* movements had appeared in the mid-twenties omens of things to come under Hindu rule when British stewardship would disappear. Besides, there had recently been other signs of expanding Hindu ambition which took no notice of national frontiers or past history when the glory of Hinduism was the object.

Four years before the publication of Durrani’s book, Lala Har Dayal, a Punjabi Hindu leader (whom we have quoted above in the opening section of this chapter), had put forth his own ideas in his *Mayrai Vichar*, which were not a whit less uncompromising than Durrani’s. In his opinion all Indians were Hindus provided that their faith sprang from the Indian soil. By this definition he at once classified all Sikhs and Jains as Hindus, and all Christians, Parsis and Muslims as non-Hindus and therefore foreigners. His plan, aiming at ensuring the future of the Hindu race, of Hinduism and of the Punjab, involved four stages. First, the Hindus must be organized on a separate platform; he called it Hindu *sangathan*. Secondly, they must run the government and administration of

India; this was Hindu *raj*. Thirdly, all Muslims of India should be converted to Hinduism in order to create national homogeneity; this was Hindu *shuddhi*. Finally, as if even a completely Hindu India was not enough, Afghanistan and the north-west frontier tribal belt must be conquered and their inhabitants converted to the Hindu faith so that the defence of India was secure; this was Hindu *expansionism*.<sup>62</sup>

It would be contrary to facts to dismiss Har Dayal as a solitary apostle of Hindu ambitions. The Hindu Mahasabha was expressing very similar opinions from public platforms throughout the country.<sup>63</sup> Then there were several individual Hindu writers and polemicists<sup>64</sup> who offered in all seriousness, as their solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem, such recommendations as would have made the Muslims Hindus in all but name, and in some cases not even in name. We have to conclude, therefore, that in the context of those times Durrani was hardly the odd man out. It would be more prudent and historically more accurate to accept him as a Muslim counterpoise to Hindu extremism. In every society and in every age there are men who inspire their people with unattainable visions, and whose idealism should be judged as an essential ingredient in the making of a nascent nationalism rather than as a vain dream. At best Durrani was an idealist who inspired the Muslims by setting his sights so high. At worst he was the equal of many a British empire-builder who deemed every part of the globe a just inheritance of the British imperial crown.

Here it is relevant to recall that to the average Indian Muslim, whose faith in Islam was sound and pure and who looked at political games as irrelevant, Durrani represented a part of that historical force which directed all human movements and which had once raised Islam from its humble origin of a small community in Medina to the level of a mighty world power. He marvelled at the strange sight of the Muslim theologians of Deoband and Farangi Mahal preaching the gospel of an "Indian" nationalism, and the religious stalwarts of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema urging Muslim co-operation with Gandhi's Congress party. In his eyes such unfaithfulness to religion was as much plain heresy as a call to national suicide. That Durrani spoke for a great majority of the Muslims is evident from the scanty following of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema and other similar organizations which chose to throw their lot with the Congress.

But the contrary is not true. The Muslim League and the Muslim Conference, the two parties which then spoke on behalf of the Muslims, did not support Durrani's views and certainly did not make them their own. This may partly be accounted for by his membership of the Ahmadiyya sect. (In the present-day Pakistan his views would be regarded as a non-Muslim's, as the Ahmadiyya followers have been declared legally to be outside the pale of Islam!). In formal political terms his influence was negligible: that is to say, no political organization owned his ideal or stood forth to publicize and defend it, nor did he himself establish a party to further his plans. But ideas have the power to mould the thinking of a people without the equipment of formal organization. In this sense his influence on the Muslim community would seem to have been considerable. It does not matter if many people did not go all the way with him in the hope of establishing a Muslim empire in the sub-continent. But what he successfully did was to draw the attention of his people to the necessity of saving Indian Islam from Hindu domination. He brought the Muslim problem into focus and made people think about it. If his own scheme was impracticable, it could at least convert some to the idea of a separate state where a part of Islam would live again in self-respect and honour. This was his great service to Muslim India, and it is sad to record that so far it has not been acknowledged.

As far as Durrani's influence on some contemporary better-known figures is concerned, we have only circumstantial evidence to go by. A fair amount of such evidence is available. To take Iqbal first, both were living in Lahore at the same time, though Durrani was younger in age. Iqbal was intensely interested in Islam and kept himself abreast of Muslim opinion. It is reasonable to assume that he was familiar with Durrani's journal, even if he might not have read it regularly. Innumerable people met him and he discussed all kinds of problems with them. Some of them may have told him about Durrani's ideas. In fact, it is not at all improbable that the two men often met, for a few years later Durrani wrote a book on Iqbal. It is certain that Iqbal had read Durrani's *The Future of Islam in India*. He was a voracious reader and this was a field in which he had a special interest. The one point they had in common was their devotion to Islam and their anxiety about its future in India. From this was born Durrani's ideal of once again enthroning Islam in the sub-continent, and from this emerged

Iqbal's 1930 suggestion for consolidating the Muslim north-west in the face of Hindu ambition. Would it be too far-fetched to assume that Iqbal was influenced by Durrani's ideas in formulating the views he expressed at Allahabad less than two years later? Durrani's book was published in February 1929; the Allahabad address was delivered in December 1930.

The point of difference between the two men is also significant. Durrani was aiming higher and wanted the whole of India to be brought under Islam. Iqbal was arguing from a shorter tether, and wanted the Muslims of the north-west to be strengthened and protected. Both started from the same premiss: how to save Indian Islam. The different conclusions reached reflect the difference in their attitudes. Durrani was a missionary, a younger man, and full of unlimited zeal. Iqbal was a philosopher, mature in intellect, and without that *political* single-mindedness which is vital for upholding a new cause. Iqbal was also a politician for several years, and it was as such that he prepared and delivered the Allahabad address. That explains more than anything else the smaller but more realizable scope of his scheme. In spite of his unfathomable love for Islam he could not have followed Durrani all the way because he was a politician speaking from a responsible platform. But he was also a poet and, had he wished, could have sung the higher ideal in verse without making himself liable to political accountability: Much could have been said in verse, where imagination soars beyond prim logic and timorous caution, and where the earthly restrictions of prose do not shackle the free mind. But Iqbal chose not to say it.

Rahmat Ali's work shows greater affinity with Durrani's ideas. We know so little about the early years of both that it is difficult to say if they had met in their youth. If both were educated in Lahore there is a possibility that they knew each other. However, speculation apart, their published words converge on some points. Both were deeply involved with the future destiny of Islam in India. While Durrani stood for an Islamic India in the sense of making India Muslim, Rahmat Ali demanded such a revolutionary re-drawing of boundaries as would result in Muslim rule over a large part of India. Both were aiming at rehabilitating Muslim sovereignty in the sub-continent: one by leaving nothing to the Hindu, the other by taking much away from him. It is easy to see a connection between Durrani's passion for saving Indian Islam and

Rahmat Ali's dislike for what he called "Indianism"; and also between Durrani's ideal of Muslim hegemony in India and Rahmat Ali's plan for a series of Muslim states scattered all over the sub-continent. Each was attempting to give the maximum scope to Islam. We know that Rahmat Ali was in Lahore from his undergraduate days till his departure for England. Probably he had read Durrani's book and had been influenced by it. If this happened, it took him a few years to formulate his ultimate scheme: his plan for the north-west state (Pakistan) in 1933 and for other states in and after 1935.

In order to avoid any misunderstanding it must be repeated that all this is speculation. But speculation is a legitimate instrument in historical reconstruction. Chronology determines the dissemination of ideas, and no rational standards are violated in indicating that an idea first expressed in 1929 had a good chance of influencing those formulated in 1930 and 1933, as also in remembering that the 1929 concept could have owed much to what had gone before. That is how one generation stands on the shoulders of the other and thus sees more and farther away.

When the Muslim League made its demand for a partition in 1940 Durrani gave it his wholehearted support and wrote a book in defence and explanation of it entitled *The Meaning of Pakistan*. But he had not given up his earlier ideal, for, as we have seen above, in 1946 he said that he was still of the same opinion. His ideal, he was now careful to say, was a long-range one. Probably he looked forward to the creation of Pakistan as a first step towards the fulfilment of a vision which had come to him in 1928-29.

### Murtaza Ahmad Khan Maikash (1928)

But we have not yet finished with the prolific year 1928. Still another demand for a Muslim state in the north-west was made in December by a Punjabi journalist, Mawlana Murtaza Ahmad Khan Maikash. In a series of four articles which appeared in the *Inqilab*, an Urdu daily of Lahore, he "stated in very clear-cut terms that the solution of [the] Hindu-Muslim problem lay in the establishment of a Muslim national homeland consisting of [the] Punjab, Sind, Baluchistan and the NWFP". *Partap*, a contemporary Hindu newspaper appearing in Urdu from Lahore, took exception to this proposal and attacked it in strong words. In

reply to this criticism, Maikash reiterated his scheme and said that the establishment of such a state "on the basis of the internationally recognized principle of the right of self-determination was the only goal for which Muslims could make sacrifices".<sup>65</sup>

This is a clear enunciation of a demand for a sovereign state in the north-west. The names of the provinces claimed make it clear that Maikash was thinking only of the western wing of what was one day to be Pakistan. There is no reference to Bengal. We don't know whether Durrani had publicly or privately expressed his views before December 1928 (he might have done so in the columns of his journal). On the published evidence available there is no doubt that Maikash's proposal came first. In the light of this, there should now be no controversy about Iqbal's not being the first to suggest a Muslim north-west. Further, Maikash's scheme was for an independent state, for so it looks from the use of the word "homeland", and from the argument of the right of self-determination, while there is much doubt if in 1930 Iqbal was arguing for complete separation and independence.

### The Silence of the Politicians

A fascinating aspect of the scene so far revealed is the stunning silence of the tribe of politicians. It is the journalists and other private individuals who are venturing into new realms of thought and voicing startlingly fresh ideas. The politicians knew very well that these radical attempts were aimed at tackling the very problem they were trying to solve. But they chose to hold their peace—a miracle of self-abnegation in a game where words matter much and silence is a sign of failure. We know of no clear reasons for this. It is possible that they still had good hopes of a Hindu-Muslim agreement; though that was a prospect which events were increasingly pushing out of sight. It is also possible that they knew the hopelessness of their attempts but were not prepared to confess their despair in public. Or, it may be that they were waiting for public opinion to show the way. They had not yet thought up a solution which could command general approval. They heard voices beckoning towards partition but were not sure if they represented the popular will. They decided to tarry a while and judge the trend of public opinion before putting their influence behind it.

This is understandable. But politics is also a game of "feelers". Unless a politician throws out an idea in order to see how others, particularly the enemies, react to it, how is policy going to make a headway? Granted that the major leaders, the top figures, might not have been able to do this "throwing", but usually this task, not altogether unpleasant, is entrusted to the second rung of leadership. It is the local or provincial politicians who are often directed by the supreme leadership to float a *ballon d'essai*. This strategy enables the national leaders to save their face if the idea proves abortive or unpopular. Such repudiation of failed "kites" by the higher leadership is a common practice in politics. What strikes one as odd is that in India all the kite flying was done by the non-politicians on their own initiative: which does not make it kite flying at all!

The politicians came round to the idea of separation very late and very hesitantly. The uttermost to which they were prepared to commit themselves at this stage was the concept of Muslim provincial autonomy. Make the provinces strong, and you will have a few Muslim strongholds which would protect a majority of the Muslim population against Hindu control and interference. Considering the schemes and plans sketched in earlier pages this outlook seems insipid and almost retrograde. But it was the limit beyond which they could not venture—yet.

### Abdullah Suhrawardy and Zulfikar Ali Khan (1929)

This comes out well in a joint opinion expressed by two Muslim politicians in 1929. In a minute of dissent attached to the Report of the Indian Central Committee (which had been appointed to co-operate with the Simon Commission), Dr. Abdullah Al-Mamun Suhrawardy of Bengal and Nawab Sir Zulfikar Ali Khan of the Punjab wrote: "If Sind, Punjab, Bengal, NWFP, and Baluchistan had their own Governments, which would necessarily be Moslem in character, with the rest of the Indian provinces having Hindu Governments, it will create a *balance of power* in India which is highly desirable."<sup>66</sup>

This was quite an advance on the hitherto generally accepted proposition that an Indian federation, if and when it came into being, would be a purely constitutional convenience without any reference to the religious affiliation of the populations of its con-

stituent units. Though Muslim politicians had been demanding strong provincial governments in a not too rigid federal system, and though the idea at the back of their minds was obviously one of Muslim consolidation, yet this is the first time that they officially came out with the idea of a "balance of power" between Hindu and Muslim provinces.

This decidedly introduced a new concept into Indian politics. The Hindu-Muslim problem was now being attacked from a new angle. In a few years it would not be difficult to convert this angle into a line of partition. In reality, the very use of the phrase "balance of power" implied that a line of demarcation had already been drawn mentally and morally. It could be transferred on to the map if public opinion gave the political leaders another push in that direction.

### Sir Ross Masud (1929)

Towards the end of 1929 (most probably at the end of November) the Governor of the United Provinces had a talk with Sir Ross Masud, the Vice-Chancellor of the Aligarh University, in the course of which Masud told the following to the Governor (as reported in the latter's communication to the Viceroy): "The differences of the Muslims with the Hindus are deep-seated, and the Muslims felt that they would be swamped in a self-governing India. Their minds are turning more and more to the idea of a federation between modernized Afghanistan with Persia in the background and with allies in the frontier independent territories. The Punjab Muslims have long been talking among themselves of a union of the Northern Punjab, Sind, Baluchistan and Afghanistan. A generation ago, a union with Afghanistan would have been regarded with horror, for the Pathan was not a very popular person in Northern India; but the memory of his raids is dying out, and at present, at all events, it seems preferable to many of them to run the risk of engaging him as an ally rather than to accept the certainty of domination by a Hinduized Central Government."<sup>67</sup>

Ross Masud was a well-informed person and what he told the Governor must have had solid foundation. His friends and colleagues would have conveyed to him the views of the community. The reference to a union with Afghanistan reflects contemporary Indian Muslim interest in Amanullah's reform movement and the

King's broadening interest in neighbouring Muslim areas.

### Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan (1929)

On the last day of 1929, Nawab Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan, who had signed the above-quoted minute of dissent with Suhrawardy, propounded the two-nation theory and demanded a separate Muslim state in the north-west and Bengal from the platform of a national organization.

Zulfiqar Ali Khan of Malirkotla was a prominent member of the Muslim League, the Muslim Conference and the Khilafat Conference. A member of the Council of State, the upper chamber of the Indian central legislature, from 1921 to 1926, and of the Indian Legislative Assembly, the lower house, from 1926 till his death in 1933, he was also for several years president of the Central Muslim Party in the Legislative Assembly. In 1928 he was appointed member of the Central Committee, in which capacity he wrote the afore-mentioned minute, and in 1931 he was nominated to the Indian Franchises Committee. In 1930 he was among the Indian delegates to the League of Nations. He was a highly educated man with a scholarly taste and a magnificent private library, and a great friend of Iqbal. Author of a number of books, including biographies of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and Sher Shah Suri, he was a generous patron of art and letters in the Punjab, and his red-bricked mansion on the Queen's Road in Lahore served as a celebrated *salon* for literary gatherings and *musha'iras*.

When AIKC held its annual session at Lahore in December 1929, the Nawab was the chairman of the Reception Committee. It was his address in this capacity, delivered on 31 December, which contained his suggestion for the creation of a separate Muslim state. It is a 62-page Urdu speech, written in a colloquial, abrupt style; but the manner does not affect the clarity.

"At this stage of Indian politics", he said, "the separation of the Ali Brothers [Muhammad and Shawkat] from Mahatma Gandhi is, in principle, the separation of the entire Muslim nation (*qawm*) from the Hindu nation, and is a practical manifestation of the reality (*haqiqat*) that the two are separate nations. The one nation is not a mere part (*hissa*) or component (*juzw*) of the other, which may be merged with it in response to any demand of present-day democracy"<sup>68</sup> The Indian question is not "a problem

of one nation, but of two permanent nations. The Muslims may be killed off or forced to emigrate from India, but politically they shall never let themselves be absorbed into or dominated by another nation. Muslims can unite with the Hindus (*ittihad kar sakte hain*); they can guarantee permanent peace with them in the shape of a strong and durable agreement; but they cannot become a part of them".<sup>69</sup>

In view of the Asiatic temperament, India could be made into a nation in only one way. "And that way is that all her inhabitants adopt one religion. It is simply (*mehaz*) impossible to have one nation until there is one religion. . . . And to achieve that, they should all, by common consent, choose and embrace one of the current faiths, or invent a new religion, and abandon their ancient faiths. But never in the past were religions born of political purposes, nor shall it happen in the future."<sup>70</sup>

After having equally rejected, in this manner, the Indian claim to nationhood—and the possibility of a Muslim merger with the Hindus, he prescribed his own solution. "But I want to put it to you that there is absolutely (*sire se*) no need to create one nationhood (*qawmiyyat*). Why can't we find such a solution of this political difficulty as will enable the two nations to enjoy separate existence without fear of absorption and annihilation, and to live a life of unity, progress and peace? Why don't all the nations, who are at present at one another's throat, agree to divide the various areas of the country in such a manner as to eliminate all Hindu-Muslim rivalries and all quarrels about separate and joint electorates? . . . I appeal to my Hindu and Sikh brethren to give up, for God's sake, their ambition to swallow up each other. This country is not too small for all of us to live in peace. . . . Let us do away, once and for all, with sectarian and national conflicts, and, after dividing the territories anew, settle down in our own separate provinces as distinct nations."<sup>71</sup>

Coming to the formation of a Muslim state or homeland, he concluded: "The freedom and progress of India depends on this: the Muslims should be given in northern India a territory containing two or three provinces, or one which could be made into one province, wherein their majority should not be less than 80%. Similarly, in eastern India, Bengal should be so divided as to leave the Muslims with an 80% ratio in the population. *The Muslims should demand a country or a homeland*, instead of asking for rights."<sup>72</sup>

The entire scope of Muslim politics in India is summed up in Zulfiqar's brief argument. The fear of Hindu rule, the impossibility of solving the Hindu-Muslim question, and the conviction of being a separate nation: all have coincided and the event is proclaimed from an important public platform.

The logic of the argument is transparent. In India the concept of nationality is based on religion. Therefore Muslims constitute a nation by themselves. If India is to be made one nation it is paramount that all Indians should adopt one faith. But this is impossible. Consequently, the Hindu-Muslim problem is beyond any solution on the basis of current assumptions of political agreement and constitutional safeguards. Physical separation is thus seen to be the only possibility.

The provinces should be re-grouped and populations exchanged. This will solve the minority-majority question and make separate electorates superfluous. The two major provinces which are centres of communal rivalry and cause of much concern are the Punjab and Bengal. Luckily the two communities are so placed in these provinces that their separation offers no insuperable difficulty. The east of the Punjab is more Hindu than Muslim, and the east of Bengal is more Muslim than Hindu. So divide the two provinces following the religious line and you would have gone a long way in tackling the communal problem. But as soon as the newly re-distributed provinces come into view a further possibility suggests itself. With a solidly Muslim Punjab lying contiguous to Sind and NWFP, which also are Muslim, a Muslim *bloc* in the north-west is automatically created. Similarly, in the east, Muslim Bengal wears the look of an area large and populous enough to stand as an independent bastion of Islam in that wing. With Muslim power and numbers thus consolidated within the bounds of two recognizable areas, the next logical step is to sever all connections with India and declare their sovereignty. To all appearances this is the path by which Zulfiqar arrived at the point where he urged his audience, and through them the Muslim masses, not to demand any more safeguards, but advance further and make a bid for the creation of a separate homeland.

It seems to have taken Zulfiqar only about a year to advance from the theory of a balance of power between Hindu and Muslim provinces to the demand for a separate state. We don't know what brought about this change. The two public proposals made imme-

diately before his own were those of Durrani and Maikash, and either might have aided his thinking (this is not to discount the possible influence of such earlier suggestions as Lajpat Rai's). There is in this address an unmistakable echo of Durrani's opinion that the only method of bringing an Indian nation into being was the conversion of all Indians to one religion which may be Hinduism or Islam. Both he and Zulfiqar saw no hope in routine developments or ordinary political methods. From this conviction Durrani travelled to the vision of an Islamic empire embracing the whole of India and making ancient grandeur live again, while Zulfiqar was impelled to demand a partition on religious lines. Similarly, it was only a little while ago that Maikash had entered a plea for a Muslim *watan* (homeland) in the north-west. Zulfiqar accepted this idea with two amendments: a division of the Punjab to make the Muslim majority effective, and the inclusion of eastern Bengal to extend similar protection to the Bengali Muslim.

To see the influence of Durrani and Maikash at work in Zulfiqar's proposal is not mere speculation. All three were Punjabis living in Lahore. Durrani's book must have caught Zulfiqar's eye for he was a reader and a scholar. The *Inqilab* was a popular Muslim daily which every well-informed public man scanned each morning, and it was in its columns that Maikash had so recently argued for a separate state.<sup>73</sup> It is extremely unlikely that Zulfiqar was unaware of Maikash's suggestion. In those days there used to be much intimacy and close touch among Muslim journalists, politicians, scholars and men of influence in general, which did not survive the coming of independence.

Zulfiqar's proposal is a landmark in another sense also. It provides conclusive evidence against the general belief that Iqbal was the first person to suggest the idea of Pakistan from a public platform. As we will see in the following three chapters, Iqbal has been credited with much that history does not warrant. Though it is very doubtful if his proposal amounted to a demand for a separate state, yet a vast majority of Pakistani writers have tried to wring the last ounce of meaning out of his words with a view to proving that he alone was the harbinger of the idea of partition.

Postponing the details of this controversy to the following chapters, the short answer is that there is no clear indication in Iqbal's 1930 address of his having proposed a partition. The more

careful historians admit that Iqbal was not the first to think of a division, but then they go on to assert that he was the first to announce it from a public platform, and that it was the first time that a prominent politician had advocated such a solution. Even these limited claims can no longer be entertained in the light of Zulfiqar's 1929 address.

The adjectives "important" and "prominent" imply value judgements and may be used as "loaded" words. But it is hard to deny that as a politician Zulfiqar cut a more prominent figure than Iqbal. He had longer experience of public life and parliamentary activity. Equally energetic in all the three Muslim organizations of his time, he was in the public eye for far longer than was Iqbal. Iqbal's fame, stature and greatness rest on achievements other than the political. In the same way, it is invidious to claim that the Muslim League was a more important party than the Khilafat Conference in the late 'twenties. The Khilafat Conference had passed its heyday a few years before, and was now but a shadow of what it had been during 1920-23. The abolition of the *khilafat* by the new Turks had thrown Indian Muslims into an unparalleled confusion and at the same time pushed into oblivion the very *raison d'etre* of the Khilafat Conference. The Muslim League, in its turn, enjoyed no greater prestige in 1930. During the Khilafat movement it had been superseded in effectiveness and policy-making by the Khilafat Conference. Later it was overwhelmed by the Muslim Conference. It was destined to shine in glory once again, but that was not to be till much later when Jinnah, on his return from England, breathed a new spirit into it. In 1930 it was a relatively unimportant, organizationally weak and politically ineffective body, whose decisions and pronouncements did not much ruffle the waters of Indian politics. According to one report the Allahabad session, at which Iqbal spoke the controversial words, was so poorly attended that the quorum of the meeting was continually threatened.

One practical standard of judging the importance of a party gathering is to look at the quality and standing of the leaders who assemble on the occasion. Their presence is bound to lend weight to the party's deliberations and influence. By this criterion the 1929 Lahore session of the Khilafat Conference provided a far more distinguished panel of participants than the 1930 Allahabad session of the Muslim League. Nawab Muhammad Ismail Khan was

in the chair, and among those who came to Lahore to attend the meeting were Muhammad Ali, Shawkat Ali, Seth Abdullah Haroon, Hāsrat Mohani, Ghulam Bhik Nairang, Shafi Daudi, and Azad Subhani; Iqbal, Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi, Shaikh Abdul Qadir and Mawlawi Mahbub Alam attended from Lahore;<sup>74</sup> Dr. M.A. Ansari was also there.<sup>75</sup> It was an uncommon gathering for the annual session of an organization which was on its last legs.

It might have been an accident which brought so many of the top leadership to Lahore. It is possible that the organizers of the Conference were just lucky. But one cannot ignore the result. Zulfiqar was speaking before an audience which contained almost every important leader of every Muslim group.

In any case, the presence of Iqbal at the meeting leaves no doubt that he had listened to Zulfiqar's proposal before writing his own Allahabad address. Even if he had neither read Durrani's book nor looked at Maikash's suggestion in the *Inqilab*, he had surely heard Zulfiqar presenting his partition scheme to the Khilafat Conference session. Iqbal and Zulfiqar were very good friends—so good that Iqbal wrote a poem on him, and he a book on the poet. It is inconceivable that the two did not discuss the partition plan either before Zulfiqar's address was delivered or later. If personal contact and intimate association influence one's thoughts and mould one's attitude, it is very probable that Iqbal was directly inspired by Zulfiqar's 1929 proposal. However one may interpret the Allahabad address, to argue that Iqbal was the first to dream of a Pakistan or that he was the first to put across his dream from an important public platform is to fly into the face of history—a movement as unpleasant as it is inelegant.

## NOTES

1. Raj Kumar Ametti, speech in Delhi, *Tej*, 20 March 1926, quoted in M. Fazl-i-Husain, *Plans of Hindu Raj*, Calcutta, 1932, p. 175.
2. See *Al-Jamiat*, 18 June 1926.
3. See Asoke Chatterjee, "Are the Muslims of Bengal Really in an Effective Majority?", *Modern Review*, August 1926, pp. 125-127; and Ramananda Chatterjee, "The Voting Strength of Our Province in Legislative Assembly", *ibid.*, October 1927, pp. 479-481.
4. Speech at Cawnpore, *Sher-i-Punjab*, 19 September 1926. See also Herman I. Arthur, *The Political Career of Motilal Nehru*, unpublished Ph. D. thesis, Columbia, 1945.
5. *CMG*, 31 December 1926.
6. Editorial, *Sudhram* (a Maharashtra paper), cited in *Wakil*, 6 February 1926.
7. Speech at a Hindu Conference at Dacca, *Partap*, 21 January 1927.
8. Pratap Singh, speech at a public meeting in Sukkher, *Tanzim*, 4 February 1927.
9. Swami Wichar Anand, *Paigham-i-Sulha*, 6 April 1927, quoted in M. Fazl-i-Husain, *op. cit.*, p. 176.
10. Quoted in *Zamindar*, 24 April 1927.
11. Prof. Ram Deo, *Guru Ganthal*, 10 June 1927.
12. *Ar̥ya Vir*, 25 June 1927, quoted in M. Fazl-i-Husain, *op. cit.*, pp. 236-238.
13. *Milap*, quoted in *Inqilab*, 7 July 1927.
14. Lala Har Dayal, in *Milap*, 23 June 1928.
15. *Milap*, quoted in *Inqilab*, 7 February 1929.
16. *Presidential Address by Dr. Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi, KCSI, CIE, LL.D., D.Lit., Barrister-at-Law, Delivered at the Annual Session of the All India Muslim League held at Lahore on the 30th and 31st December 1927*, Lahore, 1927.
17. Quoted in B.R. Ambedkar, *Pakistan or Partition of India*, Bombay, 2nd ed 1945.
18. Mohammad Isa, *Indian Muhammadans*, London, n.d., p. 5.
19. Speech at the Third Hindu Conference of Oudh, Ayodhya, quoted in *Medina*, 5 April 1928.
20. For example, Sind Khilafat Conference resolution no. 1,

- Sukkher, 27-29 October 1928, quoted in Seth Haji Abdullah Haroon, *The Constitution of the Future Commonwealth of India and the Rights of the Muslim Minority*, Karachi, 1928, p. 28.
21. K.M. Panikkar and A. Pershad (eds), *The Voice of Freedom: Selected Speeches of Pandit Motilal Nehru*, Bombay, 1961, p. 63.
  22. *Report of the All India Muslim Conference held at Delhi on 31 December 1928 and 1st January 1929*, Aligarh, 1929, p. 22. My italics.
  23. *IQR* 1928, Vol II, pp. 403-404.
  24. Quoted in "Through Indian Eyes", *TTI*, 14 March 1928.
  25. Shafaat Ahmad Khan, *What are the Rights of the Muslim Minority in India?*, Allahabad, 1928, p. 66.
  26. *Report of the All India Muslim Conference*. . . , p. 26.
  27. Speech in Karachi, *Inqilab*, 18 June 1929. On him see S. Chaturvedi, *Madan Mohan Malaviya*, New Delhi, 1972, and S.L. Gupta, *Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya: A Socio-Political Study*, Allahabad, 1978.
  28. *Hindu*, 21 October 1929.
  29. *Milap*, 27 October 1929.
  30. Shaikh Mushir Husain Kidwai, letter, *The Times*, 29 October 1929.
  31. Quoted in M.R.T. (ed), *Nationalism in Conflict in India*, Bombay, n.d., p. 186.
  32. Presidential Address at the Bengal All-Parties Conference, Calcutta, 29 December 1929, *CMG*, 2 January 1930.
  33. See J.S. Hoyland, "An Indian View of Western Civilization", *Nineteenth Century*, December 1929, pp. 757-773.
  34. Sir Azizuddin Ahmad, *The Indian Minorities*, London, n.d., pp. 2-7. Hindu-Muslim relations in the years 1925-29 are studied in considerable detail in G. Robert Thursby, *op cit.*; David Page, *op. cit.*; Y.B. Mathur, *Muslims and Changing India*, New Delhi, 1972, pp. 180-190; J.T.F. Jordens, "Reconversion to Hinduism: the Shuddhi of the Arya Samaj", in G.A. Oddie (ed.) *Religion in South Asia*, New Delhi, 1977, pp. 145-162; and F.B. Wilmot, *The Communalization of Politics in India, 1926-1930*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Duke University, 1974.
  35. His writings include *The Arya Samaj*, London, 1915; *Young*

*India: An Interpretation and A History of the Nationalist Movement From Within*, New York, 1916; *The Agony of the Punjab*, Madras, 1920; *The Political Future of India*, New York, 1921; *Ideals of Non-co-operation and Other Essays*, Madras, 1924; *Unhappy India*, Calcutta, 2nd ed 1928; and *The Call to Young India*, Madras, n.d. On him see O.P. Goyal, *Studies in Modern Indian Political Thought (The Moderates and the Extremists)* Allahabad, 1964; Lajpat Rai: *His Relevance For Our Times*, Bombay, 1966; Lala Dhanpat Rai, *Life Story of Lala Lajpat Rai*, New Delhi, 1976; Ferozchand, *Lajpat Rai: Life and Work*, New Delhi, 1978; D. Argov, *The Ideological Differences between Moderates and Extremists in the Indian National Movement*, with special reference to Surendranth Banerjea and Lajpat Rai, 1883-1919, Ph.D. thesis, University of London, 1964, pub, Bombay, 1967; and Naeem Gul Rathore, *Indian Nationalist Agitation and the United States: A Study of Lala Lajpat Rai and the Indian Home Rule League of America, 1914-1920*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Columbia, 1965. For his scattered writings see V.C. Joshi (ed), *Writings and Speeches of Lala Lajpat Rai*, Delhi, 1966, 2 vols. His autobiography in Hindi, *Lajpat Rai ki Atma Katha*, was pub in Lahore in 1932. It is not available to me at the time of writing, and I have not seen any Urdu or English tr.

36. See his articles of 30 November, and 5, 14 and 17 December 1924 in *The Tribune* of Lahore. The partition scheme is elaborated in that of 14 December.
37. In his first public speech in April 1882 at Ambala, he opposed the use of Urdu and advocated the development of Hindi as a national language; though he expressed this demand in Urdu as "he did not even know the Hindi alphabet" (D. Argov, *op. cit.*, p. 60). In 1902, he "claimed that the historical and religious unity of India embodied the basis of Hindu nationalism" (*ibid.*, p. 91). When he was deported by the Government for his seditious activities in 1907, elated Muslims sent letters of congratulation to the only British newspaper of Lahore (see *CMG*, 11 May 1907), and Muslim newspapers, like *Azad* and *Watan*, published extracts from his speeches to demonstrate his guilt of sedition (*ibid.*, 28 June 1907). In December 1909, he told the Punjab Hindu

Conference that "in the present struggle between Indian communities I shall be a Hindu first and an Indian afterwards" (*The Indian Review*, December 1909 p 932) In 1911 he revived the Hindi Urdu controversy and urged the Punjabis to boycott Urdu literature (*Zamindar*, 24 August 1911) In 1914 he was not elected president of the INC solely for the reason of his being *persona non grata* with the Muslims ("Congress Politics in 1914" *The People* 14 November 1929) In December 1924, he declared that in contrast to Hindu toleration, Islam was dogmatic, doctrinaire and intolerant As long as Islam regarded the Hindus as *kafirs* "all talk of unity between Hindus and Muslims is absurd" (*The Tribune*, 5 December 1924)

- 38 A misleading statement was made recently by a Bengali biographer of Fazlul Haq when he claimed that "in 1925" Lajpat Rai "proposed that a separate Muslim State be made in North Western India comprising Western Punjab, Frontier, Baluchistan and Sind He also visualized a similar Muslim State in Eastern India including Bengal and Assam" (A S M Abdur Rab, *A K Fazlul Haq*, Lahore, n.d., p 100) The reader will notice the misstatement (with its implications) in the second sentence
- 39 For information about these and other predictions which came true see his *You and Your Hand*, *Cheiro's Language of the Hand* and *Cheiro's Book of Numbers*, each of which went into several editions Some additional information may be found in his *Memoires*
- 40 *Cheiro's World Predictions*, pp 212-218, 166, quoted in S S. Pirzada, *Evolution of Pakistan*, Lahore, 1963, pp 113-115. In the same year, William Archbold, a former principal of the MAO College, Aligarh, foresaw "a powerful Muhammadan combination in the north-west in alliance with Afghanistan" (W A J Archbold, "Some Indian Problems", *Contemporary Review*, July 1925, p 46)
41. This account is based solely on Anwar Qidwai, "Iqbal awr Tasawwar-i-Pakistan". *NW*, 21 April 1965 I have found no other reference to it
- 42 An Indian Mahomedan, *The Indian Moslems*, London, 1928, p 21
- 43 *Ibid*, p 190

44. *Ibid.*, p. 249.
45. *Ibid.* p. 266.
46. *Ibid.* p. 267.
47. Quoted in Pirzada, *Evolution of Pakistan*, p. 117, who does not give source, occasion or exact date of the statement.
48. The Simon Commission had been appointed in October 1927 and was soon expected in India to collect views on the next instalment of constitutional reforms.
49. A Correspondent in India, "The Indian Inquiry: Punjab and the Commission", *The Times*, 14 March 1928. The author of this piece was not the regular *Times* man in India, but an "outside contributor", one J.M. Ewart (information kindly supplied by Mr. W.R.A. Easthope, editor of the *Times Archives*, in his letter to me from London, dated 8 December 1969).
50. Munshi Abdur Rahman Khan, *Tamir-i-Pakistan awr Ulema-i-Rabbani*, Multan, 1956, p. 48, and *Iqbal awr Mister*, Lahore, 2nd ed. 1956, pp. 35, 37, 39, who insists that Thanawi was the first to make this suggestion; see also Ahmad Saeed, "Hazrat Mawlana Ashraf Ali Thanawi awr All India Muslim League", *Al-Balagh*, February 1970, p. 29. For the Mawlana's political opinions and activities see his *Afadat-i-Ashrafiyya dar Masail-i-Siyasiyya*, comp by Muhammad Shafi, Deoband, 1365 A.H., and Mawlana Zafar Ahmad Ansari, *Anwar-un-Nazzar fi Athar-uz-Zaffar*, Lahore, 1388 A.H. (1968).
51. The Aga Khan, "A Constitution for India, II: Grouping of Free States: The Bavarian Model", *The Times*, 13 October 1928.
52. *CMG*, 12 September 1928.
53. *Ibid.*, 20 December 1928.
54. *The Future of Islam in India*, Lahore, 1929, and *The Meaning of Pakistan*, Lahore, March 1944, rep March 1946.
55. This is his own testimony; referring to his 1929 proposal, he wrote: "I am still of the same mind, for I believe the ultimate political salvation of India lies in Islam only. But that is a long range ideal" (*The Meaning of Pakistan*, p. 109). Quite possibly he had expressed such ideas even earlier in his journal.
56. F.K. Khan Durrani, *The Future of Islam in India*, Lahore, 1929, p. 12.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 69.
59. *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70
60. *Ibid.*, p. 85. The capitals are in the original.
61. *Ibid.*, p. 86.
62. In addition to the sources quoted in earlier notes, see I.H. Qureshi, "Hindu Communal Movements", in *A History of the Freedom Movement, 1707-1947, Vol III, 1906-1936, Part I, 1906-1928*, Karachi, 1961
63. See Indra Prakash, *A Review of the History and Work of Hindu Mahasabha*, New Delhi, 2nd ed 1952; A.S. Bhide, *Veer Savarkar's Whirlwind Propaganda*, Bombay, 1941; N.C. Banerji, *At the Cross Roads, 1885-1946*, Calcutta, 1950; S.P. Mookerjee, *Awake Hindustan*, Calcutta, n.d.; and S.V. Savarkar, *Hindu Sangathan*, Bombay, 1940.
64. For example, see M.A. Buch, *Rise and Growth of Indian Militant Nationalism*, Baroda, 1940; Swami Dharma T. Maharaj, *The Menace of Hindu Imperialism*, Lahore, 1941; Pandit Tulsi Ram Misra, *My Advice to Young Hindus*, Benares, 1908; Radhakumud Mookerjee, *Nationalism and Hindu Culture*, London, 1921, and *Akhand Bharat*, Bombay, 1945; B.S. Moonje, *Hindu National Ideals and Ways to Achieve Them*, Poona, 1943; U.N. Mukerji, *Hinduism and the Coming Census*, Calcutta, 1911; K.M. Munshi, *Akhand Bharat*, Delhi, 1942; Bhai Parmanand, *Hindu National Movement*, Lahore, 1929; Gulshan Rai, *Hindu Problem in India*, Lahore, n.d.; L.L. Sundra Ram, *Cow-Protection in India*, Madras, 1927; B.K. Sarkar, *The Futurism of Young Asia*, Berlin, 1922; S.M. Datar, *Hindus and Muslimism*, Poona, 1928; M.K. Gandhi, *Hindu-Muslim Tension*, Ahmedabad, 1924, and *To the Hindus and Muslims*, Karachi, 1942; and Philip Spratt, *Hindu Culture and Personality*, Bombay, 1966.
65. This information comes to us from A.S. Khurshid, "Origin of Pakistan: Trends-that Led to Partition", *TPT*, 23 March 1962, and his *Sahafat Pakistan awr Hind Men*, Lahore, 1963, p. 451. The series of Maikash's articles were entitled "Hindi Musalman ke liye Alag Watan" (Separate Homeland for Indian Musalmans). In a later article ("Pakistan ka Bani Kawn?"), *Mashriq*, 1 April 1964), Khurshid says that Maikash

- made this proposal "in 1929".
66. *East India (Constitutional Reforms) : Report of the Indian Central Committee, 1928-1929*, London, 1929, Cmd 3451, pp. 6-72. My italics.
  67. Hailey (Governor of the United Provinces) to the Viceroy, 3 December 1929, *Halifax Collection*, c. 125/5, quoted in Pirzada, *The Foundations of Pakistan*, Karachi, 1970, Vol II, p. xvi; also quoted from *Hailey Papers*, HYC/16, by Waheed Ahmad, *The Formation of the Government of India Act, 1935*, unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Cambridge, 1969, p. 237. On him see Khawaja Ghulam-us-Sayyidin, "Sir Ross Masud", *Kya Khub Adami Tha*, Delhi, 1966, pp. 77-86.
  68. *All India Khilafat Conference, Lahore, ka Khutba-i-Istaqbalia jo Nawab Sir Muhammad Zulfiqar Ali Khan Sahib ne Mazkurah Conference men 31 December 1929 ko Irshad Farmaya*, Lahore, 1929 (printed at the Gilani Electric Press), p.15.
  69. *Ibid.*, p. 22.
  70. *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.
  71. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
  72. *Ibid.*, p. 26. My italics.
  73. The *Inqilab* of 3 January 1930 carried the full text of Zulfiqar Ali Khan's address (M. Rafique Afzal, "Origin of the Idea of a Separate Muslim State; Nawab Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan's Lahore Address, 1929", *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, January-April 1966, p. 180 fn.). But I have quoted from the original pamphlet which is in my private collection.
  74. M. Rafique Afzal, *op. cit.*, p. 179.
  75. Rizwan Ahmad, "Allama Iqbal ka Khutba-i-Allahabad", *Jang*, 21 April 1979.

