

Article

Post-Partition Politics and U.P. Congress: An Emerging New Political Identity in U.P., 1947–1950

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Abstract:

This paper situates post-Partition politics in the United Provinces within recent scholarship on the “Long Partition” and its long-term implications beyond Punjab and Bengal. It argues that Partition had serious ideological consequences for U.P., enabling the dominance of a specific form of politics associated with Hindu nationalist ideas within the U.P. Congress. These ideas, especially as articulated by Purushottam Das Tandon, centred on the cultural consolidation of Hindus and their transformation into a national community. While such ideas had existed in the pre-Independence period, Partition provided the context for their intensification, political expression, and institutionalisation. The paper examines the immediate reactions of the U.P. Congress leadership to Partition and connects them with broader questions of governance, provincial identity, and state formation. It shows how the emotions generated by territorial division encouraged a departure from earlier Congress politics and strengthened the Hindu Right within the provincial Congress. This shift was reflected in debates over language, the renaming of the province, and the creation of U.P.’s post-colonial identity. The implementation of these policies contributed to the consolidation of majoritarian tendencies and adversely affected the socio-political position of Muslims in U.P. By focusing on the first three years after Partition, the paper demonstrates how Partition’s ideological afterlife shaped emerging political and institutional structures in post-colonial U.P.

Keywords:

U.P. Politics, Partition, P.D. Tandon, Congress Party, Hindi-Urdu, Renaming United Province

1. INTRODUCTION

The historiography of Partition has undergone several phases of transition, each contributing newer perspectives to the existing frameworks, methodologies, and debates. These phases have opened further areas to examine the historical, political and social complexities associated with it, enriching the larger understanding of the event and expanding and widening multiple arenas to trace both its causes and impacts. The shift in emphasis from causes paved the way for the studies on its immediate effects. These works employed ‘non-conventional’ methodologies including oral history, memory studies, etc., resulting in

the enhancement and broadening of the scope of Partition studies within the modern South Asian Historiography.¹

At the turn of the century, historians began to see Partition not as a discrete event but as part of a longer historical process, with roots in the colonial period and a continuance within the post-colonial nation-states. This mode of inquiry pushed scholars to trace Partition’s significance beyond the event itself and connect it to its contemporary implications, challenging an older historiography that had treated Partition and Independence as the endpoint of a long process of nation formation.² This intervention led to the burgeoning of works on the longevity of Partition

1 For more details on the Historiography of Partition see, Pankhuree R. Dube, “Partition Historiography,” *The Historian* 77, no. 1 (2015): 55–79.

2 For more details see, Pandey, Gyanendra, *Remembering Partition: Violence, Nationalism, and History in India*. Cambridge

in different facets of the post-colonial nation-states. It not only expanded the scope of Partition historiography but also led to the incorporation of even those themes and areas that were not of immediate significance but have played an important role in defining the post-colonial character of the Indian state. It is to be noted that the contemporary involvement of academicians with a range of issues related to Partition did not mean the non-existence of the previous issues related to both its causes and immediate impacts. On the contrary, the emergence of newer approaches, methodologies, evidence, themes and areas elaborated these concerns and enriched the entire historiography as well.

Gyanendra Pandey has provided the key framework for understanding this longevity, questioning post-colonial South Asian nationalism through what he terms the “eventness” of Partition, treating it as a larger process continuing from the 1940s, through the Muslim League’s demand, the splitting of Punjab and Bengal, and the migrations that followed 1947.³ Vazira Zamindar’s work on the “Long Partition” follows this approach and remains its most influential example. She has elaborated on the issues and complexities concerning property, citizenship, migration, passports etc, among the North Indian Muslims. These issues accompanied Partition, however its connection, as Zamindar points out, is with the larger questions of Nation-building. Her intervention provided the impetus to trace the continuance of Partition’s long process across different aspects of the nation-state, and to scrutinise multiple contemporary questions through its lens.⁴

