

**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND CULTURE**  
**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND LANGUAGES**  
Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi

**Invites you to a lecture**

By

**Venkat Dhulipala**

On

**Arab Pilot and the English Sea Captain: The  
Deobandi Ulama, Jinnah, and the Struggle for  
Pakistan in Late Colonial North India**

**Date : 08 August, 2013 (Thursday)**

**Time : 12.15 PM**

**Venue : Seminar Room, Department of History and Culture, JMI**

**Prof. Rizwan Qaiser, Department of History and Culture will chair the session**

One of the important assumptions underpinning Partition historiography is that the ulama – especially the Deobandi ulama- were steadfast in their opposition to the Muslim League (ML) and their goal of Pakistan. It is further assumed that a few of these ulama who may finally have come over to the ML's side did so rather late in the day when Pakistan was almost achieved. This paper challenges these premises by charting a longer engagement and developing relationship between a significant section of the Deobandi ulama and the ML elite, which began before the 1940 Lahore Resolution and continued into Pakistan's early days. Accordingly, it explores this convergence in the aftermath of the Congress success in the 1937 elections when Maulana Ashraf Ali Thanawi supported ML candidates during the by-elections for Muslim seats in the UP, sent delegations of ulama to ML sessions to foster greater understanding between the two sides, and inaugurated a protracted conflict with Maulana Husain Ahmad Madani and his followers at Deoband. This ultimately led to a formal split in the ranks of the Deobandi ulama and their *Jamiatul Ulama-i-Hind* that was engineered by Thanawi's *murid* Maulana Shabbir Ahmad Usmani on the eve of the 1945-46 elections. In this referendum, Usmani and his *Jamiatul Ulama-i-Islam* openly came out in support of partitioning India and creating Pakistan as an Islamic State that would recreate the Prophet Medinian utopia, provide the locus for the reunification of the Islamic world, and lead it to its eventual triumph in the modern world. The run up to the Partition saw a developing consensus between the ulama and the ML elite that an Islamic Pakistan would emerge only gradually, on the basis of their mutual dialogue and negotiations. The paper concludes that it is the deferral of the resolution of this question that explains the continuing struggles over the definition of Pakistan's identity.

**About the Speaker:**

Venkat Dhulipala is Assistant Professor of History at the University of North Carolina, Wilmington. He has an M.A in Political Science from University of Hyderabad, an M.A in South Asian Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and a Ph.D. in History from the University of Minnesota. He was a Research Fellow at the Institute for Historical Studies at the University of Texas Austin 2010-2011, during which he completed his book manuscript, *Creating a New Medina: State Power, Islam, and the Quest for Pakistan in Late Colonial North India*, forthcoming with Cambridge University Press in 2014. His published essays include *Rallying the Qaum: The Muslim League in the United Provinces 1937-1939* (Modern Asian Studies- May 2010) and *A Nation-State Insufficiently Imagined? Debating Pakistan in Late Colonial North India*, (IESHR July/Sept 2011).