# 4

## A POET'S DREAM: 1930

### Introduction

More has been written on Iqbal than on any other Indian Muslim, ancient or modern. There is an Iqbal industry in existence which goes on producing books, articles, papers and collections of studies at an alarming rate.<sup>1</sup> The products range from the passably sophisticated and at times recondite studies of his philosophy and poetry to the most trivial articles in obscure newspapers. Every Pakistani daily issues a special Iqbal supplement on 21 April, the anniversary of his death, containing several articles of varying quality illustrated by a variety of pictures. There are some academies and societies devoted to studying his life and thought which contribute to this flow of literature. His book on the reconstruction of religious thought in Islam is a text book for the advanced students of religion and philosophy in the universities, and his poetry, in single pieces or edited selections, figures in the prescribed courses of study in every school, college and university. The anniversary of his death is a public holiday when meetings and symposia are organized in every town and city to pay him homage, and the head of state, provincial governors and some ministers issue messages to the public. Special programmes are broadcast on radio and television networks. His poems are sung on all possible occasions and functions. Many educated Pakistanis have read him, and some will quote him in writing and conversation. His portrait often appears on popular calendars which adorn shops, offices and homes. Every book shop and stall sells cheap editions of his poetry. Several roads and avenues and one university have been named after him.

There is no doubt that he is a public hero of exceptional standing, and receives an adoration which is denied to other

historical figures. It is not our business here to discover reasons for this. Every nation and country adopts its heroes and gives them the full adulatory treatment. There is always an element of dogmatism and irrationality in this hero-worship. The great man is made out to be the greatest. *Minor incidents of his life are exaggerated into legends.* A myth is created and put into the national pantheon. Criticism is condemned as disloyalty to his memory. Attempts to question the grounds of such fulsome praise are painted as perfidy. The mildest disapproval of this wild acclamation is construed as an attack on the "national ideology".

These are features common to hero-worship in every society. But what distinguishes the Pakistani sentiment is the total absence of any attempt at critical understanding. It is as if all the intellectuals have with one voice surrendered their right to seek the truth wherever it may be and are now rejoicing in the glory of this act of self-sacrifice. Experienced writers and able scholars vie with common journalists in keeping the myth aloft. The most irrational aspect of this phenomenon is the way in which Iqbal has been elevated to the level of a god or, if that description is unwelcome to a Muslim society, to that of an oracle.

He was a great poet and a great thinker. He was a great man. Because he was this, he must also have been a great politician. Therefore his political activities and pronouncements ought to be treated with the same reverence as is vouchsafed to his best poetry and ideas. Because he was a seer and a thinker, therefore his politics could not have been wrong. Because his poems shine with truth which time cannot tarnish, therefore his political ideas too are eternal verities. This is how his admirers argue; and they have persuaded the public to agree with them by using all the modern media of communication and all the tendencies for conformity in popular Islam. This transference of goodness from one field which is genuine to another which is not is not uncommon in human nature. And yet it is false in logic and common understanding. A little reflection will show the fallacy inherent in the extension of virtue. But there is no element of reflection in hero-worship, or it would not be what it is. The intolerance of criticism continues, and with it a perpetuation of false history.

Heroes and myths are a part of general history, and the objective historian will dismiss them as insignificant only at his peril. But when legends, popular images and hero-worship become

history, instead of throwing light on it, the story of the past becomes a fairy tale which amuses none save the creators of the myth. Something like that has happened to Iqbal the politician. What he actually said and did have been relegated to a secondary place. What people think he said is offered as history. His words are rarely quoted; paraphrases and interpretations occupy the centre of discussion. And the astonished critic is silenced by the admonition, which astonishes him even more, that one should not criticise such a great man (by which is primarily meant a great poet). Thus interpretations, readings, versions and theories pile upon each other while the poor original words gather dust at the bottom of a different heap.

This ignorance of fact and indifference to the original are illustrated by the nature and scope of the *Iqbaliyat* itself.<sup>2</sup> In this flood of writings on Iqbal, so faithfully and assiduously produced by a cohort of uncritical admirers, there is not a single reliable and comprehensive biography based on original sources in any language; nor is there any properly edited and annotated collection of his political writings and speeches;<sup>3</sup> nor have his private papers been collected, catalogued and made available to the scholars. The most significant political testament of Iqbal was his presidential address delivered at the annual session of the Muslim League at Allahabad in December 1930. His popular image as the first dreamer of Pakistan rests on this address. It has never been reprinted, with or without any introduction or notes, except in three or four collections compiled by people like "Shamloo" and S.A. Vahid; the reproduction is not accurate. Similarly, apart from a few articles written for the daily press and on its level, there is no serious treatment in this vast literature of Iqbal's political career or of his political ideas and opinions. The result is that students of Iqbal's politics have to rely on the second-hand and in most cases superficial and misleading studies put forth by the faithful, rather than on the original *corpus*.

In this way errors, unknowingly borrowed from others, become permanent and, over the years, come to be embodied in history as "facts". It would be unfair to give the process the name of deliberate falsification: for nobody has manufactured imaginary facts or put invented words in Iqbal's mouth. Of course, there are examples of unmistakable bias, misleading argument, and presentation of opinion as if it were a fact. But by and large history

has been killed by over enthusiasm and by a childish desire to make a very great man look even greater.

In this chapter, or in the two following it, I do not intend to offer a study of Iqbal's political career or of his political opinions. My purpose is a limited one: to discover Iqbal's place among the originators of the idea of Pakistan, and to see when and where and in what terms (and, if possible, why) he suggested a division of India and the creation of a Muslim state. In this voyage of discovery there are two major ports of call. The 1930 Muslim League presidential address is the first recorded occasion when he referred to the prospects for a Muslim India within India. Then after an interval of several years we come to his letters to Jinnah in which he suggested a separation. This correspondence will be examined in chapter 8.

The Allahabad address is our starting point for several good reasons. It is his first announcement of any importance on the subject from the platform of a national organization. It has in recent years given cause for much controversy. It is the only evidence on which his supporters base their claim that he was the first to foresee the coming of Pakistan. It contains a number of valuable ideas which repay scrutiny. Therefore, we must study this address at considerable length, and try to separate the different influences working on his mind, to compare and contrast his suggestions with those of others who were concurrently making similar proposals, and to draw some conclusions about his place in the gallery of the precursors of the idea of Pakistan.

Two points should be made right away lest an ugly misunderstanding darkens the course of this inquiry. First, the investigation will be conducted without any assumptions, prior impressions or presuppositions. No argument will be accepted as inherently true simply because it concurs with the current of popular fashion. On the other side, no point will be ignored or minimized for the simple reason that it has been put forward by those who base history on hero-worship. Everything will be made to turn on Iqbal's own words. His own arguments will be followed, no matter where they lead. If we meet any ambiguities in him, and we will, conclusions will be drawn by the stark test of reason.

In the second place, no purpose will be served by judging the present study by the standards usually adopted in viewing Iqbal as a national shrine where nothing but wreaths of a certain quality

and shape are accepted. Iqbal is a great poet, the greatest in Urdu literature and Muslim India; greater than Ghalib in the sweep of his imagination and the quality of his vision. He shakes us by making us share the tumult of his mind. He shows us the half-hidden peaks of the future destiny of mankind through the play of that wisdom which poetry shares with prophecy. He sings of the rise and fall and another rise of Islam with a lyricism which touches our heartstrings. His hopes become our expectations. His despair becomes our dismay. His music is the music of another world: a world in which Plato heard the spheres sing and saw Divinity making itself manifest. His poetry is one of the greatest that has been given to mankind to enjoy. To deny this is to deny that the sun rises at dawn. He is a philosopher of the first rank; an Islamic thinker of the quality and worth of Ghazali; a maker of some revolutionary ideas about the interpretation of the Quran which the greatest living theologians are still in the process of understanding and digesting.

But here our concern does not lie with Iqbal the poet, but with Iqbal the Muslim League president. It is a totally different plane of activity, and it is on this plane only that he will be judged by us. If history confirms that he was as great a political hero in our annals as public opinion says he is, the fact will emerge and will be recorded. Equally, if history refuses this accolade to him, facts will set this down. The historian has done his work when he has made facts speak for themselves. It is not in his power to do more. He dare not do less.

### The Contents of the Allahabad Address

The presidential address delivered by Iqbal before the annual session of AIML at Allahabad on 29 December 1930 is, in some respects, an unusual utterance.<sup>4</sup> It is natural that each League address, from the first one given by Peerbhoy at Karachi in 1907 to the last ones by Jinnah, should bear the impress of the personality of the president and reflect the circumstances of the occasion. In Iqbal's address, however, we notice two important things. His comments derive their significance not so much from the timing of their delivery as from the personality of the speaker. The year 1930 was not one of the happiest in the history of the League. The Muslim Conference was at this time a larger, more representative

and more influential organization, and attracted more attention among the public and more consideration from the government. It is a measure of the League's declining fortunes in this period that the addresses delivered during the few years before and after 1930 were undistinguished, and today few people would be able to recall the names of the presidents of these lean years. The value of the Allahabad address lies not in the occasion but in the man.

The other unusual feature is contained in the substance of the first part of the address. Iqbal did not ignore contemporary developments, no president of a party could do this. But in the earlier portions of his speech he tried to see beyond tomorrow, and related the situation and problems of the Indian Muslims to the historical march of Islam. At the same time, he indicated the dangers inherent in accepting European doctrines and assuming that Islam was bound to repeat the experience of Christianity since its crisis of the Reformation. He was the first Muslim League president to stress the role of Islam in moulding the character of the Indian Muslims and also in determining their future destiny. There are passages which read like extracts from an academic discourse and appear out of place in a party pronouncement. But Iqbal was a Muslim and a thinker before he was a Muslim Leaguer. Ideas were the medium which he used to communicate with people. He could not, as the president of a political party, avoid completely making political demands and formulating political propositions of a practical nature: he did this in the second half of the address. But the abiding interest of his words lies in his description of the creative role of Islam in the evolution of the Indian Muslim society, and in his attempt to seek a place for this society in a plural India.

The 22-page address begins with the usual show of modesty at being called upon to fill a great office: a conventional gesture of respectable antiquity. Then abruptly he warns the audience against the unusual tenor of what he is going to tell them. "I have given the best part of my life to a careful study of Islam: its law and polity, its culture, its history, and its literature. This constant contact with the spirit of Islam, as it unfolds itself in time, has, I think, given me a kind of insight into its significance as a world-fact. It is in the light of this insight, whatever its value, that, while assuming that the Muslims of India are determined to remain true to the spirit of Islam, I propose, not to guide you in your

decisions, but to attempt the humbler task of bringing clearly to your consciousness the main principle which, in my opinion, should determine the general character of these decisions.”<sup>5</sup>

Having thus administered a fair warning he directly goes to the heart of the problem as he understood it. Islam, as “an ethical ideal plus a certain kind of polity”, has been “the chief formative factor in the life-history of the Muslims of India”. It has given them those “basic emotions and loyalties” which unify individuals and make them into a “well-defined people, possessing a moral consciousness of their own”. He believes that “India is perhaps the only country in the world where Islam, as a people-building force, has worked at its best”. The structure of Indian Islam as a society “is almost entirely due to the working of Islam as a culture inspired by a specific ethical ideal”. This society owes its “remarkable homogeneity and inner unity” to “the presence of the laws and institutions associated with the culture of Islam”.<sup>6</sup>

In his opinion the great danger threatening the stability and coherence of this society is the impact of European political thinking. Ideas from the West are “rapidly changing the outlook of the present generation of Muslims both in India and outside India”. He complains that “our young men” are anxious to see these ideas “as living forces in their own countries” without realizing that they had emerged in Europe under European conditions and from European causes. In Europe Christianity was taken to be a purely monastic order, not a system of polity of a secular nature, and Luther had revolted against this church-organization. The result was that “the universal ethics of Jesus” was displaced by several “national and hence narrower systems of ethics”. Thus the “one” was broken up into “a mutually ill-adjusted many”. The human outlook gave way to the national, which demanded and received for its accommodation a system of polity based on national lines—lines “which recognize territory as the only principle of political solidarity”. Given the European conception of religion as a “complete other-worldliness” what had happened was quite natural. As a consequence, we find that in Europe today religion is considered a private affair of the individual, one to be kept out of his temporal life.<sup>7</sup>

What happened to Christianity in Europe cannot happen to Islam because Islam does not divide the unity of man into spirit and matter. “In Islam God and the universe, spirit and matter,

church and state, are organic to each other." For Islam "matter is spirit realizing itself in space and time". It is the mistaken separation of the spiritual and the temporal which has moulded European political thought and excluded Christianity from the life of European states. A Luther in the world of Islam is "an impossible phenomenon", because it has no church-organization inviting a destroyer. It is a universal polity whose fundamentals "are believed to have been revealed", but whose structure stands today "in need of renewed power by fresh adjustments".<sup>8</sup> He does not know "the final fate of the national idea in the world of Islam", but he knows that today the national idea "is racializing the outlook of the Muslims" and this "racial consciousness" may produce standards different and even opposed to Islam. But he is not despaired of Islam "as a living force for freeing the outlook of man from its geographical limitations". He believes that "religion is the power of the utmost importance in the life of individuals as well as states" and, finally, that "*Islam is itself Destiny* and will not suffer a destiny!" The problem of nationalism in Islam is a living problem on a proper solution of which alone "depends your future as a distinct cultural unit in India".<sup>9</sup>

In the second section of the address, entitled "The Unity of an Indian Nation", Iqbal gives his own answer to this problem. This is the most important part of his address for it has a direct bearing on his belief or the lack of it in the possibility and practicability of the existence of a separate Muslim nation in India, and consequently in the creation of a separate Muslim state.

The question he sets out to answer is phrased by him thus: "Is it possible to retain Islam as an ethical ideal and to reject it as a polity in favour of national politics in which religious attitude is not permitted to play any part?" The inquiry assumes additional importance in India where the Muslims are in a minority. The proposition that religion is the private affair of an individual has no sanction in the Quran. The religious ideal of Islam is "organically related to the social order which it has created". 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". Then he quotes Renan on the making of a national feeling, and finds that by his definition India is not a nation. The various religious and caste groups "have shown no inclination to sink their respective individualities in a large whole".

The unity of the Indian nation cannot, therefore, be sought in Renan's "moral consciousness". But it "must be sought, not in the negation, but in the mutual harmony and co-operation of the many". It is "on the discovery of Indian unity in this direction that the fate of India as well as of Asia really depends". "if an effective principle of co-operation is discovered in India it will bring peace and mutual good-will to the ancient land which has suffered so long, more because of her situation in historic space than because of any inherent incapacity of her people."<sup>10</sup>

So far all attempts to seek a principle of internal Indian harmony have failed. But Iqbal is still hopeful and sees in the events a tendency "in the direction of some sort of internal harmony". Then he makes a firm announcement. "I have no hesitation in declaring that, if the principle that the Indian Muslim is entitled to full and free development on the lines of his own culture and tradition, in his own Indian homelands is recognized as the basis of a permanent communal settlement, he will be ready to stake his all for the freedom of India." Fearing that he may be branded as a communalist, he defends himself. "The principle that each group is entitled to free development on its own lines is not inspired by any feeling of narrow communalism. There are communalisms and communalisms. A community which is inspired by feeling of ill-will towards other communities is low and ignoble. I entertain the highest respect for the customs, laws, religions and social institutions of other communities. . . . *Yet I love the communal group which is the source of my life and behaviour; and which has formed me what I am by giving me its religion, its literature, its thought, its culture, and thereby recreating its whole past, as a living operative factor, in my present consciousness.*"<sup>11</sup>

Thus communalism, "in its higher aspect", is "indispensable to the formation of a harmonious whole in a country like India". India is a continent of different races, languages and religions. There is no common race consciousness. The principle of Western democracy cannot be applied to India, "without recognizing the fact of communal groups". The next sentence makes it clear that his conception of "a Muslim India within India" was a communal idea, not a national one. "The Muslim demand for the creation of a Muslim India within India is, therefore, perfectly justified." Then he refers to the resolution passed by the Muslim Conference in Delhi on 1 January 1929 as having been inspired by "this noble

ideal of a harmonious whole". He asks the session to "emphatically endorse" this resolution, and then goes on to make the famous statement which has been the cause of so much controversy. "Personally, I would go further than the demands embodied in it. *I would like to see the Punjab, NWFP, 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.*"<sup>12</sup>

In reply to the objection against such a state, raised by the Nehru Committee before which such a proposal was, he says, put, that it would be too unwieldy, Iqbal agrees that its size might be unmanageable, but argues that in population it would be smaller than some of the existing Indian provinces. He then suggests, presumably in order to meet the criticism of the Nehru Committee, that the Punjab be divided by the exclusion of the "Ambala division and perhaps some districts where non-Muslims predominate". This will make the state less extensive and more solidly Muslim.<sup>13</sup>

Then follow his arguments in favour of the re-distribution he has suggested. "The life of Islam as a cultural force in this country very largely depends on its centralization in a specified territory." It "will intensify their sense of responsibility and deepen their patriotic feeling". Thus "possessing full opportunity of development within the body-politic of India, the North-West Indian Muslims will prove the best defenders of India against a foreign invasion, be that invasion the one of ideas or of bayonets". He denies Srinivasa Sastri's allegation that the demand for autonomous Muslim states was actuated by a desire to acquire means of exerting pressure in emergencies on the Government of India, and says that it is inspired "by a genuine desire for free development which is practically impossible under the type of unitary government contemplated by the nationalist Hindu politicians with a view to secure [sic.] permanent communal dominance in the whole of India". To the Hindus who might foresee "a kind of religious rule" in these autonomous Muslim states, he replies by repeating what he has said about Islam in the earlier part of the address. Islam is not a church but a state "conceived as a contractual organism" and "animated by an ethical ideal which regards man not as an earth-rooted creature, defined by

this or that portion of the earth, but as a spiritual being understood in terms of a social mechanism, and possessing rights and duties as a living factor in that mechanism".<sup>14</sup>

After thus disposing of all Hindu objections and fears to his apparent satisfaction, he reiterates his proposal in clear terms. "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 mobilize 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."<sup>15</sup>

The rest, which is the bulk, of his address is devoted to a discussion of the kind of federation he wants, the kind Sir John Simon had suggested in his report, and the kind the Round Table Conference was envisaging.

His own conclusion is unambiguous. "Thus it is clear that in view of India's infinite variety in climates, races, languages, creeds and social systems, the creation of autonomous states, based on the unity of language, race, history, religion and identity of economic interests, is the only possible way to secure a stable constitutional structure in India." The federal system suggested by the Simon Report involves two basic changes: the substitution of the existing central assembly with a legislature containing representatives of federal states, and "a redistribution of territory on the lines which I have indicated". This re-distribution must come before the federation is created, so that the controversy about separate electorates is given the final quietus. If the provinces are re-arranged as suggested, Muslims would be content with territorial electorates, and a great issue of friction would disappear for ever from Indian politics.<sup>16</sup>

What is the nature of the federations being proposed by the Hindus and the British? The Hindus want to retain a strong central authority which would be responsible to a central legislature in which, with the abolition of the nominated element, their majority would be further reinforced. The British, on the other hand, fearing that democracy in the centre would not be conducive to their interests want the experiment of democracy to be shifted from the centre to the provinces. The Muslim attitude is quite different from these two. "The Muslims demand federation

because it is pre-eminently a solution of India's most difficult problem, i.e., the communal problem." Thus the Simon Report "virtually negatives the principle of federation in its true significance". By perpetuating a Hindu majority in the central assembly the Nehru Report gives India a unitary form of government in which Hindus would dominate all India. By creating an unreal federation the Simon Report retains the existing British dominance. Both these alternatives are unacceptable to Muslim India. "To my mind a unitary form of government is simply unthinkable in a self-governing India." The residuary powers must be left "entirely to self-governing states", and the "Central Federal State" will exercise only those powers which have been expressly vested in it by the free consent of the federating states.<sup>17</sup>

The issue of introducing a federal system in India had taken quite a different turn when at the Round Table Conference the Princes had surprisingly and unexpectedly announced their willingness to enter an Indian federation. The Hindu delegates, who till then had been uncompromising advocates of a unitary system, had at once changed their mind and begun to subscribe to the federal solution. The happy reception of the Princes' announcement by the British and Hindu delegates was a natural reaction and easily intelligible. The entry of the native states will have a double purpose. It will maintain British power in India practically untouched. On the other hand, because of the very small number of Muslim states, it will give to the Hindus an overwhelming majority in the federal legislature. It is clear that the Hindu-Muslim disagreement on the ultimate form of government is being cleverly exploited by the British through the agency of the Princes who, in their turn, see in the proposal much better prospects for the maintenance of their despotic rule. The acceptance of any such scheme by the Muslims will "simply hasten their end as a political entity in India". It is not difficult to see how such a federation would operate in practice. The Princes, a solid phalanx in the future parliament, will support the British in all matters of imperial concern and side with the Hindus in all matters of internal administration. "In other words the scheme appears to be aiming at a kind of understanding between Hindu India and British imperialism—you perpetuate me in India, and I in return give you a Hindu oligarchy to keep all other Indian

communities in perpetual subjection." For the Muslims this can have but one lesson "If therefore the British Indian provinces are not transformed into really autonomous states, the Princes' participation in a scheme of Indian federation will be interpreted only as a dexterous move on the part of British politicians to satisfy, without parting with any real power, all parties concerned—Muslims with the *word* federation, Hindus with a majority in the centre, and British imperialists—whether Tory or Labourite—with the *substance* of real power." The best solution is to postpone the entry of the Princes in the federation and to make a start with a *British Indian Federation* only. This will eliminate two serious problems: the "unholy union between democracy and despotism" which will in practice keep India under the thumb of a unitary central government, and the Muslim fear of being reduced to a permanent minority in the federal legislature. The only federation the Muslims want is one in which they "get majority rights in five out of eleven Indian Provinces with full residuary powers, and one-third share of seats in the total house of the Federal Assembly".<sup>18</sup>

The prospects for a real federation also aroused another kind of fear among the Hindus and the British. With the installation of a genuine federal system and with autonomous Muslim provinces on the north-west border, the defence of that part of India would be in the hands of the Muslims. The Hindus do not like this because they mistrust the Muslims. The British might be opposed to it because of their deep concern with the future security of their stakes in India. Iqbal discusses this problem of the defence of India in some detail and then holds out an assurance on behalf of the Muslims. "I have no doubt that if a Federal Government is established, Muslim federal states will willingly agree, for purposes of India's defence, to the creation of neutral Indian military and naval forces. Such a neutral military force for the defence of India was a reality in the days of Mughal rule. Indeed in the time of Akbar the Indian frontier was, on th whole, defended by armies officered by Hindu generals. I am perfectly sure that the scheme of a neutral Indian army, based on a federated India, will intensify Muslim patriotic feeling, and finally set at rest the suspicion, if any, of Indian Muslims joining Muslims from beyond the frontier in the event of an invasion."<sup>19</sup>

The above summarizes Iqbal's view of the situation and the

solution he wanted. In his opinion, "a redistribution of British India, calculated to secure a permanent solution of the communal problem, is the main demand of the Muslims of India". This he calls "a territorial solution of the communal problem". If his own solution were to be ignored, he would "support, as emphatically as possible, the Muslim demands repeatedly urged by the All India Muslim League and the All India Muslim Conference".<sup>20</sup> These demands were: statutory majority in the Punjab and Bengal, separate electorates, residuary power with the provinces, one-third seats in the federal assembly, separation of Sind from Bombay, and full provincial status for NWFP and Baluchistan. These were the minimum demands on the fulfilment of which the Muslims would come into a federation.

The discussion of the Hindu-Muslim problem at the Round Table Conference has shown "more clearly than ever the essential disparity between the two great cultural units of India". The British Prime Minister "refuses to see that the problem of India is international and not national". "Obviously he does not see that the model of British democracy cannot be of any use in a land of many nations; and that a system of separate electorates is only a poor substitute for a territorial solution of the problem". To give to India a constitution based on the assumption that she is a homogeneous country or to apply to India principles dictated by British opinion and practice "is unwittingly to prepare her for a civil war". "As far as I can see, there will be no peace in the country until the various peoples that constitute India are given opportunities of free self-development on modern lines without abruptly breaking with their past."<sup>21</sup>

Those in charge of making a new constitution for India will ignore the Muslim entity at their own peril. "We are seventy millions, and far more homogeneous than any other people in India. Indeed the Muslims of India are the only Indian people who can fitly be described as a nation in the modern sense of the word. The Hindus, though ahead of us in almost all respects, have not yet been able to achieve the kind of homogeneity which is necessary for a nation, and which Islam has given you as a free gift. . . Nor should the Muslim leaders and politicians allow themselves to be carried away by the subtle but fallacious argument that Turkey and Persia and other Muslim countries are progressing on national, *i.e.*, territorial lines. The Muslims of India are differently situated. The

countries of Islam outside India are practically wholly Muslim in population."<sup>2 2</sup>

For Iqbal the "sole test of the success of our delegates" to the RTC is the extent to which they can extract agreement with "our demands as embodied in the Delhi Resolution" of AIMC. What will happen if these demands are not conceded? Here, for the first time in his discourse, Iqbal is inflicted with ambiguity. Perhaps the best course is to reproduce his words as they were uttered and leave our examination of them to a later place. "If these demands are not agreed to, then a question of a very great and far-reaching importance will arise for the community. Then will arrive the moment for an independent and concerted political action by the Muslims of India. If you are at all serious about your ideals and aspirations you must be ready for such an action. . . I have got definite views on the subject; but I think it is proper to postpone their expression till the apprehended situation actually arises. In case it does arise leading Muslims of all shades of opinion will have to meet together, not to pass resolutions, but finally to determine the Muslim attitude and to show the path to tangible achievement. In this address I mention this alternative only because I wish that you may keep it in mind, and give some serious thought to it in the meantime. . . I am not hopeless of an intercommunal understanding, but I cannot conceal from you the feeling that in the near future our community may be called upon to adopt an independent line of action to cope with the present crisis. And an independent line of political action, in such a crisis, is possible only to a determined people, possessing a will focalised by a single purpose. Is it possible for you to achieve the organic wholeness of a unified will? Yes, it is. . . I do not wish to mystify anybody when I say that things in India are not what they appear to be. The meaning of this, however, will dawn upon you only when you have achieved a real collective ego to look at them."<sup>2 3</sup>

### An Analysis of the Address

Alert readers of the address will not fail to notice the several loose threads which Iqbal leaves behind him along the track of his argument. Let us look at the whole thing again, this time concentrating on the course of the argument rather than its content. ~

At the outset he declares that his intention is "not to guide you in your decisions" but to bring to "your consciousness the main principle which, in my opinion, should determine the general character of these decisions".<sup>24</sup> What is this main principle? In theoretical terms it is the inevitable and vital role of Islam in the life of the Indian Muslim society. In practical terms it leads to a territorial solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem. But his acceptance of the ideal of a territorial re-distribution of India does not mean an acquiescence in the territorial concept of a nation. This is a European concept rooted in the evolution of Christianity in the West, and taking its birth in the crisis which split the European society into its spiritual and secular aspects, and ended by building an impenetrable wall between church and state. In Islam such a development and such an outcome are inconceivable. In other words, Islam does not teach or sanction territorial nationalism. But, towards the end of the address, he has no hesitation in calling the Indian Muslims a nation. This is one major contradiction in his reasoning.

One of the things on which Iqbal takes an uncompromising stand is the unique character of Islam as a combination of the spiritual and the worldly. It is as much an ethical system as a polity. It is not a religion in the ordinary sense of the word; it is a way of life. "Islam does not bifurcate the unity of man into an irreconcilable duality of spirit and matter. In Islam God and 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. To Islam matter is spirit realizing itself in space and time."<sup>25</sup> This is said to emphasize the fact that there is no place in Islam for a separation of religion and state, of things spiritual and things secular, of a private life and a public life. Yet, under his own proposal, Islam, with its singular ideals and principles, is made to reach an accommodation with Hinduism in so far as the two creeds would live together in one Indian federal state. How can Islam be a unique way of life and yet be prepared to exist in the same polity side by side with another way of life with nothing common between the two; what will happen to the ethical ideals of Islam, which are fundamental to its nature, in a state and a society where Islam will not be the only religion, in fact not even the dominating religion; is a refusal to believe in a territorial concept of nationalism suffi-

cient ground for refusing to see the consequences for Islam within a single Indian state; will the social and ethical ideals of Islam, which he accepts as an integral part of Islam, be realizable in such a state; if they are realizable, does it not make Islam far from a unique system of life; if they are not realizable, what is going to be the future of the Indian Muslim society? — these and similar other questions, which relate to the very fundamentals of his theory, not to minor details, are not faced by Iqbal. This is another important contradiction in his argument. We will return to it again in a while.

In his refusal to countenance territorial nationalism and in his appeal to the Muslims not to be taken in by fashionable Western political ideas, Iqbal's basic point is that nationalism racializes the Muslim outlook and de-humanizes Islam. Islam believes in universalism. Nationalism believes in particularism. Islam teaches the brotherhood of all men. Nationalism splits humanity into bits and pieces and ranges man against man. The adoption of nationalism will lead to the acceptance and practice of standards which are "different and even opposed to the standards of Islam"<sup>26</sup> Quite naturally and logically, therefore, he was opposed to a separate nationalism for the Muslims of India, to what we may call Muslim nationalism.

Up to this point the argument is feasible, though more academic than political and more theoretical than historical, for the *history* of Islam did not reject the national spirit and seemed to have had no use for the universal polity so nobly preached by the theologian and the theoretician. But, apart from history, Iqbal himself refutes his argument. If Muslim nationalism has no place in Islam, is there any point in declaring that the Indian Muslims are a nation, which he clearly does?<sup>27</sup> The Indian Muslims are a group of Muslims living on a certain clearly-demarcated piece of territory. To give them the designation of a nation cannot mean anything except a belief in territorial nationalism. If there is a Muslim nation in India, a Muslim nationalism (nothing if not territorial) is already there. To have a nation and to acknowledge its existence and yet to deny its nationalism is beyond the power of logic. This is yet another contradiction in Iqbal.

It is obvious to Iqbal that India is not a nation. He accepts the validity of Renan's concept of "moral consciousness", and by this criterion declares that India is not a nation. His references to the

failure of Kabir and of the divine faith of Akbar to seize "the imagination of the masses of this country" clearly show his conviction that religion is the basis of the nation. India is not a nation because "the various caste-units and religious units in India have shown no inclination to sink their respective individualities in a larger whole". But in some vague way he still seems to believe in an Indian nation. "The unity of an Indian nation, therefore, must be sought, not in the negation, but in the mutual harmony and co-operation of the many."<sup>28</sup> Thus, India is not a nation and yet it has a national unity. An added complication enters with his claim, mentioned above, that the Muslims of India are a separate nation. Such a confused picture does not encourage understanding. We will leave it at that.

The search for "the unity of an Indian nation" leads Iqbal to the most important statement of his address. This unity is to be sought in a "principle of internal harmony". This principle demands that each communal group, by which he means the Hindus and the Muslims, should have a "right to free development according to its own cultural traditions".<sup>29</sup> This, he says, is not narrow communalism. He has made communalism (a dirty word in Indian politics) respectable. Without it one cannot form "a harmonious whole in a country like India".<sup>30</sup> From this reasoning emerges his theory of "a Muslim India within India", that is, Muslim communal development within a Hindu-Muslim India.

With this we come to deeper waters. "The Muslim demand for the creation of a Muslim India within India is, therefore, perfectly justified. The resolution of the All-Parties Muslim Conference at Delhi is, to my mind, wholly inspired by this noble ideal of a harmonious whole. . .".<sup>31</sup> Thus the demand for a Muslim India within India is not his own; it was, according to him, made by AIMC in Delhi. The Delhi resolution, as we have already seen, amounted to no more than a demand for such Muslim safeguards as one-third representation in the central legislature, statutory majorities in the Punjab and Bengal, separation of Sind from Bombay, and full provincial status for NWFP and Baluchistan. In short, it was a plan for making the Muslim provinces autonomous and for some protection at the centre. The only thing Iqbal has done is to call it by a new name: "A Muslim India within India".

Then he offers his own amendment to the Delhi resolution. This is the oft-quoted passage which is generally understood to confirm

Iqbal's parentage of the Pakistan idea. The passage runs: "Personally I would go further than the demands embodied in it [the Delhi Resolution]. *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.*"<sup>32</sup> Does it contain any suggestion, proposal or hint of a separation, partition, division or the creation of a Muslim state in India?

The first thing to notice here is that this proposal was put before the Nehru Committee and rejected by it. Iqbal does not tell us who took it to the Committee: he does not say it was he. The Nehru Report does not add anything to our knowledge. But the point is unimportant. We know that several such proposals were being made in this period.

The Nehru Committee rejected the proposal on the ground that it would result in "a very unwieldy state". These are Iqbal's words, and should be enough proof of the fact that he was using the word "state" in the meaning of a province, a unit of an Indian federation. He was not asking for a separate country for the Muslims of the north-west. As if to eliminate any lingering doubt, he adds, "Thus, possessing full opportunity of development *within the body-politic of India*, the North-West Indian Muslims will prove the best defenders of India against a foreign invasion, be that invasion the one of ideas or of bayonets."<sup>33</sup> If any further proof is required it is furnished by Iqbal's reply to Sastri's criticism of the proposal. To quote Iqbal again, "The Right Hon'ble Mr. Srinivasa Sastri thinks that the Muslim demand for the creation of autonomous Muslim states along the North-West border is actuated by a desire 'to acquire means of exerting pressure in emergencies on the Government of India'. I may frankly tell him that the Muslim demand is not actuated by the kind of motive he imputes to us; it is actuated by a genuine desire for free development which is practically impossible under the type of unitary government contemplated by the nationalist Hindu politicians with a view to secure [*sic.*] permanent communal dominance in the whole of India."<sup>34</sup> He could not have said it in plainer words. He wants autonomous provinces for the Muslims to avoid the perils of a unitary system. Autonomous does not mean sovereign or inde-

pendent. Had Iqbal been advocating a separate, sovereign state he would have corrected Sastri's use of the word "autonomous".

Still another point reinforces this interpretation. In these "autonomous Muslim states", Iqbal assures the Hindus, there will be no religious rule.<sup>35</sup> How could there be an Islamic rule in *some* of the provinces of an all-India federation? They will be like other Indian provinces, except that their population will be predominantly Muslim. This again connects with the point mentioned above that his scheme of re-distribution contributed nothing to the realisation of his ideal of Islamic ethics governing the life of the Indian Muslims.

If any student of Iqbal still remains sceptical, his attention may be drawn to another sentence on the same page. "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*. . .".<sup>38</sup> An "internal balance of power" means a balance of power within India, not the creation of a Muslim state without it.

Not only is there to be no separation, but the re-distribution he suggests is not based on religious ground alone. For, he reiterates that "the creation of autonomous states, based on the unity of language, race, history, religion and identity of economic interest, is the only possible way to secure a stable constitutional structure in India".<sup>39</sup> Religion constitutes only one of the several factors governing the creation of autonomous provinces. We may recall here, however, that he also advocated a division of the Punjab, which cut across the lines of language and economic interest.

To make sure that people may not misunderstand him, he points out, while referring to the conception of federation underlining the Simon Report, that "it further demands a *redistribution of territory on the lines which I have indicated*".<sup>40</sup> He clarifies it once again when, towards the end of the same paragraph, he points out that his scheme will have the added advantage of eliminating the controversial question of separate electorates. "The Muslims of India can have no objection to purely territorial electorates *if provinces are demarcated* so as to secure comparatively homogeneous communities possessing linguistic, cultural and religious unity".<sup>41</sup> He goes on repeating that a federation is being demanded. "The Muslims demand federation because it is pre-eminently a solution of India's most

difficult problem, *i.e.*, the communal problem.”<sup>42</sup>

When he comes to discuss the issue of Indian defence he again talks of a federal arrangement. “I have no doubt that if a Federal Government is established, Muslim federal states will willingly agree” to create a federal army. And, for the last time, “I am perfectly sure that the scheme of a neutral Indian army, based on a federated India, will intensify Muslim patriotic feeling. . .”<sup>43</sup>

Iqbal asserts that his own scheme of “a redistribution of British India”, which is “a territorial solution of the communal problem”, is different from the “demands urged by the All India Muslim League and the All India Muslim Conference”.<sup>44</sup> But a closer examination of his proposal shows no very substantial points of difference. The only point which distinguishes his suggestion from the demands of the two political parties is the amalgamation of all the four Muslim provinces of the north-west into one large province. Later he also recommends a division of the Punjab with a view to making the new province more manageable in size and more homogeneous in population. On another occasion he also suggests a merger of Baluchistan with Sind.<sup>45</sup> In making a plea for these changes he was not making any revolutionary demands. Each of his proposals had been made before him in writing or in public.

The closest that Iqbal comes to enunciating the two-nation theory is towards the end of the address, when he accuses the British Prime Minister of having failed, at the RTC, to see that the problem of India is international and not national and that India is a land of many nations.<sup>46</sup> He also warns that a persistent attempt to impose Western democratic values on an India which is far from homogeneous will lead to a civil war.<sup>47</sup> And, finally, he makes the claim of nationhood on behalf of Indian Muslims, at the same time denying that the Hindus form one nation.<sup>48</sup> The first two points were later to become the standard arguments of the Muslim League leaders when the campaign for Pakistan was mounted.

It is relevant to mention one last word of testimony from Iqbal in support of our contention that he was not arguing for the creation of a separate Muslim state (as distinct from a province) in India. “I am glad to be able to say that our Muslim delegates [at the RTC] fully realize the importance of a proper solution of what I call Indian international problem.”<sup>49</sup> Now, we know that the first RTC, about which he is talking, did not consider, debate or decide anything except a federal solution to the Indian problem.

and no Muslim delegate, at the table or in private conversation, made any reference to a partition. The Muslim leaders at the Conference wanted a genuine federation, safeguards for the Muslim minority and protection for Muslim provinces. Nor was there any talk of an international problem in India at the Conference. If Iqbal approved of the stand taken by the Muslim delegates, he was obviously supporting their demands and repeating them in his address; he was not proposing anything which they were not already pursuing in London.

The last three pages of the address carry several references to an "independent action" which would become inevitable if Muslim demands were not met by the RTC. When that contingency arises Muslims would be called upon, not to pass resolutions, but to advance to "tangible" achievements. What this "independent line of action" was he does not tell us. Our intelligent guess is as good or as bad as anyone else's. Was he threatening the British and the Hindus with unforeseen, unforeseeable and dire consequences arising from Muslim inability to get what they wanted? Was he warning the Muslim League, his audience, to be prepared to change its previous policy of constitutionalism and loyalty if conditions dictated such a course? Was he issuing a hint to the Muslims in general that they might be called upon, not in too distant a future, to start and run a revolutionary movement in pursuit of something which conventional political methods had failed to bring within their grasp? Or, did his "independent action" imply a demand for an independent Muslim state, a division of India, and a sovereign Muslim north-west? If it was this, we may ask what stopped him from announcing it in clear words. Was he waiting for something good to emerge from the deliberations of the RTC, which might end the Muslim search for security in the shape of a real federation with fully autonomous Muslim provinces? Or, was he reluctant to demand a partition until public opinion had showed that it supported such a radical proposition? we have no answer to these questions, and we will never have. Iqbal never returned to this point to clarify it. He sought a solution in other directions, and by the time he came to suggest a proper division of India the idea of a Pakistan had advanced so far in other minds that there was little new in his proposals.

This should not be taken to imply that the points raised in his address were new departures from the general thinking of the time.

