**Two Nation Theory and Ideology of Pakistan**

**Definition and meaning:**

The **two-nation theory** is the basis of the creation of [Pakistan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pakistan). According to this theory Muslims and Hindus are two separate nations by definition; Muslims have their own customs, religion, and tradition, and from social and moral points of view, Muslims are different from Hindus; and therefore, Muslims should be able to have their own separate homeland in which Islam is the dominant religion, and being [segregated](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_segregation) from Hindus and other non-muslims. The two-nation theory advocated by the [All India Muslim League](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/All_India_Muslim_League) is the founding principle of the [Pakistan Movement](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pakistan_Movement) (i.e. the ideology of [Pakistan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pakistan) as a Muslim [nation-state](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nation-state) in the northwestern and eastern regions of India) through the [partition of India](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Partition_of_India) in 1947.

The ideology that religion is the determining factor in defining the nationality of Indian Muslims was undertaken by [Muhammad Ali Jinnah](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muhammad_Ali_Jinnah), who termed it as the awakening of Muslims for the creation of Pakistan.[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Two-nation_theory#cite_note-4) It is also a source of inspiration to several [Hindu nationalist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hindu_nationalism) organisations, with causes as varied as the redefinition of Indian Muslims as non-Indian foreigners and second-class citizens in India, the [expulsion of all Muslims](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persecution_of_Muslims_in_India) from [India](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/India), establishment of a legally Hindu state in India, prohibition of conversions to [Islam](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islam), and the promotion of [conversions or reconversions](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shuddhi) of Indian Muslims to Hinduism.

There are varying interpretations of the two-nation theory, based on whether the two postulated nationalities can coexist in one territory or not, with radically different implications. One interpretation argued for the [secession](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secession) of the Muslims-majority areas of [colonial India](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colonial_India) and saw differences between Hindus and Muslims as irreconcilable; this interpretation nevertheless promised a democratic state where Muslims and non-Muslims would be treated equally.[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Two-nation_theory#cite_note-caldarola1982-9) A different interpretation holds that a transfer of populations (i.e. the total removal of Hindus from Muslim-majority areas and the total removal of Muslims from Hindu-majority areas) is a desirable step towards a complete separation of two incompatible nations that "cannot coexist in a harmonious relationship. [Opposition to the two-nation theory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Opposition_to_the_partition_of_India) came from both nationalist Muslims and Hindus, being based on two concepts. The first is the concept of a [single Indian nation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Composite_nationalism), of which [Hindus and Muslims](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hindu-Muslim_unity) are two intertwined communities. The second source of opposition is the concept that while Indians are not one nation, neither are the Muslims or Hindus of India, and it is instead the relatively homogeneous provincial units of the Indian subcontinent which are true nations and deserving of sovereignty; this view has been presented by the Baloch, Sindhi, Bengali, and Pashtun sub-nationalities of Pakistan, with Bengalis seceding from Pakistan after the [Bangladesh Liberation War](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bangladesh_Liberation_War) in 1971 and other [separatist movements in Pakistan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Separatist_movements_of_Pakistan) are currently in-place.

The state of India officially rejected the two-nation theory and chose to be a [secular state](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secular_state), enshrining the concepts of [religious pluralism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Religious_pluralism) and [composite nationalism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Composite_nationalism) in its constitution; however, in response to the separatist tendencies of the All India Muslim League, many [Hindu nationalist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hindu_nationalism) organizations worked to try to give Hinduism a privileged position within the country

**Historical background of Two Nation Theory**

The ideology of Pakistan stems from the instinct of the Muslim community of South Asia to maintain their individuality by resisting all attempts by the Hindu society to absorb it. Muslims of South Asia believe that Islam and Hinduism are not only two religions, but also two social orders that have given birth to two distinct cultures with no similarities. A deep study of the history of this land proves that the differences between Hindus and Muslims were not confined to the struggle for political supremacy, but were also manifested in the clash of two social orders. Despite living together for more than a thousand years, they continued to develop different cultures and traditions. Their eating habits, music, architecture and script, are all poles apart. Even the language they speak and the dresses they wear are entirely different.

