

Acknowledgments

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A Man Alone: Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the All-India Muslim League's Support for the British during World War II

“The war which nobody wanted turned out to be a blessing.”¹ This statement by Muhammad Ali Jinnah shortly near the end of World War II reflects the importance that the leader of the All-India Muslim League placed upon the war. Yet historians have relegated the League's participation in the conflict. Indian participation in World War II is often relegated to accounts of individual soldiers or broad summaries of the service of Indian regiments and their integration with the battle plans of Western powers. Part of this is likely due to strains of Western superiority, which place non-Western forces on the edges of history. However historians have also compartmentalized this episode. Much scholarship exists during this time period that examines Indian politics as it relates to the independence movement or the creation of Pakistan. But there has been a seeming resistance to integrate the impact of World War II with domestic Indian politics. The one notable exception is Yasmin Khan's *The Raj at War*. However this work, while aimed at examining the entire subcontinent, is primarily focused on the politics of the Indian National Congress and relegates the League to only a few pages. Yasmin Khan's explanation for the League's actions is also unsatisfying as she simply paints the League as acting solely in a contrarian manner to Gandhi and the Congress, the organization is relegated to functioning merely as a face for minor parties.

The lack of scholarship on League support for World War II is rather notable as such support calls for explanation. The League was the most notable Indian independence organization to support the British and the organization's leaders seemingly saw such support as compatible with the organization's overriding goal of achieving Indian independence. Jinnah was

¹ Yasmin Khan, *The Raj at War : A People's History of India's Second World War*, (London, The Bodley Head, 2015), 135.

obviously aware of the Gandhian criticism of the war as a colonial conflict yet he still led the League in supporting the war. Even stranger, the League had historical motive to be skeptical of such support. In World War I Indian Muslim Leaders had hinged their support for the British on the agreement that, in return, the British would respect the Ottoman caliphate and Muslim holy cities in Arabia. Yet, during the war, the British supported Arab revolts in Mecca against the caliphate, and proclaimed the Balfour Declaration in support of creating a Jewish Homeland on Muslim Majority lands of Palestine. Upon the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, the British Forces invaded Istanbul, encourage the Greek invasion of Anatolia, and rejected claims of self-determination for Turkey. Against the perceived British betrayal of Indian Muslims, the post-war era witnessed a large Muslim and Hindu mobilization in India to support the Turkish War for Independence. General British abandonment of its promises to Muslim populations of India caused dismay among the Empire's Muslim subjects and a feeling of betrayal. There was thus plenty of motive for Jinnah and the League to not support the British in World War II. Yet they did and this contradiction is one that historians seem to have ignored.

This thesis fills this historical gap and craft a motive for League support that can explain the seeming contradiction of its actions. Crucial for understanding this is Ayesha Jalal's *The Sole Spokesman*. In particular, Jalal's view of Jinnah's role in the creation of Pakistan. It should of course be noted that Jalal's work is no longer the domineering force it once was and several historians have critiqued her argument. This thesis takes such views into account and incorporates such voices like Christoph Jaffrelot. However Jalal is an important part of my work and in many ways this thesis helps update her work by using the League's support for the war as a way to answer several deficiencies in her book.

Perhaps the most common criticism of Jalal that I want to answer is her depiction of Jinnah and the creation of Pakistan as ultimately something that occurs due to forces outside his control.² In examining Jinnah's decision to offer wartime support, my thesis crafts a view of Jinnah that offers him more agency and situates later forces as partially a result of actions he took early. In this sense Jinnah is not only given a renewed sense of agency but the forces that created the conditions for Pakistan are explained.

Another aspect that this thesis addresses is the dominance of hegemonic individuals in Pakistani politics. As Christoph Jaffrelot has noted, the contemporary state of Pakistan has often been vulnerable to the dominance of powerful singular figures. While I believe Jaffrelot is correct to trace part of this to the founding of the state, I believe that he does not focus enough on Jinnah's role in the League. In examining the actions taken by Jinnah during World War II, it becomes apparent that the League President acted as a powerful central force in many ways a precursor to the strongman politics now seen in Pakistan.

A final goal of this thesis is the importance of the individual in the world of politics. While this thesis is not in the discipline of political science, it does rely heavily on concepts from the realism school of thought found in modern international relations theory. Yet at the same time as I use this model, I offer a rather sharp criticism of the belief that states are the primary actors, a key tenet of realism. In observing the actions taken by Jinnah and the ramifications this had on the creation of Pakistan it becomes apparent the realist model is too narrow and that individuals' figures can have major impacts. In examining Jinnah and his impact on Pakistan I broaden the scope of realism. Through the actions of Jinnah and his impact upon the creation of

² Thomas R. Metcalf, "Review of the Sole Spokesman," *The American Historical Review* 92, no. 4 (1987): 1021.

Pakistan, I want to observe the ways in which a single individual can have an impact upon political parties, states, and even the international order.

League support of the British war effort is best understood as a strategy to achieve political goals. Jinnah used the League's backing of the war to obtain guarantees from the British, safeguarding the future of the organization, while also using the war as an opportunity to secure his control over the party. To ensure that he was not opposed while pursuing his goals, Jinnah secured cooperation within the League through the use of Islamic modernist themes and vocabulary to justify the wartime support. The first two chapters map closely onto chronology examining the bulk of World War II as well as a few preceding years. The third chapter, while loosely tied to the end of the war, zooms out and looks at the war as a whole.

In Chapter One the base is failure of the League in the 1937 election and the ways in which Jinnah tried to respond. Jinnah's negotiations with the British to achieve concessions in return for wartime support make up the bulk of this chapter and I try to connect such concessions to League goals of representation and determination.

In Chapter Two, I examine the ways in which support for the war changed particularly due to Jinnah using the war as a tool for establishing himself as a sole power within the League. In particular I discuss the conflict between Jinnah and A.K. Fazlul Huq and the ways in which the war was used by Jinnah to eliminate rival powers. This chapter also establishes the ways in which the establishment of Jinnah created a more uniform party.

Chapter Three is loosely based on the end of the war for the League and how there was little desire among the League to go to war against Japan. The primary focus of this chapter is on exploring the influence of Islamic Modernism and Syed Ahmad Khan on wartime support. This

chapter continues the idea of a uniform party from the previous chapter by displaying the way in which this uniformity functioned in practice and what it meant for the League.

Chapter One

Political Problems and Promises: The Leverage of Wartime Support

The All-India Muslim League's performance in the 1937 Provincial Election sum up the daunting issue that faced the organization. The one bright side was that the League was the second most popular party. The problem was that this only resulted in 106 of 1,585 seats.³ The Indian National Congress, the most popular party, won 707 total seats, with most of these being open contest seats. It also won about half of the seats reserved for Muslim candidates, a bitter pill for Jinnah.⁴ To top matters off for Jinnah and the League, the Congress formed the government in seven out of the eleven contested provinces with the remaining four provinces, all Muslim majority regions, going to provincial parties rather than the League.⁵ To even the most simpleminded political observers the message was clear: the League, in its current state, could not win elections.

The election of 1937 revealed the initial problem that would drive Jinnah and League leadership mad trying to find a solution. The need to win votes in the Muslim majority provinces represented the biggest challenge. Despite its name, the League had actually performed best in

³ Shiva Bajpai and Joseph Schwartzberg, *A Historical Atlas of South Asia*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), <http://dsal.uchicago.edu/reference/schwartzberg/pager.html?object=260&view=text>

⁴ Ibid. Elections had been split into separate electorates since 1909. Seats were reserved in legislative assemblies for Muslims candidates and only Muslims voters could vote on them. The loss of such seats to the Congress truly underlines the lack of Muslims unity among voters.

⁵ The League would eventually form the government in Bengal after the Congress refused to participate due to the war. However even then the League would need to form a coalition with Fazlul Huq's Krishak Praja Party in which Huq, not a Leaguer, would be the executive head.

regions where Muslims were not a majority.⁶ Though it was slightly comforting that the League could compete with the Congress in minority regions, the outcome still challenged the League's assertion that it represented all South Asian Muslims as it had failed to win any Muslim-majority region. For all the various motives that drove Jinnah's actions, ranging from pride to faith, there can be no doubt that the political necessity of finding an answer to this problem loomed large. For after all, a political party that does not win elections is little more than a social club.

Such was the political climate upon the outbreak of World War II. Faced with the prospect of continued failure Jinnah made a strategic decision and declared the League a supporter of the British. This was not a unanimous decision, even among the League leadership, and Jinnah would spend time convincing allies that supporting the war was worth it while also refuting abuse hurled by members of the Congress. Yet in obtaining a list of guaranteed rights from the British government, Jinnah secured the short-term future of the League and bought for it time to construct a message that would hopefully unify South Asian Muslims. Such a message would eventually arise in the form of the demand for an independent Pakistan.⁷ But in 1937, such an idea was still in the future, and at the outbreak of the war it was the pre-war electoral struggles of the League that drove Jinnah to support the British war effort. In doing so, he hoped to secure for the party a political future by extracting valuable concessions of political representation and Muslim self-determination from the United Kingdom.

Important Players

The most important player for the British in India was the Viceroy of India. Beginning his term in 1936, Victor Hope, 2nd Marquess of Linlithgow held the position until 1943. With the

⁶ Deepak Pandey, "Congress-Muslim League Relations 1937-39: 'The Parting of the Ways'," *Modern Asian Studies* 12, no. 4 (1978): 629.

⁷ Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, The Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 4-5.

passage of the Government of India Act 1935 the Viceroy took on a role of oversized importance as the British representative. Now imparted with the goal of forming a federation of Indian states, the Viceroy became the main point of contact with national Indian parties like the League or Congress. With the start of the war and the British focus on the conflict, the Viceroy gained more prominence as the most important British executive still focused on India. The Viceroy was of course not the only British executive, each Indian province was given a governor. However with the increased importance of provincial legislatures under the Government of India Act, the role of provincial governor was one often ignored by the national parties.

Yet while the Viceroy was the most important point of contact and often served as the articulator of British views, the ultimate authority lay in the British government. Neville Chamberlain from 1937-1940 and Winston Churchill from 1940-1945 lead the government as Prime Minister for the most relevant periods for this thesis. With the power to pass binding legislation and the ultimate decision about the future of India, the British government had supreme power over India. However the war dominated the focus of the British government and thus most decisions were left to the Viceroy.⁸ Churchill in particular did not want to be distracted by Indian politics and aside from an attempt in 1942 to secure Congress wartime support, often ignored Indian leaders.⁹ This left considerable power to the Viceroy and it is not surprising that he was the British figure most contacted by the League.

The composition of the League was far more multifaceted. Jinnah was the leading figure of the All-India Muslim League Working Committee. This group, appointed by Jinnah, was the

⁸ Kenton J. Clymer, "Franklin D. Roosevelt, Louis Johnson, India, and Anticolonialism: Another Look," *Pacific Historical Review* 57, no. 3 (1988): 265.

⁹ Clymer, "Franklin D. Roosevelt, Louis Johnson, India, and Anticolonialism: Another Look," 265.

head of the entire organization and was how Jinnah exercised most of his authority.¹⁰ As head of the Working Committee Jinnah could lead in the dictating of policy and objectives allowing the leader to broad ability to achieve personal goals. This as further supported by Liaquat Ali Khan, a close ally of Jinnah and another member of the Working Committee.

However while Jinnah was leader of the League the organization had little power by itself. Having won no provincial governments outright, the League was forced to build coalitions with provincial parties. A.K. Fazlul Huq of the Krishak Praja Party in Bengal and Sikandar Hayat Khan of the Unionist Party in the Punjab are the two most relevant leaders. Both men lead their respective parties while also accepting membership into the League when they formed coalition governments.¹¹ These provincial parties are what most fractured Jinnah's power. Unlike the Indian National Congress, Jinnah was forced to work with leaders of others parties who had their own visions of a free India. Thus while Jinnah had firm control of the core of the League he had to compete with opposing figures.

Plain Mr. Jinnah

As the dominant leader of the League, to understand Jinnah and his political goals is to understand League actions taken during the 1930s-1940s. It is thus useful to gain an understanding of Jinnah and his political beliefs before focusing specifically on League actions during World War. Jinnah's primary political motivation was securing minority protections for South Asian Muslims which he often framed in terms of an equal share of power for Hindus and Muslims.

¹⁰ Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, The Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 39-41.

¹¹ Stanley Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 150-151.

An important factor for understanding Jinnah's political views is acknowledging his negative assessment regarding the Congress, though Jinnah was not always distrustful of the opposing party. Initially a member of the Congress, Jinnah helped author the Lucknow Pact of 1916 which relieved tensions between the League and Congress and set out a plan for power sharing. A supporter of early actions by Gandhi and the Congress, Jinnah clearly did not have an ideological aversion to the organization. His decision to leave is attributable to the rise of a new political fear, a growing concern of Hindu domination that would result from the open elections supported by the Congress.¹² The Nehru Report, a Congress document that outlined a constitution for a free India, is often seen as the official split between Jinnah and the Congress. Jinnah's famous Fourteen Points, delivered at the 1929 League session, explicitly reject the Nehru Report and reflect his concern over a Hindu hegemony. Guaranteed Muslim representation in the proposed central legislature and the continuation of separate elections are key aspects of Jinnah's plan and indicate his fear of Hindu domination that would result from a purely democratic society.

Jinnah's political goals are best summarized by Christophe Jaffrelot when he describes an "obsession with parity" as being at the heart of Jinnah's political actions.¹³ To achieve this goal, Jinnah framed his plans as answers to a supposed Hindu domination, often basing his arguments on ideas of equality between Muslims and Hindus. "Honorable settlement can only be achieved between equals" Jinnah stated at the 1937 Lahore conference. This idea is reiterated in another speech when Jinnah argues that Muslims should support the League as the equivalent organization to the Hindu Congress.¹⁴ The focus is clearly upon achieving a political parity

¹² Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Pakistan Paradox: Instability and Resilience*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 67.

