# Islamising a Muslim Nation: Politics of Identity, Legitimacy and Security in Pakistan



Address by
Maneesha Tikekar

at the
ICES Auditorium, Colombo
November 25, 2005

International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo

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## Politics of Identity, Security and Legitimacy in Pakistan

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## Introduction

The belief that movements towards secularization and democratization represent a linear development has been falsified by the experiences of the past three decades. Social scientists are in agreement that the resurgence of religious movements in the 1980s and 90s is a worldwide phenomenon. For some time theories of social and political behaviour had tended to turn a blind eye to the continuously evolving role of religion as a force in national and international affairs. Scholarly researches in the area indicate that in the non- western world nationalism is engaged in a 'powerful, creative and historically significant project' of creating a contemporary national culture that is essentially non –western.[1] This is a modern phenomenon, a response to the crises of modernity and identity. It denotes a rejection of modernity and 'enforced homogeneity of global culture' and a 'non-moral rationalism of modern secularism'. Modernity is unsettling and disturbing due to its strong commitment to rationality and reason. "When a generation is beset by problems or imbued with a sense of insecurity vis-à-vis an aggressive culture, i.e. Western culture in the Third World, there is always a longing for, and aspiring to, a pure manageable past", writes Ibrahim Abu-Rabi.[2] The post –cold-war world witnessed a divide between the 'religious' and the 'mundane' and with the

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[1]   This is the central argument of Juergensmeyer's (1994) study *Religious Nationalism Confronts The Secular State.*
Ibrahim M Abu-Rabi (1995), p 2

collapse of the Soviet Union this divide became sharper as the US, and its Western allies tried to impose their world view globally through the new world order. Religious resurgence therefore signifies a tension between the universal and the particular, the global and the local. These developments and the new demands emanating from them are often condemned by westerners as well as modernizing elite in these societies as 'fundamentalists' or 'fascists' and as 'historical aberrations' or 'misguided applications of religion'. Such dismissals do not help in understanding the nature and cause of the phenomenon, which is essential if it is to be tackled effectively.

Though several non- Western as well as some Western religions and religious traditions have resisted attempts at cultural globalization and secularization, Islam stands out distinctly in offering significant resistance to these forces. Commenting on the nature of Middle Eastern resistance to Western dominance, Leonard Binder writes, "...No other cultural region is as deeply anxious about the threat of cultural penetration and westernization. And the central symbol of this anxiety is Islam, with which authenticity, identity, dignity, and even manhood are associated".[3] The presupposition of modernism that the human mind has an infinite capacity to transform and control social and natural phenomenon poses a great challenge to the theistic (Islamic) mind at its very foundation.[4] Hence the Islamic resurgence has been the most spectacular among all resurgent religions.

## Conceptual Framework

It is necessary to make a distinction between Islamic resurgence and Islamization. Islamic resurgence is a wider and generic movement that has laid a greater emphasis on religious identity and values in private and public life. Muslim scholars are in agreement that Islamic resurgence was primarily a reaction to the

colonial rule and Western dominance and that this dominance was multidimensional in nature. Yvonne Haddad labels it as a 'designer ideology for resistance, change and empowerment' based on the teachings of Jamal al-Din- Afghani, Muhammad Abduh and Rashid Rida at the turn of the 19th century as a "modernist response to the colonial and missionary challenge..."[5] From the 1830s when Mohmet Ali of Egypt tried to modernize his nation there has been a continuous attempt by intellectuals and statesmen in West Asia to come to terms with westernization and its challenge to traditional Islam and its society. In the early 20th century the leading lights of the movement were Hasan-Al-Bana, the founder of The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, 1928, followed by Sayyid Qutb, Muhmmad Iqbal, Abul Ala Maudoodi, Fazlur Rahman, Ali Shariati and Abdolkarim Soroush and many others. Abu-Rabi understands Islamic resurgence as "a reinterpretation of the Islamic tradition in a way that lends itself to a revolutionary meaning."[6] Several scholars trace its renewal in more recent times to the Arab-Israeli war of 1967 and the resultant Arab defeat that shook the foundations of 'secular' Arab nationalism of Gamal Abdul Nasser followed by the Iranian revolution of 1979 as a strong reaction to he attempts of Reza Shah and his son to brutally modernize their country sidestepping Islam. The plight of the Bosnian Muslims after the dissolution of Yugoslavia in early 1990s; the Gulf War, 1991, and the recent American wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have added militant and radical dimension to the Islamic movement in an unprecedented way. There is a terminological proliferation and the Islamic Resurgence is also known by various labels as Islamism, Islamic Activism, Islamic Modernism, Islamic Radicalism, Islamic Revival and Political Islam with little distinction made by various users between these terms. Islamic militancy though inspired by this resurgence refers to actual violent behaviour in the name of Islam.

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[3]    Leonard Binder (1988), p 83.
[4]    Ibrahim M Abu –Rabi, *Op.cit.*, p 9.

[5]    Yvonne Yazbeck Haddad (2001)
[6]    Quoted by M.H Ansari (2002) p 7.

Khurshid Ahmad, Pakistani activist and scholar of Islam views Islamic resurgence primarily as a religious and ethical movement that has focused on strengthening *Iman* (belief). Socio-political and other dimensions of Islamic resurgence are merely outward expressions of this 'ethical renovation'. In his opinion this movement has helped Muslims to go back to their roots intellectually, morally, culturally, and ideologically.[7] Khalid Bin Sayeed prefers to concentrate on socio-political elements of the resurgent Islam and on examining the situation in Iran, Saudi Arabia and Pakistan, the countries that represent the religious, ethnic and ideological spectrum of the Muslim world, and concludes that the response of socio-political Islam in meeting the Western challenge has proved to be inadequate.[8] Even though different analysts may have focused on different aspects of Islamism they all agree on the essential nature of the movement. In their view the movement is essentially modern; intellectual, reactive and yet creative and has moved away from the traditional approaches of the *ulema* (religious leadership) and it has made conscious efforts to posit a fresh set of priorities.

On the other hand Islamization is a political response of the Muslim states to the pressures created by the Islamist movement, which is also a mechanism to serve states' interests as represented through their regimes. Therefore the goals and methods of Islamization could be essentially country-specific. The state-led Islamization means that the state appropriates the right to interpret and manage Islam depending on the issues that confront the state. The interests of the state take priority over that of Islam leading to, to use Jamal Malik's (1996) apt phrase 'colonization of Islam'. Here the contest is not between Islam and secularism but between the state and Islam. The post-colonial state in the Muslim world, by and large, is seen as undemocratic and not able to fulfil the needs of the *ummah,* the community. Such governments keep themselves afloat and expand the state capacity to manage society by recourse

to Islamization either rhetorically or deliberately. When radical Islamic movements turn to the past for inspiration, the rulers of the Muslim world display no aversion to them because such groups are useful in diverting public attention from rulers' failings towards larger causes. By extending support to these radical groups the ruling elite find for them easy acceptability in the eyes of the masses.[9] In this sense Islamization plays a mediating role between the state and the society.

