

Lasting Injuries, Recuperative Possibilities

The Trajectory of an Insufficient National Imagination

In one of the most ingenious parts of *Shame*, a political commentary on Pakistan scripted as a novel, Salman Rushdie wrote: “Pakistan may be described as a failure of the dreaming mind. . . . Perhaps the place was just insufficiently imagined.”¹

These words were written in 1983. That was also the year Benedict Anderson published *Imagined Communities*, arguably the most influential social science book on nationalism.² Unknown to each other, both writers, one a novelist, the other a professor of political science at Cornell University, produced an insight that was more or less similar, the insight that imaginations are central to nation-making. Before 1983, the term *imagination* did not figure centrally in the literature on nationalism; after that, it was routinely deployed, both in the humanistic and social science arguments. Nations were conventionally viewed as outcomes of the objective forces of history, and the role of imaginations and their deployment in politics was not fully appreciated.

In this essay, I want to take the idea of imagination in nation-making and nation-building seriously and would like to ask some specific questions about Pakistan. Is Rushdie right? Was Pakistan indeed insufficiently imagined? And if so, what have been the enduring consequences of the inadequacy of imagination?

But I don’t wish to confine myself to the past. I also want to peer into Pakistan’s future and ask: Can Pakistan be reimagined, and if so, what form might an alternative imagination take? This question is immensely important. How Pakistan’s identity is reimagined will determine—substantially, if not entirely—whether the Pakistani state will contribute to the welfare of its masses and to peace in South Asia.

The insufficiency of the founding imagination has led to enduring pathologies and self-inflicted injuries in Pakistan. Rushdie’s fundamental insight is not just pithy and inventive; it is also largely correct. But there is a big question that, nonetheless, crops up. It has to do with the possibilities of Pakistan’s regeneration. Rushdie has often been pessimistic about it; I am not. I only have a conjecture about Pakistan’s future, not a full-blown argument, but it seems to me it is a reasonable

way to start a debate. A nuclear South Asia requires serious futuristic thinking.

A “Nuclear Somalia”? A “Failed State”?

Since September 11, 2001—after years of inching closer and closer to international isolation—Pakistan has returned to the family of nations as an important international actor. Its economy, faltering badly for more than a decade, has also grown at an impressive rate over the last several years. Yet the doubt that Pakistan might turn into a “failed state” has never quite disappeared. According to an assessment presented before the 2008 Pakistan elections, despite an alliance with the United States in the war on terrorism and rising economic growth rates, the odds of Pakistan’s degeneration into a failed state were high.³ According to this study, Pakistan’s vulnerability to state failure was higher than Nepal’s or Sierra Leone’s. One does not have to agree with the details of this assessment to appreciate that in many professional circles, grave doubts continue to exist about the capacities, including that of survival, of the Pakistani state.⁴ Political developments after the 2008 elections have not fundamentally altered the assessment.

In the 1960s, Pakistan as a failed state would not have mattered all that much for international security. It is Pakistan’s nuclear weapons that have given these doubts an unprecedented weight and currency. In policy circles, one often hears that if Pakistan does not substantially reform its polity, the world may have to deal with a “nuclear Somalia,” a term quite routinely used after 9/11. In 2005, the discovery that Abdul Qadeer Khan, the father of Pakistan’s nuclear bomb and one of the most highly placed Pakistani civilians in the nuclear establishment, had created a nuclear black market and was running a parallel nuclear policy, reignited the fear of state failure. Few security establishments in the world would allow such clandestine *nuclear* activities, brazenly violating the official policy of the state, to be run for over a decade.

Security hawks in India, unbridled “realists” for long, do not particularly mind Pakistan as a nuclear Somalia, believing that Pakistan is headed that way in any case and its nuclear installations can be preemptively “taken out” before they fall under the control of terrorist organizations. Any sensible notion of probabilities, however, would argue against such “realist” confidence. Basically, no one can predict what will happen to international or South Asian security if Pakistan does become a failed state and the existing security establishment loses its hold over the nuclear arsenal.

While the possibility of state failure in Pakistan has been discussed at length in policy circles, it should be noted that scholars of South Asia have, on the whole, not entertained such a claim with any degree of seriousness. Few scholars would deny that the Pakistani state continues to suffer from a fundamental political incoherence. But to talk about a low-level equilibrium or a deep-seated political incoherence of the state is one thing. To jump from that to a comprehensive state failure is quite another.

The underlying aspects of a low-level equilibrium in Pakistan's polity are well known. Even after over six decades of independence, the basic structure of political institutions, which in a normal state would, among other things, lay out the respective spheres of civilian and military jurisdiction, remains unsettled in Pakistan. And none of the multiple constitutions of independent Pakistan has endured as a basic architecture for power arrangements. India has gone through a great deal of political turbulence, but the survival of India's 1950 constitution and the spheres of civilian and military jurisdiction in the polity have rarely been in grave doubt. The Emergency (1975-77) was the only time in Indian politics when the constitution was seriously abrogated. But even then the idea of soldiers as politicians did not raise its head, and the electoral rejection of the Emergency in March 1977 was so decisive that no political leader can easily think of suspending democracy and the constitution any more. The idea that the constitution could be undermined on any grounds has simply moved out of the institutionalized common sense of Indian politics. The Supreme Court of India, the ultimate guarantor of the constitution, has, if anything, acquired a great deal of power and legitimacy in public eyes.⁵

This comparison does speak about the ill health of political and state institutions of Pakistan, but it does not suggest that the odds of state failure are high. Central to the notion of state failure is the idea that the state is unable to provide and protect public order, and in extreme cases, its writ barely runs beyond the capital city, and warlords or tribal heads control their respective territories.⁶ The latter phenomenon has often been noted in sub-Saharan Africa and also in Afghanistan, Pakistan's neighbor. Over and above the illegitimacy of civilian politicians, typically associated with state failure are factors such as unbridgeable rifts in, and collapse of, the armed forces, or the military losing mass legitimacy.