Zamindar’s work is an integral part of other studies that looked at Partition’s impacts across North and East India and in Pakistan. Joya Chatterji argues that these works helped establish Partition’s significance beyond the divided lands, providing a new framework to understand its serious repercussions in varied forms that continued long after the event itself.⁵ Chatterji’s intervention challenged the existing assumptions within Partition Historiography, establishing the Bengal refugee experience as distinct from the Punjab paradigm and giving impetus to further work across North-East India.⁶ Multiple works on Bengal Refugee Experience of Partition and other north-eastern states began to emerge in the last decade or so.⁷ Chatterji has also examined questions of refugee migration (both internal and external), displacement, and rehabilitation, processes that continue

in many parts of India, to understand their bearing on citizenship law.⁸

In the last decade or so, a range of works on the legal, constitutional and economic aspects of the Partition had inquired into the very nature of some of the laws on Evacuee Property, citizenship, and minority status, highlighting the legacy of Partition in shaping both the socio-political landscapes and constitutional measures of the post-colonial State. Rohit De has emphasised the economic implications of the Partition and its relation to various legislations dealing with property, showing how temporary measures like Evacuee Property became a part of the constitutional order of the post-colonial Indian state.⁹ His analysis has emerged from Chatterjee’s framework through which the question of Evacuee property law was seen in continuation with the process of state formation, constitution-making and the history of the law in post-colonial South Asia.

Recent years have seen a growth of works on migration, rehabilitation, and various legislatures and institutions associated with it. The intended purpose of these works is not only limited to enhancing Partition’s historiography but to also place some of the contemporary issues at the forefront of the Partition debate, providing both an alternative version to the official history as well as emphasising its significance in the post-colonial global order. These studies rely heavily on the legal and post-colonial state apparatus to understand Partition’s impact in its emergence as well as its functioning

This paper situates itself within this framework to trace the contemporary controversial issues pertaining to the imposition of the Hindi Language, the renaming of different places, and the insistence on majority cultural domination in India’s political landscape to the politics that emerged in U.P. in the immediate aftermath of Partition. It also departs from this framework in one respect: these issues did not originate with Partition. Rather, it was their strong dominance in north Indian politics in the first decade after Independence that Partition helped bring about. Understanding how they took hold in this immediate post-Partition moment offers a more coherent account of their subsequent, recurring presence in Indian political life.

Since the early 20th century, U.P has witnessed several phases of political changes.¹⁰ Its uniqueness lay in the simultaneous existence of multiple political discourses throughout these phases, a characteristic that persisted into

University Press, 2001

3 *Ibid.*

4 Vazira Fazila-Yacoobali Zamindar, *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories*, paperback ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010).

5 Chatterji has highlighted works on Sindh, East and West Bengal, Hyderabad (Both Pakistan and India), Gujarat Kashmir, Rajasthan and Delhi. Joya Chatterji, “Partition Studies: Prospects and Pitfalls,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 73, no. 2 (May 2014): 309–10.

6 Joya Chatterji, *The Spoils of Partition: Bengal and India, 1947–1967*. (Cambridge University Press, 2007).

7 For reference see, Anindita Ghoshal, ed., *Revisiting Partition: Contestation, Narratives and Memories* (Delhi: Primus Books, 2022).

8 Joya Chatterji, “South Asian Histories of Citizenship, 1946–1970,” *The Historical Journal* 55, no. 4 (December 2012): 1049–71.

9 Rohit De, “Evacuee Property and the Management of Economic Life in Postcolonial India,” in *The Postcolonial Moment in South and Southeast Asia*, ed. Gyan Prakash, Nikhil Menon, and Michael Francis Laffan (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018).

10 Gyanesh Kudaisya, *Region, Nation, “Heartland”: Uttar Pradesh in India’s Body Politic* (Sage Publication, 2006).

the second half of the 20th century.¹¹ In the first few years after Partition, a specific kind of politics associated with “Hindu Nationalist Ideas” dominated the entire political landscape of U.P. I use the term “Hindu Nationalist Ideas” to emphasise the political thought of certain Congressmen, including Purushottam Das Tandon (P.D. Tandon), who advocated the cultural consolidation of Hindus and their transformation into a national community. The term is intended to distinguish these ideas from those espoused by other right-wing organisations.¹² This kind of politics was inspired by the event of Partition as much as it was the result of it.