Each one of his proposals can be traced back to many years before him. His insistence on the diversity and heterogeneity of India was as old as British rule in the sub-continent: Bright had talked of it in 1858 and Sir Theodore Morison in 1899. The unsuitability of Indian conditions for the successful working of a Western type of democracy was brought out by Sayyid Ahmad Khan in 1883. The refusal to see India as one nation is repeated in the statements of almost every Muslim leader from Sayyid Ahmad in 1888 to Zulfiqar in 1929. The notion of the Indian Muslims' possessing a distinct identity amounting to a separate nationhood was first expressed by the founder of Aligarh in 1867, underlined by Muharram Ali Chishti in 1888 and acknowledged by Morison in 1899. Iqbal's concept of a separate personality of the north-west goes back to the time of Jamaluddin "Afghani". Redistribution of India on territorial lines in order to solve the communal problem was first suggested by Blunt in 1883 and then by Sharar in 1890. The conviction that Indian unity was a myth coined with the intention of giving a trial to a single Hindu-Muslim state was expressed by Muhammad Ali in 1911 and again in 1912, and it was Muhammad Ali who first called the Indian problem "international". The balance of power between Hindu and Muslim provinces which Iqbal seems to be seeking within the limits of a genuine federation was already thought of by Hasrat Mohani in 1921 and 1924 and by Zulfiqar and Abdullah Suhrawardy in their minute of dissent of 1929. The amalgamation of the Muslim north-west to produce a consolidated Muslim province or state had been suggested or perceived so often during the last fifty years: vaguely by Blunt in 1883 and Bambooke in 1915; definitely by the Aga Khan in 1918; Sir Arthur Keith and Beni Prasad in 1919, Gul Khan in 1923, *The Times* dispatch and again the Aga Khan and Maikash in 1928, and Zulfiqar in 1929. The idea of re-distributing India or re-arranging its provincial boundaries with a view to making Islam supreme in a clearly marked out area or zone appeared first in Bhai Parmanand's book of 1923 and later in *The Times* dispatch of 1928. Nor was the division of the Punjab on religious lines a fresh thought: Lajpat Rai had pointed it out in 1924, *The Times* had indicated it as a Muslim desire in 1928, and Zulfiqar had demanded it in 1929.

What Iqbal did was to bring together all these ideas, preface them with a rather academic discourse on the concept of

nationalism in Islamic theory, and present the whole to the Muslim League session. He rightly thought that the first part of the address was the more important. Few Muslim leaders before him had cared to relate the rising surge of nationalism, which was a political fact, to the doctrines of Islam on this issue. It is not necessary to agree with him to sense the relevance of his argument or to appreciate his pre-occupation with a vital problem. Other people with different ideas on this subject were preaching their theories of Islamic nationalism, and other variations on the same theme. Abul Kalam Azad, Husain Ahmad Madani, Abul Ala Mawdudi and other lesser thinkers took an opposite stand. It is not our business here to scrutinize these various opinions and give a judgement.<sup>50</sup> It is, however, pertinent to remember that history (or, was it chance?) decided the issue in favour of none of these, including Iqbal. When Jinnah came to construct the ultimate argument on which the creation of Pakistan was demanded and won, he combined the concept of territory and the factor of religion so closely as to give a new theory of nationalism to the historical development of Islam.<sup>51</sup>

### Impact on Contemporary Opinion

Iqbal's address must have had some impact on Indian opinion, but contemporary and later reports present such contradictory evidence that no straight conclusion can be drawn or confirmed without reviewing the contents, background and motives of these reports. Unfortunately, Hindu reports suffer from their usual inability to see any good in Muslim declarations, and later Muslim reports put too bright a paint on his influence to be credible. Both ignore the necessity of quoting authorities or arguing the point. Few Urdu newspapers of that time are now available. The reader should bear with this and be prepared to accompany the author into this murk of confusion in search of the truth.

To start with, even the date and place of the Muslim League session are not always correctly given. One Hindu author was so much carried away by his zeal in composing a diatribe against Jinnah that he made Iqbal deliver his address at Lucknow<sup>52</sup>; the same mistake is repeated by a Congress member of the Punjab Legislative Assembly.<sup>53</sup> Beni Prasad, a scholar and a serious student of the Hindu-Muslim problem, dates the Allahabad session

in 1931: while a Pakistan lawyer, leader and minister transfers it to 1937.<sup>54</sup> A pamphlet put out by the Pakistan Muslim League to mark the 1964 independence day celebrations says that the Allahabad session met on 5 December<sup>55</sup> Such errors are common in history writing and it would be wrong to exaggerate their seriousness, but some critics of Iqbal may interpret them as a measure of the importance of his address

It is reported that the address was translated into Urdu at the suggestion of the *Sufi*, a journal then appearing from Pindi Bahauddin. The journal published the Urdu version "in thousands" and distributed it free of cost.<sup>56</sup> Iqbal was a well-known figure in 1930 and the Muslim League was a national organization which could not be ignored. There is no doubt, therefore, that the address must have been widely circulated. Contemporary newspapers published it in short or long summaries. Every one interested in public affairs must have taken notice of it and given it some thought. But this should not be exaggerated. The RTC was then in session and making important decisions. Naturally the Indian public and its leaders would have paid more attention to the news coming in from London than to the speech of the Muslim League president of the year.

We have no clear picture of its impact on the public mind. Few newspapers of national stature cared to pronounce editorial opinion. No Indian leader of any importance is recorded to have publicly commented on it. The opinion of those who then or later wrote about it bifurcates. Some assert that it exerted immense influence, others believe that it was ignored by almost every one.

Let us first consider the favourable reports. The *Inqilab* of Lahore wrote "about a dozen editorials" in January 1931 in defence of Iqbal's proposal. Taking him to have suggested a partition of India, the paper referred to similar proposals made earlier by Lajpat Rai and Parmanand, and asked why Iqbal should be criticised for making a like demand. On 11 January the newspaper repeated Iqbal's warning that a civil war would be the result of a failure to concede Muslim wishes. The *Hamdard* of Lucknow, in an editorial of 5 January, believed that "Islam's survival as a cultural force depended on the establishment of a Muslim National State in Northern India". This, it wrote, "will cause a patriotic fervour among Muslims and they would be in an ideal position to defend India with all the might at their command against a possible

attack from the Bolsheviks or the Afghans. This is the best solution of the Indian problem." Three student workers of Calcutta, Raghiv Ahsan, Fazal Rasul Khan Afridi and S.M. Salim, supported Iqbal's address in a joint statement and "suggested the initiation of a 'Muslim Ideal Fund' in order to finance a vigorous propaganda drive in support of Iqbal".<sup>57</sup> No further favourable reports have reached us from contemporary sources. It is most probable that none exist, because those who present Iqbal as a prophet of partition have been assiduous in seeking, collecting and quoting every small item supporting their case.

Among later commentators, the *Islamic Culture* of Hyderabad, a highly respectable and respected Muslim quarterly, recorded in the autumn of 1939 that Iqbal's proposal "for the fullest cultural autonomy" was adversely criticised by the non-Muslim organizations of India but "it was much appreciated and supported by the Muslims".<sup>58</sup> In recent years this appreciation and support have swollen into hysterical admiration, and the influence of the address, the sum total of which has been indicated in our last paragraph, has been exaggerated to fantastic dimensions. In a book published in 1967 we find this: "The schemes suggested by others had not attracted any attention at all, but the one put forward by Iqbal attracted world-wide attention for the first time. Not only this, he worked for it and got the scheme approved by the majority of the Muslim leaders as well as British statesmen."<sup>59</sup> No comment is necessary.

Such incredible stories are not a monopoly of the Iqbal school. The detractors have made equally silly statements with similar disregard of the obligation to produce evidence. Two Hindu authors have discovered the fact that the total attendance at the Allahabad session was less than 75 persons, which was "not enough to make up the quorum".<sup>60</sup> If that is true, the 1930 session had no legal validity and all its proceedings should have been expunged from the Muslim League records. A modern American expert on Pakistan has made the startling statement that "Muslims throughout India were shocked" by Iqbal's proposal.<sup>61</sup> A Hindu writer, whom we have already quoted once, is responsible for the news that the delivery of the address was followed by "an all round denunciation of the proposal from all prominent Muslims, both inside and outside the League".<sup>62</sup> Apparently, these statements are not meant to be taken seriously. They refuse to cite their sources, they

don't care to argue the point, and their context betrays obvious bias.

Whatever the element of veracity in the reports referred to above and the touch of prejudice in the opinions expressed, at least one thing is clear. That Muslim League, as a party over whose deliberations Iqbal was presiding, met his proposals with a stony silence. There is no difference of opinion on this point. The League session "did not incorporate the presidential suggestion in any resolution".<sup>63</sup> The Subjects Committee of the League "did not consider it worth while to adopt Iqbal's proposal of 1930 in the form of a resolution".<sup>64</sup> In the words of Khaliqzaman, "it is a wonder that when this clarion call was made from the Muslim League platform no one took any notice of it and no one moved any resolution in the session approving the scheme enunciated at Allahabad"; and again, "it is strange that the Council of the Muslim League did not take any notice of the President's address nor put forward any concrete proposal touching the subject".<sup>65</sup>

This failure of the League is fully borne out by the official record of the resolutions moved and adopted at the Allahabad session. Seven resolutions were passed on subjects like condolences on the deaths of certain Muslim leaders, support to AIMC resolution of Delhu, condemnation of the white paper on reforms, demand for full provincial status for NWFP, adequate Muslim quota in the cabinets and the public services throughout India, statutory Muslim majorities in the Punjab and Bengal along with the separation of Sind from Bombay, and the appointment of a committee to revise and amend the party's constitution.<sup>66</sup> Several of Iqbal's suggestions were incorporated in these resolutions, but his most important proposal for the creation of one large, consolidated province in the north-west, or even that for joining Baluchistan with Sind, finds no place in the resolutions. Nor did anyone care to support his call for complete unity among the Muslims in the face of serious times ahead.

How can we explain this unanimous disregard of the president's wishes, suggestions, opinions and proposals by a party which normally paid respectable heed to the chair? It is true that Iqbal was not a strong president and could not impress his will on the League as some presidents had done before and as Jinnah was to do to a supreme degree in later years. All the same, he was a president voluntarily elected by the party and universally respected

throughout India. It is possible that in that year the League was influenced in its choice of the president by the absence of most of the front-rank leaders who were in London participating in the RTC. The names of the members moving and supporting the session resolutions, usually a correct index to the quality of the leadership present, speak of an unprecedented paucity of well-known public men. Rarely had a League session been reduced to such straits.

Two explanations have been offered as a solution of this mystery. One is that "the issue was so important that it could not be discussed in the absence of leaders" who were in London.<sup>67</sup> It is true that almost every leader whose voice carried authority was away. This supports the point made above that Iqbal's election as president for that year was due more to limited choice than to his standing as a politician.

But this explanation still leaves two points in doubt. First, the League session could have, at least through a non-committal resolution, taken notice of the president's suggestion without going to the length of passing a judgment on it. Iqbal himself attached much importance to his proposal, for he had italicized it in the official text of the address, and the session was really extending him less than courtesy in so pointedly ignoring it. Secondly, if the League had postponed a discussion of his proposal because it was too momentous to be debated without the benefit of the presence of other leaders, why was no notice taken of it afterwards? There is no record of any deliberations of the League Council, Working Committee or other body on this issue at any date after the return to India of the RTC delegates. It was not taken up in the next annual session. None of the returning leaders made any comment on it; and this cannot be an accident, for it is inconceivable that they did not know the contents of the party's presidential address.

The other explanation for this conspiracy of silence is "the prejudice against Iqbal on the part of Muslim leaders in the Muslim-minority provinces, as a few months earlier he had declared his intention to call an Upper India Muslim Conference at Lahore representing Muslim leadership of Punjab, Sind, Baluchistan and NWFP on the plea that Muslim leaders of Muslim minority provinces failed to understand the problems of the Muslim majority provinces".<sup>68</sup>

This argument fails to carry conviction for five reasons. First, if the leaders of the Hindu provinces were opposed to Iqbal because of his lack of interest in the Muslims of those provinces, it is difficult to account for his election to the League presidentship which, as far as we know, was uncontested and presumably unanimous. If these leaders could support him in election to the highest office in the party, their prejudice must have been of a very peculiar variety. Secondly, it is true that Iqbal's proposal was confined to the northwest India and, so to speak, ignored the Muslim minorities in the rest of India, yet there had been, as we have seen in previous chapters, several persons from the Hindu provinces who had proposed similar action. It could hardly have been his Punjabi parochialism which gave birth to Iqbal's scheme. Thirdly, if the proposal was ignored by Muslim leaders of the Hindu provinces because it did not concern itself with their areas, what was it that stopped the Muslim leaders of the north-west from speaking out in his support and defence? Hardly any newspaper (except the *Inqilab*) or leader of the Muslims of upper India considered it worth the while to give serious attention to Iqbal's pronouncement. It could not have been prejudice by any means in their case; it could be ingratitude, but that is another matter. In the fourth place, if the Muslim leaders of the Hindu provinces refused to extend their support to Iqbal on the ground that his gaze was fixed on the narrow concept of a north-west India, how did it come to pass that a few years later they supported to a man the Pakistan plan of Jinnah which also left the Muslims of the minority areas in Hindu India? If their prejudice had the quality of consistency they should not have singled out Iqbal for their indifference. If the argument is that their prejudice was specific to Punjabi leadership, this is taken care of by my next objection to this explanation. Finally, if Iqbal had incurred unpopularity in the minority areas by his 1930 proposal, how does one explain his election to the presidentship of AIMC in 1932? During these years the Conference carried more weight and attracted more attention than the League, and Iqbal could not have been called upon to occupy its chair unless he had widespread support throughout India.

Such arguments will not solve the mystery of the wall of silence built round his address. The fact seems to have been that few people saw anything fresh in his proposal. The interpretation that

he was arguing for a separate independent state in the north-west was by and large of later growth. His contemporaries rightly saw that he was merely urging the amalgamation of a few provinces, so that a large, consolidated, overwhelmingly Muslim area could occupy an important place in the Indian federal union and thus afford more effective protection to Muslim interests. This was a commendable idea and a sincere effort to bring security to the anxious Muslims. But it came too late. For several years public opinion had been thinking on different, more radical, lines. A number of more advanced proposals had come before it and, though some might have looked no better than dreams, Muslim thinking was on the verge of reaching a momentous decision about the future. The details and implications of this decision were yet not very clear, but the anticipation of taking a new turn was exciting beyond measure. Partition may lead them to an untried terrain, but it could not be worse than the known perils of a united India under Hindu dominance. To such thinking Iqbal's faith in an Indian federation must have sounded old fashioned if not downright reactionary. By ignoring it public opinion was not insulting its author, but only pointing out its obsolescence and inadequacy.

Another factor should also be taken into account. At this time Muslim leaders were immersed in the affairs of the RTC and its deep involvement with the making of a federal system suitable for and acceptable to all India. They were negotiating with the British and the Hindus to extract the last meaningful concession out of the protracted political bargain. They had already, many years ago, made up their mind that Muslim rule in Muslim provinces was the minimum, fundamental principle on which the future Indian federation should be built. Iqbal's proposal brought no new grist to their mill. The idea of joining together certain provinces was a minor detail which could be taken up later when the vital principle of majority rule had been conceded; and, in any case, it could probably be realized without much ado. They could also have been surprised by Iqbal's indifference to the nature of the proposed federal centre. He had nothing to say about it except the already staked claim for a one-third representation in the central legislature. He paid no attention to the complicated and controversial points raised by the organization and structure of the centre and the nature and working of centre-units relationship. These

were matters of great concern to the Muslim negotiators and their neglect at the hands of Iqbal might have disappointed them. Anyway, they found little in his remarks that was outstanding and capable of furnishing them with a new argument in their debates with the Hindus and the British.

This seems to me the only reasonable and coherent explanation of Iqbal's failure to move public opinion on the strength of his Allahabad address. It is useless to blame the Muslim League alone for treating him with indifference. All over Muslim India, and even outside it, his suggestions either failed to arouse any interest because they were taken to repeat a commonplace demand or failed to sound a practical note because they were considered to be nothing more than the dream of a poet.

A contemporary observer noted that his scheme of a re-distribution of provinces received no support or sympathy from any quarter because Muslim political thinking was not prepared to accept either an Indian federation or a division of the Punjab.<sup>69</sup> It was ignored by everyone and "hardly made any impression on the public life of the country".<sup>70</sup> In the opinion of F.K. Khan Durrani, whose own love of Islam matched Iqbal's, the Allahabad scheme was "looked upon as no more than a political curiosity at the time, the idealist dream of a thinker and poet who had little contact, they said, with the world of realities, a dream which, to all appearances, had little bearing on what the common herd of politicians calls practical politics, and Iqbal was neither a propagandist nor the head of any party" [sic].<sup>71</sup>

Among the Hindus, however, Iqbal's address created a much stronger impact. It is not difficult to see why it was so. Proposals for a radical re-distribution of India had been made before, but now they saw them being officially expounded from the platform of the Muslim League. Those who took the event as a demand for a partition were naturally outraged. Even those who read it for what it was worth were upset at the prospect of a huge Muslim province in the north-west. They feared Muslim rule over a part of India, though they laughed at Muslim fears of Hindu rule over the entire country. Many Hindu circles were perturbed and some Hindu newspapers used unrestrained language in attacking Iqbal. *The Leader* published editorial comments entitled "Communalism and Nationalism" on 2 and 5 January 1931, which were followed by others throughout the month.

A.S. Khurshid, who has had access to contemporary Hindu newspapers, tells us how they carried on "a tearing and raging campaign" against the Allahabad address. They used every journalistic trick to smear his name. Statements were attributed to him which he had not made. Sensational and eye-catching headlines were blazed across the page. The *Paratap* of Lahore published an article on Iqbal, bearing the "horrible" title "A Dangerous Muslim of Northern India", which bristled with such abusive epithets as "fanatic, mischievous, dangerously prejudiced, venomous, narrowminded, and mean".<sup>72</sup> In the rather exaggerated language of a modern Hindu journalist, the "proposal stunned Hindus and Sikhs who, in the light of the utterances of some Muslim leaders during the previous two decades, had expressed apprehensions at the Muslims of the north-west of India making common cause with Afghanistan. They now whispered to each other that their apprehensions were not unfounded".<sup>73</sup> Only one Hindu commentator, writing in *The Times of India* under the pseudonym of "A Liberal Hindu", appreciated Iqbal's argument that with the inclusion of the native states in the federation Hindus would become much stronger *vis a vis* the Muslims. He hoped that his plea would receive sympathetic consideration.<sup>74</sup>

In terms of contemporary India politics Christian opinion may safely be taken to follow and confirm Hindu opinion. In all controversies between the Hindu and the Muslim the Indian Christians always sided with the Hindus.<sup>75</sup> As an example of Christian reaction to Iqbal let me quote Dr. S.K. Datta who, far from being a fiery politician or a popular demagogue in search of votes, was a highly-respected educationalist and later became the first Indian principal of the well-known Forman Christian College in Lahore. His comment on the Allahabad address, written soon after it was delivered, is a good exercise in imagination. "Dr. Iqbal and his followers have seen a vision", he wrote. "Who can tell but that this new state, if achieved, might not become the candidate for a restored caliphate, possibly not in a political sense, but one which will give the Islamic world a religious and cultural centre and will be prepared to repeat in its life the glories of Baghdad or Cordova?"<sup>76</sup> No better phrasing could have set the Hindu heart against the slightest possibility of such a consummation.

The only contemporary British, or rather Anglo-Indian, comment can scarcely be called perceptive. M.L. Farrar, writing in

a collection of articles on the future of Islam edited by Hamilton Gibb, said, "Thus proposal made a clear picture signifying that the leaders knew their minds; whether they could carry the masses with them depended on how quickly the latter took to education."<sup>77</sup> The first part of this sentence echoes the 1928 dispatch of *The Times* which we have quoted before, and goes to prove that Iqbal's words were more a reflection of a section of public opinion than an innovation. The latter part has no relevant connection with the former, unless the writer was thinking in very long terms and hoping that in some far-off distant day, when the Muslim community had perfected its intellectual equipment, Iqbal's dream would come true. He did not properly gauge Muslim sentiment, or he would have noticed how far it had travelled from the age of Sayyid Ahmad Khan when education was really the key to political advance. Education or no education, now it was a question of a nationalism coming to maturity in one numble leap. The deficiencies of its equipment were no cause for worry. The stakes were now totally different and infinitely higher.

At the RTC, too, Iqbal's address made no impression; it was only a dying echo of it that was heard in the first two sessions, and that at the initiative of the non-Muslim delegates. It will be remembered that the Allahabad speech was made when the Conference was meeting in its first session in London. The delegates must have seen a summary of it in *The Times*, for on 1 January 1931 B.S. Moonje, the loudest Hindu voice in the London deliberations, referred to it in a speech in the Minorities Sub-committee, asking if the Muslim delegates agreed with Iqbal's suggestions. Sir Muhammad Shafi of the Punjab, the most energetic among the Muslim delegation and a friend of Iqbal, replied in the negative and denied that Muslim India wanted or supported separation. After pointing out that he could not pass a judgment on the address on the basis of a mere telegraphic summary carried by the London papers and that the full text was not available to him, he proceeded: "If Sir Muhammad Iqbal said that when there will be a Hindu State in the whole of India by reason of the Hindus being in a permanent and unalterable majority in the Central Government, when there will be 6 Hindu States out of the 8 Governors' Provinces, by reason of a similar unalterable permanent majority in those 6 Provinces, there ought to be 4 Musalman States, because the Musalmans in those 4 Provinces are in a

majority, I see nothing wrong in that. I myself am prepared to repeat that here before this Committee, for, after all, we are contemplating the bringing into existence of the United States of India. . . . But if he said anything in connection with the foundation of an independent Muslim State outside the British Commonwealth of Nations, in the ordinary sense in which such a phrase is used, then I, on behalf of the whole Musalman Delegation, repudiate that; I absolutely repudiate that on behalf of the whole Delegation. But, Mr. Prime Minister, I can well imagine a Muhammadan exasperated by pronouncements of the type that my friend Dr. Moonje has been making in different parts of India, possibly in a moment of thoughtlessness saying something similar."<sup>78</sup>

Thus it is clear that Shafi, along with all his colleagues in the Muslim delegation, took Iqbal to be advocating a federal India with so many Muslim provinces rather than a separate Muslim state. In case Iqbal really stood for a separation, all the Muslim leaders assembled in London refused to go along with him. It must be recalled here that these leaders, though not actually elected by the various Muslim organizations, were fully representative of Muslim public opinion, and spoke for every important Muslim party, including above all the Muslim League over which Iqbal was now formally presiding and the Muslim Conference over which he was to preside fifteen months later. There is no warrant for thinking that Shafi was misinterpreting Iqbal. Every contemporary Muslim leader read in his address a plan for a federal India with a strong emphasis on Muslim autonomy, which it really was. Moreover, Shafi himself was a Punjabi and knew Iqbal intimately. He was therefore not repudiating a friend, but denying a proposition which he felt Iqbal had not made.

Fear makes men very sensitive, and Hindu leaders, in contrast to the Muslim, found it easy to see in the address a scheme for separation or at least for a revived Muslim strength in an important and strategic part of the sub-continent. This does not mean that they were more perceptive. They were so implacably keen to retain their hegemony over the entire country that the slightest hint of a Muslim movement towards self-assertion caused them deep perturbation. That explains their opposition to Muslim statutory majorities in the Punjab and Bengal, though it sharply contradicted their faith in majority rule in all India. That also explains their

misconstruction of Iqbal's proposal as a demand for a separate Muslim state.

The non-Musim leaders, particularly of the Punjab, continued to be agitated by Iqbal's suggestions. During the second session of the RTC, which was held in September-December 1931, the two Sikh delegates from the Punjab, Sardar Ujjal Singh and Sardar Sampuran Singh, returned to their fears of Iqbal in a memorandum submitted to the Conference as an official document. They wrote: "In view of the claim of the President of the All India Muslim Conference [*sic.*], we believe that to write the garrison Province of India [i.e., the Punjab] into the onstitution as an unalterably Muslim Province would be to make the dismemberment of India inevitable. That claim, it would be remembered, was that there should be a 'consolidated North-West State, within or without the British Empire', consisting of the Punjab, NWFP, Baluchistan and Sind."<sup>79</sup>

Anxiety is the mother of carelessness. It will be noticed that worry had rendered the two Sikh gentlemen incapable not only of distinguishing between the Muslim League and the Muslim Conference but also of quoting Iqbal correctly. These errors were pointed out and corrected by Shafi Daoodi in his note circulated on 14 November 1931, who also answered the Sikh objection by quoting Iqbal's letter to *The Times* of 12 October which he had written in reply to Edward Thompson's allegations.<sup>80</sup>

## NOTES

1. A complete bibliography will need a 1,000-page book to itself, and has not yet been attempted. The reader may find major references in K.K. Aziz, *The Background of Pakistan*, Karachi, 1970, and its forthcoming supplementary volumes.
2. *Iqbaliyat* is a collective noun denoting the body of writings on Iqbal. It is now a current Urdu word, widely used in Pakistani literary circles.
3. Scholarly editing, with footnotes, citation of sources, annotation and biographical and bibliographical details, is rare in research in the Urdu language. Various attempts at biographical treatment are either contributions to hagiography, like Rais Ahmad Jafri's *Iqbal awr Syasat-i-Milli*, or slanted memoirs of the writer himself, like Ashiq Husain Batalawi's *Iqbal ki Zindagi ke Akhri Do Sal*. Iqbal's political writings and speeches in English were first collected by one "Shamloo" in a book which gives no dates, quotes no sources, provides no index, abounds in misprints and, on at least one vital point, misquotes the original text; a second, enlarged ed repeats all these faults. Another collection, prepared by S.A. Vahid, is only slightly better.
4. For contemporary accounts of the Allahabad session see *The Indian Review*, January 1931, pp. 45-46, and *IAR 1930*, Vol II, pp. 334-348. A short summary of the address was given by *The Times*, 30 December 1930. The whole address is reproduced in F.K. Khan Durrani, *The Meaning of Pakistan*, 1946 rep, pp. 149-175; Shamloo, *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, 2nd enl ed, Lahore, 1948, pp. 3-35; Muhammad Noman (ed), *Our Struggle, 1857-1947*, Karachi, n.d., pp. 1-18; Rais Ahmad Jafri (ed), *Rare Documents*, Lahore, 1967, Part II; S.A. Vahid (ed), *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*, Lahore, 1964, Part I; and others. For obvious reasons, however, I have drawn upon the original issued by Iqbal himself, of which I have a copy.
5. *All India Muslim League: Allahabad Session: December 1930: Presidential Address by Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal, Barrister-at-Law, Lahore* (issued by the author, printed at the Kapur Art Printing Works, Lahore), p. 1.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 2–3.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 3–4. The italics are Iqbal's.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 4–5.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 6. The italics are in the original.
12. *Ibid.*, pp. 6–7. The italics are in the address.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 7–8.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 9–11.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 11–13. The words “word” and “substance” bear italics in the original.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 13–15. The passage quoted is on p. 15.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 18–19.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
23. *Ibid.*, pp. 20–22.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
29. *Ibid.*, pp. 5–6.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 7. Iqbal's Italic.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 7. My italics.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
36. *Ibid.*
37. *Ibid.*
38. My italics. Note the order of the words “India and Islam”.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 9.
40. *Ibid.*, my italics.
41. *Ibid.*, emphasis added.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 15. What is a “neutral army”, and how its formation “will intensify Muslim patriotic feeling”, are questions which no student of Iqbal's politics has answered.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
47. *Ibid.*, pp. 18–19.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
50. This has been done by Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan, 1857-1964*, London, 1967; Manzooruddin Ahmed, *Pakistan: The Emerging Islamic State*, Karachi, 1966; E.I. Rosenthal, *Islam in the Modern National State*, Cambridge, 1965; Hafeez Malik, *Moslem Nationalism in India and Pakistan*, Washington, D.C., 1963; Z.H. Faruqi, *The Deoband School and the Demand for Pakistan*, London, 1963; Waheeduzzaman, *Towards Pakistan*, Lahore, 1964; M. Mujeeb, *The Indian Muslims*, London, 1967; Kenneth Cragg, *Counsels in Contemporary Islam*, Edinburgh, 1965; Leonard Binder, *Religion and Politics in Pakistan*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1961; I.H. Qureshi, *The Muslim Community*, The Hague, 1962; Freeland Abbot, *Islam and Pakistan*, Ithaca, N.Y., 1968; and others.
51. On this point see K.K. Aziz, *The Making of Pakistan: A Study in Nationalism*, London, 1967.
52. G.B. Kaushik, *The House that Jinnah Built* Bombay, 1944, p. 114.
53. Virendra, *Pakistan: A Myth or A Reality*, Lahore, 1946, p. 16. An American scholar makes it Lahore (Freeland Abbot, "Pakistan and the Secular State", in Donald E. Smith (ed), *South Asian Politics and Religion*, Princeton, 1966, p. 359 fn 23).
54. Beni Prasad, *India's Hindu-Muslim Questions*, London, 1946, p. 77; Choudhry Nazir Ahmad Khan, *Kalam-i-Narm-o-Nazak: Ap Biti: Dastan-i-Pakistan*, Lahore, 1975, pp. 56, 86.
55. Pakistan Muslim League, *Qyam-i-Pakistan ka Pas Manzar*, Rawalpindi, 1964, p. 32.
56. S. Nazir Niazi, *Maktubat-i-Iqbal*, Karachi, 1957, p. 67.
57. All quoted in A.S. Khurshid, "Immediate Reaction to Iqbal's Allahabad Address", *TPT*, 21 April 1963.
58. M.A.C., "North-West India", *Islamic Culture*, October 1939, p. 499. The identity of the author is not known to me.
59. S.A. Vahid, *Studies in Iqbal*, Lahore, 1967, p. 302. Of

- course, he quotes no evidence for these assertions.
60. Asoka Mehta and Achyut Patwardhan, *The Communal Triangle in India*, Allahabad, July 1942, 2nd rev ed August 1942, p. 41.
  61. Richard V. Weekes, *Pakistan: Birth and Growth of a Muslim Nation*, Princeton, 1964, p. 81.
  62. G.B. Kaushik, *op. cit.*, p. 114.
  63. Ram Gopal, *Indian Muslims*, Bombay, 1959, p. 231. See also L.S. May, "Iqbal and His Philosophy", *Iqbal*, January 1958; Salahuddin Nasik, *Tahrik-i-Azadi*, Lahore, n.d., pp. 409-410; and M.. Raza Khan, *What Price Freedom*, Madras, 1969, p. 19.
  64. Ahmad Shafi, "Two Punjabee Musalmans", *The Indian Review*, August 1942.
  65. Choudhry Khaliquzzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan*, Lahore, 1961, pp. 108-109, 238. For contrary opinions see M.H. Saiyid, *Hamare Quaid-i-Azam*, Karachi, 1975, p. 34; Ajmal Siddiqui, "Allama Iqbal awr Tasawwar-i-Pakistan", *NW*, 4 April 1977; Waheed Qureshi, *Pakistan ki Nazriati Bunyaden*, Lahore, 1973, p. 70; and S. Zafarmand Ali Mazhar, "Pakistan awr Iqbal", *Jang*, 23 March 1978.
  66. See *Resolutions of the All India Muslim League from May 1924 to December 1936*, Delhi, n.d., pp. 47-49.
  67. A.S. Khurshid, *op. cit.*, *TPT*, 21 April 1963.
  68. *Ibid.* Iqbal's plans for the Upper India Muslim Conference are discussed below in chapter 5.
  69. Syed Nur Ahmad, *Martial Law se Martial Law Tak*, Lahore, 1965, p. 126. This book is in fact the autobiography of Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, a Punjabi leader, written up from his memoirs after his death by Syed Nur Ahmad. It covers the period from 1919 to 1958, hence the title.
  70. Ahmad Shafi, *op. cit.*
  71. F.K. Khan Durrani, *The Meaning of Pakistan*, Lahore, March 1946 rep, pp. 109-110.
  72. A.S. Khurshid, *op. cit.*, *TPT*, 21 April 1963.
  73. Ram Gopal, *op. cit.*, p. 231.
  74. Cited in A.S. Khurshid, *op. cit.*
  75. The Indian Christian community condemned the Nehru Report, and also joined with the other minorities in putting up a demand for safeguards at the RTC. But on both these

occasions it was fighting for its minority rights which the Hindus were withholding, not siding with the Muslims as against the Hindus.

76. S.K. Datta, *Asiatic Asia*, London, 1932, p. 181.
77. M.L. Farrar, in H.A.R. Gibb (ed), *Whither Islam?*, London, 1932, pp. 235-236. Gibb himself made an astonishing statement at another place: in 1930 "the Pakistan project was definitely adopted as the political objective of the League" (article on Iqbal, in L.G. Wickham Legg (ed), *The Dictionary of National Biography, 1931-1940*, London, 1949, pp. 461-462).
78. Mian Sir Muhammad Shafi, speech in the Minorities Sub-Committee on 1 January 1931, *Indian Round Table Conference, 12 November 1930-19 January 1931, Proceedings of Sub-Committees (Part II), Sub-Committees II-IX*, London, 1931, pp. 102-103. The following leaders were then in the Muslim Delegation: Sahibzada Sultan Ahmad Khan, Sir Akbar Hydari, Sir Mirza Ismail, the Aga Khan, Mawlana Muhammad Ali, Sir Shah Nawaz Bhutto, Nawab Sir Ahmad Said Khan of Chchattari, Raja Sher Muhammad Khan, A.K. Fazlul Huq, Sir A.H. Ghuznavi, Sir Ghulam Husain Hidayatullah, Hafiz Hidayat Husain, M.A. Jinnah, Sir Abdul Qayyum, Sir Sultan Ahmad, Sir Muhammad Shafi, Dr. Shafaat Ahmad Khan, Begum Shah Nawaz, and Muhammad Zafrulla Khan (*IAR 1930*, Vol II, p. 286).
79. "Sikhs and the New Constitution", a Memorandum by Sardar Ujjal Singh and Sardar Sampuran Singh, *Indian Round Table Conference (2nd Session), 7th September 1931-1st December 1931, Proceedings of Federal Structure Committee and Minorities Committee*, London, 1932, Appendix IV, pp. 555-556.
80. Muhammad Shafi Daoodi, "Note on Appendix IV", *ibid.*, p. 585. Edward Thompson's allegations and Iqbal's reply to them are discussed below.

# 5

## THE ALLAHABAD MYTH: 1930

### The Address Widely Misinterpreted

One would have thought that any one who read Iqbal's address with some care and attention and knew what had been stated, repeatedly and publicly, before the date of his speech, would have no reasonable grounds for misconstruing his meaning. Yet such misinterpretation has had a long history.

Journalists, politicians, popular writers, serious authors—all have played a part in this falsification of history. The propaganda has been done so efficiently that professional historians and scholars have come to accept the popular distortion as the truth. In modern historical writing and research the popularly held image appears as the only possible verity. The power of time is immense. It can confirm a falsehood as effortlessly as it can reject a truth. And yet new truths emerge as knowledge advances and prejudice recedes. It is a poor tribute to Clio to limit the writing of history to a repetition of convenient traditions. It is a poorer tribute still to Iqbal, whose greatness as a man is beyond cavil, to try to make him look greater by attributing to him what he neither said nor did.

But before history is cleared of such comfortable assumptions and truth is discovered and made to stand naked without the dubious raiment of borrowed glory, a short survey of the traditional outlook is advisable. It will reveal the methods and motives of the authors of these assumptions.

Between 1930 and 1940 there is not much to indicate that Iqbal's Allahabad proposal was being dressed up as a harbinger of separation.<sup>1</sup> As far as can be ascertained it was after the Muslim League had passed the Lahore Resolution in March 1940 that some League supporters began to cast a backward look in search of some justification for what they considered to be such a revolutionary

demand. Their gaze was at once fixed on Iqbal—not the Iqbal who had recently written long letters to Jinnah pleading the urgent necessity for a separate Muslim state (for these letters were not yet in public knowledge), but the Iqbal of 1930 and the Allahabad address. Was it not from the Muslim League presidential chair that he had spoken these prophetic phrases? What could be more pertinent than to quote a former president in defence of the new programme? His fame as a poet was an added attraction. Anyway, to attribute prophecy to a poet was not an act of recklessness. Was not the poet an oracle, too, who proclaimed truths hidden from the mortal eye?

The announcement that the idea of Pakistan had already been expressed by a great poet, who was also a president of the League, solved several problems at once. It gave the idea some measure of antiquity, and therefore of respectability, by tracing it back to at least ten years. It also made it the child of a seer, thus blessing a political plan with divine or semi-divine inspiration. It also brightened the image of the Muslim League by endowing it with the quality of a rare foresight which had seen the coming of freedom many years before. In one word, it made the idea respectable. It also brought a hero from the rarefied world of letters into the gallery of the nation's freedom-makers. In thus seizing upon Iqbal these people dismissed from their memory all those who had come before him, because he made a better hero. Others, though prior in time, were not prior in quality. Chronology, the only solid base around which the vine of history winds itself, was thus swept out of sight. To hope that a straight historical edifice could be erected on such foundations was to forget that the laws of nature are neutral and will not help those who run after the counterfeit.

But to take too severe a notice of these doings is to under-rate the play of myth in the creation of history. A part of history is always made by contemporaries, and they make it in their own fashion and in their own image. Muslim India is not unique in calling in a conceit in its aid if this appeared to advance the cause of national freedom.

The first summons seems to have gone out in the summer of 1940 when, writing in the *Eastern Times* of Lahore, I.H. Qureshi asserted. "The idea of Pakistan, it is well known, originated in the brain of the late Hazrat Allama Iqbal. . . Dr. Iqbal made articulate

what was so far struggling for expression." He added: "Of course, at first Dr. Muhammad Iqbal's idea was taken up by a few persons only. A person here and there was attracted to it; a person here and there was struck by it. But the idea grew and grew, and presently the whole Muslim nation was talking of it, discussing it and digesting it. And finally they became unanimous over it."<sup>2</sup> This was a general statement and did not specifically refer either to the Allahabad address or to Iqbal's letters to Jinnah (the existence of which could not have been known to Qureshi in 1940). It is possible that here Qureshi was writing only about later developments, but it is very improbable. His later interpretations of Iqbal, to which we will shortly refer, confirm that he traces the idea of Pakistan to the 1930 address.

This lead was followed by several other writers sympathetic to the Muslim League point of view. In 1941, Mian Kafayet Ali, writing under the pen-name of "A Punjabi", stated as a matter of fact that in 1930 Iqbal had placed before the Muslims "a scheme of separation in which their salvation lay".<sup>3</sup> A few years later, in a book which carried a foreword by Jinnah himself and reflected, almost officially, the Muslim League programme, the origin of the idea of Pakistan was traced back to Jamaluddin "Afghani". "Subsequently, it owed inspiration to late Sir Muhammad Iqbal who [at Allahabad] proposed the amalgamation of the North-Western Muslim Provinces into a single state."<sup>4</sup> With each repetition the tone of affirmation grew stronger. "Thus Iqbal was the father of the idea of independent and sovereign Muslim states in India", said one author.<sup>5</sup> It is "only Iqbal" who is "the real father of Pakistan"; the Allahabad proposal was "the first concrete shape of the latent demand for a Muslim India".<sup>6</sup>

When independence came Iqbal's was the only name associated with the idea of Pakistan. Most people knew of none other, and the few who did chose to keep this knowledge to themselves. The fear of incurring unpopularity by questioning the received opinion was stronger than the courage to tell the truth. Moreover, with the creation of Pakistan Iqbal had been made a part of the Establishment, and to cast doubts on his parentage of the concept of partition was reckoned as a criticism of the government and an attack on the official version of the national ideology. To this was added the first wave of enthusiasm at the newly-won freedom. All the compulsions for treasuring the myth were thus present. Iqbal

had become a vested interest, a national memory, a focus of patriotism. Every one who put pen to paper reiterated the accepted theory. It is always safe and often profitable to swim with the current.

Shamloo (it is a pseudonym), the first person to collect and edit Iqbal's English political writings and speeches, blandly stated in his introduction that Iqbal had in 1930 demanded a "separate sovereign state", and passed on to other matters without staying to argue the point.<sup>7</sup> The journalists and others popularized and perpetuated the idea and, in countless articles in English and Urdu newspapers, persuaded a great many of its truth.

When serious writers came to write on Iqbal they did not take the issue any further, and merely transferred the transient word of the daily newspaper to the slightly more permanent page of popular literature. Only a representative selection can be mentioned here out of the vast material available.

