

THE KASHMIR CRISIS: A VIEW FROM MIRPUR

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Until recently Azad Kashmir – the narrow slice of territory which is bounded by the rivers Jhelum and Neelum to the West, and the Indo-Pakistani cease-fire line which winds through the high valleys of the Pir Panjal to the East – was largely a forgotten backwater. India has long dismissed Azad Kashmir, with its allegedly autonomous Government based in Muzaffarabad, as nothing more than a puppet of the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs in Islamabad; and although Pakistan has always vigorously denied such charges, there can be little doubt that Azad Kashmir has in fact always been kept on a very tight leash.

That is not to say, however, that there has been anything very active about Pakistan's policy with respect to Azad Kashmir. To be sure a careful watch has been kept on Muzaffarabad – above all in order to ensure that over-enthusiastic local politicians did not take an embarrassingly activist position on the prospect of liberating the remainder of Kashmir; but almost all other issues have been put firmly on the back burner.

So, for example, the level of expenditure on rural development has – with the exception of the special, and, as we shall see, largely counter-productive case of the Mangla Hydel scheme – long been a good deal lower in Azad Kashmir than elsewhere in Pakistan; international aid agencies have been denied access, on the grounds that Azad Kashmir is a "sensitive area"; most strikingly of all, these same grounds are used to justify the routine exclusion of information on Azad Kashmir from virtually all public statistics. Even census data remains unpublished.

But if Azad Kashmir remained an overlooked backwater for many years, the current crisis beyond the Pir Panjal together with growing tensions across the cease-fire line, has changed all that. Suddenly that small slice of Kashmir which has claimed Azadi status for the past forty years has gained a position of much greater prominence: articles datelined Muzaffarabad now regularly appear in the Western – and indeed the Indian – Press.

Even so, the journalists who make these reports are invariably primarily concerned with developments within the Kashmir Valley itself, with the scale of the refugee exodus, and with the arming – or non-arming – of potential *mujahideen*. Few stop to consider what is going on amongst the Azad Kashmiris themselves, nor to explore what position they – and Pakistan – might adopt if India were ever to conclude that an ever more repressive occupation of the Kashmir valley was no longer worth the candle. If it did, by whatever means, break away from India, where would Azad Kashmir then stand? The answers are complex – and paradoxical.

Who are the Azad Kashmiris?

While the Kashmiris of the central valley have, and feel themselves to have, a wide range of cultural and linguistic commonalities, those living on the western slopes of the Pir Panjal are a good deal more diverse. Not only do they have little in common with the Kashmiris of the Srinagar valley – from whom

they are almost as sharply differentiated as are from the Dogras of Jammu – but they are also marked, as is only to be expected in such a mountainous region, by a great deal of local diversity.

That said, some generalisations can still be made. Prior to 1947 this region was one of the most overwhelmingly Muslim parts of the Maharaja of Kashmir's territories: unlike Jammu where Hindus were and are in the majority, and the Valley with its substantial Brahmin minority, to the west of the Pir Panjal tiny Hindu and Sikh minority was confined to the region's few small market towns. None at all remain today, however, for they all fled to India in 1947.

Yet although Azad Kashmiris are overwhelmingly Muslim, their cultural connections with the Valley proper are few: instead they are best seen as forming the eastern and northern limits of the Potohari Punjabi culture which is otherwise characteristic of the upland parts of Rawalpindi and Jhelum Districts. Even so, this is only to identify their broad location on the cultural map of the region, within which further, more localised cultural variations are still of great significance. So it is that the inhabitants of Azad Kashmir have as yet developed only a very limited sense of their own collective unity, despite having been incorporated into an administrative unit of their own for the best part of half a century.

Caste and *Biraderi* Divisions

As might be expected, caste and *biraderi* divisions are still of great importance, but what is also striking is that they have led to the adoption of some strikingly different perspectives on just what it means to be a Kashmiri. So, for example, while most people in the more northerly, Sudhan-dominated areas around Bagh and Rawalakot are just as enthusiastic about identifying themselves as Kashmiris as are those in the southern-most Jat-dominated District of Mirpur (which is also the area with which I myself am most familiar¹) closer examination soon reveals that their commitment to Kashmir has arisen for quite different reasons, and consequently gives rise to a very different set of objectives.

