

Introduction

And what happened in Palestine . . . was then repeated in India on a large scale involving many millions of people. Since the Peace Treaties of 1919 and 1920 the refugees and the stateless have attached themselves like a curse to all newly established states on earth which were created in the image of the nation-state. For these new states this curse bears the germs of a deadly sickness.

Hannah Arendt¹

Indian independence took the form of the partitioning of British India into Muslim-majority Pakistan and Hindu-majority India. The twinning of partition with independence has long disrupted any celebratory narrative of the arrival of the nation-state in South Asia.² In northern India, and especially in Punjab, it was accompanied by communal violence that was unprecedented in its scale and brutality.³ In the divided provinces of Bengal and Assam, minorities usually faced covert forms of social and political marginalisation that occasionally escalated to violent riots.⁴ All over this partitioned landscape, millions of minorities felt ‘stranded’ on

¹ Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (London: André Deutsch, 1986), p. 290.

² Historians of India have struggled to contain the contradictory motifs of national birth and partition within a singular narrative. Mushirul Hasan, in ‘Memories of a Fragmented Nation: Rewriting the Histories of India’s Partition’ in *Inventing Boundaries: Gender, Politics and the Partition of India* (New Delhi, 2000), pp. 26–44, clearly privileges fiction as the ideal means for capturing the popular history of partition. In ‘Partition, Pakistan and South Asian history: In search of a narrative’, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 57, 4 (1998), 1068–95, David Gilmartin suggests approaching partition as a moment of re-negotiation of the relationship between high politics and everyday life in South Asia. Gyanendra Pandey, in *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism and History in India* (Cambridge, 2001), deconstructs the unitary notion of a single political partition into its multiple meanings and negotiations while Ranabir Samadhar, in *Reflections on Partition in the East* (New Delhi and Calcutta, 1997), argues that South Asia’s discontent with the settlement of 1947 might well warrant the renaming of the post-colonial period as ‘post-partition’ times.

³ For details see Swarna Aiyar, ‘“August Anarchy”: The Partition Massacres in Punjab, 1947’, *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 18:1 (1995), 13–36; Paul R. Brass, ‘The Partition of India and Retributive Genocide in the Punjab, 1946–47: Means, Methods, and Purposes 1’, *Journal of Genocide Research*, 5: 1 (2003), 71–101.

⁴ See Nilanjana Chatterjee, ‘Interrogating Victimhood: East Bengali Refugee Narratives of Communal Violence’, (<http://www.swadhinata.org.uk/document/chatterjeeEastBengal%20Refugee.pdf>, accessed 18 August 2015).

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the wrong side and fled to their putative homelands. This gave rise to a refugee crisis of staggering proportions and complexity. While no accurate numbers are available of Hindu and Sikh minorities who left Pakistan for India, or of Muslims who left India for Pakistan, the total number of refugees is estimated to be anything between 11 to 18 million.⁵ In recent decades, histories of partition have privileged quotidian negotiations of this political rift, highlighting themes of displacement, loss and violence.⁶ These new histories explore partition as a process instead of an event, where the long-term struggle to rebuild lives and communities continues well beyond 1947.⁷ A particularly rich analytical prism is provided by regional studies that investigate the long afterlife of partition in directly impacted geographies, which are variously conceptualised as divided polities, fractured trade networks, new borderlands or ‘capitol landscapes’.⁸ The figure of the displaced minority, variously classified as migrants, refugees, displaced persons, *muhajirs* and evacuees, emerges

⁵ For a discussion of the inconsistent practices of enumeration of partition refugees, especially in Bengal, and the contradictory figures thrown up as a result see Abhijit Dasgupta, ‘The Puzzling Numbers: The Politics of Counting “Refugees” in West Bengal’, *SARWATCH*, 2:2 (2002), 64–73. In recent years, demographic data has led ‘official’ figures to be progressively revised upwards. The figure of eleven to eighteen million is taken from Prashant Bharadwaj, Asim Ijaz Khwaja and Atif R. Mian, ‘The Partition of India: Demographic Consequences’, June 2009, available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=1294846>. A higher figure of 20 million is mentioned in Joya Chatterji, ‘From Imperial Subjects to National Citizens: South Asians and the International Migration Regime since 1947’ in Joya Chatterji and David Washbrook (eds.) *Routledge Handbook of the South Asian Diaspora* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), p. 187.