¹³ Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Pakistan Paradox: Instability and Resilience*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 93-94.

¹⁴ Z.H. Zaidi, ed. *Quaid-I-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah Papers*, (Islamabad: Oxford University Press, 1993), 213.

between South Asian Hindus and Muslims. Indeed as some scholars have pointed out, the demand for Pakistan should be understood as simply another attempt of achieving parity.¹⁵ By framing Muslims and Hindus as distinct nations Jinnah managed to change the idea from minority and majority into one between two equal states; thereby logically asserting parity between the two groups.

A Disparate Community

The source of the League's struggles in elections lay in the lack of a cohesive Islamic political identity. Muslims in South Asia faced widely varied problems. With no singular identity or broadly popular message that the League could use, it struggled against more locally focused parties.¹⁶ In particular, Muslim majority regions like the Punjab had government structures created by the British that led to the rise of regional parties like the Unionist Party. Muslims could not be persuaded to support an organization that was broad-based when alternative narrowly focused parties offered avenues for political representation that were more closely tailored to the interests of the provincial voters.

The League could not simply declare itself as essentially an Islamic version of the Congress, an idea that to the casual observer might make sense. The Congress was not a Hindu organization which owed its success solely to promoting a Hindu nationalist vision. While it was correct that the Congress, under the de facto leadership of Gandhi, campaigned on the sovereignty issue to immense success, this success was primarily due to the personal popularity of Gandhi. The Congress was a Hindu-majority organization, but it was never a party focused solely on Hindu needs. Gandhi never wished to represent only Hindus and was careful to

¹⁵ Safoora Arbab, "Nonviolence, Pukhtunwali and Decolonization: Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the Khuda'i Khidmatgar Politics of Friendship." Chapter in *Muslims against the Muslim League: Critiques of the Idea of Pakistan*, edited by Ali Usman Qasmi and Megan Eaton Robb, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 232.

¹⁶ Pandey, "Congress-Muslim League Relations 1937-39," 629.

emphasize the importance of minority faiths.¹⁷ The 1937 elections demonstrated that the Congress was quite popular among Muslims and thus if the League hoped to attract Muslims from the Congress it needed to give Muslims a reason to support the League rather than simply copy the Congress.

The difference between the League's support in the central, Muslim-minority provinces and the peripheral, Muslim-majority provinces was an interesting feature of the League's appeal. Oddly enough the party designed to represent all South Asian Muslims fared the best in Muslim-minority regions where the main opposition was the Congress and not regional parties.¹⁸ The reason regional parties fared so well was mainly due to their ability to correctly target the needs of the individuals living in their provinces.¹⁹ When the British tried to implement a governmental system in Muslim regions, such as the Punjab, they often tried to do so based on a misguided concept of what comprised a traditional Muslim government. Yet the British, due to a misunderstanding of such a system, only focused on creating traditional peerage systems and hierarchies while ignoring religious justifications. Previous systems in these regions had relied on patronage and hierarchy systems which were justified through Islamic motifs like the caliphate.²⁰ Lacking any religious backing, the British systems led to the rise of tensions among the populations. As David Gilmartin explains in his case study of the Punjab, with no religious underpinning for the rule of political elite, voters became disaffected with the political hierarchy. Regional parties arose to build of this anger and meet the new demand for political

¹⁷ Stanley Wolpert, *Gandhi's Passion: The Life and Legacy of Mahatma Gandhi*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 232.

¹⁸ Bajpai and Schwartzberg, *A Historical Atlas of South Asia*, 222.

¹⁹ David Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam: Punjab and the Making of Pakistan*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 17-22.

²⁰ David Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam: Punjab and the Making of Pakistan*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 17-22.

representation from the impoverished classes in these regions.²¹ The Unionist Party in the Punjab, which campaigned on elite-rural tensions, or Fazlul Huq's Krishak Praja Party in Bengal, which appealed to rural voters and relieving the debts of farmers, exemplify regional parties and the narrow targeting that allowed such them to flourish.²²

Regional parties competed with the League for Muslim votes in every Muslim-majority region to varying degrees of success but all managed, at the very least, to be equal competitors with the League. With no way to effectively target each individual province the League was forced to hope that Muslims in the subcontinent could be persuaded to see themselves as a unified force. In the aftermath of the 1937 elections, it was clear that this hope had failed, and Jinnah was forced to take a hard look at the future of the League. In an address to the League Council in March of 1937 he emphasized the need for Muslims to unite as a cause of life or death.²³ Yet the Congress had made no moves against Muslims, and as the success of the Congress among Muslim voters shows, South Asian Muslims clearly did not see the Congress as a bad option. Thus the only death that could result from Congress victories was that of the League itself.

During the pre-war era in India it seems that religion was a relatively minor factor in voting habits as religiously based parties all struggled before the might of the Hindu-majority Congress.²⁴ Yet it was not the unity of Hindus that made the Congress popular but the charisma of Gandhi, an observable fact found in the widespread appeal Gandhi had among people of all

²¹ Ibid.

²² D. Bandyopadhyay, "Preventable Deaths," *Economic and Political Weekly* 39, No. 30 (2004): 3347.

²³ Kishwar Sultana, *Politics of the All-India Muslim League 1924-1940*, (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2016), 171.

²⁴ "Hindu-Majority" refers to the breakdown of membership comprising the Congress and is not referring to a Hindu ideology that directed the Congress. It is important to make a distinction between the Hindu faith, comprised of a set of beliefs and rituals, and Hindu practitioners who are individual actors. Thus while the Congress membership was overwhelmingly Hindu practitioners, the ideology of the faith was never a political doctrine for the party.

faiths.²⁵ In this area the league was hopelessly outmatched. Jinnah, with his western style of clothing and slightly elitist nature, could not match Gandhi's traditional Indian clothing and stridently populist ideology. Jinnah's message, while likely appealing to educated, wealthy elites, did not address larger issues like widespread poverty or low literacy rates. The overwhelming majority of Indian voters were not members of the economic or cultural elite and Gandhi's focus on popular issues made the Congress a more attractive option.²⁶ Thus, with no such popular leader, the League's plan to stoke feelings of Islamic unity was misplaced and in the 1937 elections the League suffered a disastrous defeat. The League needed time to craft a message that all South Asian Muslims could unite around. Jinnah and the League leadership searched for a path forward for the struggling political party.

War and Protective Measures

In September 1939 Viceroy Victor Hope, 2nd Marquess of Linlithgow, declared India a combatant against Nazi Germany.²⁷ After the failure of British officials to secure Congress support and an unwillingness from the British government to promise Indian independence in exchange for service, the Indian National Congress encouraged all of its members to resign from their political offices en masse. Yet where the Congress feared to tread Jinnah saw an opportunity to resolve his organization's inability to win elections and secure a political future. Jinnah hoped that by supporting the war effort he might be able to extract concessions from the British government to protect the party's future. However, numerous detractors, both within the League and without, threatened to stymie his strategy. Benefits gained from concessions would

²⁵ Reel 22, IOR NEG 10781, Telegram to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, July 14, 1943. In contemporary writing on South Asia Viceroy Hope is typically referred to as either Viceroy Linlithgow or simply Linlithgow. For the rest of this paper I will maintain this practice.

²⁶ Narendra Subramanian, "Populism in India." *SAIS Review of International Affairs* 27, no. 1 (2007): 76-77.

²⁷ Sultana, *Politics of the All-India Muslim League*, 80.

mean little if the support needed to obtain them presented too much of a political liability so Jinnah had to look for ways to answer the criticism. Jinnah responded to non-League criticisms by framing wartime support as a response to the political dominance of the Congress. At the same time, he addressed worries of League members by occasionally acknowledging their concerns in order to clear a path for the League's support for the war.

First, Jinnah had to address criticisms from his opponents in the Congress and other parties. Although the mass resignation of the Congress in response to the declaration of war provided an opening for other political parties to seize control of the provincial governments, it also sent a powerful message. A refusal to support colonial orders was one of Gandhi's most basic political strategies and a popular tactic among Indian voters. When India was declared a belligerent in WWII it was not altogether surprising that the Congress refused to support what it termed an "imperialist war."²⁸ However the Congress's framing of the war as a colonialist endeavor did more than simply provide the organization with an opportunity to build political support by publicly resisting the British. Because the League supported the war, the Congress was able to mount a political attack against the League. By using the war as a chance to both refute the British and denigrate the League, the Congress positioned itself to further augment its support among the Indian electorate. Jinnah obviously could not let his already weak party be branded as a colonial sympathizer and thus needed to find a way to respond to Congress criticisms against of the League.²⁹

An anonymous letter to Jinnah from a Hindu in Bombay reflects the most extreme form of criticism aimed at League support of the war. Sarcastically calling Jinnah a "Muslim hero,"

²⁸ Reel 17, IOR NEG 10776, Fragment of Letter to Jinnah.

²⁹ Reel 17, IOR NEG 10776, Fragment of Letter to Jinnah.

the letter proceeds to attack him as, “A SLAVE of the British master.”³⁰ The letter ends by stating that the British care not for India and will ultimately betray the League. The fiery rhetoric in this letter is indicative of the intense disapproval that some non-League members felt toward Jinnah’s decision to offer wartime support. A prominent critic was Jawaharlal Nehru, president of the Congress. While not as fiercely hostile as the anonymous letter, Nehru was deeply critical of Jinnah’s position. A 1939 letter from Nehru expresses his belief that even though the League and Congress both claim to be Indian independence organizations, League support of England led him to believe that there was perhaps a “difference in political outlook and objectives (between the parties).”³¹ The fact that Nehru implied that the League did not earnestly wish to free India from colonial rule is indicative of the way that support for the British could be weaponized against the League and suggests why Jinnah needed to find an answer to it.

Jinnah’s response to Congress’s criticism was to shift the focus of the war away from the British and onto the Congress. He accomplished this by framing the previous years of Congress rule as one of domination and recast League policies, including support for the war, as a response to such oppression rather than genuine support for the British. Jinnah’s announcement of a Day of Deliverance captures this strategy quite nicely. After the mass resignation of the Congress Jinnah urged South Asian Muslims to celebrate December, 22 as a Day of Deliverance from the oppression of Congress rule.³² He tried to transform the Congress’s protest against the British into a Muslim opportunity to revolt against political domination and so avoid being marked as a colonial sympathizer. He understood that the appearance of support for imperialism would

³⁰ Reel 47, IOR NEG 10806, Anonymous to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, August 14, 1942. Capital in original.

³¹ Reel 15, IOR NEG 10774, Jawaharlal Nehru to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, December 16, 1939.

³² *Social Scientist* 30, no. 7/8 (2002): 16.

contradict the League's mission as an independence organization and took actions to combat this perception.³³

However while Jinnah had crafted a response to the main criticism of wartime support from those outside the League, accusations from within the organization also posed a problem. Some claims were similar to those made by his opponents in the Congress, namely that the League was shirking its duty as an independence party by supporting the British. Jinnah's response to such claims, apparent in intraleague correspondence, was to emphasize the political benefits of support, thus changing the narrative from supporting a colonial power to building the League's power.³⁴ In many ways this mirrors his response to Congress criticisms and both tactics appear to have mitigated—if not eliminated—such attacks. League members responded to Jinnah's justifications, since they were well aware of the League's electoral failings. Thus while they may not have wanted to support the British, Jinnah's assurance that such support was purely for political benefits assuaged their concerns.

Yet concerns over the League's relationship to colonialism were not the only criticisms; many of the Leaguers complained about the British granting insufficient concessions in exchange for their support. In a 1939 letter, the legislative assembly of Bengal told Jinnah that they (Bengali Assembly) would support him and pass the war resolutions if Muslim demands were met.³⁵ However it mentions that in the Punjab legislature the resolutions had already been passed without a need for guarantees on demands and that in Bengal minority figures had voiced their objections regardless of benefits gained for supporting the war. Other documents also show this

³³ Reel 17, IOR NEG 10776, Muhammad Ali Jinnah to Qazi Muhammad Essa, July 14, 1941.

³⁴ Reel 17, IOR NEG 10776, Muhammad Ali Jinnah to Qazi Muhammad Essa, July 14, 1941.

³⁵ Reel 17, IOR NEG 10776, Bengal Legislative Assembly to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, December 12, 1939.

debate over support for the war and skepticism of British concessions. In one illuminating example, a member, Maulana Mohani, tendered his “resignation from the Presidentship of the League” because he felt that the League was supporting the British with no concrete benefits guaranteed.³⁶

Initially, Jinnah asserted that the League was not blindly supporting the British but rather was offering support in return for concessions.³⁷ Yet he did not immediately address his allies’ disagreements over what should be included among the concessions, which they emphasized in the letters to Jinnah—letters that underscore the disparate needs of the Muslims throughout the subcontinent. Arguments for additional demands were often based in personal experiences but had broader implications. One correspondent complained about the pay disparity that he perceived between Muslims and Hindus serving in the British military.³⁸ Other Leaguers insisted that no concessions were necessary, since it was the League’s duty to oppose Nazi fascism regardless of benefits received.³⁹ The inter-League concern over concessions was thus problematic for Jinnah as a broad response from him could not address each individual worry.

Inundated by letters and telegrams from Muslims across the subcontinent, Jinnah could not reply to all of these concerns. However, the documents demonstrate that Jinnah, while not directly referring to such individual requests, sometimes referenced these new demands. One draft resolution, passed by several organizations including the League, states that while there

³⁶ Reel 18, IOR NEG 10777, Mohani to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, July, 16, 1940. The presidency referenced in the letter, while not specified, must be a presidency of a local chapter as Jinnah was President of the entire League at the time.