Recent surveys in Pakistan show that while the soldiers may not be favored by Pakistanis as political rulers, they continue to be trusted by a vast majority of people as the nation's armed forces.⁷ So long as the armed forces remain reasonably united and do not lose their legitimacy

as a professional organization in the eyes of the populace, the conditions of state failure are unlikely to mature in Pakistan. The implication of this argument is not that soldiers should continue to run politics; far from it. When soldiers run politics, the health of political institutions is almost inevitably undermined. The military creates an agonizing dilemma for Pakistani citizens: its frequent interference in politics contributes to a low-level equilibrium in the polity, generating anxiety about the future of Pakistan, but the fact that Pakistan's armed forces continue to enjoy legitimacy as a professional force prevents the worst-case scenario—a state implosion—from taking place. Despite the mass turbulence under Musharraf, surveys continue to show that the military in Pakistan has substantial legitimacy as an institution. The doubts that emerge now and then are essentially about its political role.⁸

Though formal military rule in Pakistan began in 1958, it is in the 1960s that military interference took deep institutional roots and a priority of soldiers over civilian politicians was first established. Compared to the 1960s, the rise of Islamism *within the state and the army* is now unmistakable, and the state has developed considerable incapacity to monitor antistate activities of state officials as well as citizen groups so long as they are couched in Islamic language. To the extent that this has created conflicting blocks and interests within the state and reduced the capacity of government to police borders, the Pakistani state today is indeed more vulnerable to failure than before, but greater vulnerability must be distinguished from inexorability. The existing state of affairs does not have to continue for ever. Change is possible.

Whatever one might say about the future of Pakistan, an important question about the past remains. Why did things come to such a pass? As in so many other cases, two kinds of reasons can be provided: the proximate, and the underlying. The proximate reasons have to do with the political events of the 1980s and 1990s, which I discuss in what follows; the underlying reasons concern the identity of Pakistan and the imagination that led to its birth, which I will discuss later.

The 1980s and 1990s

In the 1980s, under General Zia ul-Haq, the head of the armed forces as well as the government, Islam became a *driving force* of statecraft, not simply a *background factor* that the state had to consider in its functioning.⁹ And in the 1990s, a crippling contradiction emerged between the security impulses of the state and the welfare of the masses. As Pakistan invested in security to keep up with India in military terms, it declined

economically, socially, and politically. A descent into military rule is only too well known, but the economic and social story is equally disastrous.

Between 1988 and 1999, Pakistan's rate of economic growth averaged a little over half of India's.¹⁰ In terms of growth in GNP per capita, the difference was even more pronounced. Given Pakistan's considerably higher population growth rate, India's GNP per capita growth rate was four times higher each year.¹¹ In the same period, the percentage of population below the line of poverty roughly doubled in Pakistan.¹² In India, the absolute magnitude of poverty remained a cause of concern, but the percentage of those below the poverty line declined.

The comparison on education, too, brings no favor to Pakistan. Following Amartya Sen, a lot of Indians are justifiably critical of their country's educational performance. But if the comparison is with Pakistan, Indian performance begins to look quite good. In 2003, Pakistan's rate of adult literacy was roughly 49 percent, India's 61 percent.¹³ In 2003, only 35 percent of Pakistan's adult women were literate; in India, the proportion was 48 percent. Thus, India's literacy profile also shows a considerable gender imbalance, but the gender gap in Pakistan is virtually unparalleled. In Asia, only Nepal and Bangladesh have lower female literacy rates, and Bangladesh seems to be quickly catching up with Pakistan.

Finally, and most critically of all, in the 1990s, development spending in Pakistan's budget fell dramatically, but defense spending increased.¹⁴ As Noman noted in 2001: "Pakistan is part of an arms race that it can ill afford. Others engaged in it have rising incomes and lowering poverty."¹⁵ A preoccupation with defense and security became one of the principal reasons for Pakistan's economic and social failures. In a declining economic scenario, the more it spent on defense, the less it had for developmental expenditures. The poor masses paid a high price for Pakistan's search for military parity with India.

By 2000–2001, for all practical purposes, the Pakistani state had become a national security state, caring about and paying attention to little else. It faced roughly the same dilemma that the Soviet Union did in the 1980s: namely, could an economically declining Pakistan continue to play the game of military parity with an economically resurgent India, just as the Soviets did with the United States? Luckily, the economic turnaround appears to have begun, and an Indo-Pak peace process, with all its hiccups, has also been under way. Assuming that these two newer trends continue, the question—will Pakistan implode the way the Soviet Union did?—will no longer be relevant. The pos-

sibility of state implosion was premised upon an unending hostility with India and a continued economic stagnation. Of course, if Pakistan's economic fortunes falter again, the older questions will come back with considerable force and intensity.

If the conditions of the 1980s and 1990s leading to Pakistan's decline are transparently clear and have been written about at length,¹⁶ what about the underlying reasons? Is there a prism through which we can view the political evolution of Pakistan right since its birth as a nation? Is there a set of central ideas that facilitates linking the various problems, which may otherwise appear to be dauntingly formless?

