PROTEST FOR THE PROPHET: THE PRODUCTION AND PERFORMANCE OF THE ANTI-AHMADI MOVEMENT

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Shayan Rajani

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ADVISERS:
Ayesha Jalal
Kris Manjapra

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Introduction

On September 7, 1974, the National Assembly of Pakistan unanimously amended the constitution to deny the Ahmadi community legal standing as Muslims. Most Ahmadis believed in the prophethood of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, a nineteenth century religious reformer from the Punjab. Many had come to see this belief as an affront to Muhammad's status as khatm-i-nubuwwat or seal of the prophets, which is predominantly, although not universally, interpreted to mean that Muhammad was God's last prophet.[1] With the passage of the Second Amendment, this predominant interpretation was enshrined in the constitution.

In his speech on that day, Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto insisted, "This is a religious issue. It is a decision affecting our faith and it is a decision of the whole House, of the entire nation."[2] His statement was a mischaracterization on two counts. The issue of khatm-i-nubuwwat was not "purely religious."[3] Nor was the amendment simply a result of formal political process in the National Assembly. In fact, Bhutto had been strong-armed into passing the amendment by the anti-Ahmadi movement.

The anti-Ahmadi movement was an initiative to coordinate efforts by activists from the lower-middle class to gain a share of power within the institutions of the state on the basis of defending the Prophet. Since colonial times, the Punjabi Muslim lower middle class had been denied a share of power and patronage within

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[1] For an early history of the movement, see Spencer Lavan, *The Ahmadiyah Movement: A History and Perspective* (Delhi: Manohar Book Service, 1974).
[2] Pakistan, *The National Assembly of Pakistan Debates: Official Report*, vol. V, no. 39 (Karachi: Manager of Publications, 1974), 569.
[3] Pakistan, *National Assembly of Pakistan Debates*, vol. V, no. 39, 566.

the state. In the 1930s, where the anti-Ahmadi movement has its origins, many members of these intermediate strata of society were on the edges of colonial politics and economy. Some had secured low-level government jobs but most were part of the bazaar economy. They worked as artisans, ran small shops and businesses, or provided related services like those of religious specialists. While they had a stake in the system, Muslims of these strata were shut out of electoral institutions that were rigged to favor the colonial government's rural collaborators. After independence, in Pakistan, too, they were prevented by elite politicians and the military-bureaucracy nexus, who alternately wielded state power.

In the past, South Asian historians have grappled with these exclusions of the state by turning away from state to write histories of the subaltern. However, as Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal have noted, this approach has led to the trap of "an uncritical celebration of the 'fragment.'"[4] This study of the anti-Ahmadi movement charts a different history of exclusion, where the excluded are able to manipulate the structures of the state to carve out new channels of power. Relying on these channels, which include recourse to the popular and the transnational, anti-Ahmadi activists are able to shape the very state that excluded them.[5]

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[4] Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal, *Modern South Asia: History, Culture, Political Economy* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 6.

[5] This study builds on Ayesha Jalal's crucial insight about the importance of the informal arena of politics in influencing formal politics and the state. Ayesha Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam since 1850* (London: Routledge, 2000), 262-300. This study also benefits from recent works on transnational networks where excluded Indian activists found new platforms to pursue their causes. See Kris Manjapra, *M. N. Roy: Marxism and Colonial Cosmopolitanism* (Delhi: Routledge India, 2010); Seema Alavi, "'Fugitive Mullahs and Outlawed Fanatics': Indian Muslims in Nineteenth Century Trans-Asiatic Imperial Rivalries," *Modern Asian Studies*, 45, no. 6 (2011): 1337-82.

This work focuses on three moments when anti-Ahmadi activists confronted those holding state power. First, between 1931 and 1934, the Majlis-e-Ahrar-e-Islam, an anti-colonial Punjabi Muslim party, arrived at the anti-Ahmadi movement as a means to mobilize their lower middle class constituency against the landed elite in power.[6] The ostensibly religious form of its contentious performances allowed the Ahrar to circumvent government restrictions on their activities.[7] They discovered the advantages of exploiting the somewhat arbitrary colonial dichotomy between religious activity, which was to be largely free of government interference, and political activity, which was to be closely controlled and monitored.[8]

Historians have shown that the colonial government crossed this line at its convenience and its actions and policies continued to shape its subjects' religion.[9] In postcolonial Pakistan, where the state continued to uphold this dichotomy, the Ahrar were able to transgress in the other direction. Operating as a religious organization between 1949 and 1953, they developed popular forms of piety and patriotism and a new means of mass mobilization based on anti-Ahmadi contentious performance. However, the government was willing to tolerate religious contentious

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[6] For a history of the Ahrar, see, Samina Awan, *Political Islam in Colonial Punjab: Majlis-i Ahrar 1929-1949* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2010).
[7] For a theoretical and sociological treatment of contentious performances, see Tilly, *Contentious Performances* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
[8] This dichotomy had its origins in Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858, which spelled out a policy of government neutrality in matters of religion. See "Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858," in *Indian Constitutional Documents, 1773-1915*, Panchanandas Mukherji (Calcutta: Thacker Spink & Co., 1915).
[9] See Gregory C. Kozlowski, *Muslim Endowments and Society in British India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Nicholas Dirks, *Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Asad Ahmed, "Adjudicating Muslims: Law, Religion and the State in Colonial India and Post-Colonial Pakistan" (PhD diss., The University of Chicago, 2006), ProQuest (AAT 3231372).

performance only as long as it did not threaten it directly. In 1953, when the anti-Ahmadi movement mobilized against the government, demanding that Ahmadis be constitutionally declared non-Muslims, the government suppressed the movement and banned the Ahrar.

The final confrontation between the anti-Ahmadi activists and the government was in 1974. This time they had behind them not only a means for mass mobilization but also the backing of a transnational network of religious scholars and their patron, Saudi Arabia. This network, in which they had become active since the 1960s, offered anti-Ahmadi activists another channel of power outside the structures of the state. Bhutto, who had recently reoriented Pakistan's foreign policy towards Saudi Arabia, yielded to the combined pressure of mobilization at home and pressure from abroad and passed the Second Amendment. The anti-Ahmadi movement supported by the intermediate strata, was able to shape the state, which had long excluded them.

That this excluded section of society ultimately forced the state to effect another exclusion—that of the Ahmadi community—is the tragic conclusion of this story, especially since the movement failed to create greater space for members of the intermediate strata within the structures of the state. However, both these conclusions were latent in the form of a movement, which demanded exclusion of Ahmadis from the Muslim community rather than asking for the inclusion of its constituency in the arms of the state. This, in turn, was partly a result of being forced to work from the religious rather than political domain. It was also a result of a

tradition of arriving at Muslim unity and coordination on the basis of a common enemy, a tradition that predated the anti-Ahmadi movement.

The quest for unity is a central theme in the history of Indian Muslims, who constantly struggled to bridge the divide between the ideal of a united community and the reality of numerous fissures that divided them.[10] While historically, Muslims have found it hard to rally around a common religious or political leader, rallying against a common enemy has yielded better results. As the figure of Muhammad became increasingly central for Muslims, the common enemy became he who casts aspersions on the Prophet.[11] In the late nineteenth century, this enemy was the Christian missionary. Mirza Ghulam Ahmad was a leading figure in these early efforts at producing grounds for cooperation among Muslims. In the second decade of the twentieth century, as the menace of Christian missionaries waned, Hindu polemicists filled the role of the common enemy. This basis for unity was finally supplanted by the anti-Ahmadi movement after Partition, when most Hindus in Pakistan's Punjab immigrated to India.

The figure of the Ahmadi stood in for more than the heretic or the defiler of the Prophet's reputation. As the anti-Ahmadi movement shifted from an anti-colonial to a national to a transnational movement, the figure of the Ahmadi came to

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[10] For works on this theme, see Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League, and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty*; Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982); Farzana Shaikh, *Community and Consensus in Islam: Muslim Representation in Colonial India, 1860-1947* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
[11] For a study of the figure of the Prophet in Islam, see Annemarie Schimmel, *And Muhammad is His Messenger: The Veneration of The Prophet in Islamic Piety* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985).

bear the additional significance of the elite, the traitor, and the Zionist agent. It was this multiplicity of meaning evoked by anti-Ahmadi discourse that allowed it to move beyond a religious movement and serve as a basis for social and political coordination at three different levels. At the grassroots, it served as a basis for social cohesion in the diverse urban lower middle class localities. At the political level, it offered a cause upon which rancorously divided political parties could come together. Finally, at the transnational level, it provided an issue for cooperation with religious intellectuals and activists from other countries. However, the unity engendered by the anti-Ahmadi movement tended to be unstable, weakening without an immediate perceived Ahmadi threat. Nevertheless, the possibility of unity that it offered and continues to hold out is an important reason for the movement's resilience.

The thesis is divided into four chapters. Chapter 1 looks at the belief and early history of Ahmadis so as to help distinguish them from the figure of the Ahmadi molded by anti-Ahmadi activists later. The chapter also follows the Ahmadis' transformation from a vanguard Muslim movement to an exclusionary but powerful community. Chapter 2 traces the Ahrar's career through the 1930s, when it arrived at the anti-Ahmadi movement. Chapter 3 examines the achievements and failures of the anti-Ahmadi campaign of 1949–53. Finally, Chapter 4 looks at the movement's turn to the transnational in the decades after 1953, when the excluded intermediate strata finally succeeded in enshrining its vision of the Muslim and the Pakistani in the constitution.

Chapter 1

Contesting Christianity

At the turn of the century, the Ahmadi movement was a leading light of religious reform, making its presence known in the Punjab and beyond. At the time, Christian missionary activity, which had exploded after the British conquest of the Punjab in 1849, was a thorn in the side of Punjabi Muslims.[1] Basharat Ahmad, an important Ahmadi leader, remembers Muslim students having fierce religious debates with their principal at mission school in Sialkot. But, he says, "On the issue of the Messiah being still alive and being superior to the Prophet Muhammad they could not stand up to the reverend … At last, the daily criticisms of Islam by the Christian clergymen resulted in my having doubts about the veracity of Islam."[2]

After 1877, Punjabi Hindus organized under the Arya Samaj and launched attacks on Christians, Sikhs, and Muslims, further exposing the inadequacy of Muslim response.[3] Hakim Nuruddin, who was to become the first khalifa of the Ahmadi movement, recalls that Muslim luminaries of those days "discuss[ed] such futile and almost blasphemous questions as the possibility or impossibility of God affirming a falsehood, so that they have no time left to silence the opponents of

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[1] For a history of Christian missionary efforts in India, see Avril Powell, *Muslims and Missionaries in Pre-Mutiny India* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 1993); Jeffrey Cox, *Imperial Fault Lines: Christianity and Colonial Power in India, 1818-1940* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002).
[2] Basharat Ahmad, "How I became an Ahmadi," *The Light*, November-December 1999, http://aaiil.org/text/biog/auto/basharatahmad.shtml.
[3] See Kenneth Jones, *Arya Dharm: Hindu Consciousness in 19th-Century Punjab* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976)

Islam and to frustrate their designs."[4] Thus, in the late nineteenth century, demoralization set in among those Punjabi Muslims who were in closest contact with their colonial masters. These men belonged to the landed elite who had been early supporters of colonial rule or were from a new generation of men serving the expanding colonial bureaucracy. They could not simply shrug off Christian missionary efforts, which put their faith and political allegiance at odds. The colonial government may have promised a policy of religious neutrality but it was this very official neutrality that made Christian missionary efforts possible.[5] Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's appeal to Punjabi Muslims at the turn of the century rested on his resolution of this conflict between faith and loyalism.

Ghulam Ahmad debuted in the realm of religious debate and contentious performance in the late 1870s, when he began to defend Islamic belief against Arya and Christian polemics in public debates and through the burgeoning print press. In 1880, he published *Barahin-i-Ahmadiyya*, an accomplished treatise that brought his arguments in favor of Islam and his critique of Aryas and Christians together. The book received glowing praise.[6] It was the first of over 60 books authored by Ghulam Ahmad in Urdu, Persian, and Arabic. His mastery of these forms of religious disputation soon established his reputation as a vigorous defender of Islam.

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[4] Nuruddin quoted in Zafrulla Khan, *Hadrat Maulawi Nur-ud-Din: Khalifatul Masih I* (Islam International Publications Limited, 2006), 72-73.
[5] See Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858. Panchanandas Mukherji, *Indian Constitutional Documents, 1773-1915* (Calcutta: Thacker Spink & Co., 1915).
[6] A.R. Dard, *Life of Ahmad: founder of the Ahmadiyya movement* (Islamabad: Islam International Publications, 1948), 98-99.

Scholars have noted that this process of religious contestation spurred religious reform and rationalization.[7] It also privileged religious texts as the sole authentic sources of 'correct' religion.[8] In his defense of Islam, Ghulam Ahmad, too, was engaged in religious reform, grounding his rebuttals of Christian missionaries in a reinterpretation of Islamic texts, the Quran and hadith. This emphasis on text also meant that thought and practice without textual sanction were recoded by Ghulam Ahmad as 'customary' or 'innovations' and rejected.[9]

Between 1883 and 1891, Ghulam Ahmad made increasingly audacious claims of charismatic authority. First, he claimed to be a mujaddid or a renewer of religion. Next, he asserted status as a muhaddath—someone spoken to by god. Then he declared himself masih mawud and mahdi, combining two apocalyptic figures from Islamic tradition in his own person. Finally, he laid claim to being a nabi, which loosely translates to prophet. In each case, Ghulam Ahmad went to great lengths to ground his claim in the Quran and Hadith. In claiming prophethood, he was at pains to assure Muslims that his assertion did not contradict the doctrine of khatm-i-nubuwwat. However, following the tradition of twelfth century Sufi thinker Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi, Ghulam Ahmad interpreted khatm-i-nubuwwat to mean that Muhammad's seal of approval is necessary for any future prophets.[10]

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[7] See Humeira Iqtidar, *Secularizing Islamists?: Jama'at-e-Islami and Jama'at-ud-Da'wa in Urban Pakistan* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2011); Bob van der Linden, *Moral Languages from Colonial Punjab* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2008).
[8] See Lata Mani, *Contentious Traditions: The Debate on Sati in Colonial India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).
[9] Yohanan Friedmann, *Prophecy Continuous* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 184-85.
[10] Friedmann, *Prophecy Continuous,* 73-75.

Ghulam Ahmad was not alone among Muslim religious reformers of his time in claiming charismatic authority. Like him, the Deobandis emphasized a 'return' to the textual foundation of Islam, while retaining charismatic authority.[11] The process of religious reform and rationalization was not invariably accompanied by the disenchantment of religious authority. In fact, the new modes of religious disputation encouraged recourse to the charismatic, even as they facilitated a new emphasis on text.[12]

Claims of divine inspiration opened up avenues to the miraculous and spectacular for Ghulam Ahmad, which helped him cut through the thicket of theological argumentation to reach a broader audience. Ghulam Ahmad became infamous for prophesizing the death of his opponents, garnering much controversy and publicity.[13] The striking accuracy of his prophecies provided a vindication for demoralized Muslims that arcane debate could not.

Ghulam Ahmad's charismatic claims were also part of his project of contesting Christianity. The sophisticated theology that anchored his claims, simultaneously closed off missionaries' arguments for the superiority of Jesus over Muhammad, which had long confounded Punjabi Muslims. Muslims generally believe that the masih mawud is Jesus. According to the hadith, God took Jesus up from the cross before his death. It is believed that Jesus is alive in heaven and will return to establish peace on earth before the Day of Judgment. Christian

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[11] Barbara Metcalf, *Islamic Revival in British India: Deoband, 1860-1900* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982), 157-97.
[12] See Nile Green's study of the reinscription of charismatic authority in print media, *Bombay Islam: The Religious Economy of the West Indian Ocean, 1840-1915* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
[13] Lavan, *The Ahmadiyah Movement*, 68-70.

missionaries liked to argue that God's decision to keep Jesus alive and let Muhammad die was irrefutable proof of the superiority of Jesus. With support from the Quran, Ghulam Ahmad asserted that Jesus in fact was dead. The masih foretold in the hadith was not Jesus but someone resembling Jesus. That someone was Ghulam Ahmad.[14] Furthermore, by deriving his prophecy from Muhammad's seal, Ghulam Ahmad set up another argument for Muhammad's superiority: Muhammad alone among the pantheon of prophets held the privilege of conferring prophecy on members of his community.[15]

Defense of Islam and Muhammad was only a part of Ghulam Ahmad's larger project of reconciling faith with loyalism. To mitigate Muslim suspicion of the government, Ghulam Ahmad reimagined the role of colonialism and religious debate. He argued that the advent of colonial rule had created the ideal situation for Islam's spread around the world. The British had established peace and liberty in India, where "[Muslims] enjoy the same measure of freedom to preach Islam as is enjoyed by Christians for the propagation of their faith."[16] This happy political situation converged with other factors like the growth in literacy, "the invention of printing, to make any number of books on the different religions of the world accessible to every seeker after truth; the construction of railroads, to bring persons from the different corners of the country … [and] the institution of the telegraph and

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[14] Friedmann, *Prophecy Continuous,* 111-18.
[15] Friedmann, *Prophecy Continuous*, 119-28.
[16] Ahmad, Mirza Ghulam, "Letter to the Amir," in *Life of Ahmad: Founder of the Ahmadiyya Movement*, A.R. Dard (Islamabad: Islam International Publications, 1948), 493.

post offices, to facilitate communication."[17] All this enabled the free exchange of religious ideas, which would "put an end to all religious strife and difference and thereby bring all worshippers of God to one altar"—that of Islam.[18] Thus, Ghulam Ahmad argued that the liberalized sphere of public religious debate was not a provocation but rather an opportunity.

However, Muslims could not simply expect the truth of Islam to shine through. Ghulam Ahmad appealed to Muslims to come forward and contribute their money, time, and knowledge in the service of their religion. Individual initiative was the need of the hour. Rather than turning to the government to ban offensive polemics, Muslims had to take it upon themselves to rebut aspersions cast on Islam.[19] Muslims were to affirm their loyalty to the colonial government and embrace the freedom of religious debate with a renewed confidence in the truth of Islam. If Christian missionaries came to preach in the Punjab, then Muslim missionaries would preach in Britain. Not only would they defend Islam, but they would also unite the world under its aegis.

The people who joined Ghulam Ahmad's movement were deeply invested in his program of aggressive proselytization. The annual conferences, which Ghulam Ahmad instituted after 1891, were largely devoted to discussing proposals for spreading Islam. Preachers were appointed to conduct tours in India and abroad and the establishment of a printing press was discussed. Money was raised for these ventures and volunteers recruited. But what really caught their imagination was

[17] Ahmad, Mirza Ghulam, "Conference of Religions," in *Life of Ahmad*, Dard, 466.
[18] Ahmad, Mirza Ghulam, "Conference of Religions," in *Life of Ahmad*, Dard, 466.
[19] Ahmad, Mirza Ghulam, *Majmua-i-Ishtiharat*, vol. 3 (Rabwah: Mubarak A. Saqi, 1986), 41-45.

"the spiritual amelioration of Europe and America."[20] The spread of Islam in the West would be the ultimate vindication of Islam's superiority and of Ghulam Ahmad's case for loyalty to the British Raj.

The most concrete step taken in this direction during Ghulam Ahmad's lifetime was the establishment of an English-language journal, *The Review of Religions*, which won international attention for the Ahmadis and Islam. In its inaugural issue of 1902, the journal set out to conduct "an impartial review of the various religions sifting truth from error" and also "to refute all objections against Islam, the holy Quran and the noble Prophet Muhammad."[21] Not only did the journal get noticed in Britain, but it also connected the Ahmadis to English-speaking Muslims around the British Empire.[22] In 1913, five years after Ghulam Ahmad's death, Ahmadis established a permanent preaching mission in the famous Woking Mosque near London. It was to be the first in many international Ahmadi missions.

Assertions of spiritual superiority went hand in glove with a concern for securing a fair share for Punjabi Muslims in the colonial administration, at a time when the government was transitioning from rule by intermediaries to rule by bureaucracy. Government employment now required secular education, which Muslim elites were reluctant to adopt because of a fear of conversion. To address this concern, the Ahmadis opened Talimul Islam, a boarding school, in Qadian in

[20] Dard, *Life of Ahmad*, 364-65.
[21] "Prospectus," *The Review of Religions*, January 1902.
[22] See Humphrey Fisher, *Ahmadiyyah: A Study in Contemporary Islam on the West African Coast* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963).

1900. The school guaranteed a modern education that prepared Muslim children for government positions while keeping them safe from Christianity.[23]

It was to this school that poet Muhammad Iqbal sent his son. He and many others admired the Ahmadis for their interest in securing the material progress of the Muslim elite while refusing to compromise on their religion. By the time of Ghulam Ahmad's death, almost everyone in the elite knew an Ahmadi. Even those who did not join the movement were largely sympathetic. Iqbal, while not an Ahmadi, declared in 1910 that they had founded "a true model of Islamic life."[24] Muslim opposition to Ghulam Ahmad remained remarkably limited during his life. It was expressed in the forms of opposition characteristic of contentious performances of the time: public debates, written denunciations, and vituperative fatwas.[25] There was no appeal to the government to declare Ahmadis non-Muslim and no religiously-motivated violence against Ahmadis till 1928.[26] This early situation stands in sharp contrast to later attitudes—Iqbal's included—to Ahmadis, who were lambasted for their exclusivity and their belief in Ghulam Ahmad's prophethood.

Part of the explanation for the initial warmth is simply that during Ghulam Ahmad's time, the Ahmadi movement did not attempt to cut off social and religious ties with other Muslims. As has been seen above, they were entirely devoted to

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[23] Dard, *Life of Ahmad*, 811-12.
[24] Maulana Hafez Sher Muhammad, *Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal and the Ahmadiyya Movement* (Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at-i-Islam, 1995), 11-12.
[25] For the text of a particularly strong fatwa against Ghulam Ahmad, see Dard, *Life of Ahmad*, 575f. For a detailed account of anti-Ahmadi activity in this period, see Agha Shorish Kashmiri, *Tahrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat* (Lahore: Matbuat, 1976), 36-47.
[26] Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty*, 292.

working for the broader Muslim elite. Drawing on his conversations with Ghulam Ahmad, Unionist Party leader, Fazli Husain, has attested that Ghulam Ahmad "was fully cognisant of the importance of Muslim unity, and was strongly opposed to disruption."[27] The controversial injunctions declaring non-Ahmadis non-Muslims or prohibiting Ahmadis from marrying other Muslims came in the years after Ghulam Ahmad's death.

