

Topic 2 The wounds of history



16th/17th century Europeans start trading in India.

1600 British East India Trading Company founded.

1757 Beginning of Company rule in India.

1784 Indian Act: British Parliament sets up a control board to restrict the Company's power.

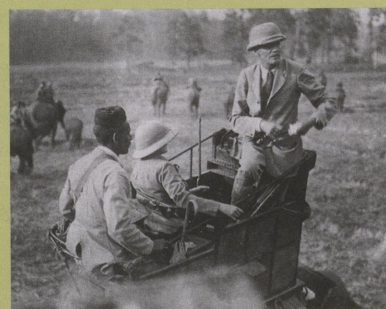
19th century Expansion of Company territories. British Parliament opens up the subcontinent to private investment and missionaries. **Positive developments:** During the Industrial Revolution an efficient infrastructure is set up. **Negative:** Market risks are shifted to the Indian taxpayers, skilled jobs are reserved for Europeans. The British Empire is flourishing: Britain imports raw materials from the colonies and exports manufactured goods to them. India is the 'jewel in the Crown of the British Empire'.

1857 Indian Rebellion: Indians resent land taxation by the British and interference with traditional inheritance laws. They also fear the British might try to impose Christianity on them and force them to abandon their traditional way of life. This leads to outbreaks of violence, brutally ended by the British.

1858 Government of India Act: Beginning of the British Raj. The East India Company is dissolved. The Crown takes over rule with a Secretary of State for India and a Council of India in London. In Calcutta, the Viceroy is head of the central government of British India. The subordinate provinces each have their own governor. India consists of British India and over 600 native states governed by Indian princes. Power over the larger native states is held by the central government, the remaining states are under provincial government.

1876 Queen Victoria becomes Empress of India.

Late 19th century First steps towards self-government: Indian counsellors.



1885 Indian National Congress is formed.

1892 Indian Councils Act: Local administration included elected Indian members.

1906 All India Muslim League is founded.

1909 Government of India Act: Indian participation in legislative councils.

1914–1918 World War I: India provides money and troops for the war.

1935 Government of India Act: Independent legislative assemblies, central government for all the states, protection of Muslim minorities.

1937 Nationwide elections for provincial assemblies, dominated by the Congress.

1939 Beginning of World War II: The Viceroy declares war without the consent of Indian leaders. The Congress protests, Muslim leaders support Britain's war efforts.

1940 Lahore/Pakistan Resolution: The Muslim League supports the idea of a separate Muslim territory. The Congress strongly objects. Violence between Hindus and Muslims ensues.

1942 Mahatma Gandhi starts his 'Quit India' movement. Escalation of violence.

August 15, 1947 British withdrawal. India becomes independent, but is partitioned into two separate states: India and Pakistan.

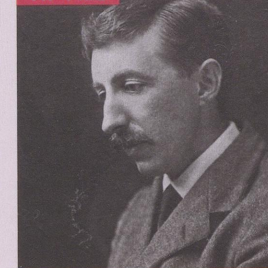
Why can't we be friends?

The novel *A Passage to India*, which is set in India during the British Raj, and deals with the British-Indian relationship, ends with this exchange between Dr Aziz, a Muslim physician, and Cyril Fielding, a British headmaster.

- Aziz grew more excited. He rose in his stirrups and pulled at his horse's head in the hope that it would rear. Then he should feel in a battle. He cried: "Clear out, all you Turtons and Burtons. We wanted to know you ten years back – now it's too late. If we see you and sit on your committees, it's for political reasons, don't you make any mistake." His horse did rear. "Clear out, clear out, I say. Why are we put to so much suffering? We used to blame you, now we blame ourselves, we grow wiser. Until England is in difficulties we keep silent, but in the next European war – aha, aha! Then is our time." He paused, and the scenery, though it smiled, fell like a gravestone on any human hope. [...]
- 10 "Who do you want instead of the English? The Japanese?" jeered Fielding, drawing rein.
- "No, the Afghans. My own ancestors."
- "Oh, your Hindu friends will like that, won't they?"
- "It will be arranged – a conference of oriental statesmen." [...]
- 15 Still he couldn't quite fit in Afghans at Mau, and, finding he was in a corner, made his horse rear again until he remembered that he had, or ought to have, a mother-land. Then he shouted: "India shall be a nation! No foreigners of any sort! Hindu and Moslem and Sikh and all shall be one! Hurrah! Hurrah for India! Hurrah! Hurrah!"
- 20 India a nation! What an apotheosis! Last comer to the drab nineteenth-century sisterhood! Waddling in at this hour of the world to take her seat! She, whose only peer was the Holy Roman Empire, she shall rank with Guatemala and Belgium perhaps! Fielding mocked again. And Aziz in an awful rage danced this way and that, not knowing what to do, and cried: "Down with the English anyhow. That's certain. Clear out, you fellows, double quick, I say. We may hate one another, but we hate you most. If I don't make you go, Ahmed will, Karim will, if it's fifty or five hundred years we shall get rid of you, yes, we shall drive every blasted Englishman into the sea, and then" – he rode against him furiously – "and then," he concluded, half kissing him, "you and I shall be friends."
- 30 "Why can't we be friends now?" said the other, holding him affectionately. "It's what I want. It's what you want."
- But the horses didn't want it – they swerved apart; the earth didn't want it, sending up rocks through which riders must pass single-file; the temples, the tank, the jail, the palace, the birds, the carrion, the Guest House, that came into view as they issued from the gap and saw Mau beneath: they didn't want it, they said in their hundred voices, "No, not yet," and the sky said, "No, not there."