It may be useful to make a little deviation to understand this need to anchor the state in the indigenous culture by examining the nature of the ruling elite in non- western countries. The early political leadership in the immediate aftermath of attaining freedom chose the western discourse on democracy, modernization and secular nationalism. This helped them to emerge as national leaders ahead of a multitude of traditional, ethnic and religious leaders, provided justification for their political existence and power at home, and acceptability at the international level. Thus the secular and national came to be construed as the opposite of the communal and parochial. There developed a tendency to look down upon things indigenous causing thereby a wide chasm between the political culture and the idiom of the elite and the masses. This explains the need for 'acculturation' of the ruling elite to the native soil. Often there has been a tendency to assume one- way relationship from Islamism to Islamization and to ignore the manipulation of Islam by the state in articulating and promoting its own concerns.

Sayyed Nasr in his article on "States and Islamization" provided a typology of Muslim states based on the nature of mediating role of Islam: The 'Rejectionist Secularist'; the 'Opportunist Islamizer'; and the 'Thoroughgoing Islamizer'.[10] While Pahlavi Iran, and Algeria are put in the first category, and Egypt, Turkey, Jordan and Indonesia in the second; Malaysia under Mahathir Mohamed and Pakistan under General Zia-ul-Haq (hereinafter Zia)

[7]    Ahmad Khurshid, in I. M. Abu-Rabi, *Op.cit,* p 66.
[8]    Khalid Bin Sayeed (1997), see the Preface and Introduction.

[9]    See, Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr (2001), pp 296-298 and M. J Akbar, (2002) pp xvi, xvii.
[10]    ibid, pp 299-310.

are classified as the Thoroughgoing Islamizers. Because Islamization represents political manipulation of Islam, it is based on a narrow and literal view of Islam. Though Islamization of Pakistan is normally ascribed to the Zia regime (1977-1988) the present paper contends that in the 58 years of history Pakistan has fluctuated between the Islamic ambivalence of the early years, the Islamic opportunism of Ayub Khan (1958-1969) (he could be categorized more as reluctant Islamizer) and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, (1971-1977- he was also the Martial Law Administrator, and the President of the country during this period) and the Islamic thoroughness of Zia regime. The tidal wave of Islam has had its highs and lows sometime engulfing the entire society as it happened during the Zia years or at times breaking at the shores of with varying intensity.

Therefore resort to Islamization is seen as deliberate political choice of the ruling classes. Its demand did not emanate from the people though there is no denying of the fact that politicisation of religion by regimes can hold appeal to the masses for reasons distinct from regimes' calculations. The central argument of the paper suggests that Islamization of Pakistan was primarily prompted by the crisis of national identity, concern for security, and search for legitimacy. 'Islamization' does not denote uniformity of the process. Its usage has been symbolic or rhetoric as many Pakistanis tend to suggest, but also substantive. The substantive aspects of its use must be assessed in terms of its impact on Pakistani polity and society. It may be clarified that the phenomenon of Islamization is not treated here as the sole determinant of Pakistani political process. Instead it is argued that the failure of politics and the quick fix mentality of the rulers led Pakistan to take recourse to Islam. The demand for Islamization was thrust on the people by the political leadership that could not resolve the problems of constitution- making and nation- building, that remained indecisive on the place of local language and ethnic culture in the national schema, and the choice of the system of government, that was

unsure of its legitimacy, that lived with an obsessive fear of the Indian threat and that used Islam as antidote for everything.

It may be useful to take a brief look at the South Asian context to understand the Islamization of Pakistan. South Asian region has remained captive of the idea of nation -state and hence overtly concerned with protecting 'national boundaries' and 'national interests', and preserving the sanctity of, 'national identity' and 'national culture'. In 1947 the civilisational entity called Indian Subcontinent became South Asia, the region that gradually evolved into of seven nation- states or rather 'state- nations'[11] with divided historical inheritance. Therefore the South Asian region remains deeply divided and mired in the interstate conflict. Bangladeshi scholar Rehman Sobhan locates all the major interstate disputes in South Asia in the break up of an integrated community and makes a strong plea for the creation of the South Asian community.[12] South Asia is an India – centric region beyond geography and resource allocation. While other states in the region share historical, cultural and social bonds with India, they at once face a tremendous challenge in shaping their identities bereft of India which explains their efforts at eschewing close bilateral relations with India. Therefore the issue of national identity, among other things, remains a major determinant of the nature and structure of interstate relations in South Asia.

## *The Argument*
### *Crisis of National Identity*

A major theme that runs through Pakistan's history since its inception is a search for national identity. A prominent political leader in an interview with this writer made a cryptic remark that neatly sums

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[11]   'The inversion draws on Earnest Gellner's shift of focus from 'what a nation is' to 'how a nation is formed.' See Athar Hussain (2000) pp 127-128. Hussain has used the term to describe the nation formation in Pakistan.

[12]   Rehman Sobhan (1997), pp 53 & 59

up this crisis of identity. He said, "In 1947 we were a nation in search of a country. But now we are a country in search of a nation".[13] It would not be too audacious to state that Pakistan's problem of identity begins with its very name. Normally a country's name is a symbol of its identity, for, the name has historical, geographical or cultural connotation. The name Pakistan does not represent any of it. At best it is an acronym. Each letter stands for the British Indian province that was to constitute Pakistan. An acronym by itself will present a difficulty in lending a national identity to the state. Louis Hayek wrote bluntly that no country, empire or kingdom called Pakistan has ever existed. Christina Lamb is frightfully frank when she likens creation of Pakistan to inventing a country and Pakistan as more than a fantasy. Christophe Jeffrelot's study of Pakistan has a subtitle-'Nationalism without a Nation?'[14] Stephen Cohen, leading American analyst of South Asia has titled his latest work on Pakistan *The Idea of Pakistan.* In a review essay of the book titled equally interestingly "Can Pakistan Work? A Country in Search of Itself", its author Pervez Hoodbhoy, Pakistani physicist and well known peace activist, describes Pakistan as 'enigma of modern history'?[15]

This crisis resulted from the interplay of a peculiar mix of Islamicity and ethnic consciousness in the Pakistan movement, the ruling elite's manipulation of Islam, Pakistan's feudal socio-economic structure, and the impact of country's economic policy since its inception.[16] In the Pakistan Movement when leaders of the Muslims of the Indian subcontinent demanded a separate state for themselves on the basis of a two-nation theory they were using Islam as a subterfuge of ethnicity. Muslims, they claimed constituted a separate nation, different from Hindus in language, culture and religion. Judged from this perspective the demand for a separate

Muslim state had communitarian underpinnings rather than communal. The demand came primarily from the Muslim minority regions in India notably the United Provinces, Bihar and Hyderabad for the fear of being submerged in the Hindu majority. Ironically the Muslim majority provinces of India except Bengal joined the movement almost at its fag end. Yet Islam was employed rhetorically to rouse the Muslim masses that shouted the slogan of 'Islam in danger' and chanted *Pakistanka matlab kya, la ilaha illalah.* - What is the meaning of Pakistan? There is no god but Allah.