Since its birth in 1947, Islam and anti-Indianism have been the two master narratives of Pakistan's polity. Islam itself has taken two forms: as a cultural idea, and as a religious one. But in both forms, Islam's power to unite Pakistan's disparate communities has fallen short. In the end, anti-Indianism, albeit suffused with a touch of ambivalence, has turned out to be a stronger uniting force.

India's cultural life and heroes have always been a source of attraction in Pakistan, just as many of Pakistani cultural icons have traveled remarkably well in India. Many personal friendships across the border have also blossomed. But these notes of social or personal warmth have never overpowered the reasons of the state. Islam could have been a binding and positive force for Pakistan, if only it had greater plausibility. Anti-Indianism, as a consequence, becomes a default option for national cohesion. For reasons discussed later, the Indian state has had to rely less on an anti-Pakistan impulse.

Islam: Culture or Religion?

It is sometimes suggested that yet another discussion of Jinnah's two-nation theory simply fatigues Pakistanis and reduces the possibility of a fruitful discussion about how to improve relations between Indian and Pakistan. The underlying logic of this assertion is that an attack on the founding principles of a state is no way to build warmth and civility.

Whatever the validity of this position from a *policy* perspective, it is a nonstarter from an *analytic* perspective. It is not clear how to begin an analysis of Pakistan's political evolution without a discussion of the two-nation theory. Many of Pakistan's past and ongoing troubles are intimately tied up with Jinnah's argument about why two nations—India and Pakistan—were needed in the first place.

In its original formulation, South Asian Islam—as a cultural, not a religious, idea—was to be the core of Pakistan's national identity. Pak-

istan was born as a Muslim state, not as an Islamic one. With the exception of one clerical school (the Barelvis), all schools of Islamic theology in British India were opposed to the idea of Pakistan. Theologically, Islam provided the foundation for an *umma*, an international community, not a national one. Moreover, the clerics found the idea of an utterly westernized leader, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, leading the Muslims of South Asia quite preposterous.

Jinnah, indeed, had no patience for an Islamic state, or for the clerics. In the famous Lahore Resolution of 1940, which became the intellectual bedrock of Pakistan, his argument was cultural:

Islam and Hinduism . . . are not religions in the strict sense of the word, but are in fact different and distinct social orders. . . . [T]hey belong to two different civilizations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. . . . They have different epics, (and) their heroes are different. . . . Very often, the hero of one is the foe of the other and likewise their victories and defeats overlap.¹⁷

The Muslims, according to this doctrine, could not expect fairness and justice in an independent India, where the Hindus, their adversaries, would constitute a majority. Muslims had to build a political roof over their cultural heads, and take full control of their destinies. They were not simply a religious, but a distinct cultural and national, community.

The two-nation theory, of course, did not go uncontested. Reading Indian history differently, Maulana Azad, another Muslim stalwart of the first half of the twentieth century, a scholar of religious texts, and a leader of the Congress Party, vigorously argued that being a Muslim did not require denial of Indian heritage.

I am a Muslim and proud of that fact. Islam's splendid traditions of thirteen hundred years are my inheritance. . . . In addition, I am proud of being an Indian. I am part of the indivisible unity that is Indian nationality. . . .

It was India's historic destiny that many human races and cultures and religious faiths should flow to her, and that many a caravan should find rest here. . . . One of the last of these caravans was that of the followers of Islam. . . .

. . . Eleven centuries have passed by since then. Islam has now as great a claim on the soil of India as Hinduism. If Hinduism has been the religion of the people here for several

thousand years, Islam has also been their religion for a thousand years. . . .

Eleven hundred years of common history have enriched India with our common achievement. Our languages, our poetry, our literature, our culture, our art, our dress, our manners and customs, the innumerable happenings of our daily life, everything bears the stamp of our joint endeavour. There is indeed no aspect of our life, which has escaped this stamp.¹⁸

That Jinnah's argument did not fully succeed has, in retrospect, become Pakistan's biggest structural problem as a nation. Jinnah simply could not win over the entire Muslim community of British India. It is arguable, though not entirely provable—counterfactuals rarely are—that if the two-nation theory had succeeded, Pakistan would have overcome its anti-Indianism over time. The success of the two-nation theory could well have become a source of psychological security. Nations not troubled about their identity are often less externally involved and more internally calm. Of course, whether the two-nation theory, given the serious internal cleavages of South Asian Muslims, would at all have succeeded is another matter. In that sense, Rushdie's point about insufficient imagination is right. Islam was used by Jinnah, among other things, to cover the internal diversities of Indian Muslims, but the divisions were too deep to remain hidden and dormant for long.¹⁹ Something other than Islam was needed for nation-building.

