

# INDIA AND PAKISTAN

## REFLECTIONS ON POLITICS AND CULTURE 70 YEARS AFTER INDEPENDENCE

### EDITOR'S PREFACE

In 2017, India celebrated the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of gaining Independence from the British, and Pakistan – the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of becoming an independent country. Both countries – the relatively young political entities in South Asia, for strategic reasons are important not only in the regional, but also in the global context; they share common history and culture, but since 1947 follow different paths.

The papers constituting the first section of the present issue of *Politeja. The Journal of the Faculty of International and Political Studies of the Jagiellonian University* are the result of the “India and Pakistan after 70 years of Independence: Reflections on Culture and Politics“ Conference held at the Jagiellonian University on 11-12 December 2017. They discuss various issues related to the history, the present, and the future of modern India and Pakistan. The Contributors have critically reflected on the culture and politics of both countries, contextualizing their own research in a broader frame of interdisciplinary studies.

The section opens with a paper by Ian Talbot who deals with problems resulting from the Partition of the Indian Subcontinent, such as (forced) migrations, ethnical violence, and growing nationalism as well as their impact on present day India and Pakistan. The next paper, co-authored by Fahmida Naheed and Muhammad Shakeel Ahmad, examines India-Pakistan relations in the context of persisting narration of rivalry and hostility. Ashfaq Ahmed analyses India's strategic and political motives behind the decision to introduce the Ballistic Missile Defence System. Krzysztof Iwanek offers a detailed study of Bharatiya Janta Party's doctrine, aiming at answering the question whether India's currently ruling party is more of a conservative or rather nationalist approach. Renata Czekalska focuses on verbal expressions used by the official Indian

media to describe the 2016 Students' Anti-government Protest and compares them with the official reports on students' protest in Poland during the communist era. Roswitha Badry's paper on blasphemy law in Pakistan discusses both the complex situation that led to its emergence in the past, as well as the increasing (sectarian) violence motivated by this law in the present. Next two papers engage with the legacy of the colonial era in Indian history. The first – by Sanjukta Das Gupta – intends to show how the colonial perceptions of and politics towards the Adivasi communities defined the present day ideologies of the state regarding India's indigenous people. The second – written by Antonina Łuszczkiewicz – describes the image of the colonial rulers as depicted in the contemporary Hindi cinema. It is followed by another essay on Indian cinema, in which Roshni Sengupta explores the motif of violation of woman's body during the Partition and interprets this motif as a metaphor of the Muslim aggression over the Hindu community, which perpetuates the communal prejudice and serves the nationalist ideology. The succeeding three essays address various issues related to literature. Kamila Junik-Łuniewska deals with the question of image and visibility in Indian literature written in Hindi and English, and analyses different modes of incorporating the visual elements into the literary text. Marcin Ciemniowski investigates horror/thriller comic books written in Hindi, examining their main themes and motives, as well as the fear-provoking imagery. Diana Mistreanu's essay is a study of a quasi-autobiographical novel by an Indo-Francophone writer, Shumona Sinha, built around problems such as trauma, a sense of not belonging, and mental illness. The section closes with Magdalena Piech's paper which aims at defining the cultural identity of Kashmiri youth as reflected in their musical oeuvre.

I am deeply convinced that the broad range of topics dealt with in this collection of papers, representing cultural, political, religious, sociological, literary, and linguistic issues, reflect the diverse and complex situation of both India and Pakistan. The papers selected for this publication succeeded in seizing various contemporary problems in their current and genuine form, yet embedding them in a larger interdisciplinary, historical, and global context. In this way, by presenting new topics, arguments, and approaches, this section of *Politeja* has the potential to strengthen and deepen the understanding of contemporary India and Pakistan.

At this point I would also like to express my gratitude to all the Authors who accepted the invitation and contributed their papers to this section. A special appreciation goes to Scholars who participated in the above-mentioned Conference. Many ideas and themes discussed during this two-day gathering found their place – in this or the other way – in this publication.

*Kamila Junik-Łuniewska*