But the creation of Pakistan changed the role of Islam. The assertion of distinctly separate linguistic and cultural identities of the three out of four provinces of West Pakistan and Bengal in the east, soon after the emergence of Pakistan, threw a gauntlet at Islam. Now Islam was no longer paraded as ethnicity but was charged with the task of containing its upsurge. Pakistan was created not merely to protect religious interests of the Muslims but perhaps more importantly political, economic and cultural interests too. This was the vision of the founder of Pakistan, Mohamed Ali Jinnah. Going by his oft-quoted Presidential address in the Constituent Assembly on 11 August 1947[17] it can be safely said that he visualized Pakistan as a modern, progressive and a secular state. His notion of Pakistani nationalism was comprised of religious freedom, political equality and the state's distance from religious and sectarian differences. Yet it cannot be overlooked that he repeatedly invoked the Islamic idiom. He hoped there would be "renaissance of Islamic culture and ideals" in Pakistan. On other occasions he spoke of creating a state of "our own concept", of taking "inspiration and guidance from the Holy Quran" and making Pakistan a "bulwark of Islam".[18] The fact that it was sought as homeland for a religious

[13]   Interview, Islamabad, 4 June, 2001.
[14]   (a) Louis D Hayek (1986), p 55 (b) Christina Lamb (1991), p 19.
[15]   For Hoodbhoy's insightful review of Cohen's book see *Foreign Affairs,* November- December 2004. Interestingly Sunil Khilnani had written a similarly titled book, seven years earlier, *The Idea of India* in 1997.
[16]   Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr (1997), pp 103-104.

[17]   Mohammad Ali Jinnah had said, "You are free to go to your temples, you are free to go your mosques or to any other place of worship in this land of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion, caste or creed -that has nothing to do with the business of the state".
[18]   Anwar Syed, (1984), p 60. Syed's book provides a comprehensive and in-depth study of Muslim and Pakistani nationhood in the context of national identity of Pakistan.

community was bound to throw up the issue of Islam's place in the polity.

A strong national movement may create a new state but the role of a mature state in keeping the nation together by balancing the diverse aspects of nationality, that become visible only later, and harnessing it into a harmonious whole is a crucial one. A strong emotional upsurge of nationalism experienced during the freedom movement needs to be concretized to convert it into the bedrock of a new state. Many a freedom movement has often failed to foresee the mammoth challenge of state formation and construction of a national identity that awaits the formalization of freedom. Similar fate befell on the newly created state of Pakistan. "Absolutely nothing was done to fit into the larger scheme of an abstract national identity, the very tangible constituent parts from which the country was ultimately formed."[19] Lawrence Ziring bemoans the absence of an al-Biruni or ibn-Khaldun in the Pakistan movement. Pakistan did not result from the conventional nationalist politics in the sense that the demand for its creation was not based on the past grievances but on the anticipated grievances from the 'oppressive Hindu majority'. Therefore Pakistan came into existence before its ideological base was fully developed. Was it a Muslim state or an Islamic state? This was a fervently discussed issue in the Constituent Assembly during the debate on the Objectives Resolution. Another such debate on the issue of two nation theory was held on several occasions in the 1950s both in the Constituent Assembly and the National Assembly in the context of the creation of separate electorates for non –Muslims. In the debate on the Objectives Resolution the central issue was the place of Islam in the constitutional and political set-up of Pakistan while in the latter it centred on assertion of *Muslim* nationhood.[20] It may not be possible

to go in to those debates in a single exposition like the present paper, but suffice it to say that hardly anyone at that time was talking about the need to create *Pakistani* nationhood. After having created the state on the basis of Islamic identity, it was difficult to later develop its national identity and legal structures entirely on secular basis.

The long arm of Islam did not prevent the violent assertion of Bengali identity culminating in the secession of East Pakistan in 1971. Paradoxically after this debacle the Pakistani regime resorted to more Islamization as if Islam was the panacea for any expression of provincial ethnicity. The roots of growing ethnicity lay mainly in Pakistan's feudal socio-economic structure and the process of economic distribution. The convergence of dominant interests of Mohajirs-refugees from India- and the Punjabi elite with the cooption of landowning classes from Sindh and Punjab led to the regional imbalance in economic growth. A secular conception of Pakistani national identity was otherwise possible if it had contended with socio-economic imperatives. The success of such an approach would have hinged on wide scale social reforms and an equitable distribution of scarce economic resources.[21]

The crisis of national and cultural identity also resulted from a continuous tension and war of attrition with India not to talk of actual wars between the two countries. "Hindu" India is the "other" in the collective psyche of Pakistan. Vilification, demonization and hence the rejection of the "other" became essential to establish its national identity as that rejection constitutes the *raison de'etre* for the creation of Pakistan. The question who and what is a Pakistani meets with a most 'logical' yet most ridiculous answer: he is 'un-Indian'. But while doing so Pakistan has to reject a part of its own identity. Therefore a Pakistani historian notably, Punjabi or Sindhi encounters a dilemma: to own or not to own the Indian (read Hindu) influence on Pakistani culture. And it is here that Pakistan falls into

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[19]   Lawrence Ziring (1999), p 98.
[20]   Text of the debate on the Objectives Resolution is available in Sharif Al Mujahid (1976). Also see, Hamid Khan (2001), chapter 5, "The Objectives Resolution, 1949", pp 91-105. Detailed references to the debate on separate electorates are found in Anwar Syed, *op.cit.* pp 102-115.

[21]   Seyyed Vali Reza Nasr, 1997, p 106.

an identity trap. Irfan Hussain a well-known Pakistani journalist quoted below has captured this dilemma succinctly. Constantly stroking the fear of India out to devour Pakistan "Leaders with little understanding of history denied geographical and cultural realities...seemed willing to turn Pakistan into a middle eastern rather than a South Asian nation, ignoring the contributions of Muslims had made in India over a millennium...they sought to justify the existence of Pakistan by presenting an image of a country severed from the heritage of culture and history and sealed from the map of South Asia. All this has served as a kind of deracination which left a nation orphaned of the past".[22] This was contrary to Jinnah's understanding of cultural nuances of Pakistan. He was emphatic that Pakistan's Islamic culture was inherited from the Indian Muslim culture. Thus a "flawed" sense of identity was promoted by not merely embracing Islam but through a puritanical variety of Islam. Hence in the process of Islamization the dominant tendency has been to emphasize Arab connection and influence more, to the relative exclusion of historically dominant Persian and Central Asian influences. Suroosh Irfani finds the roots of Pakistan's cultural problems in the decline of Indo-Persian cultural matrix that constituted a foundational plank of the subcontinent's Muslim identity and in the ascent of Arabism, or 'Arabist shift', a tendency to locate Pakistani culture in the Arab past and to imagine Pakistan in the Middle East. Arabism robbed Pakistan of eclectic culture and consequently of creative South Asian Muslim identity and triggered 'a slide towards a tribal, anti-intellectual and misogynist view of Islam promoted by a narrow interpretation of the Koran.' But Irfani assures that a pacifist Indo-Persian matrix remains alive and kicking at the grassroots level which is also corroborated by my experience

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[22]    Irfan Husain (1997), p 10.

of living in Pakistan.[23] Aitzaz Ahsan, in his celebrated book *The Indus saga And The Making of Pakistan* addresses this issue squarely. He argues that though commonality of religion with the Arabs and Persians was obvious that did not make Pakistanis either Arabs or Persians. Similarly by emphasizing 'un-Indianness' Pakistanis could not overlook that they shared a common history, culture, language and racial stock with many Indians.[24] The sum and substance of the foregoing discussion is that the primary goal of politics of identity in Pakistan has been building collective identity on the basis of the 'Other'.