The ideology of Pakistan took shape through an evolutionary process. Historical experience provided the base; with Sir Syed Ahmad Khan began the period of Muslim self-awakening; Allama Iqbal provided the philosophical explanation; Quaid-i-Azam translated it into a political reality; and the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, by passing Objectives Resolution in March 1949, gave it legal sanction. It was due to the realization of Muslims of South Asia that they are different from the Hindus that they demanded separate electorates. When they realized that their future in a ‘Democratic India’ dominated by Hindu majority was not safe; they put forward their demand for a separate state.

The Muslims of South Asia believe that they are a nation in the modern sense of the word. The basis of their nationhood is neither territorial, racial, linguistic nor ethnic; rather they are a nation because they belong to the same faith, Islam. On this basis they consider it their fundamental right to be entitled to self-determination. They demanded that areas where they were in majority should be constituted into a sovereign state, wherein they would be enabled to order their lives in individual and collective spheres in accordance with the teachings of Holy Quran and Sunnah of the Holy Prophet (S. A. W.). They further want their state to strengthen the bonds of unity among Muslim countries.

As early as in the beginning of the 11th century, Al-Biruni observed that Hindus differed from the Muslims in all matters and habits. He further elaborated his argument by writing that the Hindus considered Muslims “Mlachha”, or impure. And they forbid having any connection with them, be it intermarriage or any other bond of relationship. They even avoid sitting, eating and drinking with them, because they feel “polluted”. The speech made by Quaid-i-Azam at Minto Park, Lahore on March 22, 1940 was very similar to Al-Biruni’s thesis in theme and tone. In this speech, he stated that Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, with different social customs and literature. They neither intermarry, nor eat together, and indeed belong to two different civilizations whose very foundations are based on conflicting ideas and concepts. Their outlook on life and of life is different. He emphasized that in spite of the passage of about 1,000 years the relations between the Hindus and Muslims could not attain the level of cordiality. The only difference between the writing of Al-Biruni and the speech of Quaid-i-Azam was that Al-Biruni made calculated predictions, while Quaid-i-Azam had history behind him to support his argument.

The Ideology of Pakistan has its roots deep in history. The history of South Asia is largely a history of rivalry and conflict between the Hindus and Muslims of the region. Both communities have been living together in the same area since the early 8th century, since the advent of Islam in India. Yet, the two have failed to develop harmonious relations. In the beginning, one could find the Muslims and Hindus struggling for supremacy in the battlefield. Starting with the war between Muhammad bin Qasim and Raja Dahir in 712, armed conflicts between Hindus and Muslims run in thousands. Clashes between Mahmud of Ghazni and Jaypal, Muhammad Ghuri and Prithvi Raj, Babur and Rana Sanga and Aurangzeb and Shivaji are cases in point.

When the Hindus of South Asia failed to establish Hindu Padshahi through force, they opted for back door conspiracies. Bhakti Movement with the desire to merge Islam and Hinduism was one of the biggest attacks on the ideology of the Muslims of the region. Akbar’s diversion from the main stream Islamic ideology was one of the Hindus’ greatest success stories. However, due to the immediate counterattack by Mujaddid Alf Sani and his pupils, this era proved to be a short one. Muslims once again proved their separate identity during the regimes of Jehangir, Shah Jehan and particularly Aurangzeb. The attempts to bring the two communities close could not succeed because the differences between the two are fundamental and have no meeting point. At the root of the problem lies the difference between the two religions. So long as the two people want to lead their lives according to their respective faith, they cannot be one.