⁶ Gyanesh Kudaisya and Tai Yong Tan, *The Aftermath of Partition in South Asia* (London: Routledge, 2004); Anjali Gera Roy and Nandi Bhatia, *Partitioned Lives: Narratives of Home, Displacement, and Resettlement* (Delhi: Pearson Education India, 2008); Amritjit Singh, Nalini Iyer, and Rahul K. Gairola, *Revisiting India’s Partition: New Essays on Memory, Culture, and Politics* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2016); Urvashi Butalia (ed.), *Partition: The Long Shadow* (New Delhi: Zubaan/Penguin, 2015); Yasmin Khan, *The Great Partition: The Making of India and Pakistan* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2008); Deepti Misri, *Beyond Partition: Gender, Violence, and Representation in Postcolonial India* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2014).

⁷ Of particular importance is the term ‘long partition’ used by Vazira Zamindar, which shifts the emphasis from partition’s impact to looking at partition as a long-term process. See Vazira Fazila Zamindar, *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

⁸ Willem van Schendel, *The Bengal Borderland: Beyond State and Nation in South Asia* (Anthem Press, 2005); Sarah F. D. Ansari, *Life After Partition: Migration, Community and Strife in Sindh, 1947–1962* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); Ravinder Kaur, *Since 1947: Partition Narratives Among Punjabi Migrants of Delhi* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2007); Joya Chatterji, *The Spoils of Partition: Bengal and India, 1947–1967* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Ilyas Chattha, *Partition and Locality: Violence, Migration, and Development in Gujranwala and Sialkot, 1947–1961* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2011); Haimanti Roy, *Partitioned Lives: Migrants, Refugees, Citizens in India and Pakistan, 1947–65* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2012); Debjani Sengupta, *The Partition of Bengal: Fragile Borders and New Identities* (Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

as a central figure in these histories. The centrality of displaced persons in histories of partition is not merely born of the scale and complexity of the refugee crisis unleashed by the hurried division of British India; it is also indicative of a peculiar feature of partition refugees. The refugees who sought shelter in India and Pakistan in the aftermath of partition claimed to be *both* refugees and citizens of their putative homelands. This allowed partition refugees to occupy a visible and central place in the post-partition polities of South Asia. The significance of this simultaneous iteration of refugee-ness and national belonging is the point of departure of this study. This unlikely conjuncture transformed the project of rehabilitation of partition refugees into a richly contested sphere of governance where refugee visions of rights and belonging clashed with official ideals of governance and citizenship.

The political leadership of India and Pakistan did not anticipate any large-scale movement of minorities. As a result, in both India and Pakistan, policy lagged behind ground realities. When refugees started pouring in from Punjab, along with reports of ‘stranded’ minorities facing mass slaughter, the authorities were forced to improvise. In the face of escalating violence and complete polarisation along ethnic and religious lines, initial hopes of restoring peace in Punjab and repatriating refugees rapidly gave way to a bilateral military operation to evacuate stranded minorities. The Hindu and Sikh minorities who were rescued in this manner and brought ‘home’ to India could not be excluded from the emerging community of citizens. The evacuation of minorities from Punjab was completed by January 1948.⁹ In the eyes of the state, this was an exceptional measure, adopted in order to deal with an emergency situation. It nevertheless drew force from prevalent discourses of ethno-nationalist belongings, in which India and Pakistan were seen as the respective homelands of Hindus and Muslims.¹⁰ The evacuated minorities, who were initially housed in government-administered refugee camps, were seen to belong to the new nation-states. In post-partition India, this led to equivalence between becoming a Hindu or Sikh refugee and becoming a *de facto* citizen. The violent arrival of the nation-state in

⁹ For details see U. Bhaskar Rao, *The Story of Rehabilitation* (Department of Rehabilitation, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Rehabilitation, Government of India, 1967), pp. 4–29.

¹⁰ These discourses had deep roots in colonial historiography and nineteenth century literature that consistently portrayed Muslims as outsiders and invaders in India. For example, see Shahid Amin, ‘Representing the Musalman: Then and Now, Now and Then’, in Shail Mayaram, M. S. S. Pandian, Ajay Skaria (eds.) *Subaltern Studies XII: Muslims, Dalits, and the Fabrications of History* (New Delhi: Permanent Black and Ravi Dayal Publisher, 2005).