From: E. M. Forster, *A Passage to India*, 1924

VIP FILE



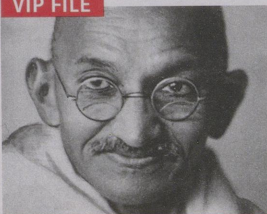
E.M. Forster (1879–1970); English writer; his work displays sharp, amusing observation of Victorian values and social conventions. His most famous novels are *A Room with a View* (1907) and *A Passage to India* (1924).

- ¹stirrup *Steigbügel*
²to rear to rise on its hind legs
¹¹rein *Zügel*
²⁰apotheosis highest point of sth
²⁰drab grey, dull
²¹to waddle *watscheln*
²²peer person of equal rank
³²to swerve to take a sudden turn
³³single-file one behind the other
³⁴carrion decaying flesh of dead animals

- 1 [2] Listen to track two and take notes to answer the following questions:
a) What information does Mark Tully, a radio journalist for the BBC in India for over twenty years and thus an expert on India, give about the events in 1947 and how his family experienced them?
b) What does 'going jungly' mean and what did most British people think of it?
- 2 [3] Listen to track three and take notes. In what way is the second track related to the first one? Consider time, place, communicative situation and content. →S21

- 1 Describe and analyse the relationship between Aziz and Fielding as revealed by their behaviour and feelings. →S7
- 2 Examine important aspects of the text (genre, narrator, point of view, characters, plot, theme, imagery, symbolism, structure etc.) in detail and use your results to illustrate how Forster portrays the situation in India at the time and the relationship between the Indians and the British in general. →S8, →S9

VIP FILE



Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, mostly called 'Mahatma' (Great Soul).

- born in 1869 in Gujarat, assassinated in 1948
- studied law in London
- stayed in South Africa 1893–1915 to represent Indian labourers, where he developed his famous philosophy of satyagraha, "a force born of truth combined with love"
- applied nationwide satyagraha actions of non-violent resistance in the Indians' struggle for independence from Britain
- sought to improve the conditions of the members of the lowest castes

Father to a nation, stranger to his son

Mahatma Gandhi once confessed that the greatest regret of his life was that there were two people he had not been able to convince. One was Mohammed Ali Jinnah, whose demand for a separate homeland for Muslims led to the partition of India and Pakistan in August 1947 and the end of the dream of a united, independent India. The other person was his own eldest son. Harilal Gandhi's entire life was lived in the shadow of his father and it was spent rebelling against everything his father believed in. Gandhi's stern morality, sexual abstinence and principled stand against Britain were all challenged by his son, who was an alcoholic gambler trading in imported British clothes even as his father was urging a boycott of foreign goods. Harilal even converted to Islam and changed his name to Abdullah before his death in 1948, only months after his father was assassinated by a Hindu extremist.

Sixty years on from the Indian independence he was so instrumental in securing, Gandhi is a symbol of innocence and peace; a simple man in peasant clothes whose adherence to nonviolence defeated the British and would later inspire both Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela. This was the Gandhi depicted in Richard Attenborough's multi-Oscar-winning film a quarter of a century ago: a dhoti-clad demigod. Attenborough's film told the story of Gandhi as the father of a nation; now a new film, *Gandhi, My Father*, reveals the extraordinary story of the son and the man he described as "the greatest father you can have but the one father I wish I did not have". The film's release coincides with the publication of a monumental new biography by Rajmohan Gandhi, a historian and grandson of the Mahatma. "I wrote this book because I wanted to make sense of my grandfather," says Rajmohan, 72. "I was 12 years old when my grandfather died and I wanted to be able to tell my children and grandchildren who Gandhi really was. The story of Gandhi is not only the story of India and partition: it is also the story of a father with high expectations and four sons who found it hard to measure up." [...]

Gandhi's political philosophy was based on the belief that there was a larger good for society which demanded that each individual makes sacrifices. The necessity not to appear hypocritical meant that his sons were schooled at home when the family lived in South Africa. He could not have sent the boys to the private European schools without alienating himself from the Indian community, but in remaining true to his principles, he angered his children, who would meet other youngsters demanding to know which school they attended. [...]

When an Indian friend offered Gandhi the opportunity to send one of his sons to England on a scholarship, Gandhi inquired whether the scholarship was truly for one of his boys or for the most deserving young person from the Indian community in South Africa. The man reluctantly agreed that the scholarship could go to the most deserving young person. Gandhi promptly suggested two other boys who he believed were more deserving and these were sent to England in the place of his own children. "You want to make saints out of my boys before they are men," complained his wife but, for Gandhi, his sons were to be the ideal symbols of the new India he was trying to create.

Embittered, Harilal resolved to carve out his own identity. He began drinking and trading in foreign clothes for profit; Gandhi's relationship with his son was further strained by Harilal's decision to remarry after the

death of his first wife. "How can I who has always advocated renunciation of sex encourage you to gratify it?" asked Gandhi. "If Harilal wants to marry against my wish, I will have to stop thinking of him as my son." While Gandhi espoused nonviolence, his son's business at one point depended on the continuation of the second world war, and peace led to financial troubles. [...]