It may be appropriate at this juncture to consider at some length Ahsan's rare effort to establish 'secular' roots of Pakistani nationalism by providing it a territory- based civilizational character than the commonly accepted communal one. He names the territory of Pakistan as *al- Sindh*- the Indus region- and of India as *al-Hind* and argues that both have been separate civilizational entities through history. That makes Pakistani personality Indus personality. The book begins with espousing the civilizational differences between the Indus and India that date back to almost five thousand years and ends with elaborating communal differences between the Hindus and Muslims at the end of the British rule in the mid twentieth century. Are civilizational and communal differences one and the same? Is there no difference between faith and civilization? What is the Indus identity? What are the ingredients or parameters of

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[23]    Suroosh Irfani (2002): 'Pakistan: between the 'Arabist shift' and Indo-Persian culture' *The Daily Times*, 3 September 2002. Ejaz Haider, the news Editor of *The Friday Times* makes an interesting comment "The Allah Hafiz, Khuda Hafiz debate, the severing off of the Persian connection, keeping Arab names, growing date palm trees, wearing the horrible abayas, attempting to bring in khilafat, harking back to the city-state of Madina are all attempts by us to lose the new to beget the old because the old - we have convinced ourselves - was somehow the period of near-perfection, if not perfection itself." Received through Asiapeace Bulletin on 12 /8/2005 as a member of Asiapeace group. see http:/ /groups.yahoo.com/group/asiapeace/

[24]    Aitzaz Ahsan (1996), see Author's Preface to the Nehr Ghar Publications Edition, page not numbered.

identity of a community? Ahsan does not tell his readers about the distinct contributions of Indus civilization in *al Sindh*. Civilization is not constituted by a distinct racial identity alone though it is certainly an important factor.[25] Nor can civilization be constituted by eclectically- drawing upon neighbouring cultures. A distinct civilizational identity of a people is constituted by their contribution to art, literature, philosophy and science, the technologies they employ and the distinctness of their social and political organizations. It is such achievements that distinguish one civilization from another. To establish an identity of a civilization one needs to adopt an ideographic approach i.e. methods that highlight the unique elements of the individual phenomenon. Also a pertinent question arises when the author equates the Indus region to Pakistan today. He states Indus has always been Pakistan, 1947 was only a reassertion of that reality. It means he is assumes an unbroken civilizational continuity and an acceptance of the entire Indus heritage by Pakistan. Now this creates a problem. He states *Vedas* belong to the Indus and *Mahabharata* to India.[26] Does Pakistan today accept *Vedas* as its literary or philosophical heritage? Ahsan's efforts are indeed laudable. From this writer's personal interaction with Pakistanis it can be said that only a few them accept this heritage as their own. But the moot point is: has the pre-Islamic heritage become a part of the mainstream discourse on nationalism in Pakistan?

## Concern for Security

The concept of security employed here is not in the conventional sense of national security but that of psychological, economic and cultural security. There is a close connection between the crisis of

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[25]     According to Ahsan the racial make up of *al Sindh* is different from that of *al Hind*. In the former people belong to the Central Asian stock.

[26]     Ahsan, p. 42.

identity and the concern for security. The conceptual foundation of Pakistan and the Islamic Ideology implied that it would derive its moorings from Islam. This made identification with *ummah,* the world Muslim community, particularly with the Muslim states of the Middle East, easy and also secure substantial benefits from such identification. But in the initial years Pakistan's Islamic overtures did not find favour with powerful Islamic countries like Egypt or Turkey nor was Pakistan very keen about pursuing them as they were not seen as really suitable to satisfy Pakistan's urge for national security and economic needs. For both military and economic aid it looked more towards the West. But disenchantment with the West, particularly the US, came in the wake of American arms aid to India during Sino-Indian conflict of 1962. This feeling of being let down was further strengthened during Indo-Pakistani war of 1965 when the Americans clamped arms embargo on Pakistan. Separation of East Pakistan in 1971 proved a water-shade in the process of Islamization. The ambivalent and hesitant Islamic symbolism of the yesteryears gave way to closer and more deliberate identification with Islam. The rhetoric of Islam became more strident internally. Externally the loss of the eastern wing altered Pakistan's geo-political focus and West Asia became a major concern. Thus Pakistan's foreign policy in 1972 clearly indicated the new emphasis on Islamic links across the borders. This coincided well with the development of a new Islamic consciousness among the Muslims over the world. This could be attributed to a number of developments in the Muslim world such as Arab-Israeli war of 1967 and 1973 resulting into occupation of Arab territory by Israel, growing Israeli militancy, 1969 Rabat summit of the heads of Muslim countries and consequent establishment of a permanent body Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC), and later the oil crisis that gave an opportunity to the oil producing Middle Eastern countries to raise the price of oil boosting their self confidence in the International system. Pakistan cemented the Islamic bonds with *ummah* by holding an OIC summit in Lahore in 1974.

Later, Zia's Islamization policy became well tuned with his Afghan policy that won for him a broad based support at home especially from the religious parties. Pakistan wanted a satellite Islamic state across the borders that would serve larger interests of Pakistan. "It will be a real Islamic state, part of a Pan Islamic revival that will one day win over the Muslims in the Soviet Union."[27] Zia's Afghan policy was continued under the successive regimes of Benazir Bhutto (1988-1990 and 1993-1996) and Nawaz Sharif (1990-1993 and 1997-1999). Pakistan formulated the doctrine of 'strategic depth' in Afghanistan to meet the Indian threat, developed strong bonds with Taliban using not only Islamic but also ethno-cultural bonds among Pakhtuns of both the countries and also provided ideological moorings to Taliban through its (in)famous seminary at Akora Khatak near Peshawar. A close connection between the internal and external manifestation of Islamic rhetoric has also changed the course of Kashmir struggle. From the 1990s its discourse has moved clearly from national liberation and self-determination to Islamist jihad to which Pakistan claims to extend only "moral and diplomatic" support. As Yoginder Sikand argues, "the mission of the Kashmiri struggle (after the 1990) is not to set up an independent state, which is what the nationalists' project is all about, but to make Kashmir a part of Muslim Pakistan."[28]

The newly discovered Islamic connections in the 1970s helped Pakistan in reinforcing national interest. Because, in a wider context, national interest could be interpreted as Muslim interests and further could be stretched to fit into Islamic interests. This helped Pakistan to create a suitable ideological niche for itself that was eluding it for long. Hence what Bhutto attempted to make after 1974 was not merely a nuclear bomb but allegedly an "Islamic" bomb.[29] Jubilant

reaction of Muslim countries in May 1998 after Pakistan successfully made a series of nuclear tests bears an ample testimony to it. Moreover, "Pakistan did not have to compete with India within the Islamic bloc, whereas in the Third World movement, India remained a formidable force."[30] Considering the fact that the Islamic bloc was also a part of the Third World movement, it doubly benefited Pakistan. The moral support derived from such connections helped Pakistan in resisting the American pressure on limiting Pakistan's nuclear programme and prevented the French from revoking the agreement of supplying nuclear processing plant.