Ghulam Ahmad's claim to prophethood also provoked limited disapproval because Ghulam Ahmad was sensitive to his audience and because the new Muslim public sphere, brought into existence by the print press, had yet to arrive at a consensus on what kinds of charismatic claims were beyond the pale. When some orthodox religious scholars responded to his claims of prophecy with a vituperative fatwa condemning him as the "worst of apostates," Ghulam Ahmad quickly backpedaled.[28] He issued announcements in newspapers denying any claim to prophethood, emphasizing instead his less controversial status as a muhaddath.[29] In 1901, he reasserted his status as a prophet.[30]

Sensitivity about Muhammad, which played a large role in the anti-Ahmadi movement later, was at that time being produced in the contestation with Christian missionaries over the figures of Jesus and Muhammad. Ghulam Ahmad, a vital participant in this encounter, played an important role in confirming the centrality of Muhammad to Muslim discourse. For him, defense of Muhammad and loyalism to

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[27] Fazli Husain to Zafrulla Khan, 24 September 1934, *Letters of Mian Fazl-i-Husain*, ed. Waheed Ahmad (Lahore: Research Society of Pakistan, 1976), 380.
[28] Dard, *Life of Ahmad*, 575f.
[29] Friedmann, *Prophecy Continuous,* 132-33.
[30] Dard, *Life of Ahmad*, 821-43.

the Raj were two sides of the same coin: one was not possible without the other. After his death, Ahmadis asserted Ghulam Ahmad's prophecy more forcefully, even as a consensus emerged among other Muslims on the importance of the finality of Muhammad's prophethood, thus, turning Muslim sensitivities about Muhammad against Ahmadis.

The Split in the Ahmadi Movement

When Ghulam Ahmad suddenly died on May 26, 1908, members of the community pledged their allegiance to Hakim Nuruddin, an early disciple of Ghulam Ahmad. Thus came about the institution of the khalifa, which had no clear grounding in Ghulam Ahmad's instructions. In 1905, Ghulam Ahmad had established the Anjuman-e-Ahmadiyya, to institutionalize the key principle of Ghulam Ahmad's mission, the propagation of Islam, and ensure its continuation after his death.[31] He appointed fourteen persons to the Council of Trustees or the Sadr Anjuman, all of whom were to be lifetime members replaced at death by a majority vote. The creation of the khalifa created tensions about the source of authority in the community and started a rancorous power struggle that led to a schism in the community.[32] Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, who was one of Ghulam Ahmad's sons, believed himself to be in the minority faction in the Sadr Anjuman. Inclined to have the Ahmadi community led by a forceful and charismatic leader rather than a

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[31] Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, *The Will* (1905: Islam International Publications Ltd., 2005), http://www.alislam.org/library/books/thewill/the_will.pdf, 27.

[32] For the Qadiani and Lahori version of the split, see Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, *Truth About the Split* (1924; Islam International Publications Ltd., 2007), http://www.alislam.org/library/books/Truth-about-the-Split.pdf and Muhammad Ali, *True Facts About the Split*, trans. Mirza Masum Beg (1922; Ahmadiyya Anjuman Isha'at-i-Islam, 1966), http://aaiil.org/text/books/mali/truefactssplit/truefactssplit.pdf, respectively.

council where he would be permanently outvoted, Mahmud Ahmad worked to strengthen the institution of the khalifa. Muhammad Ali and Khwaja Kamaluddin, who were part of the old guard of the movement, wanted to reduce the khalifa to a titular post, investing real power in the Sadr Anjuman, which they claimed was the legitimate heir to Ghulam Ahmad.

These differences were compounded by doctrinal disputes, which to a great extent arose from their divergent visions for the community. Kamaluddin and Muhammad Ali were inclined to remain in step with other Muslims. They wanted to join cause with the emerging bloc of anti-colonial Muslims on the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913 and the Kanpur Mosque controversy of 1913.[33] While this was a departure from Ghulam Ahmad's tradition of unwavering loyalty towards the government, it was also a continuation of Ghulam Ahmad's keen attention to the pulse of Muslim public opinion.

Hand in hand with this move went an attempt to minimize doctrinal differences with other Muslims. Kamaluddin and Muhammad Ali were interested in bringing Islam to non-Muslims rather than preaching Ahmadi doctrine to other Muslims. With this in mind, they devoted their energies to spreading Islam in England. As the rift between the two factions widened, they asserted that Ghulam Ahmad had never claimed prophecy. Given Ghulam Ahmad's ambiguity on the issue, it was not difficult for their faction to accept his status as a mujaddid, muhaddath, masih mawud and mahdi while repudiating any claim to prophecy.[34]

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[33] Lavan, *The Ahmadiyah Movement*, 108-09.

[34] For the specifics of the Lahori understanding of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's claims, see Muhammad Ali, *The Ahmadiyya Movement*, vol. 1 (1918; Ahmadiyya Anjuman

For Mahmud Ahmad, however, this was anathema. He accused the other faction of making every effort "to obliterate the distinctiveness of Ahmadiyyat and to make Ahmadis and non-Ahmadis merge into one common mass."[35] To counter them, he insisted that Ahmadi preachers emphasize distinctive Ahmadi doctrines. He also stood by the government on the Kanpur Mosque issue. Most controversially, he declared all Muslims who did not accept Ghulam Ahmad's prophethood to be kafirs or unbelievers. This declaration, published in 1911 with the approval of Nuruddin, was an attempt to harden the lines between Ahmadi and non-Ahmadi, which Muhammad Ali and Kamaluddin were intent on blurring.

The rift over kufr or disbelief made the split final. On Nuruddin's death in 1914, Mahmud Ahmad outmaneuvered Muhammad Ali and Kamaluddin and was elected second khalifa by the community. The other faction refused to swear allegiance to a khalifa who believed all non-Ahmadis to be non-Muslims and was expelled from the community.[36] The majority fell behind Mahmud Ahmad, indicating the Ahmadi community's preference for a charismatic leader. Mahmud Ahmad's followers came to be known as the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. The minority under Muhammad Ali and Kamaluddin called itself the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement for the Propagation of Islam.[37]

Isha'at-i-Islam), http://aaiil.org/text/books/mali/ahmadiyyamovement1founder/ahmadiyyamovement1founder.pdf.

[35] Mahmud Ahmad, *Truth About the Split*, 292.

[36] Muhammad Ali, *True Facts*, 107-9.

[37] In this work, Mahmud Ahmad's community will be called Ahmadis or Qadian Ahmadis, while the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement will be called Lahore Ahmadis or Lahoris. The terms 'Qadiani' and 'Mirzai', which are used pejoratively for Ahmadis, have been avoided.

With the Lahori faction out of the way, Mahmud Ahmad set about strengthening the office of the khalifa and creating a distinct Ahmadi community. He claimed an institutionalized charismatic authority for the khalifa, who, as the spiritual successor of Ghulam Ahmad, had a special connection to god. The khalifa was able to prophesize the future and receive divine inspiration through dreams. He also asserted the temporal authority of the khalifa by making his decisions absolute for the Anjuman. Five years later, in January 1919, Mahmud Ahmad set up an institution parallel to the Anjuman called the Mehekma-e-Nazarat or the Department of Supervision. The department was to be headed by a Nazir-e-Ala or Chief Supervisor and staffed by supervisors of publication, education, general affairs, treasury, justice, law and trade. Unlike members of the Anjuman, the nazirs were all appointed by the khalifa for a limited period of time, giving Mahmud Ahmad full control over this new institution and making the khalifa paramount.[38]

To secure the Ahmadi community's separation from other Muslims, Mahmud Ahmad prohibited Ahmadis from praying behind non-Ahmadis, from attending non-Ahmadi funerals, and from marrying their daughters to non-Ahmadis.[39] Schools, colleges, and hostels were set up especially for the community. Ahmadis were now to share more than religious beliefs and a concern with the preaching of Islam; they were to be a distinct community. It was partly with this goal in mind that Mahmud Ahmad made a concerted effort to have Ahmadis buy up property in Qadian and immigrate there. As a result, between 1921 and 1931, the Ahmadi population of

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[38] Dost Muhammad Shahid, *Tarikh-i Ahmadiyyat*, vol. 4 (Qadian: Nazarat Nashr-o-Ishaat Qadian, 2007), 215-17; 295-97.
[39] Lavan, *The Ahmadiyah Movement*, 113-14.

Qadian more than doubled, while the non-Ahmadi population shrank by over ten percent.[40]

By turning Qadian into an Ahmadi town, Mahmud Ahmad did not just insulate his followers but also put into practice the idea of khilafat not just as spiritual leadership, but as Islamic government. Qadian, the birthplace of Ghulam Ahmad, was to be the preordained space where Mahmud Ahmad would establish a model government and society. This served as the basis for the bureaucratization of the community and for various levies that he imposed on his followers. His Mehekma-e-Nazarat functioned as the de facto administration of the town. Disputes between Ahmadis were settled by their own judicial system, which was run according to Shariah law. Under threat of boycott, harassment, or revocation of their lease, non-Ahmadis who ran businesses in Qadian also had to comply with the verdict of Ahmadi courts.[41] These arrangements put the institution of the khalifa at the center of a distinct Ahmadi community but it also created resentment among local non-Ahmadis, Muslims and non-Muslims.

United under a spiritual and temporal leader, the Ahmadi community became highly organized and very powerful. Many Ahmadi individuals were influential in their own right, as respectable government officials, landholders, merchants, lawyers, and religious scholars.[42] However, as a loyal community, they were able to offer special services to the government, in return for which they won

[40] Shahid, *Tarikh-i Ahmadiyyat*, vol. 5 (Qadian: Nazarat Nashr-o-Ishaat Qadian, 2007), 312.
[41] *The Ahmadiyya Sect: Notes on the Origin, Development and History of the Movement up to the Year 1938*, Government of the Punjab, 1938, NDC, Islamabad, 16.
[42] Lavan, *The Ahmadiyah Movement*, 94-95.

special favors. During World War I, Ahmadis dutifully subscribed to government war loans and even offered a double company of Ahmadis for service in the war. They toed the government line by rejecting self-government in 1917, calling instead for Indianization of the bureaucracy. After the war, they proved their value as a loyal community once again by staunchly resisting the Khilafat Movement.[43] In return, Ahmadis were rapidly incorporated into the bureaucracy and allowed to consolidate their hold on Qadian. Their proximity to the government increased their prestige. They became, in effect, an informal part of the state so that "people took Qadianis' voice to be an echo of the government."[44]

These transformations under Mahmud Ahmad also meant that Ghulam Ahmad's original mission of defending Islam fell by the wayside. In its new inward-looking incarnation, the Ahmadi movement chose exclusivity, organization, and loyalism, losing much of its broader appeal to Punjabi Muslims. Where Ghulam Ahmad's movement had kept Muhammad and the Muslim community at its center, Mahmud Ahmad shifted focus to the figure of Ghulam Ahmad and the Ahmadi community.[45] The anti-Ahmadi movement, started by the Majlis-e-Ahrar-e-Islam in the 1930s, would not have found much traction if not for the transformation of the Ahmadi community under Mahmud Ahmad. It is to the Ahrar and the anti-Ahmadi movement's origins, which lay in the politics of the Muslims of the intermediate strata during the interwar period, that the next chapter turns.

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[43] *The Ahmadiyya Sect*, 5-6.
[44] Chaudhry Afzal Haq, *Tarikh-e-Ahrar* (Lahore: Maktaba-e-Majlis-e-Ahrar-e-Islam, 1968), 178.
[45] The Qadian Ahmadis spent much of the 1910s defending Ghulam Ahmad's status as prophet against their Lahore Ahmadi critics.

Chapter 2

Converging on Anti-Ahmadi Politics

Discontent in India had been on the rise during World War I. As hostilities in Europe ended, political and economic frustration in India boiled over. Coming under pressure, the colonial government moved to repress protests by passing the draconian Rowlatt Act of 1919, even as it made a show of redressing political grievances. With the passage of the Government of India Act, 1919, the British ostensibly met some demands of the Indian National Congress by expanding the scope for representative politics at the municipal and provincial levels. However, under this tentative shift from rule by bureaucracy to rule by popular consent lay a careful plan to perpetuate the dominance of colonial collaborators by engineering the structures of electoral politics.

In the Punjab, these collaborators were the landed elites—largely Muslim but also Hindus and Sikhs—who held sway over the province's vast rural areas.[1] The reformed council was designed to comprise overwhelmingly of rural and nominated members, leaving only 10 of 94 seats for elected representatives of urban areas. The franchise was also tailored to favor the rural areas and the property qualifications devised to exclude much of the politicized urban lower middle class.[2] Elections for

[1] For a study of colonial system of collaboration in the Punjab, see David Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988).
[2] David Page, *Prelude to Partition: The Indian Muslims and the Imperial System of Control, 1920-1932* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1987), 57-59.

the Punjab Council in 1920 predictably ushered in a government of the agricultural elite, who had organized themselves into the Unionist Party.[3]

The full impact of these reforms was not immediately observable. Anti-colonial activists of the Congress and Islamic universalist varieties came together to lead the Khilafat Movement, which was aimed to preserve the Ottoman caliphate and win swaraj or self-rule for India. The movement was an experiment in cultural accommodation of Muslims within the Indian nationalist project of the Congress. For the first time, Muslims found a voice and space within nationalist politics. However, even at the height of the Khilafat Movement, the response in the Punjab was tepid, partly because of the effectiveness of the reforms in channeling political energies. When Gandhi called off the movement in February 1922, the faltering project of forging a pluralistic vision of Indian nationalism collapsed.[4]

The possibility of unity on display in the Khilafat Movement quickly gave way to struggles over the limited space available in elected institutions. Many other activists directed their efforts away from influencing the state, towards local contests for social space.[5] To distinguish them from political activists, who either strive to share power or influence its distribution among groups within the state, they will be referred to as social activists.[6] In practice, this distinction did not always hold fast. Vocational social activists did participate in politics avocationally and vice

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[3] For a study of the Unionist Party, see Talbot, *Punjab and the Raj, 1849-1947* (Riverdale: Riverdale Co, 1988).
[4] This account of the Khilafat Movement draws on Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty*, 187-261. See also Gail Minault, *The Khilafat Movement: Religious Symbolism and Political Mobilization in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1982).
[5] Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty*, 262-70.
[6] This definition of political activists is based on Weber's definition of politics. See *Politics as a Vocation*.

versa.[7] Nonetheless, the distinction is a useful one because the different interests of and pressures on social and political activists led to differing forms of action.

With separate electorates already enshrined in the colonial system, the tussle for power among urban activists in the Punjab quickly adopted communitarian overtones. Political activists eyeing communal quotas in government sought to expand and organize their religious communities. Hindu movements of shuddhi and sangathan were matched by Muslim efforts at tabligh and tanzim. Blatantly communitarian pamphleteering was on the rise, even as Muslims in the intermediate strata organized campaigns to boycott Hindu shopkeepers. Political, economic, and social competition at the provincial and local levels was increasingly expressed as religious antagonism. However, what Ayesha Jalal has described as "the politics of disunion" went even further.[8] Unrestrained by concerns for electoral calculations and alliance-building, social activists began to champion increasingly narrower group interests, undermining even attempts of mobilizing along unified lines of religious community. This social and political fragmentation came to characterize the Punjab of the 1920s.[9]

There were moments in this decade when alternatives to this fragmentation came to the fore. For Muslim activists, this took the form of rallying to the defense of the Prophet. This time the Prophet's reputation needed protection not from Christian missionaries, but from Hindu polemicists. In 1924, the publication of

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[7] I borrow these terms from Weber, too, who remarked, "There are two ways of making politics one's vocation: Either one lives 'for' politics or one lives 'off' politics." See ibid.
[8] Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty*, 265.
[9] See Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty*, 262-300.

Rangila Rasul, a book describing Muhammad as a philanderer among other things, provoked much outrage. The drawn out prosecution of the book's publisher, Rajpal, which led to his acquittal in 1927, Rajpal's murder by Ilmdin in 1929, and Ilmdin's subsequent conviction and execution provided public events that offered a promising basis for cooperation for disparate Muslim activists.[10]

For those few Muslim activists still dedicated to Indian nationalism, this trend of anti-Hindu communitarian consensus formation was very problematic. Having dabbled in the politics of disunion themselves in the mid-1920s, by the end of the decade, they came to see that the way forward politically was to come to terms with urban Hindu politicians and the Congress. After all, they shared an interest in opposing the colonial government and its collaborators who had a stranglehold on the politics of the province.

Thus, a handful of Punjabi Muslim politicians supported the Congress' Nehru Report of 1928 and its controversial proposal to end separate electorates for Muslims. However, their efforts at anti-colonial alliance building and breathing new life into Indian nationalism in the province provoked a serious backlash from their Muslim constituency, which was adamantly opposed to joint electorates. Angry crowds pelted them with stones at a conference in Lahore.[11] The Central Khilafat Committee expelled them from their party.[12] When, after all this, the Congress jettisoned the Nehru Report on December 29, 1929 at its Lahore Conference, these men were left in the wilderness.

[10] For details, see Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty*, 295-97.
[11] Chaudhry Afzal Haq, *Mera Afsanah* (Lahore: Afzal Haq Memorial Society, 1991), 156-57.
[12] Janbaz Mirza, *Karavan-e-Ahrar*, vol. 1 (Lahore: Maktaba-e-Tabsirah, 1975), 80.

On the very same day, a section of these Punjabi Muslim political activists formed the Majlis-e-Ahrar-e-Islam. The leaders of this party were Chaudhry Afzal Haq, Syed Ataullah Shah Bukhari, Habib Rehman Ludhianvi, Mazhar Ali Azhar, Daud Ghaznavi, and Sheikh Hissamuddin. All six had cut their teeth on anti-colonial politics in the Khilafat Movement and all six came from lower middle class backgrounds. Their professional and educational backgrounds were a testament to the diversity of members of the intermediate strata. Afzal Haq was a college dropout who had served for a brief stint as a police inspector before joining politics. Politically, he was most successful, having held a seat on the Punjab Council since 1920. Azhar was Afzal Haq's contemporary at college and practiced law after graduation. Hissamuddin was also a college graduate. Bukhari, on the other hand, was the madrassa-educated son of a pashmina trader who worked as a khatib or a sermon deliverer at a mosque in Amritsar. Ludhianvi was born into a family of ulema and received his training at the famous Darul Uloom at Deoband. Both Bukhari and Ludhianvi were renowned orators, who had put their talents to great use in their anti-colonial cause. Finally, Ghaznavi was also educated at a madrassa and gained employment as a madrassa teacher.[13]

These men were drawn together not just by their anti-colonial politics but also by the consciousness of their humble backgrounds. The Ahrar leaders all belonged to families of little significance. What little social mobility they had experienced was a result of their education. In a political world dominated by England-educated lawyers and other men of wealth, connections, and influence,

[13] For short biographies of each, see Mirza, *Karavan-e-Ahrar*, vol. 1, 126-47.

they were constantly belittled and marginalized. Afzal Haq wrote that the leaders of the Khilafat Committee treated them like foot soldiers and that wealthier Muslims in the Congress refused to work with them because they were poor.[14] The Ahrar leaders repeatedly competed with richer and better-connected Punjabi Muslims like Saifuddin Kitchlew for posts within the Congress and repeatedly lost.[15]

Despite these grievances, the formation of the Ahrar did not mean a break with the Congress. In fact, Congress leader Abul Kalam Azad had encouraged these men to form the Ahrar and the Congress continued to support them surreptitiously.[16] The Congress' ambitions in the Punjab had been frustrated by the province's political structure, which shut it out from the rural areas, and by the failure of its brand of nationalism to attract Punjabi Muslims. Despite its best efforts, the Punjab Congress remained an urban Hindu party.[17] The hope of the Ahrar and the Congress was that an independent Muslim political organization, which shared the Congress' anti-colonial vision, would make greater inroads with Punjabi Muslims.

As an independent party, the Ahrar, under the guidance of Afzal Haq, drew up a new vision of anti-colonial politics. Rather than basing Muslim politics in opposition to Hindus or Sikhs, the Ahrar sought to ground it in the language of social and economic justice in the Islamic idiom. Its first program declared: "The Majlis-e-Ahrar is a people's party in the true sense and its sole purpose is to free poor

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[14] Haq, *Mera afsanah*, 158; Chaudhry Afzal Haq, *Tarikh-e-Ahrar* (Lahore: Maktaba-e-Majlis-e-Ahrar-e-Islam, 1968), 74.
[15] Mirza, *Karavan-e-Ahrar*, vol. 1, 44.
[16] Mirza, *Karavan-e-Ahrar*, vol. 1, 82-83; Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty*, 361-62.
[17] For the Congress' failed mass contact movement in Punjab, see Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty*, 377-85.

communities from the destructiveness of the present political and economic system."[18] It also approved a slew of reforms including the reduction of landholders' wealth, a ban on usury, unemployment benefits, unionization of labor, rent reduction and so on.[19] At the first Ahrar conference in Lahore on July 11, 1931, strident speeches were made condemning capitalist exploitation. Ludhianvi, for instance, criticized the Congress for seeking to transfer power from British capitalists to Indian capitalists, while Azhar exhorted the government to protect the poor rather than the rich.[20]

Along with these Marxist slogans went a deeper understanding of the social and religious hierarchies in place that impeded a class-based politics. In a pamphlet on capitalism, Afzal Haq wrote that the upper class of Muslims was but a corpse; yet the middle and lower classes clung to it. He identified the bonds holding these classes to the upper class as "false religion." The god whose name was invoked at the beginning of oppression had to be swept away because the true god, the creator of the world, was opposed to the system of capitalism. Haq insisted that Muslims not only free themselves from the economic slavery of capitalists and landlords but also free all the poor.[21] Thus, the Ahrar proposed an anti-colonial Muslim politics based on an economic and religious critique of the elite, while avoiding the closures inherent in a communitarian approach. It was in putting this into practice that the Ahrar arrived at an anti-Ahmadi politics.

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[18] Mirza, *Karavan-e-Ahrar*, vol. 1, 306-7.
[19] Mirza, *Karavan-e-Ahrar*, vol. 1, 306-8.
[20] Haq, *Tarikh-e-Ahrar*, 55-59.
[21] Chaudhry Afzal Haq and Syed Manazar Ahsan Gilani, *Islam mein Sarmayadari aur Jagirdari ka koi Wujud Nahin* (Lahore: Makki Darul Kutub, 1997), 46-58.