Gandhi, My Father opens with Harilal's death after he is picked up from the streets in Mumbai and taken to hospital. The doctors imagine him to be an alcoholic vagrant. They ask him his father's name and he replies: "Bapu" – the term of endearment that Indians used to refer to Gandhi. The doctors agree that Bapu is indeed the father of the nation but demand the name of his biological father. It is a poignant scene. "Gandhi is an inconvenient truth," admits [director Feroz Abbas] Khan, "and his principles were hard to live by."

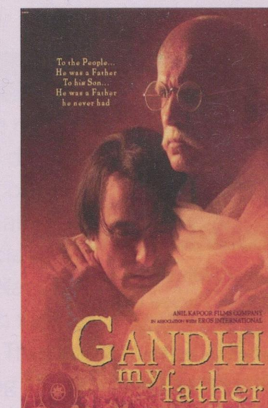
Filmed in English and Hindi and shot in India and South Africa, *Gandhi, My Father* is not typical Bollywood fare. Rather than the usual Bombay mix of melodrama and music, first-time director Khan's film is understated and humane. Khan based his script on his own play, *Mahatma vs Gandhi*; he supplemented the work with research visits to South Africa and interviews with Gandhi's relatives, all the while collecting letters, articles and any other scraps of information that would help make his film appear authentic.

"I have a responsibility to this subject and the dignity of the subject," he says. "There are no duets sung between Harilal and his father because they didn't have duets – they had arguments." Those arguments stemmed from Gandhi's belief that the needs of the nation were more important than the need of any individual. "One reason that Indians loved him so much," explains Rajmohan, "was that he was not partial to his children – that was his strongest card. He knew that if India wanted to be inspired, they needed the sort of leader who was willing to 'neglect' his children."

In fact, he was a fragile, troubled father. "People assume he was a miracle worker from the start," says Rajmohan, "some impossibly wonderful human being always in control of himself. This was not the case at all." Even before the film's release in India there were protests from those uncomfortable with this portrayal and demands that the film be banned.

Razi Ahmad, secretary of Gandhi Sangrahalaya, a research centre in Patna, said: "We are of the view that any attempt to tarnish the image of national heroes should not be permitted." In truth, the film reveals Gandhi's humanity and that, says [his great-grandson] Tushar Gandhi, should have been exposed a long time ago. "Gandhi has become a hostage to his mahatmaship. It is easy to say that we cannot emulate someone like him when we put him on a pedestal. What we should be doing is seeing him as a normal, frail human being who strove to achieve something. We should emulate people like him, but not worship them."

Sarfraz Manzoor, *The Guardian*, August 10, 2007



- ⁵⁰renunciation giving up
- ⁵¹to gratify to indulge in
- ⁵³to espouse (fml) to adopt and support (a belief)
- ⁶⁰poignant causing a feeling of sadness
- ⁶⁰an inconvenient truth here: a reality people find hard to accept (play on the title of a film about climate change)
- ⁷¹to stem from to be caused by
- ⁷⁴partial to showing a preference for
- ⁷⁷fragile easy to break
- ⁸³to tarnish beflecken
- ⁸⁶hostage Geisel
- ⁸⁶mahatmaship (invented noun) state of being a 'mahatma'
- ⁸⁷to emulate to try to be as good as or better than

WORD BANK

talking about contrasts on the one/the other hand

- a huge discrepancy between
- whereas/while
- to have little/nothing in common with
- unlike
- as opposed to
- at odds with
- the reverse of

²Mohammed Ali Jinnah (1876–1948) Indian statesman and first Governor General and President of Pakistan

⁷stern strict

⁹gambler Spieler

¹⁴peasant farm labourer

¹⁵adherence to strong and lasting support of (an idea)

¹⁷Richard Attenborough British film director

²¹release here: making a film available for viewing

²²to coincide with to occur at the same time as

²⁸to measure up to meet expectations

³¹hypocritical claiming falsely to be a good person

³⁸scholarship payment given for a student's education

⁴⁹to strain here: to put under tension

VIP FILE



Bapsi Sidhwa, born in 1938, a Parsee (member of a very powerful religious group in India) from Karachi raised in Lahore, lives in Houston/Texas today and is one of Pakistan's most acclaimed diasporic writers. Her novel *Cracking India* (1991) was made into the award-winning film *Earth* (1998) by director Deepa Mehta, who called this film her "antiwar statement".

Cracking India

The narrator in Bapsi Sidhwa's novel *Cracking India*, an 8-year-old girl called Lenny, lives in Lahore with her affluent and well-educated Parsee family. She has a habit of making up fantasy names for people and things she likes.

There is much disturbing talk. India is going to be broken. Can one break a country? And what happens if they break it where our house is? Or crack it further up on Warris Road? How will I ever get to Godmother's then? I ask Cousin. "Rubbish," he says, "no one's going to break India. It's not made of glass!" I ask Ayah. "They'll dig a canal ...," she ventures. "This side for Hindustan and this side for Pakistan. If they want two countries that's what they'll have to do – crack India with a long, long canal." Gandhi, Jinnah, Nehru, Iqbal, Tara Singh, Mountbatten are names I hear. And I become aware of religious differences.