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South Asia thus gave birth to the paradoxical figure of the citizen-refugee. Families displaced by partition became refugees and staked a claim to citizenship long before the new rulers of India had managed to define either a partition refugee or an Indian citizen.

The refugee crisis that engulfed post-partition South Asia posed a fundamental challenge to the emerging nation-states. The question posed by the millions of refugees who crossed the newly minted international borders of India and Pakistan was one which lies at the heart of the modern political system. The post-war international order of nation-states seeks to organise populations into national groups, each with their own sovereign state, or homeland. The modern refugee is the product of a world where the ground realities of multi-ethnic societies contradicts the political ideal of a seamless congruence between the territory and population encompassed by a state and the political community of a nation. Given that the nation, as an ‘imagined community’,¹¹ has seldom been free from ethnic or religious markers of belonging, where do ethnic and religious minorities belong? This question has been answered differently by various philosophers and political scientists, depending on the particular minority group they study, and the specificity of the historical context. Many scholars, beginning with Hannah Arendt, have cited India’s post-partition refugee crisis as an example that illustrates how nation-states inevitably fail to shelter ethnic and religious minorities. A brief survey of this literature presents a curious anomaly. The partition of India is repeatedly evoked as an example of how nation-states generate refugees. However, this evocation is selective. Post-partition South Asia did not merely generate a large number of refugees; it also absorbed an overwhelming majority of these refugees within the rank of citizens. Thus, to cite partition refugees as an example of the inevitable incommensurability between nation-states and ethnic minorities is to tell only half the story. The history of rehabilitation of millions of refugees in South Asia calls for a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between emerging nation-states and refugees in the twentieth century.

Arendt argued, based on her experience of the first half of the twentieth century, that nation-states were prone to creating, through expulsion from their ranks of citizens, the ‘curse’ of refugees and stateless people. For Arendt, this expulsion was a symptom of the rise of totalitarianism, or the emergence of a kind of state that dealt with diversity through the expulsion of people who did not fit a prefigured ideal of citizenship. Arendt analysed the predicament of Jewish refugees in post-war Europe

¹¹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991).

to illustrate what she believed to be the inevitable fate of all minorities in modern nation-states. Writing in 1948, she cited the millions displaced in India and Pakistan as proof of her indictment of all states ‘built in the image of the nation-state’.¹² Arendt’s theorisation of the impossibility of minority belonging has been understandably influential within refugee studies, as it is usually displaced minorities who populate the category of the refugee. Aristide Zolberg expands Arendt’s insight to argue that nation-building is a refugee-generating process that is neither limited to totalitarian regimes, nor unique to the twentieth century. He argues that the homogenising impulse of states can be traced back to early modern Spain and France, when nationalism first emerged as an organising principle of political power in Western Europe. The same process, with important variations, has been repeated in the demise of multi-ethnic empires in Eastern Europe and colonial empires in Asia and Africa.¹³ Zolberg explicitly cites the partition of India as the ‘classic case’ that illustrates how the birth of new nation-states transformed minorities into refugees fleeing from violence.¹⁴ Giorgio Agamben builds upon Arendt’s insights to argue that the figure of the refugee is not just representative of minorities who cannot belong, but an embodiment of the unresolved crisis of the contemporary political order of nation-states that reduces anyone who is not a national to ‘bare life’ – a human being devoid of political rights.¹⁵ Within this particular trajectory of thought, the refugee emerges as the radical outsider. They are the essential opposite of citizens and nationals. Becoming a refugee, in this context, is usually read as an experience of loss – of homes, of political rights *and* of citizenship. However, becoming a refugee in post-partition India did not only connote loss. While displacement was a formative experience for all partition refugees, it was not coterminous with the process of *becoming* refugees. Millions of minorities who were forcibly displaced from their homes in the wake of a violent partition became refugees, both by their own accounting and in official records, only *after* they crossed the new national borders. To become a refugee in post-partition India was not only to be displaced. To become a refugee was to claim the right to relief and rehabilitation from the state. In other words, in post-partition India, the displaced became refugees in order to stake a claim to their putative

¹² Arendt, *The Decline of the Nation-State and the End of the Rights of Man* (1986).

¹³ Aristide R. Zolberg, ‘The Formation of New States as a Refugee-Generating Process’, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 467(1983), 24–38.

¹⁴ Aristide R. Zolberg, Astri Suhrke and Sergio Aguayo, *Escape from Violence: Conflict and the Refugee Crisis in the Developing World* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

¹⁵ Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen, 1st edition (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998).

