



Radicalization of State and Society in Pakistan

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The need to understand and explain the phenomena referred to as 'radicalization' or 'Talibanization', is becoming increasingly urgent, given the massive humanitarian catastrophe unfolding in Pakistan, accompanied by a pervasive sense of fear and foreboding. Though, it is difficult to explore or analyze such transformations while they are still occurring, and the processes appear to be changing by the day, some tentative reflections on the social, economic and political dynamics may be proposed at this stage.

The terms 'radicalization' and 'Talibanization' are being employed to refer to the increasing tendency to use a peculiar brand of religion, as the justification for conquest and control over territory, populations and resources, and the establishment of specific forms of judicial and social systems by the use of force. Unbridled violence, including gruesome murder, decapitation, lashing and cutting off of limbs and similar tactics, comprise a salient feature of these new phenomena. The creation of intense fear seems to underlie the formation of such social and political systems. Fear is engendered to maintain control and ensure compliance with the dictates of the leaders.

There is a commonly observed tendency to conceive of radicalization in terms solely of ideology. Religious zealotry, extremism and militancy, or whatever one prefers to call them, are often regarded as signs of backwardness, lack of education, absence of a civilized mind-set and a reflection of a barbaric or savage worldview. The recourse to colonial binaries, such as backward versus modern, savage versus civilized, or illiterate versus enlightened, serves to obfuscate the issues rather than clarify them. Categories such as backward, savage, barbaric or pre-modern fail as explanations since they become tautologies: they committed the act *because* they are barbaric; they are barbaric *because* they committed the act. The reliance upon psychological and ideological categories, that refer to some kind of assumed inherent proclivity among certain people to commit heinous acts, becomes essentialist. Such explanations become redundant, for they obliterate history, as well as, material reality that form a part of the dynamics of radicalism. The use of overarching ideological categories seems to rely on some form of biological determinism, thereby rendering such categories deeply racist. The importance of locating specific actors, within specific historical contexts and material concerns, is overlooked when there is resort merely to ideology, belief or mind-set as explanations for historical phenomena.

Instead of characterizing the perceived extremism and violence as some kind of inherent flaw within a particular people, religion, culture or belief system, it is more fruitful to explore the political economy of radicalization, in order to lay bare the material basis that may have generated it. It seems to be more useful to examine the conflicts between competing social classes attempting to establish their hegemony and deploying religion, or a specific form of it, to justify their position in the social and economic hierarchies. Islam seems to provide an ideological cover for class-based privilege and exploitation. In many Muslim countries 'the upper strata increasingly proclaim their attachment to Islam, in a frenzied search for an ideological guarantee for their social and material advantages'. (Rodinson, 1966:226). The ruling strata use Islam to give religious endorsement to their conservative attitudes. A historical evaluation of the compacts between specific interpretations of religion and political power may serve to demystify radicalism and locate it back within history and material conflicts. The use of religion to attain, maintain and enhance class power may, in turn, serve to explain the increasing currency of religion and its hegemonic ascendancy within the state and society.

Theoretical underpinnings

This paper owes its theoretical underpinning to developments in western political discourse, from which the modern notions of state and society have traditionally been derived (Kant, 1994; Rousseau, 2009; de Tocqueville, 1964). The Enlightenment era liberal philosophers, in particular, contributed immensely to theories of the state and civil society (Hegel, 1991; Hobbes, 1931; Locke, 1821). This discourse was further sharpened and enriched by Karl Marx and Marxist philosophers of state and society.

With the Renaissance, Reformation and Enlightenment in Europe, the influence of the divine in worldly affairs declined and the secular began to take precedence over the sacred. The power of the divine gradually eroded, and the alliance of the clergy with the state diminished in European countries. As the state and society emerged as separate, though overlapping realms, religion was relegated to the private sphere and the public sphere was designated as one based on rational ordering and secular law. Thus, while societies continued to be religious to varying degrees, the state was conceived as being devoid of religion and reformulated along scientific, rational and bureaucratic lines. Religion could no longer be used to shore up the power of kings, nobility and clergy. With the French Revolution in 1789, one of the early forms of the modern state was born.

Karl Marx distinguished between political society and civil society and located these two in a system of production and reproduction. Marx believed that civil society represents the interests of the bourgeoisie. For him, civil society represented the base in which the social relations of production and reproduction took place, while the state represented the superstructure of power built upon the productive base. Marx relegated religion to the superstructure and called it the “opiate of the masses” which helps them accept the bourgeois order as natural and ordained by God (Marx, 1843). As he wrote, “Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people”. The social and economic conditions, the ‘soulless conditions’ that force people to live in poverty and degradation, wed them more deeply to religion for the latter becomes the vehicle for understanding the causes of want and misery. French Structural Marxist, Louis Althusser, regarded the Church as one of the powerful Ideological State Apparatuses that reproduce the ideologies to enable the bourgeoisie to retain and enhance class power (Althusser, 1984).

The philosopher, most relevant to the discussion in this paper, is the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, who proposed the idea of hegemony and counter-hegemony. According to him, civil society is the sphere in which hegemony is created by the ruling classes (Gramsci, 1971). In his view, civil society is the location where ruling ideas become hegemonic – ruling class ideologies come to appear as obvious, common sense and in everyone’s equal interest. Gramsci argued that Political Society is the realm of force and Civil Society of consent. He emphasized, however, that the division is purely conceptual and that the two, in reality, often overlap.

For the purposes of this paper, the arguments of Marx, Althusser and Gramsci – that religion acts as a prop for class interests – are salient. This approach can potentially diminish the understandings that relegate radicalism to the realm, purely of ideology and belief, without reference to a structural base.

Religion and power in the Pakistan movement

Pakistan emerged on the world map in a binary version of religious nationalism, which posited Muslims and Hindus as two eternally opposed, inimical and morally opposite nations (Saigol, 1994, 1995). Having arisen within a dichotomous paradigm premised on religious difference, Pakistan became trapped within its own history, finding it hard to climb out of its foundational mythology, the two-nation theory (Saigol, 2006). The initial conception of two diametrically opposed and inimical nations is attributed to Syed Ahmad Khan, who highlighted the differences between Hindus and Muslims, and opposed democracy on the grounds that it would usher in

Hindu rule. Later, however, the two-nation formulation was strengthened by Muslim League leaders in the course of the struggle for Pakistan (Ali, 2009).

While the ideology of two religiously divided nations has been defined as the primary force that powered Muslim separatism in North India, the class basis of the demand for Pakistan is ignored in official, state discourses. The Muslim League was founded in Dhaka in 1906, one year after the partition of Bengal sharpened social divisions along religious lines, and the Hindus began to agitate for the rescinding of the partition. The founders of the Muslim League belonged to the Muslim ruling groups and Nawabs. The meeting of the Muhammadan Educational Conference in December 1906 was held at the house of Nawab Salimullah, and eminent personalities like Nawab Viqar-ul-Mulk and Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk were asked to draft the first constitution of the All India Muslim League founded during the session. Those who led the demand for the rights of Muslims thus belonged to the landed aristocracy of the time¹. In 1909, the Morley-Minto reforms institutionalized religious separatism by accepting the demand for separate electorates. However, it was with the Khilafat movement, and the failure of the Hindu-Muslim unity heralded with fanfare at the time of the Lucknow Pact of 1916, that the Muslim elite classes began to Islamize religion in the pursuit of dominance (Ali, 2009).