³⁷ Reel 18, IOR NEG 10777, Muhammad Ali Jinnah to Zafrullah Khan, June 20, 1941.

³⁸ Reel 16, IOR NEG 10775, Sikandar Khan to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, June 09, 1942

³⁹ Reel 47, IOR NEG 10806, Allah Hasan Syed Ali to HKH the Nizam’s Government and Reel 17, IOR NEG 10776, Khan Bahadur S.M. Ismail to Muhammad Ali Jinnah

should be concessions to Indian organizations that supported the war, all Indians still had a moral duty to support the war as a fight against fascism.⁴⁰

Even though Jinnah was willing to let the League sign such a resolution, it is unclear whether this placated dissatisfied Leaguers. Ultimately, Jinnah seems to have tried to ignore complaints about the concessions from those within the League and hoped that by occasionally incorporating some individual demands he could maintain support. Of course this was aided by the fact that internal League critics were predominantly lower ranked members. Unlike the Congress criticism, which came from high-ranking leaders such as Nehru, there is no convincing evidence that other League leaders publicly opposed the decision to support England. Why this is the case is hard to determine but it is likely due to the fact that League decisions were approved by the working committee which would provide an opportunity to parse out debate among the most senior members. League leadership also likely realized the necessity of supporting the British due to the political weakness of the organization. Jinnah managed to maintain enough support within the League to further his plans.

The Early Demands

Jinnah reaped the political rewards that came with concessions from the British. In their correspondences with the British, Jinnah and the League stressed the importance of these concessions. However not all demands reflected the same motivations. In early lists of demands, many of the most important concessions were motivated by a desire to achieve political representation and determination for the League. Yet other goals appear in the demands too. In

⁴⁰ Reel 53, IOR NEG 10812, Draft Resolution, October 12, 1940.

particular, Jinnah felt a duty to the wider Islamic world to demonstrate concern for Arabs in Palestine.⁴¹

The earliest reference to concessions in exchange for supporting the war appear in a publication by the League on September 17, 1939. This document resulted from an emergency meeting among League leaders to discuss the announcement of Indian involvement in WWII. In the declaration, the League urges the British to adopt three practices in return for the League's wartime support:

1. No decision regarding the future of India should be made without approval of the League.
2. The British should "take into its confidence" the League, which should be seen as the only representative of Muslim India.
3. The British should satisfy the demands of the Arab National in Palestine.⁴²

These three requests reveal core principles. The first speaks to the idea of political determination while the second demand deals with political representation. The final point reveals Jinnah's relation to the broader Muslim world and a duty he felt towards his fellow Muslims. These initial demands reveal the complex mix of League goals: the third demand is starkly different from the first two.

Political determination and representation are shorthand for common themes present in League sources discussing concessions: first, the right of the League to participate in designing the future constitution of India after the end of the British Raj, and second, British recognition of the League as sole representative of South Asian Muslims. While neither of these terms are found in the correspondences of Jinnah or the League, the ideas are perennially present.

⁴¹ Reel 17, IOR NEG 10776, All-India Muslim League Declaration Regarding the War, September 17, 1939.

⁴² Reel 17, IOR NEG 10776, All-India Muslim League Declaration Regarding the War, September 17, 1939.

In 1940, the League's central committee, the governing body of the entire party, issued a decree that asserted that the League would support the war effort so long as it was included in discussions regarding India's future and allowed to be the sole representative for the interests of Muslims in the subcontinent.⁴³ Guarantees that the League could help create the future constitution of free India and act as the political representative of South Asian Muslims would buy the organization the time and power it needed to craft a Muslim identity among the electorate so that it could actually win elections. Meanwhile, concessions that secured the right of the League to represent all Muslims would provide Jinnah with justifications that he would need for later political goals. The two-nation theory in particular would benefit from the idea of representation.⁴⁴ Jinnah emphasized political self-determination and representation to win support for the League in the short term and protect the group's future.

The third request in the September 17 documents relates to a wholly separate question of the fate of Muslims living in Palestine. A later chapter will explore Jinnah's Muslim faith in detail, but here it is important to briefly address the religious context of the League's interest in British policy in Palestine.

In the 1939 emergency meeting declaration the third demand states that the British should meet the requirements of the Arab Nationals in Palestine.⁴⁵ At the time, colonial powers were debating the future of the region after the dissolution of Mandatory Palestine. This declaration is likely referring to the White Paper of 1939, a policy passed by the British Parliament several months prior to WWII dealing with the governance of Mandatory Palestine. Importantly, this

⁴³ Reel 20, IOR NEG 10779, All-India Muslim League Committee Decree, June 15, 1940

⁴⁴ The two-nation theory would be the belief used to justify Pakistan. It stated that Hindus and Muslims were actually two distinct peoples and thus Muslims deserved their own nation.

⁴⁵ Reel 17, IOR NEG 10776, All-India Muslim League Declaration Regarding the War, September 17, 1939.

paper stated that within ten years an independent Palestine would be created, in which Jews and Arabs would share governing responsibilities, and that Jewish immigrations into Palestine would receive a limit for the next five years after which further Jewish immigration would need to receive Arab permission.⁴⁶

The reaction from Muslims in Palestine to the document was quite negative.⁴⁷ Yet the motivation for the League interfere is unclear. Jinnah deploys language that indicates that he felt a kinship to the wider Muslim world; in a letter to the viceroy he included himself as a part of the, “eyes of the Muslim world watching the situation (in Palestine) keenly.”⁴⁸ This use of pan-Islamic language is important as the entire concept of a pan-Islamic world was a tool used by colonized Muslims to give weight to their demands. Thus while the League might only represent a minority in the subcontinent, by connecting the organization to Muslims from other parts of the British Empire Jinnah gave more significance to his authority. He became not just a representative of the League but of the Muslim world.

There were also very practical political reasons for Jinnah to want the British to resolve the issue in Palestine in a way that favored the Muslims. In a way, the White Paper of 1939 exemplified Jinnah’s worry about what could happen if the British refused to listen to Muslim voices, and he had a political motivation to prevent the British from adopting a precedent that could be repeated later in India. Jinnah’s desire for parity is rather evident in the third demand as the League leader hopes to stave off a future where the British fully disregard the suggestions of the League.

⁴⁶ *British White Paper of 1939*, http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/brwh1939.asp.

⁴⁷ Issa Khalaf, *Politics in Palestine: Arab Factionalism and Social Disintegration, 1939-1948*, (New York: SUNY Press, 1991), 283.

⁴⁸ Reel 9, IOR NEG 10768 All-India Muslim League to Viceroy Linlithgow, February 23, 1940.

The 1939 demands from the League set the terms of the conversation regarding concessions and they remained largely unchanged during the course of the war.

Debating Demands and their Importance

After the League sent its initial demands to the British, both sides began to prepare for negotiations. Over the course of the negotiations, the concessions became bargaining tools, which the League valued in different ways—some demands were vital, and others, Jinnah was willing to sacrifice. The most valued concessions, to Jinnah, dealt with the concepts of political representation of Muslims on the subcontinent and League influence on the future constitution of India. The value of such demands was derived from the political security that they provided to the League.

While the three earliest concessions expected by the League are found in the September 17 declaration, other sources indicate that additional demands were later made. However due to a gap in the sources, knowing how many added demands existed is practically impossible, but later demands were either not in great number or of little importance. The most important additional demand forbade the use of Indian, Muslim troops against Muslim nations.⁴⁹ This restriction on Muslim troops, along with the previously examined three demands, would form the crux of the concessions at the center of the British-League debates.

In a letter dated December 23, 1939 Viceroy Linlithgow openly seems to accept the demand for political self-determination. He acknowledged that Muslims in South Asia held an important position and that they were crucial to “the success of any constitutional developments

⁴⁹ Reel 9, IOR NEG 10768 Viceroy Linlithgow to All-India Muslim League, December 23, 1939.

in India.”⁵⁰ Yet in the same letter the viceroy rejected two other concessions. The first dismissed demand dealt with the British treatment of Palestinians which Linlithgow sweeps away by stating that the British will meet “reasonable demands” from the Palestinians but makes no concrete promises as to what this might entail.⁵¹ The other demand he refuted dealt with the use of Indian Muslim troops against Islamic nations. Linlithgow states, accurately, that the British were not at war with any Muslim powers, yet he went on to argue that even if they were this demand could not be reasonably granted as the demand was overly broad and would unduly restrict British military options including any needed to protect India. The British thus adopted what would be their primary negotiation strategy: they endorsed concessions related to the League while refusing or only vaguely acknowledging requests not related specifically to India.

The League’s response to Linlithgow’s letter is perhaps the most illuminating piece of evidence for understanding how Jinnah and his colleagues viewed the concessions. In their initial list of demands the League had made no distinction between the demands and all were presented as equally important. Yet in their reply to Linlithgow’s letter the League was surprisingly acquiescent. In a letter sent roughly two months after the viceroy’s reply, the League stated that it understood the British attitude on Palestine and use of Muslims troops.⁵² League acceptance of British dismissal of two concessions is striking, even more so given the fact that in their reply the League felt that the British concession on determination was not satisfactory. Stating that a “definite assurance” was needed, the League was openly displeased with the British stance on this concession.⁵³ In effect, the League replied that they were willing to ignore two demands so

⁵⁰ Reel 9, IOR NEG 10768 Viceroy Linlithgow to All-India Muslim League, December 23, 1939.

⁵¹ Reel 9, IOR NEG 10768 Viceroy Linlithgow to All-India Muslim League, December 23, 1939.

⁵² Reel 9, IOR NEG 10768 All-India Muslim League to Viceroy Linlithgow, February 23, 1940. The League did ask for more clarification regarding the use of Muslims troops but there does not seem to be any opposition to the stated intent of the British.

⁵³ Reel 9, IOR NEG 10768 All-India Muslim League to Viceroy Linlithgow, February 23, 1940.

as to focus on the one concerning political determination. This correspondence leaves little doubt about Jinnah's priorities and demonstrates that he was willing to sacrifice some demands to achieve those with greater value.

The difference in value given to the various concessions can largely be attributed to the practical impacts that such concessions had upon the continuation of the League. Guarantees that the League would represent South Asian Muslims and participate in constitutional framing would secure the organization's future. Jinnah stated as much in 1940 arguing that "The League is of the opinion that before [offering wartime support] they must feel confident that the future of the Muslims of India is not left uncertain."⁵⁴ In many ways this quote sums up Jinnah's goals for the wartime concessions as he both frames the League as representative of all Indian Muslims and articulates the need for political authority in the future.

The League prioritized concessions that could promise the party a political future; the other requests were, at least in part, bargaining tools that Jinnah used to secure the more concessions that he valued more. In a letter from 1941 Jinnah references this idea of concessions as an exchange, suggesting that the British ought to remember the support that was given by the League and that the British should uphold the concessions in return.⁵⁵

An Unintended Gain

While most benefits gained from the war were the result of concessions granted to the League in return for support there was one notable exception. When discussing the war, Jinnah often referenced the newly formed relationship between the League and the British government.

⁵⁴ Z.H. Zaidi, ed. *Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah Papers*, (Islamabad, Oxford University Press, 1993), 171.

⁵⁵ Reel 18, IOR NEG 10777, Muhammad Ali Jinnah to Zafrullah Khan, June 20, 1941.

This relationship was not an intentional goal of Jinnah or the League's but a benefit that arose naturally. Jinnah attributed the relationship to the British necessity for support and it proved crucial as it enabled the League to garner legitimacy from its association with the British.

Before the war Jinnah's interaction with the British seems to have been quite limited. Delivering a presidential address in Lahore Jinnah stated "It was only then [after the start of the war] that the viceroy realized that the Muslim League was a power... previously the Viceroy never thought of me [Jinnah] but of Gandhi and Gandhi alone."⁵⁶ This speech articulates the novelty of the newly formed relationship the League had with the British and his surprise at the new importance given to the League. The relationship that arose between the League and the British Jinnah clearly attributes to World War II. The benefits brought by such a relationship are obvious. As noted by Jinnah, before the outbreak of the war the only party that concerned the British was the Congress. The League and small provincial parties were mostly ignored in talks regarding the future of a free India. Yet with the refusal of the Congress to initially support the war, the British reached out to the League.

In many ways, Jinnah's attempts to gain political representation and determination can be seen as ways to codify and protect the new relationship between the League and the British. Jinnah could observe the benefits of the association given to the Congress and understood the political value they brought. Such benefits mainly entailed access to British officials and had been elusive in the past. However by 1940, the Leagues relationship with the British had progressed enough to allow Jinnah solo interviews with the Viceroy as well as continual correspondence, benefits previously only afforded to ranking Congress members.⁵⁷ The

⁵⁶ Z.H. Zaidi, ed. *Quaid-I-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah Papers*, (Islamabad, Oxford University Press, 1993), 213.

⁵⁷ Z.H. Zaidi, ed. *Quaid-I-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah Papers*, (Islamabad, Oxford University Press, 1993), 254.

relationship also provided recognition to League claims. In particular, the recognition of the League by the British countered the Congress claim that they represented all Indians and offered Jinnah's claim of Muslims representation legitimacy. Jinnah's desire for the League to represent all South Asian Muslims is well accepted and while different motives have been suggested for this desire it is hard to argue that Jinnah did not believe that he and the League were the best suited for such representation.⁵⁸ Without the votes to back up this claim, the League's association with the British provided clout for Jinnah.

However the relationship did more than just provide Jinnah and the League with credibility and political power, it arguably emboldened the demand for Pakistan. In Jinnah's presidential address at the Lahore conference, the session at which the demand for Pakistan was first articulated, Jinnah spends a considerable part of his speech discussing the war and the new relationship with the British.⁵⁹ There was obviously an association between the new concessions and the British-League relationship with the new objective of Pakistan. The League was no longer a minor party that first needed recognition. The relationship provided a safety net and allowed Jinnah's party to articulate major demands like an independent Muslim state. The war thus emboldened the League to take more political risk by providing both new avenues for achievement and safeguarding.

