The Challenge and Leaven of Christian Communities in Pakistan

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Building on new fieldwork, religion scholar Sara Singha argues that Christians have played a vital role in the formation of Pakistan. They strongly supported the effort of Pakistan’s founder, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, to establish the country as a pluralistic democracy. Today Christians run orphanages, hospitals, clinics, women's centers, and social work agencies across the nation. Their educational system is the most highly rated in the country, attracting the children of many elite Muslim families. However, over time, Pakistan’s governments have embraced exclusionary policies that undermine Jinnah’s vision and threaten the ability of Christians to contribute constructively to Pakistani society. While Christians are increasingly fearful, Singha shows that they are also increasingly active and assertive players in public life.