With the advent of the British rule in India in 1858, Hindu-Muslim relations entered a new phase. The British brought with them a new political philosophy commonly known as ‘territorial nationalism’. Before the coming of the British, there was no concept of a ‘nation’ in South Asia and the region had never been a single political unit. The British attempt to weld the two communities in to a ‘nation’ failed. The British concept of a nation did not fit the religious-social system of South Asia. Similarly, the British political system did not suite the political culture of South Asia. The British political system, commonly known as ‘democracy’, gave majority the right to rule. But unlike Britain, the basis of majority and minority in South Asia was not political but religious and ethnic. The attempt to enforce the British political model in South Asia, instead of solving the political problems, only served to make the situation more complex. The Hindus supported the idea while it was strongly opposed by the Muslims. The Muslims knew that implementation of the new order would mean the end of their separate identity and endless rule of the Hindu majority in the name of nationalism and democracy. The Muslims refused to go the British way. They claimed that they were a separate nation and the basis of their nation was the common religion Islam. They refused to accept a political system that would reduce them to a permanent minority. They first demanded separate electorates and later a separate state. Religious and cultural differences between
Hindus and Muslims increased due to political rivalry under the British rule.

On March 24, 1940, the Muslims finally abandoned the idea of federalism and defined a separate homeland as their target. Quaid-i-Azam considered the creation of Pakistan a means to an end and not the end in itself. He wanted Pakistan to be an Islamic and democratic state. According to his wishes and in accordance with the inspirations of the people of Pakistan, the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan passed the Objectives Resolution. The adoption of Objectives Resolution removed all doubts, if there were any, about the ideology of Pakistan. The Muslims of Pakistan decided once and for all to make Pakistan a state wherein the Muslims shall be enabled to order their lives in their individual and collective spheres, in accordance to the teachings and requirements of Islam as set out in the Holy Quran and Sunnah.

**Quaid-e-Azam and his political ideas:**

Born on December 25, 1876, in a prominent mercantile family in Karachi and educated at the Sindh Madrassat-ul-Islam and the Christian Mission School at his birth place, Jinnah joined the Lincoln’s Inn in 1893 to become the youngest Indian to be called to the Bar, three years later. Starting out in the legal profession with nothing to fall back upon except his native ability and determination, young Jinnah rose to prominence and became Bombay’s most successful lawyer, as few did, within a few years. Once he was firmly established in the legal profession, Jinnah formally entered politics in 1905 from the platform of the Indian National Congress. He went to England in that year along with Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915), as a member of a Congress delegation to plead the cause of Indian self-government during the British elections. A year later, he served as Secretary to Dadabhai Noaroji (1825-1917), the then Indian National Congress President, which was considered a great honor for a budding politician. Here, at the Calcutta Congress session (December 1906), he also made his first political speech in support of the resolution on self-government.

Jinnah started his parliamentary career in 1910 and on January 4, elected as member of Imperial Legislative Council from Bombay. On the insistence of Sayyid Wazir Hasan and Mohamed Ali, ”Jinnah became a member of the League on October 10, 1913”2 Jinnah was instrumental in persuading the All India Muslim League to amend its constitution by adding a suitable self government under British Crown. In October 1917, he joined the Home Rule League founded by Annie Besant to further the cause of attainment of self rule for India. On the internment of Annie Besant, he became President of the Home Rule League of Bombay on 17th June 1918. He used his position to organize public meetings throughout the Bombay Presidency, mobilized propaganda and publicity campaigns.3

In 1918, he held a vigorous campaign against the farewell party in honour of the Governor of Bombay, Lord Willingdon. “In the company of hundreds of his supporters present on the occasion, Jinnah told Willingdon to his face that the people of Bombay were not party to commemorating or approving his services as Governor”.4 The efforts of Jinnah were applauded and Jinnah Memorial Hall was constructed as a tribute to him from the people of Bombay.

Another landmark of Jinnah’s political struggle, to bring closer the Hindus and Muslims, was Lucknow Pact. In December 1916, AIML and Congress met in Lucknow. It was due to untiring efforts of Jinnah that the Congress “agreed to separate electorate, for the first and the last time”.5 To applaud these efforts of Jinnah, he was given the title of ‘Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity’ by Sarojni Naidu.