So, for example, while the Sudhans still remember with pride that it was they who were amongst the first to take up arms in rebellion against the Maharaja's forces², aiming, as they still do, to bring the whole of Kashmir into a wider Pakistan – their slogan is "*Kashmir Pakistan banega*", the perspective which most Mirpuris adopt these issues is very different. Paradoxically enough, the Mirpuris tend – even though they differ little in cultural terms from the Potohari population on the far side of the river Jhelum in Pakistan proper – to be enthusiastic supporters of a Kashmiri entity which would be entirely independent of both India *and* Pakistan – their slogan is "*Kashmir Azad banega*". Yet as we shall see in a moment, they have adopted this position not so much as a result of a clear and positive commitment to the cultural distinctiveness of the Kashmir region as a whole, but rather as a consequence of their strong sense of disillusionment about the way in which Pakistan has treated them. It is worth exploring in some detail just how this has come about.

Azad Kashmir, Mirpur and Pakistan

In administrative terms Azad Kashmir is only nominally autonomous: from the very outset all important decisions have always had to be cleared by – if they had not already been taken in – the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs in Islamabad. Yet although Pakistanis in both official and unofficial spheres have long tended to regard Azad Kashmir as having only the most peripheral significance in the national scheme of things, this region and its population has in fact made a considerable contribution to the economic well-being of country as a whole.

Firstly Azad Kashmir has contributed disproportionately to Pakistan's stock of overseas migrant

workers, and hence to the inflow of remittances in foreign exchange³. Such remittances, it is worth emphasising, have played an even more critical role in Pakistan's national finances than in India: in the early 80's, when such remittances reached their peak, they provided well over 50% of the country's foreign exchange earnings, and even today the figure has probably not dropped much below that figure.

Overseas migration – which in Pakistan, as in India, has recently been overwhelmingly targeted on the Middle East –has not, however, been an exclusively Kashmiri phenomenon. But apart from urban outflows from Karachi and to a lesser extent from Lahore, the overwhelming majority of unskilled emigrants from Pakistan have been drawn from the *barani* (and hence less agriculturally prosperous) areas which sweep in a great arc from Peshawar through Azad Kashmir, Rawalpindi and Jhelum and down to Sialkot. But although emigrants from the more northerly districts of Azad Kashmir are particularly heavily represented in this outflow, they still only constitute a relatively small proportion of the total. Where Kashmiris occupy a very much more prominent position, however, is in emigration to Britain. Somewhere in the region of two thirds of all British Pakistanis are in fact of Azad Kashmiri origin.

Nor has this outflow occurred from across the length and breadth of the region: instead the overwhelming majority of emigrants stem either Mirpur District, or from the southern part of Kotli District which lies immediately to the north of it. In this area the scale of emigration has been truly massive. In many villages well over half the population now lives overseas, with the result, thanks to the remittances they have sent back, that there has been an immense inflow of wealth into these otherwise remote and isolated settlements.

This has had complex, not to say paradoxical, consequences. So it is that although most villages in Mirpur District are now as capital rich – in the village which I myself examined, with resident population of no more than 3,000, the five local Banks had no less than Rs. 5 Crore on deposit – the new wealth has brought some very mixed blessings. In the short run living standards have most certainly risen, but it is equally clear that the inflow of resources has not stimulated real and sustainable economic growth. Most strikingly of all, while Mirpuris now control a plenitude of investment funds, finding secure and profitable ways to deploy them, other than by leaving them on deposit in the bank has proved to be exceedingly problematic, given Mirpur's specific location in the wider political economy of Pakistan.

Mangla and its Consequences

One source of these difficulties is very concretely manifested in the shape of the Mangla Dam, which confines the waters of the rivers Jhelum and Poonch just before they break out into the plains of the Punjab proper. To Pakistan Mangla is a vital asset which brings many benefits: second only to the mighty Tarbela as a source of hydro-electric power, it also serves as the principal water-storage reservoir for the entire canal system West Punjab. Mangla is thus of critical to the success of the Pakistani economy as a whole.

Yet despite the great benefits – in terms of cheap electricity, year-round irrigation and security from flooding – which Mangla has brought to everyone in Pakistan proper, those unfortunate enough to live immediately upstream of the dam have had – as in so many other similar projects elsewhere – to bear the brunt of its environmental costs. It is the Mirpuris who have had to witness the disappearance of much of their most fertile agricultural land, as well as the District's two market towns, Mirpur and Chaomukh, beneath the waters of the lake; it is they, too, who have had to cope with the intensely disruptive impact of the rising waters on the local infrastructure, and particularly on transport and communications.