Most existing scholarly work on the post-colonial U.P. Congress polity has focused on the changes that accompanied Partition/Independence, but its serious ideological implications have either been ignored, treated as a passing reference, or relegated to the margins of explanation. Hence, Paul R. Brass has looked at the transformation in the political leadership as the major reason for both the ideological changes and intensification of the factional conflicts in the U.P.¹³ Gyanesh Kudaisya, on the other hand, acknowledged the impact of Independence/Partition but has only seen it as a reference for its emergence as a distinct post-colonial “regional” polity.¹⁴

In the recent works on post-colonial U.P. politics, Partition has begun to occupy a central position.¹⁵ While Pandit's focus is on its “short-and medium-term” impacts on U.P.'s rank-and-file congressmen, it began to be reflected in the larger changes in U.P.'s entire political landscape.¹⁶ She has emphasised the “anti-partition and anti-muslim sentiments” that gripped U.P soon after the declaration of the Partition Plan.¹⁷ It led to the unleashing of Hindu majoritarian tendencies among the Congressmen, and they began to voice them more openly and vigorously.¹⁸ However, her explanation does not give sufficient emphasis to the role of the U.P Congress leadership in enabling and providing legitimacy to these sentiments. It was only at the helm of certain provincial leaders like P.D Tandon whose patronage and similar expressions provided legitimacy for the burgeoning of these sentiments. Nonetheless, her work has provided us with a new framework to look at UP Congress politics influenced by the Partition experience.

It is to be noted that Partition alone cannot help in explaining all the major issues in the post-colonial U.P. For the U.P Congress, the presence of “Hindu Nationalist Ideas” in the

form of the need for Hindu consolidation amidst colonial cultural subjugation and the politics associated with it was nothing new and has been a part of the ideology of many leaders in the pre-independence period.¹⁹ However, Partition provided the context for its actual materialisation. Its domination in different areas of Congress politics can be understood by looking at the process through which these concerns were manifested and implemented by the provincial Congress leadership. Nevertheless, it had serious and long-term repercussions for both the Congress organisation and the government in U.P.

This paper intends to provide a perspective to locate the emergence of some of the larger concerns of U.P politics in the period immediately after Partition. It does this by providing a brief account of the immediate reactions to the Partition by the U.P leadership and shows the persistence of these emotions generated by this event. These emotions portrayed the strong desire for a change from the earlier forms of Congress politics and breaking away from the dictums of the central Congress leadership. Control over the Party organisation emerged as a way for the required changes. The domination of the Hindu right within the U.P Congress party led to the consolidation of “Hindu Nationalist Ideas” and their subsequent legitimisation. In the sphere of the U.P government, they were reflected through the strong implementation of some of the earlier controversial policies, leading to their eventual institutionalisation. These issues gave validity to all the previous fears of the Muslim League and jeopardised the socio-political prospects of Muslims, at least for some time.

2. FROM DISAPPOINTMENT TO IMMEDIATE RETALIATION: REACTIONS TO PARTITION IN U.P.

The initial reaction to the Partition by the local-level Congressmen provided us with the general mood within the U.P Congress.²⁰ However, this alone could not lead to larger ideological changes within the organisation. Therefore, an analysis of the reactions of the leadership is required to understand the processes through which these concerns were incorporated in the organisational structure. The validation and legitimacy that the leadership provided to the sentiments can help us in understanding how these moods were translating into political action and practices.

The immediate response to the HMG's 3rd June Plan,

11 *Ibid*, 3–36.

12 William Gould, *Hindu Nationalism and the Language of Politics in Late Colonial India* (Cambridge, 2004).

13 Paul R. Brass, *Factional Politics in an Indian State: The Congress Party in Uttar Pradesh* (University of California Press, 1965), 33–34.

14 Kudaisya, *Region, Nation, “Heartland”*, 341–342.

15 The most recent and significant work among them is Aishwarya Pandit, *Claiming Citizenship and Nation: Muslim Politics and State Building in North India, 1947–1986* (Routledge, 2021).

16 *Ibid*, Introduction, xxxi.

17 *Ibid*, 2–3.

18 *Ibid*, 5.

19 For more details on this aspect of UP Politics see William Gould, “Congress Radicals and Hindu Militancy: Sampurnanand and Purushottam Das Tandon in the Politics of the United Provinces, 1930–1947,” *Modern Asian Studies* 36, no. 3 (2002): 619–55.