Economic dimension of security was equally important. Pakistan had close relations with Iran and Turkey as partners in the Baghdad Pact of 1955 that eventually became Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) in 1959 and later as members of Regional Cooperation for Development (1964) founded to promote economic relations between the three. But the real economic benefit came only after 1970 when Pakistan forged close relations with the Arab world. In a situation of serious economic dislocation following the Indo- Pak war of 1971 the Middle-Eastern countries helped Pakistan in the rehabilitation of its war –shattered economy. The Gulf countries replaced Bangladesh as market for exports of goods as well as labour. The remittances sent by the labour met critical foreign exchange requirement of Pakistan. From 1973 the oil- rich states began to underwrite the cost of economic programme in Pakistan, and Pakistan entered into joint ventures in fertilizers, textiles, and cement with several Islamic countries.

The support from the Muslim countries that helped in resolving Pakistan's crisis of confidence following the loss of its eastern wing in 1971 was crucial.[31] The Western reaction to the excesses of the Pakistani army in East Pakistan had given a strong blow to Pakistan's image and had resulted in some kind of international isolation. Further that 90,000 Pakistani soldiers

[27]    General Zia in his interview with an American scholar, Selig Harrison. See Jyotsna Bakshi's (1999), p 53.
[28]    Yoginder Sikand (2001), p 218.
[29]    According to towering Pakistani intellectual Eqbal Ahmad Bhutto has been misquoted. He is supposed to have said 'why shouldn't Muslims also develop their own bomb'? See Barsamian David, (2001), p 86.

[30]    Shirin Tahir-Kheli (1983), p 72.
[31]    Hasan Askari Rizvi (1993), p 73.

detained in India as prisoners of war had also left the army prestige in shambles. The lack of firm support from the US and also from China in 1971 crisis had left Pakistan completely frustrated. What was significant about this crisis of confidence was that for the first time it affected the psyche of Pakistani elite that had till then lived with the 'trappings of western culture' far removed from the mass culture that was steeped in ethnicity and religion[32]. It was in this situation that Pakistan found solace in regular consultations with Muslim countries, particularly the Arab. Again it was the same support that helped Pakistan to countenance the Soviet pressure with confidence in the wake of Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in 1980s.

In the recent years the problem of cultural security has been compounded by satellite television. Pakistan's oft-repeated concern for its cultural security that is allegedly under a constant threat from Indian and western TV channels can be effectively safeguarded, according to the 'culture police' in Pakistan, by invoking Islam and Islamic values. Even a casual reader of Pakistani newspaper can find readers' letters expressing grave concern about purity of Islamic culture suffering the onslaught of Indian programmes transmitted through the satellite. With reference to Indian films, values, songs and culture beamed into Pakistani homes and lapped up by Pakistanis, comments Akbar Ahmed, "In public few would admit it but Pakistanis spend hours every day watching Indian TV. Jinnah's notion of separation- described in his historic 1940 speech in Lahore about separate culture, history and belief (of the Indian Muslims) – is under threat from an unexpected quarter."[33] The discomfiture of the Pakistani establishment at the satellite experience is understandable because it has highlighted the cultural similarities between the two countries. This has compounded the difficulties of Pakistani state in defining national culture. Sajjad Gul, the owner of Lahore's oldest film studios

laments, "Pakistan has lost the culture war... Today Pakistan has no culture except for preaching Islam and Kashmir." One reason why the threat of the satellite seems so daunting is because "it has revealed how much Indian and Pakistani cultures have in common and how difficult it is to distinguish between them" Mehdi Hasan, a Mass Communication expert thinks that in 50 years Pakistan has not been able to decide what Pakistani culture is. Sheema Kirmani a well-known Pakistani classical danseuse, who has been branded, as 'unislamic' is forthright on this issue, "We have conflicts within us. The issues of nationhood, denial of past linkages with India, ignorance of cultural heritage, the blocking out of certain attachments are all part of the conflict... It is basically not being able to define what Pakistani culture is after disowning a huge chunk of cultural heritage."[34] Madeeha Gauhar's scathing comment reveals Pakistan's trepidation over matters of culture. She wrote, "In Pakistan frontiers are all important...The cultural frontiers are also very vulnerable and Pakistani cultural identity had to be protected vigilantly (it is immaterial whether this identity has ever been clearly defined). Then there are psychological frontiers beyond which people are not allowed to think, imagine or explore. This applies to education, philosophy, media and politics".[35]

## Islam as Instrument of Legitimacy

Islam has been employed symbolically and rhetorically to legitimize both the constitutional set up and the regime from time to time. This "arose from the attempt to utilize an insufficient conceptual plan to provide the philosophical underpinning for a state that no had historical precedent".[36] The March 1949 Objectives Resolution that subsequently became the preamble to the later constitutions

[32] Waheed-uz Zaman (1979), 'Editor's Note', p 1.
[33] Akbar S Ahmed, *Jinnah, Pakistan and Islamic Identity: The Search for Saladin,* p 211.

[34] For all quotations in this paragraph refer to a very interesting study of TV in South Asia by David Page and William Crawley (2001), p 239.
[35] Madeeha Gauhar (1997), P 250.
[36] Saleem M.M Qureshi (1993), p 240.

had proposed government under the 'guidance' rather than the 'instruction' of Islamic principles. While commenting on the Objectives Resolution Paula Newberg writes "The resolution's generality could not hide the profound disagreements about the character of the future constitution or state- for example, its characterization of the role of Islam was simultaneously prominent, obscure and legally undefined."[37] The 1956 Constitution described Pakistan as an Islamic Republic. But the constitution remained ambivalent on Islam's relationship to the state nor did it throw any light on how the Islamic principles would be applied and implemented in the legal framework of the state. Though emotive in value it was seen as essential concomitant of the state.

The 1962 Constitution promulgated by the first military ruler of Pakistan Ayub Khan dropped the adjective Islamic and made it simply Republic of Pakistan; but was soon forced to accept the amendment formally re-designating Pakistan as Islamic Republic. Despite his modernistic orientation Ayub Khan accepted symbolic importance of Islam in Pakistan's politics and used it selectively. He criticized the *ulema* (Islamic scholars) for their demand for an Islamic constitution but made peace with them to minimize their opposition to his programme, and also sought their help, when Fatima Jinnah, sister of the founder of Pakistan contested Presidential election against him, by requesting the *ulema* to declare that a woman could not head the state under Islamic law.

Islamic symbolism/ rhetoric of Ayub regime was turned into Islamic populism by the next Pakistani ruler Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. He had to establish his Islamic credentials under the weight of frequent challenges from his opponents. The Constitution of 1973 adopted during the Bhutto regime not only reiterated the Islamic aspirations and symbols of the two previous Constitutions but also added some new ones. Islam was declared the state religion; basic freedoms were subjected to the protection of the glory of Islam apart from

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[37]    Paula R Newberg. (1997), p 85.

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the considerations of national security. The two top officials of the country, the President and the Prime Minister were exhorted to preserving Islamic ideology that was the basis for the creation of Pakistan. Bhutto had begun his political career as a socialist and professed a strong belief in the ability of socialist creed to resolve Pakistan's political problems as well as problems of poverty of the people, but to counter socialism's anti religious, and materialistic bias he propagated 'Islamic Socialism'. For him Islamic symbols were a tool of political mobilization and he wanted to prevent religious parties from monopolizing this tool. His rule was at once populist and repressive and as the criticism and opposition to his rule mounted he employed Islam more and more in the hope of checkmating his opponents. He banned gambling and alcohol, made Friday a weekly holiday instead of Sunday, and gave the slogan of *Nizam-e-Mustafa*, the order of the Prophet. For Bhutto, concessions to Islamic sentiments were necessary to produce the feelings of national unity and consensus within the country to deal with the complex exigencies of the time resulting from the dismemberment of the country in 1971.