The two-nation theory has faced formidable challenges right since its birth. Facts on the ground have rarely given it a long and enduring moment of empirical comfort. To begin with, unlike India's freedom movement, in which Gandhi, Nehru, and the Congress Party had untiringly mobilized the masses for almost three decades, the political movement for Pakistan lasted a mere seven years before the movement—for a whole variety of reasons—acquired a state of its own in 1947. Few nations in the world have had such short gestation periods. Muslim masses were not mobilized on behalf of the theory; only the tiny Muslim middle classes of British India were. The Muslim League, leading the Pakistan movement, did handsomely win Muslim endorsement in the last election (1946) of British India, but the franchise at that time was strictly confined to the educated and the propertied. No reasonable statistical imputations would put the number of Muslim voters at significantly more than 10–12 percent of the total Muslim population in 1946. Essentially, the nation of Pakistan came into being even before its mass base was established

The followers of the two-nation theory sometimes use the horrific violence during India's partition as evidence that Hindus and Muslims could not live with each other and the two-nation theory had mass legitimacy, not simply the approval of educated and propertied Muslims. Why otherwise would so many Hindus and Muslims brutally kill each other? This argument is a *non sequitur*. It derives causes from consequences. The violence only proved that once partition was accepted, unspeakable havoc was unleashed on the masses, even though they had little to do with its creation. Postpartition violence cannot demonstrate that partition was a voluntary choice of the Muslim masses on an ideational, or ideological, basis.

As India and Pakistan commenced their independent journeys, the two-nation theory received further blows. The unwillingness of the highly popular Muslim leaders of a Muslim-majority Kashmir, stalwarts such as Sheikh Abdullah, to join Pakistan was the first crippling disappointment;²⁰ and the reasonable success of India as a democracy under Nehru in the 1950s, despite the odds against such a success raised by the violent horrors of partition, increasingly suggested the viability of a multireligious India. It was, moreover, an India that seemed quite comfortable with a constitutional and democratic framework of politics. In contrast, Pakistan found it impossible even to devise a constitution until 1956, and in the first of several iterations of the same phenomenon, the 1956 constitution was abrogated in 1958. Finally, the first national multiparty elections in Pakistan could not be held until the late 1960s. India had had four national elections by then.

In 1972, the birth of a Muslim-majority Bangladesh as a nation, breaking away from Pakistan, wrote the epitaph of the two-nation theory. The presumed cohesion of the Muslims of British India was eaten away by their interminable inner conflicts and diversities. There was nothing surprising about this sad denouement. *South Asian Islam is fundamentally multicultural*. To emphasize the religious commonality and to suppress the cultural diversity under a religious banner was the kind of flattening of multiple identities that Bengali Muslims would not easily accept. They were not simply Muslim, but also proudly Bengali. Both parts of the identity were important and had to coexist.

The point, of course, is not confined to Bangladesh or Muslims. If Hindu nationalists try to turn India into a Hindu nation, a homeland only of the Hindus, they will also come to grief. Cultural identity envisioned as a religious identity is too narrow a view of culture for most people in South Asia, and too restrictive a view of identity. As Sen has argued, oversimplified singularities, if imposed by the elite from above,

can be a source of ghastly violence in a necessarily complex and multi-layered world of identities.²¹

The conduct of most Indian Muslims after 1947 has also been a living refutation of the theory. By fighting for India in the armed forces against Pakistan, and vigorously participating in the public sphere—sports, films, music, art, and business (especially in western and southern India)—India's Muslims have time and time again demonstrated that they do not have an adversarial relationship with the Indian nation. To be sure, the treatment of the Muslim minority in India is not entirely satisfactory; Muslims are more often than not the target of violence in riots, they are also among the most impoverished; and much can be done to improve matters.²² But the constitution, law, and politics continue to pay attention to Muslim concerns, and despite the attempts of Hindu nationalists to rewrite Indian history, the dominant interpretation of Indian history and culture continues to show that pluralism and syncretism marked India's social and religious identities.²³ Hindu-Muslim riots, often presented in Pakistan as indicative of an irreparable rift between the two communities and a sign of the Hindu oppression of Muslims, are highly localized in India, not a feature of Hindu-Muslim relations all over the country.²⁴

In the 1980s, the two-nation theory was given a new twist in Pakistan. President Zia, the then ruler of Pakistan, gave up Jinnah's idea of *Islam as culture*. Instead, *Islam as religion* became an explicit basis of state policy and conduct. Right through the first two decades of Pakistan's existence, the relationship of Islamic religiosity and the state was shot through with profound ambivalence. A religious man himself, Zia decided to end that.

The most exhaustive account yet of Pakistan state's functioning in the 1980s (as also later in the 1990s) suggests the following developments: a rising Islamic presence in the army, an institution that used to be historically secular; a striking inability of the armed forces to concede power to the civilians, except under great mass political pressure or external duress, especially from the United States; and the emergence of multiple centers of power, some committed to Islamism, others to secular anti-Indianism, and still others seeking to combine the two.²⁵ The state under President Zia systematically promoted Islamism within the state, the legal structures, the armed forces, the intelligence apparatus, and the nation's education system.²⁶

Even this religious turn was unable to repair deep social divisions. First, riding on the argument that those who led the movement for Pakistan, Muslims from India during the 1940s, were being treated

shabbily in the nation they had created, a powerful Muhajir movement emerged in Sindh. The movement took a violent turn, reducing Karachi, the nation's commercial capital, into a city virtually perpetually on the boil, and leading to a huge loss of lives. Second, the Shia-Sunni divide became deeper and violent. The militia of both religious sects got locked into a cycle of reprisal and counterreprisals, a cycle from which they have yet to emerge fully.²⁷ Finally, blessed by the United States, which was fighting Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, and promoted by the Pakistani state under the religiously driven policies of General Zia, large organizations of armed religious militants were born, acquiring muscle, protection, and ambition. First they sought to throw out the unbelieving Communists from Afghanistan, and then they turned their guns toward Kashmir, where India's shortsighted policies had led to an internal rebellion. What has come to be called religious terrorism was born in such circumstances in Pakistan, and its impact is still being felt. As far as the official policy pronouncements go, the Pakistani state has fought these groups, but it is also clear that such groups had the support of many at the upper echelons of the Pakistani state. Instead of developing a coherent purpose, the state became Janus-faced.²⁸ It is too early to say that the government formed after the 2008 elections has fundamentally transformed the two-sided character of the state's functioning.