20 For more details see Aishwarya Pandit, op. cit., pp. 1–14.

declaring Partition, among the U.P leadership was its outright rejection. One of the most vocal critics of the Partition plan was P.D Tandon.²¹ He expressed his resentment publicly in the AICC meeting called for the ratification of the Congress Working Committee (CWC)²² resolution on this plan.²³ He vigorously opposed the resolution and appealed to the members to reject it.²⁴ Others like Maulana Hifzur Rehman, a Nationalist Muslim, also rejected it.²⁵ Both of them agreed on its harmful impacts on the minorities in both the newly formed States.²⁶ For Tandon, the acceptance of this plan represented Congress's weakness and surrender to the British as well as the Muslim League, and he was willing to "tolerate the British Raj rather than [accept] Partition."²⁷

Despite his efforts, the resolution was passed with a vast majority.²⁸ This led Tandon to unravel a range of criticisms towards the CWC. He portrayed these criticisms in a language that invoked larger anxieties of that time. In almost all his speeches between June and August 1947, he continuously appealed to the people to reject the CWC's decision, as it did not represent people's consensus and called them to take up the task of the reunification of the country in their own hands.²⁹

The reunion of the country became one of his major concerns. Partition interrupted his previous long-term project of the consolidation of the Hindus as a National community.³⁰ This concern was not limited to him but has been a part of the socio-political discourses present within the U.P Congress leadership at least since the 1930s.³¹ In the early 1940s, it was reflected in the form of militant volunteer movements, emphasis on physical culture and anti-Gandhian ahimsa.³² Now, the existence of Hindus as a national community required the existence of an undivided country. Therefore, it led to the intensification of all political methods and their incorporation towards achieving this goal.

The emphasis on militancy was directed towards the reunification of the country. Tandon called up people to develop a militant attitude and training in arms, adding that Gandhian non-violence had already lost its significance, and the present circumstances required the use of violence for "self-defence."³³ He also called upon people to break caste barriers and be united as *Kshatriyas*; women were told to follow the example of "*Rani of Jhansi*" and motivate their husbands and sons to join *Hind Rakshak Dal* (HRD), a militant organisation formed by Tandon soon after the acceptance of the 3rd June plan.³⁴ Gould saw this development as the "peak of his [Tandon's] involvement in the militant anti-Gandhian[ism]."³⁵

His appeals continued till the very end of partition itself but lacked any substantial plans for its materialisation. Nevertheless, the effects that it had on the entire Congress organisation were profound and long-lasting. The widespread support that he received for his militancy in general and the scheme of HRD in particular represented the extent of his appeal.³⁶ Multiple branches were being opened in many places, and Congressmen continuously endorsed, joined, and promoted it despite it being against party policies.³⁷

The strong support for Tandon's methods reflected the large-scale changes in people's perception.³⁸ It also provided him with more incentives to continue them towards the militarisation of the Hindus and expanded the scope for open criticisms of Congress policies pertaining specifically to Muslims and Gandhian principles. As late as January 1948, Charan Singh and other provincial leaders expressed their dissatisfaction with the Congress policies. In a Press statement released after submitting their resignation, issues of non-consultation of people in the Partition plan, unification of the country, criticism of non-violence, and Muslim appeasement were highlighted.³⁹

21 Purushottam Das Tandon was an important provincial leader and an active member of the Congress since 1920s. He has been associated with the Hindu Right within the UP Congress. For more details on him see, William Gould, op. cit., pp. 647-648.

22 Congress Working Committee (CWC) was also called High Command.

23 The Leader, 15 June 1947.

24 Ibid.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid.

28 The Leader, 16 June 1947.

29 Public Speech at Jhansi. The Leader, 21 June 1947.

30 For more details see Gould, "Congress Radicals and Hindu Militancy," 648-650.

31 Ibid, 626.

32 Ibid, 651.

33 Ibid.

34 'Kshatriyas' were the warrior caste. Here, it means to become a warrior. Ibid.