Symbolism and rhetoric of Islam gave way to the reality of Islamization when Zia –ul-Haq, the third military ruler of Pakistan undertook, as it were, to literally recreating the Prophet's order. His regime made serious attempts to transform all aspects of polity and society into Islamic ones through sweeping changes. Revenue system, banking, legal system, laws dealing with various crimes, education, culture, democratic freedoms, every possible thing in Pakistan was brought under the sweep of Islamization. Zia rule saw the proliferation of laws and ordinances, new institutions and new ideas purportedly introduced to make Pakistan more Islamic. Islamic economic system was introduced through *zakat* (tax levied on the gross assets of Muslims, a religious duty), and *ushr* (a tenth or a tithe of the produce) interest free banking aimed at elimination of *riba* (unlawful gain by way of excess or deferment including the concept of modern interest), and implementation of the law of

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inheritance. He established Majlis-e- Shoora, or the federal Council, an advisory body to be consulted by him on the matters of state affairs, enacted *Hudood* (Islamic punishments such as death by stoning) Laws in 1979. The *Zina* (Islamic legal term for adultery, fornication and prostitution) Ordinance , amendments to the Law of Evidence, and the practice of *diyat* (blood money for murder or man slaughter) and *qisas* blood for blood or murderer has to be executed) upheld by the ulema were the most notorious of all exhibiting a strong bias against women. Separate electorates were introduced for non Muslims in 1979 through an amendment to thee Representation of Peoples Act 1976 (Separate electorates were abolished in January 2002). A parallel system of judiciary was introduced with the establishment of The Federal Sharia Court in 1980 to ascertain the validity of any law or legal provision with reference to Islamic injunctions laid down in *Sunnah* and the Quran. Clause 295-C added to the Penal Code in 1984 made the draconian Blasphemy Law that declared any "derogatory remarks, etc., in respect of holy Prophet... either spoken or written, or by visible representation, or by imputation, innuendo, or insinuation, directly or indirectly shall be punished with death, or imprisonment for life, and shall also be liable to fine"[38] The reconstituted Council of Islamic Ideology became a conduit to Zia's large scale programme of Islimization. Zia attempted to convert Pakistan into an ideological state though the contours of ideology were never spelt out clearly; but the implication was that Pakistan was not just a geographical entity but also an ideology that was reflected in its unique culture.

The next four democratic regimes, two of Benazir Bhutto and two of Nawaz Sharif did little to dismantle the Islamic edifice constructed laboriously by the previous regimes. The Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) of Benazir Bhutto adopted a stance of deliberate indifference to Zia's legacy as the best approach to political survival and the Pakistan Muslim League (PML) of Nawaz Sharif found it

necessary to endorse Zia, rhetorically though, as the saviour of Islam. On the contrary Sharif during his second term attempted the 15th constitutional amendment by introducing the Shariat Bill ostensibly to strengthen Islamic foundation of the country but purported to strengthen his own position as the Prime Minister despite his overwhelming majority in the National Assembly.

The present President of Pakistan General Pervez Musharraf (1999- ) is a modern man dedicated to making Pakistan a modern, 'moderately' Islamic and a progressive state. His 12 January 2002 speech[39] was hailed in western capitals as a ground –breaking one. In an emotional plea to the nation he asked Pakistanis what Pakistan has gained by Islamization? - The question he has asked again and again since then. He also announced ban on some hardcore militant Islamic organizations. Giving due credit to his integrity of intention and sincerity of efforts in this direction two important issues could be raised. Firstly, to what extent his efforts at 'delegitimising' Islam from the public arena were also aimed at increasing his own legitimacy and acceptability in the Western capitals, particularly in Washington. Yet going by the reports in the New York Times or Washington Post, it appears that Americans were not too happy with Musharraf's support to American War on Terrorism.[40] Secondly, given that the sectarian violence has gone unabated in Pakistan since 2002 serious apprehensions have been raised about the success of his endeavour may not be totally out of place. General Musharraf through a nationwide referendum on April 30, 2002 legitimized his position as the President of the country. Despite the opposition of the religious political parties like Jamaat-e –Islami. But the government made every effort to win back the moderate religious elements. It released top leaders of religious parties and

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[38]    Akbar Ahmad (2002), p B01.

[39]    For the full text of the speech see *Indian Express*, Mumbai, January 14 & 15, 2002.

[40]    Husain Haqqani (2003), Pakistani scholar at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace at Washington, wrote that several new books particularly published in the US accused Musharraf from past sponsorship of Al Qaeda, to an official cover up in the Daniel Pearl murder, to revived backing for Taliban.

activists of banned militant organizations and issued orders to the concerned authorities to ensure that Western culture was not promoted through television programmes and music and stage shows and that "Pakistani and Islamic heritage and tradition must be adhered to in all public functions and cultural programmes."[41] At the end of 2004 the Musharraf government was still battling hard to control the militants with little success.

## *Implications of Islamization*

What has Islamization given to Pakistan- a cohesive national identity and a confident national persona? Several articles and readers' letters in the newspapers, which I came across during my stay in Pakistan, do not bear this out. The ideology of Pakistan invoked by almost every ruler of Pakistan in the name of national identity has proved to be a chimera. Ayub Khan thought that without Islamic way of life, Pakistan would be a "mere wasteland". Bhutto was yet vaguer in his pronouncement of ideology. According to him thee ideology of Pakistan meant that Muslims should govern the country, strive to make it prosperous by getting rid of corruption and injustice. Zia's sanctification of the ideology broke all norms of political sagacity. A punishment of seven years imprisonment and ten lashes was prescribed for criticism of the ideology. It is surprising that when the Muslims constitute 97 percent of the population and face no national enemy, the debate on national identity and the role of Islam has ever remained high pitched and intense. Narrow Islamic prescriptions led to the ex-communication of Ahmadiyas[42] from the *ummah*. Interestingly the Munir Report[43] (1954) based on

the public inquiry of the anti- Ahmadiya agitation that took place in the Punjab in 1953 concluded that there existed no consensus on the definition of a Muslim in Pakistan. Apart from Ahmadiyas the other non Muslim minorities of Pakistan have bore the brunt of Islamization mainly through the Blasphemy law, and the system of Separate Electorates that was abolished by Musharraf in January 2002. Talking of minorities a mention must be made of the latest move of immense significance by the Musharraf Government that has made the minorities jubilant is the exclusion of the religious column from the passport. The Commission for Peace and Human Development (CPHD), a minorities' non-government organisation while lauding President Musharraf's 'enlightened moderation' has wished that all symbols of discrimination, which have been the cause of intolerance and violence in Pakistan over the past many years, are eliminated.[44]

Has Islamization satisfied the security concerns of Pakistan? Yes, for some time and to some extent. It appears that it was more a phenomenon of the 1970s and 80s, and perhaps overall more emotive than substantive. Otherwise the fear of the Indian 'threat' looms large or at least it is perceived so by the Pakistani establishment. India's 'predatory' moves are discussed in the media regularly. Support of the Muslim countries has not strengthened Pakistani position on Kashmir vis-à-vis India. Nor has Islamization provided the much-wanted protective shield against the 'onslaught' of the Indian and Western culture. Its usefulness in securing legitimacy to the constitutional order and the rulers proved to be more elusive than real. Pakistan's first constitution came in after nine years of independence in 1956 followed by two more constitutions till date. The 1973 Constitution was thoroughly mutilated during the Zia regime and now stands amended substantively by President Musharraf through the Legal Framework Order introduced in August 2002 with 29 constitutional amendments. It has virtually replaced the 1973 Constitution by giving the military a strong

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[41]    Quoted by Muralidhar Reddy (2002) Report from the Pakistani daily *The News International* is covered extensively in this article.