In a comprehensive survey of Iqbal's political activities we are told that in 1930 he "for the first time in Indian political history, and with much elaboration (*bauhat hi wazahat ke sath*), presented a scheme for the creation of an Islamic State".<sup>8</sup> "The fact is that the Allama had proposed an 'Islamic State', not an 'Islamic province', and this is clear to any one who has taken the trouble of reading his 1930 address".<sup>9</sup> And again, "it has to be conceded that the state contemplated in the scheme presented in 1930 was not to be a part of the Indian federation, but a separate, free and sovereign state".<sup>10</sup> And not only was Iqbal advocating a partition of India, but he was also asking the Muslims left behind in India to migrate to the Muslim state.<sup>11</sup> This was the interpretation of a former chief justice of Bhopal.

A lawyer from Lahore, who made a full-length study of Iqbal the poet, mentioned in passing that he "proposed the creation of a State— Muslim India, now known as Pakistan".<sup>12</sup> A politician, in the course of his 600-page polemic on the issue of the electorate in Pakistan, said that at Allahabad Iqbal "for the first time proposed [that] the North-Western British Indian Provinces (excluding Kashmir) might be constituted into a separate state. This was the genesis of the conception of 'Pakistan'"; and "he proposed a separate Muslim State in North-West India"; and again, Iqbal was "the architect of Pakistan".<sup>13</sup> In the words of a very successful popular novelist in Urdu and biographer of national leaders, Iqbal

advocated "Pakistan" and a partition of India.<sup>14</sup> These assertions appeared in a book on Iqbal's political career published by the Iqbal Academy of Karachi.

A recent biographer of Fazlul Haq, the Bengali leader who moved the Lahore Resolution, sees Iqbal at Allahabad giving "a clarion call to the Muslims of India to struggle for the creation of a separate homeland for themselves".<sup>15</sup> The word "homeland" also appears twice in this connection in a biographical study of Jinnah by G. Allana, who writes that "Iqbal boldly declared he was ready to stake his all for the freedom of India, if the Muslims of India were assured of their own homeland by the amalgamation of the Punjab, Sind, Frontier and Baluchistan into a single 'Muslim State'"; and again, he said that "the Muslim majority provinces of the Punjab, the Frontier, Sind and Baluchistan should be grouped together and made a single homeland for the Muslims of North-West India".<sup>16</sup> A prominent Iqbalite of Lahore confirmed that "one miracle which flowed from him is the creation of Pakistan of which he gave the concept".<sup>17</sup> A former chief justice of East Pakistan has said the same thing in the same words: "The political plan which he had propounded at the Sybilline session of the Muslim League led to the creation of Pakistan."<sup>18</sup>

It is interesting to see that Iqbal's son, a frequent speaker at meetings and symposia held on the death anniversary of his father and author of several articles on Iqbal, has refused to go all the way with these makers of public opinion. He prefers to call the Allahabad proposal Iqbal's "abstract and nebulous political ideal"<sup>19</sup>, and correctly paraphrases it: Iqbal "suggested that the Muslims of the Indian sub-continent should demand territorial specification in the form of a separate state on the basis of a distinct cultural unity".<sup>20</sup> The words are well chosen and give no aid and comfort to those who claim that Iqbal wanted a division of India, a sovereign Muslim or Islamic state, or an independent Muslim India.

Most historians have made a fatal choice. Instead of reading the address itself they have quoted one another. Interpretation of documents is a privilege of the historian, and he is free to read any reasonable and feasible meaning in the given words. But when he ignores the original source and even quotes it from a secondary source, he has surrendered his right of interpretation to the ease of borrowing conventional opinion.

As we saw above, Qureshi had in 1940 already committed himself to a certain view of Iqbal. He has held on to it consistently in his later writings (like his unchanging views on Jamaluddin "Afghani", as examined in chapter 1). He admits that in 1930 Iqbal's "ideas on the subject were still vague and aroused no immediate response", but proceeds to state that "this was the first time that the idea of a separate state for the Muslims had been put forward from the platform of a political party".<sup>21</sup> Iqbal told the Muslim League session "that he hoped to see the Muslim areas of the sub-continent become a separate state".<sup>22</sup> This is not merely a case of interpreting Iqbal in a certain way but of putting in his mouth words which he did not say. Irrespective of whether he wanted a *separate* state or not (he could have demanded a separate state as a unit of the Indian federation), he laid claim only to the north-west of India, not to "Muslim areas of the sub-continent". Again, in saying that separation was put forward for the first time "from the platform of a political party", Qureshi has ignored Zulfikar's address to the Khilafat Conference of December 1929.

Qureshi does not agree with those who contend that Iqbal wanted only an enlarged Muslim province within an Indian federation. His objection is based on two points. When Iqbal talked of this consolidated area being within or without the British Empire, he must have meant it as an independent state. This is not convincing. Iqbal was saying that whether India as a whole chose, at some future date, to leave the Empire or preferred to stay in the Commonwealth he would, in any case, like the north-western Muslim areas to be amalgamated into one large unit. Internal evidence is clear on this point. Separation or independence finds no mention anywhere in the address. To the argument that Iqbal was not urging separation because in the address he talked a great deal of other matters like federation, separate electorates, legislative quota, etc., Qureshi replies that he was doing this because "he was speaking from the platform of a body which had as yet not accepted the policy of complete separation from India". But his own proposition "could only mean independence".<sup>23</sup> This point has already been discussed in detail, and we have seen from Iqbal's own words that what he called his "territorial" solution amounted to no more than the creation of a large province. His reference to the Nehru Report's criticism of such a proposal and his reply to Sastri's allegation leave no doubt about it.

A great majority of Pakistani historians has presented a similar view of Iqbal, though, unlike Qureshi, without even trying to argue the issue. Aziz Ahmad is a principal example of this trend. In 1959, he wrote that Iqbal "est, en generale, considere comme le premier a avoir concu l'idee d'un Etat indien musulman autonome le Pakistan". He has phrased the statement with caution "he is generally considered to have conceived". He quotes the correct word "*autonome*" from Iqbal's address, and then confuses it with Pakistan. He also writes that this address was delivered at "la Ligue arabe en 1930", but that must be a misprint.<sup>24</sup> In 1960, he connected Iqbal with Jamaluddin and said that "this made it possible for him to reduce al Afghani's concept of a north west-Indian and Central Asian Muslim state to the practical limits of Muslim politics in India by suggesting in 1930 the creation of a separate Muslim state within the Indian sub-continent".<sup>25</sup> In 1961, he repeated that in 1930 Iqbal "proposa le premier la creation d'un Etat musulman separe en Inde".<sup>26</sup> Note the capital E of *Etat*. In 1967, he reiterated that Iqbal "first put forward a proposal for the creation of a separate state in India in 1930", and he "was the first explicitly to formulate the theory of the necessity of the creation of a separate Indian Muslim state".<sup>27</sup> In the same year he wrote in another place "Le separation politique trouva son expression la plus explicite" in the Allahabad address of 1930.<sup>28</sup>

S.A. Vahid, the foremost upholder of the Iqbal myth, is more dogmatic in his assertions. In the Allahabad address Iqbal "made a definite suggestion regarding the creation of a Muslim State on the sub-continent".<sup>29</sup> He was "one of the first men to declare from the platform of the Muslim League the fact that the creation of a sovereign Muslim State provided the only solution of the political, religious, and communal troubles with which the country is faced".<sup>30</sup> The Allahabad address contained Iqbal's "proposal for the division of the sub-continent", for he "was now convinced that the only way for the Muslims to survive on the sub-continent was to have a homeland".<sup>31</sup> He also states, "It has been asked if it was really Iqbal who first suggested the name Pakistan. The question can be answered in one word 'No'".<sup>32</sup> This question has never been asked, and to say that it has been is very misleading. Then, contradicting what he had said earlier, he goes on, "Iqbal was not the first to suggest this [a partition]. But it is to his credit that

Iqbal was the first to suggest a homeland for the Muslims from the platform of the All India Muslim League".<sup>33</sup>

Trained historians and political scientists echo the traditional theme. Abdul Hamid says that in his Allahabad address Iqbal "adumbrated the plan for an independent Muslim state on the north-west of India".<sup>34</sup> G.W. Choudhury asserts that "the vision of a separate state had already been expressed by the poet-philosopher Allama Iqbal in 1930" when he had proclaimed that the future of the Muslims of India "lay in a separate state".<sup>35</sup>

Such a persistent view of history was bound to travel abroad, and we find several foreign students of Pakistani history accepting it without demur. Rushbrook Williams's statement that in 1930 Iqbal "put forward the demand for an autonomous Muslim State" is a curious one, however it is interpreted. If Iqbal was asking for an autonomous state within an Indian federation the word should not be spelt with a capital S, for that implies an independent political entity, and Iqbal does not spell it like this. (This point is discussed fully in the following section). If Iqbal was asking for an independent state the word "autonomous" is misleading: autonomy is not sovereignty. But it is obvious from the rest of Rushbrook Williams's remarks that in his opinion Iqbal wanted an independent state, for he continues, "The idea spread; and although for some time Jinnah himself remained unconvinced, it began to attract increasing attention from the Muslim community".<sup>36</sup> It is unnecessary to point out that at no stage did Jinnah demand autonomy.<sup>37</sup>

A more cautious statement is made by Ian Stephens: "At the session in 1930 of the Muslim League in Allahabad, a rough first sketch of what became the Pakistan project was formally commended for attention, for the first time in the League's history."<sup>38</sup> The "rough first sketch" is a more prudent expression than the wild and exaggerated claims made by others, though it is still doubtful if the later Pakistan plan, embracing Bengal and Assam and seeking sovereignty, can reasonably be said to emerge from Iqbal's first sketch.

Percival Spear has made two statements in the course of the same year which are at odds with each other. According to one, Iqbal "came forward in 1930 for a separate homeland in the north-west".<sup>39</sup> According to the other, Iqbal "suggested the union of the Frontier Province, Baluchistan, Sind and Kashmir as a

Muslim state within a federation".<sup>40</sup> In the first, it will be noticed, Iqbal is demanding an independent state; a province or colony is far from being a homeland. In the second, he is demanding only a larger province in an Indian federation. Besides this contradiction, Iqbal is also misquoted in the second statement. The Punjab is omitted though Iqbal mentioned it specifically, and Kashmir is included though Iqbal did not refer to it.

The treatment of Iqbal by American scholars is no less cavalier. One of them calls him "perhaps the first important Muslim leader to suggest the idea of a separate Muslim state".<sup>41</sup> In spite of the happy qualification contained in the "perhaps", the claim for separation is affirmed. Another provides a rather over-imaginative picture of the state visualized by Iqbal. After assuming that an independent state was the objective, he says, "he offered no precise description of this state, but thought of it as a utopia. It was to be an ideal society guided by a disinterested class of intellectuals, Pan-Islamic in outlook".<sup>42</sup> At another place but at the same time, a different account is given by the same author. One year after his Allahabad address, Iqbal wrote of the need "to redistribute the country and to provide one or more Muslim states with absolute majorities".<sup>43</sup> This is offered as a quotation from Iqbal. I have not been able to discover its source or determine its difference from the Allahabad proposal.

After reading the above account of the history of what we may call the Iqbal myth, it is not at all surprising to find that popular and text book history has been made to conform to the accepted theory. Once the journalists and the popular writers had persuaded the general reader to believe in the traditional point of view and the historians had convinced themselves and one another of the truth of the idea (without reading the original), the next step was to condition the mind of the rising student generation. The task was taken up seriously and executed with some efficiency. Before looking at the following examples one must remember that education at all levels is under the strict control of the state.

In a text book prepared in 1955 by a board consisting of virtually every practising historian in the country it was stated that at Allahabad Iqbal "set before the nation the goal of a Muslim State".<sup>44</sup> Since then this book has been reprinted several times and placed on the compulsory or required reading list of nearly every college. A few years earlier, an introductory study of Pakistan

aimed at higher secondary students, and jointly written by a Pakistani and an Englishman, affirmed that it was Iqbal "who first conceived the idea of a separate Muslim State in the Indian sub-continent".<sup>45</sup>

The spectacle of even more incorrect information combined with much wrongly-placed enthusiasm is offered by two publications of the Government of Pakistan. In a short book on Jinnah, apparently meant for the young readers, we read the extraordinary statement that during his "four-year exile" in England Jinnah was thinking of Iqbal who "had suggested a separate homeland for the Indian Muslims".<sup>46</sup> And about this "homeland" we are confidently told that "as far back as 1930 he had suggested that all those areas where Muslims were in greater number than the Hindus should be grouped and made a separate homeland for the Muslims of the Indian sub-continent".<sup>47</sup> For the first assertion we have no evidence either in Jinnah's statements, or in the memoirs of those people who were meeting Jinnah during his stay in London, or in Jinnah's letters to Abdul Matin Chowdhury which have now been published. The second assertion is palpably false, for Iqbal was referring to the north-west and not to "all those areas" where Muslims were in a majority.

The second publication of this order is a brief account of the history of the Pakistan Movement which, the authoress tells us, is "meant for school children" and whose "main object" is "to give Pakistani children a picture of our historical past, the present and future" (Preface). This picture of the historical past shows that at Allahabad Iqbal "suggested that in those provinces of India where the Muslims were in greater number than the Hindus, a separate homeland for the Muslims should be created".<sup>48</sup> The statement reproduces, almost in exact words, the error contained in the earlier publication, *viz.*, an unwarranted extension of Iqbal's claim from the north-west to the Muslim majority areas throughout India. The intention is clear: to present Iqbal as the 1930 prophet of the 1947 Pakistan, and as the only person to have inspired Jinnah to think on the lines of partition.

In a volume on the founders of Pakistan two young writers have similarly credited Iqbal with "the vision to foresee that the Muslims and the Hindus would be better [off] by living in separate states". This vision was presented "in a concrete form in the shape of the Presidential Address" which he delivered at Allahabad.<sup>49</sup>

The acceptance of the standard theory was not confined to school children, young students and under-graduates. Research work done on the post-graduate level showed similar acquiescence.<sup>50</sup> The myth had become authoritative history.<sup>51</sup>

### The Address Widely Misquoted

A major instrument in the perpetuation of this myth has been a straight misquotation of the most vital passage in Iqbal's proposal (which has already been quoted twice, but, if the reader permits, must be cited once again). The heart of his scheme is contained in these two sentences: "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 of North-West India."<sup>52</sup> Besides the context of this passage and the contents of the whole address, an analysis of which has already been made, one principal indication of his intentions is given by the use of the word "state" with a small s at both places. It is not, of course, a conclusive argument. But generally when one is talking of units in a federation and using "state" to mean a component part of that federation the word is spelt without a capital S. There is no reason to believe that Iqbal was unaware of this distinction. Had he been envisaging an independent and sovereign state in the north-west, he would have used a capital S. That he did not do so is a further argument in favour of interpreting his suggestion as the creation of a larger province which would form a part of a federated India.

A very large number of historians and authors quote Iqbal wrongly, writing State in place of state at one or both places. The mis-reproduction may be deliberate or unwitting, but it does alter the meaning of the passage and gives the wrong impression that Iqbal was demanding an independent State, not a province. Since it is possible that the general misconception about Iqbal's scheme has arisen from this misquotation, it seems fair that the students of Iqbal should know the places where it occurs.

Part of the blame for spreading the error must go to Shamloo who was the first to collect and edit Iqbal's English political speeches and statements. He reproduced the second sentence

incorrectly, giving a capital S to the word state, while in the original it is in the lower case.<sup>53</sup> Every writer on Iqbal who took pen in hand and did not care to go to the original reproduced Shamloo's error. We don't know how or why Shamloo himself was led into committing this mistake. He does not cite the sources in his collection, and therefore gives us no opportunity to find out whether he was just careless or was provided with a corrupt text. A more recent and comprehensive collection of Iqbal's writings, put together by a well-known Iqbal scholar, suffers from the same defect. It puts a capital S in the second sentence, and refuses to give the source from where the address is taken.<sup>54</sup> In all probability he has copied from Shamloo.

One explanation of this distortion could have been that the original address was not available to Shamloo and Vahid. In that case, however, they were obliged to mention this in the preface and tell the reader the source from where they had taken the text. This is a universal practice among editors and compilers of documents who have had some training. The excuse that the correct text was not available cannot be pleaded by Shamloo and Vahid, because it was available to them at at least four places besides Iqbal's own original. The *Indian Annual Register*, a standard and well-used reference work available in several libraries in Pakistan, had reproduced the full text correctly in its second volume of 1930.<sup>55</sup> The special Pakistan issue of the *Aligarh Magazine* of 1944 also contained the correct text.<sup>56</sup> It is reported that AIML office reprinted the address in 1945, and presumably on its p. 12 the passage in question was correctly given, for Khalid bin Sayeed quotes from this source and his citation is free of this error.<sup>57</sup> In 1946, F.K. Khan Durrani reproduced the address in full in *The Meaning of Pakistan*;<sup>58</sup> and much later a publication of the Government of Pakistan did the same;<sup>59</sup> both reproductions are correct. Only a very few authors quote from these correct sources; and, to our astonishment, even they repeat the primary error by misquoting a correct text.<sup>60</sup> The rest go to Shamloo,<sup>61</sup> thus perpetuating the mistake, or cite no source at all to sustain their misquotation.<sup>62</sup>

Some treatments of Iqbal leave Shamloo behind in tampering with the text, offering the word State (with a capital S) in both sentences: Waheeduzzaman's *Towards Pakiatan* (p. 132), who professes to quote from Shamloo; S.A. Vahid's "Allama Iqbal" in

- *A History of Freedom Movement* (Vol III, Part II, p. 507), *Studies in Iqbal* (p. 281), and "Iqbal as a Politician" (*Dawn*, 23 April 1967), where no source is quoted; S.S. Pirzada's "The Lahore Resolution (1940)" in *A History of the Freedom Movement* (Vol. IV, Parts I and II, p. 82); Sir Reginald Coupland's *Indian Politics, 1936-1942* (p. 198), quoting the *Indian Annual Register*; H.R. Aiyer's *Why Pakistan?* (p. 3), quoting no one; and G. Allana's *Pakistan Movement: Historical Documents* (p. 87), giving no source; and one contemporary reference, Butshikan's "The Muslim World" (in the *Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore, 19 October 1931). There is one other example of this category where the error is incomprehensible. In the *Struggle for Independence* issued by the Government of Pakistan, to which I have referred in the preceding paragraph, the correct text is fully reproduced in an appendix, but in the body of the book the misquotation appears in two different places.<sup>63</sup>

Then there are works which quote only the second sentence with a capital S, leaving the first one correctly intact: I.H. Qureshi's *The Muslim Community* (p. 297), and S.M. Ikram's *Makers of Pakistan* (pp. 183-181) and *Modern Muslim India and the Birth of Pakistan* (p. 181), both quoting Shamloo; W.C. Smith's *Modern Islam in India* (English ed. p. 254, Indian ed. pp. 307-308), who claims to quote from the original; Hafeez Malik's *Moslem Nationalism in India and Pakistan* (p. 240), who says he is quoting from Durrani; and Khaliquzzaman's *Pathway to Pakistan* (p. 108), Abid Husain's *The Destiny of Indian Muslims* (p. 66), G. Allana's *Quaid-e-Azam Jinnah* (p. 216), S.S. Pirzada's *The Pakistan Resolution and the Historic Lahore Session* (p. 7), Muhammad Ali's *The Emergence of Pakistan* (p. 25), Abdullah Anwar Beg's *The Poet of the East* (p. 262), A.S. Khurshid's "Origin of Pakistan" (*The Pakistan Times*, 23 March 1962), and Riffat Hasan's "Iqbal and Pakistan" (*ibid.*, 14 August 1968), all these quoting without any reference.

Some studies quote only one sentence, either the first or the second, but add a capital S to the operative word. Examples of these are: Syed Mahbub Murshid's "The Pebbled Shore" in K.A. Rahim's *Iqbal: The Poet of Tomorrow* (p. 141), Mian Amiruddin's "More About the Forgotten Hero" (*The Pakistan Times*, 10 May 1964), and M.R.T's *Pakistan and Muslim India* (2nd. ed. p. 82).

Among all the works consulted in the preparation of the present study only six reproduce Iqbal correctly: *A Short History of*

*Pakistan* (Book Four, p. 205; this portion by Waheeduzzaman), Donald Wilber's *Pakistan: Yesterday and Today* (p. 99), Richard Symond's *The Making of Pakistan* (p. 36), Muhammad Noman's *Muslim India* (p. 312), S. Hyder's *Progress of Pakistan* (p. 35), and A.B. Rajput's *Muslim League Yesterday and Today* (p. 222). It is an interesting observation that out of these six authors two are foreigners, and of the four Pakistani writers only one (Waheeduzzaman) is a professional historian. Journalists and popular writers have for once set an example of correct reporting which the historians might well have emulated.

What is astounding in this affair of almost universal misquotation is the unanimity with which even trained scholars and historians have depended on a secondary source for such an important passage from such a celebrated document. If the original text was not available in any library in Pakistan, copies could have been obtained from where it was. The fact that correct reproductions had already been made by Durrani and the official publication means that the true text was available to those working in Lahore and Karachi. Some of the historians quoted above were working in London or places in Canada and the United States where the original address is available. Yet they appear to have preferred Shamloo's clumsy editing to the original source. Further, even those who have quoted Shamloo have often quoted him wrongly, and compounded his mistake by putting in a capital S at both places. Sheer carelessness alone can explain this. Only W.C. Smith has gone to the original, and yet his quotations in both the English and Indian editions of the book are wrong, which shows that even the availability of the true word is no guarantee that it will be reported correctly. And then there is a large circle of authors who have just not cared to cite any source, thus making it easier to clothe their own interpretation in what are alleged to be Iqbal's words.

Iqbal himself has added to the confusion. In the address he italicized the passage in question, which shows the care and attention with which he must have phrased it. He could not have spelt "state" with a small s twice had he not meant it to stand for a federal unit: he should either have written it as "State" or added the word independent or sovereign had he meant a separate Muslim country. Nor can we take shelter behind the excuse of a misprint, for the whole text of the address is printed clearly in large type and

does not contain a single printing error. Thus it is clear that when he wrote "state" he meant exactly that. So far there is no difficulty.

The difficulty arises from the wording, or rather the lettering, of Edward Thompson's letter to *The Times* of 3 October 1931 and Iqbal's reply to it of 12 October. Thompson attacked Iqbal for making the Allahabad proposal and quoted the famous passage with a capital S at both places. In his reply Iqbal said that Thompson "has torn the following passage from its context in my presidential address", and then quoted the full passage itself, and the quotation showed a capital S in both sentences. Not only did Iqbal not correct Thompson for misquoting his passage, but he himself quoted it wrongly.<sup>64</sup> It is not easy to explain this. Unless Iqbal knew his address by heart, which is very improbable, he must have quoted from a written record, and this record could not have been any other but the text of the address. And that makes it harder to think of any explanation. Either he was careless in the draft of the letter he wrote or he did not correct the work of his typist—assuming that the letter was sent to the newspaper in typescript. It is also possible that he thought that it made no difference how the words were spelt. In any case, it remains a minor mystery. But, as we will see shortly, his answer to Thompson's letter does not at all encourage the general impression that he had advocated a separate state. On the contrary, it is one of the clearest proofs we have from his own hand that he had only suggested the creation of a Muslim province.

### The Arguments of the Myth-Makers

This study would remain incomplete without looking at the evidence produced by Iqbal's misinterpreters in support of their statements and assertions.

"Few thought at the time [1930]", wrote S.A. Vahid, "that Iqbal's foresight would lead to the creation of the independent and sovereign state of Pakistan. It may be said that while other people also might have thought that a solution of the political troubles of the sub-continent of India lay in the creation of Pakistan, to Iqbal must go the credit for having been the first to present to the world the scheme as a political proposition."<sup>65</sup> Having thus stated a "fact", he disposed of the matter of evidence in one magisterial

remark, "In view of the overwhelming and irrefutable evidence, documentary and otherwise, it should be unnecessary even to refer to attempts that are being made to belittle the part played by Iqbal in the creation of Pakistan".<sup>66</sup> This "overwhelming and irrefutable evidence" finds no place in the volume in which it is referred to with such finality. Let us try to seek it elsewhere.

In 1950 was published a book called *Makers of Pakistan and Modern Muslim India* by one who called himself "Al-Beiruni"; later it turned out that he was S.M. Ikram, a civil servant. It contained chapters on Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Hali, Mohsin-ul-Mulk, Viqar-ul-Mulk, Shibli, Azad, Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan. Iqbal was not considered worthy of a chapter to himself and was fobbed off with a few scattered references. Nor was there a chapter on Rahmat Ali.<sup>67</sup> A revised edition of this book under a changed title was brought out in 1965, and it made full amends for its earlier indifference to Iqbal. By now Ikram, who this time was writing under his own name, had not only come to realize Iqbal's importance in the movement for Pakistan, but had firmly subscribed his name to the list of those who believed that Iqbal had initiated the Pakistan idea and inspired Jinnah to make it his cause.

Like most claimants of Iqbal's exaggerated role in the movement towards partition, Ikram also provided no documentary evidence and made no attempt to examine the Allahabad address or to argue for his interpretation of it. A series of assertions were made, some of them very significant, but unfortunately no supporting testimony was produced beyond what might have been mere hearsay or his own memory (we are not even told which is which).

After participating in the by-now standard drill on the Allahabad address, viz., that Iqbal "set, for the first time, before the Indian Muslims, the national goal of what later came to be known as Pakistan",<sup>68</sup> he made a reference to Iqbal's visit to London in 1931 in connection with the RTC. In London, Iqbal "had, for one thing, many meetings with Muhammad Ali Jinnah, whom he was able to interest in his scheme for the future of India".<sup>69</sup> Here it should suffice to repeat what has been said before: that there is no material proof at all, documentary or otherwise, of Jinnah having shown any interest in Iqbal's suggestion at this date, not to speak of having allowed himself to be persuaded of its value, practicability or importance.

This treatment of Iqbal was rounded off by the remark that he "put forward the scheme in a concrete, tangible form at the principal political platform of Muslim India, gave the proposal the prestige of his illustrious name, and worked for its success".<sup>70</sup> Each of these four assertions is open to formidable doubt. Even those, like I.H. Qureshi, who interpret the Allahabad address as a demand for a partition, agree that at that time Iqbal's ideas were vague and nebulous; his son, Javid Iqbal, thinks the same; and any one with the slightest acquaintance with the text of the address is bound to reach the same conclusion. To call it concrete and tangible is to give a different meaning to language. Nor will any student of the politics of that time agree to call the Muslim League "the principal political platform of Muslim India". The League was then weak in organization and completely overshadowed by the Muslim Conference. We have seen above that the number of well-known and prominent leaders attending the 1930 annual session gave it the appearance of something even less than a provincial political conference. As for Iqbal's having given the scheme "the prestige of his illustrious name", it is sufficient to recall the cold indifference with which the Muslim League treated it and the eloquent silence with which Muslim leaders received it. Finally, we are not told how Iqbal "worked for its success". He did not repeat it at the RTC, he did not mention it before the 1932 AIMC session, and he did not reassert it in any public statement or private communication.

Another report of Iqbal having talked of partition in London comes from Frank Moraes, an Indian journalist. Moraes was in London during the second RTC, and he recalled the incident in 1973 as follows: "One evening I had dinner at Shafi's Indian restaurant in Gerrard Street, then a popular meeting place for Indians in London. It was during one of the sessions of the RTC, and at the next table was a group of Muslim delegates, among them the poet, Sir Muhammad Iqbal, who was advocating the partition of India. He mentioned the word Pakistan. It was the first time I had heard it. I told Jinnah about the episode when I next met him. He had a habit of throwing his head back when something amused or interested him. 'My dear boy', he chuckled, 'don't you know that Iqbal isn't a politician? He's a poet. Poets are dreamers'."<sup>71</sup> I find it hard to trust this tale. Moraes is not sure which session of the RTC it was. He is recalling an incident which happened 41

years ago. And in 1932 the word Pakistan had not yet been coined.

Some writers have quoted Iqbal's earlier views, on the impracticability and undesirability of Muslims being submerged in Hindu culture to a point where they would lose their identity, as evidence of his thinking on separatist lines. Our previous chapters have demonstrated that this was a commonplace opinion even in the nineteenth century, and can have no causal connection with a demand for the creation of a separate Muslim state. Nevertheless, it may help us to read Iqbal's mind if we look at these earlier expressions of his views. They may not lead us to a different interpretation of his Allahabad proposal, but they reflect Iqbal's general sentiment.

In the first decade of the twentieth century, the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs of Amritsar had established a literary and learned organization called Minerva Lodge and issued a monthly journal *Minerva*. In March 1909, Munshi Ghulam Qadir Farrukh Amritsari invited Iqbal to the annual meeting of the Lodge to be held in April at Amritsar. In reply, Iqbal excused himself on the plea that the annual session of the Anjuman-i-Hamayat-i-Islam (a Punjabi Muslim philanthropic body of Lahore) was scheduled for the same time; and wrote that the Muslims of Amritsar did not think well of the Lodge. Farrukh wrote back, saying that undoubtedly the Hindus had joined the Lodge in much greater number than the Muslims, but all members practised brotherhood and equality, and that all efforts to bring in more Muslims into the society had failed. In reply to this letter, Iqbal wrote on 28 March 1909. "I, too, have been of the belief that distinction of religion should disappear from this country, and have till now practised it in private life. But now I think it is essential for both Hindus and Muslims to safeguard their national identity (*qawmi shakhsiyyat*). Though the thought of creating a common nationhood (*mushtarik qawmiyyat*) in India is very beautiful, and has a poetic appeal, but in view of the present conditions and of the unconscious trends of the nations (*qawmon ki nadanista raftar*) appears to be impracticable."<sup>72</sup>

Much has been made of a contribution of Iqbal to the *Census Report of India* of 1911 entitled "Muslim Civilization" A short passage from it is to the effect: "To try to cover religion into [sic] a system of speculative knowledge is absolutely useless. The point that I have tried to bring out is that Islam has a far deeper

significance for us than merely religion. It has a national meaning for us. The idea of Islam is ultimately our Home or Country in which we live, move and have our being according to the tenets of Islam." After quoting this, one scholar comments that "these words are a proof of the fact that Allama Iqbal had presented a demand (*matalaba*) for a separate homeland for the Muslims of the sub-continent in as early as 1911". As "all the people agree that Iqbal had presented the demand for a separate homeland for the Muslims" in 1930 at Allahabad, "now I suggest to the intellectual circles that they should accept, as the source of the concept of the Pakistan of today, this article by Iqbal of 1911 in place of his 1930 Allahabad address".<sup>73</sup>

Iqbal's 1911 words are vague and do not lend themselves to such an interpretation. However, several persons came forward to accept the theory that the date of Iqbal's prophecy of a Pakistan should be pushed back to 1911. One of them claimed that this article was actually a lecture on the "Muslim Community" delivered by Iqbal at Aligarh in 1910. "I was a first year student there", he continued, "at that time we young students and other senior scholars and professors took it to mean that just as there could be no English nation without England so there could be no Muslim nation without a Muslim State. This was the general argument of the Muslim educated class at that time and Allama Iqbal had the courage to express it at the Aligarh meeting."<sup>74</sup> This may pass without comment.

In February 1912, Iqbal told a public meeting in Lahore that among the benefits accruing to India from the King Emperor's visit for the Delhi Durbar (at which the 1905 partition of Bengal was annulled, to much grief and anger of the Muslim community) would be that "the nations of India will merge together (*yahan ki qawmen baham mil jayengi*)".<sup>75</sup>

In March 1924, he wrote in a letter to Sayyid Sulaiman Nadawi, "The fact of the Muslims being sold to the Hindus is something intolerable. It is a pity that the Khilafatists have gone astray from their true path. They are leading us to a nationalism (*qawmiyyat*) which is not acceptable to any Musalman even for a single moment."<sup>76</sup>

However, in public he continued to express contrary views. In April 1926, he said that "I want it from my heart that Hindus and Muslims should remove their differences and live in the country like

others".<sup>77</sup> In January 1927, he told a public meeting in Lahore that "the concept of a united nationhood (*muthadda qawmiyyat*) is good for us. Though there will be difficulties in achieving this high goal, yet once we reach this high objective we will be very happy, and will not consider the effort as having been a waste. Therefore, O Hindus and Musalmans, you should cultivate each other in such a way that we can tolerate the existing differences".<sup>78</sup>

In May 1927, while speaking before a Punjab Provincial Muslim League meeting at Lahore, he declared: "I have the right to say that I was the first Indian to realize the importance and need of Hindu-Muslim unity, and it has ever been my wish (*arzu*) to see this unity take a permanent form."<sup>79</sup> In November, he entertained the hope that some practicable solution might be found if the spokesmen of the various Indian nations (*qawmen*, here a better translation would be "communities") could make another attempt to bring them together at one place (*markaz*).<sup>80</sup>

In January 1929, in Madras, he emphasized the "great need" for the unity of the "various communities", and felt that the Hindus and the Muslims ought to arrive at a compromise.<sup>81</sup> At the end of the year, in Lahore, he opined that "if provincial governments are autonomous (*azad*), that is, there is a federal government", there would be no risk to Muslim security even if only 25% seats were occupied by the Muslims.<sup>82</sup>

This survey of his pre-Allahabad opinions does not encourage us to believe that Iqbal upheld the two-nation theory, or wanted a separation between Muslims and Hindus, or looked forward to a dismembered India. On the other hand, he sounds anxious to bring the two communities together, to remove or weaken their differences, and to see a united India taking birth before his eyes.

There is one passage in Iqbal's "Reply to Questions raised by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru" which throws some light on his concept of nation and its implications for the Indian communal problem. "It is obvious", he wrote, "that the Indian nationalist whose political idealism has practically killed his sense of fact, is intolerant of the birth or a desire for self-determination in the heart of the north-west Indian Islam. He thinks, wrongly in my opinion, that the only way to Indian nationalism lies in a total suppression of the cultural entities of the country through the interaction of which alone India can evolve a rich and enduring

culture. A nationalism achieved by such methods can mean nothing but mutual bitterness and even oppression."<sup>83</sup>

Two things about this statement are noticeable. It was written long after the Allahabad address. It does not say anything about separation or partition. On the contrary, it argues against a two-nation theory. The Hindu opposition to the birth of Muslim self-determination in north-west India is condemned, but at the same time the 1930 proposal, whatever Iqbal meant by it, is not recalled. Instead of separation, he is here concerned with the problem of producing a "rich and enduring" Indian culture out of the "ineraction" of the several different cultures in existence in the country. This is quite in keeping with what he had said in 1930 about the harmonizing of the various communalisms of India into a national unity under which no single communalism would be the dominating factor. Instead of being an added proof of his separatist demand, this is a confirmation of his faith in one harmonious Indian whole embracing all local varieties and forces of communalism.

One minor piece of evidence has been produced which upholds the case of the Iqbal school, but unfortunately its original is said to have been lost, and more than one opinion is possible about its context. At some date in the last quarter of 1932, says Nazir Niazi, who was for several years quite close to Iqbal as one of his younger admirers, he (Niazi) wrote to Iqbal inquiring if a transfer of population would be required in case his ideal of a Muslim State were accepted. Only one line of Iqbal's reply is made available to us: "The suggestion for a transfer of population is not mine; it is Lala Lajpat Rai's."<sup>84</sup> Iqbal's reply may be construed to mean that he had advocated a separate state in 1930; though we must remember that the possibility of a transfer of population cannot be ruled out in relation to the creation of a large Muslim province in the north-west to which Muslims from other parts of India might wish to migrate. Iqbal's rejection of such a transfer does not sound consistent with his fundamental premiss that his aim was to save the Muslims from an un-Islamic environment so that they could realize in their society the ethical and social ideals of their religion. The Muslims of the north-west were only a minority of the total Indian Muslim population; and even if Iqbal had wanted a separate state, this could not have been of any help to a large majority of Indian Muslims. In fact, he made this left-out majority even greater

by recommending the exclusion of eastern Punjab from his north-western state.

We also learn from this letter that Iqbal was aware of Lala Lajpat Rai's suggestion for a clear partition, which had been made before his own Allahabad speech. Had he himself been urging a partition, is it not reasonable to expect that he would have referred to Lajpat Rai and other predecessors and drawn a distinction *between his own proposal and theirs*? By having failed to do so he encourages us to believe that he was not speaking about a partition at all.

There is only one definite statement of Iqbal which lends colour to the general theory about him. It has recently been discovered that in a speech delivered on 15 December 1932 in London, at a meeting called by the National League to enable foreign diplomats and members of the House of Lords and House of Commons to meet Iqbal, he said, "Four or five years ago as President of the All India Muslim League, I suggested as a possible solution the formation of a large West-Indian Muslim State. While this suggestion of mine was not embodied in the demands of the Muslims of India, my personal opinion still is that this is the only possible solution. I wait until experience reveals the wisdom or unwisdom of this suggestion."<sup>85</sup>

A careful perusal shows that this is not as clear as it seemed at first sight. Several points need clearing up. If Iqbal spoke these words in December 1932, and we are told he did, his conception of time must have been incredibly hazy. He said that he had spoken to the Muslim League session "four or five years ago", though this had happened exactly two years earlier. He was not delivering this speech 20 or 30 years after the Allahabad address. Long intervals weaken the memory, and one is apt to make a mistake of two or three years in recalling what happened so long ago. Iqbal was far from senile in 1932. And it was not something about whose date he could have been doubtful. His Allahabad address was among the greatest landmarks of his life, certainly the greatest in his political career; and yet we are invited to believe that the date of that year went clean out of his memory. With such a beginning one may be excused for looking at the rest with some scepticism.

Again, the "north-west", repeated a dozen times in the Allahabad address, has here become "West-Indian". This could have been careless phrasing, but it makes the connotation quite

different. In modern Indian history, politics, geography and administration, "West India" has a clearly-demarcated and universally-understood meaning; for example, Bombay is firmly included in this area, and West India logically excludes the north.

In considering the word "State" we come back to the foregoing discussion on the capital S and the small s. With so much confusion about and misquotation of an important written and printed address of which the original is available, it would be imprudent to rely on the spelling of the word in the report handed down to us in the above quotation, and to work out its implications on that assumption.

It is, however, significant that Iqbal did not use the word separate or independent in this speech, just as he had refrained from such expressions in 1930. At the same time he preferred "formation" to "creation". One forms a big area out of several small ones. One does not form an independent state; one creates it. The use of the adjective "large" is also noticeable. He wanted the formation of a large state, not of some small ones. When, later, Jinnah said he wanted Pakistan, he did not say he wanted a large Pakistan or a large Muslim state. The opposite of large is small, and Iqbal was stressing the point that he was in favour of amalgamating the several small Muslim provinces of the north-west into one large one—precisely what he had said at Allahabad.

For these reasons it seems unwise to accept the testimony of this speech as a proof of Iqbal's parentage of the idea of Pakistan. Editors of his writings and speeches have handled their material so carelessly that, apart from the internal contradictions of this speech to which I have pointed out above, we should wait for the discovery of the unimpeachable original text before accepting it as incontrovertible evidence. All canons of historical criticism cast doubt on the genuineness of the available text of this speech.

One habit characteristic of all students of Iqbal's politics is to make controversial assertions without supporting evidence and then to attack those who refuse to bow before their *obiter dicta*. Even the best scholars in this field are not above indulging in this practice. Here and there we come across a writer who cares to present a rational argument. Among this small circle is M.A. Khan whose replies to Iqbal's critics deserve attention. He picks out a few important "accusations" made against Iqbal's reasoning and phrasing and tries to answer them.

The first point to which he gives attention is the use of the word "autonomous" in the Allahabad address. Iqbal had said that he wanted an autonomous state, and his failure or refusal to employ terms like *independent and sovereign* conveys the impression that he was not arguing for a separate state but for a province in an Indian federation. To this Khan has two replies to make. One is that by "autonomous state" he meant dominion status, *i.e.*, autonomy within the British Commonwealth, not membership of the Indian federation. The argument has some plausibility. The concept of autonomy has been used in the constitutional law of the British Commonwealth in this sense, and for many years Canada and Australia were informally referred to as enjoying dominion autonomy or the status of autonomous members of the empire or commonwealth. To this extent the argument holds good. But two considerations dilute the strength of this interpretation. In the first place, in Indian political and constitutional vocabulary the use of the word "autonomy" or "autonomous" was confined to provincial autonomy or autonomous provinces. The terminology of the entire discussion on the making of the Indian federation bears this out. Some Muslim leaders, like Jinnah, had been asking for a federation since 1924 and urging fully autonomous provinces. Whenever the status of India *vis a vis* the British government was at issue the words used were independence, *swaraj*, freedom or dominion status. Hardly any Indian leader declared that he wanted an autonomous India or that he was fighting for Indian autonomy.