35 Gould, "Congress Radicals and Hindu Militancy," 650.

36 Ibid, 651-653.

37 The Leader, 12 and 13 July 1947.

38 Ibid, 651-653.

39 Charan Singh Papers II Instalment, File no. 149, Prime Ministers Museum and Library (PMML), New Delhi.

For Tandon, Partition also reflected the non-alignment of the Congress policies with what he called “Nationalistic urge.”⁴⁰ Hence, its realignment required an overall change in the organisational structure.⁴¹ Control over the organisation became an essential part for it to change. It was also required to expand his efforts towards Hindu militarisation, through legitimate channels, at the national level. The support he received from within the organisation encouraged him to contest the U.P Provincial Congress presidency. His win was so essential for the Congressmen that all kinds of means were used to remove disgruntled elements.⁴² This trend was worrying for central leadership.⁴³ Nehru expressed his desire directly to Tandon not to stand for the elections.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, he stood for the elections and won it, defying the official Congress policies as well as the opinions of the central leadership.⁴⁵ This win heightened his confidence and gave a boost to his ambitions for the organisational changes at the national level. He contested the elections of the All-India Congress Committee (A.I.C.C.) presidency and lost only by a margin of approximately 150 votes.⁴⁶ He later contested again in 1950 and won it.

The rise of Tandon and the eventual control of party organisation, even for a short period, in the hands of the “Hindu-right” within the Congress was a serious concern for the National leadership and had severe implications for the Congress organisation in UP.⁴⁷ On the one hand, it showed the growth of Hindu Nationalist Ideas in the form of larger discontents against the official Congress policies since 1947, and on the other hand, challenged the High Command’s authority. Tandon’s rise was also because of other important and interconnected factors, but they can all be traced to the period succeeding the Partition. It paved the way for further conflicts and the eventual emergence of UP as a distinct polity dominated by the Hindu Nationalists’ ideas.

3. MOVING AWAY FROM “CONGRESS”: U.P. POLITICS POST-1947

The strong emotional response to the Partition by the leadership began to guide their political actions as well. While most of the leaders were not as vocal as Tandon, some did not subscribe to either his extreme militancy or his methods to achieve it. However, almost all of them subscribed to the larger idea of “cultural uniqueness” portrayed through his Nationalism.⁴⁸ They also showed similar concerns about the need for a change in the Congress policies.

The efforts to institutionalise Tandon’s militancy began as early as July 1947, when UP Provincial Congress Committee (UPPCC) received a proposal from Congress Seva Dal to raise a volunteer corps for the protection and defence of people.⁴⁹ Tandon, along with some other members, not only supported this proposal but also pressed for arming it.⁵⁰ Sampurnanand, Education Minister and Rafi Ahmad Kidwai, Home Minister, rejected it on the basis that it coincides with the defence function of the government.⁵¹ Later, Sampurnanand expressed the government’s “intention to introduce compulsory military training in educational institutions in the province.”⁵² By September, the UP government declared its plan to give “military training and arms to 12 lakh people in a year.”⁵³ The rationale for it was to “make people defence-minded and not military-minded.”⁵⁴

Partition transformed the political concerns of the Muslim League into an ideology of all Muslims. The resentment towards the Congress politics of Muslim appeasement began to emerge in different forms. In almost all the speeches of the U.P leaders, the call for peace came along with warnings for Muslims to leave separatist tendencies and show loyalty to the Indian state.⁵⁵ Tandon also blamed Partition on the existence of Muslim’s ideology of separate culture.⁵⁶ Preserving the integrity of the country required

40 The Pioneer, 2 July 1947.

41 *Ibid.*

42 Acts of party indiscipline was used to remove disgruntled elements leading to disciplinary action against 1000 Congressmen in UP. *The Leader*, 28 May 1948.

43 Nehru wrote letters to both G.B Pant and Rajendra Prasad. Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru (SWJLN) Second Series, Vol. 6, 439–441.

44 Letter to P.D Tandon dated 7 June 1948. SWJLN Second Series, Vol. 6. pp. 442–444.

45 Besides Nehru, Rajendra Prasad was also not in favour. It would also lead to conflict of interest in the Legislature as he was the Speaker of the Assembly, a position which required no-official association with any party. SWJLN Second Series Vol. 6, 440–444.

46 Stanley A. Kochanek, *The Congress Party of India: The Dynamics of One-Party Democracy* (Princeton University Press, 1968), 21.

47 *Ibid.*, 34.

