

Share/Care 3

Lent

each digit varies in value (is associated with units, tens, and so on) depending on where it is placed in the written number and that a special digit, zero, is used to show that a place (hundreds, for example) is empty. These principles, which make arithmetic operations easy to perform, were unknown in Europe until the twelfth century, when Arabs brought them from India, where they had been in use for seven centuries.

The Mughal Empire carried with it Islam, which more than any other factor has shaped Pakistan's history. When the Mughals came, most Indians were contemplative Hindus who, with their many deities, differed greatly from the activist Moslem invaders, with their strong faith in one God. Gradually, Islam gained Indian converts, especially among the urban poor, who felt disenfranchised by the Hindu caste system, and in the northwest (modern Pakistan) where the Moslem newcomers had been longest established.

BRITISH INFLUENCE

By the mid-eighteenth century, more newcomers threatened Mughal power. British trade companies dominated the sugar, indigo and textile trades and soon began to wrangle with the Mughal government over the establishment of a uniform economic system. Harassed by Hindu dissent within and Afghan raids from without, the Mughals allowed Britain to gain economic control. In 1858, the British Parliament took formal charge of the subcontinent's affairs. Now three major groups had stakes in Indian destiny: the British, dependent on Indian raw materials and manpower but divided about respecting Indian rights; Hindus, freed from Moslem rule and—influenced by European scholars—newly aware of their ancient but long-neglected culture; and Indian Moslems, deprived of their Mughal government allies and anxious to preserve Islamic traditions.

Early in the twentieth century, as the spirit of nationalism strengthened worldwide, tensions within India grew to the breaking point. Most Indians agreed that the primary task was to rid themselves of colonial rule, but few agreed about the best way to deal

with Hindu and Moslem differences. Sir Muhammad Iqbal, poet and spiritual father of Pakistan, expressed the conflicting emotions. In speeches aimed at galvanizing support for the creation of a separate Moslem state, Iqbal pointed out that "Islam is not only an ethical ideal; it is also a certain kind of polity." Following the example of Mohammed, who in 630 A.D. established a theocratic state to enforce adherence to a stricter and more just moral code based on the worship of one God, Moslems believe in a strong alliance between church and state. Hence, life under a government dominated by the Hindu majority appeared anathema to Iqbal and many others. At the same time, most also dreamed of harmony and peace. In one of his poems, Iqbal wrote, "In the spirit world I have not seen a white man's Raj, / In that world I have not seen Hindu and Muslim fight."

INDEPENDENCE FROM INDIA

The subcontinent's independence day, August 15, 1947, which included a partition of the country into the secular state of India and the Islamic republic of Pakistan, was both a joyous and a heartbreaking occasion. With freedom came a new and terrifying migration, this time not invasion from without but convulsion from within. Many Hindus lived in Pakistan and many Moslems in India. Fearful of persecution after the long, often bitter, struggle, millions took to the roads to join their co-religionists. Within three months, ten and a half million people were refugees within the