In the second place, if by "autonomous" Iqbal meant independent, what was there to stop him from spelling out the details of his demand? Independence was a radical idea in Indian politics, but then the Congress had owned it officially in January 1930 and Hasrat Mohani had been preaching it since 1921. Radicalism could have held no terror for Iqbal who gloried in breaking prescriptive idols. If, as his defenders claim, he was making a radical suggestion in his address, why did his courage to voice the unfashionable idea quail before clarifying the nature of his demand?

The second line of defence raised by Khan is that Iqbal was not interested in the constitutional niceties of a distinction between "complete independence" and "dominion status". "By using the phrase 'sovereign state' he could have gained the sympathy of the extremists in Indian politics but lost that of the moderates, and

further earned the wrath of the ruling class." This would not have been "a demonstration of political wisdom". He realized that his scheme was a novel one and would be unacceptable to Indian and British statesmen. This novelty, he feared, might lead to its rejection. Therefore he abstained from presenting it in words which would have led the Indian politicians and the Muslim leaders to ignore it and the British authorities to reject it out of hand.<sup>86</sup>

It is hardly a tribute to Iqbal to say that he was not interested in the constitutional distinction between independence and dominion status. It was not an academic nicety but a vital controversial issue, particularly since Hasrat Mohani's campaign for a demand for full independence, and more recently since the Congress's resolution on complete independence. Even apart from the passionate debate it aroused among politicians, the distinction had a meaning of its own. The argument of a choice between complete independence and membership of the Commonwealth (which was a British institution with the British Crown at its head, whatever the legal fiction) was a perfectly valid one. To dismiss it as a constitutional nicety is to run away from logic. Some may also find it a little strange that a poet who sang so lyrically of the primacy of the Ego and the vital, pulsating force of the faith of Islam was not averse to leading his people into a British Commonwealth, as if this were the noblest goal a Muslim society could pursue!

It is also no compliment to Iqbal to say that he did not express his real intentions for fear of alienating public opinion and offending the British overlords. Whatever he was in politics, he was not a coward. To make a suggestion in irritatingly vague words is not a mark of political wisdom. To fear the wrath of the imperial power so much as to conceal the true meaning of one's public pronouncement is to surrender self-respect to security. Khan's argument paints Iqbal as completely devoid of courage, and incapable of leading public opinion or countenancing imperial disfavour. Men before Iqbal—British, Hindu and Muslim—had demanded clearly a partition of India and a separate Muslim state. No public anger had descended upon them. No imperial frowns had darkened their fortunes. Why should Iqbal have been singled out for punishment or obloquy had he expressed his wishes without ambiguity? It is such defenders of Iqbal who, by their misplaced but well-intentioned enthusiasm, belittle him, and thus achieve the exact opposite of what they had set out to do.

Then Khan turns to Iqbal's support to AIMC's Delhi resolution, and the resulting incompatibility between this and his demand for a separate state. He solves the contradiction by answering like this. The Muslim Conference resolution had made a plea for a federation in which residuary powers would vest in the provinces. This was close to Iqbal's own conception, and his scheme was in fact only one step further from this resolution. It would not have been practical politics for him to reject a recommendation so near to his own ideal merely for the purpose of boosting his own leadership. Therefore he supported the Muslim Conference resolution as the leader of the Muslim League, and then offered his own scheme in his personal capacity.<sup>87</sup>

How can the concept of an Indian federation, irrespective of where the residuary powers lie, be so close to the scheme of a separate state that a believer in the latter could in conscience support the former in the same breath? There would have been nothing wrong in Iqbal's rejection of the Muslim Conference proposals if his thoughts had a different bent. Either he agreed with the Delhi resolution and therefore with the idea of an Indian federation, and so he would not have put forward his own scheme. Or, he had a solution of his own to give which was radically different from the Muslim Conference stand, and then he had no right to support the Conference's decision. It is meaningless to argue that rejecting the Delhi proposals would have amounted to "boosting his own leadership". If every politician lends his support to previous decisions of the community, without believing in them, in order to avoid the impression that he is self-seeking, the political world will distingerate into chaos and people will lose all trust in the word of their leaders. To run with the hare and hunt with the hounds may bring a brief hour of pleasure, but soon nemesis catches up and the outcome is ignominy. Those who make the Iqbal of 1930 an originator of the idea of a separate state should remember this, and not burden him with an extra charge to be answered.

The next point dealt with by Khan relates to Iqbal's support of some of the recommendations of the Simon Commission. If he had finally rejected a federal solution for India and substituted it with a territorial and political partition, why did he welcome the Simon Commission's suggestions about a federal India? Khan's reply is this. Iqbal did this because the Commission had recommended

complete provincial autonomy and separate electorates, and these two items were very important in his eyes. Further, the Commission had recommended a re-distribution of provinces on religious, linguistic and cultural bases, and this was in consonance with Iqbal's own point of view. The Montagu-Chelmsford scheme had suggested a unitary India; the Nehru Report had also advocated a unitary system; only now the Simon Commission had proposed a federal plan. This was in Muslim interests, and therefore Iqbal called it "sound in principle".<sup>88</sup>

It is clear from this that Iqbal was not asking for separation. He wanted a federation to replace the unitary structure; the Simon Commission had proposed this; therefore, he supported the Commission's scheme. If a federal plan with full provincial autonomy, separate electorates and some re-arrangement of provincial boundaries was in Muslim interests and if Iqbal found it "sound in principle", what was the point in presenting his own scheme which made nonsense of a federal idea? The Commission's federal solution was either in Muslim interests or it was not. If it was, it should have been accepted by Iqbal. If it was not, he should have rejected it and suggested a new solution. But, according to Khan, he did both; something which even a man of Iqbal's great achievements was incapable of doing. Khan also forgets to mention two things. The re-distribution demanded by Iqbal was quite different from that recommended by the British inquiry report. Further, he rather exaggerates the fulness of the provincial autonomy envisaged by the Commission.

Finally, Khan takes up the interesting and important point of Iqbal's failure to present or rather repeat his 1930 scheme at the RTC. Here the defensive barrier is made of poor material: a hastily erected stockade rather than a solid rampart. We are told that "the occasion, the force of circumstances and the demands of discretion and statesmanship dictated that he should not have put this proposal at the Round Table Conference". His scheme could only be considered after the fundamental demands of the Muslims had been conceded. Otherwise it would have been putting the cart before the horse. His scheme was "the palace which was to be built on the foundations of the basic Muslim demands". "Without prior acceptance of these demands how could the building go up?" For Iqbal "to further his scheme at the Round Table Conference would certainly have amounted to an exhibition of egotism and

self-praise". By insisting on their demands Muslims had already alienated the Hindus. Now, at the Conference, they depended on the British for their fulfilment. They could not afford to alienate the British, and this is what Iqbal's campaign in favour of his scheme would have led to. The British would not have liked its Islamic tone and idealism, and might have looked at it as an attempt to revive the Mughal Empire.<sup>89</sup>

It needs no effort to pick holes in such a vulnerable argument. If it is statesmanship to present a scheme from a major platform and not to follow it up, then Khan is using a vocabulary different from ours. It is strange logic to argue that the scheme could only have been brought to the attention of the Conference after Muslim demands had been met. In other words, after a full and detailed federal plan had been decided, devised and drafted at the end of countless debates and much labour and time and after all the major Muslim demands had been met, Iqbal or some other Muslim spokesman should have stood up and addressed the Conference in some such words:

"Mr. Prime Minister, my right honourable friends and fellow delegates, I thank you, on behalf of my delegation, for the courtesy shown to us and the sympathy and readiness with which you have perceived the justice of our cause and the rightness of our demands. On behalf of the entire Muslim population of India, on behalf of all the 75 millions of us, I express my grateful thanks for the acceptance of all our major demands. You have given us full and complete provincial autonomy, thus making our provinces powerful entities. You have conceded us separate electorates, which will enable us to continue to send to the legislatures men and women of our own choice. You have separated Sind from the Bombay Presidency, thus saving the Sindhi's self-respect. You have raised the Frontier Province and Baluchistan to full provincial status, and in so doing removed a long-standing grievance of the proud and freedom-loving wardens of our marches. You have given us statutory majorities in the Punjab and Bengal which was our right by any democratic principle, but still we thank you for it. You have vouchsafed us one-third of all the seats in the federal assembly, and we hope this will add to the Muslim feeling of security. You have made provisions for adequate Muslim representation in all executive bodies at the centre and in the provinces with a view to giving us some voice in the running of the

country. You have also fixed a quota for us in the public services, and thus assured us that our backwardness in education, a very temporary disadvantage we hope, will not mean our exclusion from a share in the administration of the country. And you have, in your infinite wisdom, bestowed upon you by Divine grace, devised a federal system which we are sure will protect our interests, safeguard our future and enable us to make our contribution to the progress and advance of India. Now we see that all the hard labour, all the long hours and all the serious efforts which have gone into the making of this constitution were worth our while. We have produced a system which matches the eminence of this assembly in its quality and ingenuity. For all this we thank you."

"But the fact of the matter is that the Muslims do not want to live in India under any system. [*The members were stunned*]. We want a separate state for ourselves in the north-west where we can be our own masters. [*A hush overwhelmed the chamber*]. Gentlemen, you will, I am sure, recall that such a scheme was put forward some years ago from the platform of our great national organization, the All India Muslim League. We still stand by that scheme and, now, with your permission, Mr. Prime Minister, I am going to place it before this august assembly with the single statement, final and irrevocable, that this is our irreducible, minimum demand on which none among us here, and none in India, dare make compromises or listen to alternatives. [*Pandemonium in the conference hall*]."

Imagination boggles at the results of such a speech at the RTC. It would have made the Muslim delegates and all the parties they spoke for the laughing stock of the world. And yet this is what M.A. Khan thinks should have been done.

It also passes understanding how Iqbal's advocacy of his scheme at the Conference would have amounted to "an exhibition of egotism and self-praise". Was it egotism which impelled him to propound it in the first place at Allahabad? If it was, it did no harm to play the egotist once again in London. If it was not, it was his duty to carry his proposal to the Conference where the real decisions were being taken. And, if Iqbal was afraid of offending the British by repeating his suggestion in London, what had happened to this fear when he was presenting it in 1930? Was the fear now greater? Was it politically wise and morally correct to throw overboard his own scheme, to which he still pinned his faith,

simply because it was likely to estrange the British?

If this is the stuff of which the best arguments of Iqbal's myth-makers<sup>90</sup> are made, the others may be left to the reader's imagination or allowed to rest in oblivion. Their makers are truly fearless. No amount of contradictions weaken their resolve. They are not afraid of looking foolish. They acknowledge no principle of logic, no canon of reasoning. Iqbal supported the Muslim Conference resolution, and at the same time suggested something different. He praised the Simon Commission's recommendations, and in the same breath argued against the Commission's basic idea. He talked in detail of the kind of federalism suitable for India, and along with it demanded a division of the country. He made a revolutionary statement from a public platform without fear or favour, but was not prepared to repeat it lest the British be offended. He proposed a scheme from the Muslim League presidential chair and offered it to the nation as the only solution of the communal problem and went on believing in it, but he did not put it before the London gathering for fear of being seen as waving his own flag. These contradictions are no contradictions in the eyes of the believers. Faith, our elders used to say, dissolves all doubts. Apparently it still does that, for how else can we explain the force and longevity of a point of view which is alike impervious to facts, arguments and common sense. It hugs a certain image, a fancy, to its breast and will not allow its glory to be tarnished. Myth, they seem to say, is stronger than history. They may be right. Whether it may also be truer than history is a question they have never asked themselves.

Even the obvious is ignored by those bent upon presenting Iqbal as the harbinger of the later-day Pakistan. In spite of the fact that the "state" advocated by Iqbal was confined to the Muslim provinces of the north-west and he himself, in the address and in subsequent statements, always talked of the north-west or the west, some defenders of this myth insist that he had included Bengal in his calculations. Some years ago when this was denied by Z.A. Suleri, a Pakistani journalist, Dr. Khurshid sprang to his hero's defence with the astonishing claim that Bengal appears in Iqbal's plan as contained in the address, and the equally astonishing accusation that such baseless statements could only be due to a failure to read the text of the address. In his words, "The statement of Suleri sahib that Bengal did not figure in Allama

Iqbal's plan is incorrect. Though this is not really the fault of Suleri sahib. It is a pity that like Rousseau's famous work, *The Social Contract*, which every one mentions but none studies, people usually do not read the Allahabad address, and even if they do, they do not read it carefully". Interpreting the address as a demand for a "separate Islamic state", he made this clarification about Bengal: "Allama Iqbal's proposal covered the whole of India. He gave the designation of 'states' to the 'provinces' and made each state autonomous (*Khud-mukhtar*). As Muslims were already a majority in Bengal, it had to become a state."<sup>91</sup> It is enough to refer the reader to the relevant passage in the address and let him decide if Bengal can be included in the plan without doing gross violence to Iqbal's actual words.<sup>92</sup>

The same author has also solved the problem of Iqbal's failure to follow up his scheme in the years following the Allahabad address. "There is something called an objective or goal", he tells us, "and there is another thing which we call the means through which that objective is achieved. The means include political games (*dao paych*) which imply the making of compromises on the principle of give-and-take. Allama Iqbal's objective was the one he expressed in the Allahabad address, but when he realized that he did not have the sympathy and support of prominent Muslim leaders, he decided to co-operate with them on the minimum programme on which there was common agreement, and this was Mr. Jinnah's fourteen points. . . . These points were really of fundamental importance for the success of the Pakistan movement. Therefore, what was the harm in Hazrat Allama's acceptance of the establishment, on the basis of these points, of a weak central government, as a temporary political expedient?"<sup>93</sup>

We must admit that this explanation is consistent with Iqbal's attitude in the early and mid 'thirties and his pronouncements at the RTC. It is also plausible provided that the first premiss is granted, *viz.*, that he was in fact demanding a separate state in 1930. He had announced his proposal from the highest platform available to him, but had discovered immediately that he had no support among his colleagues. A similar realization came to him when he found his *confreres* at the London conference indifferent or perhaps even hostile. Therefore he never repeated his Allahabad suggestion and went along with the general trend of Muslim political thinking; but in his heart he did not give up the old idea of

separation, which remained his ideal.

It may have been so, but the argument goes astray where it shows Iqbal accepting a "weak" central government for India. The 1935 constitution which emerged out of the long labours of the Simon Commission, the RTC and the Joint Select Committee, did not establish a weak centre. The federal system as finally devised was a "close" one, not a loose one, and no talk of provincial autonomy could disguise the fact that the federal centre had been armed with powerful opportunities of interfering in provincial affairs, determining the content of the concurrent list, controlling provincial finance, governing the conduct of senior civil servants posted in the provinces, intervening in provincial administration in the name of statutory safeguards, and in other ways making provincial independence a mere legal fiction. It was a stroke of good fortune for the Muslims that the federal part of the constitution did not come into operation, otherwise the story of the Congress-ruled provinces in 1937-39 would have reproduced itself all over India, and the Muslims of the Muslim-majority areas would not have escaped the Congress whip.

The conclusion to be drawn is that Iqbal's acquiescence in the new constitution cut at the root of all his major principles enunciated at Allahabad. If he was demanding a separate state, of course the new Act took no notice of it. If he was arguing for such a re-distribution of provinces as would secure Muslim interests and bring into existence a large north-western unit, his wishes were once again ignored. The separation of Sind from Bombay was the only concession to Iqbal made by the new arrangement; but this demand had been voiced by many Muslims, and some Hindus, for several years. It was a far cry from the territorial solution urged by Iqbal.

### **The Upper India Muslim Conference Proposal**

Some attention has been paid to Iqbal's plans to organize a separate political party for the north-west Muslims, and it has been suggested that his Allahabad address was in fact a child of these plans. It is therefore relevant, and may be profitable, to examine this project in some detail and to find out if the exercise throws any fresh light on Iqbal's mind and widens our understanding of the problem we are studying. The account which follows has much

interest for us, though it must be pointed out that the whole of it is based on information derived from one major source<sup>94</sup> and one editorial annotation.<sup>95</sup>

Towards the end of 1930 Iqbal saw the course of Muslim politics darkened with clouds of uncertainty. On the one hand, the Hindus were in no mood to concede any Muslim demand, however reasonable it was. On the other, the Government of India was expressing views which compromised all those major recommendations of the Simon Report which had held out some hope for the Muslims. On top of that, Muslim delegates to the first RTC "committed a political blunder in watering down the Muslim demands and even accepting [a] joint electorate that killed all chances of Muslims securing majorities in [the] Punjab and Bengal". In these circumstances Iqbal came to believe that the Muslims of the north-western areas should try to solve their problem by themselves without leaving their destiny in the hands of others. This belief was strengthened by a feeling that these areas posed certain problems which were peculiar to them, and which the Muslims of other parts of India could not understand. In fact, in his opinion the rest of Muslim India was not at all interested in these issues. In short, "Iqbal realized that the peculiar problems of the Muslims in the North-West could only be understood by the people belonging to this region and that in order to survive they would have to chalk out their own line of action."<sup>96</sup>

He opened the campaign in November 1930. In those days Lahore had three daily newspapers with "separatist ideas": *The Muslim Outlook* in English, and *Inqilab* and *Siyasat* in Urdu. The editors of all the three were intimately known to Iqbal. Long private conversations were held on the subject, and finally, under Iqbal's inspiration, *Inqilab* wrote a leader on 21 November underlining the necessity of convening a conference of the Muslims of northern India to discuss the problems and difficulties of the region. The last paragraph of the editorial ran: "The need for a Conference of the Muslims of Northern India was felt since long. However, recent events have made it absolutely necessary. As long as [the] Centre's hold on the provinces is not weakened, constitutional reforms are not introduced in Sind, the NWFP, and Baluchistan, and Muslim majority is not secured in the Punjab through [a] separate electorate, the political existence of the Muslims of Northern India will remain in jeopardy. No doubt, it is

the crying need of the hour that Muslims of this region rise to the occasion and decide what practical steps are necessary in order to safeguard their rights in the Punjab, Sindh, the NWFP, and Baluchistan. If they remain inert at this critical moment, they will be sorry for ever."<sup>97</sup> Iqbal supported this proposal in an interview with *The Muslim Outlook*, which was published in translation in the *Inqilab* of 23 November.<sup>98</sup>

This new call to action was given a period of two days to sink into the Muslim mind. Then on 23 November Iqbal called a meeting of the leading Muslim citizens of Lahore in the Barkat Ali Islamia Hall. The assembly included Dr. Khalifa Shujaiddin, Sayyid Muhsin Shah, Sardar Habibullah, Sayyid Maratab Ali, Nawab Saadat Ali Khan, Ghulam Muhayyuddin Qasuri, Haji Mir Shamsuddin, Mian Ferozuddin Ahmad, Majid Malik (editor, *The Muslim Outlook*), Ghulam Rasul Mehr and Abdul Majid Salik (editors of *Inqilab*), Sayyid Habib Shah (editor of *Striyasat*), Muhammad Ali (leader of the Lahori branch of the Ahmadiyya community), Dr. Muhammad Sharif, Mian Haq Nawaz, Mawlawi Fazluddin, Malik Muhammad Din, Fazal Karim, Mahbub Elahi, and Khan Bahadur Mir Azizuddin.<sup>99</sup> As the idea was Iqbal's own he chose to preside over the gathering. In the inaugural address he outlined the aims and objects of the projected conference. The meeting decided unanimously to invite to the conference all Muslim members of the provincial legislative assemblies, municipal committees and district boards of the four Muslim provinces of the north-west, delegates from various Muslim organizations, and other leading men of the region. The meeting was then converted into a reception committee for the proposed conference. Majid Malik and Saadat Ali Khan were appointed its secretary and financial secretary, respectively.<sup>100</sup>

Two important questions were raised and quickly disposed of by the meeting. First, it was asked if the Muslims of northern India had no sympathy with their co-religionists in the rest of India. The *Inqilab*, acting as Iqbal's mouthpiece, answered this a few days later. Separate regional consultations were necessary because all opposition was directed at undermining Muslim rights in the Muslim majority provinces, while the weightage given to the Muslims in the minority provinces had hardly ever been challenged by the Hindus, the Government of India or the Simon Commission. The second question arose out of this line of thinking. If the

problems of the Muslims of Bengal were similar to those of the Muslims of the north west was it right to exclude Bengal from the proposed conference? The answer given was that the decision to exclude Bengal merely took notice of the long distance involved. But the Muslims of Bengal were assured of full help and support in case they chose to hold a similar conference of their own.<sup>101</sup>

Some more decisions were taken on 4 December when the reception committee met at Iqbal's residence. Sayyid Atzal Ali Hashmi an influential citizen of Lahore was allowed to join the committee. Sayyid Habib was appointed co secretary to work with Majid Malik. A name was given to the proposed conference the Upper India Muslim Conference. Organizational efforts were strengthened and speeded up by opening a proper office and appointing a small staff. Abdullahi Haroon of Sind had joined the sponsors of the conference and was busy in mobilizing public opinion in Sind in favour of the proposed deliberations.<sup>102</sup> It was decided to postpone the plenary session of the conference from December 1930 to January 1931 as Iqbal was to go to Allahabad in December.<sup>103</sup>

The task of publicizing the aims and objects of the conference was then taken in hand. On 14 December the *Inqilab* appeared with a double-column box on the front page carrying an appeal to the Muslims for their full co-operation in holding the conference. The first two lines of the poster box announced PUNJAB SIND NWFP AND BALUCHISTAN ARE A MUSLIM COUNTRY<sup>104</sup> KEEP THE BANNER OF ISLAM ALOFT IN THEM. The box appeared several times at short intervals during the following few months.<sup>105</sup> On 16 December Iqbal and other members of the reception committee issued an appeal to some leading figures of these provinces summarizing the objects for the achievement of which the conference was being convened.<sup>106</sup>

At the end of December Iqbal went away to Allahabad to speak of the ideal of a north west Muslim India. On his return to Lahore he persisted in his idea of holding the conference. The reception committee continued to meet more often at his home, till about the end of March 1931. Then all the plans disappeared and nothing more was heard of the conference.

This account differs materially from two other versions available to us. But before looking at them one small point may be mentioned. In the foregoing account Khurshid says that the idea of the

conference occurred to Iqbal towards the end of 1930. In another place, however, he tells us that "the idea of an Upper India Muslim Conference was revived" at this time.<sup>107</sup> But this is a small point and need not detain us.

What gives an entirely new complexion to the conference project is a statement made by Khrushid's father, Abdul Majid Salik, who was *Inqilab's* editor and one of the foremost sponsors of the plan. He recalls in his autobiography that the scheme for holding such a conference was inspired by "the thought of fortifying the stand of the Muslim delegates to the Round Table Conference".<sup>108</sup> This contradicts his son's contention, apparently based on the information published in the *Inqilab*, that the conference, far from providing support to the Muslim delegates, was in fact meant to make amends for their alleged mishandling of the Muslim issue in London.

Another contemporary report presents still another picture. According to Nazir Niazi, who at this time was either meeting Iqbal or receiving letters from him, it was after Iqbal's return from the Allahabad session that the scheme of holding this conference was prepared (he gives it the name of "Upper India Conference", dropping "Muslim" out of it; a significant alteration, unless his memory is at fault). Iqbal in fact began to write the inaugural address for it, but it was never held. However, he did not give up all hope because in October 1932 he told Niazi, "Wait and you will see what I want to say".<sup>109</sup> Nothing, however, was said by Iqbal or anyone else, and the idea of a northern regional conference disappeared from history.

It would be wrong not to realize the importance of this conference project in the evolution of Iqbal's thinking. It is a pity that we possess so scanty information on the subject. Obviously the idea could not have appeared out of nothingness in November 1930. Iqbal must have been thinking about the problem of the north-west at least for some time before this date. He might have mentioned it to his friends in conversation or written to them about it. But there is no record of this, and it becomes difficult to examine an idea whose origins and antecedents are so imperfectly known.

In whatever way the idea emerged in Iqbal's mind, its connection with his Allahabad proposal is clear. He had reduced the essence of the Indian Muslim problem to the future position of

the Muslims in the north-west, and had concentrated his attention on finding a solution to it. The rest of Muslim India could be left to fend for itself. Probably Iqbal realized that no territorial re-grouping, no transfer of population, no political expedient and no constitutional innovation could save the millions of Muslims scattered in uneven numbers throughout Hindu India. The search of a solution which would embrace all of them and save Indian Islam from being overwhelmed by Hinduism was a waste of time and effort. It was prudent and practical to cut the losses and save what could be saved. Therefore he narrowed down his interest to the north-west.

Here was a compact, contiguous and relatively homogeneous area where Muslims were in a comfortable majority. If some way could be discovered of ensuring a genuine autonomy for this region, a degree of Muslim self-rule could be won. As the area was split artificially into four administrative divisions, some of them being too small and weak for autonomy, he suggested their amalgamation into one large province, whose resources, size and population would be sufficient guarantee of its ability to exercise adequate powers. With such an extensive and strong Muslim province situated on the strategic periphery, a good part of the Muslims of India would be able to look the central government in the eye and to refuse to be cowed down by the perpetual Hindu majority in the federation as a whole.

This seems to have been the background to his Allahabad proposal. It was a commendable idea, though it was less far-reaching than some other proposals which cut off the north-west from the Indian body because they saw no hope in a co-operative federation. Iqbal was not prepared to go to that extent. He still believed that a united India was not only possible but also desirable. He wanted to keep India as a Hindu-Muslim entity with his principle of "internal harmony". Within the possibilities of such a solution his ideal of a Muslim north-western unit in the Indian federation salvaged at least a part of Islam. Short of separation, it was perhaps the best method of protecting Muslim interests within an Indian federation. In this respect and to this extent it may be said to foresee Pakistan; for if the experiment failed and even this large Muslim province could not in practice hold itself against the ambitions of the Hindu centre, then nothing remained except separation. Such a possibility, or rather eventuality, might have

occurred to Iqbal in the course of his cogitations, but for reasons unknown to us he did not express it.

Seen in this light the exclusion of Bengal from his calculations ceases to wear an odd look. At first sight it seems strange that Bengal, with its largest mass of Muslim population in the sub-continent, does not figure in his scheme. One who set out with the express purpose of creating a "Muslim India within India" could ignore Bengal only at the cost of making his ideal look silly. But to regard his plan in this way is to misunderstand him. We must remember his terms of reference and clearly see the limits within which his ingenuity was forced to seek a solution.

An all-India federation was coming and escape from it was impossible. The problem was to find a way of protecting Muslim interests within this federation. It was clear, painfully but absolutely, that no expedient, however inventive, could save the entire Muslim population. It had to be an attempt to save as much as was possible. Fortunately the north-west presented one sizeable unit with a Muslim majority whose autonomy could be demanded with justification and worked with success. Hence Iqbal's scheme for a north-western province embracing the Punjab, NWFP, Sind and Baluchistan. There was no need to make any specific reference to Bengal. Bengal was a Muslim majority province, and that it would remain when the federation came. In fact, if Iqbal's scheme was followed, the federation would contain two huge provinces at the two ends of India, both with Muslim majorities. In this way a sort of a balance of power would be created within the federation between Hindu and Muslim provinces.

It must be emphasized, however, that this interpretation of Iqbal's scheme fits in only if we take him as an advocate of an Indian federation with strong Muslim units as its component members. Those who believe that he was, on the other hand, demanding separation and urging the creation of an independent Muslim state in the north-west, have to think of an answer to the charge that, in that case, by excluding Bengal he was leaving a large majority of Indian Muslims to their own fate.

Coming back to the plans for an Upper India Muslim Conference, from the list of its sponsors it seems to have been a purely Punjabi idea. The reception committee was entirely Punjabi in composition, the newspapers which supported and propagated the project were also Punjabi, and we have no information about

the reaction of other provinces in the north-west. Who were the persons in the NWFP and Sind who were contacted, and what was their attitude? Were any such contacts made at all? Similarly, how did the Muslim League and the Muslim Conference view this proposal? One would also like to know the exact date of Iqbal's election as president of the Muslim League. Did it come before he began to speak of his own regional conference, or after? When the Muslim League chose him as its leader, did it know that he was campaigning for the establishment of another party which was bound to weaken and, in some ways, oppose the Muslim League itself? These are interesting questions which, if and when answered, would throw more light on several dark corners of the history of this period.

The mystery of this would-have-been conference is further deepened by the silence and suddenness with which it vanishes from history. The preparations for it were begun with much *eclat*. Important people got together to bless it. The finest Muslim newspapers of the north-west came out in support of it. A man of Iqbal's reputation and stature stood firmly behind it. And then, some time in March or April 1931, the whole idea was dropped. By whom? We don't know. Why? We don't know. Khurshid, who has read the relevant newspapers, is silent. His father, who was there in the thick of things, does not tell us. (In fact, he encourages all kinds of doubts about the conference by presenting a picture of it in which Iqbal has no place). Once again, as so often in this book, we are reduced to speculation.

As it was Iqbal's idea, we must turn to him in our search for the reasons. We know that the reception committee met several times in January, February and March 1931. It was about March, then, that the idea was dropped. What could have happened in this period to make Iqbal change his mind?

One reason may have been the lack of support from other north-western provinces. The Punjab alone could not have staged the conference, though it had the resources to do so. That would have been against the whole idea of gathering the four provinces under one umbrella. Apart from Abdullah Haroon of Sind we hear of none else coming forward to help Iqbal. This must have been a bitter disappointment to the sponsors; but they were all men of public affairs, and would have realized that it was better not to hold a conference at all than to hold a weak and ineffective one.

An even stronger reason must have been the indifference meted out to Iqbal's Allahabad proposal. His scheme as presented at the Muslim League session was a preview of what the projected conference was scheduled to preach. Quite naturally Iqbal saw the Allahabad session as a rehearsal of his own coming conference. And as a rehearsal it was an irredeemable failure. The stony silence which met his proposal, in the Muslim League, in Muslim press, among Muslim leadership and in Muslim public, must have convinced him that his programme, which was to be the *raison d'être* of the conference, had no chance of winning public approval. After this realization there was no point in holding the conference. This also explains why he never repeated his Allahabad scheme in later years.

It is clear that Iqbal's ideas about the future differed from those of other Muslim leaders, and specially from those of the Muslim delegates to the RTC. The opposition of Muslim leaders from the rest of India was to be expected, and Iqbal or anyone else could not do much about it. Yet, he might have persisted if he had the support of the Muslim leaders from the north-west. The foremost spokesman from the region was Sir M. hammad Shafi. Shafi was a powerful man with a long political experience, impressive connections and wide influence in the Punjab and outside. At the RTC he was playing a very important role, and was to do so again in the following sessions. If Iqbal wanted to hold his conference he had to range his forces against Shafi's. This, as everybody knew, was beyond his power. Shafi was too powerful to be beaten in a straight fight, too astute a politician to be won over by political bargaining, and too set in his opinions to be persuaded to change course. He also enjoyed much popular backing which was denied to Iqbal, particularly after the Allahabad session. Shafi was a recognized Muslim spokesman of all-India level, who had been negotiating with the Hindus and the British for several years and who had demonstrated both skill and courage in 1927 by splitting the Muslim League and holding his own session in Lahore in the teeth of Jinnah's opposition. Iqbal lacked this status. The holding of the conference would have meant an imminent clash with a set of established and recognized forces against which Iqbal could only muster his own reputation (as a poet and a philosopher, *not* as a politician) and the support of his own circle. Another powerful politician in the Punjab was Sir Fazli Husain—so powerful that Muslim delegates to the RTC were appointed after his consent had

been given—and his views too were opposed to Iqbal's. Thus, the outcome of a confrontation between Iqbal and other Muslim leaders would have brought no laurels to Iqbal and no unity to Indian Islam.

The holding of the abortive conference would have been only the first step in a fight for the recognition of a separate identity for the north-west. It would not have been enough to meet in a conference, pass a few resolutions and disperse. The conference would mean the establishment of a new party to uphold a new cause. In other words, Iqbal would have to establish, mould and strengthen a new Muslim political organization which would be nothing if not a rival of the Muslim League and the Muslim Conference. It is easy to see how impossibly difficult a task this was. The League was an established organization, the oldest in India, with a definite public image, and wide support throughout the country. Its organization needed much improvement, and in recent years it had fallen a prey to factionalism and internal indiscipline. Yet it was a recognized national party with its own history and prestige. The All India Muslim Conference was a young body, but it gained in unity and power what it lost in freshness. It had such a wide base of support that nearly every respectable Muslim group was represented in it. To oppose two such organizations needed resources of manpower, money and effort which Iqbal and his Punjabi group could not muster at this or any other time. Moreover, a party established for the express purpose of winning a special position for a certain area would never have the power, prestige and status of an all-India organization. No matter how Iqbal looked at the proposition, he must have been assailed by serious doubts and misgivings. In the end he gave up the entire plan as impracticable and futile.

It is reported that in 1936 Iqbal once again revived the idea of such a conference, and again nothing came out of it. This time it is easier to see the reasons for its failure. Jinnah was back in India and was busy in pulling the Muslim League out of the doldrums in which years of neglect and lack of good leadership had left it. He was building an all-India platform from where the Muslim could fight the Hindu on an equal footing. He had not yet begun to give any thought to separation and envisaged an all-India struggle within the new federation. In this he needed the support of every individual, every group and every province. How could he counte-

nance even the thought of a separate political party upholding a regional cause? He would not have found it difficult to convince Iqbal that his scheme for a north-west conference would be a disaster for the Indian Muslims in so far as it would weaken the only political party they had, the Muslim League, break the unity of the Indian Muslim nation, and leave the Bengali Muslim utterly exposed and unprotected. It is quite possible that it was from here that Iqbal went on to think afresh about the future and was led to write his 1937 letters to Jinnah. But of that more later.

## NOTES

- 1 I have found only two such references in this period, both of 1939. The Raja of Mahmudabad, a leading Muslim Leaguer, misquoted the relevant portion of Iqbal's address and then declared that "that is in a nutshell the 'Pakistan' Movement the central idea is the formation of a single Muslim state or, if you prefer to use the constitutional phraseology, a separate federation of autonomous Muslim provinces" (Presidential Address, Provincial Muslim League Political Conference, Delhi, *TSI*, 5 May 1939). Sir Abdul Qadir, a former president of the AIML, thought the same (see his article in *Great Men of India*, ed by L F Rushbrook Williams, Bombay, 1939, pp 563-571, repeated in his *Iqbal The Great Poet of Islam*, Lahore, 1975 rep, p 43).
- 2 I H Qureshi, "Pakistan An Ideal or Practical Politics?", *TET*, 9 August 1940, reproduced in full in *India's Problem of Her Future Constitution*, Bombay, n d , pp 103-104.
- 3 A Punjabi, *Pakistan The Critics' Case Examined*, Lahore, 1941, p 7.
- 4 M R T , *Pakistan and Muslim India*, Bombay, 2nd ed 1946, p 14.
- 5 Iftikhar-ul Haq, *Pakistan and Constituent Assembly*, Lahore, 1946, p 78.
- 6 S Hyder, *Progress of Pakistan*, Lahore, June 1947, pp 24, 35.
- 7 Shamloo, *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, Lahore, 1945, 2nd ed 1948, Introduction, p vi.
- 8 M A Khan, *Iqbal ka Syasi Karnamah*, Karachi, 1952, pp 125-126. Muhammad Ahmad Khan was a former chief justice of Bhopal, who migrated to Karachi in about 1950 and died there (Sahba Lakhnawi, *Iqbal aur Bhopal*, Karachi, 1973, p 274).
- 9 *Ibid* , p 463.
- 10 *Ibid* , p 476.
- 11 *Ibid* , p 456. The address has absolutely nothing on this migration. The author infers this from two Urdu verses of Iqbal, which are not to be found in the address.
- 12 Abdullah Anwar Beg, *The Poet of the East*, Lahore, 2nd ed 1956, p 262.

13. Syed Hassan Mahmud, *A Nation is Born*, n.p.p., 1958, pp. 413, 528, 532.
14. Rais Ahmad Jafri, *Iqbal awr Syasat-i-Milli*, Karachi, n.d., pp. 221, 234.
15. A.S.M. Abdur Rab, *A.K. Fazlul Huq*, Lahore, n.d., p. 100.
16. G. Allana, *Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah: The Story of a Nation*, Karachi, 1967, pp. 216, 299.
17. K. Abdur Rahim, in *Iqbal: The Poet of Tomorrow*, ed by himself, Lahore, n.d., p. iii.
18. S. Mahboob Murshid, "The Pebbled Shore", in *ibid.*, p. 142.
19. Javid Iqbal (ed), *Stray Reflections: A Note-Book of Allama Iqbal*, Lahore, 1961, Introduction, p. xxi.
20. Javid Iqbal, "Introduction to the Study of Iqbal", in K. Abdur Rahim, *op. cit.*, p. 16.
21. I.H. Qureshi, in editorial note on selections from Iqbal, in W. Theodore do Bary (ed), *Sources of Indian Tradition*, New York, 1958, 2-vol ed 1964, Vol II, p. 199. It is not quite clear from the editor's note on p. vii if Qureshi did write this editorial note; most probably he did.
22. *Ibid.*, Vol II, p. 275. Qureshi's editorial note.
23. I.H. Qureshi, *The Muslim Community*, The Hague, 1962, p. 297. In the "Select Chronology" at the end of the book he says, "Iqbal's address advocated a separate Muslim state", p. 306.
24. Aziz Ahmad, "Influence de la litterature francaise sur la litterature ourdoue", *Orient*, no. 11 (1959), p. 132.
25. Aziz Ahmad, "Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and Muslim India", *Studia Islamica*, 1960 vol, p. 77.
26. Aziz Ahmad, "Iqbal et la theorie du Pakistan", *Orient*, no. 17 (1961), p. 86.
27. Aziz Ahmad, *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan* 1857-1964, London, 1967, pp. 160, 162.
28. Aziz Ahmad, "L'Islam et la democratie dans le sous-continent Indo-Pakistanaï", *Orient*, nos. 51-52 (1969), p. 11. The same claims are made by him in his "India", in Joseph Schacht and C.E. Bosworth (eds), *The Legacy of Islam*, Oxford, 1974, p. 140, and Aziz Ahmad and E. von Grunebaum (eds), *Muslim Self-Statement in India and Pakistan, 1857-1968*, Wiesbaden. 1970, pp. 15, 130.
29. S.A. Vahid, "Allama Iqbal", in *A History of Freedom*

- Movement*, Karachi, Vol. III, Part II, 1963, p. 506.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 532–533.
  31. S.A. Vahid, *Studies in Iqbal*, Lahore, 1967, p. 281.
  32. *Ibid.*, p. 300.
  33. *Ibid.*, p. 301. See also, for similar views, his “Iqbal awr Bina-i-Pakistan”, *Mah-i-Naw*, April 1954, p. 10, again printed in the issue of September 1977, pp. 334, 336–337; *Glimpses of Iqbal*, Karachi, n.d., pp. 138, 163; and other works.
  34. Abdul Hamid, *Muslim Separatism in India*, London, 1967, p. 205.
  35. G.W. Choudhury, *Pakistan's Relations with India, 1947-1966*, London, 1968, pp. 5, 18; see also his “The Quaid-i-Azam: Founder of Pakistan”, *Pakistan News Digest*, 15 September 1970, p. 6.
  36. L.F. Rushbrook Williams, *The State of Pakistan*, London, 1962, p. 21.
  37. Prof. Williams was repeating a normal English error. *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English* (4th ed and 5th ed) gives as one of the meanings of the word Pakistan “Moslem autonomy”.
  38. Ian Stephens, *Pakistan*, London, 1963, p. 75.
  39. T.G.P. Spear, *A History of India. Volume Two*, Harmondsworth, 1965, p. 27.
  40. T.G.P. Spear, *The Oxford History of Modern India*, Oxford, 1965, p. 363.
  41. Robert D. Campbell, *Pakistan: Emerging Democracy*, Princeton, 1963, p. 13. Two further misstatements occur on the same page: that Iqbal taught at Cambridge, and that he was president of the Muslim League in 1926 and 1930.
  42. D.N. Wilber, *Pakistan: Yesterday and Today*, New York, 1964, p. 103
  43. D.N. Wilber, *Pakistan: Its People, Its Society, Its Culture*, New York, 1964, p. 21.
  44. Pakistan History Board, *A Short History of Hind-Pakistan*, Karachi, 1955, p. 434. This is by no means the only weakness of this text book.
  45. Rafiq M. Khan and Herbert S. Stark, *Young Pakistan*, London, 1951, p. 225.
  46. Anwar Enayatullah, *Story of Jinnah*, Karachi, n.d., pp. 35-36.