Infrastructural damage is, of course, an inevitable consequence of all such projects. Yet although a

comprehensive effort to make good that damage would have added only a tiny fraction to the overall costs, both the Government of Pakistan and the World Bank – which provided most of the finance for the Mangla scheme – chose to scrimp and save. This was only too obvious to the Mirpuris. Although the dam contractors built a first-class road around the southern (and originally virtually unpopulated) shore of the newly formed lake, the long and winding road around the densely populated northern shore, and which now provided the remainder of the District with its only access to the Plains, was built to a much lower standard, and not fully completed until some years after the water had risen; and it was more than a decade before a bridge was finally constructed across the river Poonch to Tehsil Dadial, which the rising waters of the dam had turned into an isolated peninsula inaccessible to vehicular traffic. As we shall see, much was to turn on this.

The History and Consequences of Emigration from Mirpur

Such a failure to make good the damage caused by large-scale construction projects is, of course, all too common; and if such situations can be expected to produce an upsurge of hostility towards the beneficiaries of such projects, especially when they live elsewhere, then this tendency was yet further reinforced as a consequence of the very high level of overseas migration that has taken place from Mirpur in general and Tehsil Dadial in particular. The interaction the Mangla project and overseas migration has, however, been much more complex than is commonly appreciated. So, for example, although it is regularly assumed that the high level of emigration from the area is a direct result of Mirpuri peasants seeing their land disappear beneath the Mangla Lake, closer examination soon reveals that it is in fact the culmination of a process which had begun many years before the dam was even thought of.

As long ago as the closing decades of the last century, Mirpuri villagers had begun to take jobs as stokers on British merchant ships operating out of Bombay. Just why they began to do so is most obscure, but the most likely explanation is that it was their way of coping with a major disadvantages of their status as Kashmiris: while the Potohar plateau was a major source of recruitment for the British Indian Army, it is clear that the British were most reluctant, except in times of war, to recruit subjects of the Maharaja of Kashmir as soldiers in its Punjabi regiments. So it was that while the sons of small peasant farmers in Rawalpindi and Jhelum Districts were able to supplement their meagre agricultural incomes by signing up as soldiers, their counterparts across the river Jhelum were forced to look elsewhere. Just how they discovered that there was a demand for stokers in Bombay, and who the original pioneers were, I have not yet been able to establish. Once the initial connection was made, however, the rest was easy. The railway station in Gujjar Khan was little more than a days' walk away from most parts of Mirpur District, and having reached Bombay finding work presented few difficulties. By the end of the last century a high proportion of engineroom and stokehold *sirhangs* were themselves from Mirpur.

As Britain's coal-powered merchant fleet continued to expand rapidly during the early decades of this century, so the demand for labour steadily increased, and seamen began to be recruited from an ever larger numbers from an ever wider swathe of villages. As seamen, Mirpuris were in an excellent position from which to keep a close watch on global job opportunities, for the more adventurous amongst them soon began to look for opportunities to work ashore. Getting such jobs was by no means easy, of course, for racial exclusionism was always an obstacle. Nevertheless when acute industrial labour shortages began to emerge in Britain during the course of the second-world war, Mirpuri ex-seamen (many of whom had had their ships torpedoed from beneath them) were eagerly recruited to fill the gaps.

It was these war-time pioneers who formed the bridge-head for further settlement. When opportunities

began to widen still further in Britain's subsequent post-war boom, Mirpuri seamen began to leave their ships in ever-increasing numbers. And having established themselves ashore, they began to call their kinsmen over to join them, so unleashing a process of chain migration. As a result over half the population of many Mirpuri villages now lives abroad, while well over half of Britain's Pakistani population – which is now over third of a million strong – stems from this one small area.

Yet if the origins of the Mirpuris migratory initiative long antedated the construction of Mangla Dam, the effects of both, which were further compounded by the area's peripheral political and administrative status, subsequently reacted with each other in an extremely explosive way. By the mid 1970's, Mirpur was in a state of economic ferment. Large numbers of men had left to work in Britain during the previous decade, but few had by then reunited their families overseas. Instead most were still acting as inter-continental commuters, making regular visits back home during which they took the opportunity to invest their accumulated savings – most usually by building splendid new houses for themselves and their families. So great was the volume of remittances during the 1970's that they gave rise to a spectacular, if highly localised and very temporary, economic boom.