Although the movement for Pakistan was finally spearheaded by the Salariat (Alavi, 1992), it was initiated by rich landlords, threatened by the demand for land reforms on the Indian National Congress agenda. In the beginning, the Muslim League was formed for the protection of the class interests of the Muslim landlords (Gankovsky & Polonskaya, 1964). Even though the partition of Bengal was rescinded in 1911, as a result of immense pressure, the lines of division and difference had been engraved on the minds of people. As religion increasingly came to define difference and separation, it was relied on extensively to gain political mileage. The idea of a separate Muslim land caught the imagination of the middle classes and the Salariat. Muhammad Ali Jinnah, a thoroughgoing secular constitutionalist, and initially a strong nationalist interested in a united India, ultimately resorted to the instrumental use of religion to mobilize Muslims for a separate homeland. In 1940 he declared:

It is extremely difficult to appreciate why our Hindu friends fail to understand the real nature of Islam and Hinduism. They are not religious in the strict sense of the word, but are, in fact, different and distinct social orders, and it is a dream that the Hindus and Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality, and this misconception of one Indian nation has troubles and will lead India to destruction if we fail to revise our notions in time. The Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs, literatures. They neither inter-marry nor inter-dine together and, indeed, they belong to two different civilizations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions².

What began as a movement for the protection of the interests of the landed gentry became, over time, a movement based on religious difference. Religion became the dominant ideology, the hegemonic 'truth' on which the edifice of a new nation was to be built. Acting as an opiate, it obliterated any consciousness of the class interests of the landed gentry that were deeply rooted in the demand for a separate homeland. The interests of the Muslim ruling classes came to be viewed as the interests of everyone, including the ruled and subjugated.

Defining Pakistan – The post-partition debate

Once Pakistan emerged on the world map as a fragile new entity, loosely stitched together with a religious thread, struggles over the ideology of Pakistan and its meaning ensued. As early as August 1947, Jinnah, who no longer felt the need for an exclusivist religious nationalism, which

¹ www.storyofpakistan.com

² Excerpt from the Presidential Address delivered by Quaid-e-Azam at Lahore, March 22-23, 1940.

had outlived its purpose, imagined a secular state where religion would not play a major role in the business of the state. To quote his now famous speech to the Constituent Assembly:

If you change your past and work together in a spirit that everyone of you, no matter to what community he belongs, no matter what relations he had with you in the past, no matter what is his colour, caste or creed, is first, second and last a citizen of this State with equal rights, privileges, and obligations, there will be no end to the progress you will make...You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place or worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed that has nothing to do with the business of the State....We are starting in the days where there is no discrimination, no distinction between one community and another, no discrimination between one caste or creed and another. We are starting with this fundamental principle that we are all citizens and equal citizens of one State³.

For M.A. Jinnah, the new state he imagined would be based on the fundamental principle of citizenship equality. Needless to say, citizenship equality is not attainable as long as one religion is established as the state religion. The moment that this happens, the citizenship of those belonging to other religions is rendered secondary. This, however, is precisely what happened soon after Jinnah's death in 1948, when the *Jamaat-e-Islami*, which had opposed the creation of Pakistan on the basis that a secular leadership could not possibly construct a state based on Islam, now stepped in armed with a hegemonic religious ideology. The foundational mythology, in the form of the two-nation theory, came back into play in the construction of a new nation and state.

With M.A. Jinnah's towering presence gone, the task of defining the new nation fell to some of the individuals and parties which had opposed the very idea of Pakistan – Maulana Maududi and the *Jamaat-e-Islami*. More than any other religico-political party in Pakistan, the *Jamaat* and its student wing, the *Islami Jamiat-e-Tulaba*, have exerted their influence on Pakistani politics, economics and society. Maulana Maududi led the movement for the construction of a theocratic state in Pakistan soon after its inception (Mir, 1986). The movement for Pakistan was now re-interpreted 'as a movement not for the establishment of a national state but for an Islamic state' (Mir, 1986:159).

In 1949, just two years after Pakistan's emergence on the map, the *Jamaat-e-Islami* and Maulana Maududi pressured the Constituent Assembly to pass the Objectives Resolution. The resolution, proposed by the Prime Minister, Liaquat Ali Khan, proclaimed that the future Constitution of Pakistan would not be modeled entirely on a European pattern, but on the ideology and democratic faith of Islam. The first and main clause of this resolution was the affirmation that sovereignty over the entire universe belongs to Allah.⁴ This clause effectively removed sovereignty from the people and placed it in the hands of those who could claim to know the will of Allah, that is, the clergy. The third clause of the Objectives Resolution further reinforced the power of one religion over others by stating that "the principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and social justice, as enunciated by Islam, shall be fully observed"⁵. Having come into being, on the basis of religious nationalism, the state now became trapped within this confining ideology.

The resolution was hotly debated for five days. The leading members of the government and a large number of non-Muslim members, especially from East Bengal, took a prominent part. Non-Muslim members expressed grave apprehensions about their position and role in the new policy. The minority members of the Constituent Assembly could foresee the potential for a theocratic state, and raised valid objections. Their major objection was that the government was trying to

³ Speech to the Constituent Assembly. August 11, 1947.

⁴ Objectives Resolution. Article 2-A. The Constitution of Pakistan.

⁵ Ibid. Clause 3.

mix religion and politics, which was against the spirit of democracy. Hindu members of the Constituent Assembly argued that the Objectives Resolution differed from Muhammad Ali Jinnah's view in all the basic points. Sri Chandra Chattopadhyaya said:

What I hear in this (Objectives) Resolution is not the voice of the great creator of Pakistan - the Quaid-i-Azam, nor even that of the Prime Minister of Pakistan the Honorable Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, but of the Ulema of the land⁶.

Similarly, Birat Chandra Mandal declared that Jinnah had "unequivocally said that Pakistan will be a secular state" (Ghazali, 1996). Bhupendra Kumar Datta went a step further and remarked that "...were this resolution to come before this house within the life-time of the Great Creator of Pakistan, the Quaid-i-Azam, it would not have come in its present shape" (Ghazali, 1996). The Hindu members warned that the effects of this resolution would not remain confined but echo even in the countryside (Ali, 2009).

The non-Muslim members also objected to the novel idea of sovereignty of Allah, and argued that this would militate against the equality of all citizens. The minority members were of the view that *Sharia'h* was not adequate for modern times, and they expressed the fear that religious extremists would attempt to create a theocratic state, inhospitable and hostile to religious minorities. Their accurate and visionary concerns were overridden by the Muslim members, paving the way for the use, misuse and abuse of religion by succeeding ruling classes in Pakistan. The resolution was passed, despite serious objections from the minority members of the Constituent Assembly, who tried in vain, to remind the Muslim members of the commitment of Pakistan's founder towards minority rights and protections.

Maulana Maududi developed an elaborate theory of an Islamic state by declaring that:

Islam is the very antithesis of secular western democracy. The philosophical foundation of western democracy is the sovereignty of the people. Law making is their prerogative and legislation must correspond to the mood and temper of their opinion...Islam altogether repudiates the philosophy of popular sovereignty and rears its polity on the foundations of the sovereignty of God and the vicegerency⁷.

Effectively moving towards a theocratic state, Maulana Maududi deprived the people of their right to govern themselves, as God's will was to be determined by the clergy. It was, however, not merely the theocratic and feudal politicians and the clergy who benefited from the negation of popular sovereignty. The civil and later military bureaucracies also used the notion to their own advantage to further vested interests (Mir, 1986). The theory of divine sovereignty was a political ploy, to capture absolute power, by those who claimed to be the custodians of His Word and Law. The notion of divine sovereignty became an instrument in the hands of future military dictators, as well as, civilian rulers, who chose to interpret the divine in the manner in which it suited their vested interests. In Maududi's view, the ruling ideology of Pakistan should only be Islam as it was, in his opinion, an ideological state. In the context of his theory of an Islamic state, he provided detailed principles of law, constitution and jurisprudence. He believed that an Islamic state is not democratic because democracy permits laws to be changed at the will of the majority, even if the majority is wrong. One of the defining characteristics of the Islamic state, in the opinion of Maulana Maududi was *Jehad*, an imperative for the universalization of religion. The Islamic state perforce had to be an expanding state, leading towards the formation of a universal world state (Ahmad, 1976).

Once the state had been carved out on the basis of an exclusivist, dominant, ruling class version of religious nationalism, it became easy for Pakistan's successive ruling elites to deploy religion as a weapon of legitimacy and power. The alliance of religion and state became deeper over

⁶ Quoted in Ghazali, Islamic Pakistan: Illusions and Reality, Islamabad, 1996.