In short, both the cultural and religious interpretations of Islam have been insufficient for national unity. Anti-Indianism has ipso facto become a much larger source for national cohesion. Compared to Islam, a struggle with India over Kashmir simply brings out greater national purpose, uniting both those who are driven by a religious impulse and those not religiously inclined.

Anti-Indianism

Pakistani scholars and intellectuals have often commented that it was Jinnah's belief that once Pakistan came into existence, peace between India and Pakistan would be the natural state of affairs. That this did not happen is sometimes ascribed to India's implacable hostility to Pakistan as a separate and independent state, an attitude that, according to these scholars, goes back to India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru. By this logic, Pakistan's anti-Indianism is a reactive phenomenon, nothing more.

For most Indians, this argument has always lacked credibility. If Nehru could not be trusted to deliver, who could be? That Nehru was fundamentally opposed to the two-nation theory did not mean he was also hostile to the nation born out of a Congress-Muslim League agree-

ment to which he was party. Nor was hostility toward Pakistan in Nehru's interest. Containing communalism in India was one of the abiding features of Nehru's political project. Peace with Pakistan aided that project; hostility did not. That was certainly true in the circumstances of the 1950s and early 1960s.

In the end, the issue is not whether Nehru was trustworthy, or any of the other Indian leaders were, or what for that matter their attitudes were. *A certain level of anti-Indianism is written into the psychological and historical foundations of Pakistan.* It is not a matter of will or volition. There was always an India, culturally, if not politically, and there was never a Pakistan before 1947. At best, we can stretch the idea of Pakistan—culturally and politically—back to the thoughts of the great poet Iqbal in the late 1920s and early 1930s.²⁹

The relative historical infancy of the idea of Pakistan has serious implications: Pakistan draws one its primary rationales from the argument that it is *not India*. India's freedom movement did not break away from Pakistan; the Pakistan movement sought separation from India, arguing an independent India would be unfair and unjust to Muslims and be inevitably inclined toward Hindu majoritarianism, despite the protestations of India's leading political figures to the contrary. Given this background, Pakistan's history books, its statecraft, and its attempts at building a national consciousness had to reflect the assumption that went into the birth of Pakistan. Stated differently, take away anti-Indianism, and Pakistan as a nation loses a key component of its national identity, if not the only component, and a principal pillar of its national cohesion, if not the only pillar. Maintaining hostility toward India was a fairly natural mode of nation-building.

Pakistani intellectuals often find the line between anti-Indianism and nation-building troubling or unacceptable. We should however note that this process is not altogether unique. Historical scholarship shows that several nations in Europe were also built this way. In her pathbreaking work, Colley has argued that without a Catholic France as enemy, it would have been enormously difficult to bring the Scots, Welsh, and English together into a British nation.³⁰

The Scottish-English relationship was adversarial right until the middle of the eighteenth century. The Scots and the English, Colley argues, "came to define themselves as a single people not because of any political or cultural consensus at home, but rather in reaction to the Other beyond their shores."³¹ Further, "Time and time again, war with France brought Britons, whether they hailed from Wales or Scotland or England, into a confrontation with an obviously hostile Other and encouraged them to define themselves against it. They defined

themselves as Protestants struggling for survival against the world's foremost Catholic power."³²

Pakistan's nation-building problems, thus, have historical parallels. The key difference, of course, is that Britain was not nuclear in the eighteenth century, nor was France. India and Pakistan simply cannot wait as long as Britain and France did to manage their enmity, while fighting wars in the interim.

Except when it is under a Hindu nationalist domination, India does not need an antithetical attitude toward Pakistan to justify its nationhood. In its founding ideology, it was envisioned as a multireligious, multicultural nation. Living a multireligious, multicultural ideal has not been easy, as it rarely is, and there are still battles to be fought, especially against the Hindu nationalist conception of India. But by all comparative standards, India's multiculturalism is at the very least a half-success.³³

A Different Future?

Is the integral link between anti-Indianism and Pakistan's national identity a reason for despair? Surprising as it may seem, the link lends itself to some ideas for peace.³⁴

To begin with, we need an alternative imagination. The new imagination should not be diametrically opposed to the history of Pakistan, or it will be stillborn. Lohia socialists in India have always talked of an India-Pakistan *mahasangh*, a sort of loose binational confederation. Many citizen groups also think that if the state could somehow be plucked out of the way, uninterrupted peace and friendship will descend. These romantic notions have no possibility of life in the real world. The state will not wither away; groups that substantially derive their power and status from anti-Indianism, the military and the religious organizations, will not disappear.

How, then, should we rethink? A paradox that has remained mostly unexplored, or has at best been at the periphery of intellectual debates, is in need of resurrection. *The relative improbability of friendship between the two states should be the foundation of peace initiatives, not the expectation of profound warmth or intimacy.* The potency of anti-Indianism in the very existence of Pakistani state must be seen as a constant, not as a variable. Individuals in India and Pakistan can be friends, but the two states cannot develop bracing warmth, only working civility, in the foreseeable future. Peace between India and Pakistan should not be conceptualized as the dawn of friendship; it should simply be seen as

the end of hostilities. If anti-Indianism, more than Islam, brings Pakistan's many and fractious political and ethnic groups together, it is pointless to try to force artificial cordiality between the two nations. It will not last. We have to recognize that Indo-Pak cordiality threatens the basic foundations of two hugely powerful groups in Pakistan, the armed forces and the religious organizations.