47. *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39.
48. Zainab Ghulam Abbas, *Story of Pakistan*, Karachi, 1964, p. 22; also *Tahrik-i-Pakistan*, Islamabad, n.d. (? 1982), p. 15, and Ashfaq Ahmad, *Mera Watan, Mera Pakistan*, Islamabad, n.d. (? 1982), p. 39, both government publications.
49. Safdar Mahmood and Javaid Zafar, *Founders of Pakistan*, Lahore, 1968, pp. 172-173.
50. As a representative selection showing the quality and attitude of this work see the following unpublished M.A. dissertations submitted at the University of the Punjab (the country's oldest and most respected seat of higher learning): Fakhrunnissa, *Contribution of Iqbal towards the Creation of Pakistan*, 1958; Syed Abdul Majid, 1958; M. Qadeer Malik, 1958; and Ghulam Haider, 1959—all carry exactly the same title. The deadening uniformity of the titles is a fair indication of the scope of their imagination and the capacity of their interpreting power. None quotes the address from the original text.
51. A complete list of writings which follow the conformist opinion will make a slim volume. To show the variety of their origins and the tenacity of their purpose I give below a selection (exclusive of the items cited in my text) arranged in some order:
- Trained scholars of Pakistan: Muhammad Baqir, "The Pakistan Movement—In Retrospect", *TPT*, 23 March 1961; Sharif al Mujahid, *The Poet of the East: The Story of Muhammad Iqbal*, Lahore, 1961, p. 31; A.S. Khurshid, "Immediate Reactions to Iqbal's Allahabad Address", *TPT*, 21 April 1963; A.S. Khurshid, "Pakistan ka Bani Kawn?", *Mashriq*, 1 April 1964; A.S. Khurshid, "Iqbal: aik Mustaqbil Shanas Siyasatdan", *Naqush*, January 1966, p. 148, where he asserts that "it is a fact that Iqbal was the first person in India to present, from the platform of an all-India political party, the concept of a separate State constituted of the Muslim-majority areas of the sub-continent" (two serious errors in three lines); K. Ali, *A New History of Indo-Pakistan since the British Rule*, Dacca, rev enl ed 1968, p. 284 (a university text book); Muhammad Baqir, "Taqdir-i-Umam", in Aslam Malik (ed), *Mataleat-i-Iqbal*, Sialkot, 1969, p. 29; Saleem M.M. Qureshi, *Jinnah and the Making of a Nation*, Karachi,

1969, p. 60; Saleem M.M. Qureshi, "Pakistani Nationalism Reconsidered", *Pacific Affairs*, Winter 1972-73, p. 557; Shafique Ali Khan, *Two Nation Theory*, Hyderabad Sind, 1973, pp. 613, 623; Safdar Mahmood, *Matalea-i-Pakistan*, Lahore, 1973, pp. 67, 81; Khwaja A. Haye, *First Steps in Our History*, Lahore, 19th rep, 1973, p. 225 (a popular text book); Abdur Rauf, *Islamic Culture in India and Pakistan*, Lahore, 1975, p. 56; Muhammad Usnan, *Hayat-i-Iqbal ka ek Jazbati Dawr*, Lahore, 1975, p. 178; M. Moizuddin (Director, Iqbal Adademy), "Iqbal and the Quaid-i-Azam: The Seer and the Realist", *Papers Presented at the International Congress on Quaid-Azam, 19-25 December 1976*, Islamabad, 1976 (mimeo), Vol II, pp. 112-113; Shaikh Imtiaz Ali (Vice-Chancellor, University of the Punjab), *Address of Welcome: Quaid-i-Azam Seminar*, Lahore, 23 March 1976, p. 4; A.S. Khurshid, *Quaid-i-Azam awr Pakistan*, Islamabad, 1976, pp. 4, 7; Hamid Ahmad Khan, *Father of Our Nation: Early Life History*, Islamabad, 1976, p. 7; Fateh Muhammad Malik, "Iqbal's Concept of Pakistan", *TPT*, 9 November 1977; Muhammad Sadrudin, "Allama Iqbal awr Tasawwar-i-Pakistan", *NW*, 7 November 1977; M. Moizuddin, "Allama Iqbal awr Tasawwar-i-Pakistan", *Jang*, 11 November 1977; Abdul Qayyum and S.R. Wasti, "Struggle for Independence", in Hamid Jalal (ed), *Pakistan*, London, 1977, p. 113.

Popular writers of Pakistan Farid S. Jafri, "Muhammad Iqbal (1873-1938): The Man Who Conceived Pakistan", *Islamic Review*, April 1949, pp. 8-13; Farid S. Jafri, "The Man Who Conceived Pakistan. Muhammad Iqbal", *CMG*, 21 April 1951; Mumtaz Hasan, "Iqbal Architect of Pakistan", *Evening Times*, 21 April 1952; K.A. Waheed, "Pakistan: The Realization of Iqbal's Dream", *Pakistan Calling*, Vol VI, no. 8 (1952), pp. 9-10; K.A. Waheed, "The Role of Iqbal in the Establishment of Pakistan", *Al-Islam*, 15 June 1953, p. 47; Abdul Majid Salik, *Zikr-i-Iqbal*, Lahore, n.d., pp. 150, 153; K.A. Waheed, "Iqbal: The Poet who Conceived Pakistan", *Al-Islam*, 15 April 1955, p. 60; Abdul Majid Salik, *Muslim Saqafat Hindustan Men*, Lahore, n.d., pp. 666-667; Anonymous, "Iqbal The Architect of Pakistan", *CMG*, 21 April 1958; Muhammad Ahsan Faruqi, *Singam*, Karachi, 1961, p. 309. R.M Whyte, *The Great Leader Quaid-i-Azam*, Lahore.

2nd rev ed 1962, p. 53; Nazar Zaidi, *Islam ka Namwar Farzand*, Lahore, 1964, p. 173; Faqir Syed Wahiduddin, *Rozgar-i-Faqir*, Lahore, 5th ed 1965, p. 133; Anwar Kidwai, "Iqbal awr Tasawwar-i-Pakistan", *NW*, 21 April 1965; K.A. Waheed, *A Bibliography of Iqbal*, Karachi, 1965, p. 21; Syed Wasimuddin Balkhi, "A Poet's Dream Translated into Living Reality", *Dawn*, 23 March 1965; B.A. Dar (a specialist on Iqbal), *Anwar-i-Iqbal*, Karachi, 1967, p. 95 fn, p. 96 fn; Najam Yusuf, "Hakim-ul-Ummat Allama Iqbal ne Musalmanon ke liye Alehda Watan ki Tajwiz Pesh Ki", *Kohistan*, 13 August 1968; Mazhar Ansari Dehlawi, *Sayyid Ameer Ali*, Lahore, 1968, pp. 79-80 (in Urdu); Nazir Ahmad Shaikh, *Quaid-i-Azam*, Lahore, 1968, p. 57 (a text book); Muhammad Husain Marharawi, in *Jang*, 5 May 1968; Abdul Hai, "The Message of Iqbal", *Pakistan Observer*, 21 April 1969; Muhammad Sharif Baqa, "Tasawwar-i-Pakistan awr Iqbal awr Jinnah", *NW*, 21 April 1969; Anonymous, "Nazrya-i-Pakistan ka Bani—Iqbal", *Hurryat*, 24 March 1969; Mumtaz Hasan, "Iqbal and Jinnah", *Contemporary Affairs*, Spring 1969, p. 15; Sarfraz Husain Mirza, *Muslim Women's Role in the Pakistan Movement*, Lahore, 1969, p. 39; Arif Batalawi, *Tarikh-i-Muslim League*, Lahore, 1970, p. 313; Ziauddin Ahmad, *Quaid-i-Millat Liaquat Ali Khan*, Karachi, 1970, pp. 50, 55; Naz, *Iqbal*, Lahore, 1970, p. 45; S. Zakir Ejaz, *Sayyid Jamaluddin Afghani*, Lahore, 1970, p. 92; Hakim Muhammad Said (ed), *Main Currents of Contemporary Thought in Pakistan*, Vol II, Karachi, 1973, p. 30, his inaugural address at Dacca on 12 February 1970; Jamiluddin Ahmad, "Factors and Froces behind the Pakistan Movement", in *ibid.*, p. 188, a lecture delivered at Rawalpindi on 1 September 1970; Syed Asghar Ali Shah Jafri, *Tahrik-i-Pakistan awr uska Pas Manzar*, Lahore, 1970, p. 179; Mumtaz Hasan, Foreword to B.A. Dar, *A Study in Iqbal's Philosophy*, Lahore, 1971, p. x; Siddiq Ali Khan (a Muslim League politician), *Be Tegh Sipahi*, Karachi, 1971, p. 212; Khwaja Jamil Ahmad, *Hundred Great Muslims*, Lahore, 1971, p. 344; Malik Hasan Akhtar, *Atraf-i-Iqbal*, Lahore, 1972, pp. 256, 291; Ishrat Rahmani, *Hamari Azadi ki Kahani: Sir Sayyid se Quaid-i-Azam Tak*, Lahore, 1972, p. 41; Ahmad Khan, "Qyam-i-Pakistan ka Maqsad", *Jang*, 25 April 1973; Mushtaq

Ahmad Wajadi, *Hangamon men Zindagi*, Lahore, 1974, p 136. Anonymous, "Iqbal and the Emergence of Pakistan", *Pakistan Pictorial*, November–December 1974, p 15, Sardar Muhammad Khan Aziz, *Sarguzasht-i-Pakistan*, Lahore, 1974, p 63, Chaudhri Nazir Ahmad Khan (a politician), *Kalam-i-Narm-o-Nazuk Ap Biti Dastan-i-Pakistan*, Lahore, 1975, pp. 56, 86, Syed Shamsul Hasan (a former official of the AIML) (ed), *Plain Mr Jinnah*, Karachi, 1976, Introduction, p 52, Ejaz Ahmad, *Hamare Quaid-i-Azami*, Lahore, 1976, pp 104-105, Altaf Husain (a leading journalist and editor), "And So to Pakistan", in I H Qureshi, Altaf Husain and Muhammad Musa (eds), *A Nation Born of Sacrifices*, Karachi, 1976 p 25, Ajmal Siddiqui, "Iqbal ka Tasawwar-i-Pakistan", *NW*, 3 April 1977, Ihsanullah Sharif Aliq, "Shair-i-Mashriq Allama Iqbal ki Hamagir Shakhshyat", *Jang*, 21 August 1977, Rafiuddin Hashmi, "Allama Iqbal awr Qyam-i-Pakistan", *NW*, 24 November 1977, Muhammad Nazir Kakakhel, "Tahrir-i-Pakistan ke Mazhabi Awamil", *Fikr-o-Nazar*, February 1977 p 413, Mir Abdul Baqi Baluch "Allama Iqbal awr One Unit", *NW*, 29 November 1978, Razia Farhat Bano *Khutbat-i-Iqbal*, Karachi, 2nd rep 1960, p 38, Yusuf Aziz, *Shua-i-Iqbal*, Faisalabad, 1977, p 58, M H Siddiqui in his (comp), *Iqbal A Critical Study*, Lahore 1977, p 155, M Yusuf Saraf, "Iqbal's Role in Kashmir's Struggle", *TPT*, 21 April 1952 Yusuf Khattak, "Iqbal's Journey to Pakistan", *Iqbal Review*, April 1974, pp 19-20, Ziauddin Ahmad, "Iqbal's Concept of Islamic Polity", *Pakistan Pictorial*, September 1977, p 9, Saeed Ahmad, "Iqbal and the Pakistan Movement", *ibid*, p 29, Abdul Hamid, "The Legacy of Iqbal", *ibid*, p 65, Mumtaz Hasan, "Iqbal awr Pakistan", *Mah-i-Naw*, September 1977, p 306, Nazar Hyderabad, *Iqbal awr Hyderabad*, Karachi, 1961, p 187. S Jamil Wasti *My Reminiscences of Chaudhary Rahmat Ali*, Karachi 1982 pp. 44 45 153

Official views and reference works Mian Asghar Ali (Deputy Commissioner, Sialkot), speech at Iqbal Day, April 1968, in Aslam Malik, *op cit*, pp 12-13, *Pakistan Yearbook 1969*, Karachi, 1969, p. 65, *Struggle for Independence Photographic Album, 1905-1947*, Lahore, n d, p 51, *Pakistan 1973. Year Book*, ed by Rafique Akhtar, Karachi, 1973, p 33, *ibid*, 1975, pp 30, 72, Masudul Hasan, *Short Encyclo*

*paedia of Pakistan*, Lahore, 1975, pp. 31, 53; *Pakistan Year Book 1975*, ed by Rafique Akhtar, Karachi, 1975, p. 31; messages to the nation issued every year on 21 April by the country's governor generals, prime ministers, presidents and chief martial law administrators; and, above all, *The Urdu Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Lahore, Vol. III, 1968, p. 11, article by Khalifa Abdul Hakim and Ghulam Rasul Mehr.

Indian scholars: *The Aligarh Magazine*, Special Pakistan Number 1944, Aligarh, 1944, editor's note on Iqbal's address, p. 23; S. Abid Husain, *The Destiny of Indian Muslims*, Bombay, 1965, pp. 66-67; M.U. Haq, *Muslim Politics in Modern India, 1857-1947*, Meerut, 1970, p. 147; M. Anwar-ul-Haq, *The Faith Movement of Mawlana Muhammad Ilyas*, London, 1972, p. 44; Abul Hasan Nadawi, *Naqush-i-Iqbal*, tr. by Shams Tabrez Khan, Karachi, 3rd ed 1973, p. 47; S.A.A. Rizvi, "Muslim India", in Bernard Lewis (ed), *The World of Islam*, London, 1976, p. 312.

European and American scholars: Phillips Talbot, "The Rise of Pakistan", *The Middle East Journal*, October 1948, p. 385; H.A.R. Gibb, article on Iqbal, in L.G. Wickham Legg (ed), *The Dictionary of National Biography, 1931-1940*, London, 1949, pp. 641-642; V.G. Kiernan, *Poems from Iqbal*, London, 1955, Preface, p. xxii; Jean-Paul Roux, *L'Islam en Asie*, Paris, 1958, p. 137; Leonard Binder, "Pakistan and Modern Islamic Nationalist Theory, Part II", *The Middle East Journal*, Winter 1958, p. 50; Andre Guimbertiere, "Le reformisme musulman en Inde", *Orient*, no. 18 (1961), p. 48; F.R.J. Verhoeven, *Islam: Its Origin and Spread in Words, Maps and Pictures*, London, 1962, p. 79; Walter Leifer, *Himalaya: Mountains of Destiny*, tr from the German, London, 1962, p. 71; Fosco Maraini, *Where Four Worlds Meet: Hindu Kush 1959*, tr from the Italian, London, 1964, p. 8; Freeland Abbot, "Pakistan and the Secular State", in Donald E. Smith (ed), *South Asian Politics and Religion*, Princeton, 1966, p. 359 fn 23; John Marek, "Socialist Ideas in the Poetry of Muhammad Iqbal", *Studies in Islam*, April-July 1968 (Iqbal Number), p. 179; Sir Gilbert Laithwaite, "The Emergence of Pakistan: From Nationhood to Statehood", *Round Table*, November 1970, p. 596; John A. Teta, *Pakistan in Pictures*, New York, 2nd rev ed 1970, p. 25;

James B Prior, "Iqbal's View of Islamic Nationalism in Javid Namah", in M. Saeed Shaikh (ed), *Studies in Iqbal's Thought and Art*, Lahore, 1972, p. 383 (originally appeared in *Iqbal*, July 1971); Max Gallo, "Gandhi l'avait prédit", *L'Express*, 13-19 December 1971, p. 78; David Loshak, *Pakistan Crisis*, London, 1971, p. xv; Annemarie Schimmel, article on Iqbal, *Dictionary of Oriental Literatures*, general ed Jaroslav Prusek, Delhi, 1975, Vol II, p. 63; P.H.L Eggermont, "The Pakistan Concept: Its Background", in *Papers Presented at the International Congress on Quaid-i-Azam, 19-25 December 1976*, Islamabad, 1976, Vol IV, p. 11 (mimeo).

In contrast, the only references which assert that Iqbal's 1930 demand was *not* for an independent or separate state are: "Sir Muhammad Iqbal", *CMG*, editorial, 22 April 1938; Jinnah's speech at an Iqbal Day meeting in Lahore in March 1940, in which he did not make any allusion whatsoever to his 1930 address or to his "Pakistan" idea, *ibid.*, 26 March 1940; Rashiduzzaman, "Demand for Pakistan", *Pakistan Observer*, 14 August 1968; Syed Nur Ahmad, "Allahabad Address in Historical Perspective", *TPT*, 21 April 1969; Parveen Feroze Hasan, *The Political Philosophy of Iqbal*, Lahore, n.d., pp. 330-333; Muhammad Rafi Anwar and Hasan Askar Rizwi, *Tahrik-i-Qyam-i-Pakistan*, Lahore, 3rd ed 1974, p. 158 fn; Mary Louise Beck, "Some Formative Influences on the Career of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah", in *World Scholars on Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah*, ed by A.H. Dani, Islamabad, 1979, p. 87.

52. *All India Muslim League: Allahabad Session, December 1930, Presidential Address by Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal, Barrister-at-Law, Lahore*, Lahore, p. 7. My italics.
53. Shamloo, *op. cit.*, p. 12, and Latif Ahmad Sherwani (ed.), *Speeches, Writings and Statements of Iqbal*, Lahore, 1977, p. 10.
54. S.A. Vahid, *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*, Lahore, 1964, p. 171.
55. *IAR 1930*, Vol II, pp. 334-345; this passage on p. 338.
56. *The Aligarh Magazine*, Special Pakistan Number, 1944, p. 29.
57. See Khalid B. Sayeed, *Pakistan: The Formative Phase, 1857-1948*, 2nd ed, London, 1968, pp. 103-104.
58. F.K. Khan Durrani, *The Meaning of Pakistan*, Lahore, 1946

rep, pp. 156-157.

59. *Struggle for Independence, 1857-1947*, Karachi, n.d., Appendix IV.
60. Aziz Ahmad, "Iqbal et la theorie du Pakistan", *Orient*, No. 17 (1961), p. 88; *Etat* at both places; he says he is quoting from *Struggle for Independence*, which he calls *Struggle for Freedom*. He and G.E. von Grunebaum reproduce this extract incorrectly in their *Muslim Self-Statement in India and Pakistan, 1857-1968*, Wiesbaden, 1970, pp. 148-151, and cite their source as the *Struggle for Independence*, Appendix IV. Copying from a secondary source in a collection of documents does not become such prominent scholars; copying incorrectly is unforgivable.
61. For example, Andre Guimbretiere, "Le reformisme musulman en Inde", *Orient*, no. 18 (1961), p. 48; Annemarie Schimmel, *Gabriel's Wing* (her major work on Iqbal), Leiden, 1963, p. 34; Jamiluddin Ahmad, *The Final Phase of Struggle for Pakistan*, 2nd ed, Lahore, 1968, p. 151, and *Middle Phase of Muslim Political Movement*, Lahore, 1969, p. 124. Parveen Feroze Hasan, *The Political Philosophy of Iqbal*, Lahore, n.d., p. 332, cites Shamloo, and yet, what a surprise, the passage comes out correct; probably a rare case of a happy misprint!
62. For example, Hierndranath Mukerjee, *India's Struggle for Freedom*, Calcutta, 3rd rev ed 1962, p. 217; Raja Hasan Akhtar, "The 'Forgotten Hero'", *TPT*, 29 March 1964; K. Ali, *A New History of Indo-Pakistan since the British Rule*, Dacca, rev enl ed 1968, p. 284; Abdul Hai, "The Message of Iqbal", *Pakistan Observer*, 21 April 1969; G. Allana, *Our Freedom Fighters, 1526-1947*, Karachi, 1969, p. 192. At least two authors substitute "province" for "state": Syed Nur Ahmad, "Allahabad Address in Historical Perspective", *TPT*, 21 April 1969, and Walter Leifer, *Himalaya: Mountains of Destiny*, London, 1962, p. 73.
63. *Struggle for Independence, 1857-1947*, Karachi, n.d., pp. 13 and 61; see Abdul Hai, in M.H. Siddiqui (comp.), *Iqbal: A Critical Study*, Lahore, 1977, p. 14.
64. See Edward Thompson, letter, *The Times*, 3 October 1931, and Muhammad Iqbal, letter, *ibid.*, 12 October 1931.
65. S.A. Vahid, *Iqbal: His Art and Thought*, London, 1959, p. 20.

66. *Ibid*, p. 21
67. See Al-Beiruni (S.M. Ikram), *Makers of Pakistan and Modern Muslim India*, Lahore, 1950, throughout
68. S.M. Ikram, *Modern Muslim India and the Birth of Pakistan*, Lahore, 1965, p. 181
69. *Ibid*, pp 181-182
70. *Ibid*, p 184.
71. Frank Moraes, *Witness to an Era*, London, 1973, p 35.
72. Munshu Ghulam Qadir Farrukh, *Safina-i-Hayat*, pp 22-23, quoted in Abdul Majid Salik, *Zikr-i-Iqbal*, Lahore, n d, pp 92-94; see also Javid Iqbal (ed), *Stray Reflections A Note-Book of Allama Iqbal*, Lahore, 1961, Introduction, p. xxi
73. Riaz Husain, "Hakim-ul-Ummat Allama Iqbal awr Do-Qawmi Nazriya", *NW*, 9 January 1975.
74. Aftab Ahmad Khan, letter, *TPT*, 15 January 1976.
75. Iqbal's speech in support of a "loyalist" resolution moved by Mawlana Ghulam Mohayyuddin at a meeting held outside Mochi Gate, Lahore, on 1 February 1912, *Zamindar*, 4 and 6 February 1912, reproduced in Rafique Afzal (ed), *Gustar-i-Iqbal*, Lahore, 1969, p. 2.
76. Iqbal to Sayyid Sulaiman Nadawi, 18 March 1924, quoted in Rais Ahmad Jafri, *Iqbal awr Siyasat-i-Milli*, Karachi, n d., p. 120.
77. Statement to the press, 5 April 1926, *Zamindar*, 6 April 1926, cited in M.R. Afzal, *op cit.*, p. 13.
78. Speech at a public meeting outside Mochi Gate, Lahore, 30 January 1927, *Zamindar*, 2 February 1927, *ibid.*, p 22.
79. Speech at Barkat Ali Islamia Hall, Lahore, 1 May 1927, *ibid*, p 27.
80. Statement on the appointment of the Indian Statutory (Simon) Commission, 9 November 1927, *ibid.*, p. 51.
81. Speech at a reception given at Madras by the Anjuman-i-Hilal-i-Ahmar, 7 January 1929, *ibid.*, p. 74.
82. Speech at Barkat Ali Islamia Hall, Lahore, 19 December 1929, *ibid*, p. 106. It is this use of the word *azad* which has abetted the misinterpreters to read in his pronouncements a suggestion for independence. The normal meaning of *azad* is "independent" or "free". A province or state in a federation is not independent, at the most it is autonomous. But there is no word for "autonomous" in Urdu, hence Iqbal's use of

azaa. Students of his ideas ought to know this.

83. Muhammad Iqbal, "Reply to Questions raised by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru", in S.A. Vahid (ed), *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*, Lahore, 1964, p. 258. Also reproduced in Shamloo, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-144. Neither of the compilers gives a date to this statement. It was probably written in 1934.
84. S. Nazir Niazi (ed), *Maktubat-i-Iqbal*, Karachi, 1957, p. 85. Niazi says he has lost this letter. Is he, then, recalling the text from memory? Iqbal's exact words were: "*Abadion ke tabadlay ki tajwiz meri nahin, Lala Lajpat Rai ki hai*".
85. B.A. Dar (ed), *Letters and Writings of Iqbal*, Karachi, November 1967, p. 75.
86. M.A. Khan, *Iqbal ka Siyasi Karnamah*, Karachi, 1952, pp. 476-481.
87. *Ibid.*, p. 481.
88. *Ibid.*, pp. 482-488.
89. *Ibid.*, pp. 488-489.
90. M.A. Khan was a trained lawyer, and had retired from the chief justiceship of Bhopal State before writing this book.
91. A.S. Khurshid, "Pakistan Ka Bani Kawn?", *Mashriq*, 1 April 1964. There is something wrong with the last sentence. In the original Urdu it reads: "*Bengal men Musalman pahley hi aksariat men the, is liye Bengal state ko banana hi tha*", which is meaningless. I have translated it to the best of my ability so that it may make sense.
92. Khurshid, however, is not alone in extending Iqbal's north-west "independent state" to the whole sub-continent. He has numerous friends in this game, including some prominent scholars. I submit some examples. "The idea that the hundred millions of Musalmans of India are a nation and must have a separate homeland of their own in the sub-continent, was first struck [*sic.*] to him" in 1930 (editor's note on the text of the Allahabad address, *The Aligarh Magazine*, Special Pakistan Number, Aligarh, 1944, p. 23). "The Muslims had presented their goal of an independent Muslim State (*mamlakat*) at the Allahabad Muslim League Conference" (Abdul Majid Salik, *Zikr-i-Iqbal*, Lahore, n.d., p. 153). "Il emit pour la premiere fois l'idee de creer dans les Indes un Etat qui regrouperait tous les musulmans" (Jean-Paul Roux, *L'Islam*

*en Asia*, Paris, 1958, p 137 ) Iqbal suggested that "all the territories of India where Muslims predominated should be separated from India and made into an independent state" (Nazar Zaidi, *Islam ke Namwar Farzand*, Lahore, 1964, p 173) Iqbal wanted a separate state "for the Muslims of the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent" (K A Waheed, *A Bibliography of Iqbal*, Karachi, 1965, annotation on the Allahabad address, p 21). Iqbal "called for the creation of an independent territory for Indian Muslims" (Jan Marek, "Socialist Ideas in the Poetry of Muhammad Iqbal", *Studies in Islam*, April July 1968, p 179) He demanded that "the Muslims of India should be given a separate homeland, and the areas where they are numerically superior to Hindus should be joined under an independent and free Islamic government" (Mazhar Ansari Dehlavi, *Sayyid Ameer Ali*, Lahore, 1968, pp 79-80, in Urdu) He "dreamt of a separate homeland for the Muslims of India" (K Ali, *A New History of Indo-Pakistan since the British Rule*, Dacca, rev enl ed 1968, p 284, a university text book) Iqbal "expressed in so many words what he visualized as the future destiny of the Muslims in the Sub-Continent" (Mumtaz Hasan, "Iqbal and Jinnah", *Contemporary Affairs*, Spring 1969, p 15) He "set forth his plan for a separate homeland for the Muslims in the sub continent" (Abdul Hai, "The Message of Iqbal", *Pakistan Observer*, 21 April 1969) In 1930 "Muslim India proclaimed that the future of Indian Muslims with their distinct culture and spiritual urges lay in a separate state" (G.W. Choudhury, "The Quaid-i-Azam Founder of Pakistan", *Pakistan News Digest*, 15 September 1970, p 6) Iqbal, in 1930, "put forward the concept of a separate Islamic state in the provinces of the sub-continent with Muslim majority" (Aziz Ahmad and G E von Grunebaum (eds), *Muslim Self-Statement in India and Pakistan, 1857-1968*, Wiesbaden, 1970, note on p 130). He "thought of a separate homeland for the Muslims" (M U Haq, *Muslim Politics in Modern India, 1857-1947*, Meerut, 1970, p 147) He "put forward his concept of a separate and independent homeland for Muslims, comprising the Muslim-majority areas of the sub-continent" (*Struggle for Independence. Photographic Album, 1905-1947*, Government of West Pakistan, Bureau of

National Reconstruction, Lahore, n.d., p. 51). He "gave expression to the idea that the people of India should be separated on racial and religious grounds" (Naz, *Iqbal*, Lahore, 1970, p. 45). He demanded that, in addition to the north-west, "the Muslim-majority districts of Bengal should similarly be given the status of a Muslim state and completely separated"; and he declared (here Iqbal is being quoted), "I have studied the circumstances with great care and have arrived at the definite conclusion that a new state is going to emerge in the northern and eastern parts of the Indian sub-continent; no power on earth can now stop its emergence; and this state, appearing in the two parts of the country, will be run under a common system of governance" (Syed Asghar Ali Shah Jafri, *Tahrik-i-Pakistan awr uska Pas Manzar*, Lahore, 1970, p. 185). Iqbal announced that "the political goal for the Indian Muslims. . . was a separate independent State in the Indo-Pakistan Sub-continent" (Mumtaz Hasan, Foreword to B.A. Dar, *A Study in Iqbal's Philosophy*, Lahore, 1971, p. x). He "elaborated his scheme of an independent Muslim state in the sub-continent" (Khwaja Jamil Ahmad, *Hundred Great Muslims*, Lahore, 1971, p. 344). He advocated "a separate home for Muslims to be carved out of India after independence" (David Loshak, *Pakistan Crisis*, London, 1971, p. xv). He "for the first time very systematically demanded a separate homeland for the Muslims of India"; he "in a very clear, logical and reasonable way demanded a separate homeland for the Muslims of India" (Shafique Ali Khan, *Two Nation Theory*, Hyderabad Sind, 1973, pp. 613, 623). He "demanded political independence of the Muslims of the sub-continent" (*Pakistan 1973: Year Book*, ed by Rafique Akhtar, Karachi, 1973, p. 33; repeated in the 1975 ed, p. 30). He suggested that "all areas with a Muslim majority should be transformed into 'a separate Muslim state'" (Sardar Muhammad Khan Aziz, *Sarguzasht-i-Pakistan*, Lahore, March 1974, p. 63). He "advocated the establishment of a separate homeland for the Muslims" (Masudul Hasan, *Short Encyclopaedia of Pakistan*; Lahore, 1975, p. 81). He "spelled out the idea of a separate Muslim homeland" (Shaikh Imtiaz Ali, Vice-Chancellor, University of the Punjab, *Address of Welcome: Quaid-i-Azam Semi-*

*nar*, Lahore, 23 March 1976, p. 4) He "demanded a Muslim State for the Muslims of India" (Hamid Ahmad Khan, *Father of Our Nation: Early Life Story*, Islamabad, 1976, p. 7). He "articulated the proposition that Muslim-majority areas of the sub-continent should constitute a separate Muslim State" (Abdul Qayyum (a journalist) and S.R. Wasti (a professor of Indian history), "Struggle for Independence", in Hamid Jalal (ed), *Pakistan*, London, 1977, p. 113). He announced for the first time that "a separate state should be created out of the Muslim-majority provinces in the north-west and east" (Ihsanullah Sharif Alig, "Shair-i-Mashriq Allama Iqbal ki Hamagir Shakhsiyyat", *Jang*, 21 August 1977).

It must be pointed out that all these writers are talking specifically about the Allahabad address, not about his later opinions. As I write this, I have before me 63 other references to the same effect; but the above selection is quite representative of different kinds and levels of authors and should suffice.

93. A.S. Khurshid, *op. cit.*, *Mashriq*, 1 April 1964.
94. A.S. Khurshid, "Trends that Led to Iqbal's Allahabad Address", *TPT*, 17 June 1962.
95. M. Rafique Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-114.
96. Khurshid, *op. cit.*
97. *Ibid.*
98. M.R. Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-111.
99. Khurshid, *op. cit.*, and Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-112.
100. Khurshid, *op. cit.*, and Afzal, *op. cit.*, p. 112.
101. Khurshid, *op. cit.*
102. *Ibid.*
103. Afzal, *op. cit.*, p. 112.
104. This is Khurshid's account. A significantly different version is given by his father, Abdul Majid Salik, who quotes the headline as "*Punjab, Sind, Sarhad awr Baluchistan Islami mamalik hain*" ("...are Muslim countries"); see his *Sarguzasht*, Lahore, 1955, p. 284. Is Khurshid forestalling the Allahabad suggestion of amalgamating these provinces, or was his father writing from a fading memory? |
105. Khurshid, *op. cit.*
106. Afzal, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-114, who quotes the appeal; the original newspaper date is unclear. The signatories of the

Khan, Sayyid Mehr Shah, Abdul Majid Salik, Mawlana Muhammad Ali, Hakim Muhammad Sharif, Ghulam Mohayyuddin Qasuri, Khalifa Shujauddin, Mawlawi Wahabur Rahman, Mir Azizuddin and Abdullah; *ibid.*, p. 113.

107. A.S. Khurshid, "Immediate Reaction to Iqbal's Allahabad Address", *TPT*, 21 April 1963. My italics.
108. Abdul Majid Salik, *op. cit.*, p. 284.
109. Sayyid Nazir Niazi (ed), *Maktubat-i-Iqbal*, Karachi, 1957, pp. 63-64. Khurshid also says that in 1936 Iqbal had once again suggested the convening of such a conference; see his "Trends that Led to Iqbal's Allahabad Address", *TPT*, 17 June 1962.

# 6

## THE REAL IQBAL: 1930

### Iqbal's Views of 1930-1934

The plans for holding an Upper India Muslim Conference and the suggestion about a north-west Muslim India made at Allahabad had entered Iqbal's mind at the same time and seemed to have left it at the same time. A study of his speeches and statements made between 1930 and 1934 shows that both these ideas had ceased to interest him soon after the Allahabad session. What follows in this section should be enough to demonstrate the untruth of the claim that he "continued to develop this idea, whenever the occasion arose".<sup>1</sup> In his words we find no reference to his 1930 proposal; on the contrary, we see him grappling with problems alien to it.

In the summer of 1931 Iqbal wrote a letter to Sir Francis Younghusband, which soon afterwards found its way into the press. It reveals his studied attitude towards the Hindu-Muslim problem and should be quoted at some length. He began by saying: "While realizing the seriousness and importance of the Hindu-Muslim problem, with which this country is confronted today, and the practical difficulties involved in finding a satisfactory solution of it, I cannot allow myself to believe, as many people unfortunately do, both here and in England, that all human efforts directed to uniting the two communities are doomed to failure. I am not ashamed to say that in solving this problem we may need the assistance of Britain guided by the best of motives."

And a little later: "If you transfer political authority to the Hindu and keep him in power for any material benefit to Great Britain, you will drive the Indian Muslim to use the same weapon against the swaraj or Anglo-Swaraj Government as Gandhi did against the British Government. Moreover, it may result in the

whole of Muslim Asia being driven into the lap of Russian Communism which would serve as the *coup de grace* to British supremacy in the East. I do not myself believe that the Russians are by nature an irreligious people. . . . Since Bolshevism plus God is almost identical with Islam, I should not be surprised if in course of time either Islam would devour Russia or Russia Islam. The result will depend, I think, to a considerable extent on the position which is given to the Indian Muslims under the new constitution. . . . I shall have no objection to be ruled by the Hindu if he has the tact and ability to govern, but I cannot worship two gods. It must be either him or the British alone, but not the two together. . . . Somehow I feel hopeful that some solution of the Indian communal problem will be found at the next RTC which would satisfy all parties, including the British. . . . To the recognition of a common ideal and to the avoidance of friction in advancing along the path of self-rule, let us here and in the West address ourselves.”<sup>2</sup>

In one respect this statement of his ideas and hopes conforms to the substance of his Allahabad address; in another, it contains some staggering opinions: depending on the point of view of the present-day reader. What stands out is the absence of any reference, direct or oblique, to his “Muslim India within India” and the separation of the north-west. Writing within a few months of his Allahabad address on the subject of the Hindu-Muslim problem and the shape of the future constitution, there must have been strong reasons for not referring at all to his own solution of a Muslim state in the north-west. Either he had changed his mind completely about separation, or he had never suggested it in the first place.

The rest of the letter tends to confirm the second possibility. He had not lost hope in the final communal agreement. And he makes it clear that his idea of an agreement was not one of separation but of “uniting the two communities”. In this task of shaping a united India he seeks British help and guidance, but at the same time warns the British against two possibilities in case Muslim rights are disregarded. If all power is transferred to the Hindus, the majority, Muslims would treat the new Indian government in the same way as Gandhi had treated the British Indian Government—by which he probably meant civil disobedience. The second threat is more significant. If the British betray the Muslim faith in them, the

whole of Muslim Asia would be "driven into the lap of Russian Communism", thus putting an end to British supremacy in the East. Some students of Iqbal may here question his concern about the future of British supremacy; they may also look askance at his equation of Bolshevism plus God with Islam. But let that pass.

Iqbal has no objection to be ruled by the Hindus provided that they show tact and ability. He has also no objection to be governed by the British. What he does not want is that both the Hindus and the British should dominate the Indian Muslims: he does not mind the overlordship of any one of them. He does not indicate his preference, but the reference to "uniting the two communities" makes it clear that it was the British who had to leave the scene. So much for the supposed plans for the freedom of the Muslims. He ends the communication with the hope that a solution of the communal problem satisfactory to all parties would be found at the next RTC. The requirements were to recognize "a common ideal" and to avoid friction. This takes us back to the Allahabad search for a principle of internal harmony which would co-ordinate the different communalisms into a whole. In this sense, but not in the sense in which he is generally interpreted, he is reiterating his 1930 ideas.

Soon after writing the above letter to Younghusband, Iqbal left for England to participate in the deliberations of the second RTC, to which he had been appointed a delegate. On the eve of his departure for London he gave an interview to the *Bombay Chronicle*.<sup>3</sup> In this there is not a word about his scheme of a string of autonomous Muslim provinces on the north-west, or a large amalgamated Muslim state in an Indian federation, or a separate Muslim state in the north-west.

While in London Iqbal wrote a letter to *The Times* which contains his own interpretation of the Allahabad address and should settle the controversy once and for all. Edward Thompson, an English educational missionary with strong and unconcealed sympathies for the Hindus, wrote a letter to *The Times* in early October in which, after characterizing Iqbal's Allahabad proposal as "Pan-Islamic plotting", he said, "And I am not arguing against the establishment of Muslim 'communal provinces' in North-West India. But what Sir Muhammad Iqbal demands is a confederation 'within or without' the Indian Federation. Look at the map and see what sort of defensible frontier would be left to the rest of India."<sup>4</sup>

Before we look at Iqbal's reply, it should be pointed out that Iqbal had not used the word "confederation". Whether it is possible to have a confederation within a federation is a question which Thompson alone could answer, and he is dead.

Iqbal replied in a letter published in the same journal on 12 October. He wrote: "May I tell Dr. Thompson that in this passage [here he quoted the two italicized sentences from his address beginning 'I would like to see the Punjab. . .'] I do not put forward a demand for a Muslim State, outside the British Empire, but only a guess at a possible outcome in the dim future of the mighty forces now shaping the destiny of the Indian sub-continent. No Indian Muslim with any pretence to sanity contemplates a Muslim State or series of States in North-West India outside the British Commonwealth of Nations as a plan of practical politics."

After thus interpreting this passage, he turned to an explanation of his territorial solution for which he had argued at Allahabad: "Although I would oppose the creation of another cockpit of communal strife in the Central Punjab, as suggested by some enthusiasts, I am all for a re-distribution of India into provinces with effective majorities of one community or another on lines advocated both by the Nehru and the Simon Reports. *Indeed, my suggestion regarding Muslim provinces merely carries forward this idea.* A series of contented and well-organized Muslim provinces on the North-West Frontier of India would be the bulwark of India and of the British Empire against the hungry generations of the Asiatic highlands."<sup>5</sup>

Thus he confessed that at Allahabad he had not demanded the creation of a Muslim State, which, he now made clear, was "only a guess at a possible outcome in the dim future". Those who allege that he made such a demand or suggestion should accept Iqbal's own words and refrain from claiming that they know better than Iqbal did. In this letter he uses the word "province" again and again, and reaffirms that his territorial solution only meant the creation of provinces with effective majorities of any one community. Indeed, he removes the last vestige of doubt by saying that his suggestion was only a development of the idea contained in the Nehru and Simon Reports. He has also withdrawn the proposal for amalgamating the four northern Muslim provinces (which we can now presume to have been relegated to the dim future), for in the closing sentence he talks of a series of Muslim provinces on the

north-west. It may also be noticed in passing that two of his arguments given in support of such a configuration could not have won much appreciation from the Indian Muslims of his day: his anxiety to see a new Muslim north-west as a bulwark of the British Empire, and his uncomplimentary reference to the Central Asians which must have riled every frontiersman who called himself a Pathan or an Afghan.