⁷ Quoted in Mir, Religion and Politics in Pakistan, 1986, p. 160.

time, as rulers – both, civil and military, religious and moderate – used religion as a legitimizing ideology and a means of perpetuating class power.

The nexus between religion and power in Pakistan

A brief examination of the post-partition history of Pakistan reveals that virtually every ruler, whether civil or military, religious or 'enlightened moderate', used religion as an instrument of the attainment, maintenance and perpetuation of power. In turn, this deployment of religion in the politics of power strengthened and reinforced religious ideologies, as well as, created enormous sectarian, ideological and, ultimately violent, conflicts over the version of religion that would define the state in Pakistan.

Following the passage of the Objectives Resolution of 1949, a Basic Principles Committee was set up to formulate the main guidelines for the framing of the Constitution. Its report was presented to the Constituent Assembly in December 1952. According to the report of the Basic Principles Committee, the head of state would be a Muslim, elected by a joint session with the majority vote of the Central Legislature for a period of five years. However, Prime Minister, Khawaja Nazimuddin, who had presented the second draft of the report, was removed in April 1953, mainly as a result of the Tahaffuz-e-Khatam-e-Nabuwat movement, which had incited disturbances in the Punjab. The anti-Ahmadiyya movement, started in the Punjab by the Majlis-e-Ahrar, was supported by the Chief Minister of Punjab, Mumtaz Daultana⁸. The movement spread to other parts of the country and created widespread anarchy. Religion, invariably used by the rulers, as the justification for power, was playing its divisive role in the hands of unscrupulous politicians (Ali, 2009).

After the dismissal of Khawaja Nazimuddin, the Governor General appointed Muhammad Ali Bogra as the Prime Minister. According to the Bogra formula of 1953, in place of the Board of Ulema, the Supreme Court was given the power to decide if a law was in accordance with the basic teachings of the Holy *Quran* and *Sunnah* or not. By that time, it seems that politicians had widely accepted the idea that laws would be framed in conformity with the injunctions of religion. The state had already begun its journey towards becoming a religiously-defined political entity.

In 1955, Chaudhary Muhammad Ali was appointed as Prime Minister, and he succeeded in framing the Constitution of 1956, as well as, getting it passed by the Constituent Assembly. One of the basic features of the Constitution of 1956 was its Islamic character. However, the Objectives Resolution was only made the preamble of the Constitution and was not included in the main text. The Islamic provisions were outlined in the directive principles of state policy. Among other Islamic provisions was the requirement for the president to be a Muslim. This provision is exclusionary in essence, and became one of the features that negate citizenship equality. Other provisions included the setting up of an organization for Islamic research, with the aim of defining and establishing a true Islamic society. The name 'Islamic Republic of Pakistan' was adopted, adding to the exclusionary character of the state, which was now, by definition, a religious state. It was specified that no law would be enacted which is repugnant to the injunctions of Islam, as laid down in the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*, and that existing laws would be brought into conformity with such injunctions. Whether a law was repugnant to Islam or not, would be decided by the National Assembly. Teaching of the *Quran* was made compulsory for all Muslims, and the sale and purchase of alcohol was prohibited. One of the functions of the state would be to strengthen the bonds of unity with other Muslim countries. Within the first nine years of Pakistan's formation, there was a perceptible shift towards becoming a state defined by Islam, and a discernible move away from the kind of state outlined by M.A. Jinnah in his August 11, 1947 speech to the Constituent Assembly.

⁸ www.storyofpakistan.com

In October 1958, President Ayub Khan deposed Iskandar Mirza and became the sole power in Pakistan and ruled the country as an all-powerful dictator for a decade. In 1962, Pakistan's second Constitution was promulgated transforming the country from a parliamentary democracy to a presidential form. In spite of his primarily secular outlook, Ayub Khan did not desist from the use of religion to bolster his political career and gain legitimacy. He continued the established tendency to use Islam as an instrument of power, control and domination.

The Constitution of 1962, like its predecessor, had numerous Islamic provisions. The preamble of the Constitution was based on the Objectives Resolution. Initially, Pakistan was named the 'Republic of Pakistan'. However, when the National Assembly met in June 1962 there were demands to add the word 'Islamic', since there were so many Islamic provisions. In December 1962, the first amendment to the Constitution renamed the state as the 'Islamic Republic of Pakistan'. It was further laid out that No law would be enacted which is repugnant to the teachings and requirements of Islam as set out in the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*, and all existing laws would be brought in conformity with the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*. According to the Constitution of 1962, only a Muslim was qualified to be the president of the country. These exclusionary clauses, which affirmed the centrality of one religious community over others, served to create unequal citizenship.

In order to create a docile and subservient citizenry, the state chose to take upon itself the responsibility of inculcating religious sentiments in society. Therefore, the teaching of the *Quran* and Islamiyat to the Muslims of Pakistan was made compulsory. The freedom to choose a religion, or not choose any religion, was constitutionally circumscribed. The Constitution further sought to regulate economic and social relations, as the proper organization of *Zakat*, *waqf*, and mosques was constitutionally ensured. It was specified that practical steps would be taken to eradicate what were seen as social evils by Islam, such as, the use of alcohol and gambling. This minute regulation of society through the conversion of sin into crime, and state control over the personal behaviour of individuals, rendered the state totalitarian, for citizens were not left with any personal moral choices. Instead of leaving such personal choices to people so that they may work out their own unique relation with their religion and God, the state chose to define good and evil by criminalizing acts forbidden in a particular religion, but not necessarily harmful to society.

In the Principles of Policy section, it was specified that steps would be taken to *enable* the Muslims of Pakistan, individually and collectively, to order their lives in accordance with the fundamental principles and basic concepts of Islam. In reality, however, there seemed to be coercion, for people were denied the right to choose their religion, as well as, to decide the manner in which they would follow it. Stating that people should be provided with facilities, whereby, they may be enabled to understand the meaning of life according to Islamic principles and concepts, meant that people would not be allowed to freely interpret their own religion and observe it in consonance with their own specific belief. With intensive encroachment into the private sphere and social relations, the moral policing by the state enabled religion to permeate deep into society. In other words, it allowed religion to become hegemonic rather than a matter of personal, individual choice.

The encroachment of the totalitarian state into personal life was institutionalized through the creation of an 'Advisory Council of Islamic Ideology', to be appointed by the president. The function of the Council was to make recommendations to the government, regarding the means, which would enable and encourage the Muslims of Pakistan to order their lives in accordance with the principles and concepts of Islam. The Council of Islamic Ideology was empowered to examine all laws in force, with a view to bringing them into conformity with the teachings and requirements of Islam, as set out in the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*. The overwhelming thrust to construct an Islamic society was further reinforced, through the creation of an Islamic Research Institute, which was to be established by the President. The function of the Institute, as envisioned in the Constitution, was to undertake Islamic Research and Instruction, for the purpose of assisting in the reconstruction of Muslim society on a truly Islamic basis. The state saw as its goal and purpose, the creation of an Islamic society, rather than perceiving its role as the reflection of the

collective will of the people and a symbol of people's aspirations. The state was defined as an intrusive state, which arrogated to itself, the right to interfere in the minutiae of everyday existence. As if to further invigorate its Islamic character, the Constitution stated that the state would endeavour to strengthen the bonds of unity among Muslim countries.

By the time of Ayub Khan then, religion had become the established method of the retention of power and control by the rulers. Ayub Khan used it brazenly when it suited his aim of continuing in power. In the elections of 1965, he gathered the support of the Ulema, who argued that Islam does not permit a woman to be the head of an Islamic state. The orthodox religious political parties, including the Jamaat-i-Islami, led by Maulana Maududi, which had repeatedly declared that a woman could not hold the highest office of a Muslim country, modified their stance and supported the candidature of Miss Fatima Jinnah. This reveals the essentially opportunistic character of both religious and secular ruling groups of Pakistan. When it suited their purpose, the interpretation was accordingly changed in the pursuit of power. Ayub Khan won the election, but his 'decade of development' proved to be a decade of disaster for the country in a number of political, economic and social ways. In 1969, Ayub Khan was forced out of power after handing over the reins of power to another military dictator, Yahya Khan.