No-where was this process more marked than in Dadial Tehsil. Perhaps because it was relatively close to the railway station, many *sirhangs* had been recruited from Dadiali villages: hence the outflow of migrants, and the consequent inflow of remittances, had been particularly heavy in this area. But at the same time Dadial's physical location ensured that no-one was more conscious than Dadiali returnees of the negative consequences of the Mangla project. Thus instead of taking a Tonga from Mirpur to Chaomukh, they were suddenly faced with a long relatively perilous trip by boat across the new lake, for their homes were no longer accessible by road. And for just the same reasons the costs of house construction were greatly inflated, since all building materials now had to be ferried expensively across the lake from a place which Dadialis now began to describe with ever-increasing dismissiveness as Pakistan.

This sense of hostility, which was fired by their steadily more explicit perception of their exploitation by Pakistan, finally came to a head as a result of a disastrous accident. A boat carrying a marriage party from a very influential family in one of the most affluent of Dadiali villages sank while crossing that part of the river Poonch that should long since have been bridged. More than fifty people were drowned. This proved to be the last straw. An uprising swiftly followed, in which the *thana* was taken over, the SDM was taken into custody, and, so I was told, Indian flags were ironically raised over public buildings. The Dadialis had had enough.

The rebellion did not last long, of course, for within days the Pakistani state had re-asserted its authority. But the fact that this could only be done by means of a parachute drop – for the area was as inaccessible to military as to civilian vehicles – embarrassingly underlined the rebels' basic argument. The point was taken very swiftly. Within weeks the Army had installed a temporary bridge across the river Poonch, and a more permanent one was completed within the year. At long last Dadial was on the map again. Nevertheless the damage done to public confidence was permanent. To be sure the most pressing grievance had been settled, but many others still rankled. So, for example, many Mirpuris were deeply resentful that despite their considerable contribution to Pakistan's economy through their foreign exchange remittances, no serious effort had been made to stimulate economic and infrastructural development, either in Dadial Tehsil, Mirpur District, or indeed in Azad Kashmir as a whole. And although large sums had indeed been spent on the Mangla project, its beneficiaries were most definitely not Mirpuri. As my informants never failed to emphasise, the benefits of Mangla's electricity were felt in Lahore, and even in Karachi, long before powerlines began to be installed in rural Mirpur. Without such connections, how could they power up fans, let alone the expensive electrical and electronic equipment that so many people had brought back from overseas for their smart new houses?

Kashmiri Nationalism?

So it is that even though the boundary between Azad Kashmir and Pakistan is, in this region, largely artificial in cultural terms – for there are few, if any, linguistic or cultural differences between those who love on either side of the river Jhelum – Mirpuris now *feel* themselves to be very different from other Potohari Punjabis. They regularly assert that they are Kashmiris, and by that token *not* Pakistani. They also have the capacity to assert that distinctiveness in places that count: bumper stickers displaying Chinar leaves and the slogan I♥Kashmir are now commonplace on the streets of Birmingham, Bradford and London. This matters: as the British have learned in Ulster, and India with Punjab, the existence of an overseas diaspora means that those back home can always rely on the support of their cousins overseas, and that whenever the going gets tough back home, those developments will swiftly be drawn to the attention of the international media.

Nor is it hard to see why this sense of Kashmiri nationalism should have emerged so swiftly and so vigorously in Mirpur. Given their very reasonable view that Pakistan has not only overlooked their interests, but has unashamedly exploited both their environmental resources and their hard-earned financial assets, their self-definition as Kashmiris, and not as Pakistanis, provides Mirpuris with a powerful means of both expressing and legitimising their grievances.

Hence there is there is a great deal of enthusiastic support both within the District itself – and even more so amongst the overseas Mirpuri diaspora – for the prospect of a Kashmir which is truly Azad. "*Kashmir Zindabad! Pakistan Murdabad!*" they cry with great enthusiasm.