48 For more details on Tandon’s Nationalism see Gould, “Congress Radicals and Hindu Militancy,” 648–649.

49 Report of the Working Committee meeting of UPPCC held from 30th June to 1st July. *The Leader* 2 July 1947.

50 *Ibid.*

51 *Ibid.*

52 *The Leader*, 27 July 1947.

53 Reported in *The Leader*, 28 September 1947.

54 *Ibid.*

55 *The Leader*, 15 October 1947.

56 *The Leader*, 1 June 1948.

cultural unity exemplified in the Hindu culture.⁵⁷ Criticism of Gandhian Ahinsa now came along with criticism of Gandhi's language stance. While Tandon's differences with Gandhi on the language were well documented, their voicing by many other leaders like S.K.D Paliwal after Partition with such intensity was something new.⁵⁸ He also began to express the government's intention to reduce the number of Muslims in the Public services, especially the police force.⁵⁹

Not only that, but U.P's distinct identity also required exemplification of all those characteristics associated with its cultural uniqueness. Unfortunately, it did not have any space for cultural amalgamation. This was an essential part of the Nationalism associated with Tandon and others.⁶⁰ Their subscription to Tandon's Nationalism represented a change in the ideology of the Congress as well.

These concerns began to be reflected in almost all policies of the U.P government. In the debates surrounding the renaming of the province, Kudaisya has shown that it was an important aspect for creating a distinct post-colonial identity and involved the dual process of correcting colonial misspellings and mispronunciations and renaming the province itself.⁶¹ It is through the debates surrounding the latter that we see the actual manifestation of the Hindu Nationalist Ideas. In the long list of names suggested by different legislators, all of them had a strong undertone of Hindi.⁶² Among all the suggestions, "Aryavarta" had support from the majority of legislators, but the centre's intervention led to a compromise on "Uttar Pradesh."⁶³ Although the matter was resolved, the leadership was not happy with it, and some, like Mohan Lal Gautam, expressed his dissatisfaction publicly as well.⁶⁴

The Hindi-Urdu issue, on the other hand, was much more serious and emotionally driven. The U.P government had passed an ordinance making Hindi the official language as early as 1946 itself. However, its actual conversion into an act and the debates surrounding it represented the extent to which U.P leadership was willing to go to fulfil its long desire even if it required sacrificing Urdu. The context of the Partition fuelled the intensity of this issue as well and led to

the eventual subscription of Urdu with the Muslims. The Hindi cause united Congress leadership with many other institutions, as the concerns of Hindu consolidation aligned with many Hindu reform and revivalist organisations like Hindu Sabha and Arya Samaj.⁶⁵

Kudaisya has shown that Hindi was to be promoted at the expense of Urdu.⁶⁶ Not only that, but there was also a great resentment against Urdu to even consider it as the second language.⁶⁷ Even the adoption of two scripts, as proposed by Gandhi, was detested.⁶⁸ The reasons for the non-inclusion of Urdu as the second language were varied. For some like G.B Pant, there was no distinction between Hindi and Urdu. In fact, Urdu was integrated into Hindi.⁶⁹ For others, it was primarily for the sheer economic difficulty and viability.⁷⁰ For Tandon and Sampurnanand, it was required primarily for the cultural unity of the province.⁷¹ Urdu did not deserve any position as it neither possessed these qualities nor was it indigenous. Hindi was finally adopted as the official language of the province in September 1951.⁷²

These two issues were part of the many other developments that reflected a strong desire to create U.P with a distinct cultural and political identity. The creation of this distinct identity, however, came at the expense of its multicultural diversity. The earlier forces that had served as major motivators for political action, the colonial government and the Muslim League, were now gone. The new leadership increasingly turned its attention towards redefining the political and cultural boundaries of the province, with Muslims becoming a central focus of these efforts. While attempts to restrict their presence in public services were more direct, the politics inspired by "Hindu Nationalist Ideas" operated at a broader ideological level. Both the Congress organisation and the government were at the forefront of this process.

4. CONCLUSION

The Partition experience that U.P. witnessed was unique among the North Indian states. Unlike Punjab and Bengal, it was spared the physical division of its territory and the immediate, large-scale violence that marked Partition

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ The Leader, 18 October 1947.

⁵⁹ The Leader, 4 and 6 October 1947.