After Pakistan's defeat in the war, in December 1971, Yahya Khan departed and the mantle of leadership now fell upon Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, whose Pakistan People's Party (PPP) had won the 1970 election in West Pakistan. As early as 1966, Z.A. Bhutto had declared in a speech that "Islam is our faith, democracy is our policy, socialism is our economy. All power to the people". Z.A. Bhutto stitched together Islam and socialism into an uncomfortable fabric and called it 'Islamic socialism'. This was designed to gain legitimacy for his programme, which involved a redistribution of wealth and power, and threatened to create new elite structures. Both, religion and socialism, were used by him to shore up his power which, in turn, strengthened his feudal base.

The Constitution of 1973, which was formulated and passed during Pakistan People's Party's first tenure, retained the idea that sovereignty over the entire universe belongs to Almighty Allah alone. In its introductory articles, it went on to state that "Islam shall be the state religion of Pakistan" (Article 2), thus establishing the principle of inherent inequality between Muslim and non-Muslim citizens of the state. The Constitution promised to establish an order "wherein the principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and social justice, *as enunciated by Islam*, shall be fully observed". The liberal notions of democracy, freedom and equality were made subordinate to Islam, thus, automatically curtailing the liberal freedoms, and reducing the equality, of non-Muslims. There was the reiteration of the usual 'enabling Muslims individually and collectively to live their lives in accordance with the fundamental principles of Islam', and the promise to create 'a democratic state based upon Islamic principles of social justice'. The principle, that only a Muslim could be president or prime minister was also retained. Despite his secular and liberal outlook at a personal level, Bhutto took recourse to Islam as a political instrument, thus, undermining the secular socialist state that he otherwise propounded.

The Constitution of 1973, reproduced and preserved, a number of Islamic provisions observed in previous constitutions. The name 'Islamic Republic of Pakistan' was retained and Islam was declared the state religion of Pakistan. With the state having thus chosen one religion as the official one, the status of the followers of other religions was inevitably lowered. The idea of Islam as the state religion was reinforced with the constitutional intent that all existing laws would be brought in conformity with the injunctions of Islam, as laid down in the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*, and no law would be enacted which is repugnant to such injunctions. The Constitution reiterated the need for a Council of Islamic Ideology, whose functions would be to make recommendations to the Parliament and the Provincial Assemblies. These recommendations, as envisioned, would specify the ways and means of enabling and encouraging the Muslims of Pakistan, to order their lives in accordance with the principles of Islam. It was further specified that "the President or the Governor of a province may, or if two-fifths of its total membership so requires, a House or a Provincial Assembly shall, refer to the Islamic Council for advice on any question as to whether a proposed law is or is not repugnant to the injunctions of Islam".

The Constitution of 1973, not only reiterated the stances of the previous constitutions with regard to Islam, but empowered the state to define who is or is not a Muslim. For the first time, the Constitution of Pakistan gave the definition of a Muslim which states: "Muslim' means a person who believes in the unity and oneness of Allah, in the absolute and unqualified finality of the Prophethood of the Islamic prophet, Muhammad, and does not believe in, or recognise as a prophet or religious reformer, any person who claimed or claims to be a prophet, in any sense of the word or of any description whatsoever, after Muhammad (PBUH)". With the state arrogating to itself the right to define a 'Muslim', this right was wrested from people who belonged to varying, conflicting and contesting sects and versions of Islam.

A monolithic and homogenized view of 'Muslims' seemed designed to assert state control over meaning and interpretation, and impose a singular view on the population. The effect of the act of defining a 'Muslim' by the state was most visibly seen, with disastrous consequences, when the Second Amendment in September 1974 declared, for the first time, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community (Qadianis), or the Lahore Ahmadiyya Movement for the Propagation of Islam (Lahoris), as non-Muslims, and their leader, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, as a fraudster and imposter. The anti-Qadiani riots of the 1950s now bore poisoned fruit, and Maulana Maududi's dream of forcefully pushing certain sects out of the pale of Islam, was now accomplished during the democratic period of Z.A. Bhutto.

The deep penetration of society with religious thought continued, and the Constitution averred that steps would be taken to make the teaching of the *Qur'an* and Islamiyat compulsory. The intent was to encourage and facilitate the learning of Arabic language, and to secure correct and exact printing and publishing of the *Qur'an*. It was no longer enough, simply, to promote Islam but the Arabic language learning would now be facilitated, underscoring Pakistan's deepening relations with Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries; the idea of bonding with other Muslim countries was also reinforced. There was deep penetration also into the economy and social relations, as the Constitution declared that proper organization of *Zakat*, *waqf* and mosques would be ensured, and *the state shall prevent prostitution, gambling and consumption of alcohol, printing, publication, circulation and display of obscene literature and advertisements*. The moral policing of society by the state reached its pinnacle at that time, as the state decided to define what is or is not obscene. This massive and intrusive foray into the private realms of life, set the stage for the aggressive 'Islamization' agenda of General Zia that followed the ouster of Z.A. Bhutto.

In 1977, Z.A. Bhutto was accused of rigging the national elections, and the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) movement against him, drew upon the angry sentiments of various sections of the public and rival political parties. Despite the presence of secular and liberal politicians in the PNA movement, it soon acquired a religious colour. The PNA claim, that its manifesto was the *Quran*, helped mobilize a sizeable number of supporters from all over Pakistan. Religion, used by Bhutto to galvanize the population around his agenda, now became equally a tool in the hands of his opponents. An alliance of nine parties, the PNA used mosques to stimulate the masses and tried to create an impression that it was only working for the enforcement of *Nizam-i-Mustafa*. The leaders criticized the socialistic attitude of Bhutto and alleged that he had lost faith in Islam. The Ulema whipped up emotions for a *Jihad* to save Islam, which they alleged was in danger from an evil regime. The Alliance promised to implement Islam and *Shariah* in the form of *Nizam-e-Mustafa*.

The Nine Stars of the PNA Alliance constituted a contradictory and diverse conglomerate of parties, as divergent in their agendas as Khan Abdul Wali Khan's National Awami Party, which espoused secularism and socialism, Asghar Khan's Tehrik-e-Istiqlal which preached secularism, Maududi's hardline Islamist Jamaat-e-Islami, and Mufti Mahmood's Jamiat- Ulema-e-Islam which

emphasized its Deobandi version of Islam and *Shariah*⁹. They were united only in their opposition to Z.A. Bhutto's autocratic style of ruling. Nonetheless, their use of Islam as the instrument of gaining power, ushered in the longest and most terrifying military dictatorship, that relied on a harsh and fundamentalist version of Islam for its legitimacy.

Bhutto's belated attempt to placate the Islamists through cosmetic and symbolic measures, such as, declaring Friday as the weekly holiday, banning alcohol and gambling dens was, for his opponents, too little too late. Even though there was some evidence of rapprochement between Z.A. Bhutto and the opposition, General Zia seized the opportunity to overthrow an elected civilian government and establish military rule on July 5, 1977. Thence followed the period when religion, to which every ruler had in the past resorted, became the main ideological instrument for the hegemony of the new classes that had acquired wealth from remittances from the Gulf countries and Saudi Arabia.

General Zia-ul-Haq established the Majlis-e-Shoora in 1980, and all 284 members, including many Ulema, were nominated by him as the president. General Zia seized upon Islam as the most powerful, hegemonic ideology, through which he could justify his illegal takeover. He instituted drastic changes in nearly every sphere of life, from the most private to the public. At that point in Pakistan's history, the state was more intrusive, more totalitarian and more punitive than at any previous or subsequent time. Every area of life, from the political to the social, economic and cultural was brought under the surveillance and control of the government, to force people to order their lives according to the religious interpretation provided by the state.