To counter the secret and revolutionary activities during the World War I, an Act was introduced by the British Government known as Rowlatt Act. Jinnah opposed the Act as it was against all the fundamental notions of law and justice. He “resigned from Imperial Legislative Council as a protest”.6

For survival of the Ottoman Empire in Turkey, Khilafat Movement started in India in 1919. Congress participated in the movement and M.K. Gandhi “was elected President of the Khilafat Conference at Delhi”.7 This was followed by the Non-Cooperation Movement which triggered violence in India. Jinnah was against Gandhi’s Non Cooperation Movement so much so that he remained away from it. ”He had a feeling that the League was being overshadowed by Gandhi’s ideologies, so he distanced himself from Khilafat Movement”.8

The dream of Hindu-Muslim unity seemed collapsing but it was Jinnah who stepped forward and presented his Delhi Muslim Proposals in 1927. For the sake of Hindu-Muslim unity, the Muslim League was ready to forego the demand which was cry of the Muslim India, the ‘separate electorate’. The Delhi-Muslim Proposals “reflected his intentions and revealed his views about Hindu-Muslim Unity”.9 These efforts were undone by the Nehru Report. Jinnah opposed it tooth and nail. “The Nehru Report of 1928 made no concession at all, and was rejected by all shades of Muslim opinion”.10

Reaction to Nehru Report was the famous Fourteen Points of Jinnah. These Fourteen Points clearly reflected the demands, sentiments and aspirations of the Muslims”.11 The Congress did not give any importance to these points and instead determined to oppose them.

In order to discuss the political deadlock and reach some constitutional settlement of British India, Round Table Conferences were held in London from 1930-1932. Jinnah “played a vital role on Federal Structure Sub-Committee”.12 The Round Table Conference proved that the two main communities of India held bipolar and contradicting views on Indian constitutional progress.

To end the stalemate British Government announced Communal Award on 16 August 1932 leading to the enactment of Government of India Act 1935. The Act was neither held by the Muslim League nor by the Congress. But this Act became the basis for the future constitutions of India and Pakistan.

In recognition of his singular contribution, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah was nominated by the Muslim League as the Governor-General of Pakistan, while the Congress appointed Mountbatten as India’s first Governor-General. Pakistan, it has been truly said, was born in virtual chaos. Indeed, few nations in the world have started on their career with less resources and in more treacherous circumstances. The new nation did not inherit a central government, a capital, an administrative core, or an organized defence force. The Punjab holocaust had left vast areas in a shambles with communications disrupted. This, alongwith the en masse migration of the Hindu and Sikh business and managerial classes, left the economy almost shattered.

The treasury was empty, India having denied Pakistan the major share of its cash balances. On top of all this, the still unorganized nation was called upon to feed some eight million refugees who had fled the insecurities and barbarities of the north Indian plains that long, hot summer. If all this was symptomatic of Pakistan’s administrative and economic weakness, the Indian annexation, through military action in November 1947, of Junagadh (which had originally acceded to Pakistan) and the Kashmir war over the State’s accession (October 1947-December 1948) exposed her military weakness. In the circumstances, therefore, it was nothing short of a miracle that Pakistan survived at all. That it survived and forged ahead was mainly due to one man-Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The nation desperately needed a charismatic leader at that critical juncture in the nation’s history, and he fulfilled that need profoundly. After all, he was more than a mere Governor-General: he was the Quaid-i-Azam who had brought the State into being.

It was, therefore, with a sense of supreme satisfaction at the fulfillment of his mission that Jinnah told the nation in his last message on 14 August, 1948: “The foundations of your State have been laid and it is now for you to build and build as quickly and as well as you can”. In accomplishing the task he had taken upon himself on the morrow of Pakistan’s birth, Jinnah had worked himself to death, but he had, to quote Richard Symons, “contributed more than any other man to Pakistan’s survival”. He died on 11 September, 1948. A man such as Jinnah, who had fought for the inherent rights of his people all through his life and who had taken up the somewhat unconventional and the largely misinterpreted cause of Pakistan, was bound to generate violent opposition and excite implacable hostility and was likely to be largely misunderstood.