At the RTC Iqbal did not put forward his Allahabad proposal, and the above letter explains why. The next major occasion when he could have reiterated his scheme, if he had wanted to, was the AIMC annual session at Lahore in March 1932, where he delivered the presidential address. Here again we find no mention of separation, or of a Muslim state. There is no reference even to a re-distribution of provinces. The emphasis is on the attainment of unity and harmony. Some passages of this speech need to be quoted and annotated in order to understand the development of his ideas and their connection with those of 1930.

Arguing for unity rather than division, he said: "In view of the visible and invisible points of contact between the various communities of India I do believe in the possibility of constructing a harmonious whole whose unity cannot be disturbed by the rich diversity which it must carry within its bosom. The problem of ancient Indian thought was how the one became many without sacrificing its oneness. Today this problem has come down from its ethical heights to the grosser plane of our political life, and we have to solve it in its reversed form, *i.e.*, how the many can become one without sacrificing its plural character. In so far then as the fundamentals of our policy are concerned, I have got nothing fresh to offer. Regarding these I have already expressed my views in my address to the All India Muslim League."<sup>6</sup>

He wants "unity", "a harmonious whole", the making of many into one—and calls it the "fundamentals of our policy" which he had already expressed at Allahabad. Certainly the creation of a separate state is not the same thing as the achievement of a unity in which differences are ironed out and a plural society is formed out of the "many".

Referring to Sir Geoffrey Corbett's scheme relating to the Punjab, which had been circulated at the RTC, Iqbal called it "very similar to the one I had suggested in my address to the All India Muslim League".<sup>7</sup> But he did not recall that for him it had formed

a part of a general scheme in which a truncated Punjab was joined with its northern and western provinces to produce a large unit.

He summed up the Muslim demands in the following paragraph: "The continuance of separate electorates and the status of the Frontier Province are no doubt assured, but complete provincial autonomy, transfer of power from Parliament to Indian provinces, equality of federal units, classification of subjects not into federal, central and provincial, but into federal and provincial only, majority rights in the Punjab and Bengal, unconditional separation of Sind, and one-third share in the Centre, constitute no less essential elements of our demand."<sup>8</sup>

By now he has identified himself completely with the point of view of other Muslim leaders. His demands are the same as theirs, and there is no mention of a territorial re-grouping. It would, however, be wrong to conclude from this that he had clipped his wings in order to win the presidency of the Muslim Conference. He had jettisoned his 1930 ideas long ago, and was now formally and morally a part of the Muslim delegation to the RTC (in spite of his dissociation from it on the preceding 15 November), against whose views, we are given to understand, he had once planned the campaign of an Upper India Muslim Conference.

Iqbal made one rather curious statement in this 1932 presidential speech. Deploring the declaration made by Muslim spokesmen in the Federal Structure Committee of the RTC on 26 November 1931, to the effect that they agreed to the simultaneous introduction of provincial autonomy and central responsibility, and giving his opinion that responsible government ought to be introduced immediately in British Indian provinces without waiting for the coming of a "federal superstructure", he said: "In my address to the All India Muslim League [in 1930] I raised my voice against the idea of an all-India federation".<sup>9</sup>

As it stands here, without any qualifying clause, this can be very misleading. The operative word is "all-India". He had not opposed the concept of any federation for India, but the idea of a federation in which the native states would be brought in along with the provinces. Torn from its context and quoted by itself such a statement can give a completely wrong impression of his Allahabad address. It is important to remember this because some writers have taken this sentence out of the speech and presented it as an argument that in 1930 he had stood firmly against the federal

solution, with the implication that he had suggested a division of India and the creation of a separate Muslim state.

On 8 June 1932, Iqbal wrote a letter to Muhammad Irfan Khan which clinches the argument against the myth-makers. It said: "Mawlana Shawkat Ali must be busy in preparing his legal case. Will you find out from him how things stand and write to me? Some days ago I had written to him that I had received a letter from a Hindu gentleman, Mr. Lalit, saying that Dr. Moonje accepts the scheme that I had put forward in my Muslim League presidential address and that he (Lalit) was going to consult Pandit Malaviya who, too, will accept it for the sake of Hindu-Muslim amity, and that at present it was not prudent to accept the scheme publicly. This letter was confidential. It also said that he (Lalit) had talked to Mawlana Shauwkat Ali and found him willing to come to an agreement. You must have understood to which scheme I am referring—consolidation (*ek ho jana*) of the Muslim provinces of northern India."<sup>10</sup>

That should leave no doubt about what Iqbal thought he had proposed at Allahabad. Had he demanded a separate state, he should have said so in the letter. But he reminds Irfan that he is referring to his 1930 plan of amalgamating the four provinces.

Later statements by him can be considered more briefly. In July 1932, replying to the Sikh demands in relation to the future of the Punjab, he wrote: "The Muslims of India are as anxious to protect their communal interests as to secure the constitutional advance of the country. The safeguards which they demand are essential for their protection as an all-India minority. They accept the principle of majority rule in the Centre and in those provinces where they happen to be in a hopeless minority provided they are not deprived of the countervailing [*sic.*] and legitimate advantage of being in a majority in certain other provinces."<sup>11</sup>

Exactly one month later, while commenting on the Communal Award, he again stressed the importance of provincial autonomy and its role in bringing security to the various minorities. "I must add", he said, "that the mere allotment of seats to various communities is in itself of no great consequence. What is vital is the amount of power which may be transferred to the provinces of India. If real power comes to the provinces there is no doubt that the minorities of India, Muslims and non-Muslims, will have an opportunity of improving their political position in the country

and that in working out the coming constitution, Muslims in their majority provinces will, in view of their past history and traditions, prove themselves free from all pettiness of mind and narrowness of outlook."<sup>12</sup>

By 1933 the shape of the coming constitution was becoming clear, and in February Iqbal welcomed it in a statement which complimented its principle of protection of minorities and applauded the birth of a new Indian nation. On the first point he said: "The proposed constitution clearly recognizes the principle of protection of minorities. This is the only way of giving the minorities a national outlook. It is now for the minorities themselves, who were parties to the Minorities' Pact in London, to take full advantage of the opportunities given to them." On the second he declared: "Whatever else one may say about the results of the RTC, nobody can deny that they have given birth to a people who are at once new and ancient. I believe it to be one of the most remarkable facts of modern history. Not even a farsighted historian can realize the full consequences of the birth of this new-ancient people."<sup>13</sup>

The expression of these opinions marks a new and odd stage in the evolution of Iqbal's attitude to an Indian federation. He had started as a well-informed critic of the whole federal concept as it was visualized for India. At the RTC he had seen his doubts deepening and had therefore given priority to winning provincial autonomy even if that meant a postponement of central responsibility. Throughout 1932 he had been asserting this, and harping on the virtues and primacy of provincial autonomy and giving increasingly less attention to the federal centre. And now abruptly we find him singing the praises of the whole package deal prepared and offered by the RTC. Both the points he made in the above-quoted statement separate him from the stand taken by the generality of Muslim commentators and from his own earlier opinions. It is not easy to see what had convinced him of the efficacy of safeguards embodied in the Conference decisions. Several of the Muslim demands, like constitutional provisions for adequate share in provincial and federal executives, had not been met. The idea of composite cabinets, *i.e.*, representation of minorities in the ministries under a written rule rather than by an unspoken tradition, had found no favour in London. This point was to create immense trouble with the coming into operation

of the provincial part of the new constitution. The Muslim League movement for Pakistan began and immediately commanded so much support because the 1935 constitution failed to protect Muslim interests or allay Muslim fears.

Similarly, Iqbal's generous tribute to the Conference for having produced a new "people" in India is beyond comprehension. He called it a "remarkable" achievement and rejoiced in its birth. If he meant that federalism had cemented Indian unity and heralded the coming of an Indian nation, soon, very soon, history was to prove him wrong. If he meant that the federal machinery now devised was exactly suited to the plural character of the Indian society, again later developments would refuse to vindicate him. In fact, one major reason for the failure of the federal solution to keep India together and avoid partition was that the makers of the new constitution closed their eyes to Indian diversity and heterogeneity, and refused to match their handiwork with the plural nature of the population for which it was meant. Far from considering the Indian Muslims sufficiently different from other Indians to rightfully demand separation, Iqbal was in fact welcoming the prospects for a new unity to be created by fresh constitutional means. Far from preaching or believing in a two-nation theory, he was looking forward to a united India based on the recognition of interests common to all her communities.

This comes out very well in his statement issued in December 1933 in explanation of the attitude of Muslim delegates to the RTC. Echoing the words of the Aga Khan and other Muslim delegates spoken at the second RTC in the course of their unsuccessful negotiations with Gandhi, he said: "If under Pandit Nehru's leadership the Hindus and the Congress agree to the safeguards which Muslims believe to be necessary for their protection as an all-India minority, the Muslims are still ready to serve, in the Aga Khan's words, as camp-followers of the majority community in the country's political struggle." Having thus set the pace, he went on to hope for a united India. "It is obvious that there are interests common to the various communities of India. In so far as these interests are concerned an understanding among the communities is possible: according to my belief, it is bound to come. The present situation is only a necessary stage in the country's political evolution. A united India will have to be built on the foundations of concrete facts, *i.e.*, the distinct existence of more than one people

in the country." If this state of affairs did not materialize, Iqbal would go back to his territorial solution of 1930. "Either the Indian majority community will have to accept for itself the permanent position of an agent of British imperialism in the East or the country will have to be redistributed on a basis of religious, historical and cultural affinities so as to do away with the question of electorates and the communal problem in its present form."<sup>14</sup>

One thing conveyed by these words of Iqbal is that in his opinion no change had occurred in the Muslim attitude since 1931, when the Aga Khan had made an offer of co-operation to Gandhi. Another thing made clear is Iqbal's faith in the attainment of Indian unity, in the realization that there were common interests on the basis of which this unity would be built, in the opinion that the present impasse was but a transient stage in the political evolution of India, and in the conviction that an understanding was bound to come. *Still another thing we learn here is that in case such an understanding failed to emerge, Iqbal would once again stand by his earlier solution of re-distributing the provinces.*

Any attempt to reconcile this statement of Iqbal's opinions with his popular image as the dreamer of Pakistan immediately comes up against four difficulties, which even his most tenacious supporters will not find it easy to overcome. In the first place, his emphasis on the unity of India and his sanguine hopes of winning it, as also his mention of common interests, set him apart, on the one hand, from those of his contemporaries and predecessors who saw nothing in common either between the Hindus and the Muslims or between Hinduism and Islam except a struggle for power which could only lead to the domination of one by the other, and, on the other hand, from his successors, among whom Jinnah stands supreme, who had lost all hope of an understanding and believed that a parting of the ways had become inevitable. Iqbal still hitched his wagon to the rapidly setting Indian star. In the second place, even if no agreement was forthcoming and the Hindu majority was to be installed in absolute power, the only solution Iqbal could offer was that of re-distribution of provinces. His gaze was still struck at an all-India federation with a number of autonomous Muslim provinces. He did not see partition as an alternative. In the third place, he was still fighting the narrow, by this time obsolete, battle of electorates. His re-distribution was aimed at doing away "with the question of electorates" and solving the communal pro-

blem "in its present form"—not at the deliverance of Islam or the freedom of Muslims.

Finally, we must not forget that when Iqbal was making these suggestions and expressing these hopes the call for a clear-cut partition with a name to itself had already been made by Rahmat Ali, for whom even to think in Indian terms was to strengthen the bonds of slavery, and to acquiesce in remaining a part of India was to sell the Islamic heritage to Hinduism. Iqbal must have known about the proposal of Rahmat Ali, for the message of Pakistan had reached the Punjab and was already agitating the mind of its youth. It is a proof of Iqbal's rejection of a solution by partition that at this time he issued a statement of this nature. This disposes of the unfounded claims of those who insist that Iqbal met Rahmat Ali in London and inspired him to think and plan for a partition of India. It passes understanding how a man who was arguing for a united India at the end of 1933 could have persuaded Rahmat Ali in 1931 or 1932 to demand a divided India.

That Iqbal was quite consistent in his opinion is once again borne out by what he wrote in 1934 in reply to Jawaharalal Nehru's remarks on Islam and nationalism which were published in the *Modern Review* of Calcutta. Clarifying the attitude of Islam towards nationalist ideals, Iqbal wrote: "Nationalism in the sense of love of one's county and even readiness to die for its honour is a part of the Muslim faith; it comes into conflict with Islam only when it begins to play the role of a political concept and claims to be a principle of human sodiarity [*sic.*] demanding that Islam should recede to the background of a mere private opinion and cease to be a living factor in the national life. In Turkey, Iran, Egypt and other Muslim countries it will never become a problem. In these countries Muslims constitute an overwhelming majority. . . It becomes a problem for Muslims only in countries where they happen to be in a minority, and nationalism demands their complete self-effacement. In majority countries Islam accommodates nationalism; for there Islam and nationalism are practically identical; in minority countries it is justified in seeking self-determination as a cultural unit. In either case, it is thoroughly consistent with itself."<sup>15</sup> Then in one single sentence he applies this principle to India: "In so far as India is concerned I can say with perfect confidence that the Muslims of India will not submit to any kind of political idealism which would seek to annihilate their cultural identity."<sup>16</sup>

Here again there is no reference to a Muslim nationalism in India, or to a feeling among Indian Muslims which could lead to a separate nationalism. What agitates his mind is the fear of a cultural disintegration of Islam, not its political servitude; and it can scarcely be argued that here, for him, the one included or implied the other. Nor does he enunciate the principle that nationalism for the Indian Muslim is primarily based on his culture, otherwise the fear of cultural decay might have produced a national feeling. The fact that Iqbal stopped after indicating his anxiety about the disappearance of Muslim culture is a measure of his refusal to acknowledge the birth or existence of a separate Muslim nationalism.

### Modern Historians and the Address

The interpretation put forward in these pages, viz., that Iqbal's Allahabad address can, by no rational process, be made to yield a demand for Muslim separation or for the creation of a Muslim state independent of an Indian federation, should not be considered an innovation, though the so-called Iqbal school may find it alien to its orthodoxy. Several writers and historians have read Iqbal in this way, and an account of their findings may help to put the issue in its perspective.

When Iqbal's letter to Edward Thompson, to which reference was made above, appeared in *The Times* on 12 October 1931, and was in the following weeks reproduced by many Indian English-language newspapers, a Muslim commentator, who used to write a regular column in the *Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore under the pen-name of But Shikan (idol-breaker), deplored the "mischievous" way in which the Hindus and the British were spreading the wrong impression that Iqbal was advocating a separate Muslim state in the north-west. "How much misrepresentation there has been of Muslim views", he wrote, "is evident from the fact that Sir Muhammad Iqbal recently found it necessary to write to the London *Times* to contradict the mischievous suggestion that he and his fellow Pan-Islamists contemplated the creation of a group of Indian Muslim States, outside the British Commonwealth of Nations. The chain of Muslim States contemplated by Sir Muhammad Iqbal. . . was of course to have been a part of British India, and certainly of the British Commonwealth of Nations."<sup>17</sup> As far as we know no communication contradicting this was

published in this newspaper, nor did any controversy or discussion erupt in the correspondence columns, which would suggest that at that time even in Lahore the above interpretation was acceptable, at least to the English-reading Muslim elite.

Sir Reginald Coupland, perhaps the most astute British observer of modern Indian politics, reaches the same conclusion. He admits that Iqbal's language was ambiguous, but "it is clear from the rest of Sir Muhammad's speech that he was not contemplating a separate sovereign Muslim State but only the consolidation of the Muslim North-West in one political unit of an all-India federation".<sup>18</sup>

It was possible for Muslims holding opposite political views to agree on this version of Iqbal. Shawkatullah Ansari, a stout Congressman and a consistent critic of Muslim League politics, denied in 1944 that Iqbal originated the Pakistan idea.<sup>19</sup> In the same year, Sardar Iqbal Ali Shah, a strong supporter of Muslim separatism and a prolific publicist of the Pakistan plan, remarked that in his 1930 address Iqbal "had not shed the idea of Pakistan as an integral part of India, for Pakistan to Iqbal was to be of federal association with the rest of India".<sup>20</sup>

Before 1947 the origin, nature and prospects of the idea of a partition of India on Hindu-Muslim lines were studied in much detail by two prominent non-Muslim politicians: Dr. Ambedkar, the untouchable leader, and Dr. Rajendra Prasad, a leading Congressman who later presided over his party. Of these two treatments Dr. Ambedkar's is less prejudiced and reflects an earnest effort to understand the Muslim separatist sentiment.<sup>21</sup> Dr. Rajendra Prasad's study, though much slanted and frankly expressive of the Hindus point of view, is important because it represents the Congress attitude and also because on certain points it goes into greater detail. By the time his book was published the myth of Iqbal had come into its own, for he says, "It is generally said that it was the late Sir Muhammad Iqbal who first put forward the demand for a separate and independent Muslim State in his Presidential address. . .".<sup>22</sup> But when he comes to examine the text of the speech he reaches the conclusion that "in the scheme adumbrated by Sir Muhammad Iqbal there is no independent Muslim State without a Central Indian authority of any kind contemplated. He evidently wants a Federation in which the Units will be autonomous and suggests a new demarcation of boundaries

of the Provinces in the North-West so as to create a unit in which the proportion of Muslims will be greater and the area more manageable".<sup>23</sup>

It may also be relevant to point out that Iqbal's Allahabad address, no matter how one interprets it, finds no mention in the works of the two most outstanding English scholars of Islam. Professor Sir Hamilton Gibb, in his popular and frequently reprinted *Mohammedanism*, does not even hint at Iqbal's foreshadowing of Pakistan.<sup>24</sup> Alfred Guillaume, in his extremely sympathetic and widely-read book on Islam, has nothing to say about Iqbal's politics or their influence on the creation of Pakistan.<sup>25</sup> It is fair to suggest that had either of these perceptive students of Islam found any ground for thinking that Iqbal had foreseen Pakistan, he would have included this in his account.

A Hindu historian of the Muslim League also concedes that "it is true that Muhammad Iqbal's suggestion of a compact Muslim state at this stage did not altogether contemplate the possibility of secession from Indian polity", though he goes on to say that "but for this reason the fact of preaching Muslim isolation could not be rendered less effective".<sup>26</sup>

In recent years some Pakistani scholars, after a careful study of the Allahabad address, have come to the conclusion that the origin of Pakistan has to be discovered elsewhere. One of them, comparing the Allahabad suggestion with the later Pakistan demand, points out three significant differences. First, Iqbal "was thinking only of North-West India and not of Bengal". Secondly, he wanted a division of the Punjab with a view to excluding the non-Muslim majority districts. "In a way he was clearer than the formulators of the Lahore Resolution of 1940. West Pakistan of the future was to cover roughly the territory outlined by Iqbal." Finally, "Iqbal was agreeable to the idea of the North-Western Muslim state forming a part of the Indian Federation, if 'residuary powers' were left entirely to self-governing states".<sup>27</sup>

Another historian (Hafeez Malik) realizes that "on the basis of his historic Allahabad address Iqbal is considered to be the architect of the state of Pakistan", but his own opinion is that "this interpretation is only partially correct". His comment on Iqbal's exclusion of Bengal is short and sharp. "First of all, he is silent about the fate of the Muslims of East Bengal, who were in fact more numerous than the north-western Muslims. Whether this was

an oversight or deliberate omission is not clear." On the proposed state he writes that the words of the address "indicate that the north-western Muslim state that he envisioned was to be part of an *Indian Confederation* [sic.]. He failed to answer the question how this plan could work without creating friction between Hindus and Muslims. Perhaps he intended to be vague so that Muslim politicians would have sufficient leeway to work out details for a Muslim homeland". Perhaps not really happy with having treated Iqbal in this way, he concludes with the statement that "nevertheless, 'the seeds of Pakistan' can be found in Iqbal's address".<sup>28</sup>

Hafeez Malik's reference to an "Indian Confederation" within which Iqbal allegedly wanted to put his north-western consolidated Muslim unit is misleading. Confederation is not mentioned anywhere in his address or in his later statements, nor was it ever considered at the RTC or, earlier, by the Nehru and the Simon reports. The controversy raged between the supporters of the close-type federation in which the centre would be immensely powerful (the Hindus) and the advocates of a loose-type federation in which the component units would be in control of their own affairs and the federal government would be vested only with the minimum powers essential to the efficient working of the entire machinery (the Muslims). This, incidentally, leads to the reflection why no Muslim politician suggested a confederal solution to the Indian problem. It is true that confederations are notoriously difficult to work and that history provides few instances of successful confederal arrangements, yet one would have thought that a proposal of this kind would occur to some one between the rejection of the federal solution and the suggestion for a partition.

To make the story complete and to maintain the chronological order, I may mention here that my interpretation of Iqbal was first put forth in my doctoral thesis at the University of Manchester in 1957-59, and appeared in published form in 1963. There I had written that "it is vital to remember that his scheme was for a *Muslim India within a larger Indian federation, and in no sense can he be said to have envisaged a sovereign and independent Pakistan*".<sup>29</sup>

The latest historian to publish his conclusion confirming the above line of thinking is Waheeduzzaman. In the course of his study of Indian Muslim politics during the years 1928-1940, he

writers, ". . . it is important to note that Iqbal was using the word *state*, not with the meaning of a sovereign independent state but as a component and constituent unit of India". He finds support for this in Iqbal's reference, contained in the sentence immediately following the italicized enunciation of his own proposal, to the rejection of his scheme by the Nehru Report, and adds, "The framers of the Nehru Report were obviously not entertaining any idea of *separating certain areas from the rest of India*".<sup>30</sup> To leave no doubt on this point in his own mind, and in ours, he continues in the same firm tone, "To start with, Iqbal nowhere in this lengthy speech mentioned the term 'Pakistan'. He did not advocate the division of India. He nowhere suggested the creation of a separate independent state. His main concern was with 'Muslim India within India'. It is quite possible that Iqbal himself had not yet found the correct clue to the Indian political riddle, or, which [*sic.*] is perhaps more probable, he did not consider at this time that the situation called for such a solution".<sup>31</sup> And again, "All that he wanted was a loose federation with maximum Provincial autonomy and an amalgamation of the Punjab, NWFP, Sind and Baluchistan into one Province. This Province was to be a part of the Indian Federation and there was no suggestion of its separation from the rest of the country".<sup>32</sup> And once again, "The idea of Pakistan did not originate with him".<sup>33</sup>

Nothing could be clearer than this. But in another paragraph he has, probably inadvertently, contradicted himself. Writing about Iqbal's inestimable service in awakening the Muslims of India to their real situation, he says, "His contribution, it must be emphasized, was *not so much in making a demand for a separate homeland for the Indian Muslims*, but in the fact that he inspired a whole generation of Muslims to think on those lines and ultimately to make that demand. He prepared the ground for Jinnah who finally led the Muslims to the goal of Pakistan".<sup>34</sup> Was Iqbal making a demand for a separate homeland for the Indian Muslims? Here the impression is given that he was, though elsewhere the opposite case is argued in terms which brook no compromise. It is possible that here the author has in mind the Iqbal-Jinnah correspondence, not the Allahabad address. If that be so, the context should have been specified.

Later, at another place, Waheeduzzaman has claimed that in

making his Allahabad proposal Iqbal "had gone farther than any other Muslim political leader".<sup>35</sup> This assertion fails to take notice of some of Iqbal's predecessors, and in particular of Zulfiqar Ali Khan. If he means that no other "Muslim political leader" had recommended the amalgamation of the four north-western provinces into one large area which would be a unit of the Indian federation, he is still wrong, since the Aga Khan's 1918 suggestion for an "Indus Provinces" had forestalled Iqbal's plan.

We may also take notice of a contemporary opinion. Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan, a well-known Punjabi politician of that period, was also of the belief that Iqbal's proposal was "in connection with an all-India federation".<sup>36</sup> The passage where this sentence occurs shows that this view of the Allahabad address is being taken for granted and needs no arguing or clarifying.

In 1967, I repeated my earlier interpretation of Iqbal and wrote, "It is grossly misleading to call him the originator of the idea of Pakistan or the poet who dreamed of partition. He never talked of partition. . . . It is one of the myths of Pakistani nationalism to saddle Iqbal with the parentage of Pakistan".<sup>37</sup> (It needs to be recorded, in passing, that I was pulled up severely for betraying the "national ideology" by several Pakistani scholars and writers. I quote two of my critics. The Director of the Iqbal Academy fancied it a duty of his office to remark: "I we accept this interpretation of the worthy scholar, the very basic conception of the demand of Pakistan as a separate homeland is totally shattered."<sup>38</sup> A columnist of an influential Urdu daily newspaper wrote that "it is clear" that this statement of "the famous historian K.K. Aziz" is "a part of the conspiracy aimed at diminishing the role of Iqbal in the creation of Pakistan and in the evolution of the concept of Muslim nationalism in the sub-continent";<sup>39</sup> the Urdu text runs: ". . . is saziš ka ek hissa hay jo Pakistan ke qyam aur barr-i-saghir men Muslim qawmiyyat ke tasawwur ke irtiqa ke silsila men Iqbal ke kirdar ko ghataney ki khatir ki ja rahi hain". I prefer not to speak about the unspeakable.)

It will be noticed that in this list of authors there are only four Pakistani names, and a number of points are common among them. All write in English, not in any Pakistani language. All are scholars, not journalists or popular writers. All were trained in research in the West. And, barring Waheeduzzaman, all published their books outside Pakistan. As for the exception, it may be

pointed out that Waheeduzzaman's book was written as a doctoral thesis in Toronto, though it was published in Pakistan.

Such writings are read by the English-knowing elite, not by the traditionally-educated class which receives all its knowledge from Urdu publications or by the common man whose literary effort is limited to reading Urdu newspapers, magazines and popular books which are by and large unreliable. None of these four authors has been translated in any local tongue. The importance of these facts lies in the conclusion that opinions expressed in such books do not travel far and have absolutely no effect on the continuing dissemination of the Iqbal myth which goes on from strength to strength. The historical truth or otherwise of these opinions is an irrelevant issue. What matters is that the prevalent orthodoxy, fully supported by the establishment, looks upon them as heresy, wrinkles its nose and goes its way. The impact of fresh thinking is blunted when its conclusions meet such deadly indifference from the scholars and such peurile abuse from the journalists.

### The Alleged Recantation

One small, but not unimportant, point need to be settled before we turn to a summing up of Iqbal's Allahabad proposal and its true place in the history of the idea of Pakistan. This concerns two different allegations that he recanted what he had proposed in December 1930.

The first to make a statement to this effect was Malik Barkat Ali, a lawyer from Lahore who later became a staunch supporter of the Muslim League and was for some years after 1937 the only Muslim League member in the Punjab legislative assembly. In 1931 he was in the "nationalist" camp, and was elected chairman of the reception committee for that year's session of the Punjab Nationalist Muslim Conference. Speaking in this capacity on 24 October, he said, "The conception of a divided India, which Sir Muhammad Iqbal put forward recently in the course of his Presidential utterance from the platform of the League, at a time when that body had virtually become extinct and ceased to represent free Islam—I am glad to be able to say that Sir Muhammad Iqbal has since recanted it—must not therefore delude anybody into thinking that it is Islam's conception of the India to be".<sup>40</sup> Another version of the same speech is slightly different: "The conception of a divided

India. . . must not delude anybody to think that that is Islam's conception of the India to be. *Even if Sir Muhammad Iqbal had not recanted it* as some thing which could not be put forward by any sane person, I should have emphatically and unhesitatingly repudiated it. . .".<sup>41</sup>

Two things about this assertion are clear. First, Barkat Ali had taken the Allahabad scheme to mean a division of India. Whether this was his own independently-arrived conclusion, or an impression borrowed or derived from current Hindu opinion which the "nationalist" Muslims always followed, is not clear and has no importance. Secondly, the date of this speech puts it beyond any doubt that he was referring to Iqbal's letter in reply to Edward Thompson published in *The Times* of 12 October. That letter had been reproduced by several Lahore newspapers and must have come to Barkat Ali's notice. In this letter, as we have seen, Iqbal had repudiated the idea that at Allahabad he had demanded the creation of a separate state in the north-west and had affirmed that his only suggestion was for a re-distribution of provinces with a view to easing the communal problem. The reference in the second of the above quotations to "something which could not be put forward by any sane person" paraphrases the language of Iqbal's letter, and makes it obvious that Barkat Ali was taking it *as his authority for the inference that Iqbal had uttered a recantation*. Barkat Ali's failure either to refer directly to the letter or to quote from it created the impression that he was either referring to a private communication of which the public was not aware or inventing a story to blacken the Muslim League. Surprisingly several Hindu and "nationalist" Muslim writers have quoted Barkat Ali without mentioning Iqbal's letter, thus creating the wrong impression that Iqbal was guilty of recantation and that Barkat Ali was the first to bring this withdrawal to public notice.

This incident has no inherent significance, and has been mentioned here merely to show how Iqbal's interpretation of his own proposal was given the unsightly and politically loaded name of recantation, and how cleverly the "nationalist" Muslims exploited the slightest possibility of making their political enemies look silly.

The second story about recantation has even less ground to stand upon. Its author is Edward Thompson, who wrote in one of his books on India: "In the *Observer* I once said that he [Iqbal]

supported the Pakistan plan. Iqbal was a friend, and he set my misconception right. After speaking of his own despondency at the chaos he saw coming 'on my vast undisciplined and starving land'... he went on to say that he thought the Pakistan plan would be disastrous to the British Government, disastrous to the Hindu community, disastrous to the Muslim community. 'But I am the President of the Muslim League and therefore it is my duty to support it'."<sup>42</sup> As this statement has been quoted with approval, almost glee, by several Hindu authors, including such responsible persons as Rajendra Prasad and Jawaharlal Nehru, and as Thompson was a writer of some popularity in England where the Left accepted him as a figure of liberal nobility, it is necessary to settle this controversy once for all by looking at its author and its antecedents.

Who was Edward Thompson? It is not known when he was born, but he died in 1946. By vocation an educational missionary, he taught at Bankura College in Bengal from 1910 to 1922, and was later given a fellowship at Oriel College, Oxford. He was neither a trained scholar nor a professional historian, but he wrote much on India. His only valuable book on India is a study of the native states. What endeared him to many anti-British Indians was his volume on the Mutiny, in which he tried to present the theory that the British atrocities during and after the uprising matched Indian excesses. Due partly to his missionary background, partly to his long stay among the vocal Bengali Hindus, and partly to his "liberal" beliefs which saw much virtue in the rigidity of the principle of majority rule in all areas of the Empire, he was an unflinching supporter of the Congress movement for independence and the Hindu plans for ruling all India. An interest in the future of the Indian minorities was to him nothing more than an unsavoury imperial move to keep India under the British yoke. Muslim claims for safeguards, protection and autonomy were to him nothing less than expressions of reaction, primitiveness and treachery to the cause of "Indian" freedom. Sincere in his own opinions, he was incapable of seeing the same virtue in the opinions of others.

A glance at some of his ideas about India and Indian Muslims will reveal his outlook and show the influences working upon him.

During the first RTC he acted, behind the scenes, as a spokesman of the Hindus. Suggesting outside arbitration to solve the

communal problem, a course which had already been rejected by the Muslims, he stated it as a "fact" that the younger Muslims were not as "communal minded" as the old ones.<sup>43</sup> When Muslim leaders, in a letter to *The Times* on 22 June 1931, expressed their resentment at this suggestion and this remark, he answered that it was a suggestion he had been "asked to make".<sup>44</sup> He did not say who had asked him to do so, but we know that the idea of tackling the Muslim problem through arbitration had been propounded in January by three Hindu (Mahasabha) leaders, M.R. Jayakar, B.S. Moonje, and S.B. Tambe.<sup>45</sup>

Towards the end of 1939, when even some of the Congress leaders had begun to weaken in their claims to represent the Muslims, Thompson continued to doubt if the Muslim League spoke for even a quarter of the Indian Muslims, and to assert that the Congress had a larger Muslim membership than the League's.<sup>46</sup> The rising popularity of the League, the growing strength of Jinnah, the continuous defeats of the Congress in provincial and central by-elections in Muslim constituencies—nothing could alter his belief in the Congress as the only true spokesman of India. In early 1941 he again claimed that the League had still a long way to go before it could be accepted as representing Muslim India.<sup>47</sup>

Echoing the Congress, he deplored the alleged British policy of giving the Muslim League a permanent veto on Indian constitutional advance.<sup>48</sup> A few years later he repeated the Hindu Mahasabha claim that the British had won the sovereignty of India from the Marathas, not the Muslims, implying that therefore sovereignty should revert to the Hindus when British rule was withdrawn.<sup>49</sup> Next year, he argued that Pakistan should not be conceded to the Muslims even if Gandhi and Jinnah agreed to it, for they had no right to decide this question. Neither of them was a Panjabi or a Bengali; the Punjab was being governed by a Hindu-Muslim-Sikh coalition; in Bengal, though Muslims had a slight majority, the "wealth and tradition and culture of the Bengali nation was overwhelmingly Hindu". Recalling the 1905 partition of Bengal, he uttered an historical falsehood by saying that it had been opposed so much by "all Hindus and Muslims" that it had to be annulled.<sup>50</sup> Indulging in the general habit, practised by the British left, of likening Hindu-Muslim rivalry in India to Catholic-Protestant friction in Britain, he declared that if Britain had been

occupied by a conqueror who then offered self-government on the condition that first the Catholics and the Protestants should be in agreement, "we should never have won freedom".<sup>51</sup>

The important point here is not that such opinions were held and expressed by Edward Thompson, for this was the general attitude of British liberals and socialists;<sup>52</sup> what is relevant for us here is to take notice of the kind of man we are dealing with when we come to consider his story about Iqbal.

It is obviously useless to expect objectivity from a commentator of these antecedents. His sympathies for the Hindus were too deep-rooted to let him view the Muslim question dispassionately. The examples I have quoted above also indicate his inability to treat facts with respect. He was not beyond uttering actual falsehoods in the pursuit of his own argument. In such a case, therefore, the historian has no obligation to accept his word unless there is unimpeachable corroboratory evidence to support it. And of that there is not an iota. On the contrary, there is much to disprove his allegation, both in his own statement and in attendant circumstances.

First of all, the book containing the allegation was published two years after Iqbal's death, when all unsupported statements about him were beyond any risk of contradiction by Iqbal himself. When Thompson was writing this book in 1939, he knew that Iqbal was dead and no longer in a position to confirm or deny what he was going to say about him. This should have obliged Thompson to present his evidence in chapter and verse, so that no doubt could be entertained. Even if he did not care for historical discipline, he owed something to the memory of the dead. But unfortunately he preferred to make a wild allegation which had nothing in its favour except his own tainted word and a proven prejudice and much against it.

Then, in making such a charge, Thompson is curiously indifferent to dates, though time is the essence of this story. He says that "once" he wrote that Iqbal supported the Pakistan plan. He does not say when. Nor does he give the date or text of Iqbal's letter in which he is supposed to have denied this. Such a letter, if it was ever written at all, could only have been written between January 1933, when the word "Pakistan" was born, and April 1938 when Iqbal died. But Iqbal never supported the Pakistan of Rahmat Ali, and this name was not given to the Muslim League

partition scheme till two years after Iqbal's death Was Thompson referring to the Allahabad address, which he interpreted as a demand for separation? If so, it was grossly wrong to call it by the name of Pakistan, and Iqbal had already, in his letter to *The Times* of 12 October 1931, put a different construction on his 1930 proposal Or, was Thompson referring to the scheme propounded by Iqbal in his letters to Jinnah written during 1937-38? But that is impossible, for the existence of these letters was unknown to all except Jinnah till quite late <sup>53</sup>

There is also the added mystery of Iqbal's "confession" that he had to support the Pakistan plan because he was president of the Muslim League Iqbal held this office only once, and that was in 1930 when he spoke at Allahabad At that date the word "Pakistan" was yet unknown to the world, not to speak of forming a part of the Muslim League policy When the League came to adopt it as its goal, in March 1940, Iqbal had been dead for two years Is Thompson then referring to the year 1930-31? In that case, how can one use the word "Pakistan", even if Iqbal was believed to have urged a division at Allahabad?

Anyway, what is this "Pakistan" Thompson is talking about? If he means the plan put forward by Rahmat Ali, Iqbal was never a supporter of that If he means the scheme propounded by Iqbal in 1937-38 in his correspondence with Jinnah (assuming that by some magic he knew the contents of these letters), Iqbal never recanted it, for he continued to press it on Jinnah till the day of his death The word "Pakistan" was not in existence before 1933, and it was not in the vocabulary of the Muslim League till long after Iqbal's death

Thompson's claim that Iqbal was a friend of his is also open to serious doubt We know the names of Iqbal's English friends, and his correspondence with some of them has been published in the various collections of his speeches, writings and letters, or is available in scattered references in the biographies, autobiographies and memoirs of important figures of that period Thompson does not get a mention anywhere Nor is his name to be found in any of Iqbal's biographies, or in any of the accounts of Iqbal written by people who worked with him or were in close association with him. The conclusion is inescapable that Thompson's claim to Iqbal's friendship was put into this statement with a view to either pretending that he was well known to the great poet or to

lending a semblance of truth to the allegation he was making.

To sum up, in view of Thompson's life-long anti-Muslim campaign and the contradictions inherent in the statement itself, his allegation is too big a draft on our credulity to be taken seriously. By normal standards of checking historical documents the statement has every appearance of being a fabrication, and that is how it should be treated.

## A Re-Assessment

From what has been said about Iqbal in these pages it is evident that a re-assessment of his role in Indian Muslim politics, and especially in the history of the idea of Pakistan, is called for. We have seen how widely, one-sidedly and passionately he is misinterpreted, and an imaginary meaning is given to his words. The Allahabad address is a very important document even without making it out to be the first, or the first Muslim League, call for the creation of a Muslim state. Iqbal's refreshing view of communalism and its place in a society which was not yet a nation broke new ground.<sup>54</sup> His warning to the Muslims to beware of the dangers of accepting the western concept of nationalism underlined the fact that for them nationalism, when and in whatever shape and whatever name it came, would be an empty shadow unless it was given substance by Islam. In their society and thought there was no place for a secular, state-inspired and purely earth-bound nationalism which divorced the essence of life from its material existence, which took the husk to be the substance and the body to be the soul, which separated the unseparables, the creed from the people, the faith from the believers, which made Islam but an oriental version of Christianity, and which corrupted the religion of Allah in the name of a spurious reformation.

To use a modern, though horrible, word, this was the ideology Iqbal gave to his people. It is his mark of distinction that none before him had done so. The upholders of orthodox Islam seemed to be sending out a similar message from their fastnesses in Deoband and Farangi Mahal, but only seemed. They were preaching the non-existence of territorial nationalism in Islam and stressing its universalism. The conclusion they drew was the exact opposite of Iqbal's. There could be no Muslim nationalism in India because Islam gave no sanction to territorial nationalism;

therefore, there was an Indian nationalism of which the Muslims formed a part; therefore, the Congress was right in its claim to speak for all India; therefore, separate Muslim politics and parties had the sanction neither of Islam nor of political utility. This line of argument demonstrated how the same premisses can lead to diametrically opposed conclusions. But it is obvious that the divines of Deoband were making a very selective use of Islamic teachings. They chose from Islamic law and traditions whatever suited their purpose, and ignored the rest. They believed in the doctrine that nationalism had no place in Islam, for it buttressed their argument. But they showed no inclination to accept the much more fundamental belief that in Islam the secular and the sacred could not be separated. To them politics were an activity independent of religion; how else could they have justified, nay decreed, acquiescence in Congress policies? This dogma sat ill on the lips of religious leaders who claimed the monopoly of interpreting Islam. But stranger things have happened in history, or it would not be the exciting, tingling, flaming study that it is.

Iqbal, who was neither a *mawlawi* nor a *mulla* nor an *'alim* in the conventional sense, had a higher vision of Islam and a nobler view of mankind. His spirit was liberal to the core and completely at one with his true faith. He refused to see Islam as a set of static, unmoving and unmovable principles to be interpreted by a narrow class of *mullas* and to be accepted by the commonality with a look of spiritual ecstasy. This is not the place to discuss Iqbal's philosophical ideas.<sup>55</sup> but one or two basic points may be mentioned since they colour the entire body of his thinking.