The War Continues

After the League's failure in the 1937 elections, Jinnah was forced to search for other ways to ensure that the organization would have a political future. The outbreak of World War II

⁵⁸ Despite major differences in their interpretation of Jinnah and his actions, both Christophe Jaffrelot in *The Pakistan Paradox* and Ayesha Jalal in *The Sole Spokesman* agree that Jinnah acted under the belief that he was the best suited to represent all South Asian Muslims.

⁵⁹ Z.H. Zaidi, ed. *Quaid-I-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah Papers*, (Islamabad, Oxford University Press, 1993), 213.

provided such an opportunity and he lead the League in offering support for the war to gain British concessions in return: the promise of political representation and determination, with which he hoped to secure the existence of the League.

By 1940, Jinnah had obtained the necessary guarantees to protect the League. As seen in the letter to Khan, Jinnah no longer felt the need to demand new concessions and instead simply focused on ensuring that the English followed through on their promises.⁶⁰ While I have been unable to find a document that explicitly lists which concessions had been accepted it seems likely that the demands of political representation and determination had been met. A 1941 letter to Jinnah from an English civil servant states that the British are committed to securing independence for people of all, “creeds, races, and interest.”⁶¹ The League must have found such promises acceptable for there is no evidence of any attempts to rescind their support for the British.

In many ways supporting the British paid off. The concessions bought time for the League until the declaration of the Lahore Resolution, which would provide the League with a way to begin crafting an interprovincial identity among South Asian Muslims. As the war dragged on Jinnah no longer needed many of the initial safeguards received from the British. The stage was set for Jinnah to use League support of the war to accomplish more personal goals.

Chapter Two

Managing Membership: Jinnah Asserts Control

By September of 1940, roughly a year after Viceroy Linlithgow’s declaration of India as a combatant in World War II, the political dynamics of the All-India Muslim League had

⁶⁰ Reel 18, IOR NEG 10777, Muhammad Ali Jinnah to Zafrullah Khan, June 20, 1941.

⁶¹ Reel 18, IOR NEG 10777, Jehaagir Kotewal to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, September 19, 1941.

drastically changed. While not achieving all concessions, guarantees regarding political representation and determination were granted and the League's political future was thus safeguarded. 1940 also saw the announcement of the Lahore Resolution and with it the beginning of the League as a truly pan-provincial organization. Although not the first demand for an independent Muslim state, the Lahore Resolution would have a significant impact in Jinnah's position in politics.⁶² As Stanley Wolpert notes in his biography of Jinnah, a man once seen as an ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity "had totally transformed himself into Pakistan's great leader."⁶³

Yet Wolpert's assertion that Jinnah turned away from attempts to craft a unified state for Muslims and Hindus is relatively weak part of his thesis. As Ayesha Jalal argues in her landmark text, *The Sole Spokesman*, Jinnah never truly desired to create an independent Pakistan.⁶⁴ Focused on correcting his losses in the 1937 provincial elections, Jinnah would come to realize that he could use the idea of Pakistan as a rallying cry to gather South Asian Muslims to his side. While Jinnah would ultimately lose control of the idea due to the popularity it commanded among South Asian Muslims, at the time the Pakistan demand functioned as a way to make Jinnah the "sole spokesman" for South Asian Muslims while also exaggerating his political might in the eyes of rival parties.⁶⁵

Jalal's thesis underlines the effectiveness of the Pakistan demand in uniting South Asian Muslims under the banner of the League. However if Jalal's ideas are accepted then the concessions granted to the League at the beginning of the war lose some significance. British

⁶² Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, The Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 54.

⁶³ Stanley Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 182.

⁶⁴ Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman*, 4-5.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 60.

guarantees that the League was the sole representative of subcontinent Muslims or that it should be involved in the framing of the constitution for future India mattered little if the party truly represented South Asian Muslims and won elections. Yet even as these concessions lost value Jinnah could not radically shift his position on the war. Not only had he led the League in publicly declaring support but the British still held command in India; Jinnah could hardly risk upsetting the nation that would likely determine the post-colonial future of India.

What then was Jinnah to do about League support for World War II? Given the political risks that Jinnah had taken to extend support for the war it is not likely that he would be willing to simply let this political tool fade away. It is here that a revised edition of Wolpert is applicable. While personally not a genuine believer in Pakistan, Jinnah adopted a public persona that turned away from Hindu-Muslim unity and embraced an independent Muslim state. This change in public image brought many problems including attacks from the Congress, confusion and trepidation from the British, and, most problematic, the rise of potential rivals within the League. To meet such challenges Jinnah once again turned to the war, hoping to use the conflict to increase his power over the League and eliminate potential rivals in the League. British-created defense committees in particular became the focus of his attention as Jinnah realized that by regulating membership on them he could justify punishments dealt to rivals. By the mid-1940s, Jinnah had changed his strategy. League support for World War II, previously a political tool for achieving party goals, became a more personal weapon as Jinnah used aspects of the war to increase his own power. The League President now hoped that by regulating membership in the British defense committees he could justify actions that would assert his authority and reinforce his control over the League while removing potential rivals.

The Lahore Resolution and Associated Problems

The declaration of the Lahore Resolution in 1940 was the factor that changed the importance of concessions and put the League in a politically precarious position. While this declaration would aid in coalescing South Asian Muslims into a unified electoral force, the proposal proved a unique problem due to its extreme nature. Congress leaders, particularly Nehru, vilified it as an attack on Indian unity. Gandhi, who had previously held back from striking out at Jinnah too often, was aghast at the idea and emerged as one of the most prominent critics. Within the League itself moderate members, mainly from the central provinces, worried about such a radical proposal while periphery provincial leaders, like Fazlul Huq and Sikandar Hayat Khan, saw the opportunity as a chance to increase the provincial autonomy of Bengal and the Punjab respectively.⁶⁶ Thus the Lahore Resolution, while it presented the League a chance to win elections, brought with it a host of problems that Jinnah needed to address.

To better understand the Lahore Resolution, it is useful to first know where the idea came from and how it evolved. The two-nation theory, i.e., the belief that Indian Hindus and Muslims were separate nations, formed the bedrock of the Lahore Resolution. Such a theory was first propagated by Syed Ahmad Khan, an Indian Muslim philosopher. Khan had an oversized impact on the thinking of the League, not least due to the fact that his All India Muhammadan Educational Conference, established in 1886, was the forerunner of the All-India Muslim League.⁶⁷ Yet despite the popularity and importance of Khan, his two-nation theory never commanded serious attention among League members except among a few individuals. The most notable exponent of this position was Muhammad Iqbal. The Indian Muslim poet

⁶⁶ Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, The Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 54.

⁶⁷ Khan created the AIMEC in 1886 and led it until his death in 1898. Several years later, at the 20th session of the AIMEC in 1906, a proposal to form the League was put forward and passed.

continually asserted the idea of an independent Muslim state yet politicians, for the most part, ignored his pleas.⁶⁸

However, with the resounding defeat of the 1937 election, these individuals had a chance to propagate their ideas while Jinnah led the League on a search for potential strategies. He set up a special committee in 1939 to examine potential schemes that might enable the League to appeal to Muslim voters. Jalal is right to point out that while many such schemes had roots in the two-nation theory, to think of them as simply the “tattered remnants of kites flown long ago” is incorrect.⁶⁹ The proposed ideas that were put before the committee covered a huge array of possibilities, ranging from Chaudhuri Rahmat Ali’s plan for a “Pakistan Commonwealth of Nations” Sikandar Hayat Khan’s suggestion that the Punjab should be given sovereign power over the northwest area of the subcontinent.⁷⁰ As Jalal points out, the differences between these ideas shows the disparity between different individuals and what they valued in a Muslim state.⁷¹

Among such plans the only general agreement was the belief that Muslims were a nation and as a result they needed their own state. With no documents available from the committee’s deliberations it is impossible to see what exactly lead to the final draft. However the text published in 1940 ultimately reflects a slight variation on Khan’s proposal. Rather than simply making the Punjab independent, “the North Western and Eastern Zones of India should be grouped to constitute independent states in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign.”⁷² This quote forms the core of the Lahore Resolution, the formal political statement

⁶⁸ Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman*, 12. A view that must be qualified. Iqbal had an impact on Jinnah and other League leaders but his assertions about an independent state were never seriously discussed until after the 1937 elections.

⁶⁹ Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, The Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 53.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Bhimrao Ambedkar, *Pakistan or the Partition of India*.

http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00ambedkar/ambekar_partition/101.html.

that was created by the League Working Committee in 1940. Named for the city in which it was first announced, the Lahore Resolution was the first public demand by the League for an independent state.

The Lahore Resolution represents Jinnah's new political strategy coming out of the 1937 elections. Religious communalism drove this plan as Jinnah attempted to unify South Asian Muslims behind his party while also drawing voters away from provincial parties in Muslim majority provinces that had previously split the Muslim electorate.⁷³ Of course notions of communalism had long been an aspect of Jinnah's political thought as his primary concern had always been to protect the interests of South Asian Muslims. A statement by Jinnah several years prior to the war envisioned an Indian state in which provinces are grouped in a loose confederation.⁷⁴ Such a plan was designed to ensure that Muslims majority provinces could maintain their sovereignty in the face of a Hindu majority. The Lahore Resolution continued Jinnah's goal of protecting South Asian Muslims. By asserting that Muslims constitute an independent state the logic follows that they ought to have self-sovereignty and thus should be allowed to assert their interests.

The Lahore Resolution brought with it a host of new issues. To many the mission of the League had fundamentally changed and Gandhi, who had previously been willing to work with Jinnah, publicly denounced him and the plan as a dangerous scheme.⁷⁵ Since Gandhi publicly picked a side, the Congress could go full force in attacking the resolution. However Jinnah could

⁷³ It is important to note that the communalism referred to in this paper is using the term as often used in South Asia. South Asian communalism refers to attempts to create religious or ethnic identities often with connotations of communal violence attached. This idea of communalism is not at all similar to the ideas of communal ownership often associated with western uses of the terms. For an outline of communalism in South Asia I recommend Surya Upadhyay and Rowena Robinson's article "Revisiting Communalism and Fundamentalism in India."

⁷⁴ Reel 15, IOR NEG 10774, Statement by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, May 11.

⁷⁵ Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, The Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 52-53.

not have been surprised by the criticism from the Congress and for the most part it does not seem to have presented any major concern for the League. The true problems of the resolution came from within the party. Political rivals of Jinnah hoped to use the resolution for their own benefit. Sikandar Hayat Khan and Fazlul Huq were perhaps the most prominent League members who hoped to use the Lahore Resolution to strengthen their individual parties. The Unionist Party of Hayat Khan in the Punjab and Huq's Krishak Praja Party in Bengal both stood to gain and this helps to explain why both men had supported a plan that created a confederacy, which benefitted their provincial specific parties, rather than a unified Muslim state. Even though these proposals failed to gain traction, the two politicians still used the document to rally Muslim voters to their parties in their respective provinces.⁷⁶

Huq and Khan's use of the Lahore Resolution to assert their provincial parties' agendas certainly upset Jinnah. In a 1941 telegram Jinnah openly accused Huq of betraying, "the former coalition party (of the League and the Krishak Praja Party)."⁷⁷ Part of this anger was due to the fact that the confederacy of Muslim states envisioned by the provincial leaders mirrored the confederacy that Jinnah had previously articulated.⁷⁸ However more importantly, the Lahore Resolution was intended by Jinnah to provide a platform that would gather support among South Asian Muslims which would enable him to defend what he believed were Muslims interests.⁷⁹ When Khan and Huq appropriated the resolution for their own provincial goals, they not only disrespected Jinnah but challenged the core assertion that South Asian Muslims formed a collective community.

⁷⁶ Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, The Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 54.

⁷⁷ Reel 18, IOR NEG 10777, Telegram from Muhammad Ali Jinnah to Fazlul Huq, December 6, 1941.

⁷⁸ Reel 15, IOR NEG 10774, Statement by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, May 11.

⁷⁹ Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, The Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 57.

Defense Councils and Jinnah's Initial response

In 1940 the British government began to create war committees designed to gather South Asian officials to give their advice on the war. These advisory bodies had no real authority. They could not martial troops nor direct resources, and mainly served as organizations to provide the impression that South Asians had a say in the war.⁸⁰ Interestingly, the League said little about such councils when they were first organized and League members did join them; notably a disproportionate number of Punjabis signed on as members.⁸¹ Yet some time in the summer of 1940 the League, at the direction of Jinnah, published a directive ordering all members to not join such boards and to resign from them if already a member. Soon, Jinnah was swamped by letters pleading for an alternative path that would allow League members to maintain their membership on the councils. Some ranking League members even claimed, contrary to Jinnah, that such alternatives existed. However despite such problems Jinnah's attitude toward the boards remained one of relative indifference and 1940 saw Jinnah largely unconcerned and apathetic towards the committees.

The early war advisory boards, as they were called by the British, functioned almost exactly as the name implies: small organizations scattered around the subcontinent that were open to educated South Asians. Local and provincial elites made up the bulk of such committees with several, notably the Viceroy's National Defense Council, being created solely for high ranking South Asian political leaders. Such councils existed as both ways to disseminate news reports about the war while also helping the British gauge Indian attitudes regarding the course

⁸⁰ Reel 16, IOR NEG 10775, Unknown to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, June 16, 1941.

⁸¹ The reason for so many Punjabis joining such councils never seems to have been a point of consideration for Jinnah and thus there is not much information given to why this is. However the British idea of "martial races" which include Punjabi's is likely the reason for such an increased presence of them in the councils.

of the conflict. In the case of boards reserved for high ranking officials, the councils also served as a forum for such individuals to provide their input on the war to the British.