General Zia's interpretation of Islam was derived heavily from the Deobandi, Jamaat-e-Islami's view of religion. Initially, the Objectives Resolution formed the preamble to Pakistan's Constitution. However, during the time of General Zia-ul-Haq in 1985, this resolution was made a substantive part of the Constitution, through the insertion of Article 2-A in the Constitution. The model for undertaking the 'Islamization' project was supplied by Maulana Maududi's theory of the state, and the *Jamaat-e-Islami* was the only political party that could freely function during the time. General Zia placed the economy outside the purview of Islamization for ten years, as Pakistan's financial interests were tied to the global economic system which depends upon interest payments. Cosmetic economic changes were introduced within Pakistan. However, the judiciary, education and the media were subjected to far-reaching changes (Jehangir & Jilani, 1990; Saigol, 1993, 1994 & 1995; Malik & Hussain, 1996).

It is relevant here to shed some light on Maududi's expositions on women's status and rights within Islam. Maududi did not allow any place to modern, western or liberal thought, and relied entirely on the *Qura'an* and *Sunnah*. So much so, that he even opposed the compulsory registration of marriages (Ahmad, 1976). In his view, the *Shariah*-ordained method of contracting marriages was ample. He opposed the appointment of Registrars of Marriage, on the grounds, that Islam was opposed to a professional clergy. The non-registration of marriages was a major problem for Muslim women, as husbands could simply pronounce the triple *talaq* (divorce), and later even recant leaving the women at their whim and mercy. Registration provides proof of the marriage so that women can claim their rights whether married or divorced.

Maulana Maududi's views on women's status and position in society were laid out in his book *Purdah* written in 1963 (Maududi, 1963). In this book, he attributed the fall of great civilizations to woman, calling her an Agent of Satan. He then proceeded to reassure society that an Islamic state would preserve civilization, by protecting women from both the extremes of maid or mistress (Ahmad, 1976; Haque, 1987). Maududi vehemently asserts that, if an Islamic state is to be

⁹ Major component Parties of the PNA Alliance were, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam, Pakistan Muslim League, Jamaat-e-Islami, Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan, Pakistan Democratic Party, National Democratic Party (formerly National Awami Party (Wali)), Tehrik-e-Istiqlal, Khaksar Tehrik, Azad Kashmir Muslim Conference.

established in the true sense, the position ascribed to women by *Shariah* must be adhered to completely or else Muslim civilization would collapse, especially if women failed to play their pre-determined role. Maududi's view of gender roles was based on the theory of separate spheres, with men's role relegated to the public productive realm, and women's role to the private reproductive sphere (Haque, 1987). The relation between the sexes was seen as complementary, and one based on mutual interdependence. Free mixing of the sexes was seriously disapproved for the possible chaos it might create.

Maulana Maududi found adult franchise unsuitable for women, and harmful for the welfare of the country, for being an 'imitation of the West'. He believed that women should not have the right to be elected to the legislature, as this would be contrary to the spirit of Islam. Maududi contended, that active politics and administration were not a field of activity of the womenfolk, and should be restricted to men. He advocated a separate assembly for women, whose main function would be to look after the special affairs of women, such as female education and female health issues. This assembly would be consulted by the male legislature on matters of importance affecting women (Ahmad, 1976). Maulana Maududi, thus, propagated a theory of complete segregation of the sexes and relegated 'women's issues' to a separate assembly of women, as though, these issues were not of general national importance. Women, in Maududi's formulation, become citizens of a different type than male citizens. General Zia's social, economic and legal measures reflected the perspectives outlined by Maulana Maududi.

In December 1978, in a nationwide address to ostensibly enforce an Islamic system devised by him, Zia accused, quite ironically, politicians of exploiting the name of Islam: "*Many a ruler did what they pleased in the name of Islam*". After assuming power, the government began a programme of public commitment, to enforce *Nizam-e-Mustafa*, marking a major shift from Pakistan's predominantly Anglo-Saxon law, inherited from the British. As a preliminary measure to establish an Islamic society in Pakistan, General Zia announced the establishment of Sharia Benches. A parallel judicial system, consisting of the Federal Shariat Court and Shariat Bench of the Supreme Court, and other Islamic courts were instituted. Other measures to Islamize the legal and judicial systems included, the Hudood Ordinances of 1979, the Qisas and Diyat Ordinance (which became law in 1990), and the Law of Evidence of 1984. The latter laws seriously affected the protection, security and status of women and the minorities, whose citizenship rights were curtailed through such measures (Jahangir & Jilani, 1990). The general atmosphere created by General Zia's 'Islamization', was one of fear, public lashings, beatings and severe punishments for the poor and weak, women and minorities.

The minoritization of certain sects of Islam had begun with the Second Amendment in 1974. With Zia, the targeting of those with differing religious views reached a height. The Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) and the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC) were amended, through ordinances in 1980, 1982 and 1986, to declare anything implying disrespect to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Ahl al-Bayt (family members of Muhammad), Sahaba (companions of Muhammad) and Sha'ar-i-Islam (Islamic symbols), a cognizable offence, punishable with imprisonment or fine, or both. A significant addition to the laws was Ordinance XX of 1984. Under this, the Ahmadiyya were barred from calling themselves Muslims, using Islamic terminology or practicing Islamic rituals. While other religious minorities could, within limits, practice their religions, the Ahmadiyya community suffered the most, as they could not carry out marriage or other rituals according to belief¹⁰. Thousands of members of the persecuted Ahmadiyya community fled Pakistan to save

¹⁰ General Zia-ul-Haq promulgated Ordinance XX on 26 April, 1984, banning members of the Ahmadiyya community from performing their religious ceremonies and prayers. He declared that "This Ordinance may be called the Anti-Islamic Activities of the Qadiani Group, Lahori Group and Ahmadis (Prohibition and Punishment) Ordinance, 1984". Article 298-C of this law states "Any person of the Qadiani group or the Lahori group (who call themselves 'Ahmadis' or by any other name), who, directly or indirectly, poses himself as Muslim, or calls, or refers to, his faith as Islam, or preaches or propagates his faith, or invites others to accept his faith, by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representations, or in any manner whatsoever outrages the religious feelings of Muslims, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years and shall also be liable to fine". Thousands of cases

their lives and to escape victimization. During Zia's reign, many Shi'a Muslims and politicians were killed, most prominent being the judicial murder of Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

In 1986, the Criminal Law (Amendment Act, III) was passed by the Majlis-e-Shoora, and it added Section 295(C) to existing Blasphemy laws which reads: "Whoever by words, either spoken or written, or by visible representation, or by imputation, innuendo, or insinuation, directly or indirectly, defiles the sacred name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) shall be punished with death, or imprisonment for life, and shall be liable to fine". Around 1991 a petition was filed in the Shariat Court, which prayed that Section 295(C) prescribe only the death penalty, with no option of life imprisonment. The Shariat Court allowed the petition, and its decision was later upheld by the Shariat Appellate Court of the Supreme Court. The Blasphemy law, which carries the death penalty, was used against Muslims to settle personal scores but particularly, and perniciously, against non-Muslim citizens, especially Ahmadis and Christians, in the context of disputes that often involved property and money. Religion was now forged as a weapon against enemies in personal disagreements. The intrusive state could now take the life of its citizens for mere speech and utterance.

State regulation of the most personal aspects of social life was not limited only to women's dress, their right to take part in sports, to work and move freely, the state also took it upon itself to decide virtue and vice. Drinking of all forms of alcohol was not a crime under the Pakistan Penal Code. In 1977, however, the drinking and selling of wine by Muslims was banned in Pakistan, and the sentence of imprisonment of six months or a fine of Rs. 5000/-, or both, was provided in that law. Under the Zina Ordinance (one part of the Hudood Ordinances), the provisions relating to adultery were replaced so that the woman and the man guilty would be flogged, each of them, with one hundred lashes, if unmarried. And, if they were married, they would be stoned to death. People could no longer establish an independent moral system as a private matter. Morality, its control, regulation and enforcement became public matters. While the state privatized the crime of murder through the Qisas and Diyat Ordinance, which allowed the relatives of the victim to accept compensation or seek retribution, the private issues of adultery or fornication became a crime against the state, and a public matter.