⁶⁰ For more details see Gould, "Congress Radicals and Hindu Militancy," 626.

⁶¹ Kudaisya, Region, Nation, "Heartland", 351.

⁶² For the list of suggestions see, *Ibid*, 356.

⁶³ *Ibid*, 357–359.

⁶⁴ National Herald, 26 November 1949.

⁶⁵ Gould, "Congress Radicals and Hindu Militancy," 645–648.

⁶⁶ Kudaisya, Region, Nation, "Heartland", 368.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 371.

⁶⁸ The Leader, 18 October 1947.

⁶⁹ Kudaisya, Region, Nation, "Heartland", 375–376.

⁷⁰ S.K.D Paliwal's views. The Leader, 18 October 1947.

⁷¹ Gould, "Congress Radicals and Hindu Militancy," 648–649.

⁷² Kudaisya, Region, Nation, "Heartland", 375.

elsewhere. Yet the range of emotions it generated, and the issues that unfolded in its aftermath, reflected deep-seated resentments among its leadership that were no less consequential for being less visible. This paper has explored only one aspect of that experience, i.e., the impact of emotions generated by Partition on the politics of U.P. There were, of course, other issues that contributed to long-term changes, but the politics inspired by Partition dominated across them. Therefore, Partition alone cannot explain all the major changes in post-colonial U.P. The presence of “Hindu Nationalist Ideas” within the U.P. Congress was not new; the concerns of Hindu consolidation, cultural uniqueness and the transformation of Hindus into a national community had been part of the political thought of leaders like P.D. Tandon since the pre-independence period. Partition, however, provided the context for their intensification, political expression and eventual institutionalisation.

Tandon’s immediate reaction to Partition, and his subsequent rise within the Congress organisation, reflected the growing influence of these ideas. The strong support he received revealed that these sentiments had acquired a far wider presence within the U.P. Congress than his own individual politics could account for. Their influence was equally reflected in the policies of the U.P. government particularly in the debates surrounding military training, public services, the renaming of the province, and the Hindi-Urdu question. What had begun as an emotional and largely improvised response to Partition, Tandon’s militant appeals, the Hind Rakshak Dal, calls to arms and self-defence, was, by the early 1950s, absorbed into the ordinary functioning of the state itself, in the form of compulsory military training in educational institutions and government schemes to arm and train the civilian population. Nor were these sentiments short-lived as they

continued to find expression across U.P.’s politics well into the late 1950s, sustained not only by the U.P. Congress but by the Hindu Mahasabha and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh as well, demonstrating the durability of the emotions that Partition had first set loose.

The biggest implication of this transformation was for the Muslims of U.P. The politics that emerged proved almost all the fears portrayed by the Muslim League to be true. Their loyalty was questioned, and they had to preserve their cultural identity amidst the rising influence of “Hindu Nationalist Ideas” within the Congress as well as other Hindu Nationalist organisations. The significance of Partition, therefore, lay not only in the immediate disruption it caused but also in the context it provided for existing political ideas to gain legitimacy and become part of the political and cultural changes of post-colonial U.P.

At the same time, these issues did not remain confined to the immediate post-Partition years. Elements of the same politics including the insistence on cultural and linguistic homogeneity, the anxiety over minority loyalty, the impulse to purge names and institutions of their “colonial” associations, have continued to resurface in India’s political landscape well beyond the period this paper examines. This recurrence suggests that a closer examination of their emergence in post-1947 U.P. offers more than an account of a single decade, it provides a coherent framework for understanding the deeper roots and durability of this kind of politics. Read through the lens of the “Long Partition,” the developments traced in this paper were not a self-contained episode but the opening chapter of a longer, still-unfolding history, one in which Partition’s ideological afterlife has continued to shape the terms on which cultural nationalism asserts itself in India.

DECLARATIONS

Author(s) Contribution

Shantanu Mishra conceptualized the study, developed the methodology, performed the investigation, analyzed the data, and wrote the original draft. The author has read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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The author used ChatGPT and Grammarly to correct grammar. All content was reviewed and verified by the author.

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The author declares no competing interests.

Clinical Trial Registration (if applicable)

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Human Ethics and Consent to Participate

The study did not involve any clinical interventions or experiments requiring formal ethical approval.

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