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homeland. The constraints and possibilities of refugee life in South Asia have always exceeded Eurocentric formulations of refugees as stateless outsiders and abject victims.

The partition refugees' claim to be citizens of their host states gained traction due to contingent circumstances. The need to grant citizenship to the minorities evacuated from divided Punjab was one of many ingredients that went into the making of the citizen-refugee. Partition refugees evoked shared communitarian ties with the host society and a historical loyalty to Indian or Pakistani nationalism as a basis of belonging. Though the partitioning of British India into Muslim-majority Pakistan and Hindu-majority India was sold as a 'solution' to the problem of providing adequate rights to the Muslim minority, in effect, it offered no real solution for minority belonging. Once the dust settled over the borders, millions of Muslims were 'left behind' in India while several million Hindus found themselves in Pakistan. Partition deepened the vulnerability of minorities by recasting them as people out of place. Yet, the founding fathers of India and Pakistan neither anticipated nor encouraged the movement of minorities. While Sardar Patel was content to lament their pain and loss,¹⁶ Muhammad Ali Jinnah waxed eloquent on the 'sacrifices' made by those 'left behind'.¹⁷ By migrating, minorities refused to be sacrificed. Instead, they claimed affective belonging to their putative homelands, demanded compensation for their displacement and loss of homes, and expected to become citizens in the host societies. The new nation-states disapproved of such migration and exhorted minorities to stay put, but they were powerless to stop migration across still largely notional borders. The categorical denial of citizenship to migrants was technically impossible, given that the laws and statutes conferring Indian and Pakistani citizenship were yet to be formulated. More importantly, this was a political impossibility. In both India and Pakistan, the partition refugees' claim to moral citizenship enjoyed considerable support, not just among their co-religionists, but also amongst bureaucrats and politicians. The exchange of minority populations in Punjab was enabled by this atmosphere. Once accomplished, it provided validation for the moral citizenship of displaced minorities that spilled beyond the frontiers of Punjab. It became a popular demand that resonated across the partitioned landscape of India and Pakistan. This is not to suggest that all minorities chose to, or even wanted to migrate. For many, migration

¹⁶ Sardar Patel's speech delivered on 15 August 1947, as cited in *Andandabazar Patrika*, 28 January 1964.

¹⁷ Jinnah's speech 'Those Who Gave Great Sacrifices' delivered on 9 June 1947, cited in Tahir Hasnain Naqvi, 'The Politics of Commensuration: The Violence of Partition and the Making of the Pakistani State', *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 20:1 & 2 (2007), p. 56.

offered no remedy for a profound loss ushered in by the new borders that divided families, disrupted livelihoods, and dismantled shared cultural worlds. Yet, becoming a refugee, in post-partition India and Pakistan, was also a step towards national belonging. This study begins in the immediate aftermath of displacement, mapping the complexity of the intertwined processes of becoming a refugee and becoming a citizen in independent India.

Becoming Refugee, Becoming Citizen: The Status of Displaced Hindus in India

This book focuses on the Hindu minorities who left East Bengal, or the eastern wing of Pakistan, between 1947 and 1970, and sought refuge in West Bengal. Though migration continued and even reached crisis levels after 1970, the refugees who fled civil war in Pakistan cannot be regarded as partition refugees. They were the result of yet another process of national determination in South Asia, and marked the violent birth of Bangladesh in 1971. Between 1947 and 1970, migration across the Bengal frontier continued in fits and starts. There was no comprehensive process of enumeration, and official estimates of East Bengali migrants who sought refuge in India between 1946 and 1970 vary between 5.8 million¹⁸ and 4.1 million.¹⁹ West Bengal alone took in over 3.9 million refugees.²⁰ Though the patterns of displacement and official response varied significantly across these twenty-three years, this period nevertheless enjoys a certain coherence due to the ability of Bengali refugees to make claims upon the local and national government as de facto citizens. For all Hindu migrants the path to citizenship passed through official acknowledgement of refugeehood. However, the government of India was particularly reluctant to accept the refugee status of Hindu migrants from East Bengal. As a result, the Bengali refugee's long-term struggle to wrest relief and rehabilitation from a recalcitrant state emerges as a key site for the articulation of the limits and possibilities of Hindu belonging in post-colonial India.