The Kashmir Movement and the Modalities of Contentious Performance

The Ahrar did not have to wait long for an opportunity to make their debut. On July 13, 1931, within two days of their first conference, all eyes in the Punjab were riveted to the neighboring princely state of Kashmir, which exploded into violence and anti-state protests. Kashmir was a Muslim-majority state ruled by a Hindu sovereign.[22] Kashmiri Muslims had been nursing a plethora of grievances—a lack of representation in government service, unjust taxes, and restrictions on religious liberties—against the Dogra ruler, which found vent after an incident of police firing on demonstrators in Srinagar.[23] Here was the perfect cause for the Ahrar to demonstrate their championship of oppressed Muslims. However, they were not the only Punjabi Muslims hoping to get a political boost from the issue.

On July 25, 1931, notable members of the Kashmiri diaspora like Muhammad Iqbal and leaders of the Unionist Party came together to form the All-India Kashmir Committee (AIKC).[24] The Unionists, despite being largely Muslim, depended on the ties of tribe or biraderi rather than religion for political power in the province. However, with negotiations over the next set of constitutional reforms taking place at the Roundtable Conferences in London, they had set their sights beyond the Punjab, on the leadership of Muslims at the all-India level.[25] By supporting a popular

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[22] For the development of Dogra sovereignty, see Mridu Rai, *Hindu Rulers, Muslim Subjects: Islam, Rights, and the History of Kashmir* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004).

[23] For an account of the Kashmir movement from the point of view of Kashmiri politics, see Chitralekha Zutshi, *Languages of Belonging: Islam, Regional Identity, and the Making of Kashmir* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[24] Shahid, *Tarikh-i Ahmadiyyat*, vol. 5, 411-17.

[25] For Punjabi Muslim participation in the Roundtable Conferences, see Page, *Prelude to Partition*, 193-258.

Muslim movement against a princely state rather than the colonial government, they hoped to brush up their image as Muslim leaders without antagonizing their patrons in the government.

The president of the AIKC was none other than Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, the second khalifa of the Qadian Ahmadis. Mahmud Ahmad had overcome his squeamishness towards politics as the logic of the new channels to power had set in. Finding that it was now necessary to win votes to secure government patronage, he began to align himself and his community with the Unionists and with Muslim public opinion.[26] In shifting his attention from Ahmadis to the larger Muslim whole, Mahmud Ahmad's public emphasis shifted from the figure of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad to the figure of Muhammad. Thus, in 1927, Mahmud Ahmad played a prominent and much appreciated role in lobbying the government during the *Rangila Rasul* controversy.[27] Attempting to find common grounds between Ahmadis and other Muslims, he organized Seerat-un-Nabi conferences the following year to preach about Muhammad.[28] Assuming the presidency of the AIKC, Mahmud Ahmad made his boldest claim to Muslim leadership yet.

On his appointment, he swiftly deployed the vast resources and connections of the Ahmadi community. He tried to use his relationship with the Indian

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[26] Mahmud Ahmad became increasingly vocal on the issue of constitutional reforms and his stance for remarkably similar to that of the Unionists. See *Some Suggestions for the Solution of the Indian Problem* (Qadian: 1930); *The Nehru Report and Muslim Rights* (Qadian: Sher Ali, 1930).
[27] Shahid, *Tarikh-i Ahmadiyyat*, vol. 4, 599-609.
[28] Shahid, *Tarikh-i Ahmadiyyat*, vol. 5, 31.

government to secure a place at the negotiating table over the Kashmir crisis.[29] However, when the government told the AIKC that this was a matter for the Maharaja to settle with his Muslim subjects, Mahmud Ahmad lent Kashmiri Muslim leaders covert assistance. In exchange for his financial, legal, and political support, he won influence with Kashmiri leaders and a say in the talks.[30]

Without the resources to match Mahmud Ahmad, the Ahrar were unable to secure a place in the negotiations. By threatening to launch civil disobedience, they were able to send a deputation to Kashmir, but once there the Darbar—or court—ignored it.[31] Kashmiri leaders, who had already found a patron in Mahmud Ahmad, also had no use for the Ahrar.[32] When on October 20, 1931, the impasse between Kashmiri leaders and the Darbar ended, it became clear to the Ahrar that the game was up.[33] The Kashmiri leaders and the Ahmadis had managed to define the issues and the Darbar had taken them under consideration. The Ahrar had no conceivable role in this negotiation.

Outmatched by Mahmud Ahmad, they now turned seriously to contentious performance. They asserted that the Ahmadis, the British, and the Kashmir Darbar had duped the Kashmiri leaders into making demands that fell short of responsible government.[34] The Ahrar took it upon themselves to force the Darbar to grant its subjects responsible government. From the repertoire of anti-colonial contentious

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[29] Note by political secretary on meeting with Dard, 31 July 1931, IOR R/1/1/2154, NDC.
[30] Shahid, *Tarikh-i Ahmadiyyat*, vol. 5, 445-47.
[31] Mirza, *Karavan-e-Ahrar*, vol. 1, 183-84; Haq, *Mera Afsanah*, 179.
[32] Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, *Flames of the Chinar*, trans. Khushwant Singh (New Delhi: Viking, 1993), 31-32.
[33] To the Secretary of State, 28 October 1931, IOR R/1/1/2155(1), NDC.
[34] From the Resident in Kashmir, 30 October 1931, IOR R/1/1/2155(1), NDC.

performance, the Ahrar chose jathabandi, which consisted of leading jathas, or bands of men, to non-violently court arrest.

On October 30, Mazhar Ali Azhar led 112 men from Sialkot into Jammu even as another jatha entered Mirpur from Jhelum. They were all promptly arrested. The next day 609 men were jailed, and the day after another, 1,634.[35] The response surpassed all expectations. Jathabandi spread from Sialkot and Jhelum to Rawalpindi, Gurdaspur, and Gujranwala as well. By the time enthusiasm abated in January 1932, tens of thousands had followed the Ahrar into jail.[36] Most of the Ahrar volunteers were youth from the lower-middle and working classes of Punjabi cities. Government documents described the volunteers as "belonging to the ranks of the unemployed and hungry."[37] Hurting from the economic downturn in the wake of the Great Depression, these men had little to lose from going to jail.

However, districts like Jhelum, which provided a large portion of the volunteers for the Kashmir movement, had remained unresponsive to the Congress civil disobedience a few months ago despite the economic downturn.[38] On the face of it, this seemed to indicate the success of the Ahrar's brand of anti-colonial Muslim politics based on economic justice. The Ahrar working committee's resolution on Kashmir made it clear that they "did not conceive of the Kashmir agitation as a Hindu-Muslim issue. The situation of Kashmir's peasants and laborers was so

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[35] Chief Secretary to Government of Punjab, 2 November 1931, IOR R/1/1/2155(1), NDC.

[36] The Ahrar claim the figure to be 50,000 while the daily reports of the government put the figure around 20,000. Haq, *Tarikh-e-Ahrar*, 116.

[37] Garbett to the Government of Punjab, 2/3 October 1931, IOR R/1/1/2155(1), NDC.

[38] Tan Tai Yong, *The Garrison State: The Military, Government and Society in Colonial Punjab 1849-1947* (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2005), 170-76.

devastating and heartbreaking that it even surpasse[d] the conditions of peasants and laborers in India."[39] It is for their sake that the Ahrar started the movement.

Ahrar orators like Bukhari and Ludhianvi toured the province to rally support. Firebrand Zafar Ali Khan turned the attention of his newspaper, *Zamindar*, to the movement, too. These expert mobilizers had people believing that the Kashmir Movement was "a crusade in support of their religion."[40] The rhetoric of class exploitation gave way at the level of grassroots mobilization and popular discourse to the familiar rhetoric of religious defense. However, determined to eschew a communitarian approach, the Ahrar converged instead on an anti-Ahmadi script. This script also emerged from the fierce competition between the Ahrar and Mahmud Ahmad over leadership of the Kashmir movement. Ahrar leaders denounced Mahmud Ahmad as a British agent.[41] At the popular level, Ahrar orators and polemicists blended political hostility towards the Ahmadis with a suspicion of their religious belief. Ahmadis were denounced as kafirs in public meetings and effigies of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad labeled 'false prophet' were taken out in processions.[42] Bukhari urged his audience to "beat all false prophets with shoes."[43] Ahrar politics in practice had stumbled upon the possibility of bringing Muslims together in opposition to Ahmadis rather than Hindus.

However, the Ahrar's contentious performance failed to win responsible government for Kashmir. With the Darbar already negotiating with its subjects, the

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[39] Mirza, *Karavan-e-Ahrar*, vol. 1, 183.
[40] *The Ahrar Movement in the Punjab (1931-38)*, Government of the Punjab, 1939, NDC, Islamabad, 11.
[41] Mirza, *Karavan-e-Ahrar*, vol. 1, 206-7.
[42] Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty*, 359.
[43] *Ahrar Movement in the Punjab*, 10.

Ahrar intervention was beside the point. Nonetheless, the movement did put the Ahrar on the political map in the Punjab and also allowed it to establish itself as an all-India organization. As jathabandi had gained momentum and garnered press attention, funds had poured in from around India. At one point during the movement, they were believed to have 17,000 rupees in their coffers and received 500 rupees more every day.[44] For a political party whose constituency was largely shut out of electoral politics, contentious performance proved to be the most effective way to secure funds and attention.

With jathabandi over by January 1932, the Ahrar needed another cause célèbre to resuscitate their fortunes—both figuratively and literally. By May 1932, the Lahore branch of the Ahrar were so strapped for cash that they had to send out volunteers with collection boxes to meet the rent for their office and avert eviction.[45] However, the Ahrar did not settle on anti-Ahmadi politics. Instead, they persisted in their anti-colonial politics of economic justice. In July 1932, they took up the Muslim Meos' agitation against the princely state of Alwar.[46] After this movement waned, they dabbled in a string of controversies, including a protest over a film, another against British bombing in the tribal areas, and yet another for Palestine.[47] They also championed a movement by Muslim farmers against the princely state of Kapurthala.[48] Each of these efforts fell short of the Kashmir

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[44] *Ahrar Movement in the Punjab*, 13.
[45] *Ahrar Movement in the Punjab*, 17.
[46] For Ahrar participation in the Meos' struggle, see Mirza, *Karavan-e-Ahrar*, vol. 1, 280-287. For a history of the Meos, see Shail Mayaram, *Resisting Regimes: Myth, Memory, and the Shaping of a Muslim Identity* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997).
[47] *Ahrar Movement in the Punjab*, 29-30.
[48] For details, see Awan, *Majlis-i-Ahrar*, 55-60.

movement but they did confirm their reputation as dogged agitators. They returned to anti-Ahmadi politics in 1934, only after a series of developments at the local and provincial levels made opposition to Ahmadis politically profitable.

Converging on Anti-Ahmadi Politics

Since the Kashmir movement of 1931, Ahmadis had become increasingly visible in Punjabi politics. Mahmud Ahmad held the prestigious position of president of the AIKC for the next two years, but the most visible sign of Ahmadi prominence was the meteoric rise of Chaudhry Zafrulla Khan. Zafrulla Khan was a staunch Ahmadi and a well-known lawyer, who had been on the Punjab Legislative Council since 1926. Fazli Husain, the founder of the Unionist Party, had personally groomed him.[49] In 1931, Zafrulla Khan presided over the annual meeting of the All-India Muslim League and in 1932 was temporarily appointed to Fazli Husain's seat in the Viceroy's Executive Council.

The Ahmadis' rise as a political force, largely by dint of their excellent education, impressive organization, and vast resources, had anti-colonial and anti-Unionist Muslim politicians worried. In May 1933, the poet, Muhammad Iqbal, orchestrated a coup to replace Mahmud Ahmad as the president of the AIKC. At one time, Iqbal had been a great admirer of the Ahmadis. He had even nominated Mahmud Ahmad for the AIKC presidency in 1931. A few weeks later, Iqbal relinquished the presidency in a huff. According to him, Ahmadi members of the AIKC were trying "to spilt [sic] the Committee into two bodies." They refused to acknowledge his authority as president and "recognize[d] no loyalty except to the

[49] Husain to Shafi, 1 December 1930, *Letters of Mian Fazl-i-Husain*, 110.

head of their particular religious sect."[50] *Siasat* roundly denounced his accusations that Ahmadis were sabotaging an all-Muslim cause to further their sectarian interests as a fitnah or a source of strife.[51]

Iqbal's volte-face occurred at a time when he crossed swords with the Unionists over the Communal Award of 1932. The award was made by the British after the failure of the Roundtable Conferences, settling the contentious issue of separate electorates and weightage. The Unionists were extremely satisfied with the award, which secured the privileges of the rural constituencies, but Iqbal did not believe that it went far enough to meet the interests of urban Muslims.[52] He now worked to create an urban Muslim party to oppose the Unionists and the award.[53] Dislodging Mahmud Ahmad in the light of allegations that the Ahmadis were misusing their influence in the AIKC to convert Kashmiris would embarrass the Unionists, neutralize their allies, and give Iqbal a powerful political platform.[54]

On July 23, 1934, Zafrulla Khan was confirmed as a permanent replacement for Fazli Husain's seat on the Viceroy's Executive Council. The Unionists' opponents were once again up in arms. Zafar Ali Khan, the editor of *Zamindar*, wrote a scathing editorial. Muslims could not accept, he said, that the only seat on the council reserved for them was to be given to a man, who "on the basis of his creed, considered all Muslims outside the pale of Islam." Zafar Ali Khan was at pains to

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[50] Muhammad Iqbal, "Statement on his Resignation of the Office of President of the All-India Kashmir Committee, Issued on the 20th June 1930," in *Speeches and Statements of Iqbal*, Ed. A.R. Tariq (Lahore: Sh. Ghulam Ali, 1973), 200.
[51] Shahid, *Tarikh-i Ahmadiyyat*, vol. 5, 654.
[52] See Page, *Prelude to Partition*.
[53] Fazli Husain to Zafrulla Khan, 5 June 1933, *Letters of Mian Fazl-i-Husain*, 296.
[54] For a detailed analysis of the development of Iqbal's views on the issue, see Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty*, 364-70.

disavow sectarian motives. Indian Muslims had no objections to being represented by members of smaller sects like Shias and Ismailis. Ahmadis, however, "were absolutely not a sect of Islam, rather they were a separate religious group, that all Muslims were fed up with."[55]

Zafar Ali Khan's opinion was not shared by all.[56] However, the elegance of this religiously-based argument for excluding Ahmadis from Muslim politics made it extremely compelling. The argument for exclusion arose from political differences but its recourse to religious difference allowed its proponents to mask this and claim to speak for all Indian Muslims, transcending, in their opposition to Ahmadis, sectarian and political differences. The argument proved so effective that it had Fazli Husain scrambling for cover. Husain wrote to Zafrulla confessing that he had personally come under attack for enabling Ahmadi ascendancy and undermining Muslim interests. While Husain hoped opposition would die down eventually, he was anxious that steps be taken to reassure the public about Ahmadis' doctrinal and communitarian unity with other Muslims.[57]

This focus on Ahmadi religious difference in Punjabi Muslim politics was complemented by the Ahrar's growing involvement in local politics in Qadian. Since Mahmud Ahmad had begun his experimentation with a caliphate in Qadian in the 1920s, grievances against the Ahmadis in and around the city were on the rise. Non-Ahmadis—Muslim, Hindu, and Sikh—accused them of running a parallel

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[55] Shahid, *Tarikh-i Ahmadiyyat*, vol. 6, 195-96.
[56] For opinions of other newspapers, see Shahid, *Tarikh-i Ahmadiyyat*, vol. 6, 196-206.
[57] Fazli Husain to Zafrulla Khan, 24 September 1934, *Letters of Mian Fazl-i-Husain*, 379-80.

government, complete with its own judiciary. The rules of the Ahmadi bureaucracy in Qadian were satirically dubbed the "Mahmudia Penal Code". All the residents of Qadian, Ahmadi and non- Ahmadi, were forced to comply by these rules. People could be sentenced to boycott by these courts and it was claimed that "it was an ordinary thing for Ahmadi 'courts' to cause a Qadiani to be flogged or turned out of the city."[58] Complaints of harassment were borne out by net migration of non-Ahmadis out of Qadian.[59]

Ludhianvi, who was a committed opponent of the Ahmadis, continued to explore anti-Ahmadi causes even after the Ahrar had moved on. He reached out to the Mubahila group, a local anti-Ahmadi outfit led by an ex-Ahmadi, Abdul Karim. In 1930, the group had been driven out of Qadian to nearby Batala.[60] In October 1933, Ludhianvi and Abdul Karim planned to reoccupy the old Mubahila office in Qadian, but the Ahmadis demolished the office and built latrines on the site.[61] This incendiary move drew the Ahrar deeper into this local conflict. Two months later, they held a Tabligh Conference in Batala, designed to attack the Ahmadis. In a testament to the local anger against the Ahmadis, the conference drew a surprising crowd of two to three thousand. In April 1934, Ludhianvi and Abdul Karim formalized their alliance by starting an anti-Ahmadi organization called Shoba Tabligh-ul-Islam.[62] These efforts would have remained in the realm of local social contestation, but for the uproar over Zafrulla's nomination to the Viceroy's Council.

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[58] *The Ahmadiyya Sect*, 16.
[59] Shahid, *Tarikh-i Ahmadiyyat*, vol. 5, 312.
[60] Shahid, *Tarikh-i Ahmadiyyat*, vol. 5, 146-86.
[61] *The Ahmadiyya Sect*, 33.
[62] *The Ahmadiyya Sect*, 30.

The Ahrar decided to harness their campaign for the Indian Legislative Assembly elections to their local confrontation with the Ahmadis. They were fielding K.L. Gauba from the consolidated constituency of Ludhiana, Amritsar, and Lahore against the Unionist candidate, Rahim Bakhsh. Bakhsh was a retired judge and a Kashmiri. The Unionists were banking on his biradari to attract the large Kashmiri constituency in Amritsar and Lahore. Gauba, on the other hand, was a recent convert to Islam, who in 1934, the year of the elections had published a generous biography of Muhammad, confirming his reputation as a dedicated Muslim.[63] It was on the platforms of religion and class that the Ahrar wished to contest the election. Reminding the public of the Unionists' Ahmadi associations could only help.

On October 21-23, 1934, the Ahrar held a Tabligh Conference near Qadian drawing 10,000 attendees, a great improvement over the Batala conference from the year before.[64] Two resolutions were passed: first that the government stop counting Ahmadis as Muslims and the second that Zafrulla be removed from the Viceroy's Council.[65] Enthusiastic speeches were also made in favor of Gauba and against the Unionist candidate.[66] Bukhari addressed a mesmerized audience for five hours. The speech, for which he was later prosecuted, used the whole range of anti-Ahmadi rhetoric that the Ahrar had developed. Bukhari lambasted Ahmadis for their loyalty to the British, denouncing them as "talless [sic] dogs of Britian [sic], [who]

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[63] K.L. Gauba, *The Prophet of the Desert* (Lahore: The Times Publishing Co., 1934).
[64] Chief Secretary, Government Punjab to Secretary, Government of India, Home Department, 1 November 1934, IOR L/P&J/7/751, NDC.
[65] Mirza, *Karavan-e-Ahrar*, vol. 2, 86-88.
[66] Chief Secretary, Government Punjab to Secretary, Government of India, Home Department, 1 November 1934, IOR L/P&J/7/751, NDC.

flatter[ed] and clean[ed] the toe of Britian's [sic] shoes."[67] He mocked Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's claim to prophethood, imputing that Ghulam Ahmad hatched the idea when he failed his examinations. He challenged Mahmud Ahmad to confront him: "He is the son of a Prophet, I am Prophet's daughter's son, let him come, … he in car and I barefooted, he dressed in silk and I in Gandhi Ji's Khalri Khadar Sharif; according to the advice of his father he eats muzaffar, roasted meat, yaqutian and plomer's tonic wine day and night and I eat barley according to the Sunnat of my maternal grandfather."[68] Thus, Bukhari compounded religious and economic difference, setting up the Ahrar's piety and penury in contrast to the Ahmadi's decadence and deviance.

His anti-Ahmadi script, which deftly paralleled Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's usurpation of Muhammad's prophecy, with the Ahmadi's political and economic usurpation of other Muslims, had the potential of uniting Punjabi Muslims without undermining the Ahrar imperative of cross-communal alliances. In fact, the anti-Ahmadi issue offered a basis for cooperation with Hindus and Sikhs, too, who were equally irate about Ahmadis' vigorous proselytization and their overreaching bureaucracy in Qadian.[69]

There was a contingent of around 300 ulema at the conference.[70] Many were from Deoband, while others were from the North-West Frontier Province, some princely states, and from around the Punjab. The government read their presence as a sign that "many orthodox Muslims, who are ordinarily opposed to the Ahrars,

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[67] Judgment of criminal appeal no. 120 of 1935, 5, IOR L/P&J/7/751, NDC.
[68] Judgment of criminal appeal no. 120 of 1935, 5, IOR L/P&J/7/751, NDC.
[69] *Ahrar Movement in the Punjab*, 37.
[70] Ulema are scholars of Islamic jurisprudence.

[were] in sympathy with this side of their activities."[71] In fact, by casting the campaign as a religious issue, the Ahrar attracted social activists like the petty ulema. These ulema, who were often not scholars of great note but instead worked as teachers, prayer leaders, and guardians of shrines, held limited and local authority. However, when entire networks of petty ulema were mobilized their cumulative effect was very impressive. By taking the Ahrar cause to their pulpits, they proved a valuable asset in the election.[72]

Gauba's successful election made him the first Ahrar representative in the Indian Legislature. It also spelt a victory for the politics of religion over the politics of biradari and of the intermediate strata over the elite. The Unionist strategy of banking on the Kashmiri biradari failed in the face of a unifying appeal to Islam. A lieutenant of Fazli Husain reported to him: "People are heard saying that Gauba should win; because his defeat will be the defeat of Islam; while the defeat of Shaikh Rahim Bakhsh will be the defeat of the Muslim Conference only."[73]

The Ahrar were not unique in transforming their position of economic inferiority into a position of religious and moral superiority. The Momin Conference in the United Provinces employed a similar strategy against the Muslim elite.[74] However, the Momin Conference, despite its appropriation of Islamic universalism, remained confined to representing the julaha or weaver caste. The Ahrar, on the

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[71] Chief Secretary to the Government of the Punjab to Secretary to the Government of India, Home Department, 1 November 1934, IOR L/P&J/7/751, NDC.
[72] Awan, *Majlis-i-Ahrar*, 107-9.
[73] Shahabuddin to Husain, 1 October 1934, *Letters of Mian Fazl-i-Husain*, 382-83.
[74] For more on Momins and their politics, see Papiya Ghosh, *Muhajirs and the Nation: Bihar in the 1940s* (London: Routledge, 2010), Chap. 4; Nandini Gooptu, *The Politics of the Urban Poor in Early Twentieth-Century India*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 244-320.

other hand, were not only able to transcend the differences of biraderi and sect within the intermediate strata, but were also able to mitigate the disadvantages of their class. Winning a national election, where most members of the intermediate strata did not get a vote, was an indication of the broader appeal of their politics.