It is sudden. One day everybody is themselves – and the next they are Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Christian. People shrink, dwindling into symbols. Ayah is no longer just my all-encompassing Ayah – she is also a token. A Hindu. Carried away by a renewed devotional fervor she expends a small fortune in joss-sticks, flowers and sweets on the gods and goddesses in the temples. Imam Din and Yousaf, turning into religious zealots, warn Mother they will take Friday off for the Jumha prayers. On Fridays they set about preparing themselves ostentatiously. Squatting atop the cement wall of the garden tank they hold their feet out beneath the tap and diligently scrub between their toes. They wash their heads, arms, necks and ears and noisily clear their throats and noses. All in white check prayer scarves thrown over their shoulders, stepping uncomfortably in stiff black Bata shoes worn without socks, they walk out of the gates to the small mosque at the back of Queens Road. Sometimes, at odd hours of the day, they spread their mats on the front lawn and pray when the muezzin calls. Crammed into a narrow religious slot they too are diminished, as are Jinnah and Iqbal, Ice-candy-man and Masseur. Hari and Moti-the-sweeper and his wife Muccho, and their untouchable daughter Papoo, become even more untouchable as they are entrenched deeper in their low Hindu caste. While the Sharmas and the Daulatrams, Brahmins like Nehru, are dehumanized by their lofty caste and caste-marks.

The Rogers of Birdwood Barracks, Queen Victoria and King George are English Christians: they look down their noses upon the Pens who are Anglo-Indian, who look down upon all non-Christians. Godmother, Slavesister, Electric-aunt and my nuclear family are reduced to irrelevant nomenclatures – we are Parsee. What is God?

From: Bapsi Sidhwa, *Cracking India*, 1991

- ⁵ayah nanny
¹¹token symbol
¹²devotional fervor religious passion
¹⁴zealot ['zelat] fanatic
¹⁵Jumha prayers congregational Friday prayers
²⁰Bata brand name
²⁷lofty exalted, superior

TIP

Research on the Internet which role *Nehru*, *Iqbal* and *Tara Singh* played in the Partition of India and give a short presentation.

- 1 Make a grid with the names of all the people mentioned in this extract, noting down who/what they are and how Partition affects them. →S11
- 2 How does Lenny feel about Partition and its effects on the people around her? Interpret her question in the last line.
- 3 [🗣️] **Creative writing:** Imagine you were a Hindu and your best friend a Muslim. After Partition you live on separate sides of the border. Write a letter to express your feelings about Partition. Then read each other's texts and discuss their quality and content. →S12

Spot on facts

Indian independence

British expansion in India, from the earliest activities of the East India Company to the establishment of the Raj, was achieved by military power in the face of considerable local resistance. Consequently, unrest and opposition to British rule were a permanent undercurrent that surfaced from time to time, most notably in the Indian Rebellion of 1857. This began as a mutiny of Indian soldiers in the British Army and spread to other sections of the population.

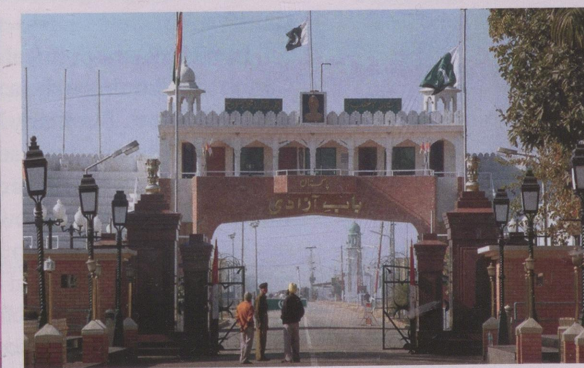
With the founding of the Indian National Congress in 1885 the desire for Indian independence took on a more organised form. Initially the Congress merely sought more rights for the Indian population under British rule using the moderate means of prayer, petition and protest. However, by the early 1900s many within the party advocated a more radical and militant approach and boycotts of British goods were organised and there were outbreaks of violence.

The Congress was predominantly Hindu and the Muslim population did not feel represented by it. This led to the founding of the Muslim League in 1906, giving the British, who had no intention of granting Indian independence, the opportunity to stall nationalist demands by playing the two parties off against each other.

The nationalist movement grew throughout the 20s and 30s especially under the leadership of Gandhi,

who was able to inspire the masses to follow his strategy of non-violent civil disobedience.

By 1946 the crippling effect of the Second World War, the heightened nationalistic feeling in the Indian population and, crucially, the mutiny by sailors of the Royal Indian Navy had all combined to bring home to the British that holding onto India would be impossible. The problem was how to withdraw without leaving chaos in their wake. The Hindus wanted a united independent India. The Muslims, afraid of Hindu domination, had long been demanding the creation of a separate nation, Pakistan. To resolve the deadlock, the British came up with plans for a "three-tier federation for India", which would divide the region into three groups of provinces with the Hindu-populated provinces making up Group A and the largely Muslim-populated ones in Groups B and C. The idea found no acceptance. For the Hindus it went too far, for the Muslims not far enough. The Sikhs of the Punjab found themselves in Group B and wanted their own nation-state. The result was rioting and bloodshed between the religious groups as well as mass migration from province to province, which continued after the withdrawal of the British and the creation of the two independent states of India and Pakistan.



- 1 Explain the relationship between the British, the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League in the decades before Partition and point out what finally led to the British withdrawal.
- 2 a) [🔍] Find out about the two parts of Pakistan and what happened to them.
 b) [🔍] Research the Prime Ministers of India since 1947 and comment on your findings. →S32



Exit Wounds – The legacy of Indian Partition

In his article 'Exit Wounds' Pankaj Mishra expresses his thoughts about Partition.