If we go by official declarations and constitutional guarantees alone, then the inclusion of Hindu and Sikh refugees within the body of Indian

¹⁸ Pran Nath Luthra, *Rehabilitation* (New Delhi: Publications Division, 1972).

¹⁹ Committee for Review of Rehabilitation Work in West Bengal, *Report of the Working Group on the Residual Problem of Rehabilitation in West Bengal* (Calcutta, 1976).

²⁰ This is the official figure, as mentioned in Pran Nath Luthra, *Rehabilitation*, 1972; and cited in Chatterji, *Spoils of Partition* (2007), p. 112. This number possibly reflected the number of registered refugees, and the actual number of minorities who claimed refuge in West Bengal is likely to be much higher.

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citizenry appears to be a deceptively straightforward process. Discussions within the Constituent Assembly rapidly led to a broad-based consensus that Hindu and Sikh minorities fleeing violence in Pakistan belonged in India.²¹ In 1950, their right to belong to India was enshrined in the constitution. Article 5 allowed citizenship by registration to all those who had migrated to India from Pakistan, provided they had arrived in India before the commencement of the constitution.²² But the influx of refugees continued well beyond 1950 and informed subsequent discussions on citizenship. The question of refugee belonging re-emerged as a dominant concern in 1955, moulding the tenor and texture of the debate around the Citizenship Bill. Pandit Pant, the Home Minister, was eager for a swift passage of the bill in order to ensure that the ‘tens of thousands of displaced persons’ who ‘have come over and are still coming to India from Pakistan’ could be given their full rights as citizens, including the right to vote in the forthcoming elections.²³ However, representatives from West Bengal, such as B. K. Das, criticised the bill for demanding the cumbrous and bureaucratic process of registration from destitute refugees, who might not have possessed the necessary papers. Instead of registration, Das wanted the bill to provide a definition for displaced persons that would declare all displaced persons to be citizens of India. Pant refused, insisting that registration was necessary to avoid confusion. However, he was also quick to clarify that the bill did not propose to endow partition refugees with a new right, or monitor their eligibility for citizenship. The right of citizenship, according to him, was ‘already there’.²⁴ In other words, India’s Citizenship Bill formally acknowledged the contradictory category of the citizen-refugee. For displaced Hindus from Pakistan, being seen as refugees or displaced persons by the Indian state opened up a pathway to citizenship through registration.

Pandit Pant’s reassurance that all refugees already had the right to citizenship left a vital question unanswered. Who counted as a bona fide refugee in post-partition India? There was no simple answer to this question. This was partly because the government of India was forced

²¹ For an analysis of how the presence of partition refugees impacted the formulation of legal citizenship in India, see Joya Chatterji, ‘South Asian Histories of Citizenship, 1946–1970,’ *The Historical Journal* 55:4 (2012), 1049–71.

²² Refugees of Indian descent who arrived before 19 July 1948 were exempted from the process of registration. The full draft of the Constitution of India is available at <http://india.gov.in/my-government/constitution-india>.

²³ Statement by Pandit Pant in the Lok Sabha, as reported in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 12 August 1955. For details of how partition refugees were included in India’s electoral roll, see Ornit Shani, *How India became Democratic: Citizenship and the Making of the Universal Franchise*, Cambridge, (New York, Melbourne, New Delhi, Singapore: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

²⁴ *Ibid.*

to deal with the refugee crisis on an emergency basis and policies for relief and rehabilitation preceded any clear definition of a partition refugee. The official term used to describe partition refugees was ‘displaced persons’, which was in keeping with the terminology used by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration to refer to refugees born of the Second World War. By 1951, the Geneva Convention had put in place a Eurocentric definition of refugees that included European displaced persons but excluded those displaced by partition in India.²⁵ Within India, ‘displaced persons’ and ‘refugees’ continued to be used interchangeably in various official documents and declarations. While displaced persons or DPs was the preferred and more accurate term for official purposes, in everyday parlance and in the contemporary press, the displaced minorities were more frequently called refugees. Various vernacular iterations of refugee identity, such as *ashrayprarthi*, *sharanarathi* and *udvastu*, proliferated in the public sphere.²⁶ Displaced Hindus overwhelmingly described themselves using one of these terms, or as a refugee – a word that passed untranslated into vernacular speech. Self-identified refugees often constituted a far broader category than officially recognised DPs. Given that this study pays equal attention to the top-down iteration of policy and the process through which displaced minorities sought to belong, I use the broader category of refugees instead of the bureaucratically sanctioned ‘displaced persons’ to refer to displaced Hindus from eastern Pakistan.