How the League felt about the defense councils when they first began appearing is hard to judge. In a letter to Jinnah dated June 24, 1940, one author apologized for his and other Punjabis' membership on a war committee.⁸² The author argued that a statement by Jinnah in a local newspaper on May 28 led "even the really genuine and enthusiastic members of the League to believe that there would be nothing wrong if they agreed to serve on the war committee."⁸³ While what Jinnah said is not included, this implication of relative indifference is also found in an August 7 letter that accuses Jinnah of appearing indecisive about the matter of defense committee membership, and therefore creating confusion regarding the League's position on such councils.⁸⁴

Although letters such as these imply that the League had not committed to a concrete position regarding war committees early, it is important to observe that both have an obvious agenda. Both letters, written after the League explicitly stated that Leaguers should not participate on defense councils, argue that Jinnah should compromise on the issue and find ways to allow individuals to serve on committees while remaining League members. Such motives would give the writers cause to portray Jinnah's past actions as indecisive, so that their membership on the defense committees would be more understandable.

Evidence from other sources indicates that there truly was confusion regarding the League's position over defense councils. An article clip from a newspaper written in July of 1940 states that while Jinnah did not waver in his desire to have League members leave defense

⁸² Reel 18, IOR NEG 10777, Shah Kawaliyan (?) to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, June 24, 1940.

⁸³ Reel 18, IOR NEG 10777, Shah Kawaliyan (?) to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, June 24, 1940.

⁸⁴ Reel 18, IOR NEG 10777, Unknown to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, August 7, 1940.

councils, a statement by the Punjabi Premier Sikandar Hayat Khan caused confusion. According to the article the premier stated that Punjabi and Bengali ministers were allowed to serve on defense councils in their capacity as ministers.⁸⁵ If this statement was accurate than figures like Hayat Khan and Huq would have been allowed to serve on the councils as they both were provincial premiers. The confusion surrounding this statement would have been considerable. Not only was Hayat Khan a ranking politician and whose words carried weight, but the vagueness of his statement could be interpreted as allowing any League member who was serving in a provincial position an exemption from Jinnah's decree.

The Secretary of the Muslim League, Liaquat Ali Khan, later stated that, "not only the Muslim ministers of the Punjab and Bengal are exempted but also those of Sind and Assam."⁸⁶ This statement by Ali Khan is also referenced in another newspaper written around the same time providing evidence that such decrees, contrary to Jinnah's goals, were widely published.⁸⁷

Such articles give some credence letter writers' complaints of confusion regarding the League's position on war committees, though such confusion does not appear to be the result of Jinnah's indecisiveness. Interestingly, these complaints of confusion also point toward early tensions between Jinnah and his rivals. Ranking members of the League did attempt to strike a middle position between Jinnah's refusal to allow Leaguers onto the defense committees and a desire to aid in the war that was apparently intensely felt among certain populations of South Asian Muslims like the Punjabis. This middle path not only enabled provincial leaders like Huq and Hayat Khan to appeal to popular sentiment in their provinces; it provided them a chance to challenge Jinnah and assert their own independence.

⁸⁵ Reel 16, IOR NEG 10775, *The Tribune*, "Exemption Given to Ministers," July 3, 1940.

⁸⁶ Reel 16, IOR NEG 10775, *The Tribune*, "Exemption Given to Ministers," July 3, 1940, 40.

⁸⁷ Reel 16, IOR NEG 10775, *The Civil and Military Gazette*, "Confusion Worse Confounded," July 3, 1940.

Jinnah's reaction to these early moves by his opponents seems remarkably measured. In a letter sent on June 29th 1940 to a Punjabi official named Ismail, Jinnah clarified that he did not want any League members to serve on defense councils. However instead of raging at those who had joined such councils he simply stated that they must resign and to "do so without delay."⁸⁸ This response is mirrored in the July newspaper article. The paper reports that Jinnah simply issued a statement that clarified the League's official position and no further repercussions are mentioned.⁸⁹ Furthermore, in both of the letters sent to Jinnah, neither of the correspondents seemed concerned with possibly upsetting Jinnah by inquiring about potential exemptions. One was even so bold as to suggest a potential resolution to Jinnah that would authorize such exceptions.⁹⁰ Ali Khan, the secretary of the League who publicly contradicted Jinnah, did not lose his position or even seem to suffer any consequences. It is fairly apparent that Jinnah was not overly concerned with people arguing or even opposing his position on the defense councils during the summer of 1940.

A letter sent to Jinnah on July 16, 1940 underlines the fact that the League President was not terribly upset over Leaguers, membership in defense councils. This letter, from the aforementioned official Ismail, appears to be part of a regular correspondence with Jinnah.⁹¹ In the letter the author discusses how the Provincial Muslim League Working Committee of Bihar passed a resolution that ratified Jinnah's position on defense councils. The resolution further authorizes the Bihar provincial president, apparently the author of the letter, to take disciplinary action with regards to any Leaguers who retain membership on defense councils.⁹² However, the

⁸⁸ Reel 18, IOR NEG 10777, Muhammad Ali Jinnah to Nawab Ismail, June, 29, 1940.

⁸⁹ Reel 16, IOR NEG 10775, *The Tribune*, "Exemption Given to Ministers," July 3, 1940.

⁹⁰ Reel 18, IOR NEG 10777, Shah Kawaliyan (?) to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, June 24, 1940.

⁹¹ Mohammad Ismail Khan is likely the Ismail that Jinnah is corresponding with however this is simply an educated guess as nothing in the letters confirms this.

⁹² Reel 17, IOR NEG 10776, Ismail to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, July 16, 1940.

League did not establish a set date by which this must be accomplished nor suggest a punishment for those who disobeyed the order. Ismail was essentially left on his own to determine the best way to deal out punishments, a fact that caused him “to seek your [Jinnah] guidance.”⁹³ That Jinnah had not even set a date by which League members must resign from the defense councils nor imposed a punishment for defying the order is indicative of his rather relaxed attitude about the whole affair.

In 1940 the League issued orders that all members needed to resign from British defense councils. However no time limit or punishment was set out and in many cases ranking League officials offered compromises that directly contradicted Jinnah. However through it all Jinnah seemed rather unhurried and no direct action, by the national League committee that Jinnah headed, seems to have been taken against League members who maintained their membership on defense councils. Jinnah’s attitude toward the British defense councils was thus one of disapproval, but a willingness to ignore in favor of other issues.

The Removal of Fazlul Huq and Jinnah’s Change

Jinnah’s unconcerned attitude over League members’ service on defense councils would not last and nowhere is the change in his attitude more apparent than in his expulsion of Fazlul Huq from the League. When the 67 year-old Bengali politician joined the Viceroy’s Defense Council, Jinnah publicly and brutally berated the former ally. However while Jinnah was demonizing Huq and kicking him out of the organization, he had only a year previously been willing to entertain requests from other League members who wished to serve on the British defense committees. Huq’s removal from the League suggests that Jinnah had come to see defense councils as a way to control League members and eliminate rivals.

⁹³ Reel 17, IOR NEG 10776, Ismail to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, July 16, 1940.

This idea likely had been in his head for a while. In the 1940 letter from Ismail, the writer references an earlier letter by Jinnah in which the leader stated that “the time has come when the League should be purified.”⁹⁴ If Ismail is accurate in attributing this quote to Jinnah, then it is apparent that Jinnah did have an idea of restructuring the League to increase his own authority. The use of the word “purified” is particularly notable as it carries a connotation that implies Jinnah’s desire was to eliminate ideas that competed against his own.

The first major step of Jinnah’s plan to restructure the League was his 1941 removal of Fazlul Huq from the All-India Muslim League. Although Huq had been a valuable partner to the League ever since he had formed a coalition government with it in Bengal, the elder statesman had never been a reliable ally. As Sana Aiyar notes, Huq saw himself as a distinct entity from the League, offering a third path for Bengalis that was different from the League and the Congress.⁹⁵ In the process of enacting this vision, Huq often opposed Jinnah, as in 1940 when Jinnah rebuked Huq and Punjabi Premier Skinader Hyatt Khan for engaging in talks with the Congress that he had not authorized.⁹⁶ This willingness to act independently without respecting Jinnah’s authority had posed a continual source of friction between Jinnah and Huq, setting the stage for a split.

The spark for Huq’s removal was a relatively innocuous letter from the Indian Viceroy. In 1941 Huq received the request to serve on the Viceroy’s Defense Council in his capacity as the premier of Bengal.⁹⁷ Despite the fact that by this point Jinnah’s position on this matter was quite well established, Huq decided to strike out on his own and accepted the invitation. Jinnah’s

⁹⁴ Reel 17, IOR NEG 10776, Ismail to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, July 16, 1940.

⁹⁵ Sana Aiyar, "Fazlul Huq, Region and Religion in Bengal: The Forgotten Alternative of 1940-43," *Modern Asian Studies* 42, no. 6 (2008): 1.

⁹⁶ Sana Aiyar, "Fazlul Huq, Region and Religion in Bengal: The Forgotten Alternative of 1940-43," *Modern Asian Studies* 42, no. 6 (2008): 10.

⁹⁷ Sana Aiyar, "Fazlul Huq, Region and Religion in Bengal: The Forgotten Alternative of 1940-43," *Modern Asian Studies* 42, no. 6 (2008): 10.

reaction to the news was belligerent, accusing Huq of “gross misconduct” purposefully calculated to harm the League, Bengalis, and “Muslim India generally.”⁹⁸ A telegram on December 6, 1941 from Jinnah to Huq states that Huq’s, “conduct amounts to treachery.”⁹⁹ While there are few third-party sources on Jinnah’s reaction to the news, one telegram described Jinnah as having a “fearsome anger.”¹⁰⁰

For his part Huq remained steadfast in his claims that he was still a loyal member of the League. In a telegram to Liaquat Ali Khan he asserted that his “loyalty to the League is unshaken” and that he wished to remain a member of the League.¹⁰¹ However such claims did not pacify Jinnah. When Huq refused to apologize for his actions or make any effort to leave the Viceroy’s council, the League President took action. In early December, Jinnah gave Huq four days to explain himself and leave the Viceroy’s Council or have further action taken.¹⁰² Yet Huq took no action and on December 10th Jinnah revoked Huq’s status as a member of the League.

Huq’s expulsion marked a stark departure from Jinnah’s earlier reactions to those who opposed his plan for the defense councils. The fierce language that he invoked to criticize Huq, calling him a traitor with an intent to harm, is absent in earlier statements on the committees.¹⁰³ Granted Huq was a notable person, he had delivered the Lahore Resolution and was a dominant figure in Bengali politics. But so too were Ali Khan and Hayat Khan who had opposed Jinnah’s stance on defense councils just a year previously. Stanley Wolpert uses episodes like this to argue that Jinnah was highly motivated by pride and could not stand to be challenged.¹⁰⁴ Yet

⁹⁸ Reel 9, IOR NEG 10768, Statement by Mr. Jinnah, December 11, 1941.

⁹⁹ Reel 9, IOR NEG 10768, Telegram from Muhammad Ali Jinnah to Fazlul Huq, December 6, 1941.

¹⁰⁰ Reel 10, IOR NEG 10769, Telegram from Liaquat Ali Khan to Ghazanfar Ali Khan, December 8, 1941.

¹⁰¹ Reel 9, IOR NEG 10768, Telegram from Fazlul Huq to Liaquat Ali Kahn, December 9, 1941.

¹⁰² Reel 9, IOR NEG 10768, Telegram from Muhammad Ali Jinnah to Fazlul Huq, December 6, 1941.

¹⁰³ Reel 9, IOR NEG 10768, Statement by Mr. Jinnah, December 11, 1941.

¹⁰⁴ Stanley Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 355.

Jinnah had been willing to show leniency toward Leaguers who had retained membership just a year prior. The change in Jinnah's reaction to Huq's disobedience is thus best explained by his newfound desire to purify the League. Huq and his continual disobedience presented a rogue element that Jinnah needed to expel and the defense council offered a useful justification.

Challenges to Authority

Fazlul Huq's removal was an attempt by Jinnah to solidify his control over the League. Huq's acceptance of the viceroy's invitation was more than a case of a premier simply acting in the best interests of his citizens; to Jinnah it was a public challenge to his authority. The introduction of the Lahore Resolution had changed the position of the League in Indian politics by opening the party to not only new criticism from outside groups like the Congress, but also by providing a platform to figures like Huq, who desired to increase provincial autonomy. To ensure that the League was not torn apart by such criticism and infighting, Jinnah began purging the League of those who he felt challenged his authority. Jinnah's anger was not over Huq's membership on an admittedly pointless council, rather it was the excuse he needed to eliminate a bold challenger.

In a letter to Liaquat Ali Khan, Huq complained about Jinnah's decision to centralize the League and even pointed out that he (Huq) might be on the chopping block as he was more concerned with Bengal than the entire subcontinent.¹⁰⁵ Jinnah's decision to remove members was thus, as Sana Aiyar points out, an attempt to solidify his authority over the League. As Aiyar notes, Huq's focus on provincial politics presented a threat to Jinnah's religious communalism that he desired to be the base of his party.¹⁰⁶ While early in his political life Jinnah was able to

¹⁰⁵ Sana Aiyar, "Fazlul Huq, Region and Religion in Bengal: The Forgotten Alternative of 1940-43," *Modern Asian Studies* 42, no. 6 (2008): 11.

¹⁰⁶ Sana Aiyar, "Fazlul Huq, Region and Religion in Bengal: The Forgotten Alternative of 1940-43," *Modern Asian Studies* 42, no. 6 (2008): 10.

successfully navigate such challenges, the announcement of the Lahore Resolution codified Jinnah's communalism and forced him to more fiercely defend challenges to it. Hayat Khan had previously opposed Jinnah's position on defense councils and had argued that Jinnah should allow provincial politicians like himself the ability to serve on such organizations. In fact, Hayat Khan, like Huq, was a provincial premier and led a provincial party that was focused on the Punjab. Hayat Khan had even joined the Viceroy's Defense Council with Huq in 1941.¹⁰⁷ However when called to step down from the council he did so, thus submitting to Jinnah's authority and avoiding the fate of Huq.