With the anti-Ahmadi campaign, the Ahrar had also struck upon a form of political action that the government was more willing to tolerate. Unlike their activities in princely states and in Congress civil disobedience, the government was not inclined to suppress the Qadian Conference despite Ahmadi uproar. The Governor of Punjab argued that since this was a religious matter "our attitude is and must be one of impartiality."[75] But their amiability to the conference had as much to do with upholding religious freedom as it did with the fact that the conference was not challenging the government. In keeping with its insistence on 'neutrality', the governor only instructed the local administration to maintain law and order, which in turn increased police presence in Qadian and forbade Mahmud Ahmad from holding a counterdemonstration.[76] These purportedly neutral actions were interpreted as a serious blow by the Ahmadis, who were prevented from responding to the Ahrar challenge on their home turf.

Bukhari was eventually arrested for his offensive speeches but only after a boy tried to assassinate Mahmud Ahmad the month after the conference.[77] Even then, in the lengthy court cases that followed the arrest, the Ahrar were able to find sympathetic judges. G.D. Khosla, a sessions judge who heard Bukhari's appeal of the

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[75] Emerson to Butler, 7 January 1935, IOR L/P&J/7/751, NDC.
[76] Dard to Butler, 21 February 1935, IOR L/P&J/7/751, NDC.
[77] Extract from fortnightly report for the second half of November, 1934, Punjab, IOR L/P&J/7/751, NDC.

six month prison sentence, reduced the sentence to a symbolic one.[78] In the months after the conference, too, the Ahrar were able to pursue their anti-Ahmadi campaign without much protest from the government. They carried out a vitriolic pamphlet war with the Ahmadis, publishing tracts with provocative names like "Was the Mirza a Man or a Woman" and "God's sexual intercourse with the Mirza".[79] In December 1934, during the Ahmadi's annual conference at Qadian, the Ahrar brought thousands of non-Ahmadis to offer Friday prayers in Qadian. This contentious performance adroitly took advantage of religious rights to challenge Ahmadi authority in the city.[80]

Thus, the Ahrar converged on a contentious performance that offered the possibility of redirecting—if not ending—the politics of disunion into a channel politically advantageous for anti-colonial Muslims. Instead of a Muslim political consensus against Hindus, they forged one against the elite as symbolized by the Ahmadis. By casting the Ahmadis as a religious threat, they were able to attract social activists to their cause, enhancing their own capacity for mobilization and offering a basis for reversing social and political fragmentation. As a result of their anti-Ahmadi politics, they avoided the trap of communitarianism, which limited scope for cross-communal alliances.

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[78] "Impressions of an Un-biased Non-Muslim Judge about Qadianism," 12, IOR L/P&J/7/751, NDC.
[79] Dard to Butler, 21 February 1935, IOR L/P&J/7/751, NDC.
[80] Dard to Butler, 21 February 1935, IOR L/P&J/7/751, NDC.

After their political success in 1934, the Ahrar settled in with plans of electoral alliances with Sikhs in the next provincial elections.[81] However, the Ahrar's success proved short-lived. In 1935, a controversy flared up between Muslims and Sikhs over the possession of the Shahidganj Mosque in Lahore. When activists turned to the Ahrar to lead a movement, they demurred. Hoping to avoid a confrontation with the Sikhs, they redoubled their anti-Ahmadi activities. However, the politics of disunion reasserted itself. Social activists, who had previously supported the Ahrar, abandoned their cause. People gathered outside their office in Lahore to abuse them.[82] Opponents quickly came forward to vilify them. Zafar Ali Khan, who spearheaded the movement, lost no opportunity to castigate the Ahrar. The Ahmadis also jumped into the fray, enthusiastically conducting anti-Ahrar propaganda.[83]

The mistake was reminiscent of their blunder supporting the Nehru Report. When the Ahrar finally joined the movement in 1937, their image had already been severely tarnished. In the provincial elections of 1937 they won only three seats. The disaster, which had been a result of their fixation with their anti-Ahmadi campaign, ironically made the Ahrar only more rigid in their anti-Ahmadi political platform. Their efforts to form an electoral alliance with the Muslim League failed because they were unwilling to compromise on their demand that League

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[81] Feroz Khan Noon to Fazli Husain, 20 July 1935, *Letters of Mian Fazl-i-Husain*, 410; Syed Nur Ahmad, *From Martial Law to Martial Law: Politics in the Punjab, 1919-1958* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985), 133-34.
[82] Noon to Husain, 20 July 1935, *Letters of Mian Fazl-i-Husain*, 410.
[83] Mirza, *Karavan-e-Ahrar*, vol. 2, 172, 236.

candidates swear to exclude Ahmadis from the Muslim community.[84] As the Pakistan Demand began to capture people's imagination in the Punjab after 1940, the Ahrar became all but irrelevant, slowly drifting back into the Congress camp and back to Indian nationalism.

In the face of humiliation in Qadian, Mahmud Ahmad shifted attention from Punjabi Muslim politics back to his community. In November and December 1934, he announced a nineteen-point program called Tehrik-e-Jadid or the New Scheme. Where Ahmadi resources before had been spent on Qadian, it was now resolved to renew the community's commitment to preaching. Ahmadis were to give one-third to one-fifth of their income to efforts combatting anti-Ahmadi propaganda and spreading their beliefs in India and abroad. Volunteers were called up to translate literature, make missionary tours and so on.[85] The turn to preaching was a way to reverse the community's demoralization and consolidate Mahmud Ahmad's shaken leadership. Tehrik-e-Jadid's emphasis on increasing Ahmadi numbers was also a consequence of the failure of a political appeal to the larger Muslim community.

Simultaneously, the program also sought to shore up Ahmadi control of Qadian and increase Ahmadi presence in the bureaucracy, returning to the old means of securing the community's influence. Ahmadis were told to build more houses in Qadian and relocate to the city. Those seeking government jobs for their children were asked to go through provincial Ahmadi committees. These committees were to decide which department their children should apply for so as

[84] Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty*, 374-75.
[85] Shahid, *Tarikh-i Ahmadiyyat*, vol. 7, 11-24.

to ensure Ahmadi presence in all the important arms of the government.[86] Another result of this renewed focus on the Ahmadi community was its internationalization. While Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and the Lahore Ahmadis had been interested in taking their message abroad, the Qadian Ahmadis began concerted efforts only after Tehrik-e-Jadid. Within three years, they had 22 foreign missions spread across the world, from Brazil to Australia.[87]

The limits of the Punjab's political system had been amply clarified for the Ahrar and the Ahmadis in the 1930s. The former saw the careful balancing act of its anti-Ahmadi politics, which offered a basis for united Muslim action and alliance with anti-colonial non-Muslims, smashed by the Punjab's unrestrained politics of disunion. The latter, too, were scorched in their attempt to claim leadership of Punjabi Muslims by dent of their influence. The Punjab's ferocious press and politicians, themselves shut out of the corridors of power, were unwilling to tolerate anyone else's ascendancy. After their disastrous experiments, the Ahrar and the Ahmadis edged back towards their old approaches. The former slunk back to the fold of nationalist Muslims, while the latter turned its attention back to less contentious bureaucratic channels of power. It was only after the Partition in 1947 that new opportunities and pressures transformed the fortunes of the Ahrar and the Ahmadis.

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[86] Shahid, *Tarikh-i Ahmadiyyat*, vol. 7, 21-24.
[87] *The Ahmadiyya Sect*, 24-25.

Chapter 3

Challenge from the Margins

Independence from the British, which the Ahrar had so doggedly pursued, proved to be disastrous for them when it finally arrived. As the British left on August 14, 1947, they handed power over to two sovereign states, India and Pakistan, and partitioned the provinces of Punjab and Bengal into non-Muslim majority Indian and Muslim majority Pakistani territories. The system of governance, which had already been weakened in the British scramble to leave, finally buckled. Banded individuals roamed the Punjab unchecked, wreaking destruction with impunity.[1] Multitudes of Punjabis of every creed were killed and many more fled to the relative safety of the part of Punjab dominated by their religious communities. When the Radcliffe Commission announced the contours of the new boundary line, the Ahrar leadership found itself on the wrong side, in the Indian territory of East Punjab. Many lived in Amritsar, which was severely affected by the violence. With the notable exception of Habib Rehman Ludhianvi, they all left for Pakistan.

While the Ahrar were safe in Pakistan, their political prospects could not have been worse. They were citizens of a state whose creation they had adamantly opposed and whose ruling party, the Muslim League, they openly loathed. They had condemned the Pakistan Resolution within a month of its passage.[2] A year later, in 1941, Afzal Haq had published two books denouncing Pakistan. He called League

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[1] For an analysis of Partition violence, see Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty*, 494-562. For an alternate explanation of the violence, see Gilmartin, "Partition, Pakistan, and South Asian History: In Search of a Narrative," *Journal of Asian Studies*, 57 (4): 1068-95, 1998.

[2] Punjab Police Secret Abstract of Intelligence (PPSAI), 20 April 1940, vol. lxii, no. 16, Government of the Punjab, 1947, NDC, Islamabad, 222.

leader, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, "a ruthless terrorist [who] has thrown a bomb amidst us."[3] Haq was certain that the Pakistan demand was a ploy of Muslim capitalists to perpetuate their hold over the Muslim community.[4] This impression was confirmed by the League's alliance with sections of the Punjab's landed elite since 1937. Falling back on their old claims of moral and religious superiority to the elite, the Ahrar denounced Jinnah, whom Pakistan supporters adoringly called Quaid-e-Azam or the Great Leader, as Kafir-e-Azam or the Great Infidel. Pakistan, Muslim League's Land of the Pure, was decried as Palidistan or Land of the Impure.[5]

The effort was all for naught. The Pakistan demand swept irrepressibly through the Punjab. In the elections of 1945-46, the League's politics of the religious community vanquished the Unionist's politics of the tribe, succeeding where the Ahrar had failed repeatedly.[6] Muslim landholders and Sufi pirs, who had historically allied with the Unionists, switched allegiances to the League, bringing with them money and votes. Social and religious activists from the intermediate strata, like Barelwi ulema and student activists, rallied to the League, too.[7] Rural and urban Muslims came together to vote for the Pakistan demand, ushering Leaguers into 75 of the 86 seats reserved for Muslims.

But the change in the idiom of Punjabi Muslim politics and the transcendence of the urban-rural divide did not signal an end to the landed elites' stranglehold on

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[3] Haq, *Pakistan and Untouchability* (Lahore: Maktaba-e-Urdu, 1943), 1.
[4] Haq, *Tarikh-e-Ahrar*, 262-63.
[5] Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty*, 450.
[6] The argument in this paragraph has been explicated in great detail in Gilmartin, *Empire and Islam*, 189-224.
[7] A detailed analysis of the election of 1945-46 in the Punjab can be found in Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty*, 449-71.

Punjabi politics. Landholders held great influence in the League and received many of the party's tickets. Despite the new appeal to Islam and the Muslim community, the landholders' biraderi connections continued to play a decisive role in securing votes, boding poorly for the political future of the Ahrar and the intermediate strata in the new state of Pakistan. The shift to the politics of religious community merely aligned the Punjabi Muslim elite with the League in negotiations with the British and the Congress over the future shape of the center.

On March 8, 1947, the Congress called for the partition of Punjab on religious lines, thereby abandoning its Punjabi Muslim allies. Stung by the turn of events, the Ahrar working committee convened on March 23-24, where it excoriated the Congress on the count that "it had shown its communal hoof and had disregarded the sufferings of the Nationalist Muslims."[8] The committee passed a resolution dissociating itself from the Congress and calling on Muslim parties to unite to oppose the partition of the Punjab.[9] However, switching sides at this late hour meant that by the time of Partition, the party was in complete shambles.

After the creation of Pakistan, debates raged within the Ahrar on its attitude towards the League government. Sheikh Hissamuddin wanted to continue opposing Pakistan and the Muslim League but Bukhari, who after Afzal Haq's death in 1942, had become the leading figure of the party, disagreed. Recognizing the center's impatience with any political threat, he suggested that the Ahrar become a religious

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[8] PPSAI, 23 March 1947, vol. lxix, no. 13, 143.
[9] PPSAI, 23 March 1947, vol. lxix, no. 13, 143.

organization and take its political lead from the League.[10] Sheikh Hissamuddin's arrest "because his loyalty to Pakistan was questioned" seems to have impressed the need for caution upon the more aggressive Ahrar.[11] By January 1949, when the Ahrar's first conference was held in Pakistan, Bukhari's approach won out. The conference was called the Difa-i-Pakistan or Defense of Pakistan Ahrar Conference. Hissamuddin announced that with the British gone, the Ahrar's job was done. In the future, they would focus only on religious reform and an anti-Ahmadi campaign.[12] Thus, the Ahrar eschewed formal electoral politics and fell back on religious contentious performances like the ones deployed in their contest with the Ahmadis in 1934. Those performances had the advantage of allowing a direct appeal to their constituency, without unsettling the government.

Their disavowal of politics paid off. On May 1, 1949, the Ahrar publicly demanded the expulsion of Ahmadis from the Muslim community for the first time in Pakistan.[13] Thereafter, they held a string of Tabligh or Preaching Conferences around the Punjab, in the districts of Montgomery, Lyallpur, Jhang, Sialkot, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Jhelum, and Multan. The conferences were opportunities to heap abuse on the Ahmadis and on Zafrulla Khan, who was now Pakistan's foreign minister. But both the government and the League were largely content that the Ahrar had ceased to insult Jinnah and Pakistan. In December 1949, the Pakistan

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[10] Janbaz Mirza, *Hayat-i Amir Shariat* (Lahore: Maktaba Tabsara Lahore, 1970), 312-13.
[11] Muhammad Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry Constituted Under Punjab Act II of 1954 to Enquire into the Punjab Disturbances of 1953* (Lahore: Government Printing, Punjab, 1954), 19.
[12] Mirza, *Hayat-i Amir Shariat*, 320-27.
[13] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 15.

Muslim League working committee removed the Ahrar's name from the list of organizations that its members could not join.[14]

Like its colonial predecessor, the Pakistani government was less concerned with policing self-purported religious organizations than it was with political ones, even in cases when the distinction between the two was not readily apparent. On March 12, 1949, the government had passed the Objectives Resolution, which was to serve as a guideline for constitution framers. The resolution promised, "Muslims shall be enabled to order their lives in individual and collective spheres in accord with the teachings and requirements of Islam."[15] This, among other clauses of the resolution, was perceived to be indicative of the government's acquiescence to the Islamic constitution lobby. In the face of mounting opposition and a deadlock over the constitution, the League government had hoped to pacify this lobby and brush up its Islamic credentials.[16] The result was that religious activists were encouraged while the government's ability to limit religious contentious performances was reduced.

While all players, within and without the government, subscribed to the dichotomy between the religious and political spheres, it was in discussions at the provincial level between law enforcement officials, the Punjab government, and Ahrar leaders that the boundaries of the religious sphere and forms of legitimate contentious performance were negotiated. DIG CID Anwar Ali and IG Police Qurban

[14] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 13.
[15] Pakistan, *Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates*, vol. V, no. 1 (Karachi: Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, 1949), 1.
[16] Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule: The Origins of Pakistan's Political Economy of Defence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 284-85.

Ali Khan were wary of the Ahrar's contentious performance, while the government was reluctant to take action against them. Anwar Ali argued that "the atmosphere aroused by Ahrar leaders [was] pregnant with dangerous possibilities and may lead to individual cases of violence against Ahmadis."[17] While the government agreed that acts inciting violence were not to be condoned, it found that "the Ahrar were not advocating violence in their speeches but merely attacking the Ahmadiya faith." Religious contentious performance, in its eyes, was acceptable and stopping the Ahrar from it would only "enhance the popularity of the Ahrar and make them martyrs."[18] When the Governor of Punjab met with the President of the Ahrar, Tajuddin Ansari, he explicitly spelled out acceptable and unacceptable action. He instructed Ansari to restrict his party to "legitimate criticisms of the religious beliefs of Ahmadis" and refrain from "creat[ing] hatred against the Pakistan Government."[19]

On May 25, 1952, after the count of violence mounted, law enforcement officials prevailed upon the government to ban Ahrar meetings. Thereafter, the Ahrar seriously began to negotiate acceptable contentious performance. On July 11, 1952, Maulvi Muhammad Ali Jullundhri, an Ahrar leader, sent the Home Secretary a letter seeking clarifications on the ban. He wanted to know whether speeches on tardid-e-mirzaeeat and masala-e-khatm-e-nubuwwat—refutation of Ahmadi belief and the problem of the finality of prophethood—were permissible. The response was that there was no restriction on "assemblies in and outside the mosques for… the exposition of the doctrine of *khatm-e-nubuwwat* or any other religious doctrine."

[17] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 21-22.
[18] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 22.
[19] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 23-24.

The ban only forbade meetings organized by the Ahrar and the Ahmadis so as to stop the preaching of violence and prevent "breach of peace between different religious sects under the garb of religion."[20] Thus, permissible performances were deemed religious but impermissible performances—those threatening the government or promoting violence—were only politics masquerading under "the garb of religion. Knowing the fluidity between the religious and the political, the non-violent and the violent, the government still upheld the false distinction, legitimizing the former and proscribing the latter. This encouraged the anti-Ahmadi campaign to express itself as a campaign for khatm-e-nubuwwat.

Arriving on an acceptable form of action was not the same as adhering to it. The Ahrar continued to push the laid out limits but the Punjab government was reluctant to police the anti-Ahmadi campaign. On June 19, 1952, the government decided to only arrest prominent leaders of the Ahrar who were in contravention of the ban, allowing Ahrar workers and other participants to go free if they offered an apology.[21] On July 21, 1952, it lifted the ban on the assurance that the Ahrar would behave themselves.[22] As a result, the Ahrar and anti-Ahmadi campaigners became bolder. In July and August, as the pressure on the Ahmadi community built, reports of Ahmadis converting or fleeing to their center in Rabwah started to stream in. A movement to boycott Ahmadis picked up pace, even as violence against Ahmadi persons and property rose.

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[20] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 68-69.
[21] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 61-62.
[22] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 89-92.

The provincial government had, in fact, been lenient with the Ahrar from the start. The Ahrar had campaigned for the provincial League during the Punjab elections in March 1951.[23] At the time, the government had been in serious trouble, having to face the public at the polling booth when its reputation was at an all time low and the League organization was nothing more than "a sacred fossil."[24] Faced with millions of refugees and runaway inflation, it had done little more than intrigue and line its pockets.[25] Now the powerful landlord, Mumtaz Daultana, who was the Chief Minister of Punjab and President of the Punjab League had to lead his party in an election, which for the first time was to be based on universal franchise.

Thus, Daultana had turned to the Ahrar and their able rhetoricians. He had hoped that an appeal to Islam and the Muslim community would gloss over the League's tenure in government pursuing particularistic interests. To give substance to his campaign, Daultana had promised very mild land reforms, which would guarantee tenancy rights of refugee farmers, who were ever at risk of losing their land to big aggrandizing landlords.[26] His efforts seemed to have done the trick. The League bagged the elections and even won 15 out of 23 seats in the urban areas, where anti-League sentiment was rife.[27]

Victory, however, had been short-lived. Daultana's new government was as before dominated by landlords, making land reforms a challenging proposition.

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[23] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 29; Shahid, *Tarikh-i Ahmadiyyat*, vol. 14, 452.
[24] Nishtar to Liaquat Ali Khan, 27 August 1950, 2(2)-PMS/49, Prime Minister's Secretariat Files, NDC, Islamabad. The term was used by Abdul Wahid Khan in "The Punjab Surveyed-III," *Dawn*, 4 February 1951.
[25] Mudie to Liaquat Ali Khan, 10 January 1949, 2(2)-PMS/49, PMS Files.
[26] Jalal, *State of Martial Rule*, 146-48.
[27] *Dawn*, 1 April 1951. The League's success in the urban areas, however, does lend credence to charges of rigging. Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule*, 148.

When Daultana pressed the issue, he was met with furious opposition. The landed elite refused to relinquish its privileges and retaliated by hoarding wheat. By the middle of 1952, there was a grave food crisis in the province with its attendant political fallout and social discontent. The center turned a deaf ear to Daultana's cries for help, ignoring even his appeal for importing wheat.[28] Daultana's relationship with the center frayed further because of disagreements over the shape of the new constitution. While the center wanted a federal form of government, the Punjab preferred a unitary form, where its voice would not be swamped by other provinces.[29] Unpopular with the public and abandoned by his allies, Daultana decided to give the Ahrar free rein in the hope that their anti-Ahmadi campaign would distract the public from an ever-growing list of problems.

Within days of his reversing the ban on Ahrar meetings, Daultana joined the anti-Ahmadi bandwagon. The Punjab Muslim League, of which he was president, passed a resolution affirming the doctrine of khatm-e-nubuwwat and proposing that "the Ahmadis who have a fundamental difference of attitude on a question of faith, should be classed as a non-Muslim minority in the Constitution of Pakistan."[30] Daultana now launched on a tour of his province, attempting to outdo the Ahrar in his fervent proclamations of allegiance to khatm-e-nubuwwat.[31] Newspapers controlled by the Punjab government also joined the anti-Ahmadi campaign.[32] The strategy was to "canalize" the campaign towards Karachi, thereby redirecting

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[28] Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule*, 148-51. See also *Dawn*, 6 December 1952.
[29] Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule*, 174-75; *Dawn*, 27 December 1952; Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 285.
[30] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 96.
[31] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 97-99.
[32] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 107-8.

discontent in the Punjab away from his government and destabilizing the central government, which had been so unsympathetic towards Daultana's predicament. Even as Daultana and the Punjab League professed their commitment to khatm-e-nubuwwat, they emphasized that the final decision lay with the center, hinting that the Ahrar turn their attention and energy in that direction.[33]

Uniting Behind Khatm-e-Nubuwwat

Channeling social discontent into the anti-Ahmadi campaign proved very effective. Part of the reason was that all other forms of social and political action were strictly proscribed by the state. Communists were already under close surveillance and when Inayatullah Mashriqi of the Khaksar tried to lead protests, he was immediately arrested by the Punjab government.[34] The other reason for the anti-Ahmadi campaign's success was its suitability to the concerns of the public. When the Governor General had visited Lahore in February 1952, the local Leagues had complained about two things, the shortage of flour and the deadlock with India over Kashmir.[35] The anti-Ahmadi campaign was able to offer Ahmadis as scapegoats for both the economic and political grievances.