In the aftermath of partition, there was no attempt to create a pan-Indian definition of a displaced person, or a refugee. This was not just the result of bureaucratic oversight. There was also a marked reluctance, on the part of the government, to come up with a clear definition of partition refugees. The lack of clarity allowed the government of India to maintain an inclusive official stance, where in theory citizenship was within the reach of all displaced persons or DPs. Yet, in order to officially count as a DP, those displaced by partition had to meet a host of discriminatory criteria, which the local authorities could change at will by periodically issuing new circulars that imposed new requirements and preconditions. As a result, questions around migration, minority belonging and citizenship continued to animate politics and policies in post-colonial India. Did minorities displaced from all parts of Pakistan count as de facto citizens of India? What would happen to those who migrated after 1950, or after

²⁵ For details of this process of exclusions see Pia Oberoi, *Exile and Belonging: Refugees and State Policy in South Asia* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 11–43.

²⁶ *Ashrayprarthi* and *saranarathi* both translate as those who seek refuge/shelter. The former was used largely in Bengali, while *saranarathi* was used in Bengali and Hindi. *Udvasu* is a Bengali term, meaning those removed from homelands, or the uprooted.

1956, when the new Citizenship Act came into force? Was proof of facing persecution or violence in Pakistan an adequate or necessary criterion for becoming a refugee? Could Muslim migrants from Pakistan count as refugees in India? The official refusal to articulate clearly who could and could not be a partition refugee had the benefit of displacing these unresolved questions into the sphere of everyday governance. Contestation was rife over issues of *who* could count as a partition refugee, *how* official recognition was conferred, and *what* such recognition entailed in terms of relief and rehabilitation.

Neither India nor Pakistan had any intention of accommodating all minorities 'left behind' on the other side. Pakistan, while upholding its foundational ideal of a homeland for South Asian Muslims in theory, refuted it in practice by arguing that it was only prepared to provide for Muslim refugees from Punjab and North West Frontier Provinces.²⁷ This selective acceptance of some but not all Muslim refugees was explicitly justified by Pakistan on grounds of national economic interests.²⁸ The situation in avowedly secular India was more complicated. In post-partition India, the national leadership found itself walking a tightrope between various contradictory notions of national belonging. In the immediate aftermath of Partition, India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, took an uncompromising stand against those who called for a 'Hindu Raj' and the evacuation of all Muslims from India by describing such beliefs as 'sectarian' and 'fascist' in numerous public speeches and declarations.²⁹ However, his principled commitment to a secular polity was undone by his response to partition refugees. In May 1948, Sardar Patel, the Home Minister of India, sounded the alarm bell regarding the arrival of Muslims from Pakistan. He warned Nehru of 'considerable discontent both among the public, in general, and refugees in particular, in regard to our failure to prevent the inflow'.³⁰ Nehru's

²⁷ At the inter-dominion conference held at Lahore on 5 October 1948, Liaquat Ali Khan, the prime minister of Pakistan, sought to restrict the accountability of the Pakistan government to the Muslim refugees from Punjab and North West Frontier Province only. Cited in Zamindar, *The Long Partition* (2007), pp. 41–4. For further details on the strategies adopted by Pakistan to restrict migration of Muslims from India see pp. 79–119 and 161–226. Also see Omar Khalidi, 'From Torrent to Trickle: Indian Muslim Migration to Pakistan, 1947–97', *Bulletin of the Henry Martin Institute of Islamic Studies*, 16:1 & 2 (1997), 32–45; and Ansari, *Life after Partition* (2005).

²⁸ Zamindar, *The Long Partition* (2007).

²⁹ For examples see Nehru's address to Congress workers in Delhi on 3 October 1947, as reported in *The Hindu* and his speech at a public meeting in Delhi on 6 October 1947, as reported in *The Hindustan Times*. Both have been reproduced in S. Gopal (ed.), *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru, Second Series, Vol. 4* (New Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund, 1984), pp. 118–19 and 124–6.

³⁰ Vallabhbhai Patel to Jawaharlal Nehru, 4 May 1948, Durga Das (ed.), *Sardar Patel's Correspondence, Vol. 6* (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1972), pp. 319–20.