For peace to move more resolutely forward, the power of these groups first has to be curbed. Short of defeats in war, unthinkable in a nuclear South Asia, only democracy can restrain the power of these groups in Pakistan. Civilian politicians in the past may have brought disrepute to themselves, but military rule is no solution to Pakistan's fundamental problems. More than half of Pakistan's independent life has been spent under military rule, and Pakistan's search for prosperity, international status, and political coherence is still nowhere close to fruition. In 2008, another democratic opening has emerged. Religious political parties have been defeated, and the military is on the defensive. Democracy in Pakistan will continue to disempower these two groups. The critical issue is whether democracy will last.

Second, the alternative idea for the rebuilding of Pakistan should not depart fundamentally from its founding imagination, however insufficient the original version was. The trick is to reinvent a different version of the same idea. Pakistan needs to reimagine, and institutionalize, India-Pakistan rivalry as a thoroughgoing *competition*, not as a do-or-die *conflict*. A distinction needs to be drawn between two terms: adversaries and enemies. Adversaries can be respected, even admired; enemies are killed. India and Pakistan must cease to be enemies; they need to become adversaries competing vigorously to become better than the other.

Is this simply a logical and conceptual distinction, or are there some real-world models that come to mind? After the peace summit of 1999 between India's prime minister Vajpayee and Pakistan's prime minister Nawaz Sharif, a summit that laid the foundation of the current peace process, Haqqani writes, "Sharif voiced the hope, first expressed by Pakistan's founder Muhammad Ali Jinnah days before partition, that 'Pakistan and India will be able to live as the United States and Canada.'"³⁵

Haqqani did not elaborate any further on this insight, but the idea of U.S.-Canadian relations as a model for India and Pakistan is both intriguing and one potentially filled with imaginative as well as pragmatic possibilities. And the fact that Jinnah apparently thought of it gives it a usable authenticity for Pakistan's future restructuration.

As we know, a certain level of anti-Americanism is part of Canada's national psyche: Canada, says a Canadian writer, "seeks to

unify its chronically fractured sense of nationhood in opposition to the United States.”³⁶ Yet the resentments have always coexisted with admiration for the United States. An oft-cited survey showed that 70 percent of Canadians like the United States and only 15 percent completely dislike the United States and its people.³⁷

Moreover, Canadians never cease to take pride in what makes them different from the United States: a national health insurance system, reflecting a society that is more compassionate than the United States, where as of April 2008, 40–45 million citizens were without health insurance; a model of nation-building consciously defined as a mosaic, not as a melting pot, as in the United States; a commitment to multilateralism in foreign policy; laws showing greater environmental consciousness than in the United States; greater secularism as opposed to the well-known religiosity of the United States; a pacific tradition as against the muscular and martial fervor often evident in the U.S. public discourse and foreign policy. Every now and then, an economic discovery that beats competition in the United States, such as the invention of the BlackBerry, can also be part of that pride, but Canadians know that their economy has not been as inventive as that of the United States. That, however, has not undermined their national image, for there are so many other ways of seeking difference and taking pride in achievements.

Finally, Canada has the kind of anti-Americanism that has not come in the way of either Canadian prosperity or economic relations with the United States. “A truck crosses the US-Canadian border every 2.5 seconds. Approximately, \$1.3 billion in two-way trade crosses the border every day—or \$500 billion a year. More than 200 million two-way border crossings occur yearly, making the shared border the busiest international boundary in the world.”³⁸

Peace in South Asia requires a threefold strategy: (a) commitment of both India and Pakistan to the various modes of crisis management, without expecting an absence of crises; (b) institutionalization of democracy in Pakistan; (c) the rechanneling of the anti-Indian aspects of Pakistan’s identity in a positive direction. The first part of the strategy, the main thrust of international diplomatic action in recent years, is about firefighting; the second and third parts, not yet the main thrust, are about a long-run strategy for reducing the probability that fires will break out.

The U.S.-Canadian relationship offers a model for the long-term vision. Military victories are not the only way for a nation to raise its international profile and gain a sense of security. A competitive fervor in various spheres of life—cultural, economic, intellectual, social—is a

win-win game, from which both nations can benefit. In contrast, military competition normally leads to a zero-sum game. The victory of one is the defeat of the other. Pakistan wants a Muslim-majority Kashmir because that way it can avenge the loss of Bangladesh and redeem pride. A victory in Kashmir would also, partially if not fully, restore the badly wounded two-nation theory.

We know, however, that India will not abandon Kashmir, for the loss of Kashmir, its only Muslim-majority state, will seriously undermine India’s multireligious foundations and make India’s Muslims highly vulnerable to a Hindu right-wing hysteria. The latter is a source of embarrassment to Indian liberals, but politics on such highly charged matters is rarely, if ever, driven by liberalism or by the normative excellence of ideas. Faced with hysteria on nation-making or nation-breaking, liberals are often helpless.