After partition, Ahmadis had done exceptionally well for themselves even though they lost their religious and administrative center, Qadian, to India. With amazing swiftness, they had set up a temporary headquarters in Lahore in August 1947. Departments of resettlement and trade were established to assist Ahmadi

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[33] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 97.
[34] Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution: the Jama'at-i Islami of Pakistan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 133.
[35] Amin to Ali Asghar, 30 March 1952, 1(1)-PMS/52, PMS Files.

refugees with finding new residence and employment.[36] By June 1948, they had purchased 1,034 acres of barren land from the government for 12,000 rupees.[37] This remote swath of land by the Chenab River became their new center, Rabwah, a closed city inhabited only by Ahmadis. By 1954, Rabwah had been transformed from a wasteland into a prosperous town with a population of 45,000.[38] In addition to Ahmadi money and organization, their connections in the government could not but have helped in resettlement. Zafrulla was the most prominent Ahmadi in government but there were many others in the civil services and the armed forces. For example, Zafrulla's brother was deputy custodian of evacuee property and another Ahmadi, Nazir Ahmad, was a general in the army.[39]

It was easy for the Ahrar to channel the resentment of the Punjabi lower and middle classes towards the Ahmadi community. After all, many were still struggling to reestablish their lives after Partition and to make ends meet in the current economic crisis without any help from the government, even as Ahmadis flourished. In a speech at Muridke in May 1952, Bukhari said:

> Mirzais are slowly taking over the country. Thousands of refugees from Kashmir and East Punjab are suffering in Pakistan. They are longing for bread. They are starving in this country but look at the Mirzais. They have seized shops, workshops, and huge factories. They have been allotted thousands of acres of land. The estate of Rabwah, Mehmudabad, Zafar Estate—what haven't they got with the support of the British.[40]

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[36] Shahid, *Tarikh-i Ahmadiyyat*, vol. 10, 94-95.
[37] Shahid, *Tarikh-i Ahmadiyyat*, vol. 10, 294.
[38] Iain Adamson, *A Man of God: The Life of Khalifatul Masih IV* (Bristol: G. Shepherd, 1990), 49.
[39] Zafrulla Khan, Wayne Wilcox, Ainslie Embree, *The Reminiscences of Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan* (Ontario: Oriental Publishers, 2004), 239.
[40] Sayyid Ataullah Shah Bukhari, and Janbaz Mirza, *Khutbat-i Amir-i Shariat* (Lahore: Maktabah-i Tabassurah, 1967), 107.

Rabwah, especially, became a symbol of perceived discrimination and a lightning rod for economic grievances. The expropriation of Rabwah became a key demand of the anti-Ahmadi campaign, along with the dismissal of Ahmadis from all government posts.

On the matter of Kashmir, the Ahrar had a perfect scapegoat in Zafrulla Khan. He was accused of deliberately having "sunk the boat of Kashmir," trading it with India for Qadian.[41] Where during colonial times, Ahrar had largely tarred the Ahmadis as colonial collaborators, they now painted them as Indian spies as well. In his speeches, Bukhari regularly said, "There is one enemy in front of us on the border; there is another in our midst. You are unaware of the snake which is hiding in your sleeve. I have said it time and again the Ahmadis are not loyal to Pakistan."[42] Mahmud Ahmad was said to be conspiring to reunite the country with India.[43] The arrest of Nazir Ahmad in the Rawalpindi Conspiracy Case of March 1951 was taken as proof of Ahmadi machinations.[44]

Hand in hand with the threat of political and economic control went the fear of Ahmadi proselytization. It was held that Ahmadis were using their official positions to spread their creed. An anti-Ahmadi orator, Muhammad Ali Jullundri, said at a meeting in Montgomery that Zafrulla had used state money to buy a mansion in America to preach Ahmadiyyat.[45] Bukhari held that "on many occasions, Ahmadi officials presided over public meetings where they preached disbelief and

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[41] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 304.
[42] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 304.
[43] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 304.
[44] Bukhari, *Khutbat-i Amir-i Shariat*, 48.
[45] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 28.

apostasy." That the government took no action proved that "the government itself [was] preaching Ahmadiyyat."[46]

At the heart of the campaign was the figure of the Prophet. It was his figure that Ahrar orators constantly returned to. Devotion to the Prophet was to unite and mobilize people in this campaign. Bukhari disputed the official notion that this issue was one between Ahmadis and Ahrars. It was a matter of importance for the entire Muslim world. However, even if no one else stepped up, according to Bukhari, "every single Ahrar will perish but we will not let anyone lay a finger on the dignity of Muhammad and the honor of his prophethood."[47] Muhammad had to be defended because "if Muhammad exists, then God exists; if Muhammad exists, then the Quran exists; if Muhammad exists, then faith exists; if Muhammad does not exist, then nothing exists."[48]

It was in this cauldron of the anti-Ahmadi campaign that a popular conception of Pakistan nationalism was forged. Using the figure of the Ahmadi, who symbolized the elite, the heretic, and the traitor, as a foil, the Ahrar cast their lower middle class Punjabi supporters as the everyman, the Muslim, and the Pakistani. In one of his speeches, Bukhari bellowed, "Muslims gave all sorts of sacrifices for the establishment of Pakistan, but why are the Ahmadis ruling over us now."[49] In the very next breath, he declared, "We have been defending this religion for 1,400 years. We will not bend to anyone."[50] This slippage between political and religious,

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[46] Bukhari, *Khutbat-i Amir-i Shariat*, 115.
[47] Bukhari, *Khutbat-i Amir-i Shariat*, 111.
[48] Bukhari, *Khutbat-i Amir-i Shariat*, 108.
[49] Bukhari, *Khutbat-i Amir-i Shariat*, 148.
[50] Bukhari, *Khutbat-i Amir-i Shariat*, 148.

Pakistan and Islam, Pakistani and Muslim gave the Ahrar formulations their potency while exposing the redundancy of the government's dichotomy between the political and religious spheres. If Pakistan was a homeland for Muslims, it was for them—the real Muslims, the real Pakistanis—rather than Ahmadi interlopers and their elite collaborators in the government. This popular nationalism was captured most succinctly in the slogans of the campaign: ""Down with those disloyal to Pakistan", "Down with traitors to Pakistan", "Long live Pakistan", "Down with Mirza Bashiruddin", "Down with Ahmadiyyat"."[51]

However, there was more to the success of the anti-Ahmadi campaign than their fiery speeches and popular nationalism. The response it received had much to do with its ability to swing the petty ulema and bazaar elements operating in urban areas, in the neighborhoods of the lower-middle classes, behind it. These social activists were more interested in power in the locality than in constitutional change. The anti-Ahmadi campaign offered them a new basis for social cohesion and local leadership. Cast as a campaign for khatm-e-nabuwwat, it could transcend the differences of clan, sect, and refugee status, uniting the disparate peoples of the intermediate strata under the devotional figure of Muhammad.

On March 24-25, 1952, the Ahrar held an Istehkam-e-Pakistan Ahrar Conference in Sargodha. The conference was organized and funded by a local man, a bookseller, Maulvi Muhammad Abdullah Ahrari. He arranged for Bukhari and other Ahrar leaders to speak at the event, which was attended by some 1,000 to 2,000 people. The familiar anti-Ahmadi speeches and resolutions were made. Ahmadis

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[51] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 28.

were declared *zindiqs*, liable to be killed, and traitors to the country. Bukhari rallied people around the figure of Muhammad, saying, "We will give our lives, but will not let harm come to the prophethood of the Prophet."[52]

Thereafter, the cause was taken over by aspiring leaders of the bazaar, who, despite their differing professional and clan associations, were able to coordinate a united response and assert leadership in their locality. The leaders were Maulvi Muhammad Abdullah, the bookseller, Maulvi Saleh Muhammad, a teacher at a local madrassah, Abdur Rashid Ashk, the editor of a small local newspaper, and Maulvi Muhammad Shafi, the khatib of Sargodha's Jamia Masjid. Of the six additional leaders identified, two were Arain, one Kashmiri, and another Gujrati. Among them were a tailor, a shopkeeper, and a wood merchant.[53] The composition of the leadership indicates the sponsorship of the bazaar, its nexus with religious specialists, and the campaign's ability to transcend biraderi ties.

These leaders organized an anti-Ahmadi procession, without the support of the Ahrar, three days after the conference. The procession started after the Friday prayer from the Gol Chowk Mosque and made its way through Bansanwala Bazaar and Katchery Bazaar, with participants shouting familiar slogans like "Down with Sir Zafrulla," "Down with Mirza Bashir Ahmad," and "Down with Ahmadiyyat." The procession culminated in a meeting of about 500 people at the Municipal Gardens.[54] Its itinerary cartographically confirms the connection between the bazaar and the mosque in the anti-Ahmadi campaign. The event also demonstrates that by

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[52] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 48.
[53] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 40-42.
[54] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 40-41.

sponsoring and continuing the anti-Ahmadi campaign in their locality, these disparate figures of the bazaar were staking a claim for local leadership on the basis of these new forms of patriotism and piety, which transcended the differences of clan and sect.

The campaign also offered other opportunities of social and economic power to bazaar elements. Shopkeepers in many towns and cities enthusiastically embraced the call to boycott Ahmadis so as to ruin successful Ahmadi shopkeepers and businessmen. In Gujranwala, non-Ahmadi shopkeepers put up signs encouraging the boycott of Ahmadi shops. Picketers prevented customers from making purchases at Ahmadi businesses. The boycott severely affected Ahmadi businesses and worked to the advantage of their competitors.[55]

Thus, these competitions for leadership, business, and power in the localities helped fuel the anti-Ahmadi campaign across the province. As in Sargodha, the Ahrar were invited to speak in other towns and cities on the initiative of local leaders. Of the 390 public meetings held before the army was called in on March 6, 1953, only 167, or about 40 percent, were arranged exclusively by the Ahrar.[56] The participation of local bazaar leaders has been discussed above. Additionally, religious specialists of important towns and cities feature prominently in government documents as key local leaders.[57] CID Punjab identified these petty ulema as the fifth column of the campaign, "who consider[ed] it a merit to keep the

[55] Shahid, *Tarikh-i Ahmadiyyat*, vol. 15, 47.
[56] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 99.
[57] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 110.

religious controversies alive from their individual quarters and pulpits."[58] The petty ulema's local influence and their interest in local contests of power and religious controversies made them enthusiastic and important participants in the anti-Ahmadi movement.[59]

The anti-Ahmadi campaign's unifying function did not operate on the local level alone. On the national level, too, the campaign produced a broad-based alliance cutting across sectarian lines. On July 13, 1952, an All Muslim Parties Convention was held in Lahore to decide on a plan of action to defend the doctrine of khatm-e-nubuwwat. Some sixty religious leaders were invited. Among them were leading religious intellectuals like Syed Sulaiman Nadvi, the head of the Board of Talimat-e-Islamia, appointed by the central government to give a religious point of view on the constitution making effort. The conference decided to pursue three demands: the declaration of Ahmadis as a constitutional minority, the removal of Zafrulla from the post of Foreign Minister, and the dismissal of Ahmadis from all key posts of the state.[60]

The convention also agreed to form a Majlis-e-Amal, or Council of Action, to chart out the future program of action. Its president belonged to the Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan, a Barelwi political party. Its vice president was a leader of Jamaat-e-Islami, an Islamist party founded and led by Maulana Abul Ala Maududi. Its members belonged to various religious and political organizations including the Majlis-e-Ahrar, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, Jamiat Ahl-e-Hadith, Idara Tahaffuz Haquq-e-Shia,

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[58] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 52.
[59] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 60.
[60] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 79.

Tanzeem Ahl-e-Sunnat wal Jamaat, and Anjuman Sajjada Nashinan-e-Punjab.[61] These organizations variously represented Barelwis, Deobandis, Ahl-e-Hadith, Shia, and Sufi interests. Their coming together on one platform was no small feat. These organizations were not known for their amicable relationships and had many ongoing disagreements and disputes. Here, too, the doctrine of khatm-e-nubuwwat offered a basis of cooperation, fostering opposition to the Ahmadis but also offering an opportunity for amity among other sects.

Nonetheless, the reasons behind the participation of leading religious leaders in the anti-Ahmadi campaign were complex. Since the Ahrar started the campaign in 1949, they had largely been on their own. Many of the leading religious intellectuals were more invested in working with the government to produce a constitution that was Islamic in form and guaranteed a position of influence for them.[62] The Ahrar's grassroots campaigning was not of great interest to them. In May 1952, anti-Ahmadi activists disrupted a prominent Ahmadi meeting in Karachi where Zafrulla Khan was speaking.[63] This catapulted the campaign from the urban areas of Punjab to the national political stage. Its political possibilities brought the leading religious figures on board, especially once Prime Minister Khwaja Nazimuddin's soft corner for the anti-Ahmadi campaign became known.

Initially, the Majlis-e-Amal favored a strategy of persuasion rather than confrontation. Deputations were dispatched to Nazimuddin and Daultana but while both were sympathetic, neither was willing to accede to their demands. On January

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[61] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 79-80.
[62] For their involvement in constitution making, see Leonard Binder, *Religion and Politics in Pakistan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961).
[63] Shahid, *Tarikh-i Ahmadiyyat*, vol. 14, 120-30.

16-18, 1953, another All Muslim Parties Convention was held in Karachi. The group favoring confrontation won out. It was resolved that they would launch a program of direct action against the government within a month if their demands were not met. Furthermore, Nazimuddin's resignation was called for along with a complete boycott of Ahmadis.[64] The deferential attitude originally counseled by Bukhari was abandoned. Preparations in the Punjab began to pick up. Volunteers were enlisted for direct action and speeches were made almost every night.[65] By February 26, 1953, the government had not caved. The Majlis-e-Amal now announced the launch of direct action the next day. It was decided that jathas of five would be dispatched to the Prime Minister and Governor General's houses to non-violently court arrest.[66]

With the government facing a direct challenge, calls for action grew louder within the federal cabinet. The Interior Ministry, which had been wary of the anti-Ahmadi campaign from the beginning, issued a scathing memo.[67] The campaign, it argued, was "an emphatic assertion of power under the cloak of religion to manoeuvre firmly for a position of authority in the future political set-up of the country. The gauntlet has been thrown down; will the Government pick it up?"[68] But unwilling to countenance the arrest of the ulema, Nazimuddin continued to drag his

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[64] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 131-32.
[65] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 140-43.
[66] Mirza, *Hayat-i Amir Shariat*, 360.
[67] In 1951 and 1952, the Interior Ministry had penned strong memos to provincial and local administrators to curb "religious controversies." G. Ahmed, 2 July 1952, 50/CF/53, Cabinet Files, NDC, Islamabad.
[68] G. Ahmed, "Anti-Ahmadi agitation," 24 February 1953, 50/CF/53.

feet. Finally, hours before the launch of direct action, the Cabinet strong-armed the Prime Minister and issued orders for the arrest of the Majlis-e-Amal leaders.[69]

With the arrests, the situation in Karachi was quickly brought under control, but in the Punjab, Daultana refused to take decisive action. In the week that followed, the government played "a cat and mouse game" with the anti-Ahmadi activists.[70] In Lahore, the police only broke up demonstrations. If arrests were made, the detainees were taken outside city limits and released. In contravention of orders from the center, Punjab did little to prevent jathas from leaving for Karachi.[71] Daultana's hope was to channel the campaign towards Karachi.

But with the arrest of the Majlis-e-Amal leaders, a new cadre stepped up. Maulana Abdus Sattar Khan Niazi, a former Leaguer but now virulent opponent of the Punjab government, took charge. Niazi was an Awami Leaguer and a member of the Punjab Assembly. He was more eager to turn the campaign against the Punjab government, rather than the center. Arguing pragmatism, he suggested abandoning direct action against the center in favor of localized protests in the districts and a movement against the Punjab government in Lahore.[72] Wazir Khan Mosque, located in the old city near the Delhi Gate, became the center of the campaign in Lahore, turned into a veritable fortress, complete with an electrified fence and passcodes.[73]

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[69] Zafrulla Khan, *Sir Muhammad Zafrulla Khan*, 242-43.
[70] "Statement by the Cabinet Secretary on the Punjab Situation made before the Cabinet on 10.3.1953," 1, 50/CF/53.
[71] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 354.
[72] Abdus Sattar Khan Niazi, *Mein Maulana Abdus Sattar Khan Niazi* (Lahore, Atishfishan Publications, 1991), 29-31.
[73] Niazi, *Mein Maulana Abdus Sattar Khan Niazi*, 31.

In the meantime, the press fueled rumors about Ahmadi rampages, government orchestrated massacres in Jhang and Sargodha, and police desecration of the Quran, thus sowing confusion and fueling the movement.[74] On March 4, 1953, Deputy Superintendent of Police Syed Firdaus Shah was beaten and stabbed to death by protesters outside the Delhi Gate. By this time, the government had lost its authority in the old city. When the police finally began to use armed force to disperse protesters, the situation only deteriorated. There was a spike in acts of violence. Where before, the protests had largely centered on the bazaar, now college students and civil servants joined, too.[75] By the morning of March 6, the Inspector General of Police thought the situation to be "something of the nature of a 'revolution'."[76] It was at this point, when the situation seemed completely out of control, that martial law was declared. This marked the beginning of the end of a carefully orchestrated challenge to the government by activists from the intermediate strata, who, denied space in the formal institution of politics, had resorted to ostensibly religious contentious performance to wrest a share of power.

Performing Violence: The Influence of Partition and the State

It took the army weeks to suppress the protests. Lahore, Sialkot, Gujranwala, Rawalpindi, Lyallpur, and Montgomery were all affected. According to reports, six Ahmadis were killed, eight wounded, and 187 renounced their faith. Forty-five men were killed by law enforcement personnel and hundreds more injured. One police officer and two army men lost their lives and another 59 sustained injuries. Seventy-

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[74] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 156.
[75] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 159-63.
[76] "Statement by the Cabinet Secretary," 3, 50/CF/53.

one Ahmadi houses and shops were burnt, causing a loss of more than 1.2 million rupees. Damage to government property was to the tune of 0.16 million rupees. All in all, the police and army arrested 10,353 persons under various laws.[77] Both the central and provincial governments were severely damaged. Nazimuddin dismissed Daultana's government soon after the army was brought in. He was dismissed himself a month later. On May 14, martial law finally came to an end.

Presented as such, the anti-Ahmadi campaign appears to be an episode of unmitigated violence and destruction. In the run up to the martial law, official documents, memos, and announcements also increasingly revolved around the campaign's "lawlessness."[78] The court of inquiry appointed afterwards to probe "the Punjab Disturbances of 1953" reaffirmed this impression. Its description of the protests is worth quoting at length to give a sense of how the event was remembered, at least, in official memory. The report states:

> Vast multitudes of human beings who in ordinary times were sane, sensible citizens, had assumed the form of unruly hysterical mobs whose only impulse was to disobey the law and to bring constituted authority to its knees while based elements of society, having taken advantage of the prevailing disorder, were behaving like wild beasts killing people, robbing them of their possessions and burning valuable property either for the sake of fun or to spite a fancied enemy.[79]

It is difficult to ignore the sensationalism of this passage. The horror and hyperbole behind phrases like "hysterical mobs" and "wild beasts" were necessary to retroactively justify the martial law and play down the non-violent forms of protest that continued even after martial law.

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[77] Note by Qamarul Islam, 11 April 1953, 34/CN/53, Cabinet Files, NDC.
[78] "Statement by the Cabinet Secretary," 8-9, 50/CF/53.
[79] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 183-84.

The aim here is not to argue that the balance of the campaign lay in favor of violence or non-violence. Rather, it is to recover the whole range of contentious performances deployed in the campaign and expose official attempts at strategic remembrance of the events, which conveniently conceal its own complicity in permitting and producing the violence. We have already established that the emphasis on khatm-e-nubuwwat was a result of negotiations between the state, the public, and campaign leaders, and that it did important work to unite participants at the grassroots and at the leadership level. Probing the various forms of action will also shed light on the modalities of engagement and the motives behind participation of people, who are remembered in government documents largely as homogeneous crowds of fanatics.

First, it has to be pointed out that leaders of the campaign were acutely aware that their protest had to be non-violent for their movement to succeed. The Majlis-e-Amal chose non-violent jathabandi in small groups of five precisely to minimize the possibility of violence or disorder. The leadership that took charge after the Majlis-e-Amal's arrest was equally conscious of the importance of non-violence. In preparing jathas to march on various government buildings in Lahore, Niazi gave detailed instructions to avoid confrontation with the police. But when Firdaus Shah was killed, Niazi confesses in his autobiography that he knew the movement would fail.[80]

While the Munir Report has little to say about non-violent protest, the daily reports during martial law contain numerous mentions of such contentious

[80] Niazi, *Mein Maulana Abdus Sattar Khan Niazi*, 31-32.

performances in cities and towns outside Lahore. On March 10, 1953, for example, a large procession was taken out in Sheikhupura, which dispersed peacefully after 3,000 people courted arrest.[81] The next day, nine processions of about a thousand people each were taken out in Sialkot. All ended peacefully, even as 155 people courted arrest.[82] Jathabandi was carried out most enthusiastically in Sialkot but activists courted arrest in Gujranwala, Rawalpindi, Sargodha, Okara, and Wazirabad. Processions were taken out and meetings held in Lyallpur, Multan, and Jhang among other places. Strikes were also observed in various cities. Leaders and participants in the localities were equally conscious of the importance of non-violence. Direct action and peaceful protest did not end with the arrest of the Majlis-e-Amal or even with the advent of martial law.

However, violent contentious performances were also aplenty, indicating a disjuncture within a campaign that was largely committed to non-violence. One could explain the violence as the performance of a militant minority, but contentious performances tend to follow readily available local scripts and change only incrementally, raising further questions about the origin and development of these scripts.[83] Two forms of violent contentious performance prominent in 1953—arson and murder—were largely absent from the anti-Ahmadi campaign of the 1930s. In the time between these two campaigns, the greatest shift in repertoire occurred with the Partition violence. The contentious performances of 1947 are notorious for arson and murder. In Lahore, the Hindu and Sikh neighborhood, Shahalmi, which

[81] M. Hamid Ali, "Punjab Situation Report," 10 March 1953, 50/CF/53.
[82] Iskander Mirza, "Punjab Situation Report," 11 March 1953, 50/CF/53.
[83] See Charles Tilly, *Contentious Performances* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), xiii.

was coincidentally not far from Wazir Khan Mosque and the Delhi Gate in the old city, was burnt to the ground.[84] Hindus and Sikhs were also attacked and killed all over West Punjab. The police participated in these performances more often than it resisted them.[85] Struggles for social space and power found their outlet in violence as the state lost its authority during the transfer of power. Even after order had been restored, there was no meaningful state intervention. No reports were published. No participant was arrested. In remembering the violence, it was later glorified as carried out in defense of the community.[86] Thus, violent contentious performances found a place in the repertoire of protest without state opposition.

