

Cambridge University Press
978-1-316-61537-9 - Creating a New Medina: State Power, Islam, and the Quest for Pakistan in
Late Colonial North India
Venkat Dhulipala
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Creating a New Medina

This book examines how the idea of Pakistan was articulated and debated in the public sphere and how popular enthusiasm was generated for its successful achievement, especially in the crucial province of U.P. (now Uttar Pradesh) in the last decade of British colonial rule in India. It argues that Pakistan was not simply a vague idea that serendipitously emerged as a nation-state, but was popularly imagined as a sovereign Islamic State, a new Medina, as some called it. In this regard, it was envisaged as the harbinger of Islam's renewal and rise in the twentieth century, the new leader and protector of the global community of Muslims, and a worthy successor to the defunct Turkish Caliphate.

The book specifically foregrounds the critical role played by Deobandi *ulama* in articulating this imagined national community with an awareness of Pakistan's global historical significance. It demonstrates how these *ulama* collaborated with the Muslim League leadership and forged a new political vocabulary fusing ideas of Islamic nationhood and modern state. It, therefore, challenges three principal strands in India's Partition historiography: scholarship on elite politics that largely sees Pakistan's emergence as the result of breakdown of constitutional negotiations between the British government, the leaders of the Muslim League and the Indian National Congress; subaltern histories that argue that Pakistan was a vague but emotive religious symbol that found overwhelming popular support without an awareness of its meaning or implications; and finally narratives which argue that Jinnah led a secular nationalist movement to create Pakistan as a liberal democratic State.

Venkat Dhulipala teaches History at the University of North Carolina, Wilmington. He has a doctorate in History from the University of Minnesota besides degrees from the University of Wisconsin Madison and the University of Hyderabad.

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Pre-Publication Praise

‘Dhulipala’s impressively researched, lucidly written, and intelligently argued book comes as a sharp but welcome corrective to the tendency to see Pakistan as a country created accidentally in a fit of popular enthusiasm and elite indirection in the final, confusing years of British rule in India. Dhulipala shows, with particular focus on north India, how rich the 1940s were with public debates in English and Urdu over the meaning of Pakistan. This is an exciting, significant, and challenging contribution to South Asian history.’

—Dipesh Chakrabarty, *University of Chicago*

‘This is a path-breaking book, indispensable to anyone who wishes to understand the emergence of Pakistan. It persuasively challenges dominant understandings of Pakistan as the creation of a ‘sole spokesman’ or of ‘secular elites’ and demonstrates a long-standing relationship between the Muslim League leadership and an important set of Deobandi ulama. It shows how preparations for creating an Islamic state in Pakistan began in the early 1940s, and explores the conflation in people’s minds between the creation of Pakistan and the fashioning of a ‘New Medina’. It thus brings Islam back into the debate on Pakistan’s birth and offers a new perspective for its subsequent development. It should be read not just by specialists working on India’s Partition and modern Pakistan, but by scholars in Middle Eastern history and politics and those interested in twentieth-century Islamic movements.’

—Francis Robinson, *Royal Holloway, University of London*

‘Dhulipala’s monograph breaks new ground in studies of the birth of the Pakistan idea in northern India. In place of the conventional focus on political negotiations and communal violence, he explores its cultural and religious dimensions and traces the roots of the concept in Indian as well as in early Islamic traditions. Based on meticulous research into a massive corpus of Urdu journals and religious treatises, it looks at the role of the Deoband clergy in very new ways. It is a valuable and important addition to the historical field.’

—Sumit Sarkar, *University of Delhi*

‘Dhulipala’s magisterial book is one of the first to carefully examine a broad range of debates on the idea of Pakistan both in English and in Urdu that illuminated the public sphere in the decade before Partition, particularly within the context of politics in UP. His book powerfully illustrates that understandings of Pakistan were not so vague or ill-formed as many historians have previously argued. Supporters (and opponents) of Pakistan were deeply engaged both with contemporary ideas about the modern nation-state and with conceptions of the state rooted in Islamic history. This is a significant story for understanding Pakistan’s intellectual and political heritage.’