Aiyar's theory thus helps to explain why Jinnah's reaction to Huq was so extreme, but it is incomplete. Notably, her theory does little to explain why Jinnah tolerated Huq's challenges for so long and only reacted when the Bengali joined the defense council. If, as Aiyar suggests, Jinnah became more sensitive to challenges to his authority after the Lahore Resolution, then he should have acted against Huq in 1940 when the provincial leader entered into talks with the Congress. Jinnah's decision to only remove Huq after he had joined the defense council is a testament to Huq's popularity and helps explain why Jinnah framed Huq's membership on the council.

The popularity of Huq was undeniable. Not only had he managed to lead a third party into the government in Bengal but his actions taken as premier had further endeared him to large segments of the Muslim population, particularly in Bengal.¹⁰⁸ To remove the potential rival, Jinnah needed a public grievance with which he could justify his decision to bring Huq down. In an article from 1941 Huq seems to be aware of this fact; as he told a reporter (Jinnah was)

¹⁰⁷ Salahuddin Ahmed, *Bangladesh: Past and Present*, (New Delhi, APH Publishing, 2004) 95.

¹⁰⁸ Sana Aiyar, "Fazlul Huq, Region and Religion in Bengal: The Forgotten Alternative of 1940-43," *Modern Asian Studies* 42, no. 6 (2008): 6.

“anxious to make a public exhibition of his authority.”¹⁰⁹ While not directly talking about the defense council or even himself, Huq suggests that Jinnah was seeking a way to reassert his authority by making a public move. The fact that Jinnah was seeking to make a public example of Huq, might initially seem strange considering Huq’s popularity. However Jinnah’s logic was likely that the often outspoken Huq would be unwilling to go quietly and Jinnah’s alternative was to publicly disgrace his opponent.

Because Huq’s membership on the Viceroy’s Defense Council was public knowledge it presented the perfect opportunity for Jinnah to assert his authority and reinforce his position as head of the League. Of course Jinnah’s previous tolerance of League members participating in British defense committees presented a potential problem and this explains why his denouncements of Huq carry so much reference to treachery, he hoped to frame Huq as a traitor and differentiate his action from other League members who had joined such councils.¹¹⁰ The nonexistent powers of the councils made them relative nonfactors in the political landscape of South Asian politics and Jinnah thus had to imbue Huq’s membership on the council with greater meaning than it practically presented.

All Alone: The Hegemony of Jinnah

The use of defense councils to neutralize Jinnah’s rivals established him as the dominant figure in the League. Yet in centralizing power, Jinnah was also removing competing ideologies from the League. In attempting to solidify his control over the League Jinnah managed to make the organization more homogeneous in ways that impacted the organizations future demand of Pakistan.

¹⁰⁹ The *Statesman*, 11 September 1941.

¹¹⁰ Reel 9, IOR NEG 10768, Telegram from Muhammad Ali Jinnah to Fazlul Huq, December 6, 1941.

Jinnah's refusal to state what he envisioned Pakistan to actually entail is the crux of Ayesha Jalal's thesis in *The Sole Spokesman*.¹¹¹ Aside from a basic assertion of South Asian communalism that was based around Muslims, Jinnah often demurred from articulating his exact vision of the state. However Huq and Hayat Khan were quite different with both articulating strong visions of Pakistan. Hayat Khan notably opposed partition, instead arguing for a Muslim majority region as part of a larger Indian confederation.¹¹² While Huq supported the idea of an independent Muslim state, his vision was often couched in themes of provincial autonomy that undermined the centrality inherent to the League.¹¹³ The two provincial leaders thus offered notable departures from Jinnah and presented visions that were designed to appeal to their respective provinces of the Punjab and Bengal.

It would be wrong to assume that Jinnah tried to neutralize Hayat Khan and Huq because of their assertions about Pakistan. As Jalal argues, Jinnah wanted the disparate Muslim populations of the subcontinent to see what they wished in the idea of Pakistan thereby uniting the provinces under the League banner.¹¹⁴ If this thesis were true, Jinnah would presumably have welcomed Huq and Hayat Khan's varying views on Pakistan as they would entice specific provincial groups into the League. In fact, there is no reflection by Jinnah on differing visions of Pakistan when discussing the matter. In a letter to Shah Nawaz Khan, a leading Punjabi Leaguer, Jinnah simply states that his goal with regarding defense councils is simply to "see that the Resolution of the Working Committee of the All India Muslim League is obeyed" and discusses

¹¹¹ Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, The Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

¹¹² Mansingh. *Historical Dictionary of India*.

¹¹³ Sana Aiyar, Fazlul Huq, Region and Religion in Bengal: The Forgotten Alternative of 1940-43

¹¹⁴ Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, The Muslim League and the Demand for Pakistan*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 242.

his willingness to accept members who follow this simply rule.¹¹⁵ It thus seems their views on Pakistan were incidental and that Jinnah's use of defense councils against them mainly stemmed from their challenges to his authority.

However while ideology did not motivate Jinnah's actions regarding the war councils, the overall League ideology was certainly impacted. The expulsion of Huq and the untimely death of Hayat Khan only a year later would remove two major influences that could have competed with Jinnah's attempts to frame the Lahore Resolution. This episode of the League also enforced a clear hierarchy for the organization with the Working Committee of the League, under the leadership of Jinnah, superior to all members even those who had dual membership in provincial parties. This fact fits well with the work of people like Christophe Jaffrelot who argue that Pakistan's formation was in part a result of the domination of elite North Indian Muslims within the League.¹¹⁶ In Jinnah's subjugation of rogue elements that challenged his authority, the League president subjugated potential third paths. In doing so he unknowingly solidified the hegemony of thinkers like himself, western-educated Islamic modernists, at the vanguard of the League.

During the course of the conflict, Jinnah continued to use World War II to enact political goals. However unlike the leveraging of support for the war to receive concessions from the British government for the entire League, Jinnah used the British defense councils for a slightly more selfish goal. The announcement of the Lahore Resolution presented Jinnah with a new avenue by which political opponents could attack the League. To respond Jinnah had to present the party as a unified whole that was tightly under his control. In achieving this goal the League

¹¹⁵ Z.H. Zaidi, ed. *Quaid-I-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah Papers*, (Islamabad, Oxford University Press, 1993), 539.

¹¹⁶ Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Pakistan Paradox: Instability and Resilience*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), Chapter 3.

president used British defense councils as a way to control, and even remove, those who challenged his authority.



The four important figures for this chapter. From left to right are A.K. Fazlul Huq, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Liaquat Ali Khan, and Sikandar Hayat Khan. This photo is from a Muslim League Council Meeting in Bombay.¹¹⁷

Chapter Three

Independence and Ideology: Islamic modernism and Identity

As the war drew to a close, the correspondence of the All-India Muslim League and Jinnah increasingly turns away from the war and a focus on the future of a free India. This is unsurprising considering that the British promise to hold conferences on the termination of the Raj. In addition, the League's declaration of support for an independent Muslim state likely urged Jinnah and leading League's members to create a coherent and unified platform for future negotiations. Interestingly, with the surrender of Germany in May of 1945, the war effectively

¹¹⁷ Roger Long, "The Man Jinnah Called His Right Hand," *Dawn*, October 16, 2017, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1364184>.

ended for the Muslim League. References to it vanish almost entirely from the correspondence. Japans' surrender, only four months later, is not mentioned by Jinnah or any other League members.

On the surface, this might seem strange to the casual observer. Japan is not only closer to India than Germany but during the war Japan had actively claimed India as a member of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. This platform was based on ideas of pan-Asian unity and promoted the cultural and economic unity of East, Southeast, and South Asian nations. Such assertions however have received criticism from historians who argue that the concept simply acted as method of asserting Japanese superiority and dominance.¹¹⁸ The idea never gained much traction in mainland India and the influence it had among the general South Asian population is dubious.¹¹⁹ To Jinnah and the League, the more worrisome opponent was the more remote one.

To explain their view of wartime threats, it is important to consider the ideological background. In Chapters 1 and 2, I made the case that Muslim League support for the war is largely attributable to Muhammad Ali Jinnah's strategy to both secure the political future of the League and to increase his control over the organization. However it is important to zoom out and take a broad look at the context in which Jinnah came to political maturity. The most important ideology that must be understood is Islamic modernism. This movement, which merges the Islamic faith with notions of Western political values, had an oversized impact on the thinking of Jinnah and other important League leaders. This ideological framework helps explain the actions of the League throughout the war as Islamic Modernism enabled Jinnah to achieve

¹¹⁸ William L. Swan, "Japan's Intentions for Its Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere as Indicated in Its Policy Plans for Thailand." *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 27, no. 1 (1996): 139.

¹¹⁹ The group that represented India in the Co-Prosperity Sphere was the Provisional Government of Free India. This group commanded no real power in the subcontinent and was in fact headquartered in Singapore during its occupation by Japan.

his goals by relying on the already constructed ideology. Western influences and Islamic modernism made Jinnah and the League open to supporting the British and provided moral justification for their wartime support. However in using Islamic Modernism to explain and justify the war, Jinnah solidified the hegemonic dominance of elite ideology within the League.

Islamic modernism and Syed Ahmad Khan

Islamic modernism was a part of the League's formulation, and shaped members' appeals to a common unity with democratic nations and their disdain for fascism. Such appeals reflect core tenets of 1940s South Asian Islamic modernism and were directly inspired by earlier Islamic Modernists. The most important figure was Syed Ahmad Khan who, through the creation of schools and his own public work, propagated Islamic Modernist ideas that were used by Jinnah and the League.

Islamic modernism is best defined by Muhammad Qasim Zaman when he suggests that Islamic modernism stresses changing Islamic norms and institutions to "align them more closely with both the spirit of Islam and current needs and sensibilities of society."¹²⁰ This definition expresses the basic understanding of Islamic modernism while also avoiding problematic notions of Islamic backwardness. However for the purpose of this paper, it is important to keep in mind that the understanding of Islamic modernism during World War II would have openly accepted Islamic backwardness. Attempts to achieve "modernity" through Western forms of education and political structure were how Jinnah and the League conceived of Islamic Modernism. This is not particularly surprising as such an ideology would have fit well into colonial beliefs and by advocating to the British under the banner of Islamic Modernism, colonized Muslims could efficiently make demands that the colonizers would understand.

¹²⁰ Muhammad Zaman, "Islamic modernism and the Shari'a in Pakistan," *Occasional Papers* 8 (2014): 3.

Syed Ahmad Khan was a major influence on modernist ideology particularly in South Asia. His attempts to promote Western-style education among Muslim communities lead him to form the All India Muhammadan Educational Conference in 1886, the forerunner of the League. Khan's efforts to promote education based on Western models would gain significant traction among Muslim elite, a fact that is not surprising given that his concern over education arose from his fear that Muslim gentry were not staying current to the times. As Shamim Akhtar notes, one of Ahmad Khan's earliest speeches on education was to a group of Muslim gentry on the importance of teaching English to their children so that they could interact with, and ultimately secure jobs within, the British administration.¹²¹ Due to his success in convincing such elites, it is not all together surprising that many on the League's executive committee had either been educated in England, like Jinnah, or had attended the Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College, an institution formed by Ahmad Khan to offer a western-style education for Muslims in the subcontinent. While the League was never a homogeneous organization, in its early years, it had a decidedly modernist slant among the ranking members, almost all of whom were from elite Muslim families and made this prevalence of Islamic modernism even further widespread.

Ahmad Khan's work as a modernist was inherently political and it is unsurprising that he had a large impact upon the political thinking of South Asian Muslims, particularly in the formation of Muslim nationalism in India.¹²² His work helped to lay the groundwork for South Asian Muslim nationalism and his usage of the phrase "our nation" is an explicit and obvious example of how Khan viewed Muslims as a distinct group.¹²³ Ahmad Khan's interest in politics

¹²¹ Shamim Akhtar, "Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and His Audiences," *Social Scientist* 43, no. 1/2 (2015): 3.

¹²² Hafeez Malik, "Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan's Contribution to the Development of Muslim Nationalism in India," *Modern Asian Studies* 4, no. 2 (1970): 130.

¹²³ Syed Ahmad Khan, "Speech at Lucknow" (speech, Lucknow, December 18, 1887), http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealc/pritchett/00islamlinks/txt_sir_sayyid_lucknow_1887.html

was thus based on this very idea of Muslim distinctiveness and much of his political work attempted to protect Muslims from the domination of a Hindu majority. This guiding principle appeared in an 1887 speech in Lucknow: the Muslim intellectual attacks the idea of allowing Indians to vote for a representative on the Viceroy's Council. Ahmad Khan states that this would not truly be an equal share of power as Hindus so greatly outnumber Muslims that "there will be four votes for the Hindu to every one vote for the Mahomedan."¹²⁴ Importantly, Ahmad Khan did not argue for a superiority but rather parity between Hindus and Muslims. As has been noted by scholars like Jaffrelot, Ahmad Khan's metaphors of Hindus and Muslims as the two eyes of India reflect early attempts to promote a distinct, but equal, relationship between the two religions.¹²⁵ Ahmad Khan thus took Islamic Modernist ideas like democracy but framed them in certain ways for his own political advantage.