Sixty years ago, on the evening of August 14, 1947, a few hours before Britain's Indian Empire was formally divided into the nation-states of India and Pakistan, Lord Louis Mountbatten and his wife, Edwina, sat down in the viceregal mansion in New Delhi to watch the latest Bob Hope movie, 'My Favorite Brunette'. Large parts of the subcontinent were descending into chaos, as the implications of partitioning the Indian Empire along religious lines became clear to the millions of Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs caught on the wrong side of the border. In the next few months, some twelve million people would be uprooted and as many as a million murdered. But on that night in mid-August the bloodbath – and the fuller consequences of hasty imperial retreat – still lay in the future, and the Mountbattens probably felt they had earned their evening's entertainment.

Mountbatten, the last viceroy of India, had arrived in New Delhi in March, 1947, charged with an almost impossible task. Irrevocably enfeebled by the Second World War, the British belatedly realized that they had to leave the subcontinent, which had spiralled out of their control through the nineteen-forties. But plans for brisk disengagement ignored messy realities on the ground. Mountbatten had a clear remit to transfer power to the Indians within fifteen months. Leaving India to God, or anarchy, as Mohandas Gandhi, the foremost Indian leader, exhorted, wasn't a political option, however tempting. Mountbatten had to work hard to figure out how and to whom power was to be transferred.

The dominant political party, the Congress Party, took inspiration from Gandhi in claiming to be a secular organization, representing all four hundred million Indians. But many Muslim politicians saw it as a party of upper-caste Hindus and demanded a separate homeland for their hundred million co-religionists, who were intermingled with non-Muslim populations across the subcontinent's villages, towns, and cities. Eventually, as in Palestine, the British saw partition along religious lines as the quickest way to the exit. But sectarian riots in Punjab and Bengal dimmed hopes for a quick and dignified British withdrawal, and boded ill for India's assumption of power. Not surprisingly, there were some notable absences at the Independence Day celebrations in New Delhi on August 15th. Gandhi, denouncing freedom from imperial rule as a "wooden loaf", had remained in Calcutta, trying, with the force of his moral authority, to stop Hindus and Muslims from killing each other. His great rival Mohammed Ali Jinnah, who had fought bitterly for a separate homeland for Indian Muslims, was in Karachi, trying to hold together the precarious nation-state of Pakistan. [...]

Cyril Radcliffe, a London barrister, was flown to Delhi and given forty days to define precisely the strange political geography of an India flanked by an eastern

⁸uprooted deprived of one's roots

¹⁰retreat withdrawal

¹³enfeebled weakened

¹⁷remit (fml) task

²³secular not religious

³⁰to bode ill to suggest that sth bad will happen

³⁶precarious unstable, dangerous

³⁷barrister lawyer

and a western wing called Pakistan. He did not visit the villages, communities, rivers, or forests divided by the lines he drew on paper. Ill-informed about the relation between agricultural hinterlands and industrial centers, he made a mistake of enormous economic consequence when, dividing Bengal on religious lines, he deprived the Muslim majority in the eastern region of its major city, Calcutta, condemning East Pakistan – and, later, Bangladesh – to decades of rural backwardness.

It was in Punjab that Radcliffe's mapmaking sparked the biggest conflagration. As Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs on either side of the new border suddenly found themselves reduced to a religious minority, the tensions of the preceding months exploded into the violence of ethnic cleansing. It seems extraordinary today that so few among the cabal of Indian leaders whom Mountbatten consulted anticipated that the drawing of borders and the crystallizing of national identities along religious lines would plunge millions into bewilderment, panic, and murderous rage. If the British were eager to divide and quit, their successors wanted to savor power. No one had prepared for a massive transfer of population. Even as armed militias roamed the countryside, looking for people to kidnap, rape, and kill, houses to loot, and trains to derail and burn, the only force capable of restoring order, the British Indian Army, was itself being divided along religious lines – Muslim soldiers to Pakistan, Hindus to India. Soon, many of the communalized soldiers would join their co-religionists in killing sprees, giving the violence of partition its genocidal cast.

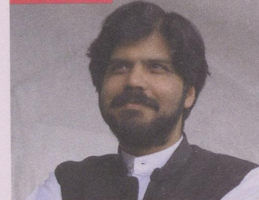
Trains carrying nothing but corpses through a desolate countryside became the totemic image of the savagery of partition. British soldiers confined to their barracks, ordered by Mountbatten to save only British lives, may prove to be the most enduring image of imperial retreat. With this act of moral dereliction, the British Empire finally disowned its noble sense of mission. As Paul Scott put it in [his novel] 'The Raj Quartet', the epic of imperial exhaustion and disillusion, India in 1947 was where the empire's high idea of itself collapsed and "the British came to the end of themselves as they were."

Meeting Mountbatten a few months after partition, Churchill assailed him for helping Britain's "enemies", "Hindustan" against "Britain's friends", the Muslims. Little did Churchill know that his expedient boosting of political Islam would eventually unleash a global jihad engulfing even distant New York and London. The rival nationalisms and politicized religions the British Empire brought into being now clash in an enlarged geopolitical arena; and the human costs of imperial overreaching seem unlikely to attain a final tally for many more decades.