—David Gilmartin, *North Carolina State University*

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'I read *Creating a New Medina* not as a slice of Indian history but as a brilliant, elegantly written study of some of the crucial subjectivities that led to the partitioning of British India. Refusing to wear glasses well-meaning liberal historians often love to wear, Dhulipala takes a hard look at styles of mobilisation deployed by the Pakistan movement and explores how they radically changed the nature of politics in mid-twentieth-century British India - to ultimately shape the future of public life in postcolonial South Asia.'

—Ashis Nandy, *Centre for Study of Developing Societies, New Delhi*

Post-Publication Praise

'... arguably among the most important studies of the ideological origins of Pakistan published to date ... A magnificent book.'

—Pratap Bhanu Mehta, *The Indian Express*

'Dhulipala has raised a host of uncomfortable issues that politicians and intellectuals on both sides of the Radcliffe Line would prefer to shy away from.'

—Swapan Dasgupta, *The Telegraph (India)*

'... a marvelous analysis of what Pakistan was meant to be ...'

—Khaled Ahmed, *The Indian Express*

'Venkat Dhulipala's book ... is a treasure house of information about debates and discussions relating to the idea of Pakistan.'

—Ali Usman Qasmi, *The News on Sunday (India)*

'... [an] engaging book ... a small treasure of references about how the campaign for Pakistan was being conducted in the areas of North India.'

—Ajmal Kamal, *The News on Sunday (India)*

'[In] *Creating a New Medina*, Venkat Dhulipala makes well-researched and insightful comments on the emergence and popularity of the demand for Pakistan in the final decade of colonial rule in India.'

—*The Express Tribune*

'... an encyclopedic masterpiece ... This wonderfully written and painstakingly researched book will be of tremendous interest to students and scholars of Muslim politics, nationalism and religion, and South Asian Islam.'

—Sherali Tareen, *New Books in Islamic Studies*
(newbooksinislamicstudies.com)

'This is an important book ... Venkat Dhulipala has provided much food for thought and unearthed a host of sources that demonstrate, without doubt, that Pakistan was not 'insufficiently imagined'. On the contrary, it was abundantly imagined, both vehemently opposed and extravagantly supported, with many shades of opinion in between.'

—Gail Minault, *H-Asia*

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To,
Amma (Late Smt. D. Annapurna)
Nanna (Sri. D. Suryanarayana)
Anu
&
little Aparna

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At UW Madison where my American journey began, Velcheru Narayana

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List of Abbreviations

AFM	Archives of the Freedom Movement, Karachi
AICC	All India Congress Committee
C.P.	Central Provinces
CWMG	Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi
GOI	Government of India
IAR	Indian Annual Register
JUH	Jamiatul Ulama-i-Hind
JUI	Jamiatul Ulama-i-Islam
ML	Muslim League
MUB	Muslim Unity Board
NAI	National Archives of India, New Delhi
NAP	National Agriculturalist Party
NARA	National Archives and Research Administration, College Park, Maryland
NMML	Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi
OIOC	Oriental and India Office Collections, London
PAI	Police Abstracts of Intelligence
QA Papers	Qaid-i-Azam Papers
SHC	Shamsul Hasan Collection
SWJN	Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru
U.P.	United Provinces (of Agra and Oudh) in British India, later Uttar Pradesh, India
UPML	United Provinces Muslim League
UPMLPB	United Provinces Muslim League Parliamentary Board