Local Contradictions

Yet however genuine these feelings of Kashmiri nationalism may be, they must also be put in context. In the first place they are reinforced by some yet more parochial considerations, not least because the present administration in distant Muzaffarabad – which can be reached much more quickly by way of Islamabad and Murree than along the long winding road through the hills – is not only controlled by non-Mirpuris, but by people who ultimately favour Kashmir's incorporation into Pakistan. So it was that when Sardar Qayyum, an integrationist Poonchi Sudhan who was subsequently to become Chief Minister of Azad Kashmir, sought to speak at an election rally in Dadiyal in 1985, he faced hostile demonstrations. Only when protected by a substantial military presence could he be escorted safely out of town. Such tensions remain to this day.

A Wholly Independent Kashmir?

What are we to make of all this? On the face of it the presence of strongly articulated anti-Pakistani feelings in Mirpur might seem to give succour to those who argue that a wholly independent state of Kashmir which incorporated the overwhelmingly Muslim areas to the West of the Pir Panjal as well as the Srinagar valley itself would form a viable entity. But of this I am extremely doubtful.

First, the strong anti-Pakistani sentiments which are so salient in Mirpur need to be seen as a product of local specificities: they are by no means necessarily shared in other parts of Azad Kashmir. Second, although there is certainly widespread support for greater regional autonomy amongst Azad Kashmiris, just as there is in every other region of Pakistan (and India!), there is no evidence – especially in the light of District-based diversities in interest and *biraderi* affiliation – that support for a wholly independent Kashmir either is, or even that it might become, either coherent or comprehensive. Thirdly if ever this did occur, or even if it seemed a realistic possibility, the very substantial cultural differences between the

Kashmiris of the valley, and the essentially Potohari population to the west of the Pir Panjal would undoubtedly loom increasingly large: given the strength of negative memories of valley-centred Kashmiri rule, the prospects of serious contradictions opening up between the two populations are very strong indeed.

However as a look at the map swiftly reveals, the most substantial obstacle to a comprehensive reunification of a wholly independent Kashmir is essentially geographical. Since a major portion of Pakistan's current Hydel capacity, and the principal reservoir for the entire canal system in West Punjab would be contained within the boundaries of such a State, it would hold a whip hand over Pakistan's entire economy. While bargaining over such issues between two relatively autonomous units within a single federal system would inevitably be fierce, such a process can at least be envisaged: the same cannot be said of a confrontation over the same issues between two wholly independent states. It is for this reason that there is no prospect whatsoever of Pakistan being prepared to allow all of Punjab's immediate submontane tracts to fall under the control of an independent state, whatever the opinions of the local population may be, and however much they may hanker for the creation of a truly Azad Kashmir.

Pluralism, Repression and Nationalism

Are, then, geo-political realities – whether with respect to Mangla, or the entire Srinagar Valley – the only issues that matter? The dominant majorities on both sides do indeed seem to assume the right to tell minorities to put up and shut up should the more specific and more localised interests and concerns of those minorities prove to stand in contradiction to their own. What though, are the consequences of such stances?

What my own experience – which has involved an exploration of the tensions thrown up by the arrival of South Asian settlers in Britain, as well as those surrounding their departure from their rural homes in East Punjab as well as in Mirpur – has led me to conclude is that although locally dominant groups do indeed only too regularly seek to impose their own hegemony over smaller and subordinated minorities, they do so at their peril.

Hegemonic majorities – be they the English in Britain, Hindus in India, or Punjabis in Pakistan – find it all too easy to convince themselves that their demands for minority compliance, which they usually justify as a necessary means of sustaining the integrity of the national order, are simply a matter of common sense. By the same token they feel it is quite in order for them to overlook and ignore any cries of protest which emerge from the minorities, usually on the grounds that they are unnecessary, unrepresentative and inappropriate.

When they find themselves caught up in such situations, minority demands are usually – at least in the initial stages – relatively limited in scope. In the first instance all that is usually sought is a rather more positive recognition of the legitimacy of their distinctive interests and concerns, and their main goal is usually no more than to gain a position of greater autonomy and dignity within the wider social order.

If, however, these requests for a more positive recognition of their distinctiveness are denied, and if, worse still their proposals come to be perceived as an ungrateful and possibly traitorous attempt to undermine the established political, social and cultural order, minorities rarely buckle and submit, no matter how vigorously the majority seek to impose their hegemony. On the contrary the outcome of such efforts – whether the battles are being fought in Bradford, Birmingham, Kashmir, Punjab, or indeed Ayodya – is invariably the very opposite of what was originally intended. In such circumstances minorities invariably become even more determined both to sustain their distinctiveness and to maximise

their autonomy and/or independence.