Yet there is something strange about the Ahrar's anti-Ahmadi campaign assuming the contentious performances of 1947, when, at that time, they had done their very best to stem the violence and protect Hindus.[87] This paradox is best understood with reference to the divergence of interests of the political and social activists. The Ahrar, other Majlis-e-Amal leaders, and even many at the grassroots were invested in constitutional change and a contest with the state, for which they understood non-violence to be paramount. However, the social activists who participated were often more interested in local struggles for social power where violent contentious performances were more effective and, after Partition violence, even intimately familiar. If in 1947, the pretext of the exclusion of non-Muslims from

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[84] Ian Talbot, *Divided Cities: Partition and its Aftermath in Lahore and Amritsar, 1947-1957* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2006), 44-46.
[85] Jalal, *Self and Sovereignty*, 556.
[86] Gyanendra Pandey has argued that Partition violence was in fact essential in giving shape to the community and the citizen that inhabited independent India and Pakistan. *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism, and History in India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
[87] Police Abstract of Intelligence West Pakistan, 4 October 1947, no. 41, 479.

the nation had allowed Muslim activists to violently wrest social space in the locality, in 1953, the demand to expel Ahmadis from the Muslim community allowed participants a similar manoeuver against Ahmadis.

The state and the judiciary's role in making violence in the name of religion more acceptable cannot be overstated. Religiously-based exhortations for violence were not uncommon during the colonial times. However, when violence was committed, the state acted decisively. The *Rangila Rasul* controversy is a case in point. When Ilmuddin murdered Rajpal, the courts awarded him the death penalty and refused to mitigate the punishment despite multiple appeals. The state's stance against murder in 1930 was unequivocal.

In October 1950, Muhammad Ashraf of Okara stabbed Maulvi Nur Din, an Ahmadi schoolteacher, to death after hearing anti-Ahmadi speeches. Having murdered Nur Din in a canal, Ashraf gloated to passers-by that he had killed a kafir.[88] Ashraf was awarded transportation for life by a sessions judge. On appeals before the high court, Nur Din's widow asked for an enhancement of the sentence, which the court rejected. Acknowledging Ilmuddin's case, the bench ruled that it would be hard in the light of precedent not to award a death sentence. However, that verdict, they held, was a pre-Partition case, influenced by administrative considerations. Today, they could not ignore that "the murder was not committed with any sordid motive and that the offender who is a youth of impressionable age, was made to believe that in the circumstances the murder had become an obligation

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[88] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 24-25.

which could earn religious merit."[89] Because he was "under the influence of his elders" who were advocating violence, and because his state of religious megalomania seemed to the court to resemble mental derangement or insanity, the normal sentence for murder was not implemented.[90]

The Punjab government had already refused to prosecute speechmakers for advocating violence, using the anti-Ahmadi campaign to serve their own agenda. The court refused to hold murderers accountable, finding that murder in the name of religion was less "sordid" than other murders. The state, thus, allowed violent contentious performances when they appealed to religion. When in March 1954, a sixteen year old boy, Abdul Hamid, stabbed Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, he was tried for a lesser crime and awarded only a five year prison sentence.[91]

Ultimately, the government was as complicit as the participants of the anti-Ahmadi campaign in the production of violent anti-Ahmadi contentious performance. Violence in the name of religion was normalized. The government was shaken out of its complacency only when the anti-Ahmadi campaign threatened to direct its energies against it. Ironically, it was the threat of non-violent direct action rather than the steady acts of violence against Ahmadis that mobilized the government. Later, it used those acts of violence, which it had initially tolerated, to justify its action against the campaigners.

Even after the army suppressed the campaign, the government only went after the political activists. The two people who received a death sentence were

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[89] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 27.
[90] Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*, 27.
[91] Details of the crime and the case can be found in Mirza Sultan Ahmad, *Silsilah-i Ahmadiyyah*, vol. 2 (Rabwah: Nazarat Isha'at Rabwah Pakistan, 2008), 439-56.

Niazi and Jamaat-e-Islami head Abul Ala Maududi. Niazi was notorious for his anti-government politics and had led the protests in Lahore. Maududi, however, was not very closely involved in the movement. His party was represented in the Majlis-e-Amal, but he had been reluctant to lead the campaign and had stayed almost entirely in the background.[92] In February, Maududi wrote a pamphlet, *Qadiani Masla*, or *The Qadiani Problem*. During martial law, this pamphlet was distributed widely to government and army officers in the hope of winning them over.[93] The army gave him the death penalty for this attempt to subvert the institutions of the. However, soon after martial law was lifted, most sentences were commuted and prisoners quickly released. Niazi and Maududi were both out of jail within two years.

Having finally moved against it, the government now did its best to portray the anti-Ahmadi campaign as a 'political' movement. In his speech before the National Assembly on March 19, 1953, Nazimuddin described the movement as the Ahrar's "method of coming back into the political field."[94] The government, however, was entirely aware that the Ahrar and other anti-Ahmadi activists had exploited the latitude given to religious performance to mount their political challenge. Behind the scenes, the government did its best to dissociate "the issue of khatam-e-nabuwat from the present agitation."[95] It published copious government propaganda to this effect and mulled employing preachers.[96] The effort was merely an attempt to reconstruct the boundary between acceptable religious activities and unacceptable

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[92] Niazi, *Mein Maulana Abdus Sattar Khan Niazi*, 29-30.
[93] Iskander Mirza, "Punjab Situation Report," 15 March 1953, 50/CF/53.
[94] "Prime Minister's Speech in Parliament," 4, 50/CF/53.
[95] Iskander Mirza, "Punjab Situation Report," 13 March 1953, 50/CF/53.
[96] "Working Paper Prepared by the Cabinet Secretariat and the Ministry of the Interior," Appendix C, undated, 50/CF/53.

political activities, which was thought to have been breached in 1953. However, this arbitrary boundary, which informed government response to various contentious performances, was what facilitated the anti-Ahmadi campaign in the first place. By shying away from bringing the 'religious' sphere firmly under state purview, the government helped preserve the transgressive quality of the anti-Ahmadi and khatm-i-nubuwwat issues.

For political activists who had participated in the campaign of 1949–53, it was a failure. Denied space in state and political institutions, these activists carved alternate channels of power. Initially they were met with official responses ranging from indifference to encouragement. The politicians in control at the center and provincial level were either unwilling to interfere with the anti-Ahmadi campaign or eager to use it to their advantage. However, when anti-Ahmadi activists tried to use these new channels to negotiate with the government, they were ignored at first. When they finally threatened the government, they were firmly put down.

Though a political failure, the campaign successfully entrenched the anti-Ahmadi movement in urban lower middle class localities. Popular forms of patriotism and piety centered on devotion to the Prophet gave members of the intermediate strata a basis for establishing local leadership and social cohesion, which transcended divisions of sect, clan, and origin. The connections forged between the mosque and the bazaar in urban localities also outlived the anti-Ahmadi campaign of 1949-53. After the coup in 1958, when the anti-Ahmadi movement lost much of its political potency, it was partly this unifying work of anti-

Ahmadi performance in the localities that ensured its sustenance as a primarily social and religious movement in the next decade.

Chapter 4

Transnational Constitution-Writing

The anti-Ahmadi campaign of 1951-53 had failed to declare Ahmadis a constitutional minority. Instead, the Ahrar, who had initiated the campaign, were banned. Conversely, in 1974, when a brawl in Rabwah between some college students and some Ahmadis triggered another round of countrywide anti-Ahmadi protests, the government succumbed. Sadia Saeed has explained this shift in terms of the ascendancy of political institutions. In 1953, politicians, most notably the Prime Minister, Khwaja Nazimuddin, were inclined to accede to Ahrar demands but the judiciary, bureaucracy, and military compelled them to take action against the Ahrar. By 1974, Saeed argues, Bhutto had firmly brought these arms of the state under political control, allowing him to transition unimpeded from a "state-centered language of stateness" to a "nation-centered language of stateness."[1] This explanation puts too much emphasis on the difference of opinion between the military and bureaucracy on the one hand and politicians on the other. More importantly, by attending solely to the state, Saeed neglects the transnational linkages, operating below and across the state, which were crucial to amending the constitution.[2]

Isabel Hofmeyr has proposed that historical processes are not simply "made in different places but that they are constructed in the movement between places,

[1] Sadia Saeed, "Politics of Exclusion: Muslim Nationalism, State Formation and Legal Representations of the Ahmadiyya Community in Pakistan" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 2010), ProQuest (AAT 3441621), 222-23.
[2] For a discussion on transnational history, see C.A. Bayly, Sven Beckert, Matthew Connely, Isabel Hofmeyr, Wendy Kozol, and Patricia Seed, "AHR Conversation: On Transnational History," *American Historical Review*, 111 (5): 1440-64, 2006.

sites, and regions."[3] She describes this as one of the key claims of the transnational method of history. This chapter makes the argument that the circulation of the ideas of the anti-Ahmadi movement and the growth of institutions and networks supporting these ideas, both within and without Pakistan, were decisive in reshaping the constitution. Thus far, close attention has been paid to the reliance of the anti-Ahmadi movement on social activists and their networks operating under the state's radar. After the failure of direct action in 1953, transnational movement across state borders became an important feature, too.

After 1953, the state no longer tolerated demands for the exclusion of Ahmadis. Unable to make claims on the state, the anti-Ahmadi movement directly addressed society at home and abroad. The Majlis Tahaffuz Khatm-e-Nubuwwat (MTKN), the purportedly apolitical successor to the Ahrar, was responsible for laying down grassroots organizations that popularized the ideas of the anti-Ahmadi movement at the local level. MTKN also took the anti-Ahmadi movement to Muslims in Britain, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. Jamaat-e-Islami's leader, Maududi, and other leading religious intellectuals turned to the transnational network of religious scholars and its supporter, Saudi Arabia. This network predated the nation state but as nation states lay roots across the Muslim world, it became an important alternate source of authority. The pressure that these transnational connections put on Bhutto's government, at a time when Pakistan's foreign policy was reorienting

[3] C.A. Bayly, "AHR Conversation: On Transnational History," 1444.

away from the United States and closer to the Muslim world, clinched the anti-Ahmadi movement's renewed demands for constitutional change in 1974.[4]

The Turn to the Transnational

In the aftermath of the martial law, the government's resolve to oppose anti-Ahmadi demands was strengthened. As we have seen, counterpropaganda was stepped up.[5] A Court of Inquiry was instituted to retroactively assert government authority. Supreme Court Justices Muhammad Munir and M.R. Kayani, who chaired the inquiry, summoned all involved parties to face the court's scrutiny. The report was a resounding indictment of the Ahrar's anti-Ahmadi politics and of the Punjab government's cynical encouragement of the movement. It also disparaged the religious intellectuals' vision of an Islamic state for its lack of coherence and came out strongly in favor of secular government.[6] Opponents were quick to challenge the inquiry's conclusions, but it nevertheless managed to establish a narrative that remained dominant in the coming decades.[7]

In the face of decisive political defeat, Ataullah Shah Bukhari, the guiding force behind the Ahrar, saw little use of continued involvement in politics. On being released from jail in 1954, he founded the Majlis Tahaffuz Khatm-e-Nubuwwat (MTKN) or the Party for the Protection of Khatm-e-Nubuwwat. This new

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[4] See Jalal, "An Uncertain Trajectory: Islam's Contemporary Globalization, 1971-1979," in *The Shock of the Global: the 1970s in Perspective*, ed. Niall Ferguson (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 2010).
[5] Appendix C, "Working paper prepared by the Cabinet Secretariat and the Ministry of the Interior, 50/CF/53, National Documentation Center, Islamabad.
[6] See Munir, *Report of the Court of Inquiry*. For an insightful critique of the Munir Report, see Asad Ahmed, "Adjudicating Muslims."
[7] For Jamaat-e-Islami's response to the Munir Report, see Abul Ala Maududi, *Tehqiqati Adalat ki Report par Tabsarah* (Lahore: Idara Muarif-e-Islam, 1994).

organization was an attempt to distance its members from the anti-Pakistan and pro-Congress history of the Ahrar, which the state was exploiting to discredit them. MTKN was intended to be a purely religious organization, devoted to counteracting Ahmadi proselytization. Electoral politics, Bukhari said, was as taboo as consuming pork. However, many Ahrar were unwilling to give up their political struggle against the League. They abandoned Bukhari's leadership and joined H.S. Suhrawardy's Awami League.[8] Those left behind in the MTKN were largely Deobandi ulema committed to the defense of khatm-e-nubuwwat, and to opposing the Ahmadis, even if it meant abandoning anti-state politics.

An organization like MTKN was made possible by the connections formed at the local level between the mosque and the bazaar during the anti-Ahmadi campaign of 1949-53. Patronizing petty ulema and the anti-Ahmadi movement became a form of popular piety and patriotism, while also offering a means for people to claim local leadership over the heterogeneous intermediate strata. The movement served as a basis for social cohesion even after martial law because of the state's reluctance to interfere in what it saw as 'religious' activities. This afforded the MTKN and petty ulema, who operated out of local mosques, the space necessary to grow. As early as September 1953, the DIG of CID Punjab, Anwar Ali, noted that "speeches on the "Khatm-e-Nabuwwat" issue have again started in mosques."[9] However, because the ulema did not explicitly mention Ahmadis or advocate agitation, the government felt that there was little it could do legally.

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[8] Zahid Munir Amir, *Maulana Taj Mahmud: Halat va Maktubat* (Sargodha: Idarah-i Mutalah-i Tarikh o Tahqiq, 1985), 79-80.
[9] Note by Ata Muhammad Noon, 16 September 1953, 50/CF/53.

Far-reaching proposals to bring this network of mosques and petty ulema under state control were contemplated. There was talk of a government-run training institute for ulema and of keeping petty ulema on government pay but the government feared that open sponsorship of the ulema would institutionalize a clerical class within the state.[10] It was recognized that the wind could be knocked out of the anti-Ahmadi movement if the government took a firm public stance against it or abolish separate electorates and put an end to government jurisdiction over religious boundaries. But these were also steps the government was unwilling to take.[11] Satisfied that their activities were no longer directly threatening the government, they did not want to antagonize the ulema any further.[12]

Ayub Khan's martial law regime, which put an end to Pakistan's dismal experiment with civilian government in 1958, was more willing to act against religious activists at all levels. [13] Religio-political parties were monitored closely and even the petty ulema were watched with new vigilance.[14] Petty ulema were arrested for sectarian and anti-Ahmadi sermons.[15] To counter their ideas, Ayub began to back

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[10] Note by G. Ahmed, Secretary to the Government of Pakistan, 17 September 1953, 50/CF/53.
[11] "Working paper prepared by the Cabinet Secretariat and the Ministry of the Interior, 50/CF/53; Noon to Prime Minister, 28 May 1953, 50/CF/53.
[12] Note by G. Ahmed, 17 September 1953, 50/CF/53.
[13] For an account of the events leading up to Ayub's coup, see Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule*.
[14] For his views on ulema and the violence of 1953, see Muhammad Ayub Khan, *Friends Not Masters: A Political Autobiography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967).
[15] "Political speeches in religious meetings; the proposal to introduce a martial law regulation prohibiting the making of speech of a political nature in any public meeting; check over the activities of Mullahs belonging to Jamaat-i-Islami," 333/CF/61.

modernist Islamic thinkers like Fazlur Rehman and Ghulam Ahmed Parwez.[16] Under his government, the state also began to appropriate institutions of Sufi Islam, which, with their strong rural base, were intended as a source of legitimacy for the state and as a bulwark against the urban-based ulema.[17] This move was strikingly reminiscent of the colonial policy of pitting the rural against the urban. In these circumstances of constricted political space in the 1950s and 1960s, many ulema and Islamists turned their energies to institution building and also to the transnational networks of their peers.

Religious activists' enduring connections with the urban lower middle class meant steadier financial support, which allowed them to lay down durable institutional infrastructure for the first time. MTKN established district offices in over 23 towns and cities across Pakistan. It also established its headquarters in Multan and instituted annual khatm-i-nubuwwat conferences.[18] In 1966, under the leadership of Maulana Muhammad Ali Jalandhari, MTKN established a Darul Tabligh or Center of Preaching in Multan. Preachers were trained specifically for the purpose of anti-Ahmadi propaganda. Funds were provided for their tours and also to cover legal expenses for any cases they may become embroiled in. Students from

[16] For Ayub's support of Fazlur Rehman, see "Controversy on Dr. Fazlur Rehman's Book 'Islam'," 331/CF/68. For more on Parwez's thought, see Ali Usman Qasmi, *Questioning the Authority of the Past: The Ahl al-Qur'an Movements in the Punjab* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2011).
[17] See Katherine Ewing, "The Politics of Sufism: Redefining the Saints of Pakistan," *The Journal of Asian Studies.* 42, 2 (1983): 251-68.
[18] Allah Wasaya, *Tahrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat 1974* (Lahore: Majlis Tahaffuz Khatm-e-Nubuwwat, 1993), 639.

India, Burma, Mauritius, Fiji Islands, and African countries were also trained at the institute. They returned to their home countries to warn against Ahmadis there.[19]

Preaching remained the main focus of MTKN. This was their way of combating Ahmadi proselytization efforts and effecting a separation of Ahmadis from other Muslims at the level of society. They started a scheme where anyone could send a postcard to the MTKN office, alerting them of Ahmadi preaching. MTKN would dispatch their own preachers to that area free of cost to counter Ahmadi efforts.[20] It also started drives to prevent Ahmadi burials in non-Ahmadi graveyards; to deny them access to non-Ahmadi mosques; to discourage purchase of sacrificial animals with Ahmadis; and to popularize the notion that marrying Ahmadis was un-Islamic.[21] If Ahmadis could not be separated from other Muslims constitutionally, then MTKN did its best to separate them socially and religiously.

This period also saw the burgeoning of Deobandi madrassas, many of which would become towering institutes of international repute in the decades to come. Though these madrassas were not formally associated with MTKN, their personnel often overlapped, or were either linked by personal connections or by a shared history of participation in the anti-Ahmadi movement of 1951-53. In the 1960s, five of MTKN's twelve central committee members headed such institutions.[22] Most notably, Muhammad Yusuf Binori, a Deobandi ulema and a member of MTKN's central committee, founded the renowned madrassa Jamiah Arabia Islamia—known today as Jamia Uloom-e-Islamia, Binori Town—in 1954 in Karachi. In 1958, another

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[19] Kashmiri, *Tahrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat*, 166.
[20] Wasaya, *Tahrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat*, 912.
[21] Wasaya, *Tahrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat*, 913-14.
[22] Wasaya, *Tahrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat*, 625.

Deobandi ulema, Mufti Mahmud, formed the Wafaqul Madaris, an association that oversaw Deobandi madrassas operating in Pakistan.[23] These institutions gave Deobandi networks an unprecedented degree of coherency. What used to be a largely personal network of ulema that had an affinity with the teachings of Darul Uloom Deoband in India, now became an institutionalized and organized group with deep connections to urban communities across the country, which supported and were served by these institutions.

Simultaneously, other religious groups like the Barelwis, Ahl-e-Hadith, and Shias also established networks linking local institutions at the national level.[24] In the late 1950s, these groups formed central organizations, much like the Deobandi Wafaqul Madaris, to manage their madrassas.[25] The total number of madrassas in the country also rose from around 137 in 1947 to around 900 in 1971.[26] Staying aloof from politics, these organizations and networks were able to flourish in the 1960s and establish enduring connections at the local level. However, they were closely linked by institutional and personnel overlap with the political parties that represented their respective religious groups. Thus, the Deobandi network, for example, included Deobandi madrassas, the Wafaqul Madaris, and the political

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[23] Sana Haroon, "The Rise of Deobandi Islam in the North-West Frontier Province and its Implications in Colonial India and Pakistan 1914‑1996," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 18, 01 (2008): 61-62.
[24] H. Ahmed, “Scheme for supervision and control of religious institutions and religious activity,” 13 July 1960, 54/CF/60.
[25] For names and dates of establishment of these associations, see Tariq Rahman, *Denizens of Alien Worlds: A Study of Education, Inequality, and Polarization in Pakistan* (Karachi, Pakistan: Oxford University Press, 2004), 78.
[26] Rahman, *Denizens of Alien Worlds*, 78; Pamela Constable, “Pakistani Children Add School to Workday,” *Washington Post*, March 30, 2003.

party, Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam (JUI). The case was similar for Barelwis, Shia, and Ahl-e-Hadith.

Friction between these networks arose from time to time at various levels. But they were also capable of uniting on opposition to the Ahmadis.[27] MTKN's annual conference became one of the main forums promoting such cooperation. The conference of 1970 was attended by leaders of all major religious groups. Jallandhri, the amir of MTKN at the time, invited all religious groups to come together on the issue of khatm-i-nubuwwat, basing his appeal on their particular beliefs. To Deobandis, he said, "As the heirs of Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani, it is your right to gather everyone together to make Pakistan an Islamic state and defend the doctrine of khatm-i-nubuwwat."[28] To Barelwis, he appealed for participation because "[they were] the representatives of the Sawad-e-Azam of Muslims."[29] He appealed to the Ahl-e-Hadith and Shia on the basis of their claims to be "followers of the example of the Prophet" and "lovers of the Ahl-e-Bait," respectively.[30] Thus, MTKN was a forum where religious differences, which generated much contention among these groups, could be embraced as they rallied together in defense of the Prophet. This new form of patriotism and piety based on public affirmations of khatm-i-nubuwwat not only linked these activists and networks to supporters in urban localities, but also served as grounds for cooperation across religious groups.

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[27] The list of newspapers and magazines that supported the anti-Ahmadi movement included publications associated with all these various religious groups. Kashmiri, *Tahrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat*, 171.
[28] Shabbir Ahmad Usmani was a Deobandi scholar and important leader of JUI and the Pakistan movement.
[29] Sawad-e-Azam is a title Barelwi use for their group.
[30] The Ahl-e-Bait refers to the family of the Prophet, which figures prominently in Shia beliefs. Wasaya, *Tahrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat*, 498.