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Glossary

<i>Achhutoddhar</i>	uplift of untouchables taken up by the Congress under Gandhi's influence
<i>akhlaq</i>	ethics, moral or mannerly correctness
<i>alim</i> (pl. <i>ulama</i>)	a religious scholar trained in the Islamic sciences
<i>anna</i>	one-sixteenth of a rupee
<i>anjuman</i>	a voluntary public association or society
<i>ansar</i>	the 'helpers', companions of the Prophet in Medina
<i>asabiyat</i>	group/tribal loyalty
<i>ashraf</i>	high-caste respectable Muslim communities
<i>barakat</i>	blessing; good fortune; abundance
<i>ba'yat</i>	pledge of allegiance or public acknowledgement of the caliph or ruler
<i>bid'a</i>	innovation
<i>badshah</i>	king
<i>bande mataram</i>	national song sung at Congress meetings or sessions composed by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay praising the glories of the motherland
<i>biradari</i>	endogamic kinship group
<i>chillakashi</i>	a forty day period of seclusion for mystic communion
<i>crore</i>	ten million
<i>dal-bhat</i>	daily bread
<i>dar al harb</i>	lands not under Islamic rule
<i>dar al Islam</i>	lands under Islamic rule
<i>darul uloom</i>	an abode of knowledge
<i>dastarbandi</i>	convocation for honoring a qualifying student by tying a turban on his head

<i>dhimmi</i>	category of Islamic law signifying non-Muslims who were protected by the Islamic state
<i>dhoti</i>	dress covering the lower part of the body
<i>din</i>	religion; faith
<i>din-i-illabi</i>	faith inaugurated by the Mughal Emperor Akbar
<i>duniya</i>	world
<i>diyanatdar</i>	honest, faithful, conscientious
<i>faqir</i>	dervish, saint, mendicant, mystic
<i>fatwa</i> (pl. <i>fatawa</i>)	a legal opinion issued by the <i>ulama</i>
<i>fiqh</i>	the science of Islamic jurisprudence
<i>fitna</i>	civil war, violent factional strife, rebellion that leads to schism
<i>ghair</i>	opposite, other
<i>ghat</i>	riverbank
<i>ghulam</i>	slave
<i>hadith</i>	written traditions of the Prophet revealing what he did, said, or of his tacit approval for something said or done in his presence
<i>haj</i>	pilgrimage to Mecca
<i>hazrat</i>	Muslim notable, elite
<i>hijrat</i>	migration; in Islamic history the migration of the Prophet from Mecca to Medina
<i>hukumat</i>	government; rule
<i>ibadat</i>	worship; religious practice
<i>ijtihad</i>	lit. 'exerting oneself'; used in Islamic law to refer to the use of independent reasoning in the interpretation of a point in the <i>sharia</i>
<i>ijma</i>	ideally connotes the consensus of the Muslim community; it is generally used, however, to describe consensus of the <i>ulama</i>

GLOSSARY

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<i>ilham</i>	revelation
<i>Imam</i>	in Shi 'ism one of the descendants and legitimate successors of the Prophet
<i>iman</i>	belief; faith
<i>ishtaraqiyyat</i>	socialism
<i>istifta</i>	query sent to a <i>mufiti</i> seeking a <i>fatwa</i>
<i>jabiliyat</i>	the times of ignorance or paganism before the manifestation of Islam
<i>jadid</i>	new; modern
<i>jamiat</i>	organization
<i>jamhooriyat</i>	democracy
<i>jihad</i>	effort or struggle; often used in the context of holy war in defence of Islam
<i>jizya</i>	poll-tax paid by non-Muslims to an Islamic ruler
<i>kafir</i>	infidel; non-Muslim
<i>kalima</i>	Islamic creed
<i>khaddar</i>	homespun cotton popularized by Gandhi
<i>khilafat</i>	office of the Caliph
<i>khilafat-i-rabbani</i>	God's rule
<i>khulafa-i-rashidin</i>	Golden Age of Islam during the reign of the rightly guided caliphs
<i>khutba-i-sadarat</i>	presidential address
<i>kisan sabha</i>	peasant association
<i>kripan</i>	sword
<i>lakh</i>	one hundred thousand
<i>lashkar</i>	army
<i>maatam</i>	mourning rituals
<i>madrasa</i>	school or seminary
<i>majlis</i>	council or gathering
<i>maktab</i>	school for young children