Be that as it may, with nuclear weapons on both sides, the battle over Kashmir is no longer “winnable.” It is almost certain to be a stalemate, while the costs, economic and human, of a low-intensity conflict can only mount. This does not mean that for the sake of nuclear realism, the status quo in Kashmir should be maintained. At a minimum, a political regime more hospitable to human rights in Jammu and Kashmir and greater movement of Kashmiris across the line of control are necessary. But that is very different from changing existing lines of sovereignty.

The withering experience of the latest round of military rule in Pakistan is causing much rethinking in policy and intellectual circles. The message that needs to be emphasized is that Pakistan should keep trying to defeat India in other spheres of life, not on the military battlefield. This requires not only a continued economic recovery and expansion, but also, among other things, building a credible mainstream school system—to neutralize the attraction of madrasas and to nurture twenty-first-century skills in Pakistani youth. For long-term national renewal, Pakistan’s education system, badly neglected thus far, requires careful attention. India also has its educational problems, but they are not as serious.

A security obsession with India has thrown Pakistan into such a profound political and economic abyss that its leadership needs to think afresh. Despite security concerns, Indian economy has been booming for quite some time and its democracy also continues to function, but in Pakistan a preoccupation with security has seriously hurt the economic development process and has, even more critically, led to awfully weak-end political institutions, raising fears of state failure. Pakistan’s Indian obsession has become utterly self-destructive.

For peace in the subcontinent, Pakistan needs to reinvent the na-

ture of its anti-Indianness, not abandon its anti-Indianness per se. This idea for peace recognizes Pakistan's structural need for an adversary for national cohesion in the foreseeable future, but it also seeks to link that need to mass welfare. Pakistani masses have paid an awful price for the obsession of their state with security. They deserve better.

NOTES

This chapter was put through an online seminar by Lloyd Rudolph. The discussion was vigorous. I am especially grateful to Anis Dani, Husain Haqqani, Vali Nasr, Lloyd Rudolph, and Maya Tudor for their comments.

1. *Shame* (New York: Picador, 1983), 92. For another discussion of the theme of insufficient imagination, see Philip Oldenburg, "A Place Insufficiently Imagined? Language, Belief, and the Pakistan Crisis of 1971," *Journal of Asian Studies* 44, no. 4 (1985): 711–33.

2. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

3. "The Failed State Index," *Foreign Policy*, May–June 2006. Also see the collection of articles under the heading "State Failure" in *National Interest*, March–April 2008.

4. For expressions of deep anxiety, see Owen Bennet Jones, *Pakistan: Eye of the Storm* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002); and Hassan Abbas, *Pakistan's Drift into Extremism* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2005).

5. Peter R. deSouza, "Political Trust, Institutions, and Democracy in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka," paper prepared for the World Bank conference "Rethinking Social Policy in the Developing and Transition Economies," Arusha, Tanzania, December 12–15, 2005; Lloyd Rudolph and Susanne Rudolph, "Re-doing the Constitutional Design: From an Interventionist to a Regulatory State," in *The Success of India's Democracy*, ed. Atul Kohli (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

6. Sometimes, the incapacity of the state to provide basic education and health to its citizens is also defined as an essential component of state failure. If we define state failure so broadly, India is also a failed state. India's educational and health record, though not as bad as Pakistan's, is rather poor. Such broad definitions typically do not go to the core of the problem.

7. DeSouza, "Political Institutions."

8. For a succinct overview of the role of the army in Pakistan's politics, see Stephen Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2004), chap. 3.

9. For a detailed and insightful account, see Husain Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and Military* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005), chap. 4.

10. Growth was 3.6 percent per year for Pakistan as compared to 6.9 percent for India in the same period. Unless otherwise indicated, the statistics for the 1990s come from United Nations Development Programme's *Human Development Report*

2000 and the World Bank's *World Development Report 2000/2001*, both published by Oxford University Press. It is generally believed that compared to India, Pakistan's economy did much better roughly till the mid-1980s. It was also sometimes postulated that Pakistan had the potential to become an "economic tiger." See Omar Noman, *Economic and Social Progress in South Asia: Why Pakistan Did Not Become a Tiger* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

11. For Pakistan the per capita income growth was 1.2 percent per year, for India 4.5 percent. Moreover, despite being roughly at the same per capita income level as India in the 1980s and 1990s, Pakistan saved and invested very little. Pakistan had a savings rate of 12.7 percent of GDP and an investment rate of 17.1 percent in 1998; for India, the figures were 20.9 percent and 23.6 percent respectively.

12. The proportion below the poverty line in Pakistan rose from 17.3 percent in 1987 to nearly 32.6 percent in 1998.

13. These figures are from *Human Development Report 2005*.

14. In 1991, in nominal terms, development spending was 9.5 billion rupees and the defense spending 7.5 billion rupees. By 1999, in nominal terms again, development spending had barely risen to 9.8 billion rupees, but defense expenditures had climbed up to a whopping 14.3 billion rupees. In real terms, development spending fell from 28 percent of GDP in 1991 to almost its half, 15 percent in 1999. The statistics are from Omar Noman, "Economy of Conflict: The Consequences for Human Security in a Fragile Muslim Society," paper presented at the Asia Society, New York, October 16, 2001.

15. Noman, "Economy of Conflict."

16. The most recent account is Haqqani, *Pakistan*.

17. Jamil-ud-Din Ahmed, ed, *Some Recent Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah* (Lahore: Ashraf, 1952), 1:138.

18. Maulana Azad's speech as president of the Congress Party in 1940, reproduced in *Sources of Indian Tradition*, ed. Stephen Jay, 2nd ed. (New Delhi: Penguin, 1991), 2:237–41.