The framework for many of Ahmad Khan's ideas is based upon conflict between two irreconcilable poles. This conflict provides urgency to his claims while also giving them a rhetorical boost. The conflicts that Ahmad Khan discusses are wide ranging but the most common one is the perceived rift between the Muslims of South Asia and Hindus (for which he sometimes substitutes the Bengalis as a specific example). In a speech in Meerut in 1888, Khan references this inevitability of conflict between the two groups: "It is necessary that one of them should conquer the other."¹²⁶ What is important is not the attitude that Ahmad Khan expresses towards Hindus but rather his ideas of conflict in which opposed forces clash forcefully. In framing the conflict as an inevitability, Ahmad Khan removes the possibility for reconciliation.

¹²⁴ Syed Ahmad Khan, "Speech at Lucknow" (speech, Lucknow, December 18, 1887), http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00islamlinks/txt_sir_sayyid_lucknow_1887.html

¹²⁵ Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Pakistan Paradox: Instability and Resilience*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 63.

¹²⁶ Syed Ahmad Khan, "Speech at Meerut" (speech, Meerut, March 14, 1888), http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00islamlinks/txt_sir_sayyid_meerut_1888.html

Such vocabulary would prove uniquely useful to his ideological descendants as it would be valuable in articulating demands of Muslim nationalism.

The last aspect of Ahmad Khan's legacy that is important to understand is his views on the British government. In many ways Ahmad Khan was a supporter of Muslim loyalty to the British Raj; he founded the United Patriotic Association, which aimed to foster closer relations between Muslims and the colonial government. Speeches and lectures by the modernist thinker too carry many open references to such colonial loyalty. A rather notable example appeared in a speech at Lucknow when Ahmad Khan hypothesized how loyally he would serve the Raj if made the Viceroy and ending with a call for all Indians to "to do what he can to strengthen the Government of Her Majesty the Queen."¹²⁷

However Ahmad Khan did not blindly follow the Raj as seen in his book *The Causes of the Indian Revolt*. An examination of the 1857 revolt, Ahmad Khan puts the blame upon the British for not allowing Indians to serve upon the Legislative Council.¹²⁸ In truth much of Ahmad Khan's colonial support was likely influenced by political realities. The 1887 Lucknow speech is primarily concerned with critiquing demands from the Indian National Congress which had just been founded in 1885. It would not be wholly wrong to say that Ahmad Khan's work to promote colonial support could be seen as an attempt to prevent the spread and popularization of Congress ideas, which he viewed as dangerous for South Asian Muslims. Therefore Ahmad Khan did promote ideas of support for the British but did so while in conversation with outside forces like the Congress.

Remembering Modernists

¹²⁷ Syed Ahmad Khan, "Speech at Lucknow" (speech, Lucknow, December 18, 1887), http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealc/pritchett/00islamlinks/txt_sir_sayyid_lucknow_1887.html

¹²⁸ Syed Ahmad Khan, *The Causes of the Indian Revolt*, Benares: Medical Hall Press, 1873.

Historians almost fully agree that Jinnah and ranking members of the League subscribed to modernists beliefs. I believe that Khan's ideas clearly influenced their way of thinking about the war and helped provide ways for justifying wartime support. The most striking evidence for this can be seen in Jinnah and other League members' vocabulary and motifs that echoed Ahmad Khan when discussing the war. Importantly Jinnah never made Islamic Modernist arguments in conversation with British officials and in public statements, only with adhering Muslims. Among League members themselves, he relied on common notions of Islamic modernism to justify and articulate his support for the war.

Historians of the League and Islamic modernism have argued that most senior League members followed modernist beliefs. Indeed as Ali Usman Qasmi notes all of the "power elite" which included the entire executive committee as well as most bureaucratic members could be defined as Islamic Modernists.¹²⁹ This reality can be attributed to two important aspects of the League. The first is the education of the leading members who were overwhelmingly instructed in England or Western-modeled schools.¹³⁰ At such institutions the students were exposed to Western political theorists like John Stuart Mill and John Locke, whose ideas meshed well with the synthesis of Islam and Western theory promoted by Ahmad Khan.¹³¹ The second reason for the modernism of the League is the relative absence of any Ulema in the organization. Ulema are interpreters of Islamic doctrine and law who have typically received their education at a traditional religious institution. These men, having been educated in a profoundly different environment, would not have been educated in the modernist ideals espoused by so many League

¹²⁹ Ali Usman Qasmi, "God's Kingdom on Earth? Politics of Islam in Pakistan, 1947-1969," *Modern Asian Studies* 44, no. 6 (2010): 1200.

¹³⁰ Rashul Rais, *Imagining Pakistan: Modernism, State, and the Politics of Islamic Revival*, Lanham: Lexington Books, 2017. 21.

¹³¹ Tauseef Ahmad Parray, "Islamic Modernist and Reformist Thought: A Study of the Contributions of Sir Sayyid and Muhammad Iqbal," *World Journal of Islamic History and Civilization* 1, no. 2 (2011): 9.

leaders and would have brought conflicting interpretations of Islam and politics. However most Ulema remained aloof from the League, preferring to be supportive of Congress attempts to end colonial rule, and enabled the League to operate under a modernist vision relatively uncontested.¹³²

The League's modernist tendencies abound in letters discussing World War II. Khan Bahadur S.M. Ismail, president of the Bihar chapter of the League, famously stated that it was a human duty to support the British as they represented democracy in the face of German and Italian fascism.¹³³ In an unmarked letter sent around 1940, the author argued that supporting the British was natural for Muslims as they should be "opposed to German ideologies."¹³⁴ The assertion that Muslims should view the war as a battle of ideologies and thus support the British was clearly a common belief and one that is directly inspired by Syed Ahmad Khan and his way of framing conflict in Islamic modernism. In framing the conflict in such a way, it is unsurprising that modernist Muslims would feel sympathetic to supporting the British war effort. Democracy was a core tenet of 1940s Islamic modernism and it was self-evident to men like Ismail that Muslims should support the British.

Nowhere is the impact of Islamic modernism and Ahmad Khan more notable than in Jinnah's rhetoric. In a newspaper article from 1944, Jinnah referred to himself as a "nationalist" and argued that the creation of Pakistan is necessary "to achieve the liberation of their (South Asians) country."¹³⁵ The term nationalist is vocabulary borrowed from Western thinkers and the assertion that South Asian Muslims constitute a nation is a direct belief of Ahmad Khan.

¹³² Ali Usman Qasmi, "God's Kingdom on Earth? Politics of Islam in Pakistan, 1947-1969," *Modern Asian Studies* 44, no. 6 (2010): 1998.

¹³³ Reel 17, IOR NEG 10776, Khan Bahadur S.M. Ismail to All-India Muslim League.

¹³⁴ Reel 17, IOR NEG 10776, Anonymous to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, 1940.

¹³⁵ Reel 15, IOR NEG 10774, Article on Muhammad Ali Jinnah, May 31, 1944.

Importantly, Jinnah attributed the need for Pakistan as due to the fact that South Asian Muslims are a distinct nation of people who have a right to craft a state for themselves. If such an understanding is true then the entire Pakistan demand, a fundamental aspect of the League since its proposal, would be part of a modernist vision. Importantly Jinnah's use of the term nationalist should not be seen as simply parroting Ahmad Khan. Unlike Ahmad Khan Jinnah often recognized the important differences in language, ethnicity, and territory between South Asian Muslims. Jinnah's nationalism, as people like Faisal Devji have argued, was thus separate from previous nationalist factors and instead based upon European Enlightenment social contract models of a nation.¹³⁶ This reflects Jinnah's interpretation of Islamic modernism that was both based upon precepts from Ahmad Khan but influenced by his exposure to European thinkers during his education in England.

Other documents further reflect Jinnah's adherence to Islamic modernism. In an early document sent by him to the British, before the Pakistan demand, the League executive lays out a plan he has for creating a constitution for a free India. He insisted that groups of people have the right to self-determination.¹³⁷ Once again Jinnah relies on vocabulary common to modernists to articulate his beliefs, arguing that there must be "proper representation for each community."¹³⁸ Jinnah's reference to Islamic Modernist ideas was apparently so common that even his peers commented on it. A 1939 letter from the Bengal Legislative Assembly refers to "the progressive elements in the League" when discussing Jinnah and his supporters.¹³⁹

¹³⁶ Safoora Arbab, "Nonviolence, Pukhtunwali and Decolonization: Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the Khuda'i Khidmatgar Politics of Friendship." Chapter in *Muslims against the Muslim League: Critiques of the Idea of Pakistan*, edited by Ali Usman Qasmi and Megan Eaton Robb, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 233.

¹³⁷ Reel 3, IOR NEG 10776, Statement by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, May 11, 1937.

¹³⁸ Reel 3, IOR NEG 10776, Statement by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, May 11, 1937.

¹³⁹ Reel 17, IOR NEG 10776, Bengal Legislative Assembly to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, December 12, 1939.

Jinnah relied often on modernist beliefs and vocabulary to propagate his vision and enact goals. It is not surprising that aspects of Islamic modernism appeared in his support for the war. A statement by the Working Committee of the League, under the direction of Jinnah, celebrated the British wartime concessions to recognize South Asian Muslims as a coherent group that had the right to self-determination.¹⁴⁰ When criticizing the Congress for the Quit India movement Jinnah references minority rights, stating that the Congress was trying to coerce the British government into giving the Congress sole control of India.¹⁴¹ Minority rights recalls the vocabulary of Ahmad Khan and his assertions about the importance of protecting Muslims interests from the Hindu majority. In a 1941 letter to Isa, Jinnah lays out why the League should support the war. Jinnah refers to the war as an opportunity for the organization to gain the right to “wield authority exclusively” while also gaining a “share of the power” in forming the future government.¹⁴² Such terms echo modernist ideas of Ahmad Khan and his arguments over the importance of Muslims having a fair use of power that was not dependent upon the size of their population. These terms further reflect Jinnah’s concept of political parity between Hindus and Muslims, an idea that he had inherited from thinkers like Ahmad Khan.¹⁴³

It is not just in vocabulary that the influence of Ahmad Khan can be seen on Jinnah. At the 1940 Lahore meeting Jinnah gave a speech that recalled the previous speeches of Syed Ahmad Khan, particularly one given by Khan in 1887 in Lucknow. In his speech, Jinnah lists major concessions that the League has managed to gain from the British so long as the Muslims

¹⁴⁰ Reel 20, IOR NEG 10779, Statement by All-India Muslim League Working Committee, October 1939.

¹⁴¹ Reel 16, IOR NEG 10775, *The Daily Gazette* “Jinnah Declares War on Gandhi,” August 1, 1942.

¹⁴² Reel 17, IOR NEG 10776, Muhammad Ali Jinnah to Isa, July 14, 1941

¹⁴³ Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Pakistan Paradox: Instability and Resilience*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 63.

of the subcontinent support the war.¹⁴⁴ Jinnah argued that without such concessions, the Muslims would be, resulting “in the complete destruction of what is most precious in Islam” and a “Hindu Raj.”¹⁴⁵ Jinnah’s reverence to conflict is highly reminiscent of Ahmad Khan’s arguments. While this supposed conflict is not usually considered an aspect of Islamic modernism, recent scholarship has created new connections between it and modernist ideology. Safoora Arbab, in *Muslims Against the Muslim League*, argues that Jinnah’s understanding of political power is based upon a “Hobbesian model of the Leviathan state as the normative form of communal organization” in which a community must be able to enforce its aspired to ideals.¹⁴⁶ Jinnah thus uses the threat of violence to motivate South Asian Muslims in protecting their rights. While this view is relatively understudied it does make use of Jinnah’s exposure to Thomas Hobbes at law school and incorporates it into a modernist understanding of Jinnah.¹⁴⁷

It should be noted that modernist arguments were used only among members of the League. Public declarations of war are noticeably devoid of any reference to a conflict of ideologies in which democracy must be supported. Publicly, the League justified the war by appealing to the defense of India as well as the promises that the English had made for wartime support.¹⁴⁸ This is rather unsurprising: Islamic modernism is a relatively elite ideology that carried the most capital among Muslims who had received Western style education. Non-elite Muslims and Hindus would not be convinced by appeals to the ideology. Indeed non-elite members of South Asian society would likely take offense at references to Ahmed Khan, who

¹⁴⁴ Muhammad Ali Jinnah, “Lahore Sessions Address” (speech, Lahore, March 25, 1940), http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00islamlinks/txt_jinnah_lahore_1940.html