In the midst of such polarisation, majorities which persist in dismissing all forms of minority assertiveness as subversive, anti-national and terroristic will only worsen the situation. To be sure those who advance these self-serving arguments may well succeed in convincing themselves of the righteousness of their own position; but the more they do so, the more they will reinforce the minorities' conclusion that the only way forward is to redouble their efforts to struggle for greater autonomy.

How, then are such contradictions to be resolved? Geographical partition is one option: but as India knows to its cost – and as Britain has now discovered in Ulster – the moth-eaten outcomes of partition may still prove to be just as seriously internally divided as was the whole unit in the first place. Yet if partition is not the answer, what other alternatives are available? Of course there is one solution which is available right at the other end of the scale: genocide. But though this is, sadly enough, a kind of solution which is far from unknown in human history, it is hardly one to be recommended.

Is there a middle path? Despite the viciousness of so many contemporary ethnic conflicts, there can be little doubt that these contradictions *can* be bridged. But the lessons are everywhere the same. Until the dominant majority – whomsoever it happens to consist of⁴ – is prepared to act with a greater degree of magnanimity, to be more respectful of minority distinctiveness, and to give them much greater scope for the expression of their social, cultural and political autonomy no progress whatsoever will be made. Pluralism is, in other words, the only way forward.

But it is still remarkably difficult to achieve, and for fairly obvious reasons. To unwind these logjams, it is always the majority which has to take the first step, most importantly by acknowledging to itself that it has indeed been acting in a hegemonic way. And to do that they must first strip away the ideological framework which they will invariably have generated in order to obscure their hegemonic tendencies from themselves – whether that be the vision of their civilising mission with which European Imperialists sought to cloak their racism, or the equally chauvinistic notions of "secularism" by means of which most North Indian Hindus currently justify central policies in Kashmir, Punjab – and perhaps even Ayodya.

If any given process of ethnic and communal polarisation is ever to be resolved – whether it occurs in Kashmir, Karachi, Punjab, U.P. or inner-city Britain – it is always the dominant majority to take the first and most substantial step towards the negotiation of a mutually satisfactory compromise. Most are, however, extremely reluctant to make such a move, preferring instead to adopt a position of embattled righteousness, little realising that the longer they delay negotiations, the larger that crucial first step will always prove to be. Well entrenched majorities do indeed frequently conclude that such pluralistic approach is completely beyond the pale, on the grounds that this would be to undermine all they hold most dear, whether they define that as England's sceptred isle, or Aryavarta. But all those who advocate such a stance would do well to remember that the adoption of such an intransigent stance often precipitate truly horrific outcomes, where everything they hold most dear is pulled down around their ears. But horrors are not the fault of the minorities: those who precipitate them have only themselves to blame.

FOOTNOTES

1. While my own research has focused primarily on Punjabi settlers in Britain, the vast majority of whom originate either from Mirpur or from the Jullundur Doab in East Punjab, I have been involved in two

periods of intensive field research in Mirpur District itself, the first for six weeks in 1981, and the second for six months in 1985. It is largely on the basis of that experience that this article has been written.

2. An excellent account of this uprising, and of the conflict which followed until the cease-fire in 1948 in A. H. Suhrawardy *Tragedy in Kashmir* Lahore: Wajidalis 1983.

3. I have set out a more detailed analysis of the history of overseas migration from Mirpur, and of its impact on the local social and economic order in Chapters entitled "The Political Economy of Migration: Pakistan, Britain, and the Middle East" in J.S. Eades (ed.) *Migrants, Workers and the Social Order* London: Tavistock 1987, and "?????" in Alavi, H and Hariss, J (eds.) *The Sociology of Development: South Asia* London: Macmillan 1989.

4. It should always be remembered that groups who find themselves treated as an excluded minority in one context may well also act, in other contexts, as equally oppressive excluders of others further down the pile than themselves. Jews may, for example, have found themselves subjected to the most vicious forms of anti-Semitism in Europe, but this has not prevented them from acting in an equally oppressive manner towards the Palestinians. Numerous examples of the same phenomenon can be found in India.