Pankaj Mishra, *The New Yorker*, August 13, 2007

- 1 Summarise why Partition seemed inevitable to the people in power in 1947.
- 2 Point out what mistakes Mishra believes the British to have made in the process of quitting India and how he judges the consequences, both nationally and internationally. Be careful to distinguish between fact and opinion, and discuss Mishra's views. → S5, → S10, → S17
- 3 Analyse how Mountbatten, Radcliffe and Churchill are presented in the text.
- 4 Imagine the article were to be included in an anthology published on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of Indian independence and write an introductory paragraph for it. → S12

VIP FILE



Pankaj Mishra, born 1969 in North India, is a writer, literary critic and lecturer, living in Mashobra and London. In his novels and essays he portrays crucial political and social developments on the Indian subcontinent.

⁴⁵rural (adj) referring to life away from town

⁴⁷conflagration fire

⁵⁰cabal a group of people meeting secretly

⁵²to plunge here: to drive

⁵³bewilderment confusion

⁶⁰spree short period of doing sth excessively

⁶⁹to assail to attack

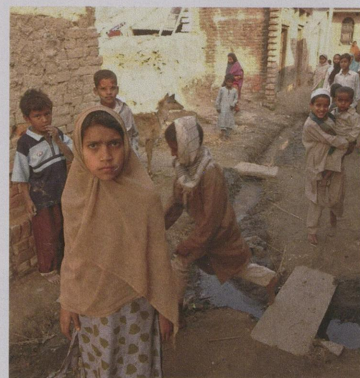
⁷¹expedient useful in a particular situation

⁷⁵tally a record of amount

WORD BANK

to maintain law and order

- multicultural society
- tensions between ethnic/religious groups
- ethnic cleansing
- genocidal – genocide
- to disregard
- economic factors
- to take over responsibility
- benefit
- to reach a political solution
- to negotiate
- to result in



A poor Muslim quarter



The Taj Mahal Hotel after the terrorist attacks in 2008

Muslims – India's new 'untouchables'

The following article was written in reaction to a coordinated series of terrorist attacks in Mumbai from 26–29 November 2008. One of the locations targeted was the Taj Mahal Palace & Tower Hotel.

The news of the attacks in Mumbai eerily took me back to a quiet morning two years ago when I sat in Room 721 of the Taj Mahal Palace & Tower Hotel, reading the morning newspaper, fearing just the kind of violence that has now exploded in the city of my birth. The headlines recounted how the socioeconomic condition of the people of my ancestry, Muslims in India, had fallen below that of the Hindu caste traditionally called 'untouchables', according to a government report.

"Muslims are India's new untouchables", I said sadly to my mother, in the room with me. "India is going to explode if it doesn't take care of them." Now, indeed, alas it has. And shattered in the process is the myth of India's thriving secular democracy.

Mumbai police said over the weekend that the only gunman they'd captured during the attacks – which left nearly 200 dead and more than 300 wounded – claimed to belong to a Pakistani militant group. But even if the trouble was imported, the violence will most certainly turn a spotlight of suspicion on Muslims in India. Already, my relatives are hunkered down for a sectarian backlash they expect from anti-terrorism agencies, police and angry Hindu fundamentalists.

India, long championed as a model of pluralism, used to be an example of how Muslims can coexist and thrive even as a minority population. My extended family prospered as part of an educated middle class. My parents, who settled in the United States in the 1960s when my father pursued a doctorate at Rutgers University, were part of India's successful diaspora. I love India, and on that trip, I wanted to show it off to my son, Shibli, then age 4.

But on that visit, across India from Mumbai to the southern state of Tamil Nadu and north to Lucknow, the hub of Muslim culture, I was deeply saddened. Talking to vegetable vendors, artisans and businessmen, I heard about how the condition of Muslims had deteriorated. They had become largely disenfranchised, poor, jobless and uneducated. Their tales echoed those I'd heard on previous trips, when my extended family recounted their humiliating experiences with bureaucratic, housing, job and educational discrimination.

Indeed, the government report I read about in the newspapers two years ago acknowledged that Muslims in India had become "backward". "Fearing for their security," the report said, "Muslims are increasingly resorting to living in ghettos around the country." Branding of Muslims as anti-national, terrorists and agents of Pakistan "has a depressing effect on their psyche," the report said, noting Muslims live in "a sense of despair and suspicion".

According to the report, produced by a committee led by a former Indian chief justice, Rajender Sachar, Muslims were now worse off than the Dalit caste, or those called untouchables. Some 52 % of Muslim men were unemployed, compared with 47 % of Dalit men. Among Muslim women, 91 % were unemployed, compared with 77 % of Dalit women. Almost half of Muslims over the age of 46 couldn't read or write. While making up 11 % of the population, Muslims accounted for 40 % of India's prison population. Meanwhile, they held less than 5 % of government jobs.

¹ eerie strange and frightening

⁴ to recount to tell

¹⁰ alas expression of regret

¹⁰ to thrive to grow healthily

¹⁶ to hunker down to get into a low (defensive) position

¹⁷ backlash negative reaction

²¹ to prosper to do well financially

²⁹ to disenfranchise to deprive of rights

³¹ humiliating causing loss of dignity publicly

The Sachar committee report recommended creating a commission to remedy the systemic discrimination and promote affirmative-action programs. So far, very few of the recommendations have been put in place.

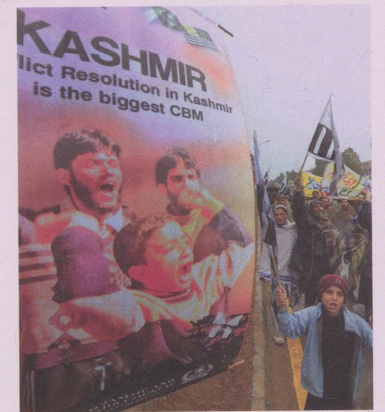
Since reading the report, I have feared that Islamic militancy would be born out of such despair. Even if last week's terrorist plot was hatched outside India, a cycle of sectarian violence could break out in the country and push some disenfranchised Muslim youth to join militant groups using hot-button issues like Israel and Kashmir as inspiration.