[42]    Ahmadiyas are the followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad born in Qadian, Gurdaspur in India, in the 19th century and claimed the prophethood for himself.

[43]    For a gist of the main argument of the Munir Report see Hamid Khan, *op.cit* pp 120-122.

[44]    Daily Times, 5 November 2004.

constitutional role through the National Security Council, and weakening legislatures with the Presidential power of dissolution and political parties with a threat of disbanding them. The comfort of Islam in securing legitimacy for the rulers proved short lived in every single case. Both Ayub Khan and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto relinquished power unceremoniously as a result of the widespread mass agitations. The powerful agitation for democracy in Pakistan till date, Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD) came in early eighties during Zia rule. Despite overwhelming electoral support that Nawaz Sharif had enjoyed in 1997 elections and his display of Islamic fervour Pakistanis celebrated his abrupt and unceremonious departure in 1999. And the tight ropewalk between modernity (by denouncing and banning some extremist Islamic groups) and Islamicity (subtly courting these religious groups and jihadis at the same time) of President Musharraf appears to have pleased none in Pakistan. Musharraf has aroused jihadi anger. According to them he has 'abandoned jihad and betrayed Islam'. Jihadis led by Al Qaeda were the prime suspects in the two attempts made on Musharraf's life in December 2003. But neither are liberals in Pakistan happy with him. Though a few would question his liberal credentials, most in Pakistan agree that his liberalism has made little difference in the country. The general impression is that Musharraf's government is powerless to break the vice-like grip of the Islamists. Instead of rallying the mainstream parties, such as PML and PPP and secular forces outside of political parties, he is seen as dependent on 'minor entities, opportunists and turncoats' for 'myopic political expediency'. And both the liberals and the zealots want him to shed his uniform, but he, it appears, is forced to clutch to his uniform for political survival.[45]

Pakistanis who believe that Islamization has been nothing more than peripheral were eager to point out that the voter support to religious parties has been always dismal. This of course was

true going by the fact that such parties had never been able to muster more than 5 to 7 percent of votes in any election. The question was not of the electoral support but of the amount of influence such groups wielded at the societal level. But the outcome of the general elections held in October 2002 has rudely shaken the confidence liberal Pakistanis who till then believed that the religious parties were peripheral to Pakistani politics. Muttahida Majlis-e- Amal (MMA), a front of six religious parties of Shia- Sunni- Deobandi- Barelvi combine captured 60 seats in the National Assembly of 341 members, became the ruling party in the North Western Frontier Province and leads the provincial government in Balochistan. The militant elements have increased their power and influence not through the vote bank alone but through *deeni madrassas*. Much maligned Pakistani madrassas have registered manifold increased in past 25 years. Though no exact count of madrassas is available, several estimates place their numbers anywhere between 8000 and 15000 providing education to more than 500,000 students some of whom come from Afghanistan, Arab countries, Central Asia and even from the Far East. John Esposito, American scholar of Islam puts the number of madrassas at 9000. Pakistan's former Education Minister Zubeida Jalal, in an interview with *The Asian Age*[46] placed the number of madrassas between 15,000 and 20,000 and student population of 1.5 million between the age group of 7 to 14. Jessica Stern, American expert on terrorism, whose article 'Pakistan's Jihad Culture' in the *Foreign Affairs* is widely quoted, has dubbed madrassas as 'jihad factories'. But Pakistanis across the political spectrum point out that all madrassas are not engaged in making militants. Mubarak Ali noted Pakistani historian thinks that much of this talk about madrassas producing *jihadis* is exaggerated. Madrassas create narrow-minded, sectarian students but certainly not terrorists. Hoodbhoy, one of the staunch critics of the Pakistani educational system wrote recently, "Schools - and not just madrassas - are churning out fiery

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[45] See Kahlid Hasan in *Friday Times*, 19 December 2003 (title not available), and Razi Azmi (2004).

[46] *The Asian Age*, 13 November 2003.

zealots, fuelled with a passion for jihad and martyrdom. The obstacles to reform are great. For example, recent street rampages by Islamists forced (Zubeida) Jalal, to declare herself a fundamentalist and denounce as unacceptable school textbooks that do not include Quranic verses on jihad".[47]

The appeal of Islamization, however symbolic or emotive, has emboldened such groups over the years. According to a recent news report, Hizbut Tehrir an international Islamic group with roots from England to Central Asia, though outlawed in Pakistan in 2003 is striving to enforce "true Islam" in Pakistan. They are considered a new breed of Islamic fundamentalists, who study at the top British and American schools yet abhor Western values, advocate a pan-Islamic state and favour the removal of Pakistan's 'pro-US' government. Fired by the passion for Islamic renaissance, they stand on a thin line dividing political and violent struggle.[48] For such groups Islamization has been more than rhetoric. If the rulers meant it to be a political rhetoric mullahs and maulavis wanted to make it a social reality. And no government official, high or low has normally been prepared to question the increasing emphasis on Islamic principles. It is often suggested that the implementation of the *Hudood* laws has been marginal. This may be true going by sheer statistics. But statistics never tell a complete story. What about its political and psychological impact? Such measures have empowered the *ulema* politically despite their defeats at the hustings. And psychologically it has proved more damaging to the society where primitive mindsets vis-à-vis women as reflected in the notions about adultery and rape and practices like honour killing have acquired social 'legitimacy'. The same holds true about the Blasphemy Law. Though none of the convicts has been executed so far the lynch mobs have killed several of the accused.[49] A triangular pattern of cooperation and competition between the *ulema*

[47]    Hoodbhoy, p 129.
[48]    See *The Daily Times*, 4 October, 2004.
[49]    Akbar Ahmed, *Op.cit.* 2002.

mind, the military might and political populism that characterized the political developments in Pakistan has done grave damage to the social fabric of the country.[50]

The obsession with constructing the polity on Islamic principles has raised a crucial question who's Islam? – Sunni or Shia? It has widened the rift between the two major sects among the Pakistani Muslims giving way to sectarianism and gory violence in Karachi, in North Western Frontier Province and the Punjab that goes unabated even after five years of Musharraf in power.[51] The political ascendancy of Deobandi School among Sunnis has relegated to the background the mild and syncretic Barelvi Islam. The Blasphemy Law of Pakistan that is regarded as one of the most dreadful of their kind in the world has been used against the three percent minority in the country, especially the Ahamadiyas and Christians. The abuse of perverted logic of the. *Zina* ordinance, prescriptive dress code, restrictive representation in art and culture during the Zia regime led to the shrinking of public space for women. The Quranic concept of jihad abused by the *ulema* and exploited thoroughly by the army has been used by the state as a tool of foreign policy. (Some Pakistanis vehemently deny this). As the outside avenues for militant jihadi organisations shrunk they have turned their wrath inward within the country. Pakistan has paid a heavy price for this internally in terms of Kalashnikov and drug

[50]    Commenting on Islamization in Pakistan Razi Azmi wrote (2004), "Its consequences range from the ludicrous to the tragic. It allows the police to arrest Ahmadi brides and bridegrooms and their parents for the blasphemous act of printing *Assalam-o-Alaikum* and *Bismillah ir Rahman ir Rahim* on wedding invitations, just when the wedding guests are arriving. A woman who becomes pregnant as a result of being raped is convicted of adultery while the rapist goes scot-free for lack of four reliable, male eyewitnesses. Sunnis and Shias are now killing each other en masse while offering congregational prayers in mosques."
[51]    According to one estimate the bloody rivalry between Shia and Sunnis has claimed 4,000 lives since the 1980s. 77 people have been killed in Pakistan in the first ten days of October 2004 in the four separate instances of sectarian violence.

culture imported by Islamic militants and externally suffered a kind of alienation, if not isolation, in the international community. This situation of course changed drastically with Pakistan joining the American 'War on Terrorism' since 2001.

Educational and intellectual activity in Pakistan has borne a fatal brunt of the Islamic zeal. Under the Zia regime the University Grants Commission of Pakistan instructed the textbook writers that they were to demonstrate that the basis of Pakistan lay not in geographical, linguistic and racial factors, but in the common experience of Islam. Scholars complain that in Pakistani history writing myth and fact easily dissolve into each other and historiography and hagiography are often interchangeable. Original research is discouraged and any intellectual activity is seen as a threat by the establishment.[52] In sum one tends to agree with a perceptive analysis of a Pakistani scholar, Salim M.M. Qureshi, when he states that Islamization has given Pakistan its "anti- Indian preoccupation...has generated a latent anti –western psychology in Pakistan... intensified conservatism that made Pakistan almost a close society... the long-term authoritarian rule... has inflicted an almost mortal injury to the development of a Pakistani intellectual community... The Ayub regime made it impossible for Pakistani scholars to critically examine subjects of fundamental concern to Pakistan... The Zia regime explicitly prohibited any criticism of the Islamic ideology and the ideology of Pakistan or any examination of the personality of Jinnah. These policies have dried out the fountain of scholarship in Pakistan, making it almost an intellectual desert".[53] Another equally scathing comment comes from Hoodbhoy. He points out that once university students argued over ideological

positions and competed for votes in student elections. Today, they are co-opted by Islamic extremist organisations, sectarian movements and groups defined by ethnicity and pitted against one another. Islamism is the only outlet for their political involvement.[54]

As collective entities state and society may be Islamized more easily than people who are disparate entities at the individual level. To what extent have the people of Pakistan been Islamized? Richard Kurin's study undertaken in early 1980s in a Punjabi village of 'Chakpur' revealed that the people actually resented the narrowly defined Islamization programme of the government and the city based *ulemas* who were far removed from the needs of the people.[55] A former chairman of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) when interviewed for this project conceded that generally the Pakistani society had become more religious under the spell of Islamization but hastened to add that people had not been 'Islamized' uniformly. In his opinion, and many others share his opinion, extremist element in Pakistan is rather small.[56] Interview, Lahore, September 28, 2001.

Indeed there exists a large conservative fringe that does not profess extremism or militancy but the danger is that it is easily co-opted by such element in a given situation. Barring a very small number the educated, liberal and progressive Pakistanis do not adequately articulate their views collectively and forcefully. Despite the attempts of various regimes to Islamize Pakistan, it must be remembered that Pakistani Muslims are a part of the Subcontinent's liberal and syncretic tradition of Islam. As the present writer observed a Pakistani lives with multiple identity ties of *biradari*, (kinship) tribe, language, province and class apart from that of his faith. Islam could not bulldoze these identities. A Sindhi, Baloch or Pakhtun in Pakistan aspires more for provincial autonomy than a centralized Islamic state. And in complete disregard to Islamic

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52   Yvette Claire Rosser, "The Diabolic Raja Dahir: Historical Dissonance and Sindh's Quest for Identity: Denial of History and Loss of the Self in Pakistan Social Studies Curriculum". This is a brilliant and incisive paper that brings out the appalling shortcomings of History and Pakistan Studies textbooks in Pakistan and the resultant mindsets. A copy of this paper was provided by a Pakistani academic; therefore no other details are available.

53   Saleem M. M Qureshi, p 246.

54   See Hoodboy, *Op.cit.*

55   Richard Kurin (1985),

56   Interview, Lahore, September 28, 2001.

injunction an average Pakistani relishes Indian (Hindi) films and TV programmes despite their "corrupting" influence.

## Conclusion

Pakistani rulers did not intend to create a theocratic state. They wore Islamic robes depending on the political climate in the country to hide their arbitrariness. In the process they have caused long-term damage to the civil society in Pakistan. Pakistani experience gives a clear and loud message that religion alone does not provide the basis for building a modern nation. It is necessary to identify and incorporate all the multiple identities that individual lives with into nation building efforts. These identities are not stacked one upon the other neatly in a hierarchical order but form a complex whole in which they overlap each other or any one identity could acquire considerable importance in a given situation. A regime that fails to understand this complexity and tries to isolate and politicize just one kind of identity according to its own calculations is bound to create problems for the future regimes too. Culture is broader and deeper than religion and cannot be put into a strait jacket of faith as the Pakistani rulers have attempted time and again. Though unsuccessful, such efforts cause long-term damage to collective psyche of the people and cause hindrance in efforts of social engineering. Attempts at politicizing religion may begin obscurely but can soon acquire a snowball effect.

It is necessary to distinguish between the people, nation and state. They are essentially different entities and each of them must be understood in its distinctness as well as in its interaction with the other two. When people get transformed into a nation they undergo as if a chemical reaction that completely transforms the main ingredients. Their litmus test is in their loyalty to the nation. People as nation tend to speak in one voice and as one person. Nationalism has been a Janus-faced phenomenon. It lends itself to many different interpretations at once such as liberalism and oppression, patriotism and chauvinism, self-determination and ethnic cleansing, and rationalism and violence. When the element of religion is injected into it, it becomes a truly volatile combination. Nation- state becomes a different entity altogether, acquires a corporate personality, develops interests and ambitions of its own often expressed in terms of national gain and power. It may not necessarily represent peoples' aspirations and concerns. Secondly, the boundary and the frontier are two different concepts. Territorial boundaries and cultural frontiers are not the same. Territories may be divided and new nations created, but the fault lines of culture do not necessarily follow national boundaries.

Most importantly the Pakistan experience has a serious lesson for India. In the past few years, the efforts of some people to change the face of Indian nationalism by equating *Hindutva* (cultural essence of Hinduism) with nationalism have acquired ominous proportions damaging the essential spirit of both Hinduism and Indian nationalism. This has caused serious impairment to cultural variety and richness, and intellectual openness that have marked the Indian society for long. Attempts are being made to replace civilizational state in India by, not a Hindu, but a hinduised state. Though such attempts have been confined to a few, they have been successful in capturing the imagination of the many and the violence against the non-Hindu communities, particularly Muslims, sanctified in the name of religion has grown to an unpardonable extent. This tendency needs to be arrested before India reaches a point of no return.

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