He maintained that the human ego possesses creative freedom, and he found its sanction in the Quran. For him the fall of man had a different, more meaningful, significance. Human development had brought the human mind to a level where a finite ego emerged with the power to choose. In claiming this revolutionary destiny for man he parted company with the traditionalists of the Islamic world. To the ordinary mortals this belief taught a great lesson. that man is the maker of his destiny. The doctrine of fatalism, so dear to the orthodox heart and so popular an image of the Muslim in the West, he regarded as immoral, irreligious and degrading. It was an invention, he said, of those who had no understanding of philosophical truth, no grasp of the intention of God in creating the universe and no interest in the inherent quality

of the human ego. Man is the "co-worker" of God, and how can he be that if he wears the shackles of predestination? No legal interpretation of Islam could claim finality, and reasoning and interpretation were the rights of every Muslim.

To elect such a man to be the president of the Muslim League was indeed a revolutionary step, though it is very doubtful if those who nominated him realized the nature of their action.<sup>56</sup> It is not surprising that the League ignored his political suggestions which were by no means revolutionary or even radical. But it is astonishing that his colleagues and followers took no notice of his attempts to re-cast Islamic thinking in a new mould. The wind of liberalism which blew from him did not reach his people, for between him and they stood the rock of inherited custom and long tradition.

To turn to his politics, I have shown that his scheme did not go beyond creating a large Muslim province in the north-west which could protect the interests of a portion of Indian Muslims and enable them to find a better place in the federal structure of India. It is impossible to find any evidence for the theory that he demanded a separate Muslim state, country or homeland. There is nothing to indicate this in his poetry written before or after 1930. For one who could find time and inclination to write on every facet of Islam and even on such topical and minor subjects as Nawab Zulfiqar Ali Khan's motor car and the corrupting influence of the *pirs* of the Punjab, it would not have been difficult to write verses on a concept of such vital importance. We also fail to discover any references to such a proposal in his letters, speeches, writings, interviews and political statements. He also did not use the RTC as a platform to propound or reiterate the doctrine of separation. It is reasonable to think that before making such a far-reaching suggestion he would have consulted some of his close friends, his political supporters and one or two among Muslim leaders. Did he do this? We have no knowledge. If he did so, how did they react to his proposal? Again, we have no information. If he failed to consult them, there ought to have been strong reasons for it; but they have not been communicated to us.

The Muslim League took no notice of his proposal, and this opens another chapter of mysteries. Had Iqbal been really asking the League to endorse a partition scheme, one can understand the reluctance of the party to commit itself to such a course of action

without notice, and without the benefit of the advice of almost the entire leadership which was then away in London; though it should be recalled that in 1930 partition was no longer a revolutionary proposition, for several prophetic voices had already given tongue to it and the 1929 Khilafat Conference had heard of it officially from its formal platform.

But Iqbal was not offering a partition to the Muslim League. He gave a much narrower and less radical suggestion for the amalgamation of certain provinces in one region with a view to strengthening the Muslim position in the coming federation. Even this was implicitly but unmistakably rejected by the party. Why? Was it so enamoured of the federal solution that it was not prepared to accept any major change in its structure? Were the delegates so provincial-minded that they were not ready to merge the separate identities of their provinces even in the hope of better things to come? Or, was it that those from the rest of India were repelled by the parochial nature of the suggestion which, as they saw it, would leave a very large part of their co-religionists under Hindu control? Or, did the League fail to attach any importance to the words of a poet, because he had been invited to preside over its deliberations not as a statesman whose reflections were to be heeded but as a renowned poet who deserved to be honoured by election to high public office?

If the League ignored his proposal because the leaders were not available for consultation, it should have taken it up for consideration in its next session; but it did not. Was it because it failed to win approval of other leaders who had now returned to India? With the League in such an impossibly un-co-operative mood Iqbal should have carried his scheme to some other party or group. His plans for a special conference to promote his ideas fell through. But he was given a valuable opportunity to give his theory a second try when the Muslim Conference chose him its president in 1932. However, he did not care to reiterate his plan before a gathering which was more representative than his 1930 audience. Is it that the indifference of the League had broken his heart, and he did not find in himself enough patience or strength to repeat something to which another assembly had given so scant an attention?

Perhaps, the explanation lies not in the refusal of the League but in the will of public opinion which seemed to confirm the

League's inaction. The eloquent silence with which his scheme was greeted by the public and the press must have gladdened the hearts of the League delegates. How right they had been in rejecting a suggestion which public opinion had refused to take up! Some of them may even have congratulated themselves on their prescience. Did it not show that they had their finger on the pulse of the nation, and were therefore perfectly qualified to guide its destinies? Iqbal saw the direction of the wind and felt, how strongly we don't know, that it was not blowing his way.

Politicians are a stubborn tribe and must have a hard skin (their friends call it resilience) in order to practise their profession. Had Iqbal belonged to this order he might have persisted in his ideas, offered them again and again to the people, fought for them, and then left the decision to the goddess of luck who, in spite of her reputed fickleness, seems to smile on so many politicians. But he was a poet, and poets are a sensitive race. He was given to making exquisite verses which people read and heard and memorized and sang. He did not have to push them down their throats. That was the work of demagogues, not of poets. He was also a seer who pointed the way with his finger and passed on. Not for him to argue and cajole and protest, to plead and flatter and browbeat. He showed the rising star and blessed the flock. If others saw only the setting sun and needed no benediction, so much the worse for them. One attempt was enough. He would not give his people the benefit of the doubt. Had they heard him the first time he had spoken, he might have spelt out the idea. But if they were not interested, nor was he; and he passed on to other things. The idea died, as all ideas do when their creators turn their backs on them. With a scowl of disapproval upon his brow Iqbal let the idea perish. If asked, probably he would have answered that it deserved this end.

This general indifference to his proposal also gives a clue to the slight influence he exercised on his contemporaries, on schemes of partition or near-partition propounded by others in the early 'thirties, and on the general course of Muslim politics. The one outstanding plan for a clear-cut division put forward after the Allahabad address was that of Rahmat Ali. As we will see in the following chapter, Iqbal's admirers have made extravagant claims about his influence on Rahmat Ali, even going to the length of saying that Iqbal coined the name "Pakistan" for Rahmat Ali's

Muslim state, though there is absolutely no first-hand or reliable evidence to support this. When Iqbal himself had made a firm declaration that his suggestion was not for a partition but for a re-distribution of provincial boundaries, how could he have inspired Rahmat Ali who did not believe in an India and who argued from quite a different set of arguments to reach a very different conclusion?

As far as Jinnah is concerned there is again no evidence, direct or indirect, that the two men knew each other well during this period, or that Iqbal had any place in Jinnah's thinking until several years later when he began to write to Jinnah. The year 1935 is a marked watershed in Muslim politics in India, not so much because of the passing of the new constitutional act, but because of the new direction taken by Muslim political thinking with the reappearance of Jinnah on the Indian scene. A new age began, which we can rightly call the Jinnah age, in which a new leadership created a new organization to pursue a new policy. What had gone before seemed so far away, not in terms of years and months but in terms of policies, men, aims and circumstances.

Part of the responsibility for the controversy about Iqbal and the precise meaning of his scheme must be borne by him. Clarity was not a virtue which he practised when writing in English. Several of his statements were vague and lent themselves to more than one interpretation. Sometimes he seemed to rejoice in ambiguity, hardly realizing that in political thinking it created the same confusion of which he himself had once accused other Muslim politicians<sup>57</sup> Of course, imprecision in expression is sometimes useful to a politician when he does not want to make himself clear in order not to make a commitment. Similarly, ambiguity has the advantage of providing convenient loopholes of escape when some imprudent public utterance comes home to roost.

But Iqbal was not speaking during a campaign on the hustings where he might have wanted to cover his words with a cloth of many colours. Nor was he attacking a particular official policy or decision, where circumspection and caution dictated round-about phrases which could contain everything from something to nothing. Nor was he writing a political manifesto in which there is a famine of commitment in a flood of promise. Nor was he speaking extempore, or from memory, or from brief, hastily-scribbled notes. A written, printed text lay before him which he

read out in his clear, firm voice. He was addressing a respectable assembly from a responsible rostrum on an important occasion. He had brought a new message for his people, a fresh idea, a novel concept, a new ideal, and he had brought it in italics. It was incumbent upon him to spell it out clearly, in crystalline brilliance, in shining clarity, in terms which commanded a single meaning, in accents of ringing transparence into which doubt dared not enter. Instead, he made an announcement which opened the door wide to controversy. He talked of many things in the same breath: the overpowering role of Islam, the impossibility of a territorial Muslim nationalism, the undesirability of a divorce between the spiritual and the temporal, safeguards, separate electorates, a loose federation, autonomous provinces, consolidation of the north-west, a future inside or outside the British Commonwealth, the Delhi Resolution, the threat of a vague, unnamed direct action in the future, and so on. There was something for everyone in this package deal. What he really wanted to put across was driven out of sight by a plethora of qualifications. His scheme seemed to say one thing, his context quite another.

This confusion comes out well if we compare the Allahabad speech with other Muslim League presidential addresses. A perusal of Jinnah's addresses from 1937 onwards tells the difference. They are by no means pieces of well-written, even passable, prose, but they invite us to enter a world of certitude, a universe of imperatives. He knows what he wants to say, and says it without leaving his meaning unclear. His mind cannot be misunderstood. His ideas are definite, almost tangible. He wants either this or that, he rejects such and such a policy, he follows one guiding star and points it out to the public with a finger as steady as a rock. He deals in certainties which turn doubts to gossamer.

It is inconceivable that the Allahabad speech would have been made by a Jinnah or a Shafi, a Hasrat Mohani or a Muhammad Ali. Is it simply because Iqbal was a poet and given to play with words? This is not enough of an answer, because he spoke in English while he sang in other languages, and above all because he was also a lawyer. If his imagination led him into a riot of ideas, his legal training should have pulled him back. If his eye had seen a vision which he wanted his people to share with him, the lawyer's exactitude should have lent it precision. He did not do this, either at Allahabad or on later occasions. At different times he gave

different interpretations of his original plan. He had many opportunities to remove doubt, and either to repeat his suggestion in unmistakable language or to announce that it meant nothing more than a provincial re-arrangement. He did not use them, and left us with a controversy which still flourishes.

If we accept his proposal as a definite offer on behalf of the Muslim League, it is still doubtful if it would have won the support of Muslim India. He ignored Bēngal to the chagrin of the Bengali Muslim. Though it may be argued that since under the majority principle Bengal would be one large Muslim province in the federation it needed no special mention, yet he was suggesting an all-India solution from a national platform, and indifference to Bengal, however unintentional, was bound to create misgivings among the sensitive Bengalis. If his interest was limited to the north-west, and the plans for an Upper India Muslim Conference show that it was, he was exposing himself to the charge of parochialism. He was entitled to his opinion, but he should not have made the Muslim League a vehicle for his purely regional ambitions.

By putting the Muslims of the minority provinces out of his calculations he gave a lie to his claim that the future of Indian Islam agitated his heart. It is quite true that as things stood nobody could have done anything for those Muslims. None of the proposals aimed at re-arranging, re-grouping, re-distributing or dividing India could rescue the badly scattered faithful (except Rahmat Ali's, which was impracticable in this aspect). When later Pakistan became a reality these people still stayed outside its scope. But the point is that by banishing them from his consciousness and from his consideration, Iqbal made his scheme even less palatable to Muslim India as a whole. It will be remembered that as late as 1939 the Raja of Mahmudabad was constrained to refer to Iqbal's proposal as unacceptable to Indian Muslims because of its "fundamental weakness" that "it left out of account the fate of Musalmans scattered in the provinces where the Hindus happened to be in the majority", and also because it took no notice of Bengal, and gave no attention to the future of Hyderabad, Bhopal and other Muslim native states.<sup>5B</sup>

It may be said in reply that Jinnah too was guilty of leaving the Muslims of the minority provinces to their fate. But there were two important differences between Iqbal and Jinnah. Iqbal's gaze

was limited to a part of India, Jinnah's covered the whole of it. Iqbal wanted a regional solution, Jinnah a national one. Iqbal was fighting for a portion of Indian Islam, Jinnah for the entirety. Iqbal would have broken the national strength of the Muslim League, Jinnah aimed at making it the equal of the Congress. Iqbal was content with a Muslim India within India, Jinnah wanted a sovereign existence. Iqbal wished to build up a united India on the basis of an internal harmony, Jinnah aspired to make the Muslim areas independent and free of all dangers of Hindu rule. Iqbal was arguing the case of a region, Jinnah the case of a nation.

In the second place, Jinnah was a more skilful politician. He could persuade the Muslims of Hindu India that a Pakistan without them would still be a deliverance of Indian Islam and would still save the maximum possible number of Muslims. Would not a minority of the nation, he asked, make sacrifices so that the majority of the nation became free? Because he put it like this the people followed him—even those people who had nothing to gain from supporting him and everything to lose. Iqbal's attitude was different. He turned his back on these people and talked only of the north-west. He did not appeal for their help. He did not count them among his people, as he did not believe in the two-nation theory. He did not ask for their support and sympathy; perhaps he thought he did not need them in the campaign he was going to mount. He surrendered his national leadership of his own accord by narrowing down his territorial solution to a certain part of India, and by making himself its major exponent. Even if the final result was the same as that of the Muslim League's Pakistan, his attitude was revealed to be vastly different. And in political and national movements attitudes of leaders are of the utmost importance.

Yet the myth that Iqbal dreamt of Pakistan in 1930 was created. A variety of factors and sentiments helped to sustain it. One was sheer momentum. Once the myth got going there was nothing to oppose it. Extraneous sentiments pushed it forward. As the poetic genius of Iqbal entered the national consciousness more and more, the line between the poet and the politician grew dim and gradually disappeared. As his fame as a thinker and philosopher grew the origin of many things was attributed to him, until an indomitable folklore gathered around him which reverence made stronger and tradition more sacred. Another factor was the absence

of an alternative myth. The belief that he had originated the idea of Pakistan was allowed to develop because the names of those who had really done so were allowed to remain in oblivion. Still another factor was the lack of objectivity. No serious effort was made to discover the origin of Pakistan, to identify the person or persons who might have spoken of it, and to find out the truth behind the myth. Comfortable conclusions took the place of history. Wishful thinking overpowered facts. Sentiment vanquished reason. The myth-makers got a myth by wanting one. A final factor was the need of owning a great intellectual as the father of the idea. In every nationalist movement there are men of letters who illumine the idea of freedom by their literary efforts. They become a part of the national tradition. They are poets, novelists, dramatists, philosophers, essayists and historians, but they are also intellectual fighters in the struggle for national existence. The Muslims, too, wanted a great literary figure who could be said to have inspired the national struggle or at least to have given the nation a noble goal. Iqbal, in their eyes, fulfilled these qualifications, and at once a shrine was raised to him.<sup>59</sup>

What the myth-makers forgot was that the Muslim League itself, which fought for and won Pakistan, did not share their belief in the myth. It ignored Iqbal in 1930, when he was its elected president, by choosing to take no notice whatsoever of his proposal. But, of course, at that time the myth did not exist. When Iqbal died in 1938, the League once again gave him no special plaudits. It was customary at the annual session and in the Council meeting immediately preceding the session to adopt resolutions condoling the passing away of all prominent Muslims who had died since the previous session. In the resolution on Iqbal's death passed by the Muslim League Council in its meeting at Delhi on 4 December 1938 there is no mention of his Allahabad proposal, even of his letters to Jinnah of a much later date, or of any special contribution made by him to the national movement. He is praised as a great poet and as a philosopher of Islam.<sup>60</sup> That is all. The annual session at Patna in December repeated this resolution without any change, except the substitution of "the Council of the All India Muslim League" with "this session of the All India Muslim League".<sup>61</sup> The party did not even refer to the fact that he was once its president.

So much for the occasion of his death—a time when usually

mourners closely examine the career of the departed soul for anything worthwhile to be recorded in the formal condolences. Apparently the myth had still not arrived. The next occasion, the greatest by its nature and timing, came in March 1940 when the Muslim League met in Lahore to demand Pakistan. The venue of the session was the vast ground next to the great mosque of Awrungleb in the compound of which Iqbal lay buried. Throughout the long session, its presidential address delivered by Jinnah with fervour but without notes, the momentous Lahore Resolution which tolled the bell for Indian unity and rang in the new Muslim nationalism, the fighting and eloquent speeches made in support of partition, the resolutions passed on various topics ranging from Palestine to the Khaksars and from the powers of the Working Committee to the election of the honorary secretary and honorary treasurer—throughout all this nobody mentioned Iqbal's name, nobody referred to him as the father of the idea which was now being enshrined in the national demand. The myth, it seems, had yet to come.

Immediately after the session, Iqbal's admirers from all communities and circles held a meeting in the University Hall to observe the "Iqbal Day" and to pay tributes to the poet-philosopher. A.K. Fazlul Haq, the Bengali Muslim League leader who had moved the Lahore Resolution, presided over the first session; Jinnah chaired the second session. In his speech, Jinnah paid a glorious tribute to Iqbal when he said, "If I live to see the ideal of a Muslim State being achieved in India, and I was then offered to make a choice between the works of Iqbal and the rulership of the Muslim State, I would prefer the former." Iqbal was a dynamic personality, he added, and had made the greatest contribution towards rousing and developing Muslim national consciousness. Sir Abdul Qadir, a former president of the Muslim League and a man of letters, also addressed the meeting. Among others who spoke were Hafeez Jullundhuri, Khawaja Ghulam-us-Sayyidain, S.A. Rahman, Ghulam Ahmad Parvaiz and Nawab Bahadur Yar Jung.<sup>62</sup> Still there was no mention of his Allahabad speech or even of his Muslim League presidentship.

The Iqbal myth was not the handiwork of the Muslim League or of Muslim politicians. It was a group of popular writers, journalists and other propagandists of the Pakistan campaign which gradually brought in his name, as if it were an argument, to prove

the righteousness of the demand. It is not a sudden sentiment, they seemed to say, not an upstart idea; look at Iqbal who showed the way in as far back as 1930. A great poet had seen the vision, and he could not have been wrong. The Muslim League had been told of it ten years ago, and the demand immediately became respectable in their eyes by thus gaining relative antiquity. From that onwards the myth rolled on, becoming stronger with every mention of his name, gaining in credibility with every new book and pamphlet, and, with the coming of independence, becoming a part of the official national tradition. Extravagant claims were made for an imaginary proposition and went unchallenged. Truth was suppressed in the interest of a doubtful cause, and no protests were heard.

For those who want to see history as it happened, free of all assumptions however serviceable, pure of all dross however attractive, clear of all prejudices however convenient, the saddest thing about the myth is that, in an attempt to credit Iqbal with something he did not do, it succeeded in ignoring the vital role he actually played in the life of the Indian Muslims. He created an awakening of which there is no parallel in their history.

In the reconstruction of Islamic thought, Iqbal's major contribution was the introduction of a liberal tendency which was capable of leading to radical social and legal reforms. Some of his ideas were genuinely fresh and amounted to a revolution in religion and theological thinking. In interpreting the Quran and assessing the role of man in divine creation he broke with a thousand year-old tradition which had become an unquestioned and unquestionable dogma in Islamic thought. It is true that at times Iqbal could not go all the way in accepting the conclusions of his own premises, and ended with indefinite references to the cake of custom and the difficulty of breaking ancient tradition. By and large, however, his thinking was consistent and courageous, and could have resulted in widespread and far-reaching changes had his ideas been accepted by the Muslim society.

They were not accepted for several reasons. One was his radicalism which repelled the majority of the traditionalists, who were accustomed to the well-known path of obedience to the old masters and could not distinguish between reform, innovation, impudence and heresy. Dogma as enunciated of old was for them the essence of their faith, and against that they were not prepared

to hear a word of criticism. The general conservative character of the society was another factor working against the acceptance of Iqbal's reformist ideals. Led by the fundamentalists, demoralized by the humiliation of living under a foreign rule, turned reactionary by lack of education, and corrupted by the enveloping influence of folk religion, the Indian Muslim society had learnt to look backwards and inwards; and so impervious was this crust of tradition that neither Shaikh Ahmad of Sirhind nor Shah Waliullah of Delhi, neither Sayyid Ahmad Khan nor Sayyid Ameer Ali, had succeeded in showing it the wrongness of its ways and the perils of its attitude.

Another thing which stood in the way of Iqbal was the general tendency of the Muslims to shun fresh thinking and hug the conventions—a not uncommon phenomenon in history when a civilization is passing through its years of decline. Innovation is a taboo when traditions govern the mind to the exclusion of independent thinking. It is so easy to bandy about charges of *kufir* when new ideas are working to dethrone long-cherished theories. Finally, Iqbal's English prose did not encourage wide reading. His lectures on Islamic thought, which gave a new turn to Islamic philosophy and theology and should have been compulsory reading for all educated Muslims, are written in a heavy, unattractive style, which suffers from lengthy sentences, involved expressions and turgid constructions. Moreover, he wrote in a language which was unknown or unpalatable to a large number of traditional-minded Muslims, whose oriental learning and knowledge of the faith were deep, but who knew little of western learning and even less of modern methods of rational thinking. The Urdu translation of the lectures that I have seen seems to have been made with the express purpose of repelling the reader.

In poetry, Iqbal's most mature and deepest thought is to be found in his Persian verses. He had taken up Persian as the vehicle of his ideas in order to be understood beyond the confines of India. When he wrote this poetry almost every educated Indian Muslim had a fair knowledge of the language and could follow his message. It is a tragic coincidence that with the coming of independence Persian gradually lost its pre-eminent place in the culture and study of Pakistanis, and today only a few among the educated can read and understand Iqbal's finest work.

In consequence of all this, Iqbal's ideas about Islam were

circulated within a small circle. The modern-educated elite read him. Students of philosophy at the universities studied his lectures as a part of their syllabus. Beyond this narrow group it is doubtful if his lectures and Persian works were read by more than a few persons. The impact of his liberal thinking was therefore severely restricted. His revolutionary ideas failed to inspire any general movement of social purification, economic uplift and religious transformation, which should, in all logic, have appeared and could, in all probability, have changed the face of Muslim society in India and also elsewhere.

Fortunately, what Iqbal lost in the failing influence of his philosophy he gained in the rising popularity of his (Urdu) poetry. As a poet he added lustre to the annals of Urdu literature which were already distinguished in the volume and quality of their poetry. By common consent he is the greatest poet in any language that Muslim India produced in its history of a thousand years. In the art of *ghazal* Mir and Ghalib were more polished in the traditional style. In philosophical interest Ghalib approaches him but only when he touches the heights of his art. In wit and sweet mischief Dagh stands unique, but in some of his verses Iqbal bears favourable comparison.

The greatness of Iqbal lies in the wide, almost limitless, range of his power. He can write simple, unadorned lines which school children can understand and have understood for decades: some of them were sung as the morning prayer by the school assembly even before independence. He is capable of producing natural, unaffected poems transmitting elementary moral lessons in a most moving way: "man ka khwab" is a good example of this. He can write verses of light wit, unwounding humour and cutting satire if the spirit moves him. But his highest art is revealed in the serious Urdu and Persian poems, where his theme is God, Satan, man and the universe. Like the Greek poets of old, like Kalidasa and Dante and Milton and Goethe, like the classical giants of Persia, he is at his best when he sings of the creation of the living universe; the divine effulgence of God whose power is as unique as His compassion is universal; the pride of Satan which over-reaches him and the inevitable command of exile goes forth, and his fall which, however unangelic, has an exciting grandeur in the event and has coloured the life of man through the ages; the coming of man to earth when an angelic horde welcomes his earthly spirit and pro-

phies the unlimited possibilities of good and evil embedded in his nature; the fundamental, universal conflict of good and evil and the story of man wrestling with the devil within him; the love of the youth for the maiden, of the mother for the child, of man for man, and, above all, of man for God and of God for man; the over-powering, dazzling spark of sacred love which knows no limits, fears no obstacles, acknowledges no weaknesses, makes no compromises, shuns no sacrifices, and ends in the ultimate fusion of the sacred and the profane, the worldly and the ethereal, the material and the spiritual, the final mystic vision of the creator of all things, where the longing, burning human heart finds what it seeks and rejoices in the fulfilment.

As in substance so in form, Iqbal's range of thought and subject matches his ability to shape the suitable mould. Art and form go hand in hand. Thought and its vehicle are beautifully yoked together. There is no *genre* of oriental prosody, classical or modern, which lies beyond his inventive power. Every form he touches comes out in perfect shape. The means of conveying the idea are selected to conform to the nature of the idea. Variety is thus achieved, and beauty of expression enhanced. There is no thought that misses the exact form which will clothe it in raiment of glory. There is no form that does not carry in its bosom a noble heart-beat.

How could such a poet fail to move the heart and soul of the nation? Nothing like this had been seen before. Sublimity of thought kept pace with an unearthly loveliness of words. Be it in Urdu or in Persian, the music bursts forth, now in a crash of symbols reverberating to the end of time, now in soothing, soft tones, not exactly a pleasure in itself but a statement of intent to please, at one moment pounding out the beats of a glad heart in repetitive ease, at another measuring out joys and sorrows of man in long syllables. The lyric quality is supreme. Every note is chosen for its effectiveness and suitability. Voices rise and fall with the unfolding of the story. Short, choppy lines speak in anger, complaint or arrogance. Long, vibrant phrases express sorrow, anguish and yearning. Philosophy speaks in its own upright syllables which keep faith with the purity of the theme. Love uses its own swinging, teasing, tingling phrases which seem to come from another world.

The impact of this poetry had a shattering effect on the com-

placency of the Muslim mind. Poetry has always enjoyed greater force to move the heart than words arranged in prose order. Love of words strung in music is man's most ancient heritage and his earliest love. In all Muslim societies poetry has had a special place. When the songs of Iqbal were read or heard, every one woke up and found his blood set astir. Here was someone revealing the unseen, uncovering the mystery of life veil by veil, speaking of things ever felt by the heart but never given a voice. Above all, he spoke of Islam, of its rise to greatness from humble Arab origins, of its glories sung by friends and envied by enemies, of its decline and fall which was a tragedy for mankind and a blight to world civilization, and of another rise, another great future, another age of achievement, which will come if the faithful renew their oath of fealty to God, their vow of faith in the Quran, their promise of loyalty to the Prophet, and their pledge to the service of mankind. He pointed to the West, to its glittering prizes of doubtful merit, to its corrupting materialism which weighed everything in the scales of gold, to its inverted values which assuaged the misery of the poor at the cost of faith in God, to its technological progress which silenced the voice of the heart in the clang and clatter of the machine, to the anarchy creeping nigher and making nought of the spiritual quest of man. He warned that the path of salvation lay not through the heresy, the confusion and the chaos of the modern world cast in the image of the heretical West, but through the pure, natural stirrings of the heart which spoke, not always in vain, of the need for love, of a search for the higher good, and of the craving for the brotherhood of man. Islam was the highest stage of this surrender to the good in man, and only by following its dictates was he to become great once more. The path to achievement led to infinite summits, and nothing lay beyond his capacity. The only barrier was man's own defeatist mentality bred by bending the knee before false deities. Shed the worship of these tin gods, cleanse the heart of all dross, he called, and you can achieve the impossible. Man is the maker of his destiny; to deny this is to deny God. Once he develops his will his grasp will over-reach the stars.

The ordinary reader of Iqbal did not understand his allegories, his philosophical touches, or even all his allusions to Islamic history. But he did not have to understand them to be moved by his poetry. The message came through, vivid and clear. It was a call

to action. It was an appeal to become self-reliant, self-respecting, honourable. It was a command to come back to Islam, the pristine fount of truth, not the lifeless dogma preached by the *mulla*. Some understood Iqbal, many more heard of his words, nearly all were influenced by him. Those who could not read had his poems recited to them. Whole poems were learnt by heart and recited to one another. Verses were quoted to suit the occasion: an old, pleasing habit of Muslims all over the world. Even those who knew no Urdu or Persian were conscious of his influence; some of them made his acquaintance through translations or Urdu- and Persian-knowing friends. In literature as well as in popular thinking this was the age of Iqbal: His presence was felt throughout the land and moulded the consciousness of men.

The upshot was that to everyone—from the illiterate who had his Iqbal on hearsay through the half-educated who knew him on the second or third remove up to the elite who read and appreciated him—Iqbal brought one message: "You are a Muslim". For the first time Indian Muslims became intensely conscious that they were Muslims. The first quickening had come with the Khilafat movement, when politics had become almost solely a religious affair with the future of the *khalifa* in jeopardy and the integrity of the Ottoman Empire in grave peril. But soon, rather too soon, the years had rolled away, the Khilafat had gone the way of all traditional institutions which have outworn their original purpose, and the one great Islamic empire of the descendants of Osman had shrunk to a small, secular republic. The Indian Muslims were frustrated, a little angry and wholly dispirited. They sank into inaction, and would have stayed in that twilight of lethargy had Iqbal not come to revive them. Their national problems were being tackled by the politicians, but this was not the age of democracy, nor was the Muslim League yet a mass organization. Some one was needed who could reach the common man, capture his attention and shake him out of his deadly ignorance. Iqbal did this, and it was his greatest achievement. He made a nation out of his people. He made them painfully aware of their inability to go forward without faith in themselves. He prepared them for great things: for the days that were coming when every shoulder would be needed at the wheel, for the sacrifices which would be required of them before the sun of freedom rose and made them fully human.

This is what Iqbal did, and by this he should be judged in history. By no means was this an ordinary achievement. To awaken a fallen people to the sense of their fall, to move them to action, to revive their faith in themselves, to make them feel the impact of and the need for Islam, to force them to grow up into thinking adults, to rekindle the torch of self-respect which burned so low in their breast, to create a thinking community out of a sapless, sluggish mass of half-living creatures—few in human history are given to achieve this, and fewer achieve it so well as he did. For any man, whatever his role in human affairs, this should be enough to immortalize his memory. It is an impertinence to try to add to his achievements by fabricating events and putting false gloss on history. He licked his people into shape and prepared them for the acceptance of the idea of Pakistan. The idea was not his, but the force behind its coming belonged to no one else. In this sense he occupies *the* highest place in the development of the idea of Pakistan, and history shall always honour his memory.

## NOTES

1. G. Allana, *Quaid-i-Azam Jinnah: The Story of a Nation*, Karachi, 1967, p. 299.
2. Muhammad Iqbal to Sir Francis Younghusband, *CMG*, 30 July 1931. The letter is also reproduced in Shamloo, *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, Lahore, 2nd ed 1948, pp. 164-169.
3. See this statement in B.A. Dar (ed), *Letters and Writings of Iqbal*, Karachi, 1967, pp. 54-62. The editor gives no date to this interview, but it must have been in August 1931 as the Conference opened in London on 17 September.
4. Edward Thompson, letter, *The Times*, 3 October 1931.
5. Muhammad Iqbal, letter, *ibid.*, 12 October 1931.
6. Muhammad Iqbal, Presidential Address, AIMC, Lahore Session, 21 March 1932, Shamloo, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-39. A summary of the address is available in *LAR 1932*, Vol I, pp. 301-306, and in *CMG*, 23 March 1932.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42.
10. Letter reproduced, in part, in B.A. Dar (ed), *Anwar-i-Iqbal*, Karachi, 1967, p. 209, and Taswir Hamidi, "Pakistan ka Tasawwar", *Jang*, 23 March 1978. Dar gives the date as 8 June, Hamidi as 5 July; probably Dar's is correct.
11. Muhammad Iqbal, Statement on the Sikh Demands, 25 July 1932, Shamloo, *op. cit.*, pp. 177-178.
12. Muhammad Iqbal, Statement on the Communal Award, 24 August 1932, *ibid.*, p. 185.
13. Muhammad Iqbal, Statement on the Constitution emerging from the RTC, 26 February 1933, *ibid.*, p. 189. The subject of the comment was Great Britain, *Proposals for Indian Constitutional Reform*, London, 1933, Cmd. 4268.
14. Muhammad Iqbal, Statement explaining the Attitude of Muslim Delegates to the RTC, 6 December 1933, Shamloo, *op. cit.*, pp. 208-212, the three passages quoted by me occur on pp. 210, 211, 212; in S.A. Vahid (ed), *Thoughts and Reflections of Iqbal*, Lahore, 1964, pp. 365, 366, 367.
15. Muhammad Iqbal, Reply to Questions Raised by Pandit J.L. Nehru, Shamloo, *op. cit.*, pp. 141-142.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 143.
17. But Shikan, "The Muslim World", *CMG*, 19 October 1931.
18. Reginald Coupland, *Indian Politics, 1936-1942: The Second Part of a Report on the Constitutional Problem in India*, London, 1943, p. 198.
19. Shaukatullah Ansari, *Pakistan: The Problem of India*, Lahore, 1944, p. 4.
20. Sardar Iqbal Ali Shah, *Pakistan: A Plan for India*, London, 1944, p. 14. See also his "The Political Aims of Muslim India", *Asiatic Review*, April 1942, pp. 151-158.
21. B.R. Ambedkar, *Pakistan or the Partition of India*, Bombay, December 1940, 2nd ed 1945.
22. Rajendra Prasad, *India Divided*, Bombay, 3rd ed June 1947, p. 204.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 206.
24. See H.A.R. Gibb, *Mohammedanism*, London, 1950 rep, p. 185.
25. Alfred Guillaume, *Islam*, Harmondsworth, 1954, new ed 1956, pp 160-163.
26. Lal Bahadur, *The Muslim League: Its History, Activities and Achievements*, Agra, 1954. Originally a doctoral thesis submitted at the University of Agra.
27. Khalid B. Sayeed, *Pakistan The Formative Phase*, Karachi, 1960, p. 112.
28. Hafeez Malik, *Moslem Nationalism in India and Pakistan*, Washington, D.C , 1963, pp -239-241.
29. K.K. Aziz, *Britain and Muslim India*, London, 1963, p. 143.
30. Waheeduzzaman, *Towards Pakistan*, Lahore, 1964, p. 132. The word "state" is in italics in the quotation.
31. *Ibid.*, p 134.
32. *Ibid* , p. 137
33. *Ibid.*, p. 147.
34. *Ibid* , p. 142. My italics.
35. Waheeduzzaman, in I.H. Qureshi (ed), *A Short History of Pakistan*, Karachi, 1967, Book Four, p. 205. Perhaps it is not fair to hold the author responsible for the view expressed here in view of the editor's declaration that at places (which he does not indicate) he has wielded the editorial pen without let or hindrance. The reader should also know that this 4-volume text book was prepared under official instructions

- and guidance of the federal ministry of education, which might have restricted the freedom of the contributors to wander away from the establishment view.
36. Syed Nur Ahmad, *Martial Law se Martial Law Tak*, Lahore, 1965, p. 126.
  37. K.K. Aziz, *The Making of Pakistan: A Study in Nationalism*, London, 1967, p. 54.
  38. M. Moizuddin, "Iqbal and the Quaid-i-Azam: The Seer and the Realist", in *Papers Presented at the International Congress on Quaid-i-Azam, 19-25 December 1976*, Islamabad, 1976, Vol II, pp. 112-113 (mimeo).
  39. Ajmal Siddiqui, "Iqbal ka Tasawwar-i-Pakistan", *NW*, 3 April 1977.
  40. Malik Barkat Ali, Address as Chairman, Reception Committee, Punjab Nationalist Muslim Conference, Lahore, 24 October 1931, *IAR 1931*, Vol II, p. 235; also quoted in Shaukatullah Ansari, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-4. My italics.
  41. This was pub by *The Tribune*, a Hindu daily of Lahore, on 9 July 1941, and reproduced from there in Rezaul Karim, *Pakistan Examined*, Calcutta, 1941, p. 159. My italics.
  42. Edward Thompson, *Enlist India for Freedom*, London, 1940, p. 58.
  43. See Edward Thompson, letter, *The Times*, 17 June 1931.
  44. Edward Thompson, letter, *ibid.*, 26 June 1931.
  45. See their joint letter, *ibid.*, 14 January 1931.
  46. Edward Thompson, "Greatest Freedom for India", *MG*, 29 November 1939.
  47. Edward Thompson, letter, *The Times*, 6 January 1941.
  48. See his letter, *ibid.*, 12 November 1940. In this letter he gave incorrect figures of Muslim wins in the preceding general elections.
  49. See his letter, *ibid.*, 8 March 1943.
  50. His letter, *Spectator*, 1 September 1944.
  51. His letter, *The Times*, 20 March 1945.
  52. For a full discussion of the attitude of the British left see my *Britain and Muslim India*, London, 1963, which gives a large number of illustrations and tries to discover reasons for this partisanship.
  53. According to one report, the year of Iqbal's alleged denial was 1935. ". . . as late as the year 1935, Dr. Iqbal was

opposed to the idea of Pakistan. In a letter addressed to Dr Edward Thompson, . . ., Muhammad Anwar, "The Forgotten Hero I", *TPT*, 23 March 1964. We don't know how and on what evidence Anwar fixes this date. There is nothing in Iqbal's records to show that he supported the Pakistan plan before (or, as a matter of fact, after) this year. Anwar seems to have accepted Thompson's allegation without demur.

54. It appears that Iqbal was much influenced by Durrani in this field. There are phrases and passages in the Allahabad address which bear a close affinity to what Durrani had written nearly two years earlier. To give one example, "Communalism and Nationalism are antagonistic forces, but they are also necessary accompaniments of each other because of the peculiar constitution of the two communities concerned" (F.K. Khan Durrani, *The Future of Islam in India*, Lahore, 1929, p. 20).
55. The original source is, of course, his own *Six Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, first pub in 1928, and his poetical works. Competent expositions have been attempted by H.A.R. Gibb, *Modern Trends in Islam*, Chicago, 1947, Aziz Ahmad *Islamic Modernism in India and Pakistan*, London, 1967, and others. But it is a pity that his message still awaits a commentator worthy of the task.
56. For a very brief account of how Iqbal was elected to the presidentship of the Muslim League see Syed Shamsul Hasan (ed), *Plain Mr. Jinnah*, Karachi, 1976, Introduction, pp. 50-52.
57. "First, we must frankly admit that there is yet a sort of chaos in the political thought of those who are supposed to guide the activities of the Indian Muslims in the present-day political struggle". Presidential Address, AIMC, Lahore, 21 March 1932, Shamloo, *op. cit.*, p. 56.
58. Raja of Mahmudabad, Presidential Address, Delhi Provincial Muslim League Conference, Delhi, 8 April 1939, *IAR 1939*, Vol I, p. 376.
59. It may be of some interest to catalogue the motives attributed to Iqbal for demanding a partition by those who insist that he wanted a separate Muslim state. According to one student of his poetry, it was the pessimism born of looking at the Hindu-Muslim conflict and finding that no alternative

was possible (Abdul Malik Arwi, *Iqbal ki Shairi*, Badayun, 1950, p. 320). In the opinion of a Muslim "nationalist" writer, it arose out of Iqbal's efforts to find compensation for the loss of the Muslim majority in the Punjab Legislative Assembly under the provisions of the Lucknow Pact (Tufail Ahmad Mangalori, *Musalmanon ka Rawshan Mustaqbil*, Delhi, 1945, p. 630). Another scholar of Iqbal gives the following list: love of Islam, sorry state of the Islamic world, abolition of the Khilafat, memory of Jamaluddin Afghani's movement for pan-Islamism, anxiety to conserve the culture of the Muslims, and, as he said in the Allahabad address, the conviction that India was the greatest Muslim country in the world (M.A. Khan, *Iqbal ka Siyasi Karnamah*, Karachi, 1952, p. 512).

60. The resolution read: "Resolved that the Council of the All India Muslim League places on record its appreciation of late Sir Muhammad Iqbal as a sage philosopher of Islam and a great national poet. He urged the Muslims to build their future in consonance with their great past. Though he is not among us, he lives for ever in his imperishable verses which would continue to inspire the life and actions of the Muslims all over the world. This meeting of the Council deeply mourns for him and offers fervent prayers to the Almighty that soul of the deceased may rest in peace" (*Resolutions of the All India Muslim League from October 1937 to December 1938*, Delhi, n.d., Resolution no. 3, p. 42).
61. *Ibid.*, Resolution no. 3, p. 56.
62. CMG, 26 March 1940.