What has irked me these last years is how the world has glossed over India's problems. In 2006, for instance, former U.S. Defense Secretary William Cohen, whose Cohen Group invests heavily in India, said the U.S. and India were "perfect partners" because of their "multiethnic and secular democracies". When I asked to interview Cohen about the socioeconomic condition of Muslims, his public relations staffer said that conversation was too "in the weeds". But, to me, the condition of Muslims needs frank and open discussion if there is to be any hope of stemming Islamic radicalism and realizing true secular democracy in the country.

India's 150 million Muslims represent the second-largest Muslim population in the world, smaller only than Indonesia's 190 million Muslims. That is just bigger than Pakistan's 140 million Muslims or the entire population of Arab Muslims, which numbers about 140 million. U.S. intelligence reports continually warn that economic, social and political discontent are catalysts for radicalism, so we would be naive to continue to ignore this potential threat to the national security not just of India but the United States.

Throughout my 2006 journey, I found the idea of India's potential for danger unavoidable. On one leg, my son tucked safely in bed with my mother in our Taj hotel room, I went out to watch the filming of *A Mighty Heart*, the movie about the murder of Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl by Muslim militants in Pakistan. When the location scouts needed to replicate the treacherous streets of Karachi's militant Islamic culture, they didn't have to go far. They found the perfect spot in a poor Muslim neighborhood of Mumbai.

Asra Q. Nomani, *Los Angeles Times*, December 1, 2008



An anti-India protest rally in Islamabad to mark the Kashmir Solidarity Day

⁴⁸ to remedy to put right a bad or wrong situation

⁵¹ plot here: secret plan to do sth illegal or harmful

⁵¹ to hatch here: to plan

⁵⁵ to irk to annoy

⁵⁵ to gloss over to try to hide by dealing with too briefly

⁶⁰ in the weeds here: difficult to find time for

⁶² to stem to stop or restrict

⁷² leg section of a journey

⁷² tucked here: under the bedclothes

⁷⁵ location scout person who looks for places to film

⁷⁶ treacherous having hidden or unpredictable dangers

1 Explain the heading of the article. Collect the information given to support this idea and present it in a suitable way, e.g. using visualising techniques. →S28

2 Pick out references the writer makes to her own personal feelings. Explain and comment on the context of these emotions.

3 If necessary using a dictionary to help you, paraphrase these expressions: a spotlight of suspicion (line 15); diaspora (line 23); affirmative-action programs (line 48); hot-button issues (line 53).

4 [] [] Find out on the Internet why Kashmir is an issue for militant Islamists.

5 Discuss to what extent you think a country should be left to solve its own problems without pressure or influence from other countries.

6 Creative writing: Look again at the 2007 article by Dr Shashi Tharoor on pages 6/7. Think how Asra Q. Nomani might have reacted to the article at the time. Write a letter from her to the newspaper giving her comments. →S18

WORD BANK

Disagreeing politely in a formal letter

With the greatest respect, ... • I would like to voice the opinion that ... • While conceding that ... • Surely it cannot be denied that ... • I feel obliged to point out that ... • Unfortunately I cannot fully accept ...

- 1 While reading: Note down the main ideas in each paragraph to help you understand how the author structures and develops his theme. →S11

Looking across the border

To many Indians, the very existence of Pakistan is seen as a dagger aimed at the heart of India. This threat is perceived on a number of levels. First, Pakistan claims Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority province. Pakistan is unlikely to relinquish that claim, precisely because it is majority Muslim. If the so-called 'two-nation' theory (which Jinnah propounded) is wrong then Pakistan should never have been created. If it is right then Kashmir should belong to Pakistan. Given the degree to which Pakistan's military regimes have demanded national sacrifice in both blood and capital in pursuit of the Kashmiri cause, it would be surprising if Islamabad abandoned its stance.

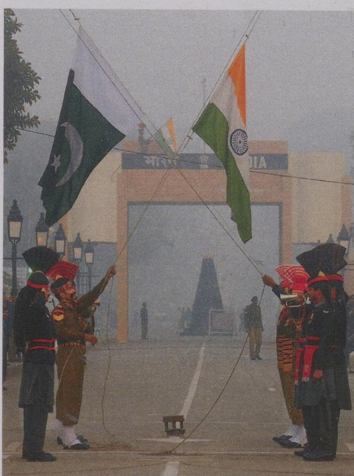
Second, the creation of Pakistan was seen as an amputation of India's natural geographical and cultural boundaries. It is not only the Hindu nationalists who dream of the day when Pakistan will be reincorporated into Akhand Bharat – Greater India. Many Indians, of whatever background, see partition as an unnecessary tragedy that ought, at some unspecified stage in the future, to be peacefully rectified. Naturally, this attitude contributes to Pakistan's own profound insecurities. However, very few Indians would any longer subscribe to Nehru's view that Pakistan was untenable as a nation state and that it would eventually merge back into India. Indian longing for subcontinental unity remains a vague sentiment. It is not a policy.