<i>markaz</i>	centre; headquarters
<i>mashaikh</i>	shaikhs; elders, holy persons
<i>maulana</i>	designation of religious distinction and authority
<i>mazdoor</i>	labourer; worker
<i>mazhab</i>	religion
<i>millat</i>	religious community
<i>momin</i>	believer in Islam
<i>mufti</i>	juri-consult in Islam
<i>muhajir</i>	migrant; the companions of the Prophet who migrated with him from Mecca to Medina
<i>mujtahid</i>	one who is qualified to perform <i>ijtihad</i>
<i>mulk</i> (pl. <i>mamalik</i>)	country
<i>munafiq</i>	someone who pretends faith in Islam; hypocrite
<i>murid</i>	disciple
<i>murshid</i>	spiritual guide
<i>musalman</i>	Muslim
<i>muttahida qaumiyat</i>	composite nationalism
<i>nawab</i>	ruler
<i>nazim</i>	organizer; administrator
<i>nechari</i>	materialist, atheist; term often used by the <i>ulama</i> to refer to Sir Syed Ahmad Khan and his followers or students at Aligarh
<i>pir</i>	spiritual guide
<i>purna swaraj</i>	complete independence
<i>pesh imam</i>	leader of the congregational prayer
<i>pardah</i>	the veiling or seclusion of women
<i>Qaid-i-Azam</i>	Great leader
<i>qasba</i>	Muslim towns and rural settlements in north India

GLOSSARY

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<i>qaum</i>	community or nation
<i>qazi</i>	Muslim judge
<i>qiyas</i>	process of analogical reasoning in <i>fiqh</i>
<i>qurbani</i>	sacrifice; refers to sacrifice of cow by Muslims in north India during <i>Eid</i>
<i>raja</i>	king; title also used by several large landlords in India
<i>raj'at pasand</i>	conservative; retrogressive
<i>ravayat</i>	narratives; reports
<i>rozah</i>	fasting
<i>sangathan</i>	organization
<i>sarmayadari</i>	capitalism
<i>sarparast</i>	patron
<i>shura</i>	council; consultative body
<i>sunna</i>	traditions; practice of the Prophet
<i>shaikhul Islam</i>	pre-eminent <i>alim</i> in a Muslim society
<i>sadaqat</i>	charity, propitiatory offerings
<i>shahadat</i>	martyrdom
<i>sharia</i>	the law of Islam
<i>sharif</i>	well born
<i>swaraj</i>	independence; self-rule
<i>tabligh</i>	proselytization of Islamic knowledge
<i>tafsir</i>	the science of Quranic exegesis
<i>taluqdar</i>	a large landowner
<i>tamaddun</i>	culture; civilization
<i>tanzim</i>	organization
<i>taqlid</i>	lit. imitation; refers to the acceptance of a religious ruling from someone who is regarded as a higher religious authority without necessarily asking for technical proof

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GLOSSARY

<i>taqsim</i>	partition; division
<i>taraqqi pasand</i>	progressive
<i>taziya</i>	an effigy of the tomb of Imam Hussain symbolically revered and interred during <i>muharram</i>
<i>tehzeeb</i>	culture, etiquette
<i>ummah</i>	worldwide community of Muslims
<i>vifaq</i>	federation
<i>waqf</i>	a religious endowment directed towards the upkeep of institutions such as mosques, <i>madrasas</i>
<i>watan</i>	homeland
<i>wataniyat</i>	territorial nationalism
<i>zabhiyat</i>	mentality
<i>zakat</i>	obligatory Islamic alms; one of the five pillars of Islam
<i>zamindar</i>	landholder
<i>zat</i>	caste