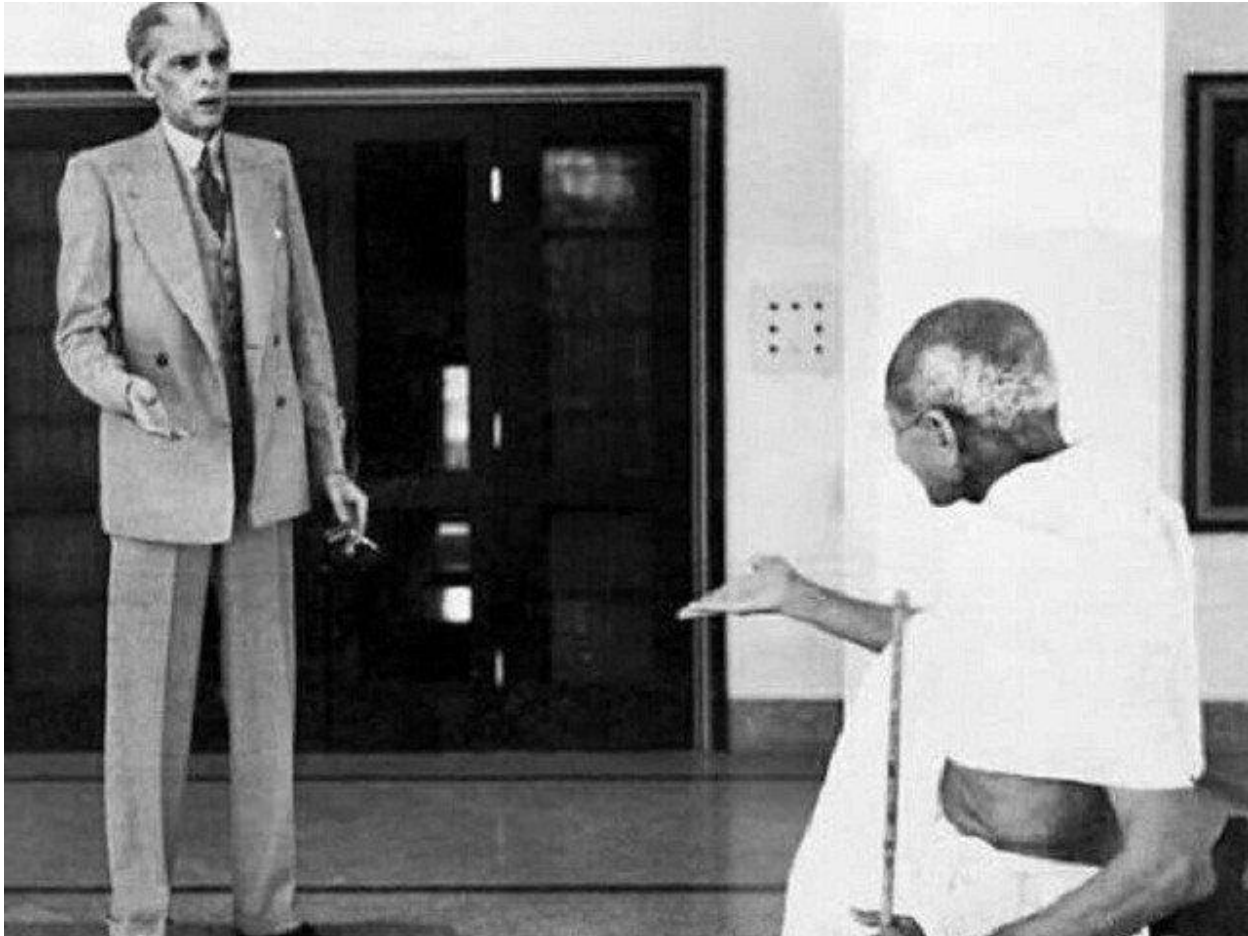
¹⁴⁵ Muhammad Ali Jinnah, “Lahore Sessions Address” (speech, Lahore, March 25, 1940), http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00islamlinks/txt_jinnah_lahore_1940.html

¹⁴⁶ Safoora Arbab, “Nonviolence, Pukhtunwali and Decolonization: Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the Khuda’i Khidmatgar Politics of Friendship.” Chapter in *Muslims against the Muslim League: Critiques of the Idea of Pakistan*, edited by Ali Usman Qasmi and Megan Eaton Robb, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 232.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Reel 9, IOR NEG 10768, Statement by the All-India Muslim League, June 15, 1940.

had made quite public remarks about the importance of maintaining elite power.¹⁴⁹ Public declarations of support for Western styles of politics were also politically risky ideas to promote; at this time Gandhi's concept of Swaraj, which emphasized a rejection of Western political, economic, and educational models, was extremely popular in the subcontinent at the time and it could not appear that the League was attacking Gandhi's most popular belief.



Jinnah and Gandhi talk. Note Jinnah's use of Western styles of fashion contrasted with Gandhi's "traditional India clothing.

Germany, Japan, and the end

¹⁴⁹ Syed Ahmad Khan, "Speech at Lucknow" (speech, Lucknow, December 18, 1887), http://www.columbia.edu/itc/mealac/pritchett/00islamlinks/txt_sir_sayyid_lucknow_1887.html

The relative absence of Japan from the communications between League leaders was likely a result of Islamic modernism, albeit quite unintentionally. The small example of the absence of Japan in League concerns of the war not only demonstrates the impact that the ideologies examined in this chapter had upon the League's participation in the war, it also shows how these ideologies combined and interacted with the more *realpolitik* goals examined in Chapters 1 and 2.

By May of 1945, having achieved his political goals, Jinnah had no need to maintain support for the war and instead needed to shift his focus to the coming negotiations with the Congress over the future of the subcontinent. With the Lahore Resolution having helped build unity among the Muslims electorate, as would be seen in the 1946 provincial elections, and Jinnah the leader of the League, the war had lost almost all political advantages that it had presented initially.¹⁵⁰ Thankfully for Jinnah it had been Germany that had been portrayed by the League as the fascist tyrant that must be defeated and Britain as the model of democracy that ought to be supported.¹⁵¹ When Germany surrendered, the Islamic Modernist framework that had been used by the League to justify the war came to an apparent resolution. With Germany defeated those who had made pan-Islamic based arguments were satisfied too. The countries referred to during such arguments were states like Egypt and Palestine who were only really threatened by Germany.

Why then did Japan never receive the same treatment as Germany? By 1945 it was partly due to the war losing political advantage to Jinnah. Having achieved greater control over the League and established concessions for the organization's future, Jinnah no longer needed the war. With no more gains to be had it makes sense that Jinnah would try to pull back from the

¹⁵⁰ Joseph Schwartzberg, *A Historical Atlas of South Asia*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1978.

¹⁵¹ Reel 17, IOR NEG 10776, Khan Bahadur S.M. Ismail to All-India Muslim League.

conflict and focus on the future of a free India. However this only explains why Japan did not receive demonization after the surrender of Germany and Japan had been part of the conflict since 1941. Japan had in fact avoided depictions of totalitarianism for the entire conflict. The use of ideologies like Islamic modernism can help explain this contradiction.

Important to remember is that Islamic Modernism is an ideology that allows effective communication of ideas from colonized Muslims to Western states. As noted by Shamin Akhtar, a primary audience of Islamic Modernists in South Asia was the British government.¹⁵² By fusing ideas of Islamic backwardness with European concepts of politics and philosophy, Islamic Modernists were able to use Islamic Modernism as a vehicle. It should not be surprising then that when Jinnah, an Islamic Modernist, needed to use the ideology to achieve his own goals he selected Italy and Germany instead of Japan as his examples for comparison. While Jinnah could have used Islamic Modernist ideas to craft a comparison between Japan and Britain it would have had to contend with racial and colonial ideas of superiority. The most obvious route for Jinnah then was to contrast Italy and Germany as examples of anti-democratic despotism with Britain.

Furthermore, modernists in the League inherited much of Ahmad Khan's ideology including his ideas of ideological conflict. When justifying the war then, if Britain was to represent the side of liberal democracy, then Germany made the most sense as the opponent. Granted Britain was still at war with Japan but it had no active troops deployed in the Pacific theater. Thus Japan, though it could have been used by Jinnah or other Leaguers as justification for the war, it never was. With Germany falling in May of 1945, League members no longer had,

¹⁵² Shamim Akhtar, "Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and His Audiences." *Social Scientist* 43, no. 1/2 (2015): 24.

or needed, a reason to continue supporting the war for the four more months that it continued and Japan thus was never portrayed in the same negative manner like Germany.

Putting it into Practice: The Solidification of Elite ideology

Jinnah's use of Islamic Modernism to justify the war was a rather obvious strategy. Not only was this the ideology that he had been raised in and accepted but it offered a useful way for the League's president to justify the war. The vocabulary of Islamic Modernism made sense to European powers and offered a framework that Jinnah believed could be used to convince hesitant forces within the party. However while Islamic Modernism did offer an effective way for Jinnah to advocate for his goals, by using it he finished the process of establishing elite ideology that had started with the removal of potential rivals.

The use of elite ideology would have a significant impact upon the formation of Pakistan. Similar to how the use of defense councils to remove rivals had inadvertently removed competing ideas of the future of Pakistan, Jinnah's establishment of elite ideology would have unintended effects. Even though Jinnah seems to have limited the use of Islamic Modernist rhetoric to primarily inter-organizational communication, by relying on Islamic Modernism to articulate his support for the war Jinnah provided legitimacy to the ideology. More conservative thought, like that advocated by the Ulema, was already a fairly minor force within the League. By actively using Islamic Modernism Jinnah further relegated such ideologies. The establishment of elite ideology is a precursor to, and helps explain, Christophe Jaffrelot's assertion that Pakistan arose from an elite group.¹⁵³ While Jaffrelot asserts that such a group was a result of lasting effects of Syed Ahmad Khan's influence on the League, it is also apparent that

¹⁵³ Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Pakistan Paradox: Instability and Resilience*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), Chapter 3.

Jinnah's use of Islamic Modernism to articulate support for the war would create an environment that cemented the already elite nature of the League.

Conclusion

The surrender of Japan on August 15, 1945 ended World War II and with it the subcontinent's formal participation in global conflict. Jinnah and the League, having already shifted focus away from conflict and onto the coming constitution of India, redoubled their efforts to promote the idea of Pakistan and build political support. Such efforts were realized in the 1946 provincial elections. The League managed to form the government outright in Bengal, the Punjab, and Sind, all Muslim majority provinces. Furthermore, the League increased its total number of seats controlled from 106 to 425 or slightly over 25% of the total representation. This was a far cry from the failure in the 1937 elections and made real the organization's claim that it represented all South Asian Muslims.

Less than a year later the subcontinent would experience a cataclysmic shift as the Dominion of India was ended and two separate states were pulled from it. The demand of an independent Muslim State had been successful and the independent states of Pakistan and India were created. In Pakistan, Jinnah was made the first Governor-General of the newly formed state. During his tenure he was mainly focused setting up the new functions of state as well as providing aid to the millions of Muslims who had migrated across India to live in Pakistan. Like his time as leader of the League, Jinnah acted with powerful moves and continued his style of strongman, assertive leadership. But in 1948, the 71 year old leader succumbed to lifelong health issues and passed away on September 11. With his death, Muhammad Ali Jinnah not only left a power vacuum in the fledgling state, but a dangerous precedent of powerful leaders serving until death.

Throughout this thesis I have tried to answer two questions. Why did the All-India Muslim League support the British in World War II and how did this support impact the party and by extension the creation of Pakistan. To accomplish this end I have examined the war chronologically, looking at the ways in which such support was articulated and justified. I have often described goals and motivations as political, giving a *realpolitik* theme to Jinnah in his search for parity between Muslims and Hindus.

I have argued that Jinnah dominated the League. In this respect I have not been unique and have followed contemporary historiography. However my examination of how this dominance by Jinnah impacted the organization as a whole provides a unique view. My work supports Christophe Jaffrelot's argument in *The Pakistan Paradox* where he points out how the reoccurrence of hegemonic figures in the contemporary state of Pakistan is likely influenced by the origins of the state which he sees as a collection of elites.

In examining the era of wartime support I have made the case that Jinnah sought to solidify his control by expelling potential rivals, unknowingly establishing a uniformity of ideology among the League elite. However with Jinnah's death, only a short time after the partition, left a sizeable power vacuum that had previously been occupied by only one person. This was never Jinnah's intent but an unintended consequence from the actions taken during World War II. My thesis provides further support for Jarrelot's work by focusing on the dominant force that was Jinnah. In particular my examination of the use of defense councils and the unintended creation of a hegemony of ideology provides explanation for the formation of the elite group that Jaffrelot discusses.

It is such unintended consequences and their impact upon the creation of Pakistan that give significance to this thesis. The formation of Pakistan has a historiography that often focuses

on the ways in which ideas, people, and circumstances came together to create the new state. However despite this there has been a lack of examination into the ways in which such circumstances were created. Ayesha Jalal's *The Sole Spokesman* exemplifies this process as she spends a great deal of her book examining the process by which Jinnah navigated a variety of competing groups. However when she discusses the circumstances that forced the creation of the state, her argument is unsatisfying, asserting the vague popularity of the concept of Pakistan. In doing so Jalal underestimates the role of the League and Jinnah. Too often the creation of Pakistan has been portrayed as something that happened due to forces outside of Jinnah or the League's control. As the famous scholar Thomas Metcalf noted, Jalal and others like her portray Jinnah as "unable to control the forces."¹⁵⁴

It is a significant aspect of this thesis that returns such agency to Jinnah. Aspects like the British-League relationship and the dominance of Islamic Modernism within the League were the circumstances that helped lead to Pakistan. However such circumstances were not random but rather unintended consequences caused by Jinnah during World War II. By recognizing this fact we gain a fuller understanding of the creation of Pakistan in which the circumstances that lead to it are properly contextualized and Jinnah's agency is restored. This agency is relevant to the final goal of this thesis, correcting the political theory of realism. Jinnah offers a good case study for both political scientists and historians as an example of realist political theory in action. As a solitary figure, Jinnah had an oversized impact upon the conditions that created Pakistan, a notable occurrence in international politics. Jinnah shatters the conception that only states can play an important role by showcasing the massive impact that single figures can have. Context and ideology should of course not be forgotten, it is impossible to study Jinnah without looking

¹⁵⁴ Thomas R. Metcalf, "Review of the Sole Spokesman," *The American Historical Review* 92, no. 4 (1987): 1021.

at aspects like the League and Islamic Modernism. However in writing this thesis I hope to encourage political scientist and historians to consider the impact that individuals can have.

There is one more final note that I would like to make at the very end of this thesis. Throughout this work I have stressed that Jinnah's demand for Pakistan was motivated by very realpolitik desires of maintaining power and that the League's support for the British help reflect such concerns. I believe this idea is relevant in the contemporary political climate during which this thesis was written. Islam and Muslims have become caricatures in political discourse and it is troubling to me that so many people seemingly believe that Muslims act according to some doctrinal mandate. Not only is this a misunderstanding of the Quran, it is an idea not borne out by history. Jinnah and the League were as much motivated by vague Islamic desires as Nehru and the Congress were by Hindu ones. Pakistan was not formed to be an Islamic state and Jinnah was not motivated by Islamist beliefs. Understanding these facts are not only good history but should help frame contemporary discourse about Muslims in ways that are more productive and accurate.

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