Third, and most intractably, Pakistan is seen as posing an existential threat to India's secular identity. No matter how stable relations are between the two countries, in the Indian mind the existence of Pakistan will always have the potential to divide the loyalties of India's Muslim minority, which now accounts for almost 14 per cent of the population, or about 150 million people. This, in turn, exacerbates the insecurities of India's Muslims. There is little doubt that Pakistan has on many occasions over the last sixty years sought to stoke this neuralgia. Yet, with the exception of Kashmir, which accounts for less than 10 per cent of India's Muslim population, the expectations of many in Pakistan (and around the world) that India would gradually break up under the weight of its diverse contradictions have been proved wrong. India's Muslims remain firmly ensconced in India, as do most of India's other minorities. There have been no significant population movements between India and Pakistan since 1947. [...]

Someone once said that the rivalry between the Soviet Union and the United States during the Cold War was ideological, whereas the enmity between India and Pakistan is biological. Whenever I visit Pakistan, I am struck by the transparent paranoia that the military and diplomatic elites in Islamabad feel towards their neighbour. I am equally struck by the absence of these sentiments among ordinary Pakistanis. The same is broadly true in reverse, although India plays a much larger role in the popular perceptions of Pakistanis than vice versa, partly because of the allure of Bollywood. When ordinary Pakistanis and Indians interact there is usually goodwill and warmth.

From: Edward Luce, *In Spite of the Gods*, 2006

- 2 [📺] The India-Pakistan border is closed every evening. Before watching the video, say what you expect this event to be like. After viewing, describe the closing of the border in detail and compare it with your expectations.



- ⁴to relinquish to give up
⁵to propound to put forward (an idea or theory)
⁹stance here: viewpoint
¹⁷to subscribe to to agree with
²⁰intractable resistant to good arguments or reasons
²⁵to exacerbate to make (a problem) worse
³¹to ensconce to establish (in a place)

- 3 Refer to the text and the film to compare and contrast the view across the India-Pakistan border from both sides. Consider the perspective both at government level and of private individuals.
- 4 The text below is a report on one aspect of the consequences of the November 2008 terrorist attacks in Mumbai. Sum up the main points in English for an Indian friend who is interested in how events in India are seen in Europe. →S13
- 5 a) Comment on the contents of the Spiegel article in the light of what Edward Luce writes about the relationship between India and Pakistan.
 b) What other examples do you know of tensions between neighbouring countries? Research the necessary information and give a short presentation. →S22

Indische Presse bezichtigt Pakistans Geheimdienst der Terrorhilfe

Neu Delhi – Die Spannungen zwischen Indien und Pakistan nach den blutigen Anschlägen von Mumbai haben eine neue Dimension erreicht: Indien hat nach Zeitungsberichten angeblich Beweise dafür, dass der pakistanische Geheimdienst in die Anschläge in der indischen Finanzmetropole verwickelt ist. Indische Sicherheitsbehörden gingen [...] davon aus, dass der pakistanische Geheimdienst ISI eine aktive Rolle bei der Ausbildung der Angreifer gespielt habe, berichteten mehrere indische Zeitungen am Freitag.

Die Details zu den Vorwürfen sind allerdings denkbar nebulös. In keiner der Zeitungen werden Quellen namentlich genannt, stattdessen zitieren die Blätter Spekulationen unter Berufung auf anonyme Behördenmitarbeiter. Zum Beispiel: Den Ermittlern sei bekannt, wer die Terroristen trainiert habe, die vorige Woche während der 60 Stunden andauernden Terrorwelle mehr als 170 Menschen töteten. Außerdem wisse man, wo das Kampftraining stattgefunden habe. Das berichten übereinstimmend die Zeitungen „Hindustan Times“, „Indian Express“ und „The Hindu“. Namen oder Orte werden allerdings nicht genannt.

Die Terroristen hätten außerdem bestimmte Kommunikationswege per Voice-over-IP benutzt, die auch der ISI verwendet – den Berichten zufolge ein Beweis dafür, dass die Geheimdienstler den Terroristen halfen. [...]

Zudem, so wollen die ominösen Quellen in Erfahrung gebracht haben, müsse das Militär über die Terrorpläne des ihm unterstellten Geheimdienstes Bescheid gewusst haben. Die zivile Regierung Pakistans hingegen war demnach angeblich ahnungslos. Das werten die Beobachter als weiteren Hinweis darauf, dass die Spannungen zwischen dem mächtigen Militär und der gewählten Regierung des Landes äußerst groß sind.

Lediglich einer der Attentäter konnte verhaftet werden. Neun weitere wurden getötet. [...] Der Verhaftete habe ausgesagt, in den vergangenen anderthalb Jahren an vier Schulungen in Ausbildungslagern in Pakistan teilgenommen zu haben, berichtete die Zeitung „Mail Today“. Er gehöre der Lashkar-i-Toiba an, der bereits mehrere Anschläge in Indien zur Last gelegt werden. Die islamistische Gruppe kämpft gegen die indische Herrschaft im umstrittenen Kashmir-Gebiet. Ihr wurden schon in der Vergangenheit Beziehungen zum pakistanischen Geheimdienst nachgesagt. [...]

Spiegel Online, 5. Dezember, 2008

FACT FILE

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan has a history of both military and civilian rule. Having come to power in a coup in 1999, General Pervez Musharraf declared a nominal democracy in 2001, but while President also remained head of the military. In February 2008 parliamentary elections restored a civilian government which was in power at the time of the terrorist attacks in Mumbai.

⁶ISI Inter Services Intelligence Agency