19. That Islam was simply a strategic device for Jinnah is an argument forcefully made by Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

20. For details, Ashutosh Varshney, "India, Pakistan and Kashmir: Antinomies of Nationalism," *Asian Survey*, November 1991.

21. Amartya Sen, *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2006).

22. See Sachar Committee Report, *Social, Economic and Educational Status of the Muslim Community of India* (Delhi: Government of India, 2006).

23. As forcefully argued by Amartya Sen, *The Argumentative Indian* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005).

24. Ashutosh Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life: Hindus and Muslims in India* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

25. Haqqani, *Pakistan*.

26. Also relevant here is the argument by made by Nasr that Malaysia and Pakistan were faced with rising Islamism from below roughly at the same time. Pakistan under Zia embraced the religious extremists, and eventually ran the nation's economy down; Malaysia under Mahathir embraced moderate Islam, and took

Malaysia toward great economic success. Nasr's claim is that Islamism and economic success can be combined. Much depends on what kind of Islam the state elects to promote. See Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *Islamic Leviathan: Islam and the Making of State Power* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

27. For an insightful analysis of Pakistan's Shia-Sunni violence, see Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, "International Politics, Domestic Imperatives, and Identity Mobilization: Sectarianism in Pakistan, 1979–1998," *Comparative Politics* 32, no. 2 (January 2000): 171–90.

28. See Haqqani, *Pakistan*, chap. 7.

29. Some take it all the way back to Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and his creation of the Aligarh College. That is conceptually incorrect. Aligarh may have been the institutional centerpiece of the Pakistan movement, but Sir Syed was essentially a prenational thinker. His attempt was to ensure that after the British suppression of the 1857 mutiny, which symbolized the end of Mughal rule in Delhi, the Muslim community, by which he nearly always meant *Muslim aristocrats*, did not decline any further. Modern education, he argued, was the tool for arresting aristocratic decline. There was no room for *poor Muslims* in his conceptualization of Muslim progress. The quest for Pakistan as a separate nation, thus, cannot be linked to Sir Syed, even if the institution he created ended up playing such an important role in the making of Pakistan. Historically, as Benedict Anderson has powerfully reminded us, nationalism was fundamentally opposed to the preexisting dynastic forms of rule and privilege. It sought a more horizontal notion of political community, which aristocrats typically fought against.

30. Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1992). In addition to France as an enemy, Colley adds two more factors to British nation-making: profits from trade and British empire. For the Scots especially, she argues, the colonies were extremely important: "A British imperium . . . enabled Scots to feel themselves peers of the English in a way . . . denied them in an island kingdom" (129–30).

31. Colley, *Britons*, 6.

32. Colley, *Britons*, 5.

33. For the links between multiculturalism and Indian federalism, see Amit Ahuja and Ashutosh Varshney, "Antecedent Nationhood, Subsequent Statehood: Explaining the Relative Success of Indian Federalism," in *Sustainable Peace*, ed. Philip Roeder and Donald Rothchild (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2005).

34. For some other recent discussions of the future of Pakistan, see Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan*, chap. 8; and Haqqani, *Pakistan*, chap. 8.

35. Haqqani, *Pakistan*, 249. The last line in the Haqqani passage is quoted from a report filed by the *Washington Post's* reporter present on the occasion: Kenneth Cooper, "India, Pakistan Kindle Hope for Peace," *Washington Post*, February 21, 1999.

36. Dan Dunskey, "Canada's Three Solitudes," *National Interest*, Winter 2005–6.

37. Dunskey, "Canada's Three Solitudes," 96.

38. Dunskey, "Canada's Three Solitudes," 94.

HUSAIN HAQQANI

Inhospitable Homeland

Salman Rushdie and Pakistan

I think a commonplace experience of the migrant is the need to dispense with [the] idea of home. You simply have to do without it.

—Salman Rushdie

Of all the countries Salman Rushdie could have called home, Pakistan is clearly his least favorite. For their part, most Pakistanis also make it clear that they do not like Rushdie. Islamist hardliners in Pakistan were the first to agitate against *Satanic Verses*, and their violent protests against the book, egged on by the country's intelligence service, preceding the unfortunately famous fatwa against Rushdie issued by Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini. Pakistan's vernacular press often described, and continues to describe, Rushdie as "Shaitan Rushdie," substituting for his first name the Urdu-Arabic term for Satan.

Two of Rushdie's novels, *Midnight's Children* and *Shame*, directly deal with Pakistan. The first uses the backdrop of the partition of India that led to Pakistan's creation, while the second deals with the evolution of Pakistan as a deeply flawed, nuclear-armed, Islamic state. Rushdie has commented on Pakistan in several nonfiction articles and essays as well as in numerous interviews. Communalism is the curse of the South Asian subcontinent in his view—"the politics of religious hatred"¹—and to him Pakistan is both a product of communalism as well as an entity that has exacerbated manifestations of communal sentiment across the region.

Pakistan invites Rushdie's ridicule, and he is by no means the only intellectual to question the rationale for Pakistan as well as what it has become. Even in 1947, Indian and Western intellectuals were either openly hostile or lukewarm to partition. *Time* magazine, while reporting on the independence of India and Pakistan, wrote that "Pakistan was the creation of one clever man, Jinnah" and compared it unfavorably to the "mass movement" leading to India's independence. The dominant Indian narrative of independence speaks of Pakistan's creation as a tragedy.

There are several contradictions in Pakistan's history that justifiably