Institution building at home was accompanied by a turn to the transnational. Ahmadis had already created an international network of preaching missions as early as the 1920s and made much headway in various countries.[31] Their opponents now began to turn their attention to Ahmadi activity abroad. Jalandhari's successor as amir of MTKN, Maulana Lal Hussein Akhtar, personally toured Britain, Germany, USA, Fiji Islands, and Saudi Arabia to preach against the Ahmadis. With the exception of Saudi Arabia, these countries had a strong Ahmadi presence, which Akhtar wanted to counter.[32] He also established MTKN offices in Huddersfield, England and Fiji. These became centers from where anti-Ahmadi literature was translated, printed, and disseminated.[33] Much of this effort was supported by the South Asian diaspora, which offered new opportunities for patronage and influence.

More significantly for the events of 1974, Pakistan's leading religious intellectuals began to tap into the network of religious scholars, which spanned the Muslim world. This mobile network of scholars is an old feature of the Islamic world.[34] In the nineteenth century, this network existed in the interstices of empires, where scholars existed as fugitives of the colonial state and also as collaborators of the Ottoman Empire.[35] As nationalist movements across the Muslim

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[31] For the spread of Ahmadi Islam in West Africa, see Fisher, *Ahmadiyyah; A Study in Contemporary Islam on the West African Coast*.
[32] Kashmiri, *Taḥrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat*, 167.
[33] Kashmiri, *Taḥrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat*, 167.
[34] For a fourteenth century view of this network, see Ross Dunn, *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta, A Muslim Traveler of the Fourteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).
[35] See Seema Alavi, "'Fugitive Mullahs and Outlawed Fanatics': Indian Muslims in Nineteenth Century Trans-Asiatic Imperial Rivalries," *Modern Asian Studies*, 45, no. 6 (2011): 1337-82; Nikki Keddie, *Sayyid Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani: A Political Biography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972).

world began to install modernizing national elites at the helm of the state, this network took on an increasingly transnational form. It functioned as a conduit for intellectual exchange. The circulation of printed works in Arabic, a language shared by many religious scholars across the ecumene, shaped religious and political thought and action across national boundaries.[36] The network also afforded refuge to religious scholars who were at odds with their country's national elite.

This network was ultimately made possible by the ability of Islam's universalism to transcend national barriers. Efforts were also made, by the likes of Rashid Rida in the 1920s, to institutionalize this network by convening worldwide Muslim Congresses, which would serve as alternate sources of authority and a counterpoints to the nation state.[37] The results, however, were lackluster. Furthermore, this network had both barriers to entry and limitations in the forms of engagement. Only leading religious intellectuals, who commanded worldwide respect, could really gain access to it. Arabic was another crucial prerequisite. While the network existed because of the universalistic possibilities of Islam and the exclusion of religious scholars from many national projects, these national projects had left indelible marks on the participants' thought. Their intellectual production was often focused on the nation state and their political engagement oriented

[36] Maududi's thought had already had a large impact on Islamists like Sayyid Qutb, who was one of the leading intellectuals of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood. See Nasr, *Mawdudi and the Making of Islamic Revivalism*; Adnan Musallam, *From Secularism to Jihad: Sayyid Qutb and the Foundations of Radical Islamism* (Westport: Praeger, 2005). For Ottoman scholar, Rashid Rida's impact on Indonesia, see Rida, "Patriotism, Nationalism, and Group Spirit in Islam," in *Islam in Transition: Muslim Perspectives*, ed. John Donahue and John Esposito (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 57-59.

[37] See Martin Kramer, *Islam Assembled: The Advent of the Muslim Congresses* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986).

towards their particular country.[38] Engagement in this transnational network was, thus, a pragmatic move for many, who, while using the connections and authority of this network, still remained invested in struggles for power in their own states.

In the 1960s, Saudi Arabia became increasingly interested in patronizing these networks. It was with Saudi assistance that this network began to assume an institutionalized form. As Pakistani activists turned to these networks after Ayub's coup, they found easiest access through Saudi Arabia's religious and political establishment. The religious leader most successful at cultivating ties with Saudi Arabia during this period was Abul Ala Maududi, president of the Pakistani political party, Jamaat-e-Islami. When Ayub banned all political parties during the initial years of his rule, Maududi embarked on a tour of the Middle East. He had already been to Saudi Arabia to perform haj in 1956, but now decided on a more leisurely religious visit to all the places mentioned in the Quran. However, the detailed travelogue written by his companion, Muhammad Asim, demonstrates that this trip, undertaken between 1959 and 1960, was much more than religious tourism.

In Saudi Arabia, where he spent most of his time, Maududi was anxious to meet leading ulema and government officials. His writings in Arabic, which had already established his reputation in scholarly circles, opened doors for him everywhere. In Riyadh, he was hosted by Sheikh Abdul Aziz bin Baz, who at the time was the rising star of the Saudi ulema.[39] Later, he stayed with Abdullah bin Abdul

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[38] See for example, Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, *Mawdudi and the Making of Islamic Revivalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).
[39] In 1962, bin Baz was appointed Grand Mufti and head of the Council of Ulema in Saudi Arabia, a post he held till his death in 1999. Adel Darwesh, "Obituary: Sheikh Abdul Aziz bin Baz," *The Independent*, May 14, 1999, http://www.independent.co.uk

Rehman, King Saud's uncle and a powerbroker in the Saudi government. Because King Saud was not in the country during Maududi's visit, he was not able to gain an audience with him, but the King did send him 3,000 riyals for his journey. In Jeddah, Mecca, and Medina, Maududi similarly met with important figures in the Saudi religious and political establishments. He exchanged views with them and invariably distributed his works in Arabic.[40] After the visit, Maududi's stock rose steadily in Saudi Arabia. In 1963, he received permission to make the Kaaba's cloth covering in Lahore. Two years later, he became a founder and member of the board of governors of Medina University.[41]

At this time, Saudi Arabia was locked in a struggle with Egypt over leadership of the Arab world. It hoped to foster an international religious organization that would be able to counteract pan-Arabism, socialism, and Nasserism, which had swept across the Arab world after Egypt's Free Officers Coup of 1952. Saudi Arabia, a state established along monarchic lines and leaning heavily on Wahhabi Islam and ulema for legitimacy, was naturally threatened by a string of Egypt-inspired coups that were toppling monarchies in other Arab countries.[42] When, in the 1960s, attempts to rally non-Arab Muslim countries like Pakistan yielded lukewarm results,

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[40] Muhammad Asim, *Safar Namah arz al-Quran* (Lahore: Islamic Publications, 1963), 77-215.
[41] Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution*, 236.
[42] For a monograph on the foundation of the Saudi state, see Joseph Kostiner, *The Making of Saudi Arabia, 1916-1936: From Chieftaincy to Monarchical State* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993).

the Saudi state turned to the transnational network of religious scholars to neutralize Egypt's appeal.[43]

In 1962, it sponsored the establishment of Rabita al-Alam al-Islami or the Muslim World League.[44] This was a Mecca-based organization of Muslim religious leaders from around the world. It was interested primarily in the propagation of Islam and in providing support to religious institutions and parties across the Muslim world. However, Saudi patronage inevitably shaped the organization's agenda. Rabita was concerned with combatting secularism, atheism, socialism, and Israeli influence in the Muslim world.[45]

Pakistani religious leaders like Maududi, who were already on amicable terms with Saudi Arabia, were extremely eager to participate in this ideological project and benefit from Saudi largesse and the visibility of an international forum. Since Rabita was designed as an organization for the defense of Islam, opposition to Ahmadis was the ideal basis for the participation of Pakistani religious leaders. They could claim an equal stake in protecting Islam and the Muslim world by exposing and combatting the international 'menace' that Ahmadis posed. Consequently, Maududi and Jamaat-e-Islami, who were not particularly involved with grassroots anti-Ahmadi activism at home, began to publish and distribute anti-Ahmadi tracts in Arabic for distribution across the Arab world.[46]

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[43] Morris to Stewart, 18 September 1968, in *Records of Saudi Arabia, 1966-1971*, ed. Anita Burdett (Slough: Archives Editions, Foreign Office, Great Britain, 2004), 661.
[44] Abdullah Sindi, "King Faisal and Pan-Islamism," in *King Faisal and the Modernisation of Saudi Arabia*, ed. Willard Belling (London: Croomhelm, 1980), 186.
[45] "Resolutions adopted by General Islamic Conference at its second session held in Mecca Mukarrama," *Muslim World League Journal*, July 1965, 31-35.
[46] Kashmiri, *Taḥrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat*, 154-55.

Other Pakistani organizations and activists also took the opportunity to publicize the anti-Ahmadi movement on a global level. With the shift in audience, the anti-Ahmadi rhetoric was also transformed. Alert to Arab insecurities about Israel, these activists now intertwined charges of heresy and treason with accusations that Ahmadis were Israeli spies. The long history of Ahmadi missionary activity in the Arab world, from colonial to contemporary times, was reinterpreted as a malicious and subversive political conspiracy. Ahmadis were blamed for sabotaging the Arabs in the Six Day War of 1967 and of working with Israel and Britain to lead African Muslims away from Islam.[47]

Newspapers like *Chattan* and *Lolaak* were crucial to the dissemination of these ideas and keeping the anti-Ahmadi issue alive in the mind of the Pakistani public. Shorish Kashmiri, the editor of *Chattan*, incited great anxiety about an Ahmadi mission in Israel. He writes, "In an Israel where Christian missions cannot be opened, an Ahmadi mission for Islam can be nothing but a joke … This mission's purpose is to spy on Arab states … This mission's purpose is to prepare the few Arab Muslims left in Israel to spy on Arab countries."[48] On another occasion, Kashmiri asserted in a speech that "pretending to be Muslims, Ahmadis prey on Arabs' faith, steal their secrets, and serve Israel."[49] In 1953, the anti-Ahmadi movement had helped nationalize the intermediate strata. Now, by linking Ahmadis to Israel and

[47] For the most sophisticated articulation of this narrative, see Kashmiri, *Ajami Israel* (Lahore: Matbuat-e-Chattan, 1973). See also Kashmiri, *Taḥrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat*, 198-225.
[48] Kashmiri, *Taḥrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat*, 198.
[49] Wasaya, *Tahrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat 1974*, 834.

the Arab world, they assisted in orienting their constituency towards the broader Muslim world.

Furthermore, given the potency of the Arab-Israel issue, these narratives could not but strike a chord with Arabs. Rabita showed its interest in the anti-Ahmadi movement by publishing and disseminating translations of anti-Ahmadi literature into Arabic, English, French, Indonesian, Persian, Turkish, Hausa, and Swahili among other languages.[50] Ibn Baz invited the MTKN amir to speak at Medina University on the Ahmadi 'threat.'[51] Religious activists and entrepreneurs from Pakistan were able to take the anti-Ahmadi movement beyond Pakistan. The transnational connections they forged during the 1960s would prove extremely advantageous in the 1970s, as Pakistan hobbled back from over a decade under military rule to another experiment with democracy.

Bhutto Between National and Transnational Anti-Ahmadi Networks

With Ayub having handed power over to General Yahya Khan in 1969 and Pakistan's first general election around the corner, political activity boomed in the country. While the Awami League and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) were the main contenders, the religio-political parties also experienced a revival. JUI, associated with the Deobandi network, Jamiat Ulema Pakistan (JUP), associated with the Barelwi network, and Jamaat-e-Islami, led by Islamist, Maududi, were the most important religio-political parties in the elections. Their performance, however, was underwhelming. Together, they secured only six percent of the total National Assembly seats. JUI and JUP won seven seats each and the Jamaat won four, all from

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[50] *Muslim World League Journal*, January 1974, 78-79.
[51] Wasaya, *Tahrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat 1974*, 580.

West Pakistan. This paled in comparison to PPP's 81 seats from West Pakistan and the Awami League's 160 seats from East Pakistan.

The elections of 1970-71 seemed to guarantee an Awami League government, but the events of the year turned everyone's expectations on their heads. Unable to come to an understanding over the state's future structure with the Awami League, the military high command decided to suppress the party.[52] The military operation that started in East Pakistan on March 26, 1971 soon turned into a war of independence. India's involvement in favor of East Pakistan turned it into an international conflict that culminated with East Pakistan's secession on December 16, 1971 and the formation of the independent state of Bangladesh.

After the war was over, Bhutto's PPP took the reins of a dismembered and demoralized Pakistan. The religio-political parties, which a year ago had been entirely marginal, were now collectively the biggest opposition in the National Assembly. JUI had also managed to form coalition provincial governments with the National Awami Party in NWFP and Baluchistan. This unexpected political clout meant that the religio-political parties were able to exert some pressure on Bhutto on issues like settlement with India, recognition of Bangladesh, and PPP misgovernment.[53] What further improved the prospects of these parties and other religious organizations was a new emphasis by Bhutto on Islam—a result of domestic and foreign policy calculations.

After Bangladesh's independence, there were great concerns about the political integrity of Pakistan. Nationalist rumblings in the provinces of Baluchistan,

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[52] Jalal, "An Uncertain Trajectory," 319-23.
[53] Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution*, 178-82.

NWFP, and Sind added to the concern. Anxiety about further separatist movements led to the dismissal of the Baluchistan government in February 1973, followed by a drawn out military operation in the province. The turn to Islam was partially an attempt by Bhutto to counter these ethnic nationalisms and keep the remaining parts of Pakistan unified.

After the war, Pakistan was also in desperate need of international allies to counterbalance India and to salvage its disastrous fiscal situation. However, America, a long-standing benefactor, was wary of PPP's socialist credo. The Soviet Union was allied with India and suspicious of Pakistan's ties to China. India was already a leader of the non-aligned countries. This left the Muslim bloc under the leadership of Saudi Arabia.[54] This bloc had come a long way since the 1960s. After its ignominious defeat in the Six Day War of 1967, Egypt had lost much of its sheen. Saudi Arabia had stepped up to lead the Arab world against Israel, even as its concerns over Egypt's influence lingered.[55] King Faisal realized his ambition of leading the Muslim world in 1969 when the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) held its first meeting in Morocco. This meeting was followed by a slew of specialized conferences in the next few years demonstrating to the world the vitality and promise of this forum.[56]

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[54] For Bhutto's diplomatic efforts, see the account of Rafi Raza, who accompanied Bhutto on many of his trips. Raza, *Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Pakistan, 1967-1977* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1997), 190-259.
[55] Throughout the 1960s, Egypt and Saudi Arabia were involved on opposite sides in the North Yemen Civil War. Madawi Al-Rasheed, *A History of Saudi Arabia* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 131-34.
[56] Sindi, "King Faisal and Pan-Islamism," 189-92.

Bhutto set his sights on this forum almost immediately. In 1971, he embarked on tour of Arab countries to thank them for their support during the war and to request that they withhold recognition of Bangladesh.[57] As in the 1960s, the Saudis saw Pakistan as a counterweight to socialist and Baathist Arab regimes. In 1969, the Saudis had uncovered a big military plot to overthrow the monarchy.[58] Thereafter, they were especially keen to phase out non-Saudi Arabs from its armed forces and replace them with less-radical Pakistanis. By 1973, 30,000 Pakistanis were working in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan had the largest contingent of military personnel in Saudi Arabia out of all the Muslim states.[59]

However, Saudi Arabia, too, was wary of Bhutto's espoused socialism. In 1972, Bhutto visited the Saudis to assure them that he would resist Communist influence in Pakistan. In return, the Saudis changed a twenty million dollar loan into a grant, giving a token of the potential benefits of staying in the Saudi camp.[60] Thus, when Pakistan approved its new constitution in 1973, it was the most Islamic one that the country had ever had. The emphasis on Islam was in part a signal to Saudi Arabia of Bhutto's commitment to its ideology. In 1972, Bhutto had banned Freemasons for a similar reason. The organization had been on Rabita's blacklist because of suspected Zionist tendencies.[61] Outlawing it was another demonstration of Bhutto's willingness to toe the line.

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[57] Memorandum for Kissinger, 15 June 1973, *The American Papers: Secret and Confidential India-Pakistan-Bangladesh Documents, 1965-1973*, ed. Roedad Khan (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1999), 938.
[58] Al-Rasheed, *A History of Saudi Arabia*, 131-34.
[59] Memorandum for Kissinger, 15 June 1973, *The American Papers*, 940.
[60] Memorandum for Kissinger, 15 June 1973, *The American Papers*, 940.
[61] *Muslim World League Journal*, May 1974, 56-60.

Bhutto's courtship of Saudi Arabia came to fruition in February 1974 when Pakistan held the second OIC summit in Lahore. At this point, after the Yom Kippur War of 1973 and oil embargo of the same year, the Saudi alliance had become even more alluring. Bhutto hosted dozens of Muslim leaders and established himself as a force to be reckoned with in international politics. A charming and charismatic figure, he was heralded by the international media as the next leader of the Muslim world. A deft politician, he also used the event to formally recognize Bangladesh, thereby dampening domestic resistance to the move.[62]

But Bhutto was not the only one hoping to use Muslim countries' support to his advantage. Much to the government's chagrin, the MTKN attempted to contact visiting dignitaries and distribute anti-Ahmadi literature.[63] The Pakistan government's turn to the Muslim world, where anti-Ahmadi activists had long fostered connections, gave their movement new impetus. Muhammad Yusuf Binori, who had taken over as amir of MTKN in 1973, visited King Faisal to appraise him of the Ahmadi 'danger'. He also wrote to Libya's ruler Muammar Gaddafi warning him of an Ahmadi rebellion in Pakistan.[64] Both heads of states were close allies of Bhutto.

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[62] Raza, *Zulfikar Ali Bhutto*, 228-229. Pakistan's intentions of projecting itself as the future of the Muslim world come out clearest in its official publications for the summit. See *Report on Islamic Summit, 1974 Pakistan, Lahore, February 22-24, 1974* (Islamabad: Dept. of Films and Publications, Govt. of Pakistan, 1974); Zahid Malik, *Re-emerging Muslim World* (Lahore: Pakistan National Centre, 1974).
[63] Mubashir Hasan, *The Mirage of Power: An Inquiry into the Bhutto Years, 1971-1977* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2000), 236-37. Shorish Kashmiri translated an anti-Ahmadi tract titled "Traitors to Islam" into Arabic and handed it out at the summit. Kashmiri, *Tahrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat*, 210.
[64] Abdul Qayyum Haqqani, *Jamal-i Yusuf: Muhaddis-i al-Asr Hazrat Maulana Muhammad Yusuf Binori ka Tazkirah va Savanih* (Khaliqabad: al-Qasim Academy, 2002), 245-49.

However, even as MTKN and its network of social activists redoubled their efforts, the religio-political parties remained quiescent on the anti-Ahmadi issue. According to Ghafoor Ahmed, a leader of Jamaat-e-Islami, the religio-political parties had not even brought up the demand to declare Ahmadis non-Muslims during the negotiations over the Constitution of 1973.[65] Their sizeable presence in the National Assembly only yielded a circuitous bar on Ahmadis holding the offices of President and Prime Minister. As in previous constitutions, the President and the Prime Minister had to be Muslim. However, this time around, leaders of the religio-political parties in the assembly managed to insert an oath where the President and Prime Minister not only attested that they were Muslims but also swore by certain articles of faith including the finality of Muhammad's prophethood.[66] This victory was quickly neutralized by the Ahmadi khalifa Mirza Nasir Ahmad, who insisted that the finality of Muhammad's prophethood was completely compatible with Ahmadi beliefs and therefore no impediment to Ahmadis holding these offices.[67]

The religio-political parties had been so meek because Ahmadis were close allies of the PPP. They had thrown their considerable financial weight behind the party in the elections of 1970–71.[68] In the first years of his rule, Bhutto had revealed his authoritarian streak, happily crushing or coercing domestic opposition. He had shown no hesitation in arresting hostile politicians and had even dismissed the

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[65] See Jamaat-e-Islami leader, Ghafoor Ahmed's interview in Sultan Ahmad, *Silsilah-i Ahmadiyyah*, vol. 3, 201.
[66] See interviews of Mubashir Hasan and Abdul Hafiz Pirzada in Mirza Sultan Ahmad, *Silsilah-i Ahmadiyyah*, vol. 3 (Rabwah: Nazarat Isha'at Rabwah Pakistan, 2006), 188-89.
[67] Nasir Ahmad pamphlet. Cite!
[68] Adamson, *A Man of God*, 78-84.

NAP-JUI government in Baluchistan.[69] Under these circumstances, the religio-political parties trod cautiously on the anti-Ahmadi issue.

Having eschewed electoral politics, MTKN was under no such restriction. With Bhutto focused on controlling opposition from political parties and state institutions, social and transnational activists could operate relatively unimpeded. This freedom to operate outside the formal structures of the state and carve out alternate channels of power allowed these activists the opportunity and means to shape the state in 1974.

During the 1960s, Ahmadis had managed to ensconce themselves in the bureaucracy and armed forces. They held many important posts in the air force.[70] Mirza Ghulam Ahmad's grandson, M.M. Ahmad ran the finance ministry under Yahya Khan and also led the Bhutto government's negotiations over debt restructuring with international aid organizations.[71] Their visibility in institutions of the state that ruled Pakistan during the 1960s at the expense of politicians and the people, caused resentment and anxiety, which MTKN fanned with great ease.

The anti-Ahmadi movement's most imaginative writer, Shorish Kashmiri, had already linked Ahmadis to Zionist conspiracies. Now he directed his considerable talent to demonstrating Ahmadi machinations of dismembering Pakistan. M.M. Ahmad, as finance secretary and deputy chairman of the planning commission, was singularly held responsible for "making Bengalis so helpless and frustrated that they

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[69] Nasr, *The Vanguard of the Islamic Revolution*, 180-81.
[70] Kashmiri, *Tahrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat*, 163-64.
[71] Mubashir Hasan, the Finance Minister under Bhutto, remembers M.M. Ahmad as "a nationalist Pakistani who had made a signal contribution to the resolution of the debt resettlement issue." Hasan, *The Mirage of Power*, 121.

turned to a separatist movement."[72] This, Kashmiri held, was part of the Ahmadis' plan to control Pakistan, which they could not do with the Bengali majority. Subsequently, when Bangladesh was formed, "Ahmadis decorated their houses, distributed sweets, and danced in Rabwah and Lahore."[73]

In the meantime, Kashmiri asserted, M.M. Ahmad had installed Ahmadis as industrialists, heads of banks and insurance companies, and army officers, making them as indispensable to Pakistan as Jews were to America.[74] After breaking away East Pakistan, "the Ahmadi community was working to separate Baluchistan and NWFP along the same line."[75] With other provinces independent and alienated, "Punjab will be isolated. Then world powers will incite Sikhs to claim West Punjab as the place of birth, life, and death of their gurus and assert the same right to it that Jews claim to Palestine … Pakistani Punjab will be joined to Indian Punjab and will become a Sikh-Ahmadi state."[76] This extraordinarily convoluted and yet sufficiently plausible theory was devised to exploit Punjabi paranoia and anxieties about their future after the War of 1971. Opposing Ahmadis was not just about 'true' Pakistanis and 'true' Muslims taking power, but was about confronting an existential challenge to Pakistan and the Muslim world.

MTKN propaganda seemed to yield results. As early as 1971, a government employee tried to assassinate M.M. Ahmad.[77] However, momentum really gathered when in April 1973 the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) assembly passed a

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[72] Kashmiri, *Tahrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat*, 207-8.
[73] Kashmiri, *Tahrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat*, 172.
[74] Kashmiri, *Tahrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat*, 208.
[75] Kashmiri, *Tahrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat*, 208.
[76] Kashmiri, *Tahrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat*, 224.
[77] Sultan Ahmad, *Silsilah-i Ahmadiyyah*, vol. 3, 163.

resolution asking the central government to declare Ahmadis non-Muslims. The head of the AJK government, Sardar Abdul Qayyum harbored a long enmity with Bhutto and hoped to embarrass him by turning the spotlight on his Ahmadi allies. When Bhutto did not come down on the AJK government for its impertinence, MTKN saw its opportunity.[78] Its grassroots and transnational networks were reactivated. Anti-Ahmadi papers also increased their efforts. This activity culminated a year later, in April 1974, when Rabita passed a resolution denouncing Ahmadis as "an offshoot of the British colonialism" and "a pernicious cult using the name of Islam as a guise for its malicious purposes." It commanded all Muslims to boycott Ahmadis and all Islamic governments to declare them non-Muslims and deny them important government offices.[79] For 144 Muslim organizations participating in the Rabita conference to unanimously condemn the Ahmadis and endorse all of the anti-Ahmadi movement's demands was a major coup. Now all it needed was a spark to light the fuse for a round of protests to catapult the issue onto the national stage.

Anti-Ahmadi activists did not have to wait long. On May 22, 1974, students from the Nishtar Medical College in Multan, who were on their way to a school trip to the hill stations in the north, stopped briefly at the Rabwah railway station. As the train was leaving, these students chanted anti-Ahmadi slogans infuriating local Ahmadis. When the students returned from their trip and their train stopped at

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[78] For the flurry of MTKN activities at the grassroots level after the AJK resolution, see Wasaya, *Tahrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat 1974*, 865-911.
[79] Muhammad Ali al-Harakan, "From the resolutions of the Islamic organizations conference," http://www.khatmenubuwwat.org/fatawas/rabitah_fatwa.html.

Rabwah on May 29, some Ahmadis allegedly attacked them.[80] When anti-Ahmadi papers got wind of the incident, they published inflammatory and exaggerated reports. *Chattan*'s headline read, "Qadiani dogs attack a hundred students from Nishtar Medical College in Rabwah." *Nawai Waqt* reported 5,000 Ahmadi attackers. The number of seriously injured students was put at 30.[81]

Almost immediately, urban areas of the Punjab exploded in violent contentious performance. Ahmadis were assaulted, their shops and homes burnt, and their mosques attacked.[82] The bazaar-mosque alliance in the localities, which had largely focused on institution building and social activism since 1953, now began another campaign of mass mobilization. Many activists in the localities were more interested in confrontation with Ahmadis than in constitutional change and appeals to the government. Armed with exaggerated stories of the Rabwah incident, the petty ulema exhorted people from their pulpits to take individual violent action to 'defend' Islam. Already suffering from massive inflation and food shortages caused by the oil embargo and devastating floods the year before, people responded enthusiastically.[83] Here was a sign of stress on Bhutto's populist basis of power, which was unable to contain agitation in the face of the government's inability to

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[80] These bare facts are all that can be gleaned out of copious but extremely biased accounts of these events produced by Ahmadis and others. The report of the tribunal appointed to ascertain the facts remains sealed to this day.
[81] Sultan Ahmad, *Silsilah-i Ahmadiyyah*, vol. 3, 273.
[82] Sultan Ahmad, *Silsilah-i Ahmadiyyah*, vol. 3, 274.
[83] According to one estimate, in 1974, the inflation rate was a whopping 25 percent. Syed Nawab Haider Naqvi and Khwaja Sarmad, *External Shocks and Domestic Adjustment: Pakistan's Case, 1970-1990* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1997). See also Islamabad Embassy to Department of State, 12 July 1973, *The American Papers*, 977.

provide "roti, kapra, makaan" or "food, clothes, homes," which it had promised the citizens of Pakistan in the elections.[84]

The contentious performances of 1974 were markedly different from those of 1953 in the composition of their participants. In 1953, protesters had largely come from sections of the urban lower and middle classes that were outside, or on the margins of state institutions. Students and government servants, who are located within state institutions, participated only in the final stages of the 1953 protests. However, in 1974, student groups and bar associations in towns and cities across the Punjab were at the forefront of the movement, bringing their own repertoires of contentious performance. Students evicted Ahmadi classmates out of hostels and burned their belongings on campuses around the country. They boycotted classes and organized marches. Bar associations announced strikes and passed resolutions calling for the expulsion of Ahmadis from the fold of Islam.[85] The demands of the anti-Ahmadi movement now resonated with those closely affiliated with the state, indicating the extent to which the anti-Ahmadi cause had become mainstream since 1953.

At the same time that these networks were unleashing a storm of contentious performance—violent and otherwise—MTKN leaders along with other figures of the national opposition were hashing out the terms for a movement that would meet their constitutional aims. MTKN leaders wanted the government to amend the constitution to declare Ahmadis non-Muslims, make Rabwah an open city, and

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[84] For an excellent study of Bhutto's populist rule and its denouement, see Jalal, *Democracy and Authoritarianism in South Asia: A Comparative and Historical Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 77-85.
[85] Kashmiri, *Tahrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat*, 233-38.

remove Ahmadis from government posts. As before, religious organizations of all sects joined up, demonstrating once again the unifying nature of the anti-Ahmadi movement. Political parties, alienated by Bhutto's autocratic and bullying style of rule, saw a chance to damage his government. Political parties of all stripes came on board but the religio-political parties, along with MTKN, took the lead.

On June 9, eighteen religious and political parties met in Lahore and decided to form a Majlis-e-Amal or Council of Action, reminiscent of 1953. However, the leaders had learnt their lessons from their previous failure. Shorish Kashmiri, suggested that the Majlis adopt a boycott of the Ahmadis as their course of action.[86] In this suggestion was the recognition that violence had to be controlled. Contentious performance had to be directed towards state-sanctioned expressions if their constitutional demands were to be met. No government would cave in to violent protests. The specific mode of social and economic boycott, employed before in 1953, now had added legitimacy due to the Rabita resolution. Most importantly, a boycott of Ahmadis meant that, unlike 1953, the direct object of the contentious performance would be the Ahmadis and not the government. Not threatened directly, the government would be more amenable to their demands.

Once the leaders had agreed upon the course of action, activists in the localities largely fell in line. By this time, 120 cities and districts were affected by the protests. Twenty-one Ahmadis were confirmed dead. Two hundred and seventy Ahmadi homes, 340 shops, 6 factories, 25 mosques, and 20 libraries had been

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[86] Amir, *Maulana Taj Mahmud*, 30-31.

destroyed.[87] Boycotts, being an ostensibly non-violent contentious performance, were more acceptable to the state, but they took an immense toll on the Ahmadi community. Ahmadi traders saw their businesses collapse. Ahmadi employees lost their jobs. In one incident, a sick Ahmadi in Gujar Khan was denied medicine from every pharmacy in the town.[88] Ahmadis had little choice but to convert or to flee to the relative security of Rabwah.

On his part, Bhutto initially decided to suppress the protests. Hanif Ramay, the Chief Minister of Punjab, was instructed to take firm measures.[89] Protesters were arrested, the press was censored, and a judicial inquiry was instated under Justice K.M. Samdani to pacify the public. On June 3, Bhutto told the opposition in the National Assembly to desist from inciting the public. The very next day, he arrested 11 leaders who were on their way to the Wazir Khan Mosque in Lahore for a meeting of the Majlis-e-Amal. However, within four hours, the leaders were released.[90] It was in the hours after the arrests that Bhutto seemed to have changed his mind. On June 8, restrictions on the press were lifted. Bhutto met the leaders of the movement and on June 13 addressed the country. In his speech, Bhutto assured the public that the demands of the anti-Ahmadi movement would be presented before the National Assembly after the passage of the budget. Anyone who did not believe in the finality of Muhammad's prophethood, he announced, certainly could not be considered Muslim.[91]

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[87] Sultan Ahmad, *Silsilah-i Ahmadiyyah*, vol. 3, 283-85.
[88] Sultan Ahmad, *Silsilah-i Ahmadiyyah*, vol. 3, 294.
[89] Raza, *Zulfikar Ali Bhutto*, 293-94.
[90] "Eleven leaders detained for 4 hours in Lahore," *Dawn*, 5 June 1974.
[91] Sultan Ahmad, *Silsilah-i Ahmadiyyah*, vol. 3, 292.

This dramatic reversal was the result of international pressure and Bhutto's international and domestic calculations. According to Rafi Raza, a close adviser of Bhutto at the time, the protests themselves were "not of such a serious nature as to require defusing in this way."[92] Mubashir Hasan, finance minister in Bhutto's government, has insisted that Bhutto's change of heart was due to Saudi pressure.[93] However, the theory that Saudis compelled Bhutto to pass the Second Amendment runs aground on the matter of motive. Saudis had nothing to gain from championing the anti-Ahmadi cause. Regardless of anti-Ahmadi activists' professions, Ahmadis were not of great political significance in the Arab world. That Saudi Arabia was not directly concerned with Ahmadis can be gauged by the fact that neither it nor any of its other Muslim allies have constitutionally declared Ahmadis non-Muslims. In this, Pakistan remains unique. Rabita showed more of an explicit interest in the anti-Ahmadi cause than Saudi Arabia, but even then it was not of paramount importance. Rabita's anti-Ahmadi resolution had been part of a much longer resolution denouncing Bahai, Freemasons, Zionism, Christian missionaries, and secularism. In the seventeen-page resolution, the Ahmadis barely got a page.[94] However, Bhutto's reversal remains a puzzle given his past propensity to suppress opposition. A more plausible, if unsubstantiated, explanation is that Saudi Arabia intervened merely to free the arrested anti-Ahmadi activists, with many of whom it had longstanding relations. With force, thus, off the table, Bhutto had few means to defuse the protests.

[92] Raza, *Zulfikar Ali Bhutto*, 294.
[93] See interview of Mubashir Hasan in Sultan Ahmad, *Silsilah-i Ahmadiyyah*, vol. 3, 314.
[94] *Muslim World League Journal*, May 1974, 44-60.

With his options limited, Bhutto decided to embrace the anti-Ahmadi cause with the hope of achieving two goals—international and domestic. Both had been made extremely urgent by India's first nuclear test on May 18, 1974. The explosion shattered the precarious balance of power between India and Pakistan, which the Pakistani state valued so much. This blow to Pakistan's strategic calculations and its prestige came on the heels of the threat from Afghanistan's new pro-Soviet regime, which was especially hostile to Pakistan. These developments lent greater urgency to Pakistan's own nuclear program, for whose financing Bhutto was relying on Saudi Arabia and Libya.[95] He could not afford to antagonize either. Rather, he hoped that amending the constitution would cement their friendship.

Secondly, according to Rafi Raza, Bhutto "felt a need to counter concern over India's nuclear bomb," fearing that Pakistanis, already jittery about the future of the country, would turn their anger on him.[96] The reversal "served as a temporary expedient to distract opinion and avert further agitation."[97] Aware also of the erosion of his popularity, Bhutto hoped that 'resolving' the Ahmadi issue would refurbish his image, albeit on a different basis than in the 1970-71 elections. The Ahmadis were an unavoidable casualty in these calculations.

On June 30, after the National Assembly passed the budget, a special committee was constituted to decide on the Ahmadi issue. This committee consisted of the entire assembly. It was to hear representatives of the Qadian Ahmadis, the

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[95] For a history of Pakistan's road to the nuclear bomb, see Adrian Levy and Cathy Scott-Clark. *Deception: Pakistan, the United States, and the Secret Trade in Nuclear Weapons* (New York: Walker & Co, 2007).
[96] Raza, *Zulfikar Ali Bhutto*, 294.
[97] Raza, *Zulfikar Ali Bhutto*, 294.

Lahore Ahmadis, and the anti-Ahmadi movement and then decide the best course of action. The proceedings of the special committee were to be conducted in camera so as to relieve the pressure of the public eye. The next two months were dominated mostly by these proceedings. The Ahmadis and their opponents expended much energy and resources in preparing and presenting their respective cases before the special committee.

The proceedings shifted public focus from contentious performance to the National Assembly. Leaders of religio-political parties who had a presence in the assembly became simultaneously more important. The proceedings of the Samdani Tribunal and the National Assembly Special Committee also dominate the histories of the anti-Ahmadi movement of 1974 written by both sides.[98] As a result, the agency and importance of the Assembly and its members have been overemphasized at the expense of social and transnational activism, which played a decisive role in the events of 1974.

In fact, contentious performances continued in towns and cities all through this time. They took the approved forms of strikes, marches, and boycott but they also took the form of violence. On June 18, for example, some people in Chiniot tried to immolate a ten-year old Ahmadi boy.[99] On July 16, a group of Ahmadis was fired upon in Sargodha's railway station.[100] The press remained silent on these incidents and gave the appearance not only of a peaceful protest but also one where the

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[98] Because both proceedings remain classified, the two sides have continued to repeat their cases in the court of public opinion. See Sultan Ahmad, *Silsilah-i Ahmadiyyah*, vol. 3, 300-535; Wasaya, *Tahrik-i Khatm-i Nubuwwat 1974*, 915-1220.
[99] Sultan Ahmad, *Silsilah-i Ahmadiyyah*, vol. 3, 294.
[100] Sultan Ahmad, *Silsilah-i Ahmadiyyah*, vol. 3, 324-28.

leaders had full control over participants at the grassroots. This was manifestly not the whole truth. Most activists in the localities took their cues from the Majlis-e-Amal, but its authority was not supreme. Not everyone who participated in the anti-Ahmadi movement agreed that the solution was a constitutional amendment. Some were inclined to turn to violence as a religious duty or as a more decisive solution to local Ahmadi presence. This disjuncture between the national and the grassroots is of important consequence in understanding not just the structure of the anti-Ahmadi movement but also the course that 'sectarian' politics took after 1974.

On September 7, 1974, the National Assembly met to pass the Second Amendment declaring Qadian and Lahore Ahmadis constitutionally non-Muslims. The vote was unanimous. Bhutto preened himself in the National Assembly, declaring that he had found a "permanent solution" to a problem that had haunted the nation for ninety years.[101] The secretary of Rabita, who happened to be visiting Pakistan at the time, immediately offered his congratulations and hoped that other countries would follow suit. Messages streamed in from religious parties commending Bhutto. Even liberal newspapers and magazines like *Dawn*, *Imroz*, and *Herald* applauded the Second Amendment in their editorials. It appeared as though the anti-Ahmadi movement had achieved the undivided approval of the entire nation. It seemed that everyone was thrilled by what the Second Amendment seemed to signify: a victory for Islam and a redistribution of state power to the majority, which was reconstituted as Muslims who believe in khatm-e-nubuwwat. It also looked like Bhutto, who had just a few months ago been backed into a corner by

[101] Pakistan, *The National Assembly of Pakistan Debates*, 565-66.

the anti-Ahmadi movement's transnational connections, had rallied forth and used the occasion to reestablish his reputation as a popular hero. But appearances were wrong on all counts.

The unanimity within the National Assembly and without was largely manufactured. Behind the scenes, Bhutto had pressured many representatives who were inclined to abstain or vote against the amendment, to change their minds.[102] These people would later come to regret their decision, albeit, in private.[103] The glowing praise in the press can similarly be discounted. Bhutto was notorious for shutting down numerous papers during his tenure and did not hesitate to arrest or threaten even leftist editors to coerce them to comply with his wishes.[104]

It is certainly true that the anti-Ahmadi movement's transnational and grassroots connections were crucial in exerting the pressure necessary for Bhutto to cave in. However, the Second Amendment was only a partial victory. Ahmadis had been declared non-Muslims and Rabwah was to be an open city, but Bhutto refused to bar Ahmadis from holding public office. The driving force behind the movement—the lower-middle classes' demand for greater access to state power and patronage—remained unfulfilled. Nonetheless, the amendment had an undeniable effect on the movement's partisans. It empowered a new generation of activists to follow suit, cultivating local and transnational connections from the margins to fight for power at the local and national levels in the name of an ever-redefined 'true' Muslim majority.

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[102] Saeed, "Politics of Exclusion," 228-30.
[103] Raza, *Zulfikar Ali Bhutto*, 295.
[104] For a description of censorship under Bhutto, see Zamir Niazi, *Press in Chains* (Delhi: Ajanta Publications, 1987).

Conclusion

The history of the anti-Ahmadi movement is one of exclusion producing exclusion. Muslims of the intermediate strata were excluded from bureaucratic and political institutions by the colonial government and its Indian allies, despite the promise of inclusion inherent in the principle of proportional representation for the Muslim community. Similarly, the elite controlling state power in Pakistan continued to deny them a share of power even though Pakistan had been created as a state for Muslims. Anti-Ahmadi activists staked a claim to power as true Muslims and true Pakistanis, using the figure of the Ahmadi to delegitimize those in power and produce united action in those shut out.

In the 1930s, the Majlis-e-Ahrar-e-Islam converged on anti-Ahmadi contentious performance because it could generate unity among urban anti-colonial Muslims on the twin bases of opposition to the elite and opposition to heretics. The Ahmadis had close links with the agricultural elite that ruled the Punjab as well as substantial influence in the bureaucracy making them a potent symbol of the elite. Furthermore, the colonial government was more tolerant of performances coded as religious rather than those that were considered overtly political. Generating Muslim unity on the basis of opposition to Ahmadis rather than Hindus also left open the possibility of political cooperation with more advanced urban Hindus and Sikhs. However, the Ahrar's experiment came to an abrupt end in 1935 when their careful balance between Muslim unity and cross-communitarian political alliance collapsed in the face Punjab's "politics of disunion."

In post-Partition Pakistan, the political predicament of the Punjabi lower middle class continued. However, the shift of Punjab's political elite to a Muslim politics and the exodus of Hindus and Sikhs after the Partition gave Muslims of the intermediate strata greater political clout. In 1949, at a time of uncertainty about the distribution of state power, the place of religion, and the form of citizenship, the Ahrar restarted their anti-elite politics on the basis of anti-Ahmadi contentious performance in 1949. Once again, opposition to Ahmadis offered a means for political and social coordination from the less regulated sphere demarcated as religious. The anti-Ahmadi movement now contributed to a process of nationalization from below and the figure of the Ahmadi stood in not just for the elite and the heretic, but also for the "Ghaddaran-i-Pakistan" or traitors to Pakistan. The Ahmadi was used as a foil against which to shape a popular conception of the Pakistani citizen. It was demanded that Pakistan declare Ahmadis non-Muslims and remove them from government posts.

However, when the social unity generated by the anti-Ahmadi movement was directed towards political opposition of the central and provincial governments in 1953, the movement was quickly suppressed. Martial law was declared in Lahore and protests were ruthlessly suppressed. Thereafter, the state no longer tolerated anti-Ahmadi politics. Political activists from the intermediate strata suspended efforts to wrest political power on this basis. The anti-Ahmadi movement endured all the same. In the anti-Ahmadi campaign of 1949-53, forms of pious and patriotic performance, based on the twin issues of opposition to Ahmadis and devotion to the Prophet, had become a basis for social cohesion in lower middle class localities,

transcending differences of clan, sect, and hometown. With sustained support from these localities, the anti-Ahmadi movement was able to institutionalize itself as a social and religious movement in Pakistan and abroad.

At the same time, the anti-Ahmadi movement also assumed a transnational dimension. After 1958, under martial rule, space for political activity was further reduced in Pakistan. Religious activists turned to a transnational network of religious scholars. This network of leading religious intellectuals, who had been shut out of their respective national projects, made use of alternate sources of authority and resistance made available by Islam's universalistic possibilities. In the 1960s, Saudi Arabia began to appropriate this network, institutionalizing it as a counter to pan-Arabism promoted by Egypt in the Arab world. Religious activists from Pakistan found in the anti-Ahmadi cause a useful basis for participation in this network, which was increasingly concerned with worldwide threats to Islam and Muslim political power. In addition to its other connotations, the figure of the Ahmadi now assumed significance as a threat to the Muslim world because of his purported collusion with Israel. Subsequently, in the 1960s, the anti-Ahmadi movement helped reorient Pakistanis towards the broader Muslim world, as well.

It was after the breakup of Pakistan in 1971 that the anti-Ahmadi movement once again became a basis for coordinating political efforts. The assertion of ethnic politics after Bangladesh's secession lent new urgency and enthusiasm for realizing a Muslim politics as a counter. The reorientation of Pakistan's foreign policy towards Saudi Arabia under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto made the moment all the more opportune. When a new anti-Ahmadi campaign was launched in 1974, the activists'

transnational connections proved critical. The transnational network's support gave the campaign greater authority and Saudi Arabia denied Bhutto recourse to violent suppression as in 1953. With his choices limited, Bhutto decided to appropriate the remarkable social, political, and transnational consensus produced by the movement. After passing the Second Amendment, Bhutto now portrayed himself as the leader of a Pakistan united in its defense of the Prophet and its allegiance with the Muslim world, leaving the Ahmadis a politically and constitutionally isolated minority.

While successfully excluding Ahmadis, the movement failed in securing political power. Taking advantage of the arbitrary colonial dichotomy between the 'religious' and 'political' spheres, it coordinated political efforts on the basis of ostensibly religious performance. But its location in the religious sphere also meant that Bhutto could embrace the anti-Ahmadi consensus as "purely religious" and simultaneously avoid incorporating anti-Ahmadi activists into the state proper. Thus, on the basis of the anti-Ahmadi movement, activists from a class shut out of formal politics developed means of coordination and influence under and across the state. They were able to shape the state through these channels but without being able to create space for themselves in state institutions. In the years after the Second Amendment, Ahmadis became increasingly marginalized as opposition to Ahmadis persisted.[1] In the end, the invidious equation of political, social, and religious unity at the price of the continued persecution of Ahmadis proved to be the most enduring contribution of the anti-Ahmadi movement.

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[1] See Surendra Nath Kaushik, *Ahmadiya Community in Pakistan: Discrimination, Travail, and Alienation* (New Delhi: South Asian Publishers, 1996).

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