

Editorial

The end of History, or the end of the world, is a theme, which has from time to time, come to the fore. The possibility began staring mankind in the face when nuclear proliferation became irreversible. The two Cold War antagonists America and Russia have revoked their nuclear treaties, and missile testing has resumed. In the wake of the Kashmir curfew, the possibility of a nuclear conflict was raised by the Indian Defense Minister. If realized, it shall destroy the ecological balance of the world, with the survivors being the main sufferers.

Although a bomb for survival is more potent than a bomb for hegemony, not sufficient attention is being paid to this crucial factor. The country which has the least to lose, shall not hesitate to employ its nuclear arsenal, if not for survival, then, as a Samson choice. The second strike, to which our strategists are devoting so much attention, need not be dealt by the adversary, but by nature. The world shall not survive in its present habitable state, the disaster brought about by nuclear conflict. The lesson of history, the lesson of the second World War in particular, is that appeasement is not a choice, nor does the sacrifice of a small nation forestall a conflagration. The curfew in Kashmir over two months old, is a major humanitarian crisis, and if the world continues to appease the aggressor, it shall do so, literally at its peril. To imagine that the present crisis can end with a simple restoration of Article 370, shall be an insult to the people of Jammu and Kashmir who have undergone unspeakable atrocities to gain their freedom. It is another lesson of history that to defer a solution is never a solution, and now, when the people of Kashmir with courage have compelled the world to pay unprecedented attention to their plight, the principles and the purposes of the United Nations must be made to prevail.

It was Thucydides, who in *The Peloponnesian Wars* warned against disparaging principles. The Athenians said to the Melians: "You must act with realism on the basis of what we both really think, for we both know that in human reckoning the question of justice only enters where there is equal power to enforce it." To this, Chris Patten adds in *Not Quite the Diplomat*: "A key and disastrous event on Athens' road to defeat, was the sack of Melos."

Coming closer to home, we have to make the sad announcement that Mr. Abul Hasanat (1950-2019) who stepped in when the present editor was ill, has passed away. I find it an irony that the editor who was

ill has survived to write these few lines, while the one with apparent health, has gone on to his reward. I knew his father Mr. Abul Akhiyar, a veteran economic journalist, very well.

As before, we are presenting the diverse papers here in a chronological order in the sense, that the paper having the earlier age as its theme shall come earlier. Two articles deal with archaeology and one deals with the Unionist Party from 1936 to 1947. Art and Archaeology are guiding concepts of History. The paper on “Proto-Historic Nomadism in Central Asia” discusses circular graves from Central Asia and their spread to Gilgit Baltistan. This is a rare feature of ancient funerary practices, and it also goes to underscore that people’s history, Subaltern Studies as they are now called, had their first stirrings in the discovery of silent ancient sites and practices. The paper on Kalhora Period Architecture in Sindh though belonging to a period heavily documented, gives an important dimension of the cultural history of Sindh, and of course architecture acts as a corrective to writings by fallible human historians.

Afghanistan is the territory where history is being made or unmade, as shall depend on the final outcome. Multi-ethnic and bilingual, this landlocked territory after facing the invasion of the Soviet Union suffered another invasion by its Cold War adversary the United States. The origins of this unfortunate land may be relevant to the restoration of peace, therefore the article: “Afghanistan: A tribal confederation to modern state: Social responses to Modernity” shall be read with more than academic interest.

The next paper on “An Examination and Analysis of Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah’s School Education Records” is based on first hand access to the School records and resolves questions arising out of the contrary assertions of Sir Sachchidananda Sinha and B.R. Nanda. Following is a paper “Electoral Politics in Colonial Punjab: The Unionist Party in the Elections of 1936-1937” This paper brings out that the so-called secularist view of Sir Fazli Husain was made possible, only due to the separation of the NWFP from Punjab. As long as the national majority could not neutralize the provincial majority, such a communal balance as he sought, could prevail; but as Sir Khizr Hayat Khan Tiwana found to his cost, no province of British India was an island, and regional security was illusory in the face of national priorities.

On this note we end, hoping that the end of history shall be deferred, and our next issue owing to the dedication and commitment of Mrs. Sadia Rashid, President of the Pakistan Historical Society, shall come out in happier circumstances.

Dr. Muhammad Reza Kazimi
mrezakazimi@hamdardfoundation.org