Apart from the regulation of social life, economic relations were also brought under strict state control. There was a compulsory levy of *Zakat* on all saving account holders, and *Ushr* tax was also instituted. The idea of charity and alms-giving in Islam is a matter of personal choice and preference. However, the state negated this freedom of choice to force economic activity to conform to the official version of religion. Since Pakistan's economy was heavily indebted to foreign donors, and Zia was deeply linked with Western powers and dependent on their largesse, the international features of the economy were exempted from Islamic provisions. This is an indication that his use of religion was purely opportunistic, for when it suited his material purposes, he conveniently overlooked Islamic injunctions.

In seeking legitimacy through the blatant use of religion, Zia surpassed all his predecessors. In December 1984, he held a referendum, in which the only option was to elect or reject him as the future president of Pakistan. The question was phrased in such a way that few Muslims would have the courage to answer in the negative. The question asked was, whether the people of Pakistan wanted Islamic Shariah law enforced in the country or not. An affirmative answer was taken as a verdict in his own favour. Predictably, over 95 per cent of the vote cast was affirmative. He used the referendum to get himself elected as president for five years. Although, only 10 per cent of the registered voters cast their votes in the farcical referendum, General Zia chose to regard the results as an endorsement of his policies. During Zia's rule, the merger of state and religion, along with the fusion of ruling classes and political Islam, was complete.

were registered against Ahmadis. One such case even included the entire 35,000 population of an Ahmadiyya town on the behest of a religious clergy of a neighbouring town.

A highly destructive and long-lasting effect of the use of religion for political purposes, during Zia's reign, was Pakistan's involvement as a frontline state in the Afghan Jihad, and the creation of the Mujahideen to drive out the Soviet Union from Afghanistan. Islam was no longer an instrument of power for the local ruling classes, for it now became a tool in the global imperial contests over West and Central Asian oil and gas resources. Islam became an ally of western capitalism, which manifested its imperial impulse through the US involvement in Afghanistan. The Soviet Union's attempt to gain access to a warm water port, through Afghanistan and Pakistan, was blocked by the US by invoking Islam, which was believed to have immense evocative power and resonance among Muslims, in both countries.

The most devastating effect of General Zia's reign of terror, financed and supported by the Reagan administration in the US, was the massive rise of fundamentalist and sectarian parties, with their followers becoming daringly belligerent over time. The definition of an Islamic state is a contested concept, with competing sects vying for the acceptance of their brand of Islam as the true one. This predictably gave rise to enormous sectarian conflict and violence. And the decades following Zia's Islamization saw an exponential rise in sectarian strife, with hundreds of people killed and injured (Rashid, 1997). The fundamentalist Wahhabi brand of Islam, being propounded by the Deobandi *Jamaat-e-Islami*, was the dominant version, yet several other versions of Islam were contesting for a dominant place at the state level. Religious parties, which had never won a substantial portion of Pakistan's vote in any election, were imposed on the population through state policy.

The picture was further complicated by the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, followed by the US and Saudi Arabia supported Afghan *Jihad*, in which Pakistan became a frontline state. The astronomical amounts of funding that poured into Pakistan, to fight communism in neighboring Afghanistan, spawned a large number of *Jihadist* and militant outfits in the northern and western parts of Pakistan, bordering Afghanistan. In his thoroughly researched book, *Jihad-e-Kashmir o Afghanistan*, journalist Muhammad Amir Rana reveals telling facts. After the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, Jimmy Carter's administration created a secret fund of \$500 million, to create terror outfits to fight the Soviets. Nicknamed "Operation Cyclone", this fund was kept secret even from the Congress and the American public. Subsequently, the Reagan administration and Saudi Arabia provided \$3.5 billion to General Zia's regime, for the funding of *madrassahs* for the Afghan Jihad. Militants were trained by the CIA in the Brooklyn School in New York and in Virginia. In Pakistan, they were trained by the British MI6 and the Inter-Services-Intelligence, which worked with the CIA on the project. The idea was to create Mujahideen to fend off the Soviets who were advancing in search of a warm water port (Rana, 2002).

The greatest increase in religious parties was recorded between 1979 and 1990, and a major chunk of it is accounted for by a staggering rise in the number of sectarian outfits. While Jihad-related organizations increased by 100 per cent, the rise in sectarian parties was 90 per cent. In the same period, religious seminaries began to proliferate in Pakistan. Prior to 1980, there were a total of 700 religious schools in Pakistan, and the rate of increase was 3 per cent a year. By the end of 1986, the rate of increase in *deeni madaris* reached a phenomenal 136 per cent. By 2002, Pakistan had 7000 institutions that award higher degrees in religious teaching (Rana, 2002). Currently, it is estimated that there are between 18,000 and 22,000 *madrassahs* operating in Pakistan, teaching over 1.5 million children.

The massive proliferation of militant and sectarian outfits includes, the *Jaish-e-Muhammad*, *Harkat-ul-Mujahideen*, *Lashkar-e-Islam*, *Lashkar-e-Tayyaba*, *Hizb-ul-Mujahideen*, *Harkat-ul-Jehad-ul-Islami*, *Al-Badr Mujahideen*, *Tehreek-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Muhammadi*, *Sipah-e-Sahaba-e-Pakistan* and so on (Rashid, 1997; Rana, 2002). Extremist and violent versions of Islamist outfits, hitherto neither much known nor encouraged in Pakistan, began to multiply at an alarming rate. Religio-political parties, such as the *Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Islam*, influenced by Wahhabi and Deobandi brands of fundamentalism, trained the Taliban ideologically, while Pakistan's military establishment and the Inter-Services Intelligence Agency (ISI), with generous help from Saudi Arabia and the US, provided military training (Rana, 2002). Long after the defeat of the Soviet

Union in Afghanistan and the fall of the Berlin wall, the militancy and extremism, unleashed by the global forces in the north-western regions of Pakistan (NWFP), and its tribal areas, have only grown rather than having subsided. Many Afghan Mujahideen, later morphed into new forms of *Jihadist* outfits, in the shape of Taliban and Al-Qaeda in the early 1990s. Islam seemed to have become deeply enmeshed in the global imperial project and, in the process, Islamist movements themselves acquired transnational characteristics and became de-territorialized.

General Zia did not only patronize the Taliban and Al-Qaida, he was also the patron of Sheikh Abdullah of the Red Mosque in Islamabad, who sought to cement relations with him in 1977. These relations continued until the death of General Zia-ul-Haq in 1988. Sheikh Abdullah took advantage of his close relations, and throughout the rule of Zia-ul-Haq, he was nominated head of the Central Committee for Verifying the Start of the Hegira Month¹¹. This relationship ultimately, and long after Zia's death, led to the Red Mosque and Jamia Hafsa fiasco in Islamabad: where armed vigilantes kidnapped people and committed crimes in the name of religion, and carried out moral policing for months before the army routed them in Operation Silence, in July 2007. In retaliation, the followers of Red Mosque unleashed a spate of suicide attacks across the length and breadth of Pakistan. Long after General Zia's death, in a plane crash in August 1988, the presence of his spirit can be felt in Pakistan, as it tackles militancy, radicalism and terror on a daily basis.

General Zia's death was followed by a decade of civilian democratic governments led by Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, alternatively. In spite of Benazir Bhutto's secular and liberal outlook, she pandered to the religious lobby, in an effort to retain political power. It was during her second tenure (1993-1996), that the Taliban rose to power in Kabul and her Minister of Interior, Naseerullah Babar, described them as 'our children'. Nawaz Sharif became Prime Minister from the platform of the conservative Islami Jamhoori Ittehad in 1990. It was during his tenure that the Enforcement of Shariat Act, 1991 was passed, which declared the supremacy of Shariah and called for laws to be interpreted in the light of Shariah¹². It specifically referred to the Islamization of education, economy and the mass media (Saigol, 1993). It also referred to notions of 'obscenity' and 'vulgarity', which could potentially be misused by anyone for personal vendetta. However, international financial obligations and contracts were maintained and exempted from the Islamization of the economy.

Politically nurtured by General Zia as his protégé, Nawaz Sharif implemented the former's agenda faithfully. In his second tenure, Nawaz Sharif introduced his infamous Shariat Bill (15th amendment) which, if passed, would have effectively made him *Amir-ul-Momineen* (Commander of the Faithful), for it was designed to gain absolute power by determining virtue and vice and imposing it upon the country. Nawaz Sharif was removed in a military coup before this bill could become law. However, both Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, and their respective parties, have a history of hobnobbing with religious parties and pressing religion into the service of attaining and prolonging power. Needless to say, the propensity to use religion to shore up power and become an absolute ruler, in turn, strengthens the hegemony of religious discourse, as well as, religious parties which claim it as their turf.

The decade of civilian democratic rule of the 1990s was followed by another long period of martial law, during which, General Musharraf became an absolute ruler by centralizing all power in his own person. He usurped many of the powers of the Prime Minister, and became an all-powerful president, while retaining the post of the Chief of Army Staff. Despite his liberal and 'enlightened moderate' protestations, Musharraf was, obviously politically, the most illiberal and immoderate ruler, who twice violated the Constitution and demolished the judiciary, the mainstay of a liberal state. After the World Trade Center attacks of 9/11, Musharraf ostensibly made his famous U-Turn on the Afghan policy. But, there was widespread suspicion and evidence, that he played a double game and used parts of US funding against terrorism, to shore up the extremist outfits

¹¹ The Hegira calendar is a lunar calendar followed by the Muslims across the world.

¹² Enforcement of Shari'ah Act, 1991. Act X of 1991.

created by the state, as 'strategic assets', against India¹³. Contrary to his self-representation as a modern and moderate ruler, he created the Muttahida-Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), an alliance of six religious parties, and engineered their victory in the elections of 2002. Subsequently, the MMA played the role of a 'friendly opposition', and supported Musharraf who agreed not to interfere with their government in NWFP and Balochistan. He used all power at his disposal, to keep the two relatively moderate and popular leaders, Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, out of the country. As a result, their parties could not participate effectively in the elections.

In return for bringing the MMA into power in the NWFP, Musharraf managed to get the 17th Amendment passed. This amendment washed his political sins clean, and allowed him to continue to remain the Chief of Army Staff until December 2004. Musharraf backtracked on that promise and retained his uniform until November 2007, more so, by having succeeded in using religious parties to his own advantage. It was during his tenure in 2005 that the NWFP Assembly passed the Hasba Bill, which would enforce Shariat in NWFP, and pave the way for the Talibanization of the province¹⁴. However, the Supreme Court of Pakistan stepped in, and declared the Bill a violation of the fundamental rights granted in the 1973 Constitution. The games played by the military ruler to prolong his rule through the use of religious parties, and their attempt to get their pound of flesh in return, led Pakistan further down the road of radicalism, by increasing the hegemony of religion and wedding religion inextricably to politics.

The proclivity to make accommodations with extremist outfits, and capitulate to their illegal demands persisted after the revival of democracy, with the installation of Pakistan People's Party government and the departure of Pervez Musharraf, in August 2008. The Nizam-e-Adl Agreement (NAR) reached between the Awami National Party (ANP) government in NWFP, and Sufi Muhammad's Tehreek-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Muhammadi (TNSM), subserviently passed by a pliant parliament, and signed by President Asif Ali Zardari in April 2009, is yet another example of a secular, liberal party like ANP, appeasing the religious extremists to prolong its stay in power. The NAR agreement established a parallel 'state within a state', where religious extremists and militants had total sway (Saigol, 2009).

The PPP and ANP, both considered democratic, liberal and secular parties, not only agreed to bring Shariat to Malakand Division, they remained comfortable in an alliance with the Jamiat-ul-Islam (F) of Maulana Fazl-ur-Rehman, widely regarded as the Father of the Taliban. On the other hand, the ruling alliance refused to restore the Chief Justice, wrongly deposed by a military dictator, and thereby failed in their commitment to a liberal parliamentary democracy. The Chief Justice was restored only when the government's hand was forced. Hence, by implication, the rulers supported the illegal actions of a dictator. Their lack of commitment to a liberal, parliamentary democracy also seems evident from an observed reluctance to undo the 17th Amendment, inserted into the Constitution by a dictator who mauled and battered the Constitution beyond recognition. The perceptible lack of commitment of seemingly democratic, secular and liberal parties, to the construction of a democratic, secular and liberal state, is one of the major reasons for Pakistan's failure to emerge from the stranglehold of religious extremism. While they may blame some of their failings on the all-powerful Establishment, which refuses to subordinate itself to an elected government, it does not seem plausible that the Establishment stood in the way of judicial restoration or the restoration of the Constitution in its original form. The main reason for their capitulation, to the religious parties, is their overwhelming objective of retaining power at all costs. Secondly, as Mubarak Ali argues, the failure to deliver basic goods to the people was often covered up by appeals to religious sentiments (Ali, 2009).

¹³ In September 2009 General (Retd) Pervez Musharraf admitted publicly that he had diverted the aid given by the US to fight terrorism towards shoring up the forces against India.

¹⁴ The stated goal of the Hasba bill was political power for it stated: the implementation of Islamic way of life revolves around *Amer-Bil-Marooif and Nahi-Anil-Munkir* [forbidding that what is not proper and practicing that what is good]. It is not hard to fathom who would determine what is not proper and what is good.

The pact between the provincial government and the Swat Taliban was reached under duress, after law enforcing authorities failed to prevent heinous crimes of murder, decapitation, loot and plunder by the Taliban. The provincial government had no choice but to conclude an agreement, in the hope of securing peace which, nonetheless, remained elusive. The NAR agreement unraveled quickly: as the violence continued, the Taliban refused to lay down arms, moving swiftly into neighboring areas, and Sufi Muhammad staunchly repudiated democracy, the Constitution, the parliament and the judiciary. He openly expressed his dream to impose his version of Shariah law, all over Pakistan and beyond. It also became fairly obvious, that while the peace deal had been reached with Sufi Muhammad of TNSM, the real control in Swat lay in the hands of the uncompromising Fazlullah, who appeared to have greater affinity with Baitullah Mehsud's Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan in Waziristan. Convinced that the capitulation to an illegal armed militia had produced disastrous results, and, under pressure from international and national critics, the government launched Operation *Raah-e-Raast* in May 2009, to clean out the Swat valley and, later on, Waziristan of terrorists. It did not take the government long to recognize the folly of making pacts with the devil.

Pakistan's history, spanning six decades, provides ample evidence that the ubiquitous presence of religious radicalism and violence cannot be attributed solely to ideology and superstructure factors. Such an approach overlooks historical, economic and material factors in producing a phenomenon such as the Taliban. The Taliban, or whatever name one chooses to give to the wide variety of religious extremists, are a modern, contemporary social formation. They use modern weapons and techniques to establish their sway over territories, peoples and resources. They are certainly not throwbacks to some ancient period or a pre-modern manifestation of fanaticism.

Modern religious fanaticism in Pakistan is the product of interlocking capitalist, imperial, national and local factors. In the specific case of religious violence, emanating allegedly from an Islamic base, global and transnational factors have been recorded by many writers (Rashid, 2001, 2008). Pakistan's ruling classes, including those involved in its birth, took frequent recourse to religion and made alliances with retrogressive forces to achieve the worldly aims of political power. In this, they sought the help of global and imperial powers, such as, Saudi Arabia and the US. In return, Saudi Arabia greatly enhanced the influence of Wahhabism in South Asia, and the US defeated the former Soviet Union and gained control over the route to the riches of the Caspian Sea.

The various versions of the Taliban, therefore (and there are many varieties), do not represent anti-imperial forces, as some romanticists would have us believe. Religious zealots, aided and abetted American imperialism which helped produce them. Wars, such as the one in Iraq and Afghanistan, are ultimately imperial wars conducted in search of oil, gas and other raw materials in the race for energy sources. Energy politics, combined with oil and gas pipeline politics, found in religion, particularly Islam, a useful ally that could be relied upon to defeat rival powers and reach precious resources¹⁵. Pakistan is geographically located at the nexus of competing and rival imperialisms (Saudi Arabian, Iranian, US, Chinese, Russian, European) that are now pitted against each other. The ruling political classes of countries like Afghanistan and Pakistan, have invariably been more than happy to oblige in the imperial project, in return for stints in power. In conclusion, it may be said that it is vital to understand the political economy of religious violence, instead of explaining it by recourse to some essential ideological characteristics of the actors involved.

¹⁵ See Pepe Escobar's article 'Pipelinstan goes Af-Pak' Central Asia, May 14, 2009. http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Central_Asia/KE14Ag01.html Also see Escobar's 'Balochistan is the ultimate prize', South Asia, May 9, 2009. http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/KE09Df03.html

Imagining a new State – path to survival

The main argument of this paper is that issues of terrorism and extremism (somewhat erroneously called ‘radicalism’) do not arise merely from ideology, backward thinking and lack of education. Rather, the problems that Pakistan is confronted with arise from fundamental socio-economic and class inequalities which have allowed the ruling classes to espouse, promote and encourage orthodox, rigid and fundamentalist versions of religion, as opposed to the more tolerant, peaceful ones that the dispossessed classes reflect. As Pakistan redefined its identity by invoking the Arabian origins of Islam, the relatively more tolerant, syncretic and peaceful versions of South Asian religion have been increasingly replaced by harsh, literalist and bland versions of Arabian Islam (Ali, 2009).

The solution, therefore, does not lie merely in increasing education, reforming the media and attempting to disseminate values of peaceful co-existence and tolerance. While this approach would certainly form a part of the strategy of transformation, it is located only at the level of the superstructure. At the level of basic socio-economic structures, serious changes would need to be instituted.

Firstly, and most centrally, land reforms have to be carried out seriously so that wealth may be distributed more equitably in the population. Such a measure, if designed carefully, would alter class relations in the rural areas of certain parts of the country, thereby reducing poverty. The stake that landlords have in maintaining the status quo, whether through religion or links with the army, would be diminished. At the same time, abject poverty would not force the poor to enroll one or two of their children in a madrassa, where ideologies of hate and terror are propagated. The investment of wealth in productive activity could potentially provide livelihoods for people, so that, they are not drawn to the only source of living provided by the madrassas. Once the feudal structures, in parts of Pakistan, are dismantled, it is hoped that larger numbers of the middle class would enter the legislative assemblies and make laws that do not just benefit one class. The redistribution of national wealth must involve the army generals as well. The military has become, not only the major landowning entity in the country, it is also engaged in a number of corporate enterprises (Siddiq, 2007). The military’s role in the national economy needs to be lessened, for it to become a truly professional outfit, disengaged from militants.

At the same time, development of the tribal regions of the country needs to be undertaken. This development needs to be planned in a manner that provides job opportunities and employment for youth, both urban and rural. The productive base of the country needs to be strengthened by focusing on economic and social development. Once young people have a chance of employment in a productive economy, they are less likely to be attracted to religious or other kinds of violence, as a form of earning a livelihood. A serious revamping of socio-economic structures of the country is required, if people are to be discouraged from participation in so-called Jihad, which is seen as lucrative and empowering.

The sources of funding that support extremist outfits need to be dried up. It is not well known, exactly, from where the funds for terror are derived¹⁶. However, there is some evidence that there are at least three sources: one, private donations from well to do citizens within the country, as well as, the Muslim diaspora in the US, Saudi Arabia, the UK and UAE; two, money earned through the trafficking of drugs; and three, arms smuggling. In the past, Jihad was officially funded by the CIA, ISI and the Pakistani and US states. However, that source seems to have now been blocked, and the money comes from private sources and criminal activities. The law enforcing agencies need to trace the sources and block them, for as long as the funding continues, so will the activities.

If Pakistan is to emerge from the present quagmire, a major paradigm shift is needed, not only in its policy of national security, but also in its self-definition as a state. For the sake of its survival,

¹⁶ See Rahimullah Yusufzai’s article ‘The big question mark’ in *The News*. June 21, 2009.

Pakistan needs to transform itself from a national security state to an economic development one. The overwhelming focus on national security, which arises from the constant threat, imagined or real, from India would have to change. The peace process with India needs to be revitalized, to enable Pakistan's resources and energies to be released for economic and social development. This, by implication, means that the foreign and defence policies need to be made by democratically elected governments rather than by the security establishment. Elected governments have exhibited a propensity to make peace with India, but the security establishment, which thrives on the neighbourly hatred, has historically resisted attempts to resolve outstanding issues. The worn out policies of perceiving Afghanistan as Pakistan's 'strategic depth', and forces such as the Taliban as 'strategic assets', must be shunned in order to defeat terrorism. The Taliban have now become 'toxic assets' that need to be subdued and totally discarded. Similarly, the old policy of 'bleeding India with a thousand cuts', by encouraging militant infiltration into Indian Kashmir and carrying on a prolonged low-intensity conflict, must be revised. This policy has precluded a solution to the Kashmir dispute, and has also placed Pakistan in an unenviable position in the international community. National security policies need a fresh approach, arrived at, through a radical re-thinking of the state and its priorities.

As long as 'national security', as defined by the military, remains the main national priority, Pakistan is unlikely to move into the future, as an economically developed and democratic country, on the road to prosperity. Instead of the national security paradigm, Human Security needs to be emphasized, as the latter concept encompasses the notions of economic and social security of the population. National security paradigms, typically tend to favour the elite and ruling classes, which dominate the state. Once economic and social development, based on a just distribution of the fruits of development, become overriding national priorities, the importance of war and militarism would tend to decrease. It is imperative, therefore, that military interventions which overthrow elected governments and parliaments are stopped forever. Military takeovers play havoc with national institutions and weaken civil society and democratic mechanisms, that would, otherwise, retain the power to deal with ethnic conflict, as well as, terrorism and extremism¹⁷.

Pakistan would need to make a major paradigmatic shift, by re-ordering and re-designing its national ruling ideology that is based on religion. Article 2 of the Constitution defines Islam as the state religion, and aims to bring all laws in conformity with it. The definition of the state, in terms of one religion, necessarily excludes those who belong to other religions – they become unequal as citizens. This conflicts with Article 25 of the fundamental rights section, which declares all citizens to be equal. Such contradictions, within the basic law of the land, need to be removed so that all citizens, irrespective of religion, sex, region, ethnicity or sect are considered equal before law. Although, formal equality is not sufficient without substantive equality, it is a start towards reducing the many hierarchies and divisions in society.

The separation of religion and politics is advantageous for both – the state and religion. For the state, such a separation would help remove the inequalities of citizenship inherent in the basic law of the land. It would enable the state to make laws and policies, without reference to any religion. Religion would gain by becoming detached from the often 'dirty' business of politics. It would cease to be debased by extremists and fanatics, or by rulers who would then not be able to use it to establish legitimacy and hegemony. The higher aspects of religious thought, based on serious philosophical debate, would replace its denigration by association with terrorism and criminal acts.

¹⁷ See the International Crisis Group Report, *Pakistan: The Militant Jihadi Challenge*. Asia Report No. 164. 13 March 2009. According to this report, 'Musharraf's eight-year rule caused a general breakdown of governance, leaving state institutions like the police and the courts in disarray. Political interference by the military establishment has not only limited the police's technical capabilities, but has directly prevented consistent action against radical jihadi groups', p. 29.

It is often believed, that the preservation of the foundational ideologies of the state is imperative for survival, and that everything must be done to preserve the mythologies of origin, within which, the state was born. However, dynamic societies reveal an important secret – that change and transformation are as necessary for survival as preservation. Sometimes, foundational myths have to be revisited in the light of changed circumstances. A reformulation, a radical re-imagining of the state is necessary, if Pakistan is to survive against the